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Chairman's Welcome

Hello and welcome to this month's Newsletter.

Being August, I'm sure many of you are away on holiday enjoying even more sunshine. However, with the wonders of the internet, you can receive your Newsletter on your smart phones, tablets and laptops and enjoy a little piece of Thrapston, wherever you are.

With the Plaza closed while a new kitchen and bar are installed, there will not be a monthly meeting in August. However, there will be our annual BBQ at the Thrapston Sailing Club and I'm looking forward to meeting many of you there. This event is now totally sold out, thanks to the valiant efforts of the social committee.

I have received a number of flyers for national events organised for U3A members.

- U3A Explores Science at the Royal Institute on 5 October.
- Exploring Elgar, at the Elgar Birthplace Museum, Worcester, on 7 October.
- What Makes Great Theatre? A workshop day at the Piccadilly Theatre, on 4 November.
- Exploring Portraiture at the National Gallery, 26 November.

In addition there are details of an ATG Theatre card for U3A members.¹

Because there won't be a chance to exhibit these leaflets at a monthly meeting, I have asked the Editor to include them in this Newsletter.

I once more appeal for a volunteer to take up the roll of Secretary on the Committee.

The rise and rise of Thrapston's U3A has been an amazing success story, due to the selfless efforts of our past and present committees. Help us to maintain that momentum and take this wonderful organisation on to ever greater heights. If you want to be part of the success story, come and join. Please call me on 01832 735797, or any committee member. Details are on the web site.

Enjoy your Newsletter.

Frank Boydell

1 - See pages 7 to 12 for copies.

General Meeting Friday 17 July

Ian Keable (right) gave an erudite, informative and very entertaining account of the life and works of the 18th century cartoonist, James Gillray. We learnt that he was the successor to Hogarth and by showing cartoons from both, Ian was able to explain how their approaches differed. He also pointed out that it was only with the weakening of the power of the King and the arrival of our first Prime Minister, William Pitt, that satirical cartoons began to be produced. He suggested that anyone who drew cartoons satirising Henry VIII, for example, might wonder where his head would end up.



Pitt, King George III, Sheridan (the playwright and impresario) were all targets of Gillray's cartoons in which we saw scenes full of detail, unlike modern cartoons which make a single point. Gillray continued to be a thorn in the side of the establishment until he was incapacitated by mental disorder in his later years; suffering possibly with bipolar disorder, as King George may also have done. As an aside we learnt the (maybe apocryphal) tale that when Alan Bennett's play, *The Madness of George III*, was turned into a film it was re-titled,



The Madness of King George, for American audiences for fear that they would feel they had missed *The Madness of George I and II*.

Forthcoming Events

Branch meetings start at 10.30am on the third Friday of each month at the Thrapston Plaza unless stated otherwise. Doors open at 10.00am when tea/coffee and biscuits are served.

- 21 August Thrapston and District U3A Barbecue. 11.30am to 4.30pm with food served from 12.30pm. Now fully booked.
- 18 Sept. Branch Meeting - **Derek R Harris, Up the Cut, the Story of the Development of England's Canal System in Tales and Songs.**
- 16 October Branch Meeting - **Polly Feeley, Music and Memories from a 1950s Childhood.**
- December **Thursford Spectacular Christmas Show** is fully booked. Iris will email the arrangements for those who have booked at a later date.
- 6 January **Aladdin.** A pantomime matinee at Milton Keynes. Tickets at £25 and bookings and payments at the barbecue or at the September general meeting.
- 16 March **Chicago.** A matinee performance at Milton Keynes

For **Theatre Trips** you may add your name to the lists at the Branch Meetings.

Pauline Dennison Tel: 01832 723724

The U3A holds several national events which may be of interest to you. Please check the U3A website (www.u3a.org.uk) at the events and competitions page of the Members' Area Homepage.

Places-2-Go

Punting on the Cam is our next adventure. On Sunday 23 August 16 I have booked lunch and then at 2pm we will set sail for some chauffeured punting through the backs. All very exciting.

This is an open group and anyone can take part as long as they are a member of Thrapston U3A, so contact me asap. maddie.places2go@gmail.com 26 Fair Lane, Thrapston. Phone Maddie on 01832-734510 or 07961-919740 for further information.

- All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.
- How long a minute is, depends on what side of the bathroom door you're on.
- Isn't having a smoking section in a restaurant like having a peeing section in a swimming pool?
- When I was young, I used to go skinny dipping. Now I just go chunky dunking.

Group Leaders' Reports

Many groups take a break during the summer. This is the perfect time to look at current groups. Is there something that you would like to do that is not there? Maybe you are thinking of starting a group and would like some advice.

Whatever is on your mind concerning the groups I can always be contacted by email at groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com or phone 01832 720262.

Enjoy the BBQ and the entertainment that is being provided by the Ukulele Group and the Live Music Group. (Please don't throw tomatoes!)

Hopefully groups will run at full strength next month

Marion Healey, Groups' Co-ordinator

Crochet - Our first meeting was fun! We will meet again on Tuesday 15 September from 2 to 4pm, at 45 Market Road, Thrapston when we will have Caroline and Wendy with us again to spur us on. If you missed the first meeting do come along, but ring me first on 01832 733436 so I can tell you what to bring. Thereafter, if there is enough interest, we will meet on the first Monday each month from 2 to 4pm. Guinette Davies

Local History Walks - Titchmarsh 25 August. This will be the second Titchmarsh walk with the same leader. Meet either at the Thrapston Co-op car park at 10:15am or outside the Titchmarsh village shop at 10:30am. Please let me know if you would like a lift to Titchmarsh. The cost will be £2 with a maximum 20 walkers. Brenda 730225

Military History – The group received a very interesting and informative talk by Gerry Martin on the Korean War. Gerry supplied us with hitherto unknown (to most of the group) anecdotes on the progress of the war.

There is no meeting in August when the members have a well-earned break.

In September the Group will resume with a talk by David Turner on the First Boer War.

Photography Group – The Group looked at the results of the photographic expedition to Hamerton Zoo in July. Some very fine photographs were taken of a variety of subjects. The quality of the photographs shows that members are getting a better understanding of their cameras and the principles of composition and



Continued on page 6

Homerton Zoo

Some of the many photographs taken by the photographic group during their recent visit.



depth of field and more esoteric matters such as perspective. Some of the photographs, kindly provided by Linda are included in this newsletter. They took an opportunity to review activities and the administration and organisation of the group.

Places-2-Go - On Friday 26 July, Places-2-Go group held their first event, playing petanque at the White Lion in Geddington with an early evening meal after. It was great fun and Barry, a former England player, was there to chivvy us along in all the (nearly) right moves! We are planning another game in September, at a different location perhaps?

Punting on the Cam is our next adventure. On Sunday 23 August 16 have booked lunch and then at 2pm we will set sail for some chauffeured punting through the backs, all very exciting. We hope to take photos of this and all future adventures.

This is an open group and anyone can take part as long as they are a member of Thrapston U3A, so contact me asap. if you would like to play petanque in September. No date as yet but probably a Friday afternoon with early evening meal. Contact phone 01832 734510 or maddie.places2go@gmail.com



Thrapston and District U3A Committee

Chair: Frank Boydell

Treasurer: Tricia James

Group Co-ordinator: Marion Healey

Publicity: Ann Carter

Social Media: Rachel Thompson

Website: Neil Busby

Vice-Chair: Michelle Collison

Secretary: To be advised

Membership: Madeline Fisher

Speaker Seeker: Brian Elliott

Editor: Parry Jones

Member: Vacant

This newsletter is published on behalf of the committee of the Thrapston & District U3A. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, or of the committee of the Thrapston & District U3A or of the U3A Trust.

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EXPLORING ELGAR

"Sir Edward Elgar & His Interpreters"

at The Elgar Birthplace Museum

Crown East Lane, Lower Broadheath, Worcester WR2 6RH

on Wednesday 7th October 2015

11am to 3.45pm

Using the unique collections held at the Elgar Birthplace Museum, the 2015 U3A Elgar Day will include presentations on Elgar's relationship with and the legacy left by his interpreters, such as those great musical knights Adrian Boult, Thomas Beecham and John Barbirolli. There will also be a feature on the recipients of the Elgar Medal, the most recent of whom, Daniel Barenboim, was presented with his award after a concert at the Royal Festival Hall in April this year.

- 1.00am Welcome refreshments & brief video introduction to Elgar & the Birthplace Museum
1.30am Presentation by **Chris Bennett, Museum Supervisor.**
12.30pm Sandwich lunch & refreshments. Time to explore Elgar's Birthplace Cottage & Garden.
2.00pm Presentation by **Wendy Hill, Museum Guide and member of Ledbury U3A.**
3.00pm Q & A session. Refreshments
3.30pm 'Finale' The Museum's choice of pieces to send you on your way
The event ends at 3.45pm. The Museum etc will remain open until 5.00pm.

£17.00 per person including lunch & refreshments

Places are limited to 40. There are only 25 parking spaces at the Museum which is in a rural location and tickets for this event will be issued on a first-come first-served basis according to parking availability. We therefore recommend car sharing.

Should you be unable to attend, we cannot refund ticket money but may be able to offer your place to another U3A member if there is a waiting list.

To The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1QE. Please send me 1 / 2 ticket (s) for **Exploring Elgar on Wednesday 7th October.** I enclose a cheque for £17 / £34 payable to the Third Age Trust with s.a.e.

Name U3A

*An exclusive study day for U3A members at
The Sainsbury Wing Theatre, the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC1*

***“Face Value” – Exploring Portraiture
The National Gallery Collection
Thursday 26th November 2015 11am – 3.30pm***



Edgar Degas *Mélène Rosart in her Father's Study* 1886 © The National Gallery, London

Following the success of our joint ventures studying Renaissance paintings in the National Gallery, the National Gallery is delighted to be hosting another U3A study day to explore the many facets of portraiture. “Face Value” will focus upon portraits and self-portraits in the National Gallery’s collection.

The meeting will introduce key themes and concepts, functions, chronology and portraiture painting techniques. The day will provide you with a well-rounded experience of various and fascinating aspects of portraiture.

- Speakers include:** Gill Hart (Head of Education at the National Gallery) *Functions of Portraiture*
Dr Simon Lee (University of Reading) *Goya's portraits*
Chris Riopelle (Curator of post 1800 paintings at the National Gallery) *Degas's Portraits*
- To be confirmed:** speaker on 18th and early 19th century French artists such as *Vigée le Brun and Ingres*
speaker on portraiture painting techniques.

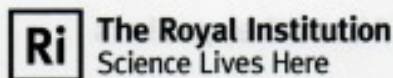
Tickets: £18.00 per person (lunches & refreshments not provided). **Tickets will be issued on a first come first served basis, maximum of 2 tickets per applicant.** Should you be unable to attend, we cannot refund ticket money but may be able to offer your place to another U3A member if there is a waiting list. Any queries to the U3A National Office: 020 8466 6139. To book your place, visit the events page in the Members' Area of the national website, www.u3a.org.uk, where you can book and pay online, or apply in writing to The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley BR1 1Q using the form below, enclosing a s.a.e. and cheque made payable to the Third Age Trust.

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To: The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1QE. I enclose a cheque for £18 / £36 and s.a.e.
Please send me 1 / 2 ticket(s) (delete as appropriate) for **“Face Value” Exploring Portraiture at the National Gallery on Thursday 26th November 2015 11am – 3.30pm.**

Name U3A

U3A Explores Science at the Ri

Monday 5 October at the Royal Institution of Great Britain
21 Albemarle Street, London W1S 4BS



Programme

- 1.30pm Audience arrives
2.00pm Introduction by the Chairman of The Third Age Trust, who will act as chair for the afternoon.
- 2.05pm **Fay Dowker – Inner Space, Outer Space: 100 years of General Relativity**
This year, 2015, we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the theory of gravity we call General Relativity, or GR for short. In the intervening years, GR has been very successful in explaining the physics of Outer Space, of the solar system, of galaxies and of the whole universe on the largest scales that we can observe. Fay will give an account of some of the underlying concepts of General Relativity that emphasises their intuitive aspects, appealing to the Inner Space of our conscious perceptions to argue that GR is not just more scientifically accurate but more in tune with our intimate experience than its predecessor theory, Newtonian Gravity. It leaves one puzzle unsolved however: how to explain our experience of the passage of time.
- 2.40pm Question and answer session (10 minutes).
- 2.50pm **Judith Mank – The evolution of males and females**
Males and females in many species are often quite different from one another. The sex of an individual can have profound effects on how an organism behaves, how it looks, how it lives and, in some cases, even how it dies. These differences are the product of different evolutionary forces acting on males and females, sometimes creating substantial conflicts between the sexes. In this talk, I'll give a quick tour of how sex is genetically programmed and how sex differences evolve.
- 3.25pm Question and answer session (10 minutes).
- 3.35pm Tea and coffee (35 minutes)
- 4.10pm **Nick Hawes – I, for one, welcome our new robot overlords**
It's inevitable, isn't it? One day robots will take over the world, either through some kind of violent rebellion, or through the back door – by taking all our jobs. Aren't we throwing caution to the wind by ignoring this threat? Well, by explaining some of the basic principles behind artificial intelligence and robotics, Nick Hawes will try to convince you that all those science fiction writers are wrong, and whilst robots will have a large part to play in our future, you don't need to worry about the effect they'll have on our existence.
- 4.45pm Question and answer session.
4.55pm Close of meeting.

Places are limited. Admission is by ticket only at £20 each including refreshments.
We cannot give refunds but may be able to offer your ticket to any waiting list if you are unable to attend.
Applications can be sent immediately.

To book a place:

Visit the events page of the Members' Area of the national website, www.u3a.org.uk, where

Exclusive ATG Theatre Card Offer for U3A Members!



If you love theatre and live entertainment as much as we do, you'll love ATG Theatre Card and we have an exclusive offer for U3A members! You can purchase an ATG Theatre Card for £25 – a saving of £10 off our standard membership price (£35).

£25 buys you a whole year of these great benefits;

- Priority – book your favourite seats, first!
- Offers – with savings of up to £10 off and even some half price!
- No fees* - no extras to pay on most productions.
- Exchange your tickets for free.*
- Great restaurant and attraction offers.
- Access to ATG Theatre Card workshop offerings – see below.



You can use your Card at any Ambassador Theatre Group theatre – there are 38 across the UK.

To purchase your U3A ATG Theatre Card for £25 either;

Go to: www.u3a.org.uk and log in to Offers in the Members' Area OR

Visit: Your nearest ATG Theatre Box Office (visit atgtickets.com to find your nearest venue) and take this advert with you.

West End Creative Learning

Inspiring passion in theatre

Once you are a member of our Theatre Card scheme you will receive details of all our courses working with West End Directors, Actors and industry experts, in our beautiful West End Theatres. Sample of workshops for 2015 below:

Pinter with Harry Burton – 1 day course

Monday 21st September 2015

Max 26 participants

Fortune Theatre

£45.00 (including tea and coffee)



Working alongside Harold Pinter's friend and long-term working associate Harry Burton, the day will begin with a presentation of Harry Burton's documentary film for Channel 4 'Working with Pinter'. You will work on scenes from a Pinter play with Harry and professional Actors to investigate the processes and options when working with Pinter's text.

(Application process available through membership details).

Puppetry taster – 1 day course

Monday 28th September 2015

Max 26 participants

Lyceum Theatre

£45.00 (including tea and coffee)



Jennifer Percy-Edwards is a performer, storyteller, and puppeteer. During the day you'll make a puppet and work in teams to move your creations and create scenes to investigate what makes a successful puppet come to life. Please be aware that this is a very physical course – do please let us know of any mobility issues you may have at the point of application.

(Application process available through membership details).

ATG Theatre Card benefits are subject to availability, please check with the venue or call 0844 871 7633. Members can purchase up to 4 tickets at the Theatre.

A unique 1-day event for U3A members created by ATG West End Creative Learning

What makes great theatre?

A day of workshops & debate at the Piccadilly Theatre
Wednesday 4th November 2015 11.00 to 16.30

Working with a **West End Director**, a **West End Producer**,
 a **West End Theatre Critic** and a **West End Actor**

The Ambassador Theatre Group's West End Creative Learning team have created this one day bespoke event to bring together up to 100 U3A members from across the UK to enjoy the experience of working with a professional Director, Producer, Critic and Actor to participate in a workshop with each followed by a Q&A debating session "What Makes Great Theatre?"

Programme

Wednesday 4th November 2015 – The Piccadilly Theatre, Denman Street, London W1

Time	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
10.45hrs – 11.00 hrs	Registration and welcome to theatre			
11.00hrs – 12.00 hrs	Director	Critic	Producer	Actor
12.00hrs – 13.00 hrs	Actor	Director	Critic	Producer
13.00hrs – 14.00 hrs	Sandwich lunch provided			
14.00hrs – 15.00 hrs	Producer	Actor	Director	Critic
15.00hrs – 16.00 hrs	Critic	Producer	Actor	Director
16.00hrs – 16.30 hrs	Return to the auditorium for Q&A session with practitioners			

Content

U3A participants will be divided into four groups which will rotate between workshops with the West End professionals. Each professional will deliver an hour long workshop about their aspect of the industry and how they strive to create 'great theatre'. At the end of the day all the practitioners will form a panel to debate what makes great theatre – with questions from the U3A members in the auditorium.

Booking notes

The cut-off date for booking is **Wednesday 30th September 2015**

Maximum of 100 places and allocations will be made on a first come, first served basis.
This is a one day event and bookings cannot be made for half a day. Maximum 2 places per booking.

Access: the ability to manage flights of stairs is essential as the workshops will take place throughout the theatre.

If there are insufficient bookings by 30th September, the event will be cancelled and your payment returned. Should you be unable to attend, we cannot refund ticket money unless we are able to offer your place to another U3A member if there is a waiting list. Those placed on a waiting list will be given first refusal to attend any future ATG/U3A events.

Contact Philippa Bassett at U3A National Office with any queries: 020 8466 6139.
Email: philippa@u3a.org.uk

Apply on the form below or online using Paypal (visit u3a.org.uk see Events in the members' area).

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BOOKING FORM for West End 'What Makes Great Theatre?' Wednesday 4th November 2015

To The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1QE.

Please send me 1 / 2 ticket(s) @ £35.00 each (maximum 2 places* per booking).

I enclose a cheque for the amount of £ _____ payable to The Third Age Trust and s.a.e.

Name _____ U3A _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Tel. no. _____ Email _____

Name (2nd participant*) _____ U3A _____

Please advise us of any dietary requirements: