

NEWSLETTER JULY 2010

ENROLMENT DAY IS FRIDAY 13th AUGUST
2.00 - 4.00 MILFORD VILLAGE HALL

From the Chairman

Mike Bakall

I have one sad duty, to report the death of Keith Williamson, who suffered a stroke early this year. His activities as a course leader and as supervisor of our website were greatly valued.

There is good news regarding membership, which now hovers just below 500. My thanks go to Rosemary Bryant, who has handled this very demanding role so well despite an initial lack of co-operation from the Third Age Trust membership section.

We are very fortunate with our Committee, who make up for small numbers with both enthusiasm and expertise. Jill Billett juggles the immense job of matching groups – whose size and numbers change every year – to accommodation. Tony Kirton manages the accounts, which is a most difficult task, being wrapped in several layers of legislation from the Charity Commission, the Third Age Trust and the local bank. Clare Windsor edits and publishes our newsletters and information pages. Mary Kershaw and her team of 'catering ladies' have a reputation for quality so high that a recipe book is now being considered for publication.

John Fairchild deserves a mention. He has been designing our posters for some years now, and is one of the quiet background members whose assistance fills those important gaps. Helen Searle has the job of tracking down speakers for our monthly meetings. New to the role, she has excelled this year. Ann Stewart has filled the Secretary slot for many years with efficiency and enthusiasm to keep all the wheels turning. I would record my thanks to all of these, whose work keeps this U3A functioning.

Our current programme lists 48 different groups, with more than 40 individual leaders all offering their time and expertise freely. This is my only opportunity to publicly thank them for their efforts.

Milford and District U3A is solvent, growing and adhering to the U3A ethos, offering a blend of academic and social activities for the benefit of the community. We are now a small component of the newly formed South-East Region. Quite what this implies has yet to be worked out, but anything significant will be reported in our Bulletins

From the Treasurer

Tony Kirton

The receipts and payments account for the year which ended on 31st March is below. We are most grateful to Michael Martin for kindly examining them for us. They are set out so you can readily compare this year's figures with those of last year.

Most people are only interested in how well, or how badly, we did during the financial year and if you look just over halfway down you'll see that there is shown a deficit of £252. Unfortunately this gives rather a false impression. Further up, under payments, you'll see that last year we paid £3,378 for venue hire but this year more than double: £8,187. This is because the bill for the previous financial year for St Mark's Church Hall arrived very late and was not paid until April – which is, of course, in the new financial year. The amount was £2,132, and adding that to the shown deficit gives us a true gain of just under £2,000, which is very satisfactory.

Other figures show that subscriptions rose due to the increased number of members and there was a very nice tax refund in respect of Gift Aid. It's extremely gratifying to receive this help and is the result of some 200 members signing up. If you pay tax but haven't yet signed one of our forms, please contact Rosemary Bryant or me. We'll have forms available at the enrolment session in August. You may also notice a large drop in the bank interest we received. No need to tell you why!

More members are attending the lunches and they stay on for the afternoon talks; this is reflected in the nett surplus from the monthly meetings. Incidentally, some members have been heard to say that it's rather a lot to pay £1 for a cup of tea and a slice of cake. I would agree, but that's not only what it's for. We also have to pay for speakers and this helps towards their cost. Some don't charge but the majority do, if only for their expenses. During the year you'll see that it was £278. Mentioning the lunches reminds me that the object is, as far as possible, to break even or at least to make a small profit rather than a loss. Mary and her team do remarkably well in this respect.

The head office affiliation fee increased due to our rising membership.

We're in a healthy position, with over £7,000 in the bank. We had to raise our fees two years ago, but if we go on as we have done this last year then I can't see the need to increase the fees in the foreseeable future.

2008/2009		2009/2010	
£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS			
8,610	Subscriptions	9,761	
234	Fees (Computer)	225	
165	Fees (TableTennis)	215	
627	Tax Refund (Gift Aid)	920	
229	Bank Interest	71	
	Donations	16	
186	Monthly Meetings (nett)	223	
319	Lunches (nett)	94	
	10,370		11,525
PAYMENTS			
3,378	Venue Hire	8,187	
952	Affiliation Fee	1,012	
642	Printing and Stationery	662	
385	Postage and Telephone	528	
280	Equipment	116	
218	Speakers	278	
605	Newsletter	593	
234	Miscellaneous	401	
	6,694		11,777
	3,676	Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(252)
FUNDS			
	3,858	Cash at Bank - 1st April 2009	7,534
	3,676	Surplus/deficit for the year	(252)
	7,534	Cash at Bank - 31st March 2010	7,282
		Deposit Account	6,000
		Current Account	1,354
		Less unrepresented cheques	72
			1,282
			7,282

Hon. Treasurer
Anthony Kirton
 20.4.10 26.4.10

Hon. Examiner
MAH Martin

From the Membership Secretary

Rosemary Bryant

Our members must take much of the credit for spreading the word about our U3A. We have enrolled 495 members this year so our trend of steady growth continues. Last year we had 448 members and in 2008 we passed the 400 mark for the first time with 409. So we are thriving, with well-supported groups and the prospect of new ones being offered.

Renewal forms are enclosed with this newsletter and programme. The annual subscription remains at £20 and you can still join as many groups as you wish.

I would like to encourage you to return your form and cheque by post, or drop it in to me at Kinfauns Cottage, on the A283 Petworth Road between Rake Lane and 'the tip' (very handy!). That way we can ease the congestion on Enrolment Day, giving you time to meet and talk with the group leaders with your new 2010/11 membership number already to hand.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Lunch Report

Mary Kershaw

Apart from the vengeance of winter in January, when our meeting had to be postponed until February, we have had some enjoyable lunches this year. There always seems to be a happy, chatty atmosphere, which is the main object of the enterprise. The limit on ticket sales is still in place at 50, so don't forget to book early, particularly as the meal is to be followed by the talk on the Hindhead Tunnel, much anticipated following its cancellation in January due to the snow.

Our team of cooks co-operate well to provide ideas for menus and present the food, so thanks are due to all of them. Sadly for us, Sue will probably not be in Milford by October, as she is planning to move to the West Country. We wish her well there: she can probably show another U3A how to cook lunch.

From the Groups

Ambling 1st Thursdays, am

Although many people signed up for the group it was only a select number of us who actually walked! We enjoyed the leisurely pace and generally fine weather.

I have reluctantly agreed to take over from Jean in organising the group. I hope that if each member will lead just one walk, the job won't be too onerous. Next season I have changed to the first Thursday in the month to encourage any 'Rambblers' to join us, and we shall meet at 10.00am at the back corner of Secretts Farm Shop car park.

Cherry

Birdwatching 1 2nd Wednesdays, am

Birdwatching 1 group meets in Milford on the second Wednesday of each month and we usually go to a local common, such as Thursley Common, for the morning. We also go to the coast at Farlington Marsh or Pagham Harbour in the winter and spring. Last season there were 12 members in the group and turn-out averaged about 8.

We visited most of the the local commons but because there were not many birds around we made three visits to the coast. The first was to Pagham Harbour in September for the autumn migration

of waders, then Farlington Marsh in December for the wild geese and ducks and lastly to Pagham Harbour and Selsey Bill in April for the spring migration.

At the end of May we had an evening meeting to listen to Nightingales, Nightjars and Woodcock.

David

Birdwatching 2 2nd Tuesdays, am

This group concentrates on the birds to be seen throughout the year on Thursley Common near Elstead, which is a National Nature Reserve. Thursley is noted for its rare heathland fauna and flora, and breeding birds include the Woodlark, Tree Pipit, Whitethroat, Reed Bunting and Redstart.

In the autumn and spring we will be looking for migrant birds passing through: these include Whinchat, Wheatear, Black Redstart and Green Sandpiper, and most years birds of prey such as Marsh Harriers and Ospreys also occur on passage.

The winter is also a good time for birds of prey on Thursley and last winter Ravens, Merlin, Peregrine and occasional Hen Harriers were seen. Some years a Great Grey Shrike overwinters on the Common. In the winter flocks of Redpolls, Redwings and Fieldfares appear.

In the summer Hobbies can be seen performing their spectacular aerobatics as they hunt for dragonflies over the ponds. Sparrowhawks, Kestrels and Buzzards are frequently observed throughout the year.

Our walks are usually 2-4km in length, with frequent stops to observe the birds and other wildlife.

Doug

Book Choice 1 2nd Fridays, am

I have been fortunate to have been a member of this reading group since its inception nine years ago and have, thereby, had my literary taste stretched reading books which I would never have thought of reading myself.

This year we have had some rather difficult books on the menu, especially by foreign authors, including *My Name is Red* by Orhan Panuk, a murder mystery about miniaturists set in Istanbul in the 1590s and revealing the tension between East and West.

I think my favourite novel was *The Innocent Traitor* by Alison Weir, about the sad life of the learned, doomed Lady Jane Grey, although we actually thought a straight biography would have been better.

All the books provoke a good, sometimes heated discussion and it is nice to get to know people one would not otherwise meet. We are so lucky to have Jill as our co-ordinator and Clare as her helpmeet. Thank you U3A.

Elaine, a member of Book Choice 1

Book Choice 2 3rd Tuesdays, pm

Our friendly and informal group has welcomed a few new members this year with their fresh ideas as to what we might enjoy reading. Having all agreed what we wish to read, we take it in turns each month to introduce the chosen book then settle down to discuss it, before finishing with a cup of tea.

We have ranged over novels, memoirs, a mystery and classic titles. If you feel you'd like to vary your reading, pick up new ideas and hear what others feel about the different books, then please come and join us. We can fit in one or two more.

Rosemary

Boules Saturdays, am

Our friendly group of players meets throughout the year on Saturday mornings in the lay-by opposite the Burton Pavilion in Milford. This new piste, courtesy of Witley Parish Council, allows us to play two games simultaneously, so accommodating our increased membership.

Pam

Bowls Mondays and Fridays, pm

Not many people joined us to play Bowls this year, but we still enjoyed ourselves. I suspect some of our members are not as fit as they thought they were! Never mind, we'll try again next year. *Norman*

Bridge Club 1st Tuesdays, pm

The Bridge Club meets on the first Tuesday afternoon at Milford Village Hall. The club will continue to provide an afternoon of Bridge played with a competitive format. Players are able to improve their skills and will play hands against different opponents. Players do not need a partner as Acol is used by all.

Ted

Bridge (Beginners) 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, pm

We have had a very successful two years and 12 members have stuck it out and are ready to go up to the improvers' classes. Iris and I will miss you all and wish you the best of luck with your Bridge from now on, with plenty of slams, games and crafty bidding!

We are starting all over again in September with another 2-year course and we look forward to seeing anyone who would like to embark upon a life-enhancing experience. *Christine*

Bridge (Improvers) 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, pm

On the second and fourth Tuesdays in the month, Judi and I enjoy helping around 28 people to improve their Bridge. It's a very cheerful group, with friends able to sit together, but with plenty of opportunity to make new friends.

I try to encourage players to use bold tactics, to make the game much more exciting!

We look forward to seeing our regulars and any others who would like to join us in September.

Elizabeth C

Bridge (Improvers) 3rd Tuesdays, pm

The third Tuesday Bridge group continues to flourish, with good attendance and enthusiastic members. It's rewarding to see the players improve their game and try to implement points discussed.

Well done, everyone.

Elizabeth P

Bridge (Advanced) 2nd Wednesdays, pm

As ever we have had a very happy year. We have averaged 24 people per session and have tried to master the art of playing and bidding difficult hands. Eight of our members went off to compete in the U3A Local Link Bridge Competition in Liphook. I am very happy to report that Liz Taylor and Wendy Newman came top East/West – many congratulations.

Nothing like retiring on a high – I am now leaving you to the tender care of John who I know will continue where I have left off. *Christine*

Card Making – NOW FINISHED

The Card Making group has had an enjoyable and productive year, but Hilary regrets that with dwindling members it must close.

Chess – NOW FINISHED

We have continued trying to play Chess at all levels of ability. Unfortunately the number of players has been too low to maintain a thriving meeting and I have decided to put the club into mothballs for a year. I thank all members who have provided very challenging afternoons of Chess and hope that we will be able to restart in the future. *Ted*

Computing for Beginners 1 and 2 Thursdays, pm

Two courses for computer beginners were run, each of 10 sessions – one in the autumn and one in the spring. The content was fairly flexible and adopted a bias towards what members needed to do, covering internet browsing, e-mail and some word processing. The sessions were quite successful and a similar format is planned for the 2010/2011 programme.

To benefit from these courses members really need to have their own computers at home in order to practise between lessons.

Computers for the course sessions are provided and this limits the capacity to eight members per session.
Don and Pam

Current Affairs 4th Thursdays, pm

Sincere thanks to Keith for sustaining and nourishing the group for so long. He is a very hard act to follow.

The format of the discussion group on Current Affairs will remain the same. All participants can raise subjects for discussion, whether local, national or international, and the leader may provoke discussion on subjects if necessary.

It's a very friendly group and I'm sure will continue to be so. *Robert*

Digital Photography (Introduction) 1st Mondays, am

What do all those little buttons on digital cameras do? A digital camera is like having a half dozen different film cameras in one. We will explore what can be done beyond 'point and shoot', see the effects of some of the basic settings and functions on most digital cameras, such as white balance, ISO, image size, the relation between F-stops and shutter speed, zoom, auto focus, metering mode, burst, macro and explore basic editing on a computer. Other functions will depend on the camera, so you need to bring yours to meetings, and the manual (sometimes a bit cryptic, but full of information) with the battery charged and space on your memory chip, to find out some new tricks and ideas for taking good pictures in general.

You will need to tell me what camera you have at enrolment, so I can group people with similar cameras. Each session will have handouts with space to add notes for your camera. If you know very little about digital cameras, I would strongly recommend you read the U3A sponsored book *Digital Photography for the Older and Wiser* by Kim Gilmour (£10 direct from Wiley with the special code from a recent U3A News magazine. If you have lost it, give me a ring.) This will give you the basics, and while there is some overlap I will go considerably further. This year there will be a limit of 24 for the sessions.

Tom

Digital Photography (Special Topics) 3rd Mondays, am

This series of five or six mornings is for survivors of the first course and other experienced photographers who have developed some skills in digital photography and want to learn more. The emphasis will be on sharing our expertise, challenges and enthusiasm. Each 2-hour morning will be divided in two sessions with a different person volunteering to lead each hour. For example, you could present something for 10-20 minutes to start a discussion or raise questions and even look at photos that everyone brings as a starting point.

Building on a basic knowledge of digital photography, many of us would like to know more about such topics as editing (e.g. 'curves', histograms, layers and other tools in editors like Photoshop CS/Elements, Picassa, Paintshop Pro, Gimp, etc). In the past, we have had sessions on good practices for macro photography, using flash, converting to black and white, digital scanning, restoring old prints, flowers, portraits, wildlife and scenery, general editing, digital microscopes, RAW format, and preparing for web publishing. Since we all improve and learn more, many of these could be repeated or gone into in even greater depth, plus any other topics you would want to lead a discussion on. Challenges and frustrations you have encountered that could be shared would be welcomed.

I do only one or two sessions and make the coffee, so volunteers are needed for the other 6-8 sessions. The digital projector and laptop will be available and set up for each morning. *Tom*

Dr Johnson – NOW FINISHED

Last year was the tercentenary of Samuel Johnson's birth, so it seemed appropriate to introduce the great man to anyone who possibly knew of him only as the compiler of the first English Dictionary. My four lectures presented an account of his extraordinary achievements, the physical and psychological problems he faced with terrific courage, and above all the sheer humanity of this deeply Christian man. I hope as well that some of his sense of fun and larger-than-life gusto came across. Truly a life worthy of commemoration. *Nick*

Drawing for Beginners 1st Wednesdays, am

This class will cover the same ground as last year. We start by getting to know our materials, creating shapes and using basic shading techniques to give form and depth, then moving on to simple textures such as cloth and silks. We will quickly cover the spotting of important aspects of an object for making preparatory sketches, and will also be using grids to copy photos. All through this course we will be progressing gradually towards drawing the human form. *Mike*

Drawing for Beginners (Follow on) 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, am

As last year, we will continue drawing more complex objects, some of which will be the more popular ones from last year. But all the time we shall be free to explore new and interesting subjects: bark, leaves, feather and fur, light reflections on metal or mirrors, sunlight on water, etc.
The list can be as wide as your imagination. *Mike*

Drawing for Fun 3rd Wednesdays, am

Our course last season has given us confidence to try new subjects and venture into charcoal and other drawing materials. Our small group has settled into its new form and we look forward to September. As everyone has made really good progress and developed in confidence, the new session will bring fun and different challenges to enjoy. *Marion*

Embroidery 1st and 3rd Fridays, am

The group has enjoyed another interesting and successful year. We have mainly concentrated on individual pieces of work – some of which were started several years ago and were rescued with new enthusiasm. Most of us have tried some new techniques to produce small samples displayed in loose-leaf covers – a new take on old-fashioned samplers. Some members are completely new and have become really keen in the use of the decorative needle.

Next session, additionally and in response to a popular request, we hope to produce a few personalised Christmas cards.

We are a friendly and helpful group offering a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join us. *Eileen*

Family History 1 and 2 3rd Thursdays, am and pm

Our two groups last season both ran as planned, although each group eventually had to be limited to 14 members because of the space constraints imposed by the Pepperpot – the only accommodation available to us with free wireless access to the internet. This meant that one or two who had put their

names down were disappointed. If they are still interested then they will be given priority when booking for 2010/11, as the present plan is to rerun both groups on the same pattern.

The morning group (1) is for those reasonably familiar with the computer and now wanting to make use of it for family history research purposes. In the event, attendance at these morning meetings was irregular and the group gradually got smaller over the first four sessions. This meant that too often we had to retrace our steps, to the disadvantage of the few regular attendees. So attendance at the last four sessions was limited to those members of the group who had demonstrated that they would benefit from further tuition. Consequently those signing up for this group in 2010/11 will be asked to commit to attendance at each of the first four sessions in so far as this is reasonably possible. Attendance at the second four sessions will again be by invitation only.

The afternoon group (2) continued to work well together for the third year, developing knowledge and solving problems. There seems to be no shortage of problems, and with frequent additions to the sites and material available on the internet this seems likely to be the case for some time to come. With one exception all members have therefore indicated a wish to continue to meet and so at best there will only be one vacancy in this group in 2010/11.

In these circumstances, subject only to availability of space, those who regularly attended the first group's meetings last season or who would otherwise have hoped to join the second group this coming season would be welcome to put their names down to rejoin the first group in January if they should wish to do so.

Christopher

Greek Mythology most 2nd Thursdays, pm

This year we will forsake our Modern Greek session in favour of only Greek Mythology in order to cover more subjects in detail and show more DVDs.

These are the main topics to be covered:

1. Introduction: What myths meant to the ancient Greeks and how they affected their lives. The importance of Homer and Hesiod in mythology and its development by the classical Greeks, the Romans, the Alexandrians and later all the Europeans up to our own day.
2. How the world was created according to Hesiod. The importance of Gaia (Earth), Ouranos (Sky), Cronos (Saturn) and finally Zeus (Jupiter).
3. The Greek gods and goddesses, in particular Zeus and the Olympians. What the ancient Greeks thought about the gods.
4. How men (not women yet) were created. The great importance of Prometheus, and Pandora the first woman on Earth.
5. The Greek heroes: Theseus, Heracles, Jason and the Argonauts, Perseus, Orpheus and Eurydice and others.
6. Helen of Troy and the Trojan war. What caused the war, the Greek and Trojan heroes and how the war ended.
7. Odysseus and his 12 adventures and how he reached Ithaca.
8. Conclusion: The most remarkable and in most cases incredible Greek myths.

Andreas

Lunch Clubs 1 4th Fridays and 2 3rd Fridays

<i>Venue</i>	<i>Percentage score</i>
The Withies, Compton	96
The Seahorse, Shalford	86
The Swan, Ash Vale	86
The White Lion, Milford	85
The Merry Harriers, Hambleton	83
The Cyder House, Shackleford	83
The Winterton Arms, Chiddingfold	83
The King's Arms, Godalming .	82
The Wheatsheaf, Grayswood	82
The Squirrel, Puttenham	77
The Barley Mow, Tilford	69
The White Hart, Witley	36

This has been another good year for testing the qualities of some of the eating establishments in the area. Not only do we have a wide range of venues to choose from, but their fortunes rise and fall as successive managements take charge. It is therefore useful to have recent word on their quality when arranging parties and outings for visitors etc. The list above indicates what we thought: some are results from one of the groups and others are an average of the views of both groups on separate occasions. Group 1 has tended to stay in the immediate area, while Group 2 likes to venture further afield.

To have plenty of choice of venues, which are made by all the members contributing their suggestions, we are obliged to limit the membership of each group to 20. All are asked to order their own food and drink at the bar (and pay for it!) then the staff bring it to the U3A reserved table(s). There is an appraisal sheet to complete so that each person's opinion may be registered. Both group leaders ask that if anyone is unable to attend they inform their group leader at least seven days before the event. This is because the booking has to be finalised then and it is embarrassing to have to explain to a restaurant manager why some of the places he has set are empty.

Please note that Group 2 will now meet on the 3rd Friday of each month, Group 1 still on the 4th. Our first visits will be to our favourites: Group 1 will go to The Withies, Compton at 12.30 on Friday 24th September. Group 2 will go to Sir Roger Titchbourne, Alfold at 12.30 on Friday 17th September.

We look forward to seeing you.

Mary and Richard

Mahjong – NEW 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, pm

Relatively few people play the traditional Chinese game of Mahjong which is a fascinating table-top game for four players.

Colourful tiles (144 of them) are stacked to form the 'Great Wall of China' which is ceremonially breached and tiles distributed to form hands. Players exchange and take tiles from the wall until 'Mahjong' is declared.

The game can be learnt and enjoyed very quickly at its simplest level and developed to more complex levels by attempting to assemble riskier but more rewarding hands. *Jeanne*

Maths for Fun 3rd Thursdays, am

It's amazing!

Take any number containing 3 digits, multiply it by 11 and then multiply the result by 91. What do you notice?

Repeat with another 3 digit number.

Now take any number containing 5 digits, multiply it by 11 and then multiply the result by 9091.

What do you notice this time?

Repeat with another 5 digit number.

Can you explain the amazing result?

Monica

(See end of group listing)

Medieval History – NEW 1st and 3rd Thursdays, am

The content of this course will focus upon western Europe from 500AD to 1500AD (collapse of the western Roman Empire to the collapse of Catholic hegemony), these being the two very significant boundaries in the social development of the region.

The extent of the content may be widened depending upon the interests of the course members.

Mike

Music Appreciation 3rd Thursdays, pm

During last season, for the most part, each session concentrated on one particular period of musical history. Over the year we heard examples of everything from the earliest surviving pieces to

contemporary music. We generally focused on the classical repertoire, but one meeting was made up of mainly non-classical pieces, as part of the look at musical history. Some items were well known but others were much less familiar, the hope being to encourage people to try a broader range of music.

This year the plan is to play music of a wide range, but the topics will not be so historical. Each programme will be made up of one or more themes connected with some other aspect of music. Again, any type could be included and from any period, but the general focus will be on classical music. Pieces that are likely to be more demanding will generally be represented by short extracts. *Robin*

Opera for All (Group A) Most 1st Thursdays, pm

We have just concluded the fourth year of this course, which again has been very well supported by its 50 signed-up members. The themes we examined included French opera, famous basses, Gilbert & Sullivan and *Die Meistersinger* – quite a mixture. In addition the group has attended performances by Opera South, *La Perichole* by Offenbach and, by the Welsh National Opera in Southampton, *The Seraglio* by Mozart.

In the fifth year, which commences in September on Thursday afternoons, I plan to discuss subjects ranging from Monteverdi to Musicals, by way of *The Flying Dutchman* and some famous Nordic singers. I hope that this programme again will be interesting, informative and fun for all those who are participating. *Michael*

Opera for All (Group B) – NEW Most 1st Thursdays, am

Because of the success of Group A, which remains full, I have been asked to start the course again from the beginning. Therefore, I shall recommence 'year one' of the programme, on Thursday mornings – 10.00am to 12.15pm – at the Dower House.

This is a monthly meeting of talks and discussion about Opera. Members will be able to listen to and view performances of many operas and singers, in a relaxed and informal environment.

The course will cover a wide variety of subjects, including the history of opera, important composers, singers and conductors, performing style and the major opera houses of the world.

'Opera for All' is open to anyone interested in opera, be they long time enthusiasts or newcomers to the world of opera. No prior knowledge is required. *Michael*

Painting 1 2nd and 4th Thursdays, am

It's been an enjoyable and well attended year. All artists re-joined us and some very impressive work was produced.

Thanks are due: to Rita for ensuring that stimulants were readily available in the form of tea and coffee; to Peter for organising our two 'in-house' exhibitions, which were both very well supported; and to Marion for negotiating with the Royal Surrey Hospital and organising all three Painting groups to set up an exhibition there.

Self-help works for this group – kind/gentle criticism plus advice on methods, materials and techniques is always readily available. *Tom*

Painting 2 1st and 3rd Fridays, am

We have enjoyed another good season and had fun trying different media and techniques and gaining confidence. As part of the three painting groups we also worked hard towards producing artwork for our exhibition at the Royal Surrey County Hospital Gallery. Our work was varied and colourful and attracted a lot of interest, and we managed a good number of picture sales among the 50 entries. So well done everyone (artists and organisers both!).

September sees another course as everyone develops their styles and tries new things. We'll be expanding our repertoire and may be introducing some 'surprise' lessons. Wait and see! *Marion*

Painting 3 2nd and 4th Fridays, am

This painting group is a self help group. This allows us to develop our artistic skills in whichever medium we are using sharing advice and encouragement. Members provide their own materials.

Join us and have a go – you don't know what you can do unless you try!!

Pat

Patchwork 1 2nd and 4th Mondays, am

Another year has passed and the Monday Patchwork group is still thriving and producing many creative items. The members are becoming more proficient and making individual pieces, with Maria's help of course. Our ideas are mostly inspired by Maria who continues to whet our appetites with new innovative ideas. Patchwork is such a diverse art form.

I know that I speak for all of us when I say "Long live the Patchwork class!"

Iris, a member of Patchwork 1

Patchwork 2 2nd and 4th Thursdays, am

Thursday's Patchwork group is small and includes relative newcomers to Patchwork. Members have received expert tuition, advice and encouragement, with many pieces being completed during the year. These ranged from block samplers, a crazy patchwork Santa wallhanging, foundation work cushion covers and quilts (crazy cot, Australian fabric log cabin, and blue hexagon).

Friends have been made and skills well taught, and learned, in a happy class. Thursdays cannot come soon enough!

New members are most welcome.

Carolyn, a member of Patchwork 2

Rambling 2nd Tuesdays, am

We are a happy, friendly group and find our way each month to a different spot to enjoy a walk of 4 to 6 miles, which by popular request continues throughout the year. Various group members take turns to lead and even when the weather is not very kind, there's sure to be a little band of us setting out to explore the local countryside. So if you have comfortable, stout walking shoes or boots, want to explore new places and join a friendly group, then do come along.

We have at times had very large numbers if everyone turns up, and following my mention last year of a possible second group on a different day, a few people expressed an interest. Please let a committee member know if you would consider forming a second group.

Rosemary

Scrabble 3rd Wednesdays, pm

Recently, TV has shown us international teams of professional Scrabblers who learn and use formidable lists of words in English – a language they neither speak nor understand! Our U3A group relies on a more basic English vocabulary and is not highly competitive, though some of us have enjoyed the stimulus of playing in friendly challenges with other U3As, and we are grateful to the organisers of these events.

We've had fun this year. Even when numbers were down for the pre-Christmas meeting, we livened up the occasion by adding variety to our usual rules: double score for any word relating to Christmas, evoking for instance robin, ox/oxen, Xmas, inn, Yule, hay, feast, Noel and Bah!

Do come and join us in September. You'll find other players of similar ability to yourself and we think you'll enjoy yourself – as we do.

Pauline

Shakespeare 3rd Mondays, pm

The group read and studied *Troilus and Cressida* and *Macbeth*. The first play showed amongst other things how complacency and lack of singlemindedness can easily upset the best planned enterprises, and the second showed the disintegration of character caused by over-ambition and insecurity.

It's becoming clear that members value reading aloud and listening to some of the best poetry in the language, and then discussing what has been read. There's no obligation to read aloud if you just wish to listen.

There are now 19 members in the group and my feeling is that more than about 22 would upset the informality. Therefore if you'd like to give it a go, I would advise contacting me no later than Enrolment Day in August.

The plays to be read and discussed in 2010-2011 are *Richard III* (to continue the villain theme) and *Twelfth Night* (as merciful relief!).
Angus

Singing for Fun 2nd Tuesdays, pm

This activity is designed for those members who either think they can't sing, or who would like to but don't know where to start, or who can sing a bit but don't want to join a Choral Society and be at the mercy of a demanding conductor. So I aim to fill a gap with this monthly singalong session, and I like to think it's a pressure-free occasion where the songs are mostly easy, well-known, not too high, and in unison.

A small challenge presented itself when we received an invitation to sing after the Milford U3A lunch and before the AGM. We had a 20-minute slot to fill, and that gave us the incentive to rehearse and polish a bit more thoroughly than we might have done otherwise. And I think it went well!

We will carry on next season in much the same style as before, and newcomers are of course most welcome.
Nick

Spanish for Complete Beginners 1st and 3rd Fridays, pm

Some members of this group have been in it for two years and several others are not absolute beginners now.

Next year we will still welcome beginners. We hope they will benefit from being able to hear our faltering emphasis on the speaking of Spanish. Our revision will be their introduction to the language.
Pam

Stargazing 1st Wednesdays if clear skies

The weather has curtailed our viewing this year but between the clouds we have gazed at galaxies, nebulae, star clusters, planets and the moon. If you would like the chance to see Saturn's rings and Jupiter's moons why not join us next winter. Hoping for clear skies. Warning – we meet in the dark on, usually, cold evenings but it's worth it.
Ted

Table Tennis 1 Mondays, am

According to the media, Table Tennis is becoming the "in thing". I'm certain my members fully agree as they and I have, once again, enjoyed an active and rewarding season.

A reminder for those signing on for next season – there is a small annual levy of £5 to cover the cost of room hire.
Ron

Table Tennis 2 Wednesdays, am

After a slow start the folks who started the course back in September '09 have completed the year – 'Ping-Pongers' no more! Through their enthusiasm, effort and with a little coaching they have improved their game immensely and, therefore, I think enjoyed themselves very much.

I look forward to seeing all old friends and perhaps one or two new ones in 2010/11.

A reminder for those signing on for next season – there is a small annual levy of £5 to cover the cost of room hire. *Roger*

Three Famous 18th Century Characters – NEW 1st Fridays, pm

This course will examine the lives of the scientist and statesman Benjamin Franklin, the astronomer William Herschel and the explorer Mungo Park. I will use a DVD to help illustrate the story of Ben Franklin, and slides for the others. They each led lives of extraordinary achievement, but there is also something colourful and rather romantic about the lives of these particular individuals which I will aim to bring across. *Nick*

Yoga 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, pm

The Yoga group had a successful and very enjoyable season with Edelgard, and the regulars are looking forward to September to continue with me, Suzanne, as their new leader. I have already taken a couple of classes during April and May and I think my gentle style of teaching was appreciated.

The paragraph below gives a brief outline of the work undertaken in our Yoga lessons.

Suzanne

YOGA CLASSES

GENTLE EXERCISE AND RELAXATION

The contents of each class will depend on the flexibility and general fitness of all students attending. In general, however, Yoga postures are designed to promote flexibility and physical well-being. Through Yoga students will become aware of the benefits of deep breathing, relaxed movements and mental concentration.

Relaxation, which forms part of all classes, greatly helps to relieve stress.

Maths explanation: $11 \times 91 = 1001$; $11 \times 9091 = 100001$.