

Leaders' reports 2007/8

The Art Group

During our ninth year we have continued with our varied programme. In October Christine Cawthorne led us on a Chinese Brush painting adventure whilst in November 16 members enjoyed a visit to Wolverhampton Art Gallery. The guidance of the curator was particularly appreciated and visits to other galleries are planned. The winner of our impromptu Christmas card competition only received a very small prize but mince pies and sherry were partaken by all. In January – in an attempt to introduce an element of culture - we had a PowerPoint presentation based on a much undervalued 16th century Italian woman artist Artemisia Gentileschi. A further one is planned for next spring and all members are welcome to attend.

Ian Blackwell showed us some of the finer points of pen and wash in February and for the March meeting 8 members climbed aboard a Skills coach to see Amsterdam in the early spring sunshine. Here we enjoyed the delights of the Van Gogh Museum and were lucky in that the Millais exhibition was on at the same time. Various other scenes of Dutch culture were also appreciated by members. In April as a follow-on to this visit - 12 of us each painted a section of Van Gogh's Sunflowers and when these were assembled they made a very pleasing copy of the original picture. We hope to try this exercise again in the coming year.

On May Day we painted outdoors at Ollerton – June was Still Life and July was Painting from a Photograph. August is our picnic and paint afternoon – this year at Thoresby Park whilst September is to be Draw the Face Opposite to You. Our birthday lunch is booked for October 17th at Portland Hall Hotel.

I did not realise until now just how busy we have been and I shall certainly be putting in for a rise in my co-ordinator salary!

Rita Turner

Bridge for beginners

This group has been active for about 20 months, and almost all those who started are still enjoying our regular sessions, which are a mix of tuition but mostly playing experience. After the September meeting, due to the demand for more places, we are moving to the Derby Road Campus of West Notts College. Meetings are held on the last Monday in the month. From October they will run from 7 – 9 pm.

Martin Rose

Classical Music 1

This 11 strong group meet each month on the 2nd Tuesday from 2 – 4 pm in member's homes to listen to CDs of classical music by a different composer each month chosen in turn by the members, after a brief introduction of the month's composer. In addition, the group has attended 13 live performances within a 35 mile radius of Mansfield. We had a very enjoyable joint Christmas meeting with Classical Music Group 2.

Sadly, during August this year, one of our members, Carol Dawson, suddenly passed away. Carol was an enthusiastic and knowledgeable member of the group who was always prepared to share her love of music with others. We will miss her.

Marlene and Alan Radford

Classical Music 2

Over the year, we have had 12 meetings, the Christmas one being a joint meeting with Classical Music Group 1. The average attendance was 8, and music from around 20 composers was listened to and discussed; the structure of the symphony being the topic at one meeting. Members attended concerts in Nottingham and Mansfield.

Peter Crabbe

Current Affairs Group

This group has had a very good year. We have 23 members, most of whom come regularly. This is about the maximum number we can accommodate. We all bring items of interest from newspapers, magazines, TV or radio, or maybe something happening in the local community. Everyone has an opinion, and these are very varied. We discuss many subjects always in a serious but good natured way. It is a very stimulating and enjoyable afternoon.

Norma Shillinglaw

Family History Group

During the last 12 months, the group has discussed a variety of subjects relevant to our research. These have helped us to remember how our ancestors lived, their problems and diseases, and how they had to cope, and how living conditions have changed in the last 50 years. In July a group of us visited the Framework Knitter's Museum at Ruddington, and more recently, we joined the Sherwood U3A group for a visit to the Nottinghamshire Archives. Other U3A members were invited to join us in March for a very interesting presentation on 'the Workhouse', and in July when Rodney Cousins came to speak to us on 'Country Crafts'.

Pat Blackwell

Gardening Group

We held our first meeting in May, having located a suitable hall close to the town centre. Six members met to organise a monthly programme and chose the first Tuesday morning of each month for the meetings. In May we had a professional gardener as our speaker, in June our own members demonstrated hanging baskets, and in July we had a discussion on growing vegetables. Attendance has averaged 28; and further meetings are already planned to November. Next year, we must find an alternative venue, but building on our success as a group so far, we are sure that we will flourish, just as we hope our gardens will!

Jean Hedges

Garden Visits

Didn't it rain, O my Lord, didn't it rain! Harrogate Spring Flower Show was full of interest with millions of spring flowers – absolutely lovely. Trentham Garden Centre and outlet was a wonderful place to empty your purse, followed by a visit to Biddulph Grange Gardens looking just as they did in 1850 – another place to test your umbrella! Local gardens which are open for charity have given plenty of choice for visits and interesting feedback, and so far – no umbrellas.

Jean Hedges

Holidays

Holidays 2007/8

February 2007

27 members and grandchildren enjoyed an outing to 'Peter Pan' on Ice at Nottingham Ice Rink.

5th May 2007

54 members & friends spent a most enjoyable 5 day 'Scottish Royal Tour' with Lochs and Glens where we had the opportunity to sail on Loch Catrine, toured the Royal Yacht Britannia and visited Glamis Castle.

19th September 2007

Treasures of Tuscany

42 members & friends enjoyed a 10 day coach holiday with Leger to Tuscany, calling at Rheims and Lake Lucerne on the downward and homeward bound journeys. In magnificent weather, excursions took us from our base in beautiful Montecatini to Florence, Siena, Pisa, Lucca and finally on the penultimate day, to Santa Margherita Ligure from where we sailed to the most fashionable and exclusive harbour of Portofino a mooring place for the yachts of the wealthy.

3rd - 5th December 2007

Thursford Christmas Spectacular in Norfolk

50 members driven by Norman from Butlers, visited this not to be forgotten, incredible performance of professional singers, dancers and musicians. During the 3 day break, staying at the Ramada Hotel in King's Lynn, we had the opportunity to spend a day in Norwich where members bought several Christmas presents from Caithness Glass, enjoyed a short time exploring King's Lynn and called at the Spalding Outlet on the way home.

10th - 17th May 2008: Isle of Wight

34 members, including 6 from the Dukeries U3A travelled with Richard from Johnson Bros. to Sandown, staying at the Burlington Hotel. Excursions were made to Ventnor Botanic Gardens, Brighstone Pearl outlet, the Needles, Yarmouth, Osborne House, the memorable Whippingham Church and Ryde. There were three free days when members planned their own days out.

Future Holidays

29th September - 6th October 2008

Jersey by air

40 members and friends will be flying from Nottingham East Midlands Airport to the Mayfair Hotel in St Helier.

3rd - 5th December 2008

Thursford Christmas Spectacular

50 members are due to travel to the Ramada Hotel in King's Lynn to experience once more this outstanding show. Excursions yet to be planned, will be different from last year apart from the Caithness Glass centre (not all glass!) where we will hopefully pick up, as last year, some useful Christmas presents!

6th - 13th June 2009

Wales (Llandudno) Cost £340 (sharing) £361 (Single)

I have booked for approximately 40 members in the Queen's Hotel, Llandudno, travelling in a Butler's Bros coach. At present there is room for 6 more (no singles available.) Excursions yet to be planned.

10 days 16th - 25th September 2009

Poland

46 members have already paid their deposits to Leger for this coach holiday which is now full, - although I have opened a waiting list in case of cancellation. We shall be dividing our stay between Krakow and Zakopane with overnight stays in the areas of Cologne and Dresden on the way to Poland and in Prague and the Leuven area homeward bound. I have planned for us to have a guided tour of Krakow, a visit to the vast underground caverns of the Wieliczka salt mine, a visit to Auschwitz and an optional tour of Zakopane in the Tatra Mountains with a ride up the Gubalowka Mountain.

2010 - Oberammgau the Passion Play

42 members & friends have signed up for this very special coach holiday. I am thinking of changing the date to the end of May or the beginning of June. The reasons will be explained at a meeting to take place immediately after the September meeting.

Margaret Burlinson

Intermediate Walkers

Every 4th Wednesday members of the Intermediate Walking Group enjoy a fairly easy walk of about 4 miles, usually ending with refreshments at a nearby pub. New members are always welcome.

Sylvia Slack

Luncheon Group

A well established group of diners who have enjoyed good company accompanied by good food at a variety of venues. Hilary is retiring as group leader to be replaced by David Ling in September. Bon Appetite!

Hilary Hamilton-Ross

Music 2

This group continues to flourish with 12 members who meet monthly in member's homes.. A range of subjects as topics have been chosen to select appropriate music which has ranged from "Celebrations" to "Summertime Memories".

Eric Prescott

Popular Music Appreciation

This interest group which was formed in February 2008 has proved very successful. In the first six months we have gained 22 members. Music chosen has been most varied and very entertaining, including Popular Music, Jazz, Blues, Country & Folk.

Peter Haynes

The Pudding Club

We continue to meet monthly to enjoy eating a variety of delicious puddings made by members. Several social occasions have also been enjoyed.

Sylvia Slack

Reading Group 1

We have been in existence for over 7 years now and have met every month during this time and have read a different (and very varied) book each month – novels, both old and new, biographies and histories. Our group is very little changed over the years and we have developed into a close group of friends. We are very lucky to be led in our discussions by Marjorie Smith. Our Christmas meeting is always a party as well as a discussion.

Peter Dawson

Reading Group 2

We have had an enjoyable year, even though some of the books we read have failed to impress. An average of 10 out of 12 members attend each meeting. Whatever the book, the conversation is always lively and we are never lost for words !

John O'Leary

Scrabble Group

Scrabble is a thriving group of 12 members who meet at the Leader's home on the 2nd Monday each month between 2.00 and 4.00pm.

Brenda Thurkettle

Strollers

Strollers have enjoyed our walks, fortunately in fair weather every time. Numbers vary, but usually about 20.

Geoff Davies

Tai Chi

The past year has seen several changes and the group goes from strength to strength. Our new home at the St. John's Centre serves our purposes extremely well. We have attracted new members including those from the Sherwood U3A, and enquiries regarding membership are still being made. Regular members maintain that they not only enjoy the sessions, but see the gentle exercise as an important part of their lives. We are lucky with our tutor who continues to provide excellent support to members.

Whilst we have goodly numbers attending, we can always fit in more people, so anyone interested should contact the group leader, Cliff Laycock before the Autumn session starts on the 22nd September.
(tel.481985)

Cliff Laycock

Theatre Visits (Plays)

Since Mike Allen took over, this group has had 3 successful visits, to Manchester's excellent Royal Exchange Theatre for "The Tempest" and Noel Coward's "Hay Fever", and then to Stamford to see "Richard III" at Toilethorpe Hall. The next visit will be to the Theatre Royal on Wednesday 26th November to see Alan Ayckbourn's comedy "Absurd Person Singular". Tickets will cost £11.25 (upper circle) and make your own way, Book with Mike Allen (Group Leader) at September's meeting.

Mike Allen

Theatre Visits (Ballet and Musicals)

This group has had a very enjoyable year, with visits to see Aspects of Love, Giselle, Sleeping Beauty and Swan Lake. We start the new year with visits to see Cantamus, Joseph and The Nutcracker.

Desley O'Leary

Treasures Group

There is a newsletter posted on the notice board at the monthly General Meeting, which has information about Auctions, Antique Fairs and Antique Centres taking place in the area. A email copy of this newsletter can be sent to any member who gives the Group Leader (Joy Crowe) their email address.

Joy Crowe

Trips and Breaks

The original booking to see the recording of "Countdown" was cancelled at short notice due to the illness of Des O'Connor, however, a full coach load was rounded up to visit Leeds for a fish and chip lunch followed by a visit to the YTV studios to watch 3 shows being recorded at full speed. The holiday at Thoresby Hall was enjoyed by 65 members when the weather behaved for once ! Next year there could be 120 going. See Terry Whitehead, the Group Leader.

Terry Whitehead
Walking Group

"Come rain or shine" our walkers tackle all types of terrain over a radius of 40 miles round Mansfield. The walks average 7 miles in length with about 19 members per walk.

Peter Thurkettle

Whist

This group, of usually 6 or 8 people, meet monthly except July and August. Contact the Group Leader (Edith Senior).

Edith Senior
Tel: Mansfield 654022

Wine Appreciation 2

During the year, the group has enjoyed wines from Argentinian Reds to American Whites, and sparkling wines from around the world. Joint ventures with Wine Appreciation Group 3 include the post Christmas meal at "The Junction" and the annual summer barbeque at the home of Ron and Carole Britton.

Ron Britton

Wine Appreciation 3

During the year, the group has enjoyed Merlots from the Americas and Africa to a French vertical tasting, As well as the joint ventures with Wine Appreciation Group 2, it also held a murder/mystery evening in February at the home of Colin and Sylvia Slack.

Ron Britton