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SHOTTERY u3a

NEWSLETTER: August 2026

Tuesday, October 6th

Looking After the Swans of Stratford
Cyril Bennis

Please note that Cyril Bennis is not charging for his talk but would welcome donations towards his work

DESK AND REFRESHMENT ROTA:

October – Reading
November- Rambling

Duties include checking members in at the entrance desk and serving tea and coffee and washing up afterwards (dishwasher available). Generally 4 members are required. Where groups have difficulty in raising the necessary 4 members, please get in touch with Jan Grant– Group Coordinator. (01789 417721)

Please note that as I don't have a current rota pattern I have gone back to the 2023 list I have. Apologies if you find your group listed above and have recently already done the duty. Kate

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:

November - Interest Groups and AGM
December – Christmas Fun and Festivities

Your input needed!

Have you had your 15 minutes of fame? If so, would you share it with us all in the newsletter? Many people have had an encounter with someone famous, done something noteworthy which gave them 'fame' (or notoriety!). It doesn't have to be major, even a smidgeon of 'fame' would be interesting. And the editor is happy to help with finessing the writing if needed. Last month we had Nick's interesting contribution and would love some more. Send your contribution to ***shotteryu3a@gmail.com***

Are you interested in learning more about the Guildhall and players in Shakespeare's time?

We have had this information about two talks you may be interested in. Details below

I am just getting in touch today as I am delivering some local history talks in association with my partner museum, Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall (Stratford-upon-Avon), in October, on Sundays 11th and 25th, and I thought members of your group might be interested in hearing about these.

I'm currently researching regional theatre in the age of Shakespeare for an in-progress book, and these talks explore my findings regarding the Guildhall's largely forgotten history as a theatre venue for the town. Booking is now open at the link below. If this is of interest, it would be great to see some local history enthusiasts there!

** "The Forgotten Playhouse: Travelling Players, Renaissance Stratford, and the Making of Shakespeare": 11th October, 2pm, £10.*

** "Schoolboys and Stage Plays: Education, Authority, and Drama in Stratford-upon-Avon's Guildhall": 25th October, 2pm, £10.*

Booking: https://www.shakespearesschoolroom.org/news/view/programme-of-autumn-talks-reveals-the-dramatic-history-of-shakespeares-schoolroom-guildhall-october-11-25-2026

I am also doing a related talk at St. Mary's Guildhall in Coventry in November, which I know is a little further afield, but which I thought could also be of interest:

** "Plague and Performance: Travelling Theatre and Renaissance Coventry in a Time of Pestilence": 1st November, 2pm, £15 (£12.50 concessions), ticket includes full entry to the Guildhall. Booking: https://stmarysguildhall-tickets.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows/1173687051*

Research participants needed

An opportunity to take part in some research relevant to people like us. This is genuine research being conducted by an acquaintance of Frances ! See below.

🔍 **Do you have low back pain? Are you aged 60 years or older?**

You may be interested in taking part in a new research study.

We are looking for people aged 60 years and older, living in the UK, who have low back pain, to help us investigate if simple balance and walking tests completed at home, can be done safely and accurately.

Background:

Low back pain is very common and can limit movement, independence, and quality of life. Clinicians and researchers often use walking and balance tests to measure mobility, but these are usually done in clinics, which can be difficult for some people to attend.

This study aims to find out whether such tests can be safely and reliably done at home by older adults with low back pain. If successful, this could make participation in research easier and reduce the need for hospital and clinic visits.

🧠 What's involved?

- A small number of straightforward walking and balance tasks, completed twice about a week apart. The first session includes both an unsupervised test (timed by a friend, relative or carer) and a video-recorded test (video recorded on mobile phone and returned via email or WhatsApp). The second session repeats only the unsupervised tests.
- Online questionnaires - about pain, wellbeing, and how easy the tests were to perform.
- Clear instructions, and a telephone support will be provided.
- Completed in your own home - No travel required
- Time commitment: about one hour
- £20 voucher provided on completion of the study

For more information and to take part please go to:https://qualtrics.kcl.ac.uk/jfe/form/SV_bmEi093zgcZzpz0

Or email: suzanne.p.mcilroy@kcl.ac.uk Mobile and WhatsApp: 07388 853 816

INTEREST GROUPS

We are always interested in expanding the number and range of interest groups that are on offer. If you would be interested in developing a new group, please get in touch with the Secretary via the website group https://u3asites.org.uk/shottery/home .

In the interests of privacy, particularly as this newsletter is published on the website for anyone to access, we don't include surnames or contact details of contributors. If you wish to contact any group leader, please do so through the email address at

the foot of this newsletter or through the contact details for group leaders on your membership card

GROUP REORTS

Local History Group

Another one of our outings, this time to the Church at Temple Grafton. A very pleasant afternoon both in terms of weather and discussion. A bit of a surprise for those of us expecting some sign of the ancient church that may, or may not, be where WS was married. It is one of many claimants. There are no written records but that might be because the original building was razed in the mid Nineteenth Century and replaced by a building which pays homage to the original with its internal woodwork but has some design features similar to St Pancras Station built about the same time.

This was followed by an interesting and informative debriefing session in The Blue Boar.

The next meeting will be at Escape Arts 2.30 Friday9th October. Miles

Rambling Group

Shottery Ramble Group walked on Tuesday 25th August around parts of the Ragley Hall estate. The following weekend was to be an event i the estate grounds named Camper Calling; I'm assuming some sort of music festival, but all we saw were the camping pitches in preparation. I thought this was a new route, but it seems Derek had been there before me, at least in part. It was again a warm day with several tall stiles to climb before we took shelter from the sun for a refreshment stop in Weethley Church. Lunch was taken (and enjoyed I believe) at Hillers Farm Shop Cafe.

On Tuesday 22nd September we walked from Wellesbourne airfield to Loxley and back. Whilst we'd walked most of this route before, I added on a loop to the south to take us up to a full 5 miles. Turns out it was 5.3 miles, including a short but steep climb via an indistinct path and some tall stiles; more than most planned for. Mental note to self; I must recce each route before committing we pensioners to things rather too challenging! Lunch was taken at The Kings Head (but I'm not sure it's worth a return visit).

Remaining Rambles for 2026 are Tuesday 27th October and 24th November.

Lunch Club

Next Lunch Club is on 15th October. Lunch Club is at different venues. Signing-up lists with details are put on the table at the Tuesday monthly meeting, For further information contact David.

Ambling
Amble 8 September Charlecote to Wasperton

After parking in the National Trust Car Park we headed for Wasperton across the fields and woodland. Although a very pleasant walk I must have miscalculated the distance as it was well over four miles! No.one complained but our refreshments at Charlecote Garden Centre was welcomed.

Wasperton is a very small pretty village of only 153 people, at the last census, with a church in them centre. There are many houses with large established gardens which are open to the public as part of the National Gardens Scheme Charity in the summer.

Whilst walking back to Charlecote Judy told us about some World War II history. Apparently on the 25 August 1942 a Wellington Bomber X9929 was returning to Wellesbourne, stalled and crashed into the River Avon killing all crew on board. They are buried together in Stratford upon Avon Cemetery.

I will circulate members of details of the Amble on the 13 October nearer the time.
Margaret.





Gardening Group
Unfortunately September's planned visit to Hidcote to see the art exhibition, 'A Place That Whispers' by Anderson & Low, was cancelled due to conflicting diary appointments for the majority of the group.

Hopefully the autumn colours will be sufficiently interesting for the group to visit Batsford Arboretum Nick

Play Reading
The group are starting to read another play on Friday, 24th of September. This is a comedy by Alan Ayckborn , 'Just Between Ourselves.'

We are a small but lively group who enjoy reading a variety of plays. If you would like to join us to see if you might be interested, please let me know..
We meet on the last Friday afternoon of the month in group member's houses and borrow the playsets from Warwickshire Warwickshire Drama Library..
Lauri Scrivens

Digital Photography



Our summer social took place in September at Hillers, where we enjoyed an excellent lunch before exploring the lovely garden and taking photographs. The roses and dahlias looked magnificent. We were pleased to welcome a new member to our group. We look forward to sharing our photographs at our next meeting, at 2.30 pm on 16 October at Rickie's. Our next theme is Autumn, and we will present our images in November. We hope as many members as possible can attend. To join us, please contact Frances

Book Group

Our book last month was 'Brian' by Jeremy Cooper who is both a writer and art historian. Online reviews describe it as 'a meditation on friendship and the importance of community and a work of film criticism'. It's a book in which nothing much happens – which is perhaps the point. Brian lives a solitary and limited life avoiding all things which might expose his carefully crafted life to risk. Then he joins the BFI (British Film Institute) and becomes part of a group of other film 'buffs' who seem to be similar to himself and begins to develop a sort of friendship. The book mentions a great many films most of us had never heard of. We didn't hate it but would hesitate to recommend it unless you are very interested in film.
The group currently has two spaces. If you are interested contact Kate

Keep Fit

Our small friendly group consists of both males and females of mixed abilities. The class is designed for our age group, with standing and sitting exercises
We meet every Thursday morning from 10 -11am in the Parish Centre at St Andrews Church in Shottery. We have an excellent tutor and really enjoy the exercises and a chat.
At present there is a waiting list, but please contact me If you are interested in finding out more about the group. Jan Jones

Please send items for inclusion in the newsletter or enquiries regarding interest groups or membership leaders via the email
shotteryu3a@gmail.com