



STOWMARKET AND DISTRICT LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN RETIREMENT

U3A

(UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE)

Registered Charity No. 1002987

Newsletter No. 17

October 2007

From our Chairman :-

Dear members

As you are all aware in September was the Annual General Meeting. I must say that I was a little disappointed with the attendance as we could only muster seventy two members out of a total of one hundred and seventy-five, rather a low figure in response to the advanced notification, also with very few apologies sent. We are a democratic organization and this is your opportunity to the put forward your views and wishes to the committee that you elect, there were one or two points raised which will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Your committee was also sad to see that more people did not stay to watch the presentation by the computer group. This was a great opportunity to see some of the work of one of our many groups and the standards that can be attained within the U3A movement, and indeed what the whole objective of our organization is all about.

From the Retiring Secretary :-

I am writing this as our new Secretary has been in Hospital going through a lengthy course of intravenous antibiotic injections. Other than that he is very bright and alert, and very keen to take up the reins as had been planned.

Our numbers keep growing and I am taking on the task of trying to encourage more and new groups. That is what makes this organisation so wonderful, especially for those who have a keen interested but do not want to become bogged down with the hard discipline of serious study. Yes, we enjoy learning about new things and finding out about much that we really didn't know about before.

At the AGM I promised to reveal the answers to What I Carry with Me , yet when it came to the pinch I omitted some of the answers so here is the full list :-

- 1) Calves 2) Pupils (eyes) 3) Palms 4) Drums 5) Soles
- 6) Lids 7) Feet & hands 8) Tulips & Iris 9) Ten-dons
- 10) Nails 11) Mussels (muscles) 12) Inn Steps (insteps) 13) Temples
- 14) Hart (heart) 15) Arms

It really was not so hard - was it ?

Philip Weir

Since the last Newsletter :-

July :-

Unfortunately I missed the talk by Mrs Margaret Grimwade on Otters, Urchins and Orchids - Wild life in the West Highlands of Scotland but all the reports that I have had show that this was another extremely interesting show and well worth coming to see and hear.

August :-

On the Wednesday the 1st we met at Abbott's Hall for a garden party Get -to-know-you . The weather being good and with some 60 in attendance we had a very satisfactory day. A competition to solve anagrams of flower names and to resolve questions about what we carry around with us.

The excursion planned for Wednesday the 15th had to be cancelled because there were so few who signed up. This was, of course, very disappointing - so perhaps in future we may repeat the Garden Party instead of the usual outing.

September :-

And now for :-

October :-

Mr Charles Garland's talk is entitled From Vicar's Son to BBC Producer . This should prove to be a fascinating insight into the working of the BBC.

November :-

Pub Signs is the topic that Mr D Herring has chosen to treat us to on this occasion. It is surprising how much history is linked into this subject.

December :-

This meeting will be our Christmas Luncheon - as last year. Notices detailing the arrangements will be posted on the notice board in November.

January :-

Pip Wright is set to enthral us with the story of The Transportation of Suffolk Criminals . As we all know Pip is an enthusiastic speaker with a good sense of humour.

Activity Groups :-

Archive Film :-

If you enjoy relaxing in comfort and in good company, going back in time by viewing The Way We



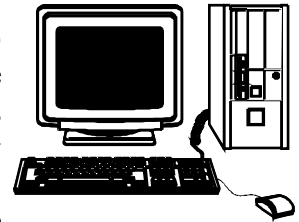
Were , and other films then this could be for you. We have room for one or two more and you will be made welcome.

Eric Adamson

01449 676 446

Computer Group:-

The main Computer Group meetings continue to take place at Woodfield Bowls Club thanks to the hospitality of Harold and Irene.



At the July meeting we welcomed back Chris Burslem of *OnLine Paper*. This visit will be remembered, not so much for the generous gifts of paper samples, but for the exquisite photographic prints displayed. Chris showed us photos from many sources, making use of his papers, with a wide variety of subject matter. Contrasted with gentle child portraits and flower studies were the dramatic pictures associated with the *Scottish Widows* advertising campaign.

In August Anne Scarff, senior mistress from Stowupland High School introduced us to some of the mysteries of modern school computing. She described the school's facilities, the curriculum and the challenges facing pupils and teachers. She has generously made arrangements for us to visit the school as part of our next year's programme.

The September meeting featured some of the students who have been learning *Photoshop* with Roy. Only a small number from Roy's four groups were brave enough to take part, but they supplied us with a range of interesting mini tutorials on various aspects of this highly rewarding program. We are greatly indebted to Roy for this long term teaching project and for his willingness to share his expertise on this and other occasions.

Future meetings will feature the creative activities of several of our members and all will be involved in our annual Christmas project.

Sadly we remember Jack Stobart, one of our longest serving members who has recently passed away. His outstanding regular attendance, was once rewarded with a certificate and his banners and posters were a customary feature. Jack was one of the four founder members when I joined the Computer Group in August 1999. We will miss him.

On a happier note, the group meets jointly tomorrow with computer group members from Hadleigh at a celebratory party to commemorate the 25 years of our wonderful organisation. Three cheers for the U3A!
Wendy Morgan

01473 824 237

wendy @paddocks9.plus.com

<http://wendywhitecat.wordpress.com/>

Country Strolls:-

Shorter:-

With summersuns waning and autumnal feelings in the air we continue to enjoy our 3 mile walks with good attendances.



Our annual whole day out took place in July - the venue again being Bramford Meadows. The weather was just perfect and our picnic relaxing. Someone, (and we ll not say who) relaxed so well that she nodded off! Well, Why not, indeed?

Our 3 mile (approx.) walks are on the 2nd and 4th Fridays in the month, always finishing with a refreshing cuppa, and perhaps a coffee cream cake! At a suitable tea shop, of course.

If you would like to join us please ring :-

Joyce Walden 01449 615 591 or
Joyce Markwell 01449 613 702

Longer:-

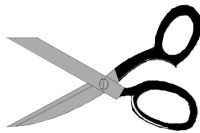
The number of people in our group has grown to a healthy 20, most of whom have enjoyed several walks with us. We are steadily increasing the distance and pace and have only been rained on once so far! There are so many lovely local walks which keeps car travel down to a minimum but we hope to venture further afield occasionally.

Contact numbers:

Andrea Burton: 01449 774 869
Jenny Rogers 01449 737 847

Card Craft Group:-

Making one's own cards is becoming ever more popular and many more skills are being used in following this hobby. We have a reasonable sized group who work together learning many new skills. Help and appreciation of the work done is always there to be found. We welcome anyone who would like to join us in this absorbing and satisfying hobby.



Normally we meet on the second Tuesday afternoon of the month at 2.00 pm.

Liz Weir 01449 676 528

Discussion Group:-

The programme this season was decided by the group and our first meeting proved the choice has been very appropriate. Our discussions are good humoured and lively and indeed range widely.



However we would welcome new members to expand our range of opinion and ideas. We meet on the second Tuesday morning of the month at 10.00 am. For further information please ring Philip Weir 01449 676 528

Entertainment (Theatrical):-

Music - There is a division between popular and serious music. The popular music stands the test of time, perhaps Mozart and Beethoven could be the most successful popular composers. Music on stage, is in the operas born in Italy in the late 1500 s. This form lead to operetta and the American Musical.



Dance started with religious ritual. The style in the west is ballet. There is, of course, ballroom, which today covers many styles of dance movements.

Theatre - Drama started by the ancient Greeks with open air theatre, which has lead to plays many taken from the world of books and romantic travel.

Variety - This was mostly started in the taverns, then in the Music Halls and on to the Variety theatre. Radio and TV have reduced the once popular family visits to theatre and End of Pier Shows. Music hall and Variety survives in revue and cabaret.

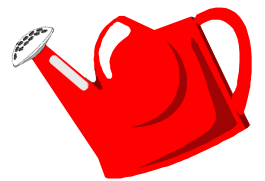
Cinema has been superceded by TV. It was the great popular art form from the 1900 s. In the 1930 s & 40 s long queues were common sights outside cinemas all over the world.

In our entertainment group we cover all these aspects and welcome anyone who cares to join us, with chat and a cup of tea. Contact:-

Joan Varley 01449 612 767

Gardens and Things:-

July The group hired a coach and set off for Scotsdale Nurseries in the heart of Cambridge area. After a pleasant hour drive we arrived at a well presented all under one roof type of garden emporium



With all nature of things for the gardening enthusiast we spent the best part of four hours and I doubt if we saw anything twice. Even the restaurant was well appointed and very reasonable in price and the plants were set at an affordable level.

August Planned to visit Eco centre Swaffham unfortunately the venture did not take place though lack of support, which was most disappointing, maybe we will look at the future again sometime and combine it with something else in the area.

September Madingley Hall Cambridge

We seem to be exploring further a field this day and went back to Cambridgeshire University for a very instructive talk by the head of gardens department, this was a talk by person who knew his subject and could also make it interesting. Two hours past with amazing speed, we only wish that we could store that volume of information, we were all impressed. The group then returned home via Anglesey Abbey and spent a pleasant two hours on site either visiting the house or gardens, and finally returned home for about 4 pm

October Planed visit the a vineyard in Suffolk

November Will be our annual meeting in doors to plan next years programme 10.00 am Woodfield bowls club on the 15 November

Harold Turner

01449 676 882

Genealogy Group:-

I have more than twenty names of people who say that they are interested in forming a group. We had a volunteer convener, but unfortunately she is leaving us because of family problems. Now surely there is someone who would be willing to get this popular hobby group up and going. If you think you might do this very interesting task please have a word with me or one of the committee.

Philip Weir

01449 676 528



Grub Club:-

This popular group is very active and going strong. A list of events is posted on the notice board each month Contact

Angela Bentley

01449-780274



Keep Fit :-

This small group is meeting again this winter and is always looking out for new members.

Pauline Taylor

01449 678 954



Music Appreciation (1):-

Our monthly meetings are suspended at the moment due to building work at our venue.

Members will be advised when we are ready to start again.

Meetings are usually held from 10.00am to 12.00 noon on the third Tuesday of the month. If you have transport and would like to join us, you will be made very welcome.



Eric Adamson

01449 676 446

Music Appreciation (2):-

Unfortunately due to ill health this group has been in abeyance for some time. However Connie is now somewhat better and has the hope of getting this group on the road again in January. So, if you are interested please give her a ring and let her know that you would like to support her and attend in January. In the meantime we all wish her good progress in regaining her active good health again.

Connie Ruegg

01449 674 673



Myths and Legends:-

We have started this new season with a slight change of tactics. The first half of each meeting will consider various Signs and Symbols related to a particular subject and this is to be followed by a story (mainly from a CD) telling us mythological tale(s) over 10-15 minutes, which we will then discuss and try to fathom some deeper meanings. We would welcome more members to our group to widen our experience and views - so if your could be interested please contact Philip Weir

01449 676 528



Poetry:-

Our group has spent the last two sessions looking at African poetry. Little did we realise what a wealth of poetry we were opening ourselves up to. The many styles and rhythms leapt off the page at us; we could sense the underlying emotions of a people who had long suffered repression. Many of the poems were sad, especially those written in the first half of the twentieth century.

Some were powerful descriptions of joy in the countryside around them, whilst others were of love and family relations. The more modern poets had produced works of protest, and also some of looking forward to a better world for all mankind.

We, now look forward to studying American and Worldwide poetry in our next sessions.

Helen Freeman

01449 613 060



In *On Aging* by Maya Angelou talks about the effects on aging with how her personality will never change. Maya expresses how she doesn't want anybody to cut her any slack or pity because she's getting older now.

On Aging

*When you see me sitting quietly,
Like a sack left on the shelf,
Don t think I need your chattering.
I m listening to myself.*

*Hold! Stop! Don t pity me!
Hold! Stop your sympathy!
Understanding if you got it,
Otherwise I ll go without it!*

*When my bones are stiff and aching,
And my feet won t climb the stair,
I will only ask one favour:
Don t bring me no rocking chair.*

*When you see me walking, stumbling,
Don t study and get it wrong.
Cause tired don t mean lazy
And every goodbye ain t gone.*

*I m the same person I was back then,
A little less hair, a little less chin,
A lot less lungs and much less wind.
But ain t I lucky I can still breathe in.*

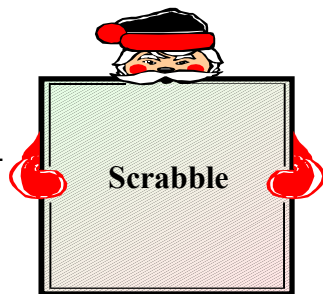
Scrabble Group:-

Time to introduce the Scrabblers! Ten in number meeting in three different Groups - two in the Stowmarket /Combs area, one in Earl Stonhm. The Sto/Combs Groups meet regularly - Group 1 on the 1st Wednesday of the month; Group 2 on the 2nd.

The Earl Stonham Group meets more frequently but has no set dates or times - meetings are arranged from week to week.

We have had a get-together of all the players in July of this year and had a very enjoyable afternoon hosted by the Earl Stonham Group. We hope to repeat the exercise at a later date.

So that's us; We are not ultra serious, or rigid or even 1st class players. We are just another Group oof people from U3A who get together, drink tea, chat - and yes- play a bit of Scrabble. If you wish to know more ring me on 01449 677265 or if unable to get through try my temporary no. i.e 01449 774625.
Sheila Dobey 01449 677 265



Town and Village History:-

Another season of exploration of our local villages has



been successfully completed and now we look forward to next years programme.

Anne Watsham

01449 672 706

U3A Suffolk and District Network:-

This is being written before the Autumn Academy takes place, so it can not be reported on, other than to say, following the success of last years effort, even more folk have signed up to attend. Indeed just about 200 students have enrolled and everything seems to be in order for another very successful day.

By the time you read this we will know for certain how our efforts have panned out.

U3A Central Office News:-

This is the twentyfiith year of the U3A in Britain and the fact is being celebrated by most of the U3As, with encouragement for Central Office. As you will already have taken note we celebrated the anniversary on The 1st of August. Not only that but our computer group was invited to join up with the Hadleigh Computer group for a joint celebratory party On Friday the 28th of September. This was due to the generosity and work of Wendy Morgan and her helpers. An enjoyable time was had by all and it signifys the aims and hopes of the U3A that each grouping should help and support each other.

Our thanks goes out to Wendy for her efforts in this direction



Art Appreciation :-

This very active and well supported group continues to prosper
Tony Taylor 01449 771 168



Birds, Bees & Butterflies:-

This group has been dormant for quite some time now. It was very popular and very active in it s day. Surely there is someone amongst us all who would like to see this working again and is prepared to do a little organising.

If you are the one please have a word with me and I will see what I can do to help you get started and to see the interest develope in this hobby. I feel sure that there are enough of us for this to be successful once again.

Philip Weir

01449 676 528



HALLOWE'EN

October 31st

THE correct name of this popular festival is All Hallow's Eve, being the vigil of All Hallow's Day, November 1st. The leading idea connected with this festival is that it is the time beyond all others when supernatural influences prevail. I can remember its celebration in Northern Ireland, where the custom had a strong hold.

The girls and boys, but especially the former, endeavour to discover the probable course of their love affairs by means of nuts. Two are placed side by side on the bars of the grate to represent a pair of lovers, or if a girl has two suitors she will name each nut after one of them, and place one in the middle to represent herself. If the nut cracks or jumps away the lover it represents will prove unfaithful, but if two blaze together they will be married. Mr. Charles Graydon has put the idea into verse charmingly thus :

*These glowing nuts are emblems true
Of what in human life we view;
The ill-matched couple fret and fume,
And thus in strife themselves consume.
Or from each other wildly start
And with a noise for ever part.
But see the happy happy pair,
Of genuine love and truth sincere,
With mutual fondness while they burn,
Still to each other kindly turn ;
And as the vital sparks decay
Together gently sink away ;
Till life's fierce ordeal being past,
Their mingled ashes rest at last.'*

These customs have given the date the name of ' Nutcrack Night ' and are widely spread over the British Isles, as Burns wrote in his ' Hallowe'en ' :

*The auld guidwife's well-hoordit nits
Are round and round divided,
And mony lads and lasses'fates
Are there that night decided.
Some kindle, couthie, side by side
And burn the gither trimly ;
Some start awa wi' saucy pride
And jump out owre the chimly.'*

Another favourite amusement of Hallowe'en is bobbing for apples floating in a tub of water. No use of hands is allowed, and much sport is provided by the efforts of the soaked competitors to secure the elusive prize.

Democracy and Election Systems:-

Davud Chapman

01449 736 223

Needle Craft Group:-

Alicia beaton

01449 616 712

Smiling

Smiling is infectious
You catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today
I started smiling too.
I passed around the corner
And someone saw my grin,
When he smiled I realised
I d passed it on to him.
I thought about the smile
And realised it s worth
A single smile like mine
Could travel round the earth.
So if you feel a smile begin
Don t leave it undetected
Let s start an epidemic quick
And get the world infected.

The Computer s swallowed Grandma

The computer s swallowed Grandma
Yes, honestly, it s true
She pressed Control and Enter
And disappeared from view.

It s devoured her completely
The thought just makes me squirm
Maybe she s caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm.

I ve searched through the Recycled Bin
And files of every kind
I ve even used the internet
But nothing could I find.

In desperation I asked Jeeves
My searches to refine
The reply from him was negative
Not a thing was found Online .

So, if inside your In Box
My Grandma you should see
Please Scan , Copy and Paste her
In an e-mail back to me.

Valerie Waite, Belper, Derbyshire.

Our August garden Party

On Wednesday the 1st of August we met at Abbott s Hall to celebrate the twenty five years of the U3A in Britain.

The photographs show many of those who turned up to celebrate with us and a view of the spread put in front of us to partake of and to enjoy by Liz and her helpers.. There she is standing prominently in the first photo.

As a diversion two quizzes were organised the first consisted of cards spread about with anagrams of flowers on them to be deciphered and the second was to decide What I Carry with Me . The winner with a very commendable 37 out of 39 possible answers was Hazel Fields. As promised she was presented with a prize at the AGM in September. This was a florally decorated large plate made to be hung upon the wall..

The day was such a success that it has been suggested that a similar event should be held next August in place of the normal excursion out and this idea was generally accepted at the AGM.

Our thanks goes to the management of the Abbots Hall complex for their help and for allowing us the privilege of using their amenities.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

HALLOWEEN

To the Celts it was the beginning of the new year, marked by the festival of Samhain, which started as the old year ended on 31st October. *Samhain* or *Samhuin* (meaning 'end of summer') became the modern Irish-Gaelic and Scottish-Gaelic names for the month, referring also to the Christian feast of All Saints (1 November). In Scotland and Ireland, fires in houses were traditionally extinguished at the end of the old year and relit from the celebration bonfires.

Vestiges of the rituals associated with this time of the year survive to the present day in some of the practices associated with Hallowe'en (31 October) and Bonfire Night (1 November).

The Anglo-Saxons named it *Blotmonath* (blood month) or *Windmonath* ('wind month') the former because it was the time to butcher livestock to lay down salted meat for the winter, and the latter for obvious meteorological reasons. It was at this time of year that fishing stopped and boats were tied up for the winter, as the seas became too dangerous.

The Weather

Weather lore includes variations on 'if the ice in November will bear a duck then all the rest will be slush and muck' the implication being that the severity of the months ahead could be predicted by the weather in November. A cold November means a mild, wet winter. Judging by some of the regional variations of the rhyme, this predictive power of ducks is reputed to be at its peak on Martinmas (11th November).



Continued over the page

Whether the ducks are skating or swimming, November's weather is never thought of as kind. The English poet and humorist Thomas Hood (1799 - 1845) wrote these happy lines when reflecting on a foggy day in London:

*No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
No comfortable feel in any member
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds
November!*

Thomas Hood, 'No' (1844).

And the poet Ted Hughes (1930 - 98) described November as 'The month of the drowned dog' in his poem 'November' (1960).

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Some more silly notices from around the world

TEN QUESTIONS THAT SHOULD BE ANSWERED

- What if there were no hypothetical questions?
- Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard?
- If Barbie is so popular, why do you have to buy her friends?
- How deep would the ocean be without sponges?
- If one synchronized swimmer drowns, do the rest have to drown too?
- Why does Christmas come when the shops are so busy?
- Is French kissing just kissing in France?
- If space is a vacuum, who changes the bag?
- What was the best thing before sliced bread?
- Is it possible to be a closet claustrophobic?

**THIS IS THE
GATE OF
HEAVEN.
ENTER YE
ALL BY THIS
DOOR.**

(THIS DOOR IS KEPT LOCKED
BECAUSE OF THE DRAUGHT-
PLEASE USE SIDE DOOR.)

On a church door

*YOU HAVE
NO REASON
TO TRY
OUR
BEST
RESTAURANT*

Sign in an Indonesian
hotel restaurant

**ANTIQUÉ
TABLES
MADE
DAILY**

Sign by a roadside in America

**DO NOT
ENTER.
PLEASE
COME IN.**

Sign on a door at a hotel in America

**KEEP
AWAY
FROM
DAMP
AND
SUNLIGHT**

On a set of garden furniture