Message from the Chairman

This is my last report as your Chairman as my term of office comes to an end at the AGM in July. I have to say that despite the fact that the last two years have been very busy I have thoroughly enjoyed the role. Not only have I learnt a lot about administering an organisation but I have also had the opportunity to meet and converse with many of the members. I could not have done it without the help of the hard-working committee members and the army of volunteer helpers (you, the members) without whom our meetings would not run. My sincere thanks go out to you all.

Looking back over the past two years our U3A has blossomed. We have closed down the Associate Membership and welcomed everyone as Full Members and, although one or two of our groups have had to close, there have been two new ones start up. Perhaps there is an area of interest with which you would like to become involved. Don’t be shy, you don’t have to take on running a group with meetings every month; a series of short sessions are sometimes a better idea than regular meetings.

The annual Carol Concert is still a great favourite; thanks go out to Paul Phillips who took over the job of organising it from Anne Marie Lord. Sheila Tunstall not only organises all of the outings and holidays but gave us two splendid afternoons celebrating the Queen’s Jubilee and the Olympic Games in 2012. The Walking Groups encouraged interaction between U3As in other parts of the country by inviting members of Pembury U3A to Chinnor and taking them on guided walks in the Chilterns. This relationship has continued with a visit by our members to Kent. Our links with other local U3As have been particularly active and there has been a lot of co-operation and joint ventures. One of the most successful was the IT familiarisation sessions organised by CHaTTR and attended by many members of the five U3As. It is good to see that modern technology is not just for the young.

As some of you will already know the Village Hall committee are working hard to complete the refurbishment of the Hall and they have great hopes of being able to make further improvements in the not too distant future. We are working closely with them to ensure a hearing loop system is installed as quickly as possible. As soon as we know more we will let you know but in the meantime please contact any of the committee if you have a particular hearing problem.

Thank you all for your support over the past two years and I am sure you will all join with me in wishing our new Chairman and Vice Chairman well, and offering them similar support and encouragement for the coming two years.

Molly Milner
Games Group

It has been suggested that every U3A should run a Humour Group, but I am sure that our Games Group could almost fit the bill and be re-named the “Fun and Games Group” because we always end up having a good laugh.

We normally start our meetings with a short quiz or word game, and then go on to choose which games we would like to play – sometimes we play one game all together as a large group, or split up into smaller groups for different games of our choice.

‘Whist’ and other variations of card games continue to be popular as well as ‘English Quest’ – a race around the British Isles to be the first to collect all the letters in Q U E S T by answering general knowledge questions. We have also had some fun with various word games as well as ‘Scrabble’.

Last month we all had another go at ‘99’ – a card game which is a lot of fun. We also played our favourite ‘Chase the Ace’, where the dealer has the choice of keeping the card he has landed up with (invariably a low one), or cutting the pack for the chance of a higher one – and ending up with an even lower one or the dreaded miserable lowest card of all, the Ace, much to the hilarity and glee of all the other players.

If you have any favourite games you would like to play or new games you would like to try, do come and join us. We meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month from 2pm to 4pm at the Village Centre. Sadly I shall be unable to run the group after the 30th April, but the group will continue at the Village Centre (next meeting 28th May) so do come along and join in the fun.

Julia Elkins Group Leader (Retired)

Do you remember the times when you looked after your boisterous grandchildren?

Then maybe you would consider taking over Julia’s role as Leader (or Joint Leader) of the Games Group.

There is really not too much responsibility involved - just make sure that the members present don’t make too much noise and disturb the other users of the Village Centre, and that the games are all put back into their respective boxes ready for the next meeting - just the same as looking after the grandchildren again!!!

Then you can relax with a nice cup of tea or coffee in the Village Centre Tearoom.

The main duties of the Leader are to act as the contact for any other member of our U3A who might wish to join the Group, and to collect the subscriptions at each meeting to pay for the hire of the room.

If you would consider taking over this role or if you would like to join the Group then -

- please contact Diane Carver.

WELFARE

I do hope that you have all been well since I wrote my last report. I have just taken delivery of the Craft Group’s delightful handmade cards for use over the coming year. Thank you all, you talented and generous ladies, your work is very much appreciated by both myself and the members who receive your cards.

Sadly we have had to say goodbye to Les Dingle. Les was one of our first members and for many years was the Co-ordinator for the six Music Groups, one of which he was also the Group Leader.

We have also had to say goodbye to two of our ex-members who have recently passed away. Our thoughts go out to Ruth Rogers and David Beechey’s families.

Please do let me know if you hear of a member who is not well or in need of a little bit of TLC. It only takes a moment to mention and it is good to let them know that we care. Be happy – stay healthy, we hope to see you soon.

Diane Carver Welfare Officer
WELCOME
TO OUR
NEW MEMBERS

Poetry Group

The past few months have seen our Poetry Group sharing a great variety of work on the following themes: Autumn, War, Winter, New Beginnings, and Personal Choices.

Included in the last was a group of poems concerned with walking. This was one of our favourites -

‘The Road Not Taken’ - Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.

We like Frost’s use of conversational language and tone, which almost disguises the universal significance of the theme, especially telling for those of us nearing the ‘ages hence’.

Still, maybe new roads will open.

Mavis Rimmer. Group Leader

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Carol Concert

Reflections on the Carol Concert are an interesting prompt.

I can remember panic, lots of rushing around and cries for help. But most of all I can remember all the people who were happy to make a contribution – whether it was a reading, to sing in a group, make refreshments or just being there.

I know that the U3A Carol Concert is regarded as a special occasion, but it is the people who make it that, whether contributing or by being there.

It was just good to be part of it – thanks again to everybody.

The Carol Concert this year will be on
TUESDAY 16th DECEMBER, 10.30 am
in St. Andrews Church

Paul Phillips.

*************************

Carol Concert 2013

I just want to thank Paul Phillips for arranging a wonderful Carol Concert in December last year. We met several times through the year and, although Paul was not familiar with what had happened in the past, he was soon putting things together. What a varied and excellent programme and “Thank you” to everyone who took part with all the enthusiasm that is so much a part of our U3A. Thank you, too, to Sarah (Paul’s wife) for the delicious refreshments!

My original concept was to have a time for us all to enjoy singing our much loved carols interspersed with “fun” and “serious” items suggested by members …. an enjoyable hour or so to relax and savour the joy of Christmas. I think Paul will soon be busy continuing the tradition and planning for December this year. So, as always, if you can help, if you have a poem, reading, song to contribute, can play an instrument alone or in a small group, or can offer anything else that might just fit - then do let Paul know.

Anne Marie Lord
Our destination in October was Stourhead (NT) in Wiltshire, where we had a magical tour around the lake with its composed views of Gothic and classical buildings including the Pantheon. We enjoyed the autumnal colours including the striking yellow of the Tulip trees. Many thanks to Ann Goold and Margaret Silvey for arranging such a super visit.

Edwin Rye gave us a comprehensive talk on ‘David Austin Roses’ in November providing us with a wealth of advice, including the importance of pruning before Christmas and using a high potassium feed twice a year.

In January Stefan White’s presentation called ‘Skulduggery in the Shrubbery’ was about John Tradescant the Elder and his son who were pioneer plant collectors, both becoming Gardeners to Charles I. We learnt how a devious lawyer Elias Ashmole acquired their museum collection, under controversial circumstances, thereby establishing the Oxford Ashmolean!

We were regaled with ‘The History of British Gardens’ by Roger Askew in February. We were taken from the enclosed gardens of Medieval times to the more open gardens of the Tudor period, progressing to the English Landscape Movement, with Capability Brown and others, during George II’s time. Roger continued on to the taste for Garden Rooms (e.g. Hidcote) and the ‘painting with flowers concept’ that typified the 20th century.

Our March meeting had a holiday theme with Ellen Walker of ‘Brightwater Garden Holidays’ taking us on a well illustrated and colourful romp through their extensive range, including very popular archaeological destinations. In short, if anyone wants to go to a famous garden somewhere in the world it is likely to be included in their repertoire.

Our three years of running the group (with a lot of help) will come to an end in April and we are pleased to hand the reigns over to the new leaders (as reported on page 5). We would like to thank all the members of the Gardening Group for the lovely handmade card and the splendid pair of herons for the garden. These will continue to remind us of how privileged we have been to be part of such a friendly and supportive group.

Mick and Judy Keen. Group Leaders (Retired)

www.chinnoru3a.org.uk

The website is updated regularly and gives a full two-monthly calendar of all of the Interest Group meetings, links to other U3A websites and useful tips on a variety of subjects.

‘Contact’ is also available in colour on the website.

If you are prepared to receive ‘Contact’ by e.mail or to view it on the website, please inform the Editors on info@chinnoru3a.org.uk
Monty Dunne (Thame & District U3A) passed away recently and will be much missed by the group. His cheerful enthusiasm and practical knowledge made his talks and contributions popular events that were always worthwhile.

We have changed the format for our “clinic” meetings. Historically the meetings were on a Question and Answer basis. In the event of not enough queries we would have some topic or topics that would not justify a full meeting but would be good for a 15-20 minute presentation. Now we are trying separate small groups set up to address specific areas; Windows XP, Windows 7, email, and Tablets. The first meeting on this format was found to be very useful.

Simon Gray, having set up his new computer sales and service business, “Turncloud”, returned to give us his annual talk on developments in the PC world. These have always been popular talks and we missed them the last few years.

The area of interest to our members is fragmenting as a result of modern technological developments. The traditional box PC is no longer seen as required unless you are into the latest “Shoot ‘em Up” games when a new top of the range computer is required every year. The rest have the choice of a laptop for staying with the traditional approach or switching to a “cloud” based approach where all your data and even software is held online somewhere and you do not need to worry about backups. Of course it only works when, and if, you have access to the web. Tablets are now very competent and easy and can do more than a PC could just a few years ago. Fortunately it gives us plenty to discuss.

The Village Centre has had a WiFi service for a few years now but not in the Chiltern Room where we hold our meetings. An upgrade to the service has put this right making it much easier to access the web.

Meetings are held at 2.30 to 4.00pm on the first Friday of each month, excluding August, at The Village Centre. The subscription for each meeting of £1.20 is to cover the room rental charges. Casual visitors are welcome even if they do bring along some PC related issue that is bothering them.

Tip
If, like me, you have a (very modest) Android phone you may find installing the “AirDroid” app. This is a boon when it comes to shuffling pictures and data between your PC and phone. This only works if both are on the same local network with WiFi for the phone. No software installation on the PC is required. The app displays the IP address for the phone which you enter into the address line of your web browser and voila!

Robin Preston-Whyte and Colin Sear
LONG WALKS GROUP

As we all know this last winter, although generally mild, has been characterised by the incredible amount of rain that has fallen and this has had quite a detrimental effect on our walking activities. Only one walk actually had to be cancelled, but most of the others suffered to some degree and we spent a lot of time wading through mud and water. However, we all survived and we did enjoy the exercise and the chance to get out into the fresh air, which is what walking is all about after all.

Brenda and George Wilson took us on our October walk from Piddington on a reasonably fine day. It was quite a challenging walk up and down several hills but the only casualty was someone who tripped over whilst walking on the flat – fortunately without serious damage. We ended the walk with a nice lunch at the excellent pub nearby.

In November it was Ros Noy’s turn to challenge us with a hilly 8 mile walk which she had to change at the last minute, and even do some of it backwards. To her credit she managed it without getting us lost. Another incident, which could have been nasty, was when a small tree branch blew down just as one of our number was walking underneath it. It scored a direct hit but fortunately without doing serious injury.

Then in December Ann Goold and Margaret Silvey took us on a very pleasant, and incident free, walk from Turville Heath. A few hills but some lovely views on what was quite a reasonable day weather wise. The January walk had to be cancelled at the last minute when we woke up to gale force winds and driving rain. As dictated by Sod’s Law it did clear up later, but it would still have been very wet and unpleasant.

I led the walk in February through Wendover Woods and along a stretch of the Wendover Canal. Less muddy than expected and the canal towpath had escaped flooding, but the route through RAF Halton had to be modified slightly due to MOD restrictions. Some of us then visited the Café in the Woods for a nice lunch.

Peter and Rosie Hetherington’s walk in March was from Shiplake and scheduled to go along part of the Thames towpath. This proved to be impossible due to the very extensive flooding, which had to be seen to be believed. However, they did an excellent job in re-working the route to go inland from the same starting point, so we had our walk anyway.

Finally, I have to commend our leaders for an excellent, and very quick, response to my request for walks for the summer programme. As a result we have a very varied schedule of walks from lots of unusual and interesting places, two starting in the middle of nowhere and others from Lewknor, Christmas Common, Cookham and Aston Clinton. Let’s just hope for some warm sunshine and less rain and mud.

TONY CLARK  Group Leader

PLAY READING GROUP

We continue to meet at 2pm on the 2nd Friday of the month in the Reading Room.

We have an average of 12 people at our meetings but still don’t have any men in the Group. Did they not enjoy reading plays at school?

We are limited in finding plays which will fit into the two hours but so far I have mostly managed to do this. We have, however, read two plays in the last six months which have taken up more than this. In both cases I have found something very short to read at the end of the 2nd session. These two were “Mansfield Park” by Jane Austen and “The Woman in White” by Wilkie Collins.

Our last month’s play was “The Hound of the Baskervilles” by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Many of us had heard the famous title but never seen or read it.

We are always happy to hear of anyone else who would like to join us. There’s no preparation beforehand – just turn up and read.

Pam Clark  Group Leader
Handicraft Group

My! – how time flies when you are having fun! That’s why the Craft groups should be feeling the passage of time because the sessions on Wednesdays are always fun. There is usually as much chat as crafting but isn’t that part of what U3A is all about?

The last six months have been as busy as usual with a variety of projects. In December we had our Christmas lunch at ‘The Crown’, followed by a combined group workshop at the Village Centre. Here, we decorated a wooden gift tag with a variety of media making a very interesting collection of tags.

In January we made our usual Care cards for Diane Carver to send to those members in need of a little TLC.

February saw a few of us off on our now annual jaunt to the ‘Make It/Knit & Stitch Exhibition’ in Farnborough. It is an excellent venue, having lots to see and space to move about, and also plenty of seating for relaxing with our lunchtime sandwiches or a bought lunch, whichever we decided upon. There was also a good supply of coffee stalls too when the need arose to stop for a breather. We certainly enjoyed ourselves, discovering both old and new ideas to keep us busy for another year.

Once again, I would like to offer my big ‘Thank you’ to Wendy, Ella, Judy and Sheila for supplying us with projects during the year. It is SUCH a help when the members come up with ideas. Finding new projects is the hardest part of being a leader. Thank you again Girls!

Janet Roebuck. Group Leader

Hexagonal cards displayed as a “patchwork”

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

Sadly we are now down to an average of five regular members at each meeting so it was decided to take certain measures. First we changed the monthly programme and added some new and exciting features throughout the year. Secondly we have introduced a Newsletter which will include members questions and answers; amusing family history stories; up to date information as it becomes available, and much more.

However, we decided to drop the January and July meetings for the time being to save costs. In the future we will look at improving the Group further with added courses and talks as time goes by, but this will depend on increasing our membership.

Yes folks, we need new members so why not come and join us at the Village Centre. We meet every first Thursday of the month at 10.30am, except July and January.

The Second Beginner’s Course. Another good turn out with 22 members attending the three sessions, including members of other U3As. Much to my delight everyone seemed to have got something out of it. The interest was so encouraging that I plan to do yet another course in November, so if you wish to join me next time be sure to attend. I look forward to seeing you then.

George Hunter. Group Leader
Elan Preston-Whyte’s subject in November was John Thomas Smith who lived from 1766 - 1833 and was an engraver, author and illustrator.

Last December, instead of our normal meeting, we met at The Inn at Emmington where we enjoyed a very pleasant meal and were made very welcome.

In January we were given a presentation by Margaret Peach of Ridgeway U3A in which she gave us a demonstration showing how the Impressionists built up their paintings. She did this by copying one using the artist’s technique.

Rosemarie Heasman took ‘Horses in Art’ as her subject in February which included famous paintings plus those more obscure. It was a very interesting talk enjoyed by all those present.

Audrey Farman’s talk in March was about Neil Simone, who was born in 1947 and is still painting, though now "occasionally retired". Audrey discovered his paintings whilst on holiday in Harrogate when she noticed some of his pictures in the window of the Sutcliffe Gallery and went in to investigate. It was a very interesting talk about an artist that none of us knew. We were all intrigued by his pictures which the Yorkshire Post in 1977 stated "combine Surrealism with an engaging wit".

At our meeting in May, Ray Barnett is taking as his subject "Three Art Forms!"

There are currently 16 of us in the Group which meets at 10.30am on the 3rd Friday of the month in the Village Centre. We are always happy to welcome new members. You do not need to be an expert but just be interested in art.

Christine Barnett. Joint Leader

This is an informal “link-up” group meeting on a “come when you can” basis, members who want to car share or do not want to go alone can “link-up” with others in the group.

Just come along and meet in the pool at Princes Risborough Springs Swim & Fitness Centre for the public 50+ session: Monday 2pm – 3pm.

Other sessions are on Thursday 10am – 11.15am and Friday 10am – 11am. Concessions apply as they do at all the public swim sessions. (Check times during school holidays as there may be changes).

I hope members will swim whenever and how frequently they wish.

Due to family commitments I am not always able to swim, and I am not aware at the time of writing of any members taking part at the above times. However, some of our “originals” have been inspired to swim regularly and have made their own arrangements to swim at other times... so the group has had a positive impact!

If you are interested then please give me a call -

Anne Marie Lord
PROGRAMME - June to December 2014

Monthly talks are held at 2.30pm at the Village Hall. Coffee Mornings are held at 10.30am at the Village Centre.

JUNE

13th Coffee Morning.
12th “SEND A COW”. Please note that this is the SECOND Thursday of the month. - Neil Rowe

JULY

11th Coffee Morning.
17th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and OPEN FORUM
23rd ‘PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES’ Tea Party. See ‘Holidays and Outings’ on page 3 of ‘Contact Extra’

AUGUST

8th Coffee Morning.
21st THE HISTORY OF PINEWOOD STUDIOS. - Mike Payne

SEPTEMBER

12th Coffee Morning.
18th G.M.CROPS. - Dr. Brenda Harrold

OCTOBER

10th Coffee Morning.
16th THE LIFE AND TRAVELS OF A BRIDGE ENGINEER’S WIFE. - Julia Freeman

NOVEMBER

14th Coffee Morning.
20th LIFE AT THE SHARP END (Reuters and News at Ten War Correspondent). - Sam Hall

DECEMBER

2nd CHRISTMAS LUNCH.
12th Coffee Morning.
16th CAROL CONCERT - 10.30am at St. Andrews Church.
18th LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU. - Betty Page

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and OPEN FORUM.
Including a short presentation on the combined Walking Groups Holiday in Kent.
2.30pm Thursday 17th July 2014
at the Chinnor Village Hall.
Please come along and support your U3A.
HOLIDAYS and OUTINGS

Firstly, a quick summary of where we have been in 2014 and then news of what lies ahead!

We had a good start to the year with a visit to a theatre in London. A very amusing show called “One Man - Two Guv’'nors”.

The visit to the ‘Cheapside Hoard’ in the London Museum was extremely popular and thoroughly enjoyed. Exquisite jewels and fantastic skills from the C16th, all unearthed 100 years ago.

Once again we supported the U3A’s Lectures held in the Royal Institution in London. This is real U3A education and so interesting. Places were also available in the coach for a DIY visit to London.

A visit in April to Portsmouth’s Historic Dockyards, which included the refurbished presentation of the Mary Rose Museum.

In May our outing will take us to Hylands House and Layer Marney which are both in Essex. We don’t cover this area very often but they both appear to be extremely interesting places to visit.

Holidays

Berlin in May. A group of us are off for a week to explore this wonderful city.

Cornwall in September An English holiday. We are staying at a family run hotel in North Cornwall. All coach outings are included and I’m told the food is good.

Think about coming on one of our holidays in the future. They are so friendly.

“PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES” TEA PARTY & ENTERTAINMENT

- 23rd July, 2014 in the Chinnor Village Hall.

We will be commemorating the start of the First World War. A professional singer will entertain us with songs of that time and I am sure we will be able to join in. This will be followed by an afternoon tea with sandwiches and cake.

Tickets are now available.

STILL TO COME IN 2014

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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>26th</td>
<td>Chedworth Roman Villa (NT) &amp; Cirencester</td>
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<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>23rd</td>
<td>‘Pack Up Your Troubles’Tea Party and Entertainment</td>
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<td>August</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>Houses of Parliament</td>
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<td>29th</td>
<td>Nuffield House (NT) and Basildon Park (NT)</td>
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<td>September</td>
<td>21st</td>
<td>Holiday in Cornwall - now booking</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>What are they doing to Euston and St. Pancras? - A Day with Sally, our Blue Badge Guide.</td>
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<td>19th</td>
<td>‘The Great Classics’ at the Royal Albert Hall</td>
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<td>November</td>
<td>17th</td>
<td>Brooklands Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Christmas Luncheon</td>
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Make sure that you come to our Monthly Meetings and Coffee Mornings prepared with your cheque book and a stamped addressed envelope to ensure your booking!

Sheila Tunstall

CARERS FOR MEMBERS WITH DISABILITIES.

The Committee has been advised by the U3A Trust that any member with a disability, who may require assistance to participate in a U3A activity, MUST BRING THEIR OWN CARER WITH THEM.

The U3A Trust states: “OUR MEMBERS ARE NOT COVERED BY OUR LIABILITY INSURANCE IF THEY TRY TO HELP AND THEY MUST NOT DO SO.”

However, CARERS will be covered by our liability insurance with regard to our members and members of the public.
## INTEREST GROUPS – AT A GLANCE

*Please contact the Leader before attending a group for the first time*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Leader/s</th>
<th>Day of Month</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Times</th>
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<tr>
<td>Art History</td>
<td>Rosemarie Heasman, Christine Barnett</td>
<td>3rd Friday</td>
<td>Village Centre</td>
<td>10.30 – 12.00</td>
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<td>Bridge</td>
<td>Stuart Baker, Betty Yendell</td>
<td>2nd &amp; 4th Thursdays</td>
<td>Village Centre</td>
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<td>Computers</td>
<td>Colin Sear, Robin Preston-Whyte</td>
<td>1st Friday</td>
<td>Village Centre</td>
<td>2.30 – 4.00</td>
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<td>Not August</td>
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<td>Digital Photography</td>
<td>Richard Carver</td>
<td>4th Tuesday</td>
<td>Village Centre</td>
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<td>Not Sept &amp; Dec</td>
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<td>George Hunter</td>
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<td>Village Centre</td>
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<td>French</td>
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<td>Various</td>
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<td>A (pm) &amp; B (am)</td>
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<td>Janet Roebuck</td>
<td>1st, 2nd &amp; 3rd Wednesdays</td>
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<td>History/Archaeology</td>
<td>Molly Milner, George Hunter</td>
<td>3rd Friday</td>
<td>Reading Room</td>
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<td>Jim Trimmer</td>
<td>Last Friday</td>
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<td>“ “ 4</td>
<td>Graham Stone</td>
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<td>Janet Williams</td>
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<td>“ “ 6</td>
<td>Pam Buckingham</td>
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<td>Poetry</td>
<td>Mavis Rimmer</td>
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<td>Play Reading</td>
<td>Pam Clark</td>
<td>2nd Friday</td>
<td>Reading Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Ann Goold</td>
<td>4th Thursday</td>
<td>Village Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading - Literary</td>
<td>Clive Bray</td>
<td>4th Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>Valerie Welford</td>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
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<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Anne Marie Lord</td>
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<td>‘Risborough Springs’</td>
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<td>Travel</td>
<td>Anne Gordon</td>
<td>1st Thursday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long Walks</td>
<td>Tony Clark</td>
<td>1st Tuesday</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>10.00 – 1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed Walks</td>
<td>Peter Hetherington</td>
<td>3rd Tuesday</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>10.00 –</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Walks</td>
<td>Graham Stone</td>
<td>2nd Wednesday</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Summer 2.00-4.00</td>
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<td>Not December</td>
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<td>Winter 1.00-3.00</td>
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Amendments since the last issue of this list are shown shaded.
Your Membership is due for renewal from 1st June 2014.
If you have not completed a Direct Debit mandate please complete the renewal form which you will find in the envelope enclosed with this issue of Contact.
Send your subscriptions to Rosie Hetherington, our Membership Secretary.

If you have not renewed your membership by 31st July it will lapse automatically.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED
for the Monthly Meetings in the Village Hall

If you are prepared to
- to welcome and sign-in members as they arrive at the start of the meeting, or
- to serve tea and coffee when the speaker has finished the talk.

please contact
Pam Buckingham

If you are prepared to help to put out the chairs and put them away again,

Please contact
Peter Brook

Would you like to contribute an item for ‘Contact’?
Any subject that you think would be of interest to our members. Letter; poem; drawing; picture; cartoon; suggestion, etc.
Please keep your article relatively short and remember that ‘Contact’ is printed in black and white.
The deadline for inclusion in the May issue is the 1st April and for the November issue is the 1st October.

Please send an email to info@chinnoru3a.org.uk or contact the Editors

U3A Diaries for 2015
Order your U3A 2015 Diaries now from Doreen Ewens
They will be available from July, price £2.00
- to be paid to Doreen when you order your diary.

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Don’t look now but I think Spring is on its way, the sun is shining (yes that round yellow object in the sky) I had almost forgotten what it looked like!

What has been happening since I last wrote to you? Well, Mick and Judy have stepped down from leading the Gardening Group, and what a splendid job they have done. Thank you both for your sterling efforts, they have been much appreciated. George has held another short Beginner’s Course for Family History which I hear went down very well.

Music Group 3, run by Jim and Mary Trimmer, would welcome new members into this very friendly group.

Reading Groups - have you heard that Chinnor Library is offering a quiet room for Book Clubs, etc.? The offer is there should you need it.

Do remember that if you wish to join an Interest Group please be polite and contact the Group Leader beforehand, don’t just turn up as some venues have limited space.

Volunteers to head up new groups are always very welcome and it is an established fact that people who volunteer live longer, so come on - have a go, you will enjoy yourself more than you think.

Diane Carver  Interest Group Secretary
The Mixed Walking Group average attendance is about 12. Despite the horrendously wet winter, the Group has been blessed with relatively good dry weather on most of our walks. Someone up there is looking after us. Or perhaps we just make our own luck!

We started our autumn / winter programme with a walk through Bladon to view Churchill’s Grave and the Parish Church.

In November, Tony Clark led us to the official source of the River Thame on the outskirts of Long Marston. To be honest there wasn’t much to see there, but the views over Wilstone Reservoir nearby made up for that!

In January, on a cold but sunny morning, Jill Ives attracted 21 of us to Haddenham where, with quiz sheets in hand, we embarked on a self guided tour of the attractive buildings and environment of Old Haddenham. Several of us never knew Old Haddenham was so attractive. Needless to say Margaret Silvey’s granddaughter shared the quiz prize with Margaret - a bag of breadcrumbs, which they fed to the ducks on the famous pond near the church.

In February, Chris Burrows and Alison Orr took us to Ewelme. We walked to Swincombe to see the beautiful snowdrop and aconites in the Churchyard and then returned by the Ridgeway through Ewelme Park.

At the end of April, over 20 of us will visit Pembury U3A for a short exchange holiday, walking and sight seeing in Kent. We will be staying in Tonbridge. Thanks are due to Frances Wells for making all the arrangements for us and to Pembury U3A for the programme of activities. You will remember we did the same for Pembury last September when Chinnor U3A led walks in the Chilterns and Thames Valley for their holiday. They stayed in Henton.

Please come and join our small and very friendly group. We meet at 10.00am on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

Our walks vary in length from five to seven miles, some easy and some in a moderate category. Please remember we always walk at the pace of the slowest, have a back marker, and nobody gets lost!

Peter Hetherington. Group Leader

If you have recently purchased a new camera and are unsure how to use it, then talk to me to see if this group is for you. We are a group of mixed abilities and we welcome new members. No one gets it right every time, even the best get it wrong some times. Every great picture takes practice and patience; it may have taken hours, days or even weeks to get it right and involved many shots.

Don’t worry, we are not in that league but everyone (even YOU) is capable of taking a good photograph no matter what camera you have. If you are not sure if this group is for you, why not come along and see. Please contact me first if you would like to do this.

We meet in the Chiltern Room at 2.00pm in the Village Centre every 4th Tuesday, except September and December.

Richard Carver. Group Leader
**History and Archaeology Group**

This year is proving to be an integration year between the History & Archaeology Group and the Family History and Photography Groups. As 2014 is the anniversary of the start of the Great War, Pam Wilmshurst and Molly Milner will be giving talks to both the History and Family History Groups about some of the men named on the Chinnor War Memorial, explaining how details of their life and families were researched and the conflicts with which the men were involved.

Last year at our “History within our home” meeting one of our members brought along an artefact that had been excavated from the ruins of Pompeii. This has proved an opportunity not to be ignored. We are lucky enough to have found a retired archaeologist who has great enthusiasm for the subject and so, later in the year, we will be expanding that to an afternoon’s talk about both the man who discovered the artefacts and the objects themselves. As part of the research into the subject we took some of the artefacts along to one of the Photography Group meetings so that their members could have a go at photographing them. It proved to be a very interesting and challenging afternoon. We all discovered that it is not as easy as you think to take a picture of a three dimensional object, especially such precious objects.

Members of the Family History and Photography Groups will be very welcome at that meeting on Friday September 19th, 2.00pm at The Reading Room.

Other talks for the year will include the ‘Ironclads of the American Civil War’; ‘Memories from Childhood’; ‘The History of Golf’, and ‘Exploration in Africa’. We will also be repeating “History within our home” to discover what other interesting things members have stashed away in the attic.

We meet at the Reading Room at 2.00pm on the third Friday of each month. If you would like to join us we will be very pleased to see you.

Molly Milner & George Hunter. Joint Leaders

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**Singles/Dining Group**

We were made very welcome at ‘The Red Lion’ in Chalgrove for our Christmas lunch and we went to ‘The Boot’ in Bledlow Ridge for our first lunch in January. The decor is warmer than previously and the food and service were excellent.

On a beautiful sunny day at the end of January we went to ‘The Angel’ in Long Crendon and had a lovely meal under the skylight.

‘The Peacock’ in Henton was under water in February but we had a warm welcome and a tasty meal. The pub was packed even on a Monday lunch time.

In March we went further afield to ‘The Woolpack’ in Stoke Mandeville and again the food and the service were superb.

Two more members have joined our group and usually there are about 15 of us for lunch.

Val Welford. Group Leader
Since my last report we have read four books. It is a pleasure to give you a synopsis of them.

The “Diary of a Nobody” was written in 1892 by George and Weedon Grossmith. It concerns Charles Pooter’s diary covering fifteen months of his daily life in the early 1890s. We are aware of anxious gentility. Pooter was worthy, deferential and acutely sensitive. The result was that he was imposed upon by everyone. Insights into servants, trades people and Pooter’s betters help us to understand the social strata and aspirations of the emerging middle class in Victorian England. There are peaks of humour with sudden, sad drops into pathos.

“The Rainbow” by D.H.Lawrence was published in 1915. It is the first book of the saga of the Brangwen sisters and their family. Lawrence attempts to describe human relationships in intimate detail. Men and women make love, women make love, adults quarrel while sensitive children either hide or look on. We read about the horror of the class room where enlightened women try to compete against men. There is a contemporary resonance when Marsh Farm is engulfed by a flood. Lawrence is writing about a period of change. Industry is engulfing rural England and wild life is ignored. Women long to be emancipated.

“Anna Karenina” was written between 1873 and 1878 by Count Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy. The story of a married woman’s passion for a young officer and her tragic fate. Anna appeared to have everything: beauty, wealth, popularity and an adored son. But her life is empty. Then she meets the impetuous cavalry officer Count Vronsky. The novel is set against the background of Russian high society exposing the importance of patronage to ambitious people. We are told about ignorant landowners duped by canny peasants. The vastness of Russia is awesome. In nearly 1000 pages Tolstoy treats us to a rich portrait of all human life. My conclusion is that Anna was the victim of her own beauty. It is with reluctance that she leaves her beloved son and her husband. In her exile she studies, revealing an intellect deserving admiration above that of mere beauty.

W. Somerset Maugham wrote ‘Cakes and Ale’, with an alternative title of ‘The Skeleton in the Cupboard’, in 1930. The novel exposes misguided social snobbery directed at Rosie Driffield the low-born first wife of a successful writer Edward. Maugham was accused of basing his book on Thomas Hardy. It was the pomp of Hardy’s funeral that gave him the idea of writing ‘Cakes and Ale’. He did meet Hardy but he had a low opinion of his style. He found his English “not very good”; interestingly, he does comment that all one had to do to become a literary legend was live to a ripe old age. Hardy died aged 88 and Maugham at 91! In fact Maugham later acknowledged that Alroy Kear, a busy-body literary figure, whom Driffield’s second wife, Amy, had engaged to write a biography, was the target of his bile. Maugham wrote in the first person under the name of Ashenden. Kear and Amy wanted his help because he had grown up in the same village as Driffield and Rosie. In so far as social convention would allow they became friends. A series of coincidences brought Ashenden and Rosie together. Amy Driffield and Alroy Kear were shocked by the suggestion that Driffield had found his inspiration and early happiness with Rosie. After the publication of a reprint of ‘Cakes and Ale’ Maugham admitted that Kear was based on Hugh Walpole who never forgave him.

We are currently reading William Cobbett’s “Rural Rides” published in 1830. Our choice of the next book to read is always by mutual consent. I suggested something about the First World War given the current coverage in the media. That was rejected so I suggested a Scottish writer as independence is another current topic. We agreed on Dame Muriel Sparks’ ‘Prime of Miss Brodie’ written in 1961.

We still have room for a few more members.
Do contact me if you are interested.

Clive Bray Group Leader.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.
Whenever you attend an event that is not organised by our own U3A please make sure that you have your current Programme Card with you.
Organisers of events such as the Thames Valley Network and other U3As will not know who you are and may ask to see your membership card.
As we do not supply membership cards your Programme Card will show that you are a member of the ‘Chinnor & District U3A’.
We have welcomed several new members these last few months and have been able to give a varied programme.

Richard Carver presented a resume on his and Diane’s ‘African Adventure’. They stayed in a lodge on the Tsavo East Reserve, one of the oldest and largest parks in Kenya. They were disappointed not to see all of the big five. However, they saw plenty of wild life - elephants, lions, baboons and comical warthogs, nicknamed ‘Kenyan Express’ because they run very fast with their tails in the air. We were treated to beautiful pictures of the animals. One day they saw a long black line on the horizon which turned out to be water buffalo making for a water hole. Behind them was another line of buffalo making for the same water hole! Quite a sight! The landscape was beautiful, wide and open.

Colin and Maggie decided to take short haul holidays and, in November, presented a mixture of holidays from Sorrento, Herculaneum, Capri, and a visit to the Vatican. They also went on an Anthony Gormley trail in Edinburgh and the River Leith. They visited Paris - time spent in Paris is always enjoyable, with so many sights to see. Once again we saw places we would all love to go to, if we had the time. Colin’s pictures were, as always, beautiful.

We celebrated Christmas in our usual way, with Christmas goodies and tales from our members. Jill Ives told of her experiences in a Caribbean typhoon, she spent two days in her hotel not able to go out. She was with her family (including a baby) but they managed very well. Once the wind had abated they were able to escape from the hotel and continue their holiday.

Gladys Bilton read a John Betjeman poem about travelling. Airdrie Greenway told us that she had a friend who lived in Cheney Walk where John Betjeman once lived; they always hoped to see the famous poet, but were unlucky. Janet Williams recalled the trip she and husband John took with their grandson and granddaughter to Euro Disney World. She was reluctant to go at first but thoroughly enjoyed the experience!

Len Davidson returned to share his experiences in Poland, this time in Krakow. He explored the city which has some beautiful buildings and an interesting cathedral tower. It is eight sided but one side is not closed in because a bugler was stationed there to alert the town if an attack was imminent. We saw Schindler's factory where he employed Jews and helped them to escape during the Nazi occupation. Len had pictures of the concentration camp which made us all think deeply of the terrible atrocities and suffering the poor people had to endure.

Jill and David Carey talked about their long trip to New Zealand, named by the Maori people as the ‘Shaking Islands’ due to the frequent earthquakes and tremors. We saw beautiful scenery, mountains capped with snow, and bright blue skies. Jill and David found plenty of colourful birds; also the rather drab-brown Kiwi, which is about the size of a chicken. It is very shy and everyone had to be still and quiet. The Kiwi is nocturnal, so it was a night trip holding torches. It lays the largest egg in relation to body size, the egg being almost the size of an ostrich’s. The Kiwi is the National symbol of New Zealand.

We are looking forward to a presentation about Venezuela in May, followed by Nepal in June.

We meet in the Reading Room the first Thursday in the month (except August) at 2.30pm.

Anne Gordon. Group Leader
In the November 2013 issue of Contact I invited readers to enter a writing competition. Thank you to everyone who found time during the busy Christmas and New Year festivities to put pen to paper. Thanks also to Diane Carver for her work in handling the entries and ensuring anonymity. Without her and the approval of the Committee the competition would not have been possible.

At the last meeting of the Literary Appreciation Group we started with a critical analysis of the entries. We applied all the tests we use when discussing the novels we read. This took half an hour or so until a clear winner was agreed.

The next challenge was for Diane to ensure that all the entrants would attend Dr. Maisey’s talk about new drugs. His popular talks always fill the hall.

I shared the suspense when called from my seat to be handed a sealed envelope. “Just like the Oscar awards ceremony” Diane whispered. “And the winner is: Anne Marie Lord, with her delightful letter to her grandchildren!” Silence for a split second and then appreciative applause rang through the packed hall. Anne Marie accepted her prize and gave a typically modest acceptance speech. In her letter she created interest, humour and suspense leaving her young readers waiting for the next letter. It was just like those writers, perhaps Dickens is the best known, who serialised the work in periodic publications.

Clive Bray

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**THE WINNING ENTRY FROM ANNE MARIE LORD**

A letter to my grandchildren -

Dear boys,

How exciting to have snow!

It didn’t snow here, it just rained again. My garden is really squelchy; a moorhen has arrived, he has a wonderful time splashing about in the enormous puddles. Houdini escaped again this morning; she was on the footpath when I had my walk. What a silly sheep, I think she wants to have an adventure. We walked to the field-gate together then she went back through the gap in the hedge.

I wonder if she will be there tomorrow. If it snows I will be able to follow her tracks!

Another adventure!

Nanny

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**MUSIC GROUP 5**

This week we heard with great sadness of the death of Ruth Rogers, a former member of our Music Group 5. She was always very quiet and unassuming but really enjoyed our meetings and always brought along an interesting contribution to whatever theme we had.

During this past year we have had a wide selection of themes at our meetings – Months, Valentines, Animals, Flowers, Food, Seasons, Chopin, Gardens, Drinks, Dances, Christmas and the Armed Forces.

We have now started going through the alphabet again starting, naturally, at ‘A’, so this will mostly be nice and easy (until we get to Q and Z) as we include names of Composers, Songs, Singers and Musicians etc. There will be a wide range to choose from.

We all bring a few contributions so no one has to prepare our entertainment for a whole afternoon. Our meetings are very informal but we enjoy relaxing together as we all lead busy lives. (How did we find time to go to work?)

Janet Williams. Group Leader
The last three books in our 2013 programme were all very different.

**‘Travels with my Aunt’ – Graham Greene**

Henry Pulling, an unmarried and retired bank manager, meets his aunt Augusta aged 75 for the first time at his mother’s funeral.

Henry’s journey with his aunt now begins. He travels first with her to Brighton, where he meets her old acquaintances and gains an insight into one of her many past lives. Their travels take them from Paris to Istanbul on the Orient Express and, as the journey unfolds, so do the stories of Aunt Augusta.

Henry is neither stupid nor naïve; he has led a narrow, honourable and respectable life; his principles have been high, both at the bank and at home. He is aware of his aunt’s shady past, her lovers and her lifestyle but finds himself drawn into the excitement and uncertainty of risk taking and the mental challenge her survival demands.

Henry’s journey is not in the discovery of foreign lands, but of revealing himself and knowing where he wants to be.

There were very mixed reactions to this read within our Group. For some it had no appeal, but those who enjoyed it found the humour plentiful and created mirth surviving long after the last page.

**‘The Well of Loneliness’ – Radclyffe Hall.**

The book’s protagonist, Stephen Gordon, was born in the late Victorian era to upper class parents who were expecting a boy and decided to christen her with the boy’s name they had already chosen. Narrow hipped and wide shouldered, as a girl she hated dresses and longed to be a boy. As she grows up she is aware that something is wrong, she cannot act or feel in the same way as other girls around her. This is an era where polite society does not tolerate or accept females in a masculine role, and such creatures are described as “inverts.”

Stephen’s father recognises her sexuality and tries to prepare her for the life she must lead on the edge of society. However he is unable to share his thoughts with his wife and fails on three occasions to communicate his fears. Stephen’s father dies in a freak accident and with his death Stephen loses the only being who understands and accepts.

**Radclyffe Hall born 1880 – 1943.** Her novel ‘The Well of Loneliness’ was published in 1928 and immediately banned. The ban was lifted after Radclyffe Hall’s death in 1943. Her book captures the attitude of society at that time, and her gift as an author mirrors that of Stephen who was able to survive as a writer and exist in exile in a circle of banished and artistic misfits living in Paris, where talents were appreciated and gender accepted.

The Group was unanimous in its praise for the tactful and tasteful way this delicate subject was handled. The book is beautifully written and demonstrates compassion without sentimentality; a book for everyone to read.

**‘River Town’ (Two Years on the Yangtze) – Peter Hessler.**

At the end of 1996 Peter Hessler and his friend Adam Meier came to Fuling, a small town on the Yangtze River in Sichuan Province on the Peace Corps programme. He was to spend two years teaching English at the university. The students he taught were extremely privileged to have gained a place there and their families would have made many sacrifices.

Peter found himself the subject of curiosity; he was the first foreigner to visit Fuling. To establish rapport and trust outside the University was clearly going to be a challenge.

The town was beset by a huge pollution problem; a large grey cloud lay permanently overhead. This presented many health problems. He also realised that he was under surveillance, his movements were being monitored and a certain amount of mistrust existed with the authorities. He decided that during his time in China he would take every opportunity to get to know people and to travel as widely as possible. To do this it was important for him to learn Chinese, not an easy language to learn and even more difficult to find anyone to teach him. Having mastered the language he was able to make friends with the locals and used every vacation to travel as widely as possible.

The Group has not had a travel book in their programme before. We were fascinated by the life in this remote part of China in the late ‘90s but our discussion took on a new dimension when one of our Group discovered a recent article written by Peter Hessler for the National Geographic Magazine in which he visits Fuling 13 years later to find a city transformed by the rapid rise in China’s economic growth.

**Dodie Smith’s – ‘Capture the Castle’**

We began 2014 with Dodie Smith’s modern classic narrated through the very charismatic Cassandra Mortmain.

Our programme for this year looks exciting and diverse. Sebastian Faulks, Anya Seaton, Victoria Hislop and Anthony Trollope are among the authors we have selected.

**Ann Goold. Group Leader**

A road sign in East Kent
Our winter season started in October with a programme of music that depicts the nature and feelings of the seasons. This included Delius’s “Sleigh Ride” for winter, part of Schumann’s “Spring Symphony,” Debussy’s “L’apres Midi d’un Faune” for summer and Glazunov’s vibrant “Autumn” from “The Seasons”. If I’d known about the forthcoming floods, I could have included Handel’s “Water Music” perhaps.

Julia Elkins followed this for our November meeting with a very seasonal history of Christmas sacred music. This, of course, included hymns and carols. It was interesting to find out that some carols such as “In Dulci Jubilo” date back to medieval times (Bach made variations on the melody). We learn a lot from our music group.

We don’t usually meet in December but this year we had Christmas lunch at The Crown in Chinnor together with the Short Walks Group and the Craft Group – we fully occupied the inn. The lunch was excellent and we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

Sadly, Les Dingle, a long standing member of our Group (when it was Music Group 2) passed away on New Year’s Eve. In memory of him, Clive Bray, thoughtfully dedicated the January meeting to Les by playing music that he had included in some of his programmes when he’d hosted it some years ago. The music was beautiful but also slightly sad as we listened to Tchaikovsky (one of Les’ favourite composers), Beethoven and Rimsky-Korsakov.

Margaret Stone’s February programme investigated Beethoven’s symphonic development from the almost “Mozart-like” Symphony No.2 to the mature Symphony No.9 – passing on the way (of course) the iconic Symphonies 3, 5 and 6 (the “pastoral” which was one of Beethoven’s own favourites).

We look forward to more meetings of our Music Group but I think we may need to broaden our musical genres to suit everyone in our group and perhaps comply more with the other music groups. After all, if we are a music group we should like, or at least listen to, all sorts of music.

Graham Stone Group Leader

The last few meetings of the French Group have focused on learning about France, so we have been playing a board game in the form of a map of France and answering questions (in French) on French history, gastronomy, geography, etc to move around the board and learn about all things French at the same time. It has been a lot of fun and nothing like hard work at all.

We have discussed in French any news that members may have as well as recounting in French any recent travel experiences.

Our monthly meetings take place on the 4th Monday of each month. We all have different levels of knowledge of French, but enjoy encouraging each other.

In between meetings Group members take home a crossword and picture puzzle/word search which we go through at the next meeting.

Sadly I will no longer be able to continue to run the Group after the April meeting, but I am sure members will make arrangements to ensure the continuation of the Group.

New members would always be welcome.

Julia Elkins Group Leader (Retired)

URGENT! Having Joint Leaders seems to work well with several of our Interest Groups so it might be an answer to this problem. Julia tells us that the current members of the Group are of mixed ability in the French language. They might also be good teachers!

Go on - give it a go! Even if you can’t speak the language fluently at present - it’s never too late to learn!

Please contact our Interest Group Secretary, Diane Carver and talk it over.
The October day was cloudy and turning slightly chilly but 11 of us, led by Graham Stone, started from Wallingford bridge, walked past the old ruined castle and out into the countryside. Reaching Benson Lock we paused awhile, ate some chocolates generously given out by birthday girl Margaret, when suddenly Peter said “Look, there are some Kingfishers!” Before we could focus our attention, they were gone, but never mind. Walking back to Wallingford Bridge, via the river path, we ended up at “The Boat House” pub for tea and coffee – very enjoyable.

On a dry, dull and quite cold November day, 16 of us enjoyed a tour around Wendover. The tour guides (residents of Wendover) showed us various old buildings, gave us their history and led us into a church on the outskirts of Wendover where they gave us a little talk. They explained how Wendover has always been a watershed (streams never seem to dry up here) and meeting point of many old roads and how the residents protested about the HS2 and managed to persuade the government to hide the HS2 (it’ll pass through a tunnel). Walking back into the town we passed the large, slightly hidden windmill and then back up the High Street past the old library and coaching inns to ‘The Shoulder of Mutton’ where we all partook of beverages and a “good old natter”. A lovely sociable afternoon. Note, there is an excellent leaflet showing the route and giving the history available at the Tourist Office in Wendover. A small place worth visiting for the market, shops and tea rooms.

We don’t usually meet in December but this year (for the first time) we thought we’d have a joint Christmas lunch with Music Group 4 at The Crown in Chinnor. This was very well supported (24 people) and together with the Craft Group we fully occupied the inn. The lunch was excellent – nicely cooked, very tasty, well-presented and the service fast. It was a pleasant Christmas atmosphere and I think we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. We must do this again.

Our January walk was to be around Hambleden village near the Thames but we had to cancel it due to our dreadful weather and floods. We’ll be doing this walk in May hopefully with no floods.

Amidst all the rain and floods, our Candlemass Sunday extra (annual) walk from Fingest was on a lovely sunny day. Surprisingly, the footpaths were not too muddy. We reached Turville, trudged back into fields again and then walked back to Fingest via the roads. Although our Fingest walk is usually only about 2 miles, the main purpose of the walk is what comes afterwards – tea and delicious cakes in Fingest church (to boost church funds) – organised by the very pleasant church members. A delightful afternoon.

Our planned guided tour around Chinnor in February (to be led by Richard Carver) was cancelled due to bad weather (again) – the weather was indeed foul. Instead, the six of us who turned up spent a pleasant hour in the Village Centre drinking tea and chatting together.

We had another attempt at the guided tour around Chinnor in March. This time the weather was lovely and 25 people turned up. Richard told us a lot about Chinnor from why Donkey Lane is so called (a man who owned donkeys lived nearby and used them as pack horses for various local industries), to the fact that our High Street in Chinnor once had a stream running down the middle of it. The stream is still there but now flows underground through a large pipe. Richard also told us about the windmill – its history, recovery, and renovation. The whole tour was very interesting – thank you, Richard.

Our summer programme includes some very pretty riverside and country walks. Please come along if you’d like a nice short walk with pleasant company. Just turn up at the start of the walk.

**Graham Stone.** Group Leader