

Newbury U3A



NEWSLETTER JULY 2011

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Another Award Winner for Newbury U3A

For the second year running Newbury U3A have featured in the prestigious Annual West Berkshire Learner Achievement Awards which were presented during May at Shaw House. The awards celebrate the success of the adult learning sector which provides a range of educational and training opportunities to individuals over the age of 19 years. There is fierce competition for these awards and they cover the whole of West Berkshire from Tilehurst in the east to Lambourn in the west. Many of the candidates work full time in education. This year an award was presented to U3A member Doreen Robinson.

Here is Doreen receiving her award from Graham Pask who was Chairman of the Council at the time of the award ceremony.

Doreen received the award for *Inspiring Others*. As many of you know Doreen is the group leader of both our Chair Based Exercise group and also our recently formed Tai Chi group.



After the award ceremony Doreen wished to record her thanks to both the U3A for nominating her for the award, and also to all those who support her classes.

Well Done Doreen! We are proud of you.

NEWBURY U3A OFFICE

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Letter from the Chairman

I hope you all have had, or have planned, your summer holidays. It seems to me that no sooner do we make plans for this year than along come the catalogues for Christmas gifts and the brochures for next year's holidays. It's always the same at this time of year – first Wimbledon and strawberries, then Christmas catalogues and gift hampers.

Our congratulations go to Doreen Robinson, who was awarded this year's Learner Achievement Award from The West Berkshire Adult & Family Learning Partnership. Well done, Doreen!

We had a very successful Summer Outing to the Cotswolds a few weeks ago, and I should like to express my thanks, and the thanks of all those who went, to Sandy Edwards for organising such a marvellous trip, and also for ordering up such fine weather!

I am hoping you will all come to tea with the Committee and Group Leaders on Tuesday 9 August at 2.30 pm in St Nicolas Church Hall, as I don't have room for everyone at home. We have some visitors coming from Wessex Harpists to play for us, so it should be a pleasant afternoon.

We are approaching our Annual General Meeting in October. Some new Committee members are needed, so I would ask you all to encourage each other to stand for election to the Committee, as without you the U3A cannot function. Don't forget to renew your membership!

Mary Blake

WE ARE HAVING A BIRTHDAY!

In September 2012 the Newbury U3A will celebrate its 21st Birthday. We need you, our members, to tell us how you want this to be celebrated. Perhaps we should have a party, or a lunch, or an exhibition, or..... it's really up to you! We need your suggestions, so send them to: Mary Blake, 24 Kingsbridge Road, Newbury, RG14 6EA

We extend a warm welcome to our New Members.

Monika Balstone, Richard Barker, Maureen Barlow, Anne Bridges, Ann Dixon, Charles Hillier, Ann North, Helena Oxley, Kathy Rough, Mary Speake, Angela Spellman and Bill Saulick.



Statistics:	Total U3As	801
	Total membership	270,057
	Newbury membership	537

U3A Conference and AGM Nottingham 2011

A full programme of events for the Conference which accompanies the AGM is available to read in the Office. There are five excellent speakers and a good mix of plenary and seminar sessions. Entertainment is arranged for each evening in very pleasant surroundings.

Minutes of last year’s AGM at Cirencester are also available.

A Discussion paper, “**The Challenge of Finding Group Leaders**” has been produced incorporating suggestions from U3As and National Office. It is hoped that it will stimulate discussion and further suggestions. See on the Office notice board.

Opera

There is another opportunity for U3A members to have exclusive use of the superb Screen 2 at the Odeon Cinema, Covent Garden in November to see “*The Marriage of Figaro*” by Mozart. Singers include Ludovic Tezier, Barbara Frittoli, Isobel Rey and Luca Pisaroni. It is an afternoon performance on Tuesday 15th November and tickets at £12.50 are available from National Office on a first-come first-served basis. Further details from our office.



New Merchandise

Following numerous requests, a metal U3A key ring is now available at the amazingly low price of £1.50.

The **Virtual U3A (vU3A)**, which went live in January 2009, is an on-line only U3A, affiliated to the Third Age Trust. One of its principle aims is to provide the U3A experience for those who are rendered isolated in some way by circumstances of geography and unable to play a full part in a terrestrial U3A. More information is available on the public website www.vu3a.org where one can also apply for membership. Why not pay it a visit? And if you know of anyone who might benefit, please pass the information on.

<p>The Third Age Trust The Old Municipal Buildings 19 East Street, Bromley BR1 1QE</p>	<p>Tel: 020 8466 6139 Website: www.u3a.org.uk email: national.office@u3a.org.uk</p>
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Thames Valley Network

In 2012, the **Network Conference** will be in Abingdon, Saturday 16th June 2012 at Abingdon College, Wootton Road, Abingdon, under the title "**Interactive U3A**". There will be a keynote speaker and discussion groups in the morning. In the afternoon there will be a chance for you to ask questions and air your views.

The **Network Bridge Event** has been cancelled due to lack of support.

Riverside Project

The **Thames Cruise** from Maidenhead on 6th September 2011 is fully booked.

The "**Riverside Revealed**" Residential event is being held at Wellington College.

Photo; Annual Outing to the Cotswolds



see report on Page 10.

NEWBURY NEWS

OFFICE NEWS

Linda Veness and Margaret Shelton

All is well at the Office. Our rickety old filing trays finally collapsed under the strain so we now have some rather smart new ones.

It is noticeable that we don't attract so many casual visitors to Broadway House as we did at Arcade House where our advert was in the window. Rather a shame, but it certainly doesn't appear to detract from the number of new members we get.

It would be good to have a few more people on the Volunteer list, particularly for helping to stuff envelopes for newsletters and other mailings, just to give the "regulars" a break from time to time.

The end of our year is approaching and next year's Membership Renewal forms should have reached you by now. Most of you are very good in renewing by September 1st when the Subscription Year begins, and this is very helpful to our Membership Secretary. It means that you are able to vote as a paid-up member at the AGM in early October, also that you are covered for attending group sessions and meetings which recommence in the early Autumn.

Diaries 2012 are the same size as this year and have an attractive bright red cover. They cost £2.00 each. Please contact the Office if you would like one.

CHARITY COFFEE MORNING 30th June 2011

Mary Blake 01635 47814

Thank you all for the effort which you put into our Charity Coffee Morning. We had an excellent display of items for the Tombola, a grand variety of things for the Bric-a-brac stall and lots of luscious cakes. Special thanks to the people in the kitchen who made the tea and coffee, and washed up afterwards, and to those who stayed to clear away the tables and chairs at the end. Overall the event raised more than £300 to add to our funds.

Join the Committee and Group Leaders for

Tea, Cakes and Conversation

at

**St Nicolas Church Hall on Tuesday 9th August 2011,
2.30pm**

Entertainment will be provided by The Wessex Harpists.



NEWBURY U3A

2011 Annual General Meeting

will be held on

Thursday 6th October 2011 at 2.15 pm

at

St. Nicolas Church Hall, Newbury

A talk will follow the meeting
Tea and coffee will be served

Please make every effort to attend

GROUP NEWS

CHAIRMAN'S REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS:

Please remember to show your Group Leader your new year's membership cards at the first meetings after 1st September, 2011. This ensures that the U3A insurance is valid for each meeting.

Also a reminder for Group Leaders: please remember to keep a register of members attending each meeting for Health and Safety purposes. This is also a requirement for our insurance.

Thank you.

Mary Blake 01635 47814

PROSPECTIVE NEW GROUP

We have the opportunity to start some Dance Classes, either standing or Chair-based. Anyone interested should please contact Jill Willson, 01635 862928, for details.

ANTIQUES & COLLECTABLES

Jo Dunning 01635 48338

By the time you receive this newsletter the group will have completed this session with their annual outing which this year was to Upton House. We meet again on Monday 3rd October when we shall have a visiting speaker. We have a few people waiting to join the group, so if any of our current members are unable to attend from October, please let me know.

ARCHITECTURE

Pauline Wilson 01635 864089

The group will restart on 27th September at 2.30 p.m. in the Robinson Rooms at St Bartholomew's School. The first meeting will be a social one when we can discuss and organise, over a cup of tea, the autumn/winter programme, which will involve, and I hope interest, all members. If you would like more details about the group, or the proposed programme, please contact me.

DISCUSSION GROUP 2

Mary Blake 01635 47814

This group has been suspended until October, after the AGM. It is hoped that some more members will come to Broadway House for interesting discussions on current topics.

GARDENING

Jill Willson 01635 862928

First of all, a reminder that we do not meet again until 5th October when Marilyn Freeman and Jacqui Hirst will be giving a talk on "The Meaning of Flowers". The programme for the rest of the year will be circulated at that meeting. As for the June meeting, apologies to all those who found that the "No Parking" sign in the car park made it impossible to attend. However we had no prior warning of this.

Instead of a July Meeting we went by coach to Wisley. The gardens were at their very best, the plants in the trial ground were spectacular and the weather was kind to us. Our thanks to Amy Banks who kindly arranged this visit.

Barnes Coaches have offered us advantageous rates on their 4th November visit to Westonbirt. Full details from Barnes (01793 821 303) to whom applications have to be made – approximate cost £15. To take advantage of the special price please ensure that you say you are from Newbury U3A.

HISTORY

Jeanne Scott 01635 42903

We continue to study the Tudor period, lively discussions being led by Ian Hopper on machines and technology, and by Betty Wright on festivals and pastimes. We have made good use of the office computer when Ian has accessed information for us on queries which have arisen during our discussions."

SCIENCE

David Hunt 01488 608300

We have an exciting programme of lectures for the future. Topics will include lasers, the Joint European Torus and crystallography.

Did you know that the world of the miniature (atoms, electrons, photons, etc.) behaves in a completely different way from our experience of everyday events? I am planning one or two presentations on Quantum Mechanics in the next year to introduce the group to the weird and wonderful world of the quantum. A degree in physics is not required!

There will not be a meeting in August to give brains a rest.

All meetings are from 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. on the last Thursday of the month in Robinson Room 1 of St Bartholomew's School.

TALKS

Howard Cooley 01635 580661

On Sept 12th James Rees of the Newbury branch of the Samaritans will talk about the organisation and the invaluable work its members do in our society.

On 14th November Howard Hannah will talk about the nature and function of journalism in contemporary society. He is a very experienced and respected journalist and has, and still continues, to work for a number of national newspapers.

THEATRE

Clive Dray 01635 42555

Unfortunately we had to cancel **Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead** as so few people wished to see it. Our next trip is something we have not done for a long time if at all. A musical, **Blood Brothers**, at the Wyvern, which I have never visited. I hope we will have more support this time.

TRAVEL

November 2011 Short Break to Paris

Nigel & Margaret Robinson 02380 267214

We are now taking bookings for a three-night holiday to Paris in November 2011. Please see the attached information sheet. Because of the relatively short notice we need bookings to be completed by the end of August, so please be quick if you are interested in joining us.

Day Outings

Margery Thomas 01635 44094

Please read the attached flier about our proposed trip to Sulgrave Manor on October 4th.

I would also like to tell you about a proposed day trip to London next year, when we will survey the facilities that we are providing for everyone in the 2012 Olympic Games.

We must book well in advance since these sightseeing slots are strictly limited. We intend to go on Tuesday 6th March 2012 when everything will be almost finished. We shall not only be able to get a very good overall picture of what we are providing for everyone but also how well we have done in turning a muddy, neglected and unpromising area of London into something quite breath-taking and in which we can all take great pride. Please make a note of this proposed trip and look out for details about it in our next newsletter.

Spring 2012 Holiday

Peter & Valerie Evans 01635 35029

Please see the attached information sheet about our planned holiday to Ireland in May of next year.

REPORTS

Day Trip to Hereford

The world famous 13th century Mappa Mundi (the Hereford World Map) was for me the main attraction in the Cathedral. The day started with heavy rain on the way but thankfully, by the time we had reached Hereford, it had cleared up.

Some of us dived into a convenient coffee shop, then a quick skirt around the town and some lunch, after which it was back to the Cathedral for an organ recital given by Ian Ball.



We then had a guided tour of the many treasures inside the Cathedral, after which we were free to examine the Mappa Mundi housed in a specially built extension opened by the Queen in 1966.

The area also contained the largest chain library in existence, containing hundreds of manuscripts dating from the early 1300 hundreds. Sadly the copy of the Magna Carta was out on loan so could not be viewed, which was a disappointment. A visit to the Refectory for tea and cake set us up for the return journey by a different and equally scenic route.

Many thanks to Margery Thomas for organising the day so brilliantly, and to Ashley our Barnes driver for delivering us all back to Newbury safely and speedily.

Amy Banks

Annual Outing

Our chairman's chosen outing took place on Wednesday June 22nd June 2011. Thirty nine members of the Newbury U3A rose early that morning and boarded a coach before heading west to the Cotswolds to begin a tour of the area. The day began rather gloomily with splatters of rain appearing on the windscreen of the coach as we left Newbury, however this soon stopped and we were blessed with warm sunshine for the rest of the day.

Having picked up Martin our tour guide en route, our first stop was at the Kings Arms in Malmesbury for a welcome cup of tea or coffee. On resuming the tour, Martin gave an account of the Cotswold stone buildings and explained the importance of the woollen trade to the area. Arriving at Minchinhampton Common we took in the glorious views of the surrounding Cotswold villages, all in a truly beautiful part of the country. Stopping at Painswick we had a chance to look around the grounds of St. Mary's Church and saw the large collection of clipped yew trees and some ornately locally carved tombstones. Each yew tree is numbered and there were thought to be 99 of them, but a smaller one was trying its best to round up that figure to a hundred!

As we continued on towards Tetbury our next stop, saw more evidence of the bygone cloth trade in the form of cloth mills which although still standing and preserved, are no longer working. We also passed Westonbirt Arberetum home to 3000 species of trees.

Royal Tetbury, a delightful Cotswold village, was our lunchtime stopping point and gave us another opportunity to explore. Martin took us on a short walking tour of the town starting at the Market Hall and pointed out the dolphins evident in the town's coat of arms. The Snooty Fox pub formerly known as the White Hart, just opposite this building had a tale to tell. Martin explained that many years ago the local hunt refused to allow the owner of The White Hart to hunt with them, he therefore took umbrage and renamed it the Snooty Fox. The town really grew from the expanding wool trade, and to celebrate this woolsack races are still held annually when large sacks of wool are carried on the backs of competitors as they race up hill to the local pub The Crown. A plaque on the wall of the pub reminds us of this. Members took advantage of the local market and plants were soon in their possession!



Having finished our lunches and enjoying the last views of the lovely stone buildings, we left for the highlight of our tour, the Abbey House Gardens - these certainly didn't disappoint.

The gardens are the result of years of thought and hard work by the owners Ian and Barbara Pollard. We visited the splendid knot gardens and were treated to a riot of colour in the magnificent rose gardens. There was much to see, in addition to the flora and fauna interesting sculptures had been well positioned to draw the eye along pathways and archways. Walking down winding pathways to the river Avon was a delight, and gave us a good view of the Tudor house. After tea and cake we boarded the coach for the return journey, our friendly coach driver Ashley, deciding to round off the trip with a drive through Wootton Bassett before returning home.

We all agreed that the trip was most enjoyable and that our chairman had chosen well.

Sandy Edwards

Outing to Upton House

Though the skies intermittently threatened rain, the weather was very pleasant for our outing to Upton House. The architecture of this house is undistinguished but we were delighted by the treasures within. Portraits by Reynolds and Raeburn and a superb collection of paintings by among others, Hogarth, El Greco and Hieronymus Bosch provided endless interest. The unusual gardens, with a beautiful hillside in the distance, brought peace and tranquillity.

Our thanks to Jo for organising such a stimulating visit.

Ann Taylor

Austria Holiday



We set off very early on Saturday 7th May and by 05:15 the coach was fully loaded with 38 heavy-eyed members, together with our guide, Gerard Venet, who had spent a restful night in Newbury's Chequers Hotel. Our coach stopped at Reading to collect our favourite Barnes driver, Herbie Smart, who would be driving us for the next eight days. Our journey took us through France and Belgium before stopping for lunch in the Duchy of

Luxembourg. We arrived at our first hotel in the lively town of Saarbrücken in Germany just after 7.

The next morning we were back on the coach and on our way through Germany to our resort of St Wolfgang for the next five nights. The Strand Hotel Margaretha was absolutely fantastic. On the banks of the Wolfgangsee, we all had superb views of the lake from our plush and comfortable rooms. The sun was shining and with an air of excitement, we enjoyed our first evening meal in Austria.

After a good night's sleep and substantial breakfast we were all very happy to walk into St Wolfgang to meet the hotel owner Clemens Vogler, our guide for the next hour. He proudly showed us around the beautiful St Wolfgang church while giving us an account of its history. After a coffee break, most of us went on the Rack and Pinion train to the Schafberg mountain summit to enjoy the breathtaking views.

The next day we were taken to Hallstatt, one of the world's most beautiful lakeside resorts. Hallstatt joined the list of UNESCO 'World Cultural and Natural Heritage' sites in 1997. Some of the most hardy of us visited the 7,000 year old salt mine, while the rest of us enjoyed a lakeside walk with Gerard through the pretty town. After a light lunch Herbie took us to the famous Spa town of Bad Ischl. The highlight of the afternoon was a visit to the famous Zauner coffee house which has served delicious pastries and ice creams since 1832.

The next day we visited Mondsee to see the beautiful Baroque twin-towered church which was used for the filming of the 'Sound of Music' wedding in 1965. In the afternoon we went to St Gilgen, situated on the north side of the Wolfgangsee, where Mozart's mother was born. We concluded the day by taking the ferry back to our hotel.

By Thursday we could not believe that the weather was still hot and sunny, but rain was forecast for that afternoon. We went to the beautiful city of Salzburg, leaving the lakes and mountains behind. There was also the opportunity to visit the Hohensalzburg Fortress, the dominant feature of the skyline or to relax in the famous Mirabell Gardens.

An early start the next day saw us retracing our steps back through Germany, this time to Rudesheim on the banks of the River Rhine for the night.

The spectacular setting of our hotel in St Wolfgang and unseasonal good weather together with a super guide and driver certainly made this a holiday to remember.

Margaret Robinson

Dates for your Diary

Tues Aug 9 th	Tea and Scones	St Nicolas Church Hall 2.30 p.m.
Mon Sept 12 th	Talk	St Nicolas Church Hall 2.15 p.m.
Tues Oct 4 th	Day Trip	
Thurs Oct 6 th	AGM	St Nicolas Church Hall 2.15 p.m.
Fri Oct 21 st	Leader's Meeting	St Francis de Sales 10.30 a.m.
Mon Nov 14 th	Talk	St Nicolas Church Hall 2.15 p.m.
20 – 23 Nov	Travel Visit to Paris	

**Copy Deadline for the next issue Friday September 30th
Late copy may not be accepted**

**Please send copy for the newsletters to Margaret Shelton
(for this issue only),**

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