

NEWSLETTER

October 2010

APPRECIATION

Whatever changes we see in the presentation of the Newsletter it will be some time before we do not automatically think of Irene Lusted as being the one to turn to.

Nineteen years is a long time to be in charge of anything – even monarchs rarely rein so long. So heartfelt thanks are due to our 'Queen' who, luckily, will still be around to fulfil other posts: Committee, Programme Planning, Chairman etc. Etc.

CHRISTMAS TEA

Michael Walker has arranged a repeat of last year's very successful Christmas Tea in Christ Church Hall. This year it will take place on Wednesday 15th December. A booking form is enclosed. This gives us the opportunity to socialise and enjoy tea in magnificent surroundings. However, numbers are limited to 60 so please return forms as soon as possible if you wish to come along. The cost will be £7 per head. Again there will be an opportunity for a brief tour of the cathedral before the tea.

RENEWAL OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are due on 1st January 2011, the cost is £21 which is the same as the current year and represents excellent value for money. Members may pay in advance, post-dating their cheques to 1st January. Please note that cheques that are not post-dated will be paid into our bank account as soon as possible. All cheques should be made out to Oxford U3A and sent with the completed form to be found with this Newsletter, together with a stamped addressed envelope for return of membership cards, to the Membership Secretary.

Please also sign the Gift Aid section if you are eligible and wish to participate in the scheme. The return we get from the Inland Revenue is a welcome addition to our funds. It would also be appreciated if those who do not wish to renew their membership would also complete the relevant section and return the form as this will help us in our advance planning for the admission of new members.

AMENDMENT TO PROGRAMME

25th November 2010

The title of Nick Havely's talk will now be 'Appenine Excursions: Journeys on the Edge of Tuscany'.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Photography Special Interest Group

Perhaps you are thinking of improving your skills? Or even going digital? Or enjoy taking and showing pictures? Would you like to meet some very friendly and like-minded individuals in an informal setting?

At each meeting we select a subject a subject to photograph for showing and discussion at the next but one meeting. We only work with enprints, trade processed for the sake of simplicity – and

cheapness. There is no set number of prints to show: just as many or as few as you wish. Currently there are three of us: one working on film, and the other two have switched to 'simple' pocket digital cameras.

We meet on a Monday at 2.30pm, usually every six weeks. We don't guarantee to have all the answers but we do have room for one or two more members of this long established and friendly group. Why not join us?

Convenor: Terry Walden.

Mah Jong Special Interest Group

This group is now up and running but would welcome new members. At present 3-5 members attend meetings. If you are interested please contact the convenor, Pat Aitken.

VISIT TO THE VYNE 6TH JULY 2010

Forty-eight members enjoyed favourable weather on this half-day trip to The Vyne, an impressive 16th century house near Basingstoke. Home to the Chute family for 350 years it is known to have been visited by Henry VIII on at least three occasions. As well as fine furniture, portraits, textiles and sculpture, attractions include a Tudor chapel with fine Renaissance glass and attractive grounds. Many thanks to Maire Walden for organising the trip. An excellent lunch was enjoyed by all and the electric buggy to and from the coach was much appreciated by some.

PROGRAMME PLANNING PANEL

We are once again sending out our two annual questionnaires and we hope as many of you as possible will complete and return them. We do need your input if we are to continue to provide the sort of programmes and visits most of you seem to enjoy.

This year we are again making some suggestions for possible visits – a house, an art collection, a garden, or, if you wish, a National Trust property if you would like to suggest one. If any of them prove popular we will try to organise a visit. Clearly there is no commitment at this stage. At the same time we hope you will continue to send in your own suggestions and, in addition, we do need offers to organise a visit. This is not difficult to do and help is offered.

a) ELTHAM PALACE

This is a truly wonderful place to visit – a large house built by Stephen and Virginia Courtauld in the 1930s, reflecting the influence of Art Deco and incorporating the medieval Great Hall which is what remains of the original palace. The lavishly decorated interiors and the contemporary furniture give an excellent insight into how the Courtaulds lived. There are also gardens, a good tea room and an English Heritage shop.

b) THE WALLACE COLLECTION (half-day)

It did not prove possible to arrange a visit this year but a half-day visit could be arranged next (it is not a very large collection). It is home to one of Europe's finest collections of works of art, paintings, furniture, etc.

c) SAVILL GARDEN

Described as one of Britain's greatest ornamental gardens there are over 35 acres of contemporary and classically designed gardens and woodland. There is a Visitor Centre, plant centre, restaurant and shop.

d) **A NATIONAL TRUST PROPERTY**

We know that a number of you enjoy visiting National Trust properties and, if this is what you would like, please indicate which ones would be of interest to you.

Thursday afternoon questionnaire:

As always, your suggestions for speakers are very helpful so please complete the form giving the names and details of any speakers you would like to recommend. It would be useful to know if you have actually heard the speaker.

TWO OFFERS FOR U3A MEMBERS FROM THIRD AGE TRUST HQ

1. **Il Barbiere di Siviglia by Rossini** (sung in Italian with English subtitles) – Tuesday 23rd November 2010 at the Odeon Cinema, Covent Garden 11.14 to 4.30
Registration is from 12.45 pm. Keith Richards of North London U3A will welcome the U3A audience and introduce the opera. Details are available on the U3A notice board in Rewley House Lecture Theatre.
2. **The Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and The Rose Site** – 25th November 2010, 1st December 2010, or 8th December 2010.
Access to the Exhibition, followed by Elizabethan dressing demonstration, and guided tours of the Rose Theatre and the Globe. Tea and biscuits will be served at the Swan at the Bar
Admission is £15 per person (senior price) including afternoon refreshments. Numbers are strictly limited and tickets will be issued on a first-come first-served basis. Further details and a booking form are available at the back of the Lecture Theatre in Rewley.

BRAINS FOR DEMENTIA RESEARCH

DeNDRon is a research network which carries out research in the area of dementia and neurodegenerative disease. They are keen to publicise the research with U3A members, and currently helping with a national study called 'Brains for Dementia Research'. This programme invites both people with and those without memory problems (who are aged 70 or over) to participate in yearly or biennial assessments of memory, thinking and behaviour prior to eventual brain donation after their death. Brain tissue from people who have been regularly assessed in this way provides the very best resource for researchers working to understand dementia. If you would like to hear more about this work or to contribute in any way, please visit www.brainsfordementiaresearch.org.uk or call Caroline Cox on oxford 234309, or email carolinecox2@nhs.net

A CHILDHOOD CHRISTMAS

Elizabeth Bremner, our Chairman, informed us of this special group event in the August Newsletter. She would like short written reminiscences from members which will take 3-5 minutes to read.

FROM THE EDITOR

As our Chairman has said on page one, Irene will be a hard act to follow. I am indebted to Irene for her help for this first attempt; the layout may be different but you will notice that the content has a familiar look to it.

I would positively welcome comments, criticism, suggestions and, above all, contributions. Ideally, contributions should be by email but typed or handwritten contributions are fine. Relevant photographs are particularly welcome but note they will be reproduced in black-and-white.

Peter Wilkinson

DON'T FORGET THE WEB SITE

www.u3aoxford.org.uk

A reminder for those who have access to the internet that, thanks to the hard work of members Hazel George and Tom Holloway, we have our own web site. This is constantly updated and is proving to be a valuable resource. The Oxford skyline picture on the front of this newsletter is taken from the web site where it appears in full colour.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

The next Newsletter will be published in January. Please send contributions should be submitted to the Editor by December 7th.