

From our Chairman

Fleet U3A has continued its steady growth during 2006-07, our membership now standing at nearly 1,300 making us the largest U3A in the U3A Thames Valley area. Once again a few more groups have started up, and through the Partnership with Calthorpe Park (see page 2 below) we will introduce the concept of seminars. These will be short-lived events, typically 4 to 6 sessions, and may be repeated during the course of the year as demand requires. We are fortunate in having Colin Philip develop a wonderful web site for us during the year. I encourage you all to visit it at www.fleetu3a.org.uk. It provides news of coming events together with photographs and group information. If you do not have a computer you can access the web site at the Fleet library. Hampshire County Council have short-listed our website as being amongst the best in the county. At our Spring Exhibition we were fortunate that Jean Goodeve, Chairman of the Third Age Trust, was able to join us.

Of all the people who contribute to our success I would like to thank two teams: Don Watson and his team who provide such a wide choice of visits and holidays; and Betty Fox and her team who regale us with refreshments and lunches at various events during the year. Our monthly meetings are becoming increasingly popular with more than 200 members attending regularly. We have raised the cost of group meetings to £1 and intend to keep it at that next year.

Once again I would like to thank our hard working committee, without whom there would be no Fleet U3A. I will miss the fun and the challenge of working with such a dedicated team. I have been on the committee now for ten years and Chairman for three of those. I feel it is now time to hand over to a successor at the AGM in May. It has been a privilege to serve on the committee, and they have asked me to continue to help with the Calthorpe Park School partnership. I will also continue as Secretary to our Regional U3A group that represents 18 U3As in all.

Thank you all for your continuing support and of course I wish Fleet U3A continuing success.

Ian Stephenson

Art Appreciation

The subjects of our six meetings this year have been: Four Modern Welsh Artists, Russian Painters (The Wanderers), The Versatile David Hockney, William Morris, The Art of Sitting, and The Salon des Refuses (popular artists who do not make it into the National Collections). As in previous years we have been fortunate to have had help from members of the Farnham U3A Art History Group in preparing these presentations.

Sheila Williams

Ballroom Dancing

This new Group began meeting weekly in September 2006 with ten couples and several 'singles', and we have averaged 32 people each week for our first two terms. Many of us were absolute beginners, but we can now produce recognisable versions of the Waltz, Foxtrot, Quickstep, Jive, Cha Cha Cha and Rumba, and lately we've begun learning the Paso Doble!

Depending on the demand, we are hoping to offer Year 1 and Year 2 classes from September 2007. Year 1 will be for beginners or those who wish to consolidate this year's work, and Year 2 for those who feel ready to move on from the first year plus experienced newcomers wishing to get back to their earlier standards.

Dancing is very good exercise and we have an enjoyable time with lots of fun, so if you would like to join us come along on **Enrolment Day, 30th August**, or contact me direct by phone on the number given in the Programme.

The group is open to members of both sexes, and I can assure you that you will not be wallflowers as there have always been partners available each week for the singletons.

Iris Martin

Bridge, Beginners and Improvers

Bridge Beginners is a very successful group with 12 to 18 regular participants who will soon be playing this fascinating game at social and, by the end of the year, club level. Since some of them hadn't even played whist before, this is a considerable achievement. We expect that most of them will graduate to the Improvers group next year.

The Improvers group is much larger with 60+ members enrolled, though only 30 or so are usually present at any one time. The intensive sessions provide about an hour of learning followed by practice play and are the mental equivalent of a strenuous workout in the gym. Intended for those graduating from our Beginners group, we also welcome experienced players wishing to take up the game again or to progress further. As it is rare for anyone to be able to attend all our sessions, the course may be repeated as often as needed.

A point worth making is that you do not need a partner to join in the sessions of these groups.

Mike Brown

Calligraphy I and II – The Art of Beautiful Writing

Calligraphy saw a great revival in the 20th century. In this country it was due mainly to the work of Edward Johnston. To begin the requirements are minimal: a layout pad, a dip pen, some nibs of different sizes, ink, pencil, ruler, eraser and you are ready. The most important ingredient is enthusiasm, which our groups have in abundance.

While last year we worked in Foundational, Uncial (3rd century), French Ronde and Gothic Cursive scripts, we have moved on to Italic, Carolingian, Gothic Black Letter and Lombardic capital letters. We have also had fun with Cadets, ornate Gothic capitals with interlacing pen strokes. We work in colour and embellish our work with designs, and recently we have gilded some of our capitals which is quite a tricky process, but very satisfying when all goes well. We also tried our hands at embossing.

The theme for this year's panel is The Sea, which is where we shall try to bring together a selection of these processes, to present a coherent and attractive whole in a beautiful layout. Examples of this will be seen at the April and June exhibitions.

Sheila Williams

Partnership with Calthorpe Park School

For several years we have been able to use Calthorpe Park School's computer laboratory for our various Computer Workshop groups. Now Calthorpe Park has been selected as a Maths and Computing Specialist School by the Government. Part of this development will see the school working in partnership with the local community aiming to spread the imaginative use of ICT. It is under this umbrella that the School has agreed to form a partnership with Fleet U3A.

What will it mean?

- A laptop computer and projector will be available for loan from the school
- IT equipment at the school will be free for U3A to use in our existing Computer Workshops.
- New short seminars can be held in conjunction with the school, subject to tutors being available. These could include:
 - Who do you think you are? (trace your Family History)
 - Enigma (including a visit to Bletchley Park)
 - Beginners Introduction to PCs
 - eBay (Buying and Selling in the internet auctions)
 - Powerpoint (useful for Group Leaders)
 - Maths for Fun (keep your brain active)
 - Introduction to Word (up to being able to write a letter)
 - Using the PC for managing your finances

We will develop this concept further and hope to be able to offer a choice at the

August enrolment. Please note that we are hoping this arrangement will last for another 3 years giving us plenty of time to develop new ideas.

Ian Stephenson

Computer Workshop - Using the Internet

"What's your e-mail address?", "I'll send you the photos of the grandchildren I took today", "You'll find the information on the internet", "You can get it from Amazon". The computer is in the other room and you have been shown how to use it but you have forgotten and there is no instruction book. You feel it would be nice if you could use it but you are too old to start again to learn.

The aim of this group is to make members feel comfortable using the internet. The Group Leader, Colin Philip, ably assisted by Carol Noad, will sit beside you and show you at your own pace and in your own time how to send and receive e-mails, surf the web efficiently, and safely buy goods and services without leaving the house. Indeed we will gently teach you to become computer literate. Unlike a commercial concern there is no pressure, there are no exams, worksheets, or hefty enrolment fees. You just learn what you want, when you want and how you want, in a relaxed gathering of likeminded people.

For those who want to go a little bit further, we will give basic instruction on designing your own website and how to make use of the free web space offered by many Internet Service Providers (ISPs). In a rapidly developing and relatively new means of communication, our members share their experiences to the advantage of all.

Richard Dexter and Colin Philip

Creative Writing

The Creative Writing Group has had another good year with fortnightly attendances holding steady. We have settled into an agreeable routine with each member writing a short story, poem or, occasionally, a thought-provoking essay, then reading it aloud at the next meeting.

The group then offer their comments, otherwise known as 'constructive criticism' and always welcome. In addition, we make a regular contribution with selected readings at the annual Spring Exhibition.

But inevitably and for all sorts of reasons a few drop out, deciding not to continue with the group. They may have found it was not quite what they were expecting, and this is understandable. But how we all wish they would give some indication that they were leaving. This might, include some comments about the group not meeting their needs and expectations which could be useful guidance for the future. I am sure other groups have the same problem. So, if you plan to leave a group, please let us know, so that we can keep the paperwork up to date.

Stewart Knowles

The Year's Events:-

Welcome Coffee Morning

The committee thought it would be a good idea to hold a coffee morning for all the new members joining Fleet U3A in September, to answer their questions and give advice about what was available. This was a great success and many friendships were formed during the morning.

Quiz Challenge

We held our annual Quiz Challenge in October at the Victoria Hall in Hartley Wintney. Nine teams from Fleet U3A competed with teams from neighbouring U3As, including Camberley, Farnborough, Hartley Wintney and Yateley. One of the Fleet teams contained some of the members of Fleet U3A who had taken part in the BBC TV 'Eggheads' programme earlier in the year with distinction.

Brian Robinson our star Quiz Master guided everyone through the 100 questions he had prepared on a variety of subjects. The winning team was a coalition of the Family History, Calligraphy, and History Groups from Fleet, and included a couple of the winning 'Eggheads' team (see later). Great fun is had by all those involved, including the helpers.

There is no doubt that the cream tea served at 'half-time' is the icing on the cake (or perhaps the jam in the scone). Grateful thanks to Betty Fox and all the ladies of the Catering Team, who prepare and serve the cream teas so efficiently.

Christmas Buffet

On this occasion, it was decided to provide a meal of ham, quiche, cheese, and salad, followed by a dessert, and a glass of wine. Everyone seemed to have a good time at this popular event. Betty Fox led the Catering Team for the last time, with Davena Lawrence assisting preparatory to taking over from Betty in May. Many thanks to all the ladies involved for all their hard work and, in particular, to Betty and Davena.

Spring Exhibition

The U3A Chairman, Jean Goodeve, visited us at the Spring Exhibition in April, and was very impressed with the standard of the exhibits and demonstrations. It is hoped that an article will appear in the U3A News shortly. Grateful thanks to all those members who helped and supported this event, and to our own PR department.

Group Leaders' Lunch

In June, we will hold our annual Group Leaders' Lunch to show our appreciation of all their efforts during the year. All are volunteers, and without their support and enthusiasm our U3A would not be able to run the fantastic range of activities available to members.

Sue Hawkins

Fleet U3A Website

Our Webmaster has been busy improving our website (www.fleetu3a.org.uk). The site now features a Members Area containing information restricted to current members of Fleet U3A. To access these private pages, members will need to login with a User ID and Password which can be obtained by following a link on the home page and filling in a simple form.

The Members Area contains a directory of

members, a guest book for members to leave their comments or suggestions and a "free and fun" page which we hope to expand to provide some light entertainment for our members. We also use this area to store other documents which we would prefer to keep private to our members.

The page devoted to details of all our various groups has been completely reorganized. Before logging-in, clicking on a group title brings up an expanded description of that group's activities. Once logged-in, however, a member will see full details of the group's activities including dates, venues and contact information.

We welcome all suggestions for improvements to the website. Members can contact the webmaster, Colin Philip (e-mail: webmaster@fleetu3a.org.uk), Tel: 01252 664974 or, better still, leave a comment in the new guest book!

Colin Philip

Advanced French

The Group has continued to enjoy plenty of jokes and chat as we tried to improve our linguistic ability. Meetings have followed much the same pattern as last year with perhaps more participation by other members in leading each gathering. As well as the two French ladies who come to "inspire" us once per month, we have had presentations about their holidays (in French of course) by four of our members. These have included camping, canoeing and language school experiences in France, and a very scenic tour of parts of the USA.

With one of the French ladies, Annie Beunier, we spent two meetings concentrating on the spelling and pronunciation of common singular and plural words like "plus" and "tous". The other French lady, Roselyne Bizot, has introduced us to several different subjects on which we then had fun in presenting our views and experiences – all helping to improve our confidence and widen our French vocabulary.

Attendance at Group meetings averages

about 10 members and all the Group enjoyed a New Year Lunch at the French Restaurant recently installed at the Cricketers Pub in Hartley Wintney.

Ray Oldham

Intermediate French

We are continuing our progress through "Panorama 2", which gives insights into life in France (immigration, finance, the media, etc) and offers the opportunity for us all to exchange views. We are still struggling with the subjunctive, and enjoy Annie's visits for extra grammar practice and French conversation.

Rosalind Kemp

Financial Affairs

We have had a good year with attendances regularly numbering around 35 members.

Our members' willingness to share their financial knowledge and experiences result in wide-ranging discussions, to which most contribute, and from which we all learn. To keep our discussions lively and up to date we obtain a wide range of topical information and subjects from newspapers, supplements, 'the media' and word of mouth. There is also plenty of social chatter during the coffee break!

One of our number arranges a "**Predict the Footsie 100 at the end of the term**" competition which continues to provide interest throughout the term - and big grins from the winners!

Brian Robinson

Gardening

The Gardening Group continues to thrive in spite of all the discouragement thrown at us by the climate changes!! The numbers attending meetings still average 40+ though the actual people attending overall are much more than this.

This year has seen an outing to Wisley in September that was much enjoyed on a glorious day! We have had lectures on a wide range of subjects, including "Gardening for Wildlife", with some advice

on organic gardening thrown in. We had a trip around the world entitled "The world in your garden". One of our members talked on the hazards of building a conservatory, and in December we had a quiz and raffle. The New Year brought a question and answer session that was lively and interesting. We watched a video entitled "Treasure Gardens" and one about Newby House Gardens. By the time you read this we will have had talks on Garden Design and the History of Nurseries in Fleet.

We are planning outings to the Savill Gardens, Longstock Water Gardens, and The Manor House in Upton Grey, a Gertrude Jekyll garden. There is always a table for "bring-and-buy" plants which with the Christmas Raffle brings in the revenue to pay for our outside speakers. The tea breaks mid-afternoon allow for discussion, questions, suggestions for future meetings and outings, or just social chit-chat.

Karin Parkinson

History

This review covers the last 24 months during which time group membership has remained around 110, with attendances varying from 45 to 70. Although a few people drop out from time to time, they are soon replaced, which is very satisfying. There is however a very dependable hard core who regularly attend come rain, snow or global warming.

Our members are greatly indebted to Neil Paxton who organized a visit to the 'Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst', on April 10th 2006, to see "The Commandant's Parade" this being the full dress rehearsal for the passing out parade of Officer Cadets, one of whom was Prince Harry. On the day our members were smartly turned out complete with medals, though swords were verboten, with some of the ladies wearing elegant hats. We filled two coaches, and despite the freezing cold we all had a memorable day, which included a tour of the Academy and lunch.

Members of this group have prepared and presented papers on a wide range of subjects, listed here in alphabetic order:

John Davis on the 'Code Breakers of

Bletchley Park', **Phillip Gething** on 'Falklands Remembered', **Kristina Humphreys** on 'Dag Hammarskjöld', **Jenny Kirk** on 'Meri Wether Triumph and Tragedy', **June Knowles** on 'Ordeal by Hunger' and the 'Bronte's of Haworth', **Stewart Knowles** on the 'History of Food', **Davena Lawrence** on 'Joseph Paxton' and 'Gladys Aylward', **Neil Paxton** on the 'Women who followed the Drum' also 'Dr. Miranda Barry' and the 'Death of a Prince', **Ellsie Russell** on 'Queen Alexandra', **Jim Russell** on the 'Scots Contribution', **Trevor Russell** on 'Samuel Pepys', **Peter Smith** on the 'History of Fleet' also the 'House of Windsor' and 'Sea Lion Invasion 1940', **Alan Summers** on 'Naval Language'.

Guest speakers gave talks on, Trafalgar 1805, the History of the RMA Sandhurst, the AA Man, the Lass that loved a Sailor, Mrs. Disraeli and Mrs. Gladstone, Escape from Poland 1939, the Siege of Kut, the History of Castles, Yvonne Arneau, the History of Language, the History of Writing, Surviving the Titanic Disaster and Diving to the Titanic Wreck, the Cody Story and finally Carry on Nursing.

At the start of each of our sessions the first priority by fair or foul means is to get three people to volunteer for the next session's tea duty, however 'washers-up', chair 'putter-outers' and 'putter-backers' are always in plentiful supply.

Finally I wish to thank Bryn Brassington for keeping the attendance register and looking after the finances, Jane Brassington for procuring victuals to keep the tea makers happy, the 'volunteer' tea makers, the washers-up, the furniture movers, the audience for attending and keeping awake, the very professional member speakers who always add that necessary touch of humour to their presentations, and finally but no means least to our Deputy Fuhrer, Neil Paxton who somehow always manages to find good outside speakers as a conjuror produces doves out of a hat, but most of all for keeping the history group going right through last year's winter term due to my

own incarceration.

Peter Smith

International Folk Dancing

The Fleet USA International Folk Dance Group enjoys folk and national dances from many European countries and some from further afield. Many of them are danced in lines or circles and do not require partners. Dances are taught or revised at all of our sessions. They are great fun and reasonably authentic, having been collected in the countries of origin, or brought here by visiting teams and teachers. The music is often very beautiful melodically and is sometimes played on instruments not found in the modern orchestra or band! Unusual rhythms are encountered but always the music fits the dance with which it has evolved.

Throughout this year we have welcomed new members and have enjoyed learning dances from many countries including Russia, Sweden, Romania, Israel, Bulgaria and Armenia. We meet at the Crookham Memorial Hall on alternate Fridays.

Jane and Michael Clark

Mah Jong

Come and play this fascinating game with us! Widely known in the East, several of our members have played it in different countries while living abroad. We play both Chinese and Western style, and move around among the tables between games, so that less experienced players learn new hands. Complete beginners are given detailed tuition and help until they are confident on their own. We usually have between 12 and 16 members at our Thursday morning meetings in the Crookham Memorial Hall.

Vlady Kell

Membership

At the end of my fourth year as Membership Secretary, I am pleased to report a further increase in Membership. When these notes were written in March 2007, membership stood at 1269 active members, compared with 1159 (2006) and 1065 (2005). We know that many

new members hear about us from existing members, and several have seen our entries on the local Hampshire Community Website (eVolve) or on the National U3A website. An increasing number are making initial enquiries through our own Fleet U3A web site, which is very encouraging and pleases our Webmaster.

Of the current membership, 865 have signed Gift Aid forms. This means that we will be able to reclaim the tax paid on those subscriptions, approximately £1951. (We received £1,778 for the financial year 2005-06.) Many thanks to all those members who contribute in this way. Some years ago the Committee decided to set aside this money for special expenditure – a DVD recorder and player, a twin tape and CD player, and some picture frames are among recent acquisitions.

However, a note of caution: if you have signed a Gift Aid declaration for Fleet U3A in the past and your circumstances have since changed such that you do not now pay income tax at the standard rate, please let us know so that we don't go on claiming the refund when it is no longer due. I'm sure you can imagine the possible consequences for us if we do!

The arrangements for processing membership renewals for the year 2006-07 again proved very successful, with more than 800 members having renewed or signed up as new members by the end of August. **Please note that membership renewal forms for the 2007-08 season are enclosed with this distribution printed on pink paper.**

If you do not receive your renewal form with this copy of the Review, please contact the Membership Secretary. A Gift Aid form is included as part of the renewal form for the use of members who wish to join the Gift Aid scheme for the first time. Members who have completed a "continuous" Gift Aid declaration previously should not complete another. But please, don't wait until August to renew your membership. Do it now and avoid the queue on **Enrolment Day, 29th August**. Any queries to me please, at the address

in the programme booklet, or by email to: memsec@fleetu3a.org.uk.

David Wimpenny

Monthly Meetings

In June 2006, we were lucky to receive a visit from Eric Midwinter, a U3A founder member, who spoke about how the U3A was established in Britain – what an inspiring man he is!

Beginning the year in September, Mary Forlenza gave her talk about 'Great Lovers'. I felt quite envious when I received a phone call from Mary – *quote* "I'm lying on the beach in St Tropez" – I could almost hear the waves lapping on the shore.

In October, we welcomed Jim Newson, who had been a warden of 'The Crown Jewels', including the Queen's fabulous coronation gems. It seemed that Jim delighted in 'pulling the leg' of unsuspecting tourists at the Tower of London with lots of improbable tales.

Disaster so nearly struck in November when Peter Heims, booked to talk about his role as a Private Investigator, was unable to attend. Peter thankfully persuaded his colleague, Jean Haynes, to take his place and Jean entertained us with her recollections of working as a 'Lady Bailiff'. It appears that turning up at a gypsy site with, coincidentally, much heavy machinery in tow greatly enhanced her reputation!

Paul Gilbert came in January to talk about his trip to Everest Base Camp, with stunning photographs. Paul donated his fee to the Cancer Fund of the Royal Surrey Hospital.

In February, Brian Lawrence showed many slides on the 'Bayeux Tapestry' and his talk was most interesting and informative, as was the talk given by Derrick Fulford on his 'life as a Justice of the Peace'.

At the AGM in May, we will hear from John Lidstone on 'Reforming the Honours System', and Nick Thomas will give our last talk before the summer break on his life as a 'Comedy Writer'.

A list of the speakers booked for 2007-08 will appear in our new programme, to be dispatched with membership cards from June onwards.

Sue Hawkins

Music Appreciation

An average of around 45 members continues to meet on alternate Thursday afternoons in Fleet Methodist Church. We are grateful that we are allowed to use the church's new hi-tech sound system but we are still retaining the ageing U3A equipment as a back up. (We should add that we are allowed the use of the equipment because we are both members of the Church. Other groups should not assume that it is generally available.)

Brian, having completed his 'Story of the Symphony' in ten parts, one per term – and wasn't his hard work appreciated and enjoyed – has now started an occasional series 'Concerto in Context'. He is taking a well-known concerto, discussing the circumstances of its composition and comparing and contrasting it with music composed by others at the same time. The Sibelius Violin Concerto will be the next to receive the treatment.

Although Brian and Alec continue to present most of the programmes, we always appreciate programmes and ideas from group members and one or two outside speakers who visit us from time to time. We have enjoyed listening to music from the 17th to the 21st Century including orchestral, chamber, solo, choral, and vocal, together with an evening visit to the Anvil Theatre for an orchestral concert.

Alec Robinshaw & Brian Smith

New Groups?

A Reading Group?

Are you interested in reading? Are you interested in joining a Reading Group? It has been suggested that we should form a new group, for those interested in reading but not necessarily in English Literature. Jean Stephenson has volunteered to start it off and lead it to begin with. Where it goes from there, like all our new groups, will depend on the interest shown and the

progress during the first year. Please contact me on the number given in the programme booklet.

Jean Stephenson

A Whist Drive Group?

This has been proposed for a new Group next year. It will meet once a month and enjoy a game of whist together. If you don't know how to play that will not be a problem as the basic game is easy to learn. The main aim is to make an enjoyable social event. If you are interested please contact me on the telephone number in the programme booklet or on Enrolment Day.

Ian Stephenson

Photography

With between 18 and 20 people attending our monthly meetings, we have had some lively discussions on topics ranging from using tripods with low light and night photography to printing and mounting our pictures. The results you will have seen at the Spring Exhibition.

We were given Gift Aid money to buy mount cutters for round, oval and rectangular mounts, which have certainly made a difference to our presentations. Our field trips have taken us to Marwell Zoo, the Savill Gardens, and Waverley Abbey, and we have a trip to the Weald and Downland centre coming up in May.

Carole Brownlee

Pilates

Pilates is a unique system of body conditioning that stretches and strengthens the muscles, improves flexibility, balance, breathing, posture, and alignment. The exercises also encourage you to focus your mind as you exercise the body, gradually improving your general awareness, co-ordination, and overall alignment.

Pilates exercises are adaptable to the needs of any individual and are suitable for anyone, regardless of age, size or level of fitness. It is also enormously beneficial to those who have never previously

undertaken any exercise programme, and to those who are wishing to rehabilitate following an injury or operation. Pilates is especially recommended by physiotherapists for anyone experiencing lower back pain.

Next year we intend to continue with one session in Crookham Memorial Hall on Tuesday mornings, and two consecutive sessions in the St John Ambulance Hall on Thursday mornings, these having been found to be the preferred way of accommodating our 25-30 regulars.

Jean Stephenson

Pub Quiz

We started this Group this year after the success of the 10th Anniversary Quiz. We form teams of three or four people, and 'compete' in several rounds of General Knowledge questions. There are usually four teams, and the format is similar to the quizzes held in many pubs nowadays but unfortunately we only have tea or coffee as drinks. Some of our members are very keen and were able to beat the 'Eggheads' in a competition on BBC2 TV earlier this year. You don't have to be particularly 'brainy' as it's the teamwork that matters. It is *nothing* like Mastermind – just a social gathering, where we can have a fun time and possibly learn something along the way.

Ian Stephenson

"Results" Gym

Following negotiations with the Results Gym in Clarence Road, Fleet, about 30 members of Fleet U3A have been using the facilities there since September 2005, and feeling fitter as a result (no pun intended).

We all had to complete an induction session, when members are introduced to the various exercise machines, such as the treadmill, cycle, cross-trainer and the rowing machine. In addition, other machines are available that use weights to strengthen the shoulders, chest, and legs.

After our induction, we have all followed our own individually tailored programmes,

and no one has had to do anything they don't want to. The gym is welcoming and members of staff are happy to give advice, if they are available.

I was a bit apprehensive at the start, as the last gym I'd been in was where the girls wore gymslips, but found that I quite enjoyed the experience. My philosophy has always been to try to avoid any exercise if I can; however, I found that after using the gym I felt much more energised and ready to tackle any task.

If you have thought of having a go – I can thoroughly recommend it.

Sue Hawkins

Salsa

The two Salsa dance groups, now in their second and third years, will be combining from September 2007 to allow fresh beginners to form a new group. Men, women and couples will find a very warm welcome to the new group.

This year we have continued to progress through the various Salsa styles, and added the Mambo and Merengue to our repertoire under the ever enthusiastic and patient guidance of James Montgomery.

Jenny Kirk

Science and Technology

The Group continues to attract more members so we have recently moved our meetings to the clubhouse at Fleet Football Club, with the added benefit of ample safe parking for the 50+ people that we have been attracting lately.

Subjects covered this year include High Speed Helicopters, Television Sound, the 2002 Foot and Mouth Outbreak, European Waterways and Shipping, Engaging Young People with Science, and Wind Turbines.

Our very able secretary, Julian Barley, continues to provide an excellent selection of biscuits with tea at each meeting. So why not come along on the first Friday of each month to enjoy our presentations

which begin at 2 pm.

Rod Parker

Shakespeare

The sun shone on our visit to "Antony and Cleopatra" at Shakespeare's Globe in September 2006, and we were treated to a magnificent Cleopatra in Frances Barber.

Our normal monthly meetings have moved to Fleet Football Club – much more spacious than our previous venue. We looked at five plays. "The Merchant of Venice", "Julius Caesar" and "King Lear" each took us two sessions with readings, CD, video or DVD. We enjoyed a video of a youth group's introduction to Shakespeare via "Romeo and Juliet", and a reading of "Comedy of Errors", the shortest play in the canon.

Susan d'Andrade

Steam and Transport

This is a new group formed at the beginning of the year. 21 people expressed interest at the Enrolment Day but that has now grown to 46. On average about 20 people have attended our monthly meetings, with new members being added every time. The group aims to concentrate on railways and other forms of land transport with an emphasis on steam power. Topics so far this year have ranged from the Metre Gauge Railways in the area of the Somme, through the Basingstoke Canal, Thorneycrofts of Basingstoke, and Railway Reminiscences of the 1940 - 1960 period. A talk on the Longmoor Military Railway is planned for April with a visit to the Didcot Railway Centre in June. A similarly varied programme is planned for next year.

Brian Armes

Traditional and Modern Jazz

We have had a very interesting year at Traditional and Modern Jazz. We are lucky to have so many members who regularly give absorbing talks illustrated by music on either CD's or tapes. We have a large hall at the Methodist Church, so

there is plenty of room for new members who will always be welcome. We occasionally arrange visits to hear live jazz. We cover a wide spectrum from Louis Armstrong to Peggy Lee and we hope there is something to please everyone.

Nick Tyson

Travelogue

It's our 13th year, but Travelogue is still going strong and finding more places to "visit" in this wonderful world that we are privileged to live in. During the winter and spring terms we have flown "on our magic carpet of films" to Morocco, Gibraltar and Spain following the spread of the Moors and culminating in the fabulous Alhambra Palace and gardens. We have re-visited the magical Maldivé Islands where I came face to face with a shark as I swam back into the lagoon – an unforgettable experience! In sharp contrast was a tour through Bulgaria, a third world experience but lovely unspoilt countryside. Then there was a memorable Tunisian journey into the Sahara desert.

Courtesy of Arthur Taylor, a member of the group, we visited Borneo – a relaxing trip for me as I sat back and enjoyed his experiences. Then we sailed to the Arctic, visiting the Orkney and Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland. We went to see the floral beauties of Northern Cyprus, and the Netherlands' Floriade extravaganza, along with Bruges en route. Our final excursion was to Australia to enjoy the open-air life of grand landscapes, beaches and exotic flora and fauna.

Now we close for the summer to relax on our own holidays and to give me time to collect more material for the next Travelogue series – it's a tough life, but somebody has to do it!

Martin Bennett

Visits

When the photograph of Joyce Welsh and Don Watson was published in last year's Annual Review who could have guessed that, one year on, Joyce would no longer be with us. Her death, after a prolonged bout of ill health, came as a great shock.

Joyce was always full of good ideas and planned all her visits, particularly the overseas ones, with great attention to detail. She was also great company and we miss her.

We have had a successful year, visiting places as diverse as the Foundling Museum in London, Brighton Pavilion, Dulwich Picture Gallery and Eton College. A pre-Christmas stay in Vienna, taking in the Christmas markets and a traditional concert proved very popular. Our now traditional long weekend in the UK took place this year in Cardiff.

We welcome to the Visits team Brian Garrod, who has much experience in arranging trips and will be making his own contribution to our 2007 - 2008 programme. We look forward to the pleasure of your company on our future visits.

Barbara Lyons and Don Watson

Art 7 – Taking Risks

We have been very busy in Art 7 this year and have tackled different techniques with varying levels of success.

We had another attempt at pen and wash and there were some lovely little paintings as a result. Some people did the pen work first and then applied a watercolour wash, while others painted their washes before adding the drawing with a pen. Next came mixed media but as this is such a vast subject, we will return to this another time. Charcoal is always popular and we produced some large animal and landscape pictures.

As I write this we are just about to try half-hour paintings. This exercise may stop us being tempted to 'fiddle'! By the time you read this, we will have begun to tackle monochrome paintings, figure drawing and pictorial design - watch this space!

We also paid a visit to the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery. We had such a good day that we propose to repeat the experience very soon.

Simone Tyson

Art 10 - Watercolours

We have been meeting at the United Reformed Church Hall now for four years and with mainly the same members - one of two have left along the way and a few more have been added - we now have 16 members and a very friendly group. There has been some lovely work created so the group can no longer be called beginners.

In Watercolour, which was our first medium, the group has tackled such subjects as still life, landscapes and flower painting, as well as animals and figures. They have also moved on to try a different medium, collage, by cutting or tearing up small pieces of paper or card and sticking them down to make a picture instead of a painting; the results have been very exciting. In the summer term we have been experimenting with mono printing to encourage the group to expand and to reach out into new areas.

Janice Edmunds

Art 11—Intermediate & Advanced Watercolours

Sadly our Tutor and Group Leader, Gerald Woolley, passed away at the beginning of the Spring Term after a very short illness. Fortunately Gerald left behind a very enthusiastic group, and it was their wish to carry on untutored until a new tutor could be found. I am pleased to say that Peter Forey, Chairman of Fleet Art Society, has agreed to tutor our group from September 2007, so we will all have a new learning experience to look forward to.

Art 11 is a very friendly group, who enjoy their painting and are prepared to help each other when asked, and thanks to Gerald's tuition the group has continued to flourish, producing some fine pieces of work, even though we are untutored at present.

David Sturt

Computer Workshop - Digital Imaging

This group is for members who want to know how to use their computer to improve their photographs.

Although the correction of images taken by digital cameras is a major interest, the techniques studied are useful in resurrecting old family photos. Repairing torn, scratched, and dirty photos of grandparents has proved to be a popular activity. We also study how to remove or make less obvious those unwanted figures and telegraph poles in the background of our photos, to correct red-eye, stitch images together into panoramas, correct colour casts, stand up tall buildings that appear to be falling backwards, etc.

The group is happy to have raw beginners as well as people with experience - so if you have just acquired one of these new digital cameras and would like to know how to fix the photos that went wrong - the camera was not held straight, the flash didn't go off, an indoor shot is all orange, etc, this is the group for you.

Here is an example of the work we do, with thanks to Winifred Tyson.



Dennis Parkinson

Members of Fleet U3A take on BBC2's Eggheads!

On 18th September 2006, six members of Fleet U3A met at Fleet station to travel to London, to the BBC Television Studios in White City to take part in the "Eggheads" Quiz programme. We had auditioned for the show on 31st July, where we were required to answer questions opposite another team. We passed that hurdle and were invited back to take part in the Programme.

Thus we six gathered again in September for a second trip to the big city. We decided to call ourselves Russell's Raiders. Although the team on screen comprises five people, a sixth "reserve" member is always on hand. The choice of which five is made by the production company and although by then we knew who would be the reserve we agreed en route that were we to win any money, it would be split six ways. In the event Dorothy was our reserve.

We were treated right royally by all the people we met at the BBC, including the two production assistants who had auditioned us. We were fed and watered, our outfits were taken away to be ironed, and we all discovered the delights of the makeup department! Finally we took our places in the studio, five at the desk and Dorothy sitting with members of the production team. We were introduced to the "Eggheads".

For readers who have never seen the programme (BBC2 6pm Monday to Friday), it is the aim of the challengers to beat the Eggheads in four "head to head" rounds covering any of eight topics (history, geography, sport, arts and books, food and drink, science, politics, or entertainment) and a final general knowledge round. Each team competes for a minimum of £1000, the prize money accumulating each time the Eggheads win. They win regularly. As the Chairman, Dermot Murnaghan, says on each show, **they** are playing for their reputation.

Our recording was broadcast on Friday 13th October 2006 and - how can I put this - Russell's Raiders won!

Caroline Noad



The Eggheads (back row): C J de Mooi, Daphne Fowler, Judith Keppel, Chris Hughes, and Kevin Ashman

Russell's Raiders (front row): Dorothy Brookman, Ellsie Russell, Trevor Russell, Carol Noad, Gilbert Rowland and Jean Tucker

Credit Where Credit is Due

The cover this year was assembled by “Computer Workshop – Picture Editing”, an ad hoc group formed by the participants for the purpose of creating this cover. The photographs featured in the centre spread were composed by Carole Brownlee’s Photography group, and the paintings sharing that space were created by Simone Tyson’s group, Art 7 – Taking Risks. I am very grateful to all those people for their work, especially as it was done during the lead up to the Spring Exhibition when they must have been quite busy enough without my interruptions. **Ed**



The Visit to Barcelona, May 2006, by Tim Lyons