



STOWMARKET AND DISTRICT LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN RETIREMENT

U3A

(UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE)

Registered Charity No.1002987

Newsletter No 22 <http://u3astowmarket.wordpress.com>

July 2009

Chairman's message :-

First Aid

At last we now have four Appointed Persons they are Mrs Liz Weir, Mrs Shirley Coburn, Mrs Irene Turner & Harold Turner.

The four of us attended a first aid course at the community centre Hillside on Tuesday 23rd June for a full day 9.30 to 3.15 and all passed in CPR(Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation),bleeding & bandaging.

I am pleased that I have managed to get this project off the ground during in my years of office as it is most important that we have people trained to react to an emergency, we never know when it might be needed and it could save a life.

This will be my last contribution as your chairman and I would like to thank you all for your support over the last three years and wish you all a happy and prosperous future, and the U3A carries on from strength to strength.

Don't forget our special day at Haughley Park this year, on the 19th August

See you all at the Annual General meeting on **September 19th**. Please make every effort to attend, this is your meeting and a time for every body to see your committee in action, as they do put a lot of effort in on your behalf throughout the year

Harold Turner 01449 676 882

Secretary's message :-

Some 52 people were on the coach for our 2009 Summer Outing last month. Our initial stop was just an hour away at Gooderstone Water Gardens in Norfolk, a first visit for the majority of members. After admiring the skill of the driver in manoeuvring the large coach off a narrow lane into the small car park, we were greeted at the gate by the lady in charge who distributed entrance stickers (marked to entitle us to the included drink of tea!) and leaflets explaining all about the venue. The weather was fine and we were able to enjoy the wonderful vistas created by the lakes and the numerous bridges connecting them. Conveniently the bridges were numbered so reducing the chance of getting lost! Several people said that they would certainly return to Gooderstone at a later date.

From here we travelled to Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, just over half an hour's drive away. Again we were greeted personally and given a short talk about Gressenhall before leaving the coach. At this time, some made for the excellent café for a bite to eat, some to the courtyard gardens whilst others went directly to the farm. Gressenhall Farm is run as a traditional 1920s farm with rare breed animals and horses working the fields and was worth the visit alone. For those less able there were complimentary carts to travel around in, with the added benefit of the guide to explain things. Later, and split into two groups, we had fascinating guided tours of the Workhouse where we learned all about the history of workhouses in general and Gressenhall in particular. After the tour there was just time to explore the museum before leaving. After a very enjoyable day, the rain obligingly started as we got back onto the coach which brought us back to Stowmarket on schedule at 6.30pm.

In the time available it was not possible to explore everything that Gressenhall has to offer and, as with Gooderstone, many people plan to visit again on their own. For those who did not have the opportunity to join us there are links on our web site to both places for more information together with some pictures from the day.

Finally, just to remind you all, due to the unavailability of the hall on our normal day, the 2009

Christmas lunch will be held on Monday 21st December.

Peter Dakeyne 01449 781 562

Since the last Newsletter :-

April:-

Mr Parfitt took us on his journey from Ecuador to the Galapagos Islands with an interesting illustrated talk and with some humour.

May:-

A Saga representative gave us a very professional explanation of the services provided by that travel company, to all parts of the world and covering many specialist interests.

June:-

This was a great success this year and great credit is owed to our secretary Peter Dakeyne. Have you read his report ?

And now for :-

July:-

'I'm a Toastmaster and I'm all right' is the topic of Mr Basil Abbott's talk this month. It should prove to be quite humorous.

August:-

The outing this month will be to Haughley Park, where we plan to have a Garden Party with refreshments and some diversions. The setting is wonderful and in case it should happen to rain we have the use of the Barn for cover. We are trying to arrange for transport for those who do not have their own means of getting there. We hope that you all will come and make it a wonderful occasion.

September:-

As usual this is the time we have our AGM. This year we hope to keep it simple and straight forward. It will be followed by a talk by one of our members, which should prove to be not only different but of some special interest.

Activity groups :-

Archive Film :-

Unfortunately this is still in abeyance, but if you have an interest and would like to help please contact:-

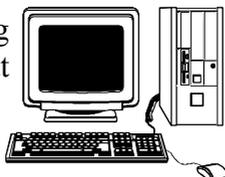
Pat Leon

01449 615 409



Computer Group:-

The Computer Group is making good use of the superb facilities at Stowupland High School. Members are coming forward to lead our ses-



sions and beginners are relishing the opportunity to follow their lead with a computer available for each to use. As spaces are still available for our sessions (30 new computers recently installed) members from Blackbourne U3A are joining us and Hadleigh members have also been invited. New members are always welcome.

Meetings take place in term time on the second Monday in the month, assembling at Reception to move off at 10.30 am.

Keep up with our numerous activities via our web presence at:

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

Wendy Morgan

01473 824 237

Country Strolls:-

Short - How great it feels to have our walking boots on again after a cold and wet winter.



The weather has been very kind to us during the spring for our walks and our numbers are increasing .

I would like to thank Angela for the wonderful cream tea she provided for us after the Wyverstone walk, it was very much appreciated.

Helen Mead

01449 673 660

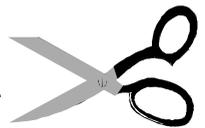
Longer - We continue to enjoy walks of approximately five miles. The most recent being at Earl Soham. Future walks will include Holbrook, Wetherden and Wyverstone'

Andrea Burton

01449 774 869

Card Craft Group:-

Unfortunately this season had to be curtailed and stopped rather early. This is because I had to have my cataracts attended to and was therefore



somewhat incapacitated. However the good news is I now see much better and our meeting will re-commence in September at 2.00pm on the 2nd Tuesday afternoon, and for each month thereafter. I look forward to seeing you all there again.

Liz Weir

01449 676 528

Democracy and Election Systems:-

Please contact:-

David Chapman

01449 736 223



Discussion Group:-

As Mike Hitchcock has moved house we have reverted and taken up Pat Smith's very kind offer to host our meetings.



We are now on our Summer recess but return to our discussions in September on the second Tuesday mornings at 10.00am. On our U3A web site is published our programme for the coming year, and we will welcome any new members who would like to share thoughts with us. Mind you we are vociferous in sharing opinions, but all in good fun and toleration.
Philip Weir 01449 676 528

Entertainment (Theatrical):-

Music - Popular music stands the test of time whether Opera, Pop, or Jazz.

Stage Music - Grand Opera, first staged in Italy in the 1500s.

Dance - In the third world countries the art is formed by religious ritual. In the West, ballet is the most popular form of this entertainment.

Theatre - Devised from ancient Greece and it's open air theatre.

Variety - Radio and TV have closed many Variety Theatres. Music Hall sometimes is repeated in revue and cabaret.

In our group we enjoy all these forms of entertainment. Travel can be entertaining. At our next meeting we will travel on the Orient Express from London to Venice Why not join us as we think and discuss these topics.

Joan Varley

01449 612 767



Gardens and Things:-

April Gt Blakenham recycle depot & Balham rear breeds Park

Ten members of the group visited the recycling depot which was the maximum number, and a very interesting time we had, and after two hours we were a lot wiser as to the movement of our waste that we put into the bin each week and a eye opening display of what and what will not be recycled.

The second group visited the Baylam farm and was surprised at the different species the were on show and the size of the area that it covers.

After the visits to both groups meet at the Chequers in the village of Gt Blakenham and had an excellent lunch, all well organized by Irene & Harold.

May Terry and Mollie Potter took the group to Gislingham and visited the Church Farm garden which was a surprising experience, the gardens are part of the National gardens for Charity on arrival we started with tea and cakes on the lawn then toured the magnificent gardens spread over some two acres and then on the local church. After that we retired to the four bells at Thornham Magna for a well deserved lunch



June As today's visit followed Wednesday's U3A full day visit to Gressenhall museum the organizers decided to visit a local site which was Hemingham Hall one of the last moated houses in the country.

The day started with a very wholesome lunch at the Helmingham Hall restaurant which consisted of local produce and all home made on the premises

The gardens were as spectacular, and as always with the deer roaming on the heath (watch where you put your feet) and the walled garden was full of flowers and vegetables which may well have provided some of our lunch and after some two hours later the group dispersed and went home a little weary after two days of travelling and walking Thank you Mike and Mary for the well organized day for the G&T group

July We are all looking forward to a new place this month East Lode which will be organized by Hazel & Jenny, but more of that in the autumn newsletter

Harold Turner

01449 676 882

Luncheon Club:-

1) Group one is still healthy,
April We all went Italian at the Salentina Stowmarket,

May Zoe arranged our meeting at the Trowel and Hammer, Cotton. We did have a small incident and had some good looking men arrive to stroke Beryl's hand.

June Pat & Bronwyn arranged for us to go to the white Hart, Blythborough, when we had finished our meal Pat and Bronwyn took us on a history lesson to Blythborough Church, Pat did a splendid job we learnt so much i.e. did you know that Cromwell's men used the pillars to tie up their Horses you can still see the metal rings that they used, a sundial outside for the congregation to look at to tell them when the next service would be, and much much more. Thank you Pat and Bronwyn, sorry that we could not go to the Nursery but the rain came down.

Angela Bentley

01449-780274

2) We had an enjoyable meal at The Cedars in June, and are looking forward to going to the Shepherd and Dog at Onehouse on July 9th. For the whereabouts of our August 13th meeting please contact Jean Niall on 01449 613937.

Pauline Taylor

01449 678 954



Keep Fit :-

This group is temporary abeyance. If you know someone who could or would act as an instructor please let me know and then we can resume our activities again.

Pauline Taylor

01449 678 954



Music Appreciation (1):-

We are up and running again! Every third Tuesday morning of the month, from 10.00 am until 12 noon, in comfort and with refreshments at half time, we explore an extensive collection of mainly classical music. The venue is just out of Stowmarket, so you would need transport. So, if you love music come and join us, we do have room for a few more to share our interest.

Eric Adamson



01449 676 528

Music Appreciation (2):-

For further information please contact:-

Connie Ruegg



01449 674 673

Myths and Legends:-

This year we have had an increased interest in our group and have covered an amazing range of relevant topics. We are now on our summer recess but start again in September on the first Monday afternoon of the month. Our programme for the coming year is posted on the Stowmarket U3A web site. New members are always welcome so why not join us in our discussions on olden day practices and beliefs and their effects today.

Philip Weir

01449 676 528



Poetry:-

The poetry group have read a wide ranging selection of poets recently. Some have made us think deeply of their meanings, some have made us laugh and some have made us cry.

In March we read Walt Whitman. This poet gave us an insight to the America of the 19c .We then read poems of spring which gave our hearts a lift after the cold winter.

Our April meeting was on St. Georges day so we read Patriotic poems, some seemed so out of line with modern thinking but there was one new one written by Brian Patten which was more to our view of today's Britain.

May saw us reading Rupert Brooke and other war poets, one about the Vietnamese war brought a tear to many of our eyes. We also read poems of journeys and found there was a huge range to choose from.

In June the tears came back at times as we read A.E. Houseman. Before we have our summer



break we look forward to reading poems on summer Irish poets and finishing with poems of our own choice.

Our group have also given poetry readings to the activities group at Partridge court and to the Wednesday club, which were well received and hopefully gave our listeners as much pleasure as we had reciting them.

Helen Freeman

01449 613 060

The True Dragon by Brian Patten

St George was out walking
He met a dragon on a hill,
It was wise and wonderful
Too glorious to kill

It slept amongst the wild thyme
Where the oxlips and violets grow
Its skin was a luminous fire
That made the English landscape glow

Its tears were England's crystal rivers
Its breath the mist on England's moors
Its larder was England's orchards,
Its house was without doors

St George was in awe of it
It was a thing apart
He hid the sleeping dragon
Inside every English heart.

So on this day let's celebrate.
England's valleys full of light,
The green fire of the landscape
Lakes shivering with delight

Let's celebrate St George's Day,
The dragon in repose;
The brilliant lark ascending,
The yew, the oak, the rose.

Scrabble:- Group:-

For further information please contact
Sheila Dobey 01449 676 220



Town and Village History:-

For further information
please contact:-
Terry Potter

01449 770 256



Wine Appreciation Group:-

An enthusiastic group of students continue to sample, discuss and learn more



about wines. It has to be said that enjoyment comes as high on the group's priorities as education but we are all discernably more knowledgeable thanks to our meetings.

Continuing the format of selecting a theme with participants bringing along suitable wines, we turned our attention to South American produce in March. Having tasted a variety of wines we found ourselves unusually unanimous in our appreciation of an Argentinian Merlot.

In May it was the turn of Australia and New Zealand. We tasted six excellent wines and were happy to prove yet again that although there are good special offers and bin ends out there, paying a pound or two more now and then can be worth it. Of the six wines only one was from Australia but it proved to be almost as popular as the group's overall best received wine which was a New Zealand sauvignon blanc.

As a group we are picking up tips and ideas from one another. We look forward to our July meeting when we will be learning about wines from South Africa.

Zoe Bystricky

01449 676 220

U3A Suffolk and District Network:-

As you will already know the Art appreciation day this spring had to be cancelled due to lack of support. Whilst this was very sad we can report that the 'Autumn Academy' on Saturday the 11th of October has been very well supported and things are going very well along those lines. Those who have applied for places will be informed about their applications by, at the latest, early September.

It is likely that a few volunteers may be needed to assist in the hosting of the event. If you would like to help or need further information please contact:-

Sally Taylor on 01449 771 168 or
Philip Weir 01449 676 528

U3A Central Office News:-

This year's U3A national conference and AGM is being held at the Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, on 3-5 September. Several eminent speakers will cover a wide range of topics of particular interest to the older age group. Full details can be read in the recent issue of 'U3A News' which you should have received at the end of June. Also published are the winning pictures in the 2009 photo competition on the topic of 'Eccentric Britain' (did anyone from Stowmarket U3A send in an entry?).

An added benefit of the direct mailing of the U3A News is that the 'Sources' educational journal is now available to all members rather than on application as before. This supplement draws on the knowledge and experience of long established U3As for the dissemination of information of interest to the membership in rather more depth than is possible in U3A News. All past issues (from 1998) are available for download as pdf files on the members' area, 'U3A Publications' at www.u3a.org.uk.

Peter Dakeyne

01449 781 562

Needle Craft Group:-

For further information please contact:-
Alicia Beaton

Art Appreciation :-

For further information please contact:-
Tony Taylor 01449 771 168



For those who went on our trip to Gooderstone Water Gardens, you might find the following few photographs of interest and the article published in the July issue of **Let's Talk** telling of its history.



Billys inspiration

It was the vision of a West Norfolk farmer — somewhere for garden lovers, naturalists, photographers or those just looking for a peaceful stroll. Neil Haverson took a trip to Gooderstone Water Gardens

The River Gadder rises near Cockley Cley. It is spring fed as it makes its 12-mile journey to meet the River

Wissey at Stoke Ferry. On its way it passes through the village of Gooderstone where it feeds the four ponds at Gooderstone Water Gardens.

The gardens are the creation of a vision by Billy Knights. Billy was a farmer, he retired aged 70 in 1970 and his sons took over, but he kept in touch with the farm. One day his son Chris asked him to take a look at one of the meadows; he thought it was too wet to graze cattle. Billy agreed and they moved the cattle - but with a

throwaway line Chris said: "What you need here is a water garden." This sparked Billy's imagination. He went home and asked his wife Florence to find him a piece of paper. She couldn't find a sheet big enough so she gave him piece of wallpaper.

"He drew his plans," says Coral Hosoy, Billy's daughter who now runs the gardens, "and soon had the machines in digging out ponds and waterways. There are no linings; the water tables are high, it's all gravity. Dad wasn't a gardener but he knew what he wanted."

In 1973 the gardens opened to the public. Billy Knights loved to move among the visitors chatting about his beloved gardens.

The gardens remained open for 20 years until Billy died aged 93. "Mum carried on," says Coral. "But she lost the gardener and it was

just too much so they closed. They were closed for six years; they became overgrown, trees fell down and bridges became dilapidated. Mum died in 2001 - and left the derelict gardens to me."

Coral had received letters from the council. They were keen to know what was happening to the gardens; they had been a good local attraction.

"I thought there might be some grants available and two men came out from the council to have a look. They were really enthusiastic! I got a letter from them the next week telling me I could get planning permission - for 12 houses! There were grants but they weren't accessible in my timescale. The gardens needed attention so I just got on with it!"

Coral employed a gardener. She didn't alter the original layout but it took 18 months to return the gardens to Billy's original plan.

"We cleared trees and replaced all 13 bridges. The grass had not been cut for six years and there was debris from trees to clear. I had a twig picking party! It was a bit like giving birth, I brought it up, now it's got life!"

Gooderstone Water Gardens opened in 2003 with a new car park, refurbished tearoom and a toilet for the disabled. A bird hide has been added together with a bamboo grove, scented arbour and plant sales area.

In addition to the water gardens an eight-acre nature trail has been created.

Coral says: "I wear all the hats! Jobs, adverts, plant sales; I bake most of the cakes. If someone had sat me down and said: 'you've got to deal with planners, highways, environment, health and safety...'"

But clearly this has been a labour of love for Coral to recreate the vision of her father - and it's been a success. From 3,500 visitors when the gardens reopened, 10,000 are now walking the grass paths.

"Father wasn't a gardener," says Coral. "He wasn't trained. He followed his own likes. It's not about a planting scheme. It's a place to relax. It's very atmospheric; the wind in the trees and the sound of rushing water."

GOODERSTONE WATER GARDENS The Street, Gooderstone PE33 9BP Open daily 10am-5.30pm or dusk if sooner.

Situated six miles southwest of Swaffham — follow the brown signs from London Street, Swaffham or from Oxborough village.

www.gooderstonewatergardens.co.uk For enquiries and details call

01603 712913 or 07730 551945

Have you ever felt like this?

JUST IN CASE

*I'm going to the sea for the weekend,
in a couple of days I'll be back,
so I'll just take my little brown suit and a blouse
and a beret and carry my mac.*

*But what if the house is a cold one,
the house where I'm going to stay,
no fires after April, no hot drinks at night
and the windows wide open all day?
I'd better take one — no, two cardys
and my long tartan scarf for my head,
and my chaste new pyjamas in case they decide
to bring me my breakfast in bed.*

*And what about church on the Sunday?
I could wear my beret and suit,
but if it were sunny, it would be a chance
to wear my straw hat with the fruit.
I can't wear my little brown suit, though,
not with the straw with the fruit,
so I'll just take a silk dress to go with the straw
and a silk scarf to go with the suit.
I'll just take my jeans and that jumper
in case we go out in a car,
and my Guernsey in case we go out in a boat
and d'you know where my swimming things are?*

*D'you think I should take that black velvet
in case they've booked seats for a play?
And is it still usual to take your own towel
when you go somewhere to stay?
I had thought of just taking slippers,
but they do look disgustingly old,
I'd better take best shoes and sandals and boots
for the church and the heat and the cold.*

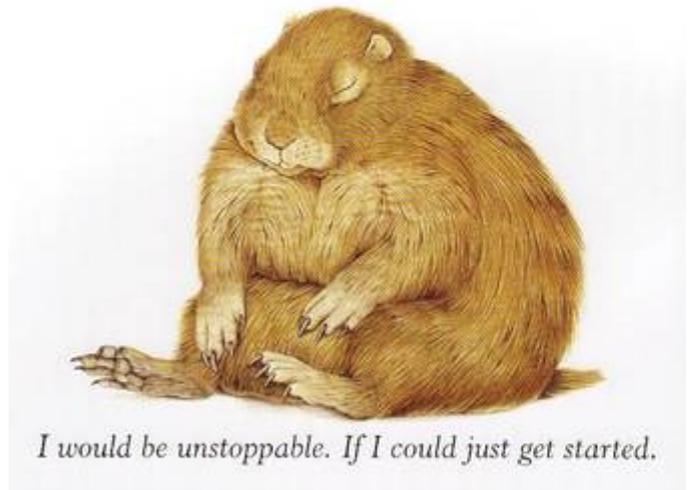
*I daren't go without my umbrella
in case I'm dressed up and it rains;
I'm bound to need socks and my wellies
for walking down long muddy lanes.*

*I'd rather not take my old dressing-gown,
it is such a business to pack,
but 'spose they have breakfast before they get dressed
I'd have to have mine in my mac.*

*I'm going to the sea for the weekend,
in a couple of days I'll be back,
so I'll just take my little brown suit and a blouse,
two cardys, my long tartan scarf,
my chaste new pyjamas,
my straw hat with the fruit,
my silk dress, my silk scarf,
my jeans, that jumper,
my Guernsey, my swimming things,
my black velvet, my towel,
my slippers (no one need see them)
my sandals, my boots, my umbrella,*

*my socks, my wellies,
my dressing-gown, no, not
my dressing-gown, OK my dressing-gown
and a beret and carry my mac.*

CHARLOTTE MITCHELL 1926-



A few ancient IRISH LAWS 11

The Great Tribal Assembly at Carman (11th century)
' There they discussed and debated the rights and taxes of the province: every legal enactment right piously, every third year it was settled'

On the best land everything is good. The herbs are sweet and no manure or shells are needed. There will be no plants that will stick in a horse's mane or tail: no briars, no blackthorns, no burdocks.

For the best arable land the price is twenty-four cows. The price for dry, coarse land is twelve dry cows.

If a man takes a woman off on a horse, into the woods or onto a sea-going ship, and if members of the woman's tribe are present, they must object within twenty-four hours, or they may not demand payment of the fine.

The husband who, through listlessness, does not go to his wife in her bed must pay a fine.

If a pregnant woman craves a morsel of food and her husband withholds it through stinginess or neglect, he must pay a fine.

Children shall be sent at an early age to distant members of the tribe to be reared in the hereditary professions of law, medicine, poetic composition or war, or of tilling the soil and wifeliness. \foster children shall be returned to their parents at the age : fourteen for girls and seventeen for boys.

PASSIONATE PLUNGE
JULY 1998, ENGLAND

A man with the unlikely ambition to jump off every river bridge in Norwich ended his athletic career with a seventy-foot leap into three feet of water. Friends said the thirty-four-year-old man had fulfilled his dream of jumping off every city bridge spanning the River Wensum. Having exhausted the bridge selection, this time he climbed to the top of a multi-story car park, looked down from the parapets, and shouted an inquiry to onlookers asking how deep the water was. Then he plunged to his death in the shallow waters below. Emergency workers were unable to resuscitate the man, who was said to possess "a strange and unusual passion for jumping into rivers."

If at first you don't succeed ... then skydiving is not for you.

DUMB DRUNK

FEBRUARY 2001, CONNECTICUT

A woman arrested on a drunken driving charge made an odd choice when calling for a ride home. Betty used her one phone call to contact Ken, her drinking companion prior to her arrest, who was visibly drunk when he staggered into police headquarters.

Ken failed a sobriety test. More surprisingly, a routine background check revealed that Betty had recently obtained a legal restraining order against him. A police sergeant explained, "We cannot allow him to come into contact with her—even if she says it's okay."

Ken was charged with violating a restraining order and driving while intoxicated. One question remains—was Betty or Ken the more foolish of the pair?

Evolution: Taking care of those too stupid to take care of themselves.



This is the display that we put on for the URC's Flower Show Exhibition on Saturday the 27th and Sunday the 28th of June 2009.

Do you not think that it works well ?

It was very prominent and just to the left of the doorway into the Church itself.

Edited by Philip Weir

Produced by

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