

Points of interest:

Membership numbers still rising

New interest groups being set up

Reduced membership fee for 2017/18



“ Spring is here and the days are getting longer again so to keep

up momentum we are planning to start up several new groups, details of which are listed inside this issue. We hope to get these up and running quite quickly and hope that many of you will make contact with Groups Co-ordinator Reg Hounsell to register your interest.

Our membership numbers continue to grow and we have now reached 430. It's amazing how we continue to attract new members. It must be that word is spreading about how vibrant an organisation Royston U3A has become.

Just a reminder that we are coming to the end of our current membership year. The next membership year starts on April 1 and I have good news... we are reducing our

annual membership fee to £14 and if you are a member of another U3A and want to rejoin Royston U3A the fee will be £10.50.

Membership renewal forms will be sent to everyone by email and for those without email it will be sent in hard copy form. Also forms will be available at the March monthly meeting. I do hope you have enjoyed being involved this year and will continue your membership in 2017-2018. ”

Jackie Gellert, Chairwoman

Great musical partnership dream teams

Mike Levy has always been hooked on musical theatre – and by the end of his entertaining talk Royston U3A members were too.

“At the age of nine I was taken by my mum to see *South Pacific*,” said Mike. “It was my first trip to the cinema and it was so magical I was completely mesmerised.”

Getting the show on the road with Gilbert and Sullivan's timeless operettas he highlighted partnership geniuses of words and music over the last 100 years.

The glory days of musicals came in the 1930s, 40s and 50s when it seemed the entire city of New York was awash with song writers and lyricists.

They included Lerner and Loewe, famous for the 1956 musical *My Fair Lady* which set a record for the longest run of any show on Broadway, and Bock and Harnick for *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Then there were the legendary Gershwin brothers of *Rhapsody in Blue* and *Porgy and Bess* fame, Rodgers and Hart

with songs like *Blue Moon* and *The Lady is a Tramp*, on to Sondheim and Bernstein with their 1961 smash hit *West Side Story*.

“There are so many other great musical partnerships I haven't had time to mention,” said Mike. “What makes them great is the art of collaboration and the spark of chemistry between them.”

Inside this issue:

<i>Welcome message</i>	1
<i>February meeting</i>	1
<i>January meeting</i>	2
<i>New interest groups</i>	2
<i>Gardening group</i>	3
<i>Theatre group outing</i>	3
<i>Mixed Crafts & Pottery</i>	4
<i>Golf group</i>	4
<i>Culture Club</i>	5
<i>Dates for your diary</i>	5
<i>Guide to interest groups</i>	5
<i>Interest group contacts</i>	6
<i>Royston U3A Committee</i>	6

Mike Levy



Grand Designs at Wimpole Hall

The changing face of Wimpole Hall over the centuries was highlighted at our first talk of the year.

Veronica Bennett described how the site of the original mediaeval manor house was transformed into a grand country residence in the late 17th century. That was just the beginning as over the years Wimpole Hall was the subject of various elaborate makeovers from baroque to neo classical, styled according to the fortunes of its owners.

Notable architects to have left their mark include James Gibb who re-modelled Wimpole in the 1700s, constructing a library big enough for the collection of 50,000 books, 350,000 pamphlets and 40,000 prints owned by

Edward Harley, 2nd Earl of Oxford.

Although the collection was sold to pay off the earl's debts, Wimpole's library is still impressive today, with its 9,500 volumes ranking in the National Trust's top ten libraries.

In its heyday Wimpole Hall attracted grand visitors including Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, but in the 1870s its great days as a private house came to an end.

The future looked uncertain at a time when underused country houses were under threat, but rescue came in 1938 when Wimpole Hall was bought by Captain

Veronica Bennett

George Bambridge and his wife Elsie, daughter of Rudyard Kipling. They turned it back into an elegant and attractive family home and when Elsie died in 1976 she bequeathed the home she loved to the National Trust.

'in its heyday Wimpole Hall attracted grand visitors including Queen Victoria and Prince Albert'



Getting new groups into gear

Plans are underway for a host of new groups - and members should be tempted because they include a curry club and pudding club!

With membership numbers soaring to 430 the committee has been looking at starting a variety of new groups for our expanding Royston U3A.

They include a local history group which is about to start, a pudding group with demonstrations of pudding making through the centuries and a meditation group meeting in The Barn.

Plans are also being investigated for a flower arranging group, more fitness groups including walking netball, and a curry club where members would face the challenging task of choosing which restaurant to eat out at once a month.

Another idea is for a shed group mainly aimed at men involving woodwork, metalwork, repairs and sharing tools - needless to say the search is on for the owner of a large shed!

A ukulele group is waiting to get up and running but needs a teacher. Plans are also being discussed for a cinema group and a buddy support group.

As always group leaders are needed to get new groups off the ground as the continuing success of Royston U3A relies on the skills and experience of its members.

"We have all these plans and ideas for new groups but we can't achieve them all unless more members offer to help," said Chairman Jackie Gellert. "If you're enthusiastic and would like to play a more active part in Royston U3A please get in touch."

If you're interested in helping new groups or have any ideas for future groups email Groups Co-ordinator Reg Hounsell at regroystonu3a@gmail.com

'group leaders are needed to get new groups off the ground'



A garden for all seasons at Anglesey Abbey

Spring was in the air for Gardening group members at their February meeting when Anglesey Abbey's assistant head gardener David Jordan took them through the four seasons.

He started with the drifts of snowdrops for which the gardens are renowned as Anglesey Abbey has 300 snowdrop varieties – one of the finest collections in the country. But the gardens are spectacular throughout the year, from the sea of tulips and spring bulbs, sweeping herbaceous borders and scent of roses in summer to the late burst of colour from dahlias in autumn.

David, who lives in Royston, also talked about the new skylight garden where visitors can lean back and relax against oak structures, and the spectacular winter walk lights event which was a sell-out success.

“David showed us some wonderful slides and is so enthusiastic about the gardens at Anglesey,” said Val Fairbanks who runs the group with leader Maureen Hersee.

The next talk on Thursday March 9 will be on ‘Getting the best from containers’ with Susan Greenbank. Meetings are at Market Hill Rooms, doors open at 2pm

for refreshments with the talk beginning at 2.30pm.

Please note: the outing to Kathy Brown's garden and Ascott House on May 11 has proved so popular that tickets are sold out.

For further details about the Gardening group contact Val at t.fairbanks@ntlworld.com

This variety of snowdrop is Galanthus nivalis 'Anglesey Abbey'



Seas of snowdrops at Anglesey Abbey

photo:nationaltrust.org.uk

The Red Shoes works its magic

We had a wonderful visit to Milton Keynes Theatre to see the ballet *The Red Shoes* and Matthew Bourne's production was a true spectacle.

As a teenager he loved the film of *The Red Shoes*, immortalised on screen by Moira Shearer, with its depiction of a group of people passionate about creating something magical and beautiful. He realised a 20 year ambition in bringing the story to the stage and the results are dazzling.

Preserving the film's Forties setting, his adaptation traces the rise and fall of a young

girl's dream of being the best dancer in the world. The conflict it causes between her love life and her career unhinges her - with tragic results.

The dancing, music, sets and costumes were magnificent and dramatic as well as very beautiful and it was an altogether super production to see.

Thank you to all Theatre group members for coming along and supporting the visit.

Deirdre Smith



Enjoying a great outing to Milton Keynes Theatre

The Red Shoes

Time to get weaving with arts and crafts

If you feel like having a go at something creative the Mixed Crafts and Pottery groups could be just the answer.

Rosie Cowsley and Sue Higginbotham run monthly Mixed Crafts sessions and so far members have tried their hand at crochet, paint-

ing flowerpots, making felt flower brooches, glass painting and patchwork.

The highlight of the next meeting on Thursday March 16 will be a demonstration of amigurumi – the Japanese art of crocheting small stuffed animals.

Also coming up will be sessions on calligraphy, decorating ceramic boxes and learning the techniques of Fair Isle knitting.

Fortnightly Monday Pottery sessions are proving so popular the group is currently full, but Rosie advises anyone interested to get in touch

Hard at work on their latest creations

to go on the waiting list.

The group, which includes several male potters, has created an impressive range of vases, bowls, plates and figurines.

“People are improving incredibly and they have such imaginative ideas,” said Rosie.

The Mixed Crafts group meets at 2pm on the third Thursday of the month in Room 11 of Royston Town Hall.

For further details about both groups email Rosie at rosie.cowsley@ntlworld.com



Swing, swear, look for the ball, repeat

'despite temperatures falling to zero, the group still carried on playing'

Royston U3A Golf group has been running successfully since August 2015 with a core turnout of 10 keen players of varying levels, meeting at Kingsway Golf Centre, Melbourn each Thursday afternoon to play nine holes for fun rather than competitively.

It has become a weekly 'must-do, not to be missed' event for the regulars who thoroughly enjoy their golf despite the occasional random bad shot.

The camaraderie is tremendous with everyone encouraging and

motivating each other to improve their game. Even the weather has proved to be no deterrent despite recent temperatures falling to zero degrees, the group still carried on playing.

Last year the group played a few away-days at nearby courses just to ring the changes and hope to do the same again this year.

So, if you used to play golf and want to get back into the swing then dust off your clubs and come and join us.

Ralph Gellert

Final thought...if you've forgotten what frustration is like, spend 10 minutes on a golf course!

photo: Karen Mahoney, Kingsway Golf Centre



Storm Doris beat us on the day!

Culture Club

I was so pleased to have been part of Royston U3A's outing in February to the Royal Festival Hall to hear Beethoven's Egmont Overture, Symphony No 7 and Violin Concerto.

The world class Royal Philharmonic Orchestra gave an impeccable performance with Principal Guest Conductor the world famous violinist Pinchas Zukerman.

All the pieces were sublime but the real treat came in the second half when Zukerman picked up his violin and began playing Beethoven's Violin Concerto. His musical genius, artistic

standards and outstanding technique are a marvel and it was spine-tingling listening to the pure emotion and sensitivity that this 68-year-old virtuoso produced on the violin. Even members of the orchestra sat transfixed by Zukerman's performance. I sat in amazement wondering how he could produce such wonderful sounds. The audience gave him a rapturous ovation.

Then the Royston U3A group, who all said it was a fantastic concert, assembled back at the coach for a safely driven journey home in ever thickening fog as we

approached Royston close to midnight.

What a wonderful evening from beginning to end. A big thank you to Annette Guttridge for organising this superb outing.

Jackie Gellert



Dates for your diary



March

Tuesday 28, 2pm
Royston Parish Church

Grazyna Tutak will give a talk on

THE RESTORATION OF CALDECOTE CHURCH

April

Tuesday 25, 2pm
Royston Parish Church

Christine Adams will give a talk on

MAY SAVIDGE MOVES HER HOUSE

May

Tuesday 30, 2pm
Royston Parish Church

Jason Middleton will give a talk on

THE PEARL - a gemstone admired throughout history

June

Tuesday 27, 2pm
Royston Parish Church

Veronica Bennett will give a talk on

SUTTON HOO ancient Anglo - Saxon royal burial site

Easy Guide to Interest Groups

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
MORNING		Fitness	Birding	Walking: Strollers	Book Club 2
		Seated Exercise	Book Club 3		
			Five Mile Walks		
			Patchwork		
AFTERNOON	Current Affairs	Book Club 1	Clay Shooting	Ballroom & Latin Dancing	Petanque/Boules
	French Conversation	Bridge for Beginners	Wine Appreciation 1	Gardening	Pilates
	Pottery (Hand Building)		Wine Appreciation 2	Golf	
	Tai Chi			Mixed Crafts	
EVENING			Jazz Appreciation		

For frequency and contact details about all interest groups please see the chart on the next page or check out our website for more information www.u3asites.org.uk/royston Announcements about future theatre trips and excursions will be posted on our website when details become available.

Interest Groups

Don't forget to check out our website for more information

GROUP	DAY	TIME	FREQUENCY	GROUP LEADER	CONTACT DETAILS
Ballroom & Latin Dancing	Thurs	4:45pm	Monthly 2nd / 4th Thurs	Jackie Gellert	jackieroystonu3a@gmail.com
Birding	Wed	8:30am	Monthly 1st Wed	Carol McGeoch	carol.mcgeoch@hotmail.co.uk
Book Club 1	Tues	2:00pm	Monthly 1st Tues	Deirdre Smith	deidreroystonu3a@gmail.com
Book Club 2	Fri	11:00am	Monthly Variable	Janet Burton	janet.a.burton@gmail.com
Book Club 3	Wed	10:30am	Monthly last Wed	Elizabeth (Lee) Towers	ladytowers@gmail.com
Bridge - Beginners & Improvers	Tues	1:45pm	Weekly	Mike Thrower	mike.thrower@ntlworld.com
Clay Shooting	Wed	2:00pm	Variable	Frank Martin	tf.martin@ntlworld.com
Current Affairs	Mon	4:00pm	Monthly Variable	George Karger	01763 245988
Excursions	Variable	Variable	Occasional	Annette Guttridge	annette@guttridge.org.uk
Fitness	Tues	9:30am	Weekly	Kathy Hounsell	kathyroystonu3a@gmail.com
Five Mile Walks	Wed	9:45am	Monthly 2nd Wed	Eric Heaton	ericroystonu3a@gmail.com
French Conversation	Mon	1:00pm	Monthly 1st / 3rd Mon	Elisabeth Goodman-Spain	elisabeth.ecgoodman@gmail.com
Gardening	Thurs	2:30pm	Monthly Variable	Val Fairbanks	t.fairbanks@ntlworld.com
Golf	Thurs	1:00pm	Weekly	Ralph Gellert	ralphroystonu3a@gmail.com
Jazz Appreciation	Wed	7:30pm	Monthly 2nd Wed	Reg Hounsell	regroystonu3a@gmail.com
Mixed Crafts	Thurs	2:00pm	Monthly 3rd Thurs	Rosie Cowsley	rosie.cowsley@ntlworld.com
Patchwork	Wed	10:00am	Monthly 1st Wed	Maureen Strugnell	maureen.strugnell@ntlworld.com
Petanque / Boules			Suspended till	Spring 2017	
Pilates	Fri	2:00pm	Weekly	Kathy Hounsell	kathyroystonu3a@gmail.com
Pottery (Hand Building)	Mon	2:00pm	Fortnightly	Rosie Cowsley	rosie.cowsley@ntlworld.com
Seated Exercise	Tues	10:45am	Weekly	Kathy Hounsell	kathyroystonu3a@gmail.com
Tai Chi	Mon	3:00pm	Weekly	Reg Hounsell	regroystonu3a@gmail.com
Theatre Trips	Variable	Variable	Occasional	Deirdre Smith	deidreroystonu3a@gmail.com
Walking: Strollers	Thurs	10:15am	Monthly 1st / 3rd Thurs	David Walker	djwalker3@aol.com
Wine Appreciation 1 & 2	Wed	2:00pm	Monthly Variable	Jackie Gellert	jackieroystonu3a@gmail.com

Proposed New Interest Groups:

Buddy Support : Film : Curry Club : Flower Arranging : Local History : Meditation : Puddings : Shed : Ukulele : Walking Netball.
To register an interest in any of these email Groups Co-ordinator Reg Hounsell at regroystonu3a@gmail.com

and finally....

If anyone has a physical disability and would like to get involved in a group activity, please contact Jackie Gellert, Chairman, in the first instance to see if suitable arrangements can be made.

Royston U3A Committee

Chairman
Vice Chair & Groups Co-ordinator
Treasurer
Secretary
Membership Secretary
Minutes Secretary
Publicity
Royston U3A News
Committee Member
Co-opted Committee Member
Co-opted Committee Member
Co-opted Committee Member
Non Committee:-
Web Management

Jackie Gellert
Reg Hounsell
Kathy Hounsell
Deirdre Smith
Marion Martin
Sylvia Fuller
Pam Dajda
Ralph Gellert
George Karger
Barbara Andrew
Karen Heaton
Eric Heaton

Rob Whatmough

jackieroystonu3a@gmail.com
regroystonu3a@gmail.com
kathyroystonu3a@gmail.com
deidreroystonu3a@gmail.com
marionroystonu3a@gmail.com
sylviaroystonu3a@gmail.com
pam@dajda.net
ralphroystonu3a@gmail.com
01763 245988
barbararoystonu3a@gmail.com
karenroystonu3a@gmail.com
ericroystonu3a@gmail.com

robroystonu3a@gmail.com



Get it in the News

If you're involved in a group why not publicise it in Royston U3A News?
Send in a short report of your latest meeting or outing - photos welcomed too -
to Pam Dajda at pam@dajda.net or phone 01763 246234