



STOWMARKET AND DISTRICT
LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN RETIREMENT
(UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE)
Registered Charity No. 1002987



Newsletter No 19

July 2008

From The Chairman:-

Thank you to those who came forward after my request asking for members to put out the chairs at our monthly meetings. Three couples volunteered and are doing a great job .

How many times have we heard the phrase “use it or lose it”? We have many members who, in their working life, had skills which are not used once they leave the work environment. This is a pity, because we are all part of an organisation that is always looking for help in its day to day activities. The many groups we have are keen to have new blood to make them even more attractive to join and new groups that need someone with that leadership that is so important for an active section. So don't be shy! Let your committee know and we will put you in touch with the required groups or help you to organize a new one

It was disappointing to see so few people take advantage of the U3A outing to Burghley House in June. Considering that we are 160 strong your committee thought that we would have filled the bus and that a waiting list would be required, but only 28 members finally took advantage of a well organized day out. The group had a wonderful day and dodged all the rain - thank you Philip for all your efforts.

Do not forget the Annual General Meeting is in September, so please keep the date clear 17th September at 2.30 pm at the United Reform Church Hall

Harold

From The Secretary:-

I am now into my ninth month as Secretary and can report that I'm finding it a most interesting and rewarding job. We had our last committee meeting at the end of April which was, as always, informative and stimulating. We were pleased to welcomed Helen Freeman onto the Committee for the first time but, reluctantly, accepted John Scott's resignation as Programme Secretary and from the Committee, effective after the July meeting. John's contribution was warmly recognised and the committee members thanked him for his valuable contribution. John has kindly organised a programme of speakers through to September next year and Helen and Dee Payne have volunteered jointly to take over the responsibilities for the programme organisation in the future. This still, however, leaves a vacancy for a member on the committee which hopefully can be filled at the AGM in September.

Following the success of our 'open day' in April plans are in hand to repeat the exercise later in the year - Wednesday 5th November (diary note for all group leaders). This will be advertised widely to encourage new members as well as the existing membership to visit.

Congratulations to Anna Pratt who has been featured on Anglia TV news receiving her certificate after taking part in a driving course for older drivers (Suffolk County Council 'Grand' driver initiative) in March.

Have you visited our web site yet (www.u3astowmarket.wordpress.com)? Recent enhancements allow more detailed information concerning groups' activities to be shown and group leaders are encouraged to take advantage of this new facility. You can send the information via the forms on the web or directly to me at peter@dakeyne.com. Currently full details of the Suffolk and District Autumn Academy are also posted. Since the launch of the site at the turn of the year and to the end of May there were almost 1800 'hits' (visitors who looked at the information) so we can assume that many more people know about us than may have done before! Things have been busy at the National Office of the Third Age Trust, notably there was an Extraordinary General Meeting in May where, amongst other things, a revision to the 'Memorandum and Articles of Association' of the U3A was agreed. See the full details at www.u3a.org.uk.

Finally, the U3A have published a new Book/CD package called 'Computer Basics for Seniors'. It's clearly aimed at those of you who may be a little apprehensive about computing and the internet but really want to learn, if only perhaps to keep up with the grandchildren. It's available for only £6 post free and I have a sample copy for you to have a look at before you buy.

Peter

Since the last Newsletter :-

February

Mr N. Woods gave a wonderful illustrated dissertation on 'Larger than Life: Nature seen through the Camera Lens'. Much of it showed us the wild life encouraged and supported in his own large garden and how he managed to achieve such excellent results. A great object lesson to us all on what can be achieved in our own little world.

March

This month we were told about the range of interest, work, and its organisation undertaken by the RED CROSS. A truly massive enterprise! Also the very strict limit it set on the behaviour and activities of its members. This was followed by a very up to date explanation on resuscitation methods made simple for the use of any citizen to give relief in an emergency.

April

Mrs D. Howlett, who has been collecting shells since being a young woman, told us of the growth and development of her great interest in shells i.e. 'Conchology' with a table full of specimens - examples of all sorts and from all over the world. This proved to be a thoroughly enjoyable and informative talk; one which should stimulate highly our future appreciation of this subject.

May

The talk given on 'Body language' by George Irvine was absolutely fascinating. Everyone found themselves completely taken up with the new sense of realisation of the things that they do unconsciously when meeting or talking to others. This was a first rate instructive talk.

June-

Our June outing to Burghley House was, unfortunately, not as well supported as we had hoped. Yet we had a very successful trip and those who came thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

And now for :-

July

'Weather Forecasting' is the topic for today. Something we all do to some extent or another.

Mr Terry Spalding will guide us to improve our understanding of the many factors that influence the British favourite subject of conversation.

August

Once again we are having a 'free' day out at Abbott's Hall. There will be refreshments and a couple of

quizzes (like last year) and probably a surprise visitor to entertain us as well. All members are invited and are welcome and we gather from 2.00 for 2.30 until about 4.00pm or so

September

This will be our annual AGM and will be followed by a novel TV item featuring one of our members and then a talk given by your editor on 'Is This What You Thought?'

October

Mr B. D. Gayton, the BBC Norfolk Gardener, will be speaking on 'The Weird & Wonderful World of The Plant Kingdom'. For anyone interested in gardens or gardening this should prove to be an extremely stimulating and inspiring event.

Activity groups :-

Archive Film :-

We meet at 2.30pm on the fourth Monday of the month, by kind invitation of the Rev d. Elizabeth Brown. With the imminent threat of Video Recorders (VCR) becoming redundant due to the non-manufacture of video tapes, we have recently obtained a DVD player. Hopefully then, the group will continue into the foreseeable future. For more information contact:-
Pat Leon 01449 615 409



Country Strolls:- Shorter

We always have a "whole day" out once a year, and this year we held it in June. We travelled to Bury St Edmunds; parked in the Meadow Car Park, and began a circular walk beyond the Abbey Gardens by the two rivers (The Lark and the Linnet), returning to the gardens for our picnic lunch and to admire the colourful flower beds - someone produced a bottle of wine !! Afterwards we had a short stroll around the rose garden area, all this in perfect sunshine and pleasant breezes. We now have to think about the future as the two Joyces wish to step down after organising these walks for almost 14 years. "Who will come forward to take over the reins?" we ask. We sincerely hope that someone will, as the group has always been very popular and full of fun. Offers or suggestions are eagerly awaited from existing members or even someone from the wider membership of our U3A.



Joyce Walden 01449 615 591
Joyce Markwell 01449 613 702

Country Strolls - Longer

We are a hardy lot!! One Friday we walked 4.5 miles with umbrellas up the whole way! There was no wind so the experience was not bad and the views over the summer countryside were wonderful. Please will members of our group mark the 1st and 3rd Fridays in their diaries and telephone me for details of our meeting time and place a couple of days before each walk.

Andrea Burton

01449 774869

Jenny Rogers

01449 737847

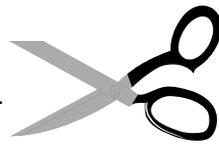
Card Craft Group:-

This season we have been able to spread out a little as we now meet in our residents lounge. We are well attended and cover a very wide spectrum of techniques in trying to develop this popular hobby.

We start the new season in September following our summer break and hope to be getting ready for the Christmas demand for attractive cards.

Liz Weir

01449 676 528



Discussion Group:-

We are now enjoying our summer break ready for the new season starting in September. Each meeting has been well attended this year and we have been fortunate in attracting some new members. Our programme for next year has already been set out and should prove to be equally lively as the one just completed. The opinions of others are always heard and appreciated. That is part of the fun. Yet again we are indebted to Mike and Mary for providing a place for us to conduct our discussions.

Philip Weir

01449 676 528



Gardens and Things:-

April. A full coach of U3A members left Stowmarket at 7.45 am and travelled to the Mecca of all gardeners, namely Wisley and arrived after a very comfortable journey of approximately 2 hours.

Our arrival heralded a bright but windy day and our efforts were well rewarded. We had the wonderful sight of a large range of flowers and trees at their best with acres of beautiful park land easily negotiable with the mobile



scooters, which were available free of charge with advanced request. With two levels and opened by the Queen only in 2007, the glass house was a real treat for the hot climate plants. This was something none of us had seen before and we were amazed at the variety. The food halls were also very reasonably priced and of good quality. By 4pm we were all ready for a sit down in the coach, arriving back in Stowmarket rather tired, but very satisfied with the day out, and such good value for money. Thank you Angela for yet another of your great days out.

May May saw the group journey into Norfolk for a day at the Blacksmiths Cottage nursery, tucked away in the country side near Dickleburgh, difficult to find for anyone going for the first time but well worth the effort. Whilst it is called a nursery, there are added attractions in the way of animals - everything from llamas, sheep, ducks to a rather aggressive crane. We kept our hands in our pockets as it moved freely among us. We saw a collection of exotic birds, plenty of partridge, storks and, tucked away, some very shy red squirrels. Although the gardens are still in the development stages there is already a large collection of plants, and judging by the plants being loaded in to the boots of our cars our party felt that the quality was very good and in most cases spoilt for choice. We had lunch at the nursery and this proved to be the right choice as the fare was excellent. Another good day out for this very popular group .

June It never fails to amaze the G&T members of the choice and variety of locations to visit in Suffolk. Our visit starting at the County Golf Club being a case in point. Stopping here for a coffee we went on to Fuller's Mill which was tucked away down a dusty track of some 300 yards. We came upon a green car park in the middle of nowhere to find the owner of the mill waiting. He gave us a guided tour of his 30 acres which are intersected by one river (River Lark which flows from the Bury St Edmund area right up to Kings Lynn) one fast flowing stream and one lake. The area is intersected by pathways winding in and out of the woodland setting and the whole journey round the park took some two hours including a potted history of the house, its origin and why it is called Fuller's Mill which doubled up as the old lock keepers house .We left at about 12.30 and proceeded to the Three Kings hotel where mine host efficiently served a selection of tasty dishes. Afterwards the party of 27 gathered at the Wyevale nursery in Bury St Edmunds to peruse a large cross section of gardening plants and hardware.

That is the programme so far for this year but we still have several outings to come, so watch the meeting notice boards for some more interesting days out.

Harold

01449 676 882

Myths and Legends:-

Our latest meeting was in June and we set up the programme for next year, starting in September. Yes, we are but a small group but our discussions are very lively and cover a very wide range of 'stories' which we all seem to enjoy greatly. New members will be made most welcome and their differing views sought.
Philip Weir 01449 676 528

Poetry:-

In our sessions since the last news letter report, we have studied the Irish poets Louis MacNeice and Seamus Heaney, Laurie Lee, Elizabeth Jennings, and the Rossetti's. Also poems written by poets born since 1935, the Liverpool poets, poetry written by women, and love poems from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

In each session we have found a wealth of mind stimulating work, which has led to some interesting discussions on what the poet was saying to us and the pictures they were painting in our minds. At the end of our afternoons we have listened to poetry on CD or tape often read by the poets themselves. We now look forward to looking at the work of the Romantics and Shakespeare, before our summer break



TO POSTERITY

By Louis MacNeice

When books have all seized up like the books in graveyards
And reading and even speaking have been replaced
By other, less difficult, media, we wonder if you
Will find in flowers and fruit the same colour and taste
They held for us for whom they were framed in words,
And will your grass be green, your sky be blue,
Or will your birds be always wingless birds?

Wine Tasting:-

The Wine Tasting group met for the first time on Monday morning April 28th. Eight tasters imbibed and two who could not attend enjoyed their tasting in the evening in their own home. We studied the Beaujolais region of France starting with a CD to introduce us to the region and different villages, customs and vineyards. Mrs Pat Hodgkins who leads wine tours kindly shared her expertise and introduced us to the art of tasting and comparing depth of colour, aroma and taste.

We tried the cru wines of St. Armour, Chiroubles, Fleurie, Regnie Brouilly and a cheap Beaujolais at £3:50. It seemed such a pity to spit them out! After an enjoyable and educational morning we planned our

second gathering for the evening of July 4th. It was decided that we should each bring a bottle of white wine from a different country and compare their delights.

Zoe Bystricky.
01449 676 220



U3A Suffolk and District Network:-

Again this year there will be another Autumn Academy (our third). It will be held on the Saturday 18th October. As usual they will be looking for some assistance with organising the car parking and the provision of refreshments. This on arrival, lunch time and on leaving. If you would be willing to help please have a word with Sally Taylor or ring Frances Lewis on 01638 713 155 as I am sure they will be very pleased to hear from you.

U3A Central Office News:-

The 'U3A News' is being distributed along with this. I do hope that you will read it carefully as it has many ideas and some of them may inspire you to attempt something new or perhaps feel like suggesting something that we maybe should, or would, like to do here. Should you have any bright appropriate ideas do let one of the committee members know

Other Groups and their contacts:-

Art Appreciation :-

Tony Taylor

01449 771 168

Computer Group:-

Wendy Morgan :

01473 824237:

wendy@paddocks9.plus.com



Democracy and Election Systems:-

David Chapman

01449 736 223

Entertainment (Theatrical):-

Joan Varley

01449 612 767

Grub Club:-

Angela Bentley

01449 780 274

Keep Fit :-

Pauline Taylor

01449 678 954

Music Appreciation (1):- (temporarily suspended)

Eric Adamson

01449 676 446

Music Appreciation (2):-

Connie Ruegg

01449 674 673

Needle Craft Group:

Alicia Beaton 01449 616 712

Scrabble Group:-

Sheila Dobey 01449 677 265

Town and Village History:-

Ann Watsham 01449 672 706

New Groups Starting :-

Bridge - Colin and Barbara Robertson are trying to get this started. They can be contacted on 01449 612 638

Genealogy -

There are more than 12 people who have expressed a desire join this group but, unfortunately it has been very hard to find someone willing to bring them all together. This is a great pity as the hobby becomes a total fascination for those who immerse themselves in it. At the time of writing we are pursuing various leads at we hope to achieve some success in the very near future.

Mahjong - Tony and Pat Ward are hoping to find some interest in this pastime and any help would be gratefully received. They can be found on 01449 720 422



Theatre Going group - John Chappell has been kind enough to try to organise this. There is definitely a lot of interest and hopefully he will get a lot of support from us all. He can be found on 01449 777 969



or at jonchapel@yahoo.co.uk

The August Meeting:-

Following the success of last year's effort we are repeating the format. We will be holding a 'Garden Party' at Abbots Hall on Wednesday the 20th of August from 2.30pm. We hope you will all come to enjoy the day. There will be refreshments and plenty of time to have a grand 'natter' with your friends, whilst having tea or coffee etc .



There will be two special events going on :-



1) Like last year there will be another, but different competition for you all to compete in and the answers will be given out at the AGM in September. The one with the most correct answers will be honoured and presented with a special award !!

2) We hope to have an entertainer who will wander amongst us, exhibiting his skill to our surprise and amazement. Who is he ? Ah! now that will be a secret you will only learn that on the day !!

Remember it is all totally free - we are not collecting any money whatsoever.

But we do ask you to sign the sheet today so that we can have a good idea of the numbers for whom to cater. We do not want to run out of nibbles!



These comments are taken from patients charts...

1. The patient refused autopsy.
2. The patient has no previous history of suicides.
3. Patient has left white blood cells at another hospital
4. Patient's medical history has been remarkably insignificant with only a 40 pound weight gain in the past three days.
5. She has no rigours or shaking chills, but her husband states she was very hot in bed last night.
6. Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.
7. On the second day the knee was better and on the third day it disappeared.
8. The patient is tearful and crying constantly. She also appears to be depressed.
9. The patient has been depressed since she began seeing me in 1993.
10. Discharge status: Alive, but without my permission.
11. Healthy appearing decrepit 69-year old male, mentally alert, but forgetful.
12. Patient had waffles for breakfast and anorexia for lunch.
13. She is numb from her toes down
14. While in ER, she was examined, x-rated and sent home.
15. The skin was moist and dry.
16. Occasional, constant infrequent headaches.
17. Patient was alert and unresponsive.
18. Rectal examination revealed a normal size thyroid.
19. She stated that she had been constipated for most of her life until she got a divorce.
20. I saw your patient today, who is still under our care for physical therapy.
21. Both breasts are equal and reactive to light and accommodation.
22. Examination of genitalia reveals that he is circus sized
23. The lab test indicated abnormal liver function.
24. Skin: somewhat pale, but present.
25. The pelvic exam will be done later on the floor.
26. Large brown stool ambulating in the hall.
27. Patient has two teenage children, but no other abnormalities

And these from Insurance claims:-

What gear were you in when the accident happened.? Answer : Reeboks and Wranglers

To avoid hitting the bumper of the car in front I hit a pedestrian

An invisible car came out of nowhere, hit my car, then vanished

The pedestrian admitted it was his fault as he had been knocked down before

I was hit by a stationery car travelling in the opposite direction

The gentleman behind me struck me on the backside. He went to rest in the bushes with just his rear end showing

I thought my window was down but I found it wasn't when I put my head through it

I knew the dog was possessive about the car but I would not have asked her to drive it if I thought there was any risk

I was backing my car out of the driveway in the usual manner, when it was struck by the other car in the same place it had been struck several times before

The accident happened because I had one eye on the lorry in front, one eye on the pedestrian and the other on the car behind

The guy was all over the road. I had to swerve a number of times before I hit him

Coming home I drove into the wrong house and hit a tree I don't have.

Being British is Confusing !!

*Being British is about driving a German car, to an Irish Pub, for a Belgian Beer, then traveling home, grabbing an Indian Curry on the way, to sit on Swedish furniture, and watch American shows, on a Japanese TV.
And the most British thing of all? - Suspicion of ALL things foreign.*

*Only in Britain can a Pizza get to your house faster than an Ambulance.
Only in Britain do supermarkets make sick people walk all the way to the back of the shop to get their prescriptions, while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.
Only in Britain do people order double cheeseburger, large fries and a Diet Coke.
Only in Britain do Banks leave both doors wide open and chain the pens to the counters.
Only in Britain do we leave cars worth thousands of pounds on the drive and lock up our junk and cheap lawnmowers in the garage.
Only in Britain are there disabled parking places in front of a Skating Rink !*

And then I found this :-

Being British is about tolerance, decency and the determination to talk about the weather on all occasions as well as a tendency, when a stranger stands on one's foot, to apologize.

Martin Bell

But then what has happened to our English language ?

What Have They Done To Our Words ?

The world of computers has taken many of our familiar, everyday words and given them completely different meanings !

A DISC used to be something that slipped when you hurt your back

A WEB was what a spider made and a RAM was a male sheep.

A NET was for fishing or to hold your hair in place and

A MOUSE was a furry little creature with whiskers.

BUGS and VIRUSES were something you caught

That made you ill, and CHIP went with fish.

A HACKER was someone with a bad cough

And a CURSOR was someone with bad language.

A LOAD went on a lorry and a BOOT went on your foot.

You found builders or caravans on a SITE

And you parked your car on a DRIVE.

A ZIP held your clothes together and FLOPPY meant limp.

You hung your washing on a LINE,

You sent a CARD at Christmas, and

a DESKTOP was the place for your blotter.

You called a butler or waitress a SERVER

And a religious artifact was an ICON.

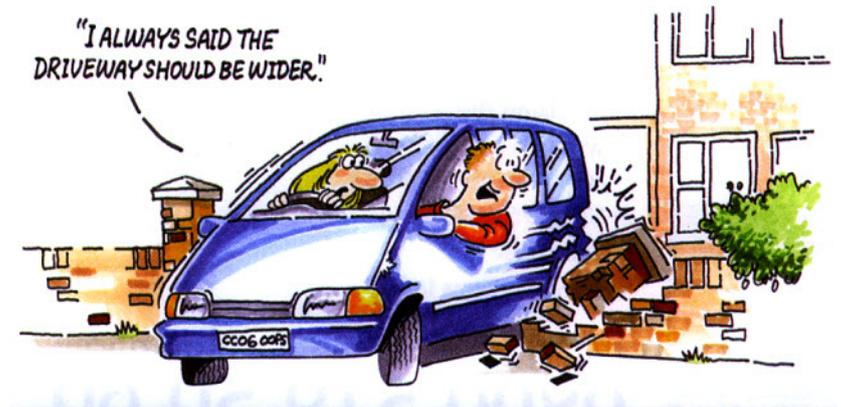
WALLPAPER brightened up a room and MOTHERBOARD was mum when she was fed up !

I saw this article by Raymond Briggs in the October issue of the 'OLDIE' and thought that it would amuse you ALL

You have to pity the poor tarts. What is there left for them to wear? How can they dress to catch the eye, and make it clear they are tarts, when every passing girl is dressed in a similar fashion? Waistlines have never been lower than they are today, and are now inches below the waist. This, then, reveals the inevitable roll of fat and navel pierced by some gimcrack ornament. And every time the young woman in question bends over, a lurid thong then generally oozes out over the welts of flesh above the 'waist' line... We thought we had mini-skirts in the sixties — little did we know! Six inches, seven inches, even eight inches above the knee? My! People wrote letters to the *Times*, and not just from dear old Tunbridge Wells. Now, skirts can no longer be measured by 'above the knee', they have to be measured by 'below the crotch'. And, as I have observed in my researches, are usually about level with it. From a distance, they look like those daring 'hot pants' that were once the fashion, but when you sidle nearer, you realise that these bikini shorts are crotchless: they are skirts. What do they do when they sit down? Have *Hello* magazine or an improving book at the ready? Last week I saw a very young teenage girl wearing denim shorts over black tights. Obviously, she had cut back the shorts with Daddy's pruning shears and shaved them down to little more than a scrap of fabric, and yet this garment way not intended for either the local pantomime or a nightclub, but for a sunny morning in a county town. What would she wear, I wondered, when she did go clubbing? There was not much left to take off... Once upon a time, 'a glimpse of stocking was something shocking', but intriguing nonetheless. Nowadays, a glimpse of thong is shocking, but we are not intrigued at all.



Dust if you must



Dust if you must but wouldn't it be better
To paint a picture or write a letter.
Bake a cake or plant a seed.
Ponder the difference between want and need.
Dust if you must but there's not much time.
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb!
Music to hear and books to read,
Friends to cherish and life to lead.
Dust if you must but the world's out there
With the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair,
A flutter of snow, a shower of rain,
This day will not come around again.
Dust if you must but bear in mind
Old age will come and it's not kind.
And when you go and go you must,
You, yourself, will make more dust

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