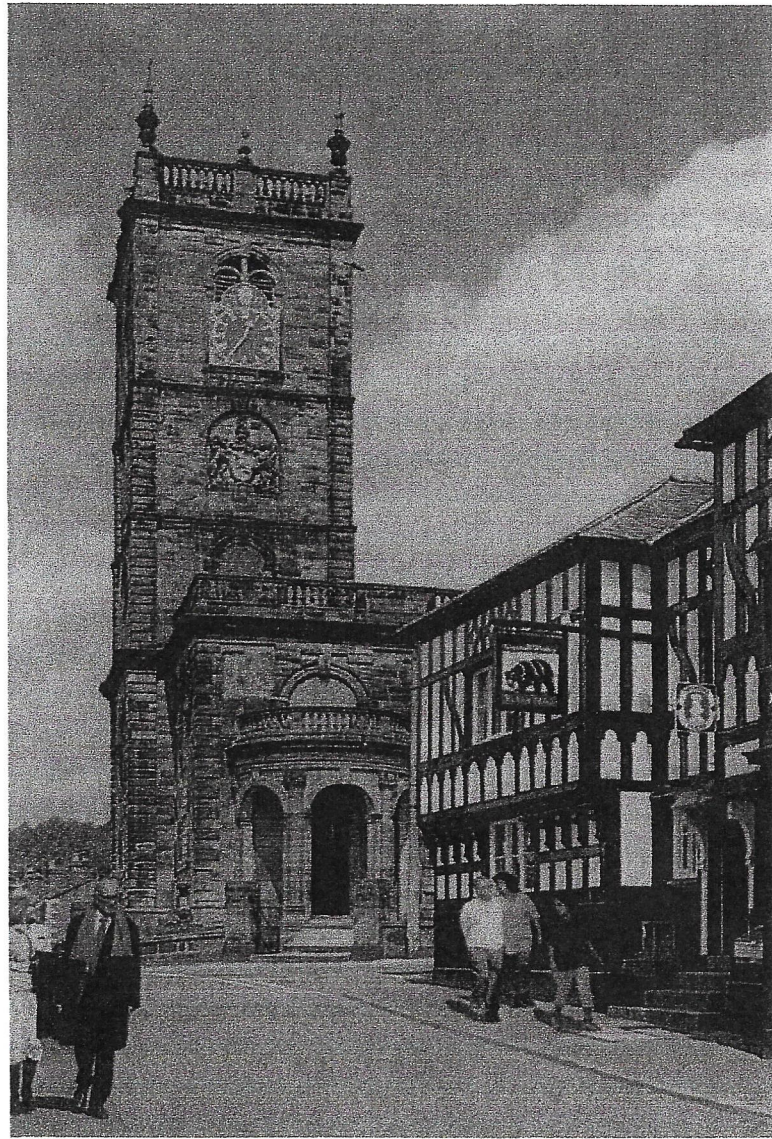


# NEWSLETTER

# U3A



**WHITCHURCH**  
and  
**DISTRICT**  
May 2005

## INTERESTED IN ITALIAN?

Doris Squire and Jenny Hughes are hoping to re-start the Italian group in the near future. If you are interested and want more information please contact Doris

## SOCIAL HISTORY

Sue Tole and Carol Wiggins have been running the Social History group for the last year, but due to changes in circumstances are unable to carry on. We are looking for one or two people to take over this not too onerous a task. If you think you would like to give it a go please ring 01948 664341 or 01948 664102. The Social History group meet in the Spring and decide which places of interest they would like to visit that year. It is hoped that different members of the group will arrange the visits. It usually does not involve organising a coach. If no-one can become the group leader the Social History group will unfortunately have to finish.

### Last year we went to.....

Boscobel Hall  
Nantwich  
Ironbridge  
The Secret Bunker  
Dorford Hall  
Combermere Abbey  
Tatton Park

## SHROPSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

Are you aware that this branch of the U3A is a member of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust? This means that anyone is very welcome to go to any of the meetings held by them. The local Whitchurch branch hold their meetings on the 2nd Tuesday at 7.30pm at the District Club in St Johns Street. May, June and July meetings will be field visits to local places of interest. On May 11th the visit is to Whixall, Fenn's and Bettisfield Mosses 7.30pm. If you wish to go please turn up at the English Nature Reserve Base at the Manor House, Moss Lane, Whixall. Speak to Anne Monie on Monday morning or ring Malcolm Monie if you have any queries.

## POETRY

The poetry group continues to meet on the second Monday each month at the Bradbury Day Centre. The year started at our January meeting with an account of the life of Lord Byron. A selection of his poetry was then chosen and read by members of the group. Our February meeting fell on St Valentine's Day, so a small selection of appropriate verses were read; this was a diversion from the main theme of 'Wind/Storms'. This title produced a varied and interesting selection of poems from the group. Margaret Cooke read one of her own poems titled, 'The Storms of 2000', which was much enjoyed and it was felt, should be published. The poet chosen for March will be A E Houseman, when his life and works will be presented. Our look at poetry, I hesitate at calling it study, is fairly lighthearted, but we all appear to enjoy the meetings. The remaining programme for 2005 will follow the above format, a poet and his works one month and a chosen theme the alternate month. Our monthly collection amounting to £14 by Christmas, was given to the Bradbury Centre as a mark of our appreciation for the use of the room and facilities.

**Margaret Morgan**

## NOVICE BOWLS

We had a very enjoyable season last year 2004, with an excellent attendance. As a result more tea money was collected and £87.18 was given to our chosen charity, the Severn Hospice, at Bicton Heath, Shrewsbury.

The 'Tony Wade' shield was played for at the end of the season, and was won by Carol Barlow. We started playing again at the end of March and any new members will be made very welcome. We meet at Tilstock Bowlig Club, 2pm on any Saturday, throughout the season.

**Richard Green**

## THANKS

by Carol and Richard

Saturdays would not be the same  
If we didn't go and play our game,  
It is the highlight of the week  
But really not for the meek.  
We throw as far as can be  
And wait to hear the sound of glee.  
Winning or losing does not matter  
Because we all enjoy the chatter.  
Our reward is tea and biscuits  
So pleased we came to play and risk it.

## TENTH ANNIVERSARY

As most of you are aware, this is our 10th anniversary year. To celebrate this event we invited the Mayor, Marion Winwood, to plant a tree for us in Victoria Park.

So on Monday, March 8th, we had a cake, made by our Chairman, Margaret Cooke, (and very good it was too!) and we were joined by the mayor, Marion Winwood.

Afterwards we adjourned to the Jubilee Park where the Mayor planted our 10th Anniversary tree, a 'Cedrus Atlantica Glauca'.



On Monday, March 17th, for three weeks, we had an exhibition in the Library. This exhibition showed the activities within our branch of the U3A to members of the public who might not know of the U3A in Whitchurch and might be interested to join us.

Thank you to all those members and groups who made such a marvellous effort to make this display so varied and interesting. Also to those who volunteered to man the exhibition.

## CRAFT SWAP

Bring along any craft odds and ends you can spare to a SWAP at our meeting on Monday, June 20th 2005. Anything that is left at the end of the morning will be taken to the Hospice.

## QUESTIONAIRES

It is hoped that as many people as possible will find their way to filling in the questionnaires accompanying this newsletter.

Questionnaires need to be handed in to the Monday morning meeting on May 9th. This is rather short notice but the results have to be collated by the committee and then sent in to The Third Age Trust by the end of the month.

## A NEW U3A IN WELSHPOOL

I was asked to attend an inaugural meeting being held in Welshpool on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March that was aimed at setting up a U3A there. This was the result of some hard work by Sylvia Sparrow, Chairman of Oswestry U3A.

When Geoff and I arrived on a bitterly cold morning, just after 10 o'clock, we could not have foreseen the numbers that would eventually arrive. The only person in the room was Sylvia.

However by 10.30 there must have been at least sixty people there, all eager to hear about the University of the Third Age. There were several speakers who spoke about the philosophy of the U3A, the U3A in Wales and setting up and leading groups. I spoke on the role of the region and about the benefit of working co-operatively with other U3As. Then there was an opportunity to ask questions.

People were requested to indicate by a show of hands whether they wanted a U3A in Welshpool. There was a massive response and forms were distributed which asked people whether they would be interested in being members of a steering committee, whether they would be prepared to lead a group, and what activity groups they would like to see set up.

Eleven people volunteered themselves for the steering committee and several indicated that they would be willing to lead a group. The new U3A will meet for the first time on the 6<sup>th</sup> April when they will choose a name for themselves, set up the committee and begin to plan the groups.

As we celebrate our tenth anniversary it seems appropriate to wish them well for the future. Good luck Welshpool.

Mary Tither

## PIGGING OUT ON PORK?

Will you be joining us for a hog roast this Summer? Write this date in your diaries, 13th July, 2005. The committee has decided that maybe we should try this instead of our annual barbeque, just for a change. There will of course, be a vegetarian option, which we will cook on a separate barbeque. I have contacted the farmer, who will bring the whole roasted hog on a hot trailer and this will be carved and served by him in a bap and include apple sauce and or mustard. Seconds and even thirds will be readily available as the whole hog belongs to the buyer, ie, us. Additional to this will be a variety of salads and sweets, which will be prepared by members who will be reimbursed for any costs incurred: so volunteers please! It would be great to get a good turnout for this event as the more we get, the cheaper the individual cost will be and anyway, we all have a great time at this annual event.

See you there!!!! Let's go the whole hog!!!!!!

**Margaret Cooke**

*at Podestà's - Y.T.E. Whiz all*

## ROAST PEPPER AND ONION TART

I was asked for this recipe just recently as someone remembered having it at our Games day. So here it is and very simple it is too.

2 large red onions peeled and cut into wedges  
 2 large red peppers, deseeded and cut into chunks  
 Olive oil for drizzling  
 1 pkt. ready rolled puffed pastry  
 Fresh basil leaves to garnish  
**Oven 200C 400F, gas mark 6**

1. Spread the vegetables over two baking sheets and drizzle with olive oil
2. Bake for 15-20 mins until just tender and slightly charred; allow to cool
3. Raise the oven temp. to 220C 425F, mark 7
4. Place the vegetables in a 9 inch flan dish and cover with puff pastry, trimming off the corners and tucking in the edges
5. Bake for 15-20 mins until the pastry is well risen and golden brown
6. Using oven gloves, place a warm serving dish over the flan dish and quickly turn it over
7. Lift off the flan dish to reveal the tart and garnish with the basil leaves.

**Margaret Cooke**

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## ANNIVERSARY CAKE

Have you ever thought how far the ingredients have travelled, before they become incorporated into our Christmas or birthday cakes? Neither did I, until very recently, when I happened to notice that the sultanas I was using came from Australia. This sent me off on a trail around the world, in search of the origins of the ingredients I was about to use, in the preparation of our 10th anniversary cake, and made me realise how much we take for granted in our every day lives. So here, for those of you who were unable to attend our tree planting celebration on the 7th March, is the breakdown, or the history/geography of our celebration cake;

Ingredient	Country of origin	Mileage
Sultanas	Australia	10,575
Raisins	California/USA	5,575
Butter	New Zealand	12,000
Cherries	France	215
Brandy	France	215
Currants	Greece	1,500
Oranges	Spain	774
Lemons	Spain	774
Brown Sugar	Mauritius	5,642
Almonds	Georgia/USA	4,000
Allspice	West Indies	3,000
Nutmeg	Molucca islands*	11,000
Cinnamon	Zanzibar	5,000
Ginger	Sri Lanka	7,500
Eggs	Great Britain	20
Flour	Great Britain	35
Sugar	Great Britain	50
* this one really got me thinking		
Total approximate distance.....		67,875 miles

Does anyone else feel like starting a geography group?

**Margaret Cooke**

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## CREATIVE WRITING

There are only just a few of us  
 We could really do with more  
 It's amazing the things folk write about  
 Stories by the score

Do come along and join us  
 It really is great fun  
 You don't need to be a genius  
 Just an everyday woman or man

Two hours out of a fortnight  
 That isn't much time to spare  
 You'll be surprised at what pleasure it gives you  
 Come along, try it out,  
 See you there?

**Edna Skidmore**

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## TEN YEARS ON

When Geoff and I moved to Shropshire in November 1994 I had made up my mind that we would seek out a University of the Third Age. I had come across this organisation when I was working as a consultant for Harrow Education Authority and I had been impressed by their liveliness and enthusiasm and I thought it would be just what we needed to help us settle in our new home and meet like-minded people.

In January 1995 I wrote to the Third Age Trust and asked them for the name of the nearest U3A which at that time was Shrewsbury. We were thinking of going to Shrewsbury when I saw a small paragraph in the Shropshire Star announcing a meeting in Whitchurch for those people who were interested in joining a new U3A. The meeting was to be held at Sir John Talbot School.

So that is how it all began! We went along to the meeting, very unsure of what to expect and found around fifty other interested people. A steering committee had been set up. Although Bill Cambridge had been very active in getting the U3A underway and later became our President he took a back seat on that occasion. Brian Edwards was chairman, Joan Letchford was secretary and Norman Baker was treasurer. I think Richard Green and Rosa Ford were committee members and I apologise to anyone I have left out.

We sat at a table with two people who I now know were Margaret Morgan and Enid Whiston. A brief introduction to the U3A was given and members of Oswestry, among them Maureen Beard, told us about Oswestry and the groups they had operating there. I particularly remember the vivid description of kitchen table science.

Then we were asked to sign up if we were interested, filling in a form giving our interests. We were told the next meeting would be on 6<sup>th</sup> March at the Anchor Hotel in Pepper Street when we would attempt to set up groups. The annual subscription would be £5 for a couple and £3 single plus 25p to be paid at every meeting attended.

The first groups were gardening, computing and making music. On the 25<sup>th</sup> April I took my first history group at the home of Meriel and Eric Hudson. It seems like only yesterday!

**Mary Tither**

The following should be read aloud for the best effect!

1. A vulture boards an airplane carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at him and says, "I'm sorry, sir, only one carrion allowed per passenger."
2. Two fish swim into a concrete wall. The one turns to the other and says, "Dam!"
3. Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it too.
4. Two hydrogen atoms meet. One says "I've lost my electron." The other says "Are you sure?" The first replies "Yes, I'm positive."
5. Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal? His goal: transcendental medication.
6. A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a American hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" They asked, as they moved off. "Because", he said, "I can't stand chess-nuts boasting in an open foyer."

**Thanks to David Gerty**

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## WISE WORDS

"Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."

*Mark Twain*

"Happiness is nothing more than good health and a bad memory."

*Albert Schweitzer*

"There is nothing on this earth more to be prized than true friendship."

*St Thomas Aquinas*

"There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered."

*Nelson Mandela*

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## CAN THEY ALL HEAR WHAT I SAY?

I have been following a hearing loss discussion with interest. I remember my grandmother as profoundly deaf ; we spoke to her through a little box and she wore headphones. My father suffered from deafness from middle age but most of the time he wouldn't wear his hearing aid. And my brother-in-law went totally deaf at the age of ten after an illness. That did not stop him being a very good Rugby player but swimming was his forte. Other than when he was engaged in either of these sports he permanently wore a more sophisticated hearing aid but was wont to switch it off in noisy surroundings . When I was associated with Adult Learning, one of the Diploma programmes was for Training Managers. As part of their learning about the legislation on Disability we also had a discussion on practical issues. The " handout" below was intended specifically for the student training managers but we later gave it to all our outside speakers , as well as the Course tutors.

As my personal document, there is no copyright so anyone is welcome to use any part of it

### Some Facts

- a.. One in ten people have some hearing loss
- b.. Older people are more likely to have some hearing loss
- c.. Young people, including students also may have hearing loss
- d.. In any group or audience there are likely to be some people with hearing loss
- e.. Poor hearing = loss of clear hearing
- f.. People with poor hearing are likely to lip read to help them see what a speaker is saying
- g.. People with hearing loss need to see the speaker's face, especially the mouth
- h.. Exaggerated mouth movements and shouting are counter-productive
- i.. People with hearing loss take a little longer to assimilate what is said to them
- j.. People with hearing loss find it more difficult to hear against a background of noises an/or music

### Some suggestions

- a.. Speak clearly and steadily
- b.. Speak a little more slowly than in one-to-one talking
- c.. Pause at the end of a sentence
- d.. Look at your audience while you are speaking

- e.. Project voice to the back row and sides
- f.. Don't drop your voice on the last few words of a sentence
- g.. Don't look down while you are speaking
- h.. Don't look away from your audience while you are speaker
- i.. Don't cover your mouth while you are speaking
- j.. Don't "um" or "er".

**Can't remember who gave this to me, loss of memory can also be a problem!**

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## DECOUPAGE GROUP

The Decoupage Group has room for others to join us at the Bradbury Centre at 2.00pm on the second Wednesday of each month. If you are interested, please contact:

**Grace Cunliffe 01948 880485**

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## SPEAKERS FOR 2005

MAY	Mike Ralph Digital Cameras
JUNE	David Asprey Market Drayton U3A Member
JULY	Judith Clayton The Edward German Festival
AUGUST	NO SPEAKER
SEPTEMBER	Lynne Munden Shangai and the Yangtze Gorges
OCTOBER	Shropshire Radio Gardening Programme (TBC)
NOVEMBER	Bryan Gresty Cheese Making by Belton Cheeses
DECEMBER	NO SPEAKER

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Next Newsletter due in September. When you come back from your holidays and outings during the Summer, please remember there are other members who would love to hear of your experiences. Any items gladly received anytime within the next 2-3 months. **The Editor**

## A HOLIDAY?

What a daft idea going on holiday in March on a so called winter holiday and not being interested in winter sports at our age. We have been on a skiing holiday before and all I achieved was to see what a large hole I can make when I fall down in the snow. Well this had been advertised as a winter holiday so we knew what would be



expected; but it was March, surely spring had arrived. But after two days travelling in the coach we arrive in the Tyrol to find everything covered in snow. Did we expect this really? Last time we were in Austria it was all sunshine and warmth and we had looked forward to being there again. Well it looked very pretty, the snow was piled everywhere. The pictures came out very well with the contrast between the brilliant white snow and the Swiss style buildings which dotted the landscape. Arriving in the evening, it was cold and we began to wonder whether we had made a mistake.

When the next day dawned and we went off on the first trip to Innsbruck we began to feel more relaxed and we enjoyed the scenes and were not too cold. As the week wore on it did begin to feel like spring. The snow was disappearing and roofs which we had not seen were beginning to appear. The scenery changed. In fact in a day or two Norah and I were able to strip and sunbathe one afternoon very comfortably. This was more like it! In fact it was a very enjoyable holiday lasting a week with visits to a number of interesting places with a courier who really knew her stuff. Some people in the party did go sledging but we left them to it. However, we did risk a ride on a cable car up the side of a mountain where we found the snow to be deep and slippery. There was a café at the top advertising Gluvine. A lovely place to have some, but it had not opened yet and we never did get any on this trip. An interesting part of this cable car ride was seeing the various animal tracks in the otherwise undisturbed snow beneath us. Whilst we recognized the deer marks, there were a surprising other range of tracks which we did not know.

Before we got to Austria, we spent the night in France at a hotel near Strasbourg. To get there from Calais we had traveled in Belgium and Luxembourg before getting back into France. It puzzled us why we should do that instead of heading straight down in France and then it dawned on us. That way we avoided the tolls on the motorways and also Luxembourg sells the cheapest motor fuel in Europe and that is where the Coach tank was filled up. On the return journey just enough fuel was taken on board to get us back into Luxembourg again.

It was worth taking this winter coach tour even though it was in contrast to our usual holiday at this time of year when we normally head for somewhere with more reliable and expected warm sunshine. But it will be assured sunshine next time!

**Lawrence Walls March 2005**

## NOTES FROM THE NATURALISTS

We've had some interesting trips recently. In November we visited Parkgate to join an organised high tide bird watch. This was a good outing because it was lead by a warden from the bird reserve and he knew what there was to be seen. Our sightings were too numerous to catalogue but here are a few: Black tailed godwit, Little egret, Peregrine falcon and Skylark. Afterwards we had lunch, a slide show and a talk about the area.

In February, on a cold bright day, we went to Bickerton Hill. Nature was still sleeping so we didn't see much on the walk but it did give us a chance to see how to identify trees in winter, mainly Silver birch and very young oak trees in this area. The walk in such a serene setting was wonderful. Afterwards we had lunch at the 'Coppermine'.

In March, we went to Brown Moss. It was cool and cloudy with a penetrating wind so most of us were wrapped up like mummies. We noted the first signs of Spring, honeysuckle was just coming into leaf and the oak and beech had big buds ready to burst forth. Numerous Canada geese were congregated and about a dozen mallard came to greet us as we parked our cars, no doubt expecting food. Hoof fungus was widespread on the birches in the woodland. Again lunch was had at the 'Coppermine'.

Our April trip was to Corbet Wood at Grinshill. Despite the forecast of ongoing cold weather with frequent torrential downpours, we had a wonderful morning of warm sunshine. For those of you not familiar with this area, it's a lovely walk round the hill. Spring had truly arrived and in the shelter of a stone wall, just off the path, we watched as a Peacock butterfly made a foray amongst the Comfrey and Greater Stitchwort. She shared the area with several Tortoiseshell butterflies and further along we saw a Brimstone butterfly, by the time we reached the end of the track we had seen half a dozen Brimstones.

The hedgerows were alive with Pennywort, Greater stitchwort, Celandines, Wood sorrel and sweet violets. Bumble bees were out in force. I recently heard the bumble bee described as a flying 'teddy bear' and everytime I see one now it makes me smile. From the woods we heard the 'chack' of the Great spotted woodpecker and the background sound of birdsong was the loudest we had heard for a long time. Blue and Great tits were busy as were Chaffinches. We heard a Willow warbler, a Chiff chaff and the shrill call of Wrens. Jackdaws and Rooks were numerous at several locations and a Sparrowhawk zoomed past. On a tree below the

path we had a good sighting of a Nuthatch. Wildflowers were in abundance. We saw Cowslips, Borage, Forgetmenots, Shepherds purse and a lot more. It was a lovely mornings forage. Then we had lunch at the Transport cafe by the Raven Hotel!!!

Jill Waugh

### Footnote

We started out as birdwatchers but as everyone who has done birdwatching will tell you, it is difficult to separate one aspect of nature from another, they are interlinked and anyway it is much more satisfying to embrace them as a whole.

So, we are the Naturalists.

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## READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY?

One thing I enjoy about the Book Group is the variety of books we are introduced to over the course of a year. I have to admit that I probably would not have chosen some if left to myself, put off perhaps by the lurid cover or even the blurb on the back.

However, the Book Group gives me no choice, although of course, if I really do not like the book after giving it a try I do not have to finish it. So far, I have only come across two that I could not read to the end.

The books are very varied. For example, this year we have read such widely differing books as Daphne du Maurier's, 'The House on the Strand', 'Disgrace', by J.M. Coetzee, 'Mortal Causes' by Ian Rankin and "Forty Words for Sorrow" by Giles Blunt. Last month was 'Anna of the Five Towns' by Arnold Bennett and this month we are reading 'Spies' by Michael Frayn.

In addition to being introduced to a wide variety of writers, styles and themes it is interesting to see how differently people react to the same book. You find that the book you love is hated by somebody else and vice versa. Sometimes of course, we all dislike the same book or all thoroughly enjoy it and the discussions afterwards can range widely. Elsie, our group co-ordinator, tries hard to keep us in order.

So if you enjoy reading and a good discussion come and join us on the first Thursday of each month at 2.00 p.m. at the Bradbury Centre. I am sure you will enjoy it too.

Mary Tither

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GROUP	DAY & TIME	VENUE	CONTACT
Art	Tuesday weekly 10.30-1.01	10.00-1.01	Margaret Cooke
Art Appreciation	Monday week 1 2.00pm		Valerie Dodson
Book group	Thursday week 1 2.00pm	Bradbury Centre	Elsie Warburton
Bridge	Tuesday weekly 2.00pm		Sue Tole
Canasta	Tuesday weeks 2 & 4 2.00pm		Mary Sutkowski
Chess	Friday weekly 2.00pm		Bob Stirling
Concert visits	As announced		Anne Monie
Country Dancing*	Every 2nd Thurs/Friday, 10.30	Scout Hut, M. D.	Mary Tither
Crafts	Wednesday week 4 2.00pm	Bradbury	Marjorie Monbiot
Creative writing	Friday alternate weeks 10.30	St John's	Jill Waugh
Decoupage	Wednesday week 2 2.00pm		Grace Cunliffe
French conversation	Friday week 2 & 4 10.00		Trevor Davies
Gardening	Thursday week 3		Meriel Hudson
Line Dancing	Alternates with Country Dancing	Scout Hut M.D	David Gerty
Making music	Wednesday week 3 2.00	Wistanswick	Geoff Tither
Music appreciation	Wednesday week 3 - 7.30	Wem	Meriel Hudson
Needlecraft	Monday alternate weeks pm		Betty Thom
Novice bowls	Saturday March-October 2.00	Tilstock	Richard Green
Play reading	Wednesday week 4, 10.00		Edna Skidmore
Poetry	Monday week 2 2.00pm	Bradbury Centre	Margaret Morgan
Scrabble	Thursday week 3 2.00pm		Doris Ritchie
Singing for Fun*	Monday week 3 2.00 pm	Wistanswick	Geoff Tither
Social History	Thursday week 4	St John's	Sue Tole
Spanish Conversation	Wednesday week 3 10.30 am	Wem	Rhoda Brooker
Storytelling Group	Wednesday week 1 10.00	St John's	David Gerty
The Amblers	Thursday week 1 10.30		Carol Wiggins
The Naturalists	Tuesday week 3 a.m.		Rosa Ford
Theatre visits	As announced		Edna Skidmore
Victorian Values?	Wednesday week 3 10.30	Wem	Mary Tither
Walking & lunch club	Thursday week 2 & 4 10.15	Kwiksave	Owen Darlington

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Groups' Co-ordinator: Mary Tither

\* Held in conjunction with M.Drayton U3A

If there are any changes to the list please contact me so it can be updated.