



# STOWMARKET AND DISTRICT LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN RETIREMENT (UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE)



Registered Charity No.1002987

Newsletter No 21    <http://u3astowmarket.wordpress.com>    February 2009

## Chairman's message

Hello everyone and welcome to a fresh year ahead. It would seem that all the groups are now in full swing and their programmes for the coming year are well advanced. We wish all the new groups that have started every success and, thank you, to the co-ordinators. If our committee can help you in any way then please ask, that is what we are there for; to make sure that the U3A in Stowmarket is leading the way in serving the more mature element of the community.

We have an excellent programme for you; two talks have already been given with a diverse selection to come in the following months.

I know that I keep plugging the First aid course that I would like to see on the agenda. This would not be a permanent group and, on conclusion of the course, would only be repeated yearly to update your certificate. We do need another four people to make the training viable - please let me have your names at the next meeting so we can get this life saving course going.

Your committee welcome suggestions for new subjects for groups. Have a talk to me or one of the committee at any of our meetings.

**“Use it or loose it”** is an old saying, but very true                      .Harold Turner      01449 676 882

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## Secretary's message

There has been an excellent response to the announcement of the summer outing to Gooderstone Water Gardens and Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse. At the time of writing we have 48 bookings so in the light of this a 53 seater has been booked giving 5 more available places. Tickets will be available for sale at the March meeting so if you do wish to go and haven't yet done so, then that will be your opportunity to book your place.

The direct mailing of the 'U3A News' to members' homes is now firmly established which means that now you get all the news 'hot off the press'. Direct mail is of particular help to those who are not always able to attend the monthly meetings and who otherwise be unable to get their copy. The inclusion of the 'Sources' magazine with 3 out of the 4 issues per year is a welcome bonus. As a note for new members, the U3A News is automatically sent to each address unless you specifically opt out. Next issue is in April (back copies in pdf format are available on the members' area, U3A Publications at [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)).

It is well worth signing up as a member to the U3A website to gain access to all the additional resources offered by the U3A. Services which have been built up slowly but are now greatly valued by many U3As are the Resource Centre, Sources and direct mailing of U3A News (as we are now enjoying). The development of the Resource Centre was initiated with funds from a lottery grant. It started with a nucleus of art slides donated by a member; it now has over 4,000 items and is used by over 89% of U3As.

Don't forget to keep an eye on our own website [www.u3astowmarket.wordpress.com](http://www.u3astowmarket.wordpress.com) where regular updates on groups' activities, photos and sometimes videos are posted. Back copies (to February 2007, issue 15) of this newsletter are also available there in pdf format.

Finally, I'm pleased to announce that Shirley Bonner has agreed to come onto the Committee and was duly co-opted at the January meeting.                      Peter Dakeyne      01449 781 562

## Since the last Newsletter :-

### November:-

This month's lecture given by Mrs Frances Hart was on the 'Canals and Waterways' and their history in this country. As the retired Chief Executive of the Inland Waterways Association, she presented her talk with humour and with obvious love and great knowledge of the subject.

### December:-

Once again we had a magnificent Christmas Luncheon at our normal place of meeting. The food was well served, hot, very tasty and enjoyed by everyone there. The poetry group entertained us with readings both serious and humorous, and the group were well appreciated by all present. It is hoped that we can repeat the occasion to an equally high standard next year.

### January:-

Mr C Hopper enthralled us with 'The History of magical Tricks' taking us from the Pharaoh Kupho's magician right up to today's magicians. Whilst, today, they entertain us their original function was to inspire fear and respect in the watching populace. This was a thoroughly amusing and thought provoking lecture.

### February:-

This month Mrs j Tyson gave us an illustrated talk on the history and growth of the 'Woodland Trust', with many examples of why it is so necessary to preserve our woodland heritage and what we would lose with the disappearance of these ancient woods.

## And now for :-

### March:-

'Suffolk Punch Horses' is the subject of Mr C. Millar's talk this month. As time rolls on the remaining number of these seems to be steadily decreasing and undoubtedly we will be encouraged to support their future.

### April:-

Mr C. Parfitt will be taking us on a long journey as he tells us about his travels 'From Ecuador to the Galapagos Islands', the islands where Charles Darwin studied and crystallised his ideas of evolution.

### May:-

We all know of Saga, and this month we will have Maureen Williams here to tell us about the organisation of the company and the world wide holidays available from them.

### June:-

This year we are planning to visit Goodiston Water Gardens and the Gressenhall Museum of Country Life. The cost of the transport is being partly subsidised so that the actual cost of the day will be as little as £ 15.00. See the notice board for further details and information.

### July:-

Our last talk of this academic year will be given by Mr C. Parfitt and is titled '@I'm a Toastmaster and I'm all Right'. Taking his experiences from country weddings and experiences as an MC we can expect this to be a very humorous afternoon.

## Activity groups :-

### Art Groups:-

There are now two art groups in the Stowmarket U3A. The first group, Suffolk Artists, has been meeting twice a month for more than four years, and the range of topics studied has widened considerably over time.



When this group started, the topics related to Suffolk-born artists like *Gainsborough*, *Constable*, *Munnings*, *Frink*, and *Hambling*. We moved on to artists who worked in Suffolk, and came up with some surprise names such as *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, *Stanley Spencer*, and *John Piper*. We are still finding more!

As members of the group - still a house-full with nineteen regular attendees - felt the need to extend their overall knowledge of art, we branched off into other topics. We have made studies of *Modern Art* and the *Arts & Crafts Movement* for example, and now tend to work to a theme. Suffolk artists still feature strongly as we tackle such diverse subjects as *Primitive Art* or *Animals in Art* or *Impressionism*. We make visits to galleries and museums and these outings are usually much enjoyed. Our most recent trip was to the John Russell Gallery and the Town Hall Galleries in Ipswich, with lunch at 'The Sanctuary'. We seem to be enjoying ourselves and living up to the U3A image of learning, with everyone making a contribution to the 'finding out'.

The second group has arisen from the first. More people wanted to join than could fit into the house so we started again with Suffolk Artists 2. This group has ten members and meets once a month. We have planned just

six sessions to look at major Suffolk-born artists. This group has got off to a positive start, despite difficult weather conditions which left some stranded by flooding.

As hosts, we have found the activity of running the groups rewarding, interesting and life-enhancing. We get a bit intense, but we laugh a lot and the work is shared because people bring so much to the sessions. And we have learned some big words such as 'chiaroscuro'. There! You now have it in black and white!

Tony Taylor

01449 771 168

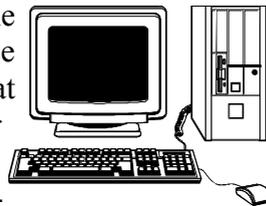
### Archive Film :-

This group is dormant at the moment due to loss of venue. If anyone can help please contact Pat. Pat Leon 01449 615 409



### Computer Group:-

New horizons open for the Computer Group as we start to use the Community Computer Suite at Stowupland High School for our monthly meetings. This means that instead of meetings organized around one computer and a projector, we now have some thirty computers with facilities for projection onto an interactive white board. The opportunities for teaching with hands on experience, rather than lecturing and demonstrating are tremendous. At present we are feeling our way and the implications of our new resources are only just beginning to emerge. We are very dependent on a technician who is most willingly available during our sessions and provides hot drinks beforehand.



We are fortunate that the suite is free for us on the third Monday morning when we usually meet. This is not the only time when it is available however, and the teacher in charge is keen that it should be used by other community groups whether from the U3A or not. The school has specialist ICT status and financial grants are dependent on community involvement. So we are helping the school while we are helping ourselves. As far as we are concerned the facility is free. Other U3As are very envious of our good fortune. Our programme is flexible at the moment as we feel our way in this new situation. The opportunity for beginners to join us and have true hands on experience is open to all U3A members.

We are indebted to Peter who has guided us through our first sessions in the new facilities and to all those who contributed to our lively Christmas meeting with cards, calendars and other artefacts

made on their computers. We donated £78 at Christmas from our funds to Christian Aid for educational use.

*Photoshop* Groups flourish in Stowmarket and Hadleigh as well as *Computer Forums* in Hadleigh. Some one-to-one help is available.

Please keep up with us via our web presence at:

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

Wendy Morgan 01473 824 237

<http://wendywhitecat.wordpress.com>

### Country Strolls:-

#### Shorter

Unfortunately we have not had a very good start this year for our walks, due to the weather, we did have a lovely Christmas lunch in January, I would like to thank Joyce very much for organising it. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves while it was pouring with rain outside. However with spring around the corner we can start looking forward to walking again.



Helen Mead

01449 673 660

#### Longer

We seem to be having a proper winter this year and the weather put paid to our last walk. It did not seem a good idea to go out and get cold and wet and very muddy - the lovely walk will still be there later in the year when we can enjoy it. We are all looking forward to warmer, drier conditions and another opportunity to go for a 5 mile walk with a great pub lunch at the end.

Andrea Burton

01449 774 869

### Card Craft Group:-

The numbers attending this group is steadily growing and providing much fresh and interesting talent. Even our techniques are becoming more sophisticated and cover a steadily widening range of skills. It was a pleasure to represent the whole of the Stowmarket U3A at the exhibition in the United Reform Church over the Christmas period. A photograph of this display is on the back page of this issue.



Liz Weir

01449 676 528

### Discussion Group:-

Fortunately the weather affected our meetings and they have been very lively and active. At our February meeting of reduced numbers on this occasion we started to consider subjects for next year's programme. The ideas cover a very wide field of interest, but we are still interested in finding more subject that will be



relevant and will provide a wide and stimulating source of discussion.

Philip Weir

01449 676 528

### Gardens and Things:-

Welcome to the new season, our programme has now been agreed and is as follows:-



**March** With Anna to Harvey's garden plants leave Solar at 11.30 for a two course lunch at 12 noon followed by a conducted walk and talk of the Hellebore tunnels that product his 'Chelsea Winning Plants'. If you have not booked a place already I'm afraid it is too late as the group is limited to 25.

**April** This time we are visiting the recycling depot at Great Blakenham in the morning, limited to only 10, first come first served. The rest of the group will be visiting elsewhere, with us all meeting up at the Chequers, Gt Blakenham for lunch. Then on to a fresh venue in the afternoon. If requested we may run another group to the recycling later in the year.

**May** Terry and Mollie Potter are arranging this visit. More details later which most probably be in the Cotton area

**June** Helmingham Hall with Mike and Mary

**July** East Lode with Hazel and Jenny

**August** As this coincides with the possible garden party we will join support that event.

**September** To be arranged. Any offers?

**October** Suffolk County with Jackie. A talk by a county employee on developments in the gardens and verges of our region at Woodfield Bowls Club.

**November** Programme meeting

All arrangements are in our programme and will be on our notice board throughout the year.

Harold Turner

01449 676 882

### Luncheon Club:-

1)

Angela Bentley

01449 780 274



2) We got off to a good start in February at the Chestnut Horse in Great Finborough, and all agreed that with fewer people it made for a cosier atmosphere. By the time you read this we shall have been to the Swan at Woolpit on March 12th (arranged by Irene & Harold). On April 9th we eat at Stowupland Crown. If you are not able to be there, please contact Joyce Markwell on 01449 613702.

Pauline Taylor

01449 678 954

### Keep Fit :-

Unfortunately the organisational problems for this group have not yet been resolved, but we are hopeful that activities can be resumed fairly soon.



For more information or help please contact -  
Pauline Taylor 01449 678 954

### Myths and Legends:-

Yes, we are but a very small but lively group. Our subjects cover a very wide field and we are often taken down strange and fascinating routes in our search of our very ancient traditions. New members will be made very welcome especially for their input.



Philip Weir

01449 676 528

### Poetry:-

The group hope you enjoyed our reading at the U3A Christmaslunch.



We started back in January by reading poems by Wendy Cope and Carol Ann Duffy, we found both these modern poets had a lot to say to us, Wendy Copes sometimes comic style of writing got her message to us very clearly, while Carol Ann Duffy we felt needed looking at more intently, which we did a month later. Some of us will never really like her style but found we developed a deeper understanding as we read her poems and listened to them being read on C.D.

In complete contrast we have studied the work of John Milton; here we had to key our ears into a very different style and use of the English Language. Next we moved on to read the work of Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes although at times there work was a little depressing there were also some wonderful passages especially from Ted Hughes using comparisons with nature.

Helen Freeman

01449 613 060

### On His Blindness

When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest he returning chide,  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need  
Either man's work or his own gifts: who best  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed

And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton

### Scrabble Group:-

By all accounts this group is pretty active and has several meeting venues. If you wish to join in please contact - Sheila Dobey 01449 676 220



### Town and Village History:-

First I would like to express my thanks and those of all the group to Ann and Ray Watsham for all the effort they have put in over many years in organising and running the group. We hope, Ann & Ray, that you will be able to join us on some if not all the visits that we are arranging for 2009.



Our programme for this year is already taking shape, in April Wendy Morgan will be showing us the high spots of Hadleigh. In May Mike Hitchcock is taking us on a visit to Brandeston and in June Angela Bentley is leading us around Bardwell. On a date to be arranged Colin & Barbara Robertson will be demonstrating the delights of Polstead and we also hope to organise a tour of Clare.

For any new members wishing to join us we meet on the first Thursday of each month and visits normally take place in the morning and are followed by lunch in a nearby pub.

The prospects look good for a varied and interesting year so let us also hope for the sun to shine on Thursday mornings!

Terry Potter

01449 770 256

### Wine Tasting:-

A large group gathered at Hazel and Jenny's hostelry on January 15th. German wines were on the agenda for the first meeting of 2009. Most of the group found them too sweet for their discerning palates. Gone are the days of Liebfraumilch, [even though the Larousse Encyclopedia of Wine says it is the most popular and best selling wine in the U.K.] Maybe a Piersport or Nierstein is more our cup of tea, so to speak than a swig of Blue Nun..



Six weeks later we reappeared with bottles of Eastern European plonk, sorry wine. Sadly the receptical for undrunk wine from our glasses filled up rapidly as we seriously squelched the E.E. Merlots and Cabernet Sauvignons. We had difficulty in detecting the blackberries, chocolate ripe fruits as, quote "this supple and smooth red wine partly went through malolactic fermentation to allow the natural fruit flavours to unfold. More anti-freeze vintage than 2007, sorry E.E.

Our dejected faces lit up with a cheeky little white number from Hungary brought by Janice. The only words we recognised were Magyar and Olaszrizling from near Lake Balaton. No-one threw that away. Aldi sold a bottle of Hungarian Chardonnay 2007 for just over £3 and it delivered it's elegant fruit flavours matched by well balanced oak characters to provide a soft buttery finish.

P.S. I should have smelt a rat when I discovered Larousse only devotes four pages to E.E.

Our next meeting will be held on April 17th when S.America will be on our tongues  
Zoe Bystricky 01449 676 220

### U3A Suffolk and District Network:-

Following the success of the Autumn Academy last October It has been agreed to run another this coming October and it will be held on Saturday the 10th. Full details will be available very soon and as numbers will be restricted to about 200 you are advised to apply early to avoid disappointment.

Art always seems to have an enthusiastic following and for this reason we inaugurated a 'Spring Symposium' to take place at Kesgrave on Saturday 25th April this year - unfortunately the response was so poor that this had to be cancelled, much to our disappointment and dismay. The reasons for this failure appear to be rather complex and obscure, however there will must likely be another attempt next year (all being well). Those among us who paid their fees will definitely be reimbursed in the relatively near future.

As a network we would like to thank you for your support both in the past and hopefully in the future.

Philip Weir

01449 676 528

### U3A Central Office News:-

Central Office News: As announced at the February meeting, the Third Age Trust have made arrangements for all U3A members to have access to free 24/7 legal advice from 'FirstAssist'. The contact telephone number is 01455 251 500 - you will need a code number which is available from any Committee Member.



The announcement has been made for the 2009 photography competition on the theme 'Eccentric Britain'. British eccentricity is unique and so this year the judges are looking for an affectionate look at the more quirky, humorous and unusual images that characterise the more eccentric aspects of Britain and our society. Places, people, even pets! Not forgetting the weather of course. Closing Date is 5th May 2009. Full details at [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) or contact me at [peter@dakeyne.com](mailto:peter@dakeyne.com).

Peter Dakeyne

01449 781 562

## U3A SIGNPOST

### Music Appreciation (1):-

### Music Appreciation (2):-

Both these groups are temporary abeyance due to health or hosting problems - It is to be hoped that these difficulties can be overcome soon as both have been very popular with full attendance. If you would like to help resolve this difficulty please contact and have a word with one of the committee

### Democracy and Election Systems:-

David has told me that he is keen to keep this group going, so if you are interested please contact him  
David Chapman 01449736 223

### Entertainment (Theatrical):-

Joan Varley 01449 612 966

## Cards

Do you know someone who would like to get a card from members of our U3A ?

Perhaps they have been bereaved, or in hospital ; maybe they have something to celebrate - a 90th birthday or a wedding.

If you do, please get in touch with

Kate Riddleston on 01449 612

**This is your Newsletter and your contributions are sought and will be welcomed. So if there is something that you wish to say re- the U3A , then please offer me your piece for publication.**

**However the editor reserves the right always to edit or refuse any contribution if thought to be damaging in any respect.**

The Editor

**General:** <http://www.howstuffworks.com/> is a compendium of articles about How Stuff Works. Supported by advertising, it is written in a popular "gee whiz" style, but has plenty of well-written articles on a wide range of subjects.

**Languages:** A website where you can find a lot of activities for beginners to learn French and Spanish for free can be found at <http://www.frenchspanishonline.com/beginnersfrench/freefrench.html>

*Recent items from signpost*

### Senior Citizens Holiday Insurance Sites:

[www.accommodation4-less.com](http://www.accommodation4-less.com)  
[www.Holidaybooker.com](http://www.Holidaybooker.com)  
[www.Staysure.co.uk](http://www.Staysure.co.uk)

*Extract from U3A Seniors Network*  
[www.seniorsnetwork.co.uk](http://www.seniorsnetwork.co.uk)

### SIGNS & WONDERS



You may be born with your name but you can control the line of work you go into. This lorry was spotted in Catterick by Alan Boon of Darlington. Perhaps not the most enticing advert for Mr Pugh's product.

If you see a Yorkshire sign that makes you smile, send a photo or slide to: Signs and Wonders, Dalesman, The Water Mill, Broughton Hall, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 3AG. Or email a digital image to [editorial@dalesman.co.uk](mailto:editorial@dalesman.co.uk). We pay £10 for each one we use.

**This appeared in the Stour Valley U3A's News**

**And it IS important for us all.**

## **WHAT ARE YOU TO DO IF YOU HAVE A HEART ATTACK WHILE YOU ARE ALONE?**

Since many people are alone when they suffer a heart attack, this article seems to be in order. The Johnson City Medical Centre staff actually did an in-depth study on this situation. It is called cough CPR.

You are alone and suddenly you start experiencing severe pain in your chest that starts to radiate out into your arm and up into your jaw.

Without help, a person whose heart is beating improperly and who begins to feel faint, has only about 10 seconds left before losing consciousness.

However, victims can help themselves by coughing repeatedly and very vigorously. A deep breath should be taken before each cough, and the cough must be deep and prolonged, as when producing sputum from deep inside the chest.

A breath and a cough must be repeated about every two seconds without let up until help arrives, or until the heart is felt to be beating normally again.

Deep breaths get oxygen into the lungs and coughing movements squeeze the heart and keep the blood circulating. The squeezing pressure on the heart also helps it regain normal rhythm. In this way, heart attack victims can get to a hospital. Tell as many other people as possible about this, it could save their lives!

From Health Cares, Rochester General Hospital via Chapter 240s newsletter 'AND THE BEAT GOES ON '

*(Amended reprint from The Mended Hearts, Inc. Publication, Heart Response)*

### **SILVER SURFERS' DAY**

The 15th May 2009 has been designated Silver Surfers' Day and anyone interested in finding out more should visit the following website:

[www.silversurfersday.co.uk](http://www.silversurfersday.co.uk).

*Jean Goodeve,  
Chairman of the Third Age Trust*



A display put on by our Card Craft Group in the United Reformed Church for their Christmas decoration of the main church.

## SPANISH CONVERSATION

*I am looking for someone who can lead a Spanish Conversation Group - please get in touch with me if you know of someone who may be interested in this opportunity. I would like to form a group and have two or three people on the list of participants already.*

Andrea Burton. 01449 774869

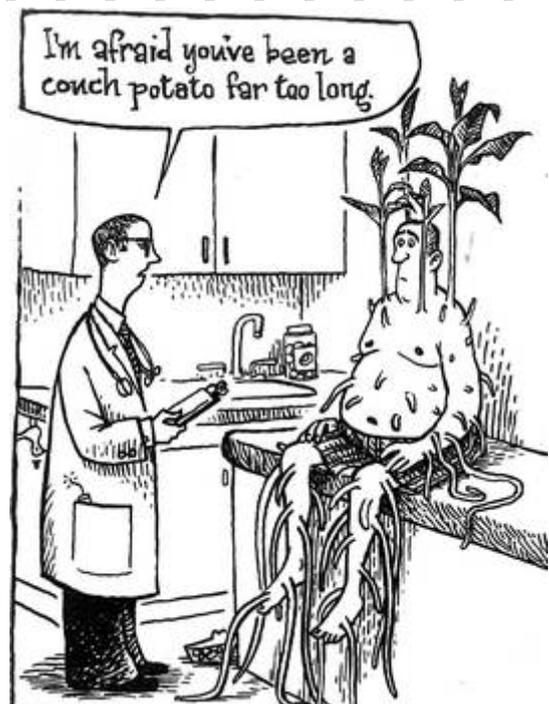
## Possible New Groups

Have you an interest that is not covered by our present range of activities? We are always keen to extend our range of activities, but we are reliant on you. This is your U3A and there is a whole host of things that we could do together, but we need your help. The success of the Stowmarket U3A is up to all of us - not just them up there. The ethos of the U3A is that we are independent and work from the bottom up and not from the top down. We are financially self-supporting and get no funding from elsewhere, so we have to be economic in what ever we do.

Any committee member will be most keen to hear and discuss any ideas that you may have to improve the life of our U3A.

Philip Weir

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