

Newsletter

Spire U3A Salisbury



February 2020

Issue 155



Cathedral Detail Peter Read

From The Editors Desk

This Newsletter is produced by Peter Read this month since Zelah is indisposed. I have produced a copy before so I know what to do. But it would be brilliant if someone in Spire U3A could take over this task. I have quite lot to do already I think.

Now the editor usually tells you the sort of weather you have just experienced. I will not both with that. Instead I will strive to add content and squeeze it all in. And I hope the content will be of interest to you.

There is a part about the Geology group to which you most welcome to join. Stuart has clearly planned well ahead. Unlike my groups which get there by the skin of my teeth.

Last Friday 7th Feb I had precious little idea of what was going to happen. But my 'students' came up trumps by showing us their homework. So for instance Roger Ellway had a super 3 minute Audio Visual show about the use of a free program called Fotosketcher. In this he showed the original photograph which the cleverly merged into an image processed in Fotosketcher. The results are quite artistic but it does need the operator to know what that means. We then looked at the Fotosketcher Blog. This has the latest news on this program and many examples of its use.

Also included is a page about a trip to the British Museum organised by another U3A. Well worth while if only to get a day in London.

My sister also belongs to Saxmundham U3A and one of her groups is short story writing. So I have included one of her interesting stories. How she does this is beyond me. She has always be enigmatic. She now has an OU Degree even.

Change.

Through our lives change has happened and we have embraced all. But as we get older we resist changes preferring the old comfortable ways. There is not much point in learning new things.

ONWARD group is my small attempt to hold back this tendency. We shall be actively looking for Change. Looking for something different and novel.

There are many tools to help us on the Internet and we will make full use of these.

The technicalities of modern life is daunting to many of us and this also something I want to tackle.

Peter Read 501218

Geology Group Programme to June 2020

February 18th Field Trip. City Wall (Exeter Street Section) followed by Cathedral Tour, led by Phil Whitemore. Meet at No.20 at 10.00 or by Video Display in the Cathedral Cloisters, at 10.45. Ending with lunch in the Refectory around 12 noon. (A table will be reserved for us.)

March 17th Indoor Study Session 10.00 to 12 noon. The Cretaceous Period, to include Chalk and Flint formation. Local geology. Practical work with stereo microscopes.

April 21st Field Trip. Harnham Chalk Pit and other local chalk exposures. Meet at No.20 at 10.00.

May 19th Indoor Study Session 10.00 to 12 noon. Minerals. General study to include classification systems. Followed by practical work - hardness testing per Mohs' Hardness Scale and other methods to assist identification - i.e. streak colour, flame tests and specific gravity measurement.

June 16th Field Trip. West Somerset coast at East Quantoxhead, reached via Sandstone Quarry near Williton. Meet at No.20 at 08.00 for 08.30 departure.

Country House Visiting

Some years ago Spire boasted three separate groups that visited the many country houses within striking distance of Salisbury. They were very popular but after a while all the members then had seen them all. Now is the time for a revival of this concept.

Pertinent to which I had an email about a country house nearby that want us to visit. Below is their request.

I hope you don't mind me getting in touch, I noticed on your website that you arrange outings and group visits for your U3A members and I thought Avington Park might be of interest to you.

Avington Park is a privately owned statley home in Hampshire, located 5 miles from Winchester in the beautiful Itchen Valley. Described by William Cobbett as "one of the prettiest places in the County".

The house is first mentioned in the Domesday Book with a fascinating history, playing host to Charles II

and George IV. The house boasts wonderful rooms – the beautifully painted Main Hall, the Library overlooking the south lawns, adjoining and leading onto a unique pair of Conservatories, the old Dining Room and the Ballroom upstairs with a magnificent gold plasterwork ceiling and painted panels – yet Avington retains the atmosphere and warmth of a family home.

We welcome groups throughout the year by appoinment and can tailor the catering to suit your time of visit and budget. Please find attached further information.

If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

*Kind regards, Amy
Avington Park, Winchester*

Hampshire, SO21 1DB

01962 779 260

enquiries@avingtonpark.co.uk

www.avingtonpark.co.uk

So if you want an interesting way of spending a day in the company of like minded folk then all you need to do is talk to a Committee member and they will make a signing on form. All you need to do is to get together with signed up members and decide which house to visit and the dates to do this. Being a member of National Trust or English Heritage helps. PR

Georgina and the Scratch

By Sue Thompson

Georgina stood staring at the mark, she was shaking with anger and felt very hurt. Her lovely new car, her prized possession was scarred and no longer perfect. She took her phone from her pocket and made a call.

"Hello Ted, it's Georgina Parker here."

"Yes I'm fine, how are you?"

"Well not actually I'm not fine, I'm furious. I'm living in Mum and Dad's house now and my car has been vandalised.

Ted replied he was sorry to hear that, he asked a few more questions and then said he would be round immediately.

Ted Jones, had been her dad's detective Sergeant and for many years had been almost part of their family. She had had an enormous crush on him for most of her teenage years, he had never shown any signs of noticing her. Georgina had met up with him at the funeral, where she was pleased to note his promotion to detective chief inspector.

Georgina, after looking up and down the road several times and stroking her poor scarred car, went back up the front path and into her front door.

Over the road her irate neighbour watched from behind some very fancy net curtains.

Half an hour later Georgina's doorbell rang and she opened the door to a young man, dressed smartly in a dark grey suit with a white shirt and a very flamboyant

"Hello Georgina, nice to see you again, even if the circumstances are distressing"

"Yes, it's lovely to see you too Ted. Come in, or do you want to see the damage first?"

"No, I think I need to have a chat first, any coffee or tea on the go" Ted smiled and Georgina felt a pang, he reminded her of times when her life was exciting, everything was new and she had felt safe and protected by family.

Georgina led the way into the kitchen at the back of the house and offered him tea or coffee. He asked for coffee and while she was making it, Ted

was wandering round the house making the odd comment about the alterations she had made.

"You haven't changed it much," he said," I still get the same cosy family feeling here, I used to love it when your mum made me stay for supper after I had driven your dad home. She was lovely, your mum."

Coffee made and packet of biscuits opened the two of them sat at the kitchen table and ted got out his notebook.

"What is the nature of the vandalism, Georgina?" he asked.

"There is a big white mark down the side of my new car. It's parked outside on the road. I had to leave it there because of the builders had parked the skip right across the driveway."

"Have you any idea who might have done this?"

"Take your pick "she said "there is a man over the road who came over yesterday and wanted me to move the skip, he really told me off, said his wife couldn't get her car out. Then there is my friend Beth who was almost green with envy when she saw

the car, but I very much doubt its her, she is too nice to think of doing anything so spiteful. My boyfriend's ex-girlfriend is known to exact revenge on you if you get in her way and then there are the jobs who were messing about in the skip and I had to tell them off, they did get quite abusive. So you see a lot to choose from"

"Hmmm yes there are. Who shall we start with?"

Georgina replied that the man over the road was probably the easiest because he was nearby. So the two of them finished their coffee and went out the front door. Walking around the car Ted wandered around to the driver's side to check the damage.

The mark was about a quarter of an inch wide and looked sticky, Ted touched it gently with his forefinger, the mark smudged, he rubbed harder and it faded. Taking out his handkerchief he rubbed at the mark, it disappeared! He rubbed a bit more with his finger and sniffed it, frowning he turned to Georgina and said.

"I might be wrong, but I think this is toothpaste!"

British Museum visit 24 February 2020

We have arranged a visit to London on Monday, 24 February, so that we can take advantage of the discount of £10.00 per person which the British Museum offers to Senior Citizens for admission to its special exhibitions on Monday afternoons, and wonder whether any of you would like to join us. The exhibition in question is “Troy: myth and reality” (see www.britishmuseum.org/exhibitions/troy-myth-and-reality for further details). Even if you don’t want to see the exhibition, you would be welcome to come for the ride, and “do your own thing”: for instance: there is an exhibition of the treasures which were found in Tutankhamun’s tomb at the Saatchi Gallery (see www.saatchigallery.com for further details). We are leaving it to you to book your own tickets for the Tutankhamun exhibition, and any other events; and there are many other galleries and museums you might like to visit.

We are leaving Tesco’s (Blandford) PROMPTLY at 8 am, and expect to be dropped at the Montague Place entrance to the British Museum at about 11.30; and leave London at 4 pm. Please could you meet us at the Montague Place entrance at 3.45, so we can check that you are all there. We are

also calling at the Millstream Coach Park, Salisbury, at 8.45 am to collect passengers there, so please could you let us know whether you’ll be joining the coach at Blandford or Salisbury.

The cost of TRAVEL on this excursion is based on 30 people travelling in the coach, and is £23.50 per person (it might be a bit more or a bit less depending on the number of people who come); so please DON’T send any money YET:

Coach are £22.00

Entry to exhibition £10.00

Tip for the driver £1.50

Total £33.50

It is IMPERATIVE that you book in advance so that we can keep an eye on numbers; and please would you let us know whether you would like to come by 18 JANUARY: we know, from past experience, that we have to book early to take advantage of the BM’s discount for Senior Citizens.

Please would you let us know your land line, and mobile phone, telephone numbers so we can keep our contact lists up-to-date.

We regret we cannot return cheques, or refund payments; but we MIGHT be able to “sell” your place to someone else.

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New Members Meeting 6th Feb

A meeting to tell new members how Spire works. 10 new members were present in the luxury of the Grasmere Hotel. In addition most of the Committee were there to assist.

John Holt Chairman introduced everyone and then asked Stuart Robson Hon Treasurer to explain our costings. He gave members a new Gift Aid form to allow Spire U3A to get money from the government.

Then Peter Read Vice-chairman showed members the depths of the Spire U3A website. There many parts here that some Committee members were not fully aware of. This applied particularly to the Links



to U3A sites for instance the Virtual U3A. *'The Virtual U3A or vU3A is like a local U3A Group except that its activities take place on the Internet.'*

An important target group for the vU3a is older people who are isolated through location, illness or immobility - but all are welcome. We have members from around the world.'

Other links go to very useful places for help in things like tax, stair lifts, household quotes and some health sites.

The link to the U3A Anniversary Song with music amused members. It was even suggested that we should sing this at the start of our coffee morning meetings.