

Archive of ssu3a Core Meetings 2023

11th December 2023

Subject: Our Christmas Party.

This was our annual Christmas celebration. There was music and fun activities accompanied by the usual festive goodies.

We were tested by one of Pam's quizzes, Wlod provided the music and Jeanine and friends provided an entertaining slant on *The Twelve Days Of Christmas*.

13th November 2022

Subject: **Local Place Names**

Speaker: Dr. Richard Churchley



Richard used his obviously extensive knowledge to explain the etymology of place names, and contrasted them with local folk explanations. He showed how we could draw inferences about local topology and activities from the names that places have acquired. He explained the differences between names of Saxon and Viking origin, and how they spread across the country. He finished with a question-and-answer session where some local names of interest to the audience were discussed.

11th October 2023

Subject: **Shakespeare And Me.**

Speaker: Jenifer Stone



This was not so much a talk as a one-woman-show; launching straight into part of the

prologue from Henry V, Jenifer captured her audience, and never let us go!

Using a mix of personal anecdotes and illustrative excerpt from Shakespeare, Jenifer told us, with great enthusiasm, about her life in the theatre, both as an actor, and back-stage, and unfolded the story of her growing appreciation of Shakespeare.

12th September 2023

Subject: Gardening and Climate Change

Speaker: Howard Drury.

Howard gave us some examples of how climate change affects ecology, and expressed his views about the causes and possible remedies for climate change.

14th August 2023

Subject: **A Nostalgic Trip Down The High Street**

Speaker: Nigel Metcalfe



Nigel defined 'nostalgia' as "The older you get, the better the past seems". Judging by the reaction of the audience, he was not far off the mark.

Using well researched slides and video, Nigel began by looking at a typical High Street of 1950; the shops and services evoked many murmurs of recognition from the audience. He then went back to 1910, and looked at how some familiar names started and developed, and, in many cases, have disappeared from the High Street. He concluded his informative and engaging talk with a few adverts that definitely wouldn't be acceptable these days!

10th July 2023

Subject: The History of Horse Racing

Speaker: Chris Pitt. Author, and former BBC Radio WM Correspondent and Chair of Midland Racing Club.



Chris spoke about the history of the horse racing in the local area, covering the local race-tracks and famous horses and jockeys who ran on them. He began with the track in Solihull, in 1780, and brought us up to the present day, covering Knowle, Sutton Park, Aston Park, Shirley Park and other locations well known to the Members present.

Much of the talk was, naturally, aimed at horse racing enthusiasts, but Chris included several humorous anecdotes that went down well with his whole audience.

12th June 2023

Subject: **Our Annual General Meeting**

Our Chair presented his report on the past year: Read a transcript of his report.

After the formal business a selection of Interest Group Leaders gave 5 minute presentations on their activities.

9th May 2023

This was a celebration of the coronation of King Charles III.



11th April 2023

Subject: **The Millennium Way.**

Speaker: Barry Durman



The Millennium way is a 100 mile trail in the Heart of England, with over 40 short and medium circular walks branching off it. Barry is the chair of the voluntary organisation that manages the Millennium Way, and told us about the history of the organisation and how the trail was created.

We were given an overview of each of the circular walks, learning how they try to support local businesses along the routes (especially pubs and tea-rooms!).

Maps and very detailed descriptions of the main trail and the circular walks are on the organisation's web-site, and are kept up-to-date by volunteer wardens who check the footpaths frequently.

The talk was well received; one member commenting "I had no idea we had such as wonderful resource on our doorstep."

13th March 2023

Subject: Jane Austin's Warwickshire Family.

Speaker: Sheila Woolf



Most people associate Jane Austen with Hampshire and the South of England, but her connection with Warwickshire was strong. By examining Jane's family in this region Sheila showed us that she was deeply influenced by their stories when composing her novels.

In her 50 minute talk, Sheila held the audience's interest with her deep knowledge of her subject, speaking without notes and with plenty of illustrative slides.

Sheila is Chair of Stoneleigh History Society, and occasional Tour Guide at Stoneleigh.

13th February 2023

Subject: **Treasure Islands - Exploring the Unknown Hebrides.**

Speaker: Roger Butler

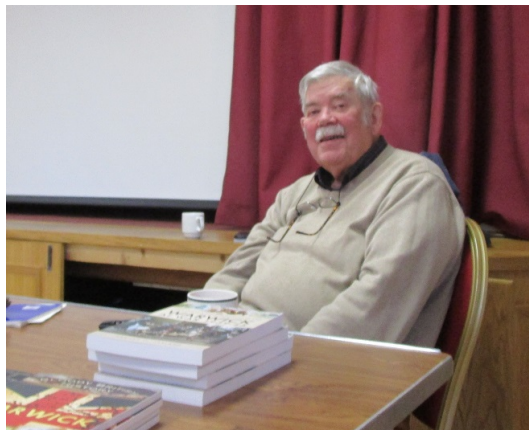


We were taken on a photographic journey through the Hebrides, from Isla to Barra, via Jura, Eigg and many of the other small islands. It is said that Scotland can have four seasons in one day - Roger showed how the Hebrides can have four seasons in an hour! Using beautiful photographs he showed us the flora, fauna and especially the spectacular geology of the islands. We also learned about the extraordinary conditions that the inhabitants of the islands endured and how it has changed in the last 40 years.

9th January 2023

Subject: **Warwick 1900 to 2010**

Speaker: Graham Sutherland. Author and Tour Guide.



Speaking without notes, Graham recounted many instances of the evolution of Warwick's buildings and streets over a period of 110 years. His well-illustrated talk used 'before and after' photographs to show that despite many changes, if you look carefully, there is still much evidence of Warwick's history to be discovered.

Graham included many amusing diversions - including how he became official beer (and pizza) taster!