



**STOWMARKET AND DISTRICT
LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN RETIREMENT**

U3A

(UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE)

Registered Charity No.1002987

Newsletter No 4

July 2003

From the Chairman - Don Marper :-

This will be the last newsletter before the AGM in September, When I shall be standing down as your Chairman, having completed the 3 years in this capacity, as allowed by our constitution.

During my period in office, I have received maximum support from the present and past members of the committee. I will always be grateful for their unstinting contribution to the progress of our club. The group conveners have continued to provide their varied facilities with increased activity and support from their members.

Only time will tell whether my stewardship has been successful. I am pleased with the progress made, and am looking forward to spending more time with my friends, having handed over to our new Chairman with my best wishes to him for a successful period in office.

From the Secretary - Philip Weir :-

This completes my first full year (having taken over in mid-season) and I must admit that not only have I found the job fascinating, but I take great satisfaction in seeing the birth and growth of several new groups. I believe that great credit is due to them and for their efforts to spread their enthusiasm in a wider field. Also through wider advertising and, I hope, personal recommendation, the number of members has increased substantially - not only that, but the balance of male and female members is also much improved .

Since the last Newsletter :-

March - Mr Richard Smith gave an illustrated talk on 'The Thames barge in Suffolk ' which told us much about the history of the barges and identified many of the remaining skeletons protruding from the mud in and all around the Orwell estuary and area. Fascinating especially for those

who are very familiar with our shores.

April - The Mid-Suffolk Environment Officer - Mr David Mitchell in his talk on 'Trees and the law' brought much amusement to what sounds like a very dry subject. In fact, in explaining the various conflicts of opinion and aspects made us wonder if it was really possible to fully understand every aspect of even the most simple problem area. Yet we left feeling that he coped amazingly well.

May - Mr Clive Paine's talk on 'The Rise of Felixstowe and Lowestoft as Coastal Resorts' was as expected full of historical detail liberally mixed with humour and nostalgia. He held our attention for every second of his expert exposition. A real joy to listen to.

June - Lord Iveagh and his team gave us a really great day - the weather being fine and not too hot meant that all the expectations and promises were totally fulfilled. The food hall and Bistro being only opened at Easter, We were very impressed with the quality - our only reservation being on the timing of the midday offering, it being rather slow and late. Under the circumstances this was understandable as we were their largest party to date, and the last of their 'guinea-pig' learning curve runs. Everything else being so good we just had to forgive this one temporary lapse. I believe everyone - but everyone was delighted with the day. Lord Iveagh,

knowledge of the estate and the wonderful atmosphere reflected by his staff at all levels. Conservation was the message received about all the tasks being undertaken on the estate.



Lord Iveagh explaining to Stowmarket U3A the workings of one of his reservoirs on the estate.

He, himself spent a large part of the day with us and impressed us all with his knowledge of the estate and the enthusiasm showed by his staff.

And now for :-

July - Mrs Linda Scoles in a talk on 'Nostalgia', will regale us with songs and stories from the days of yore.

August - This month we were going to have a rest but due to strong demand a cruise on the Orwell is being organised for us - details from Don Marper or Wendy Morgan. It should prove to be a good afternoon outing, given light winds and a nice August summer's day.

September - After our AGM, which ought to take not many minutes, Mr Stuart Bufton's talk will be on 'The History of Walking Sticks'. We often see these displayed for sale on our travels and therefore be intrigued to learn much about them - even if we do not use them ourselves

October - Dr John Blatchly, a noted authority on The New Dictionary of National Biography, comes to bring to light some Norfolk and Suffolk Characters described in that tome. His choice should be revealing !

November - Mr Paul Wright comes to tell us about 'My Life and Work as a Local Estate Agent'. We, all, have experience from our side of the desk, so his side will be another world. I expect !

December - We hope to organise our usual sort of Christmas diversion, but this has still to be properly arranged.

Activity Groups :-

Archive Film :- The fourth Monday in the month...2.30pm to 4.30 pm with tea & biscuits in the interval...and watching archive films of people and events over the past 80 years. A very pleasant way to spend two hours, once a month !! If you would like to join us please ring Eric Adamson on 01449 676 446

Birds, Bees and Butterflies :- This group is still unfortunately in abey-

ance - but we live in hope that it will be resurrected by the group with new vigour and keenness

Computer :- A recent influx of new members has widened our skills base making us more self sufficient and less reliant on outside leadership. Our small groups meeting in members' homes are thereby enriched and our large group meetings are now frequently led by our own members. Philip gave our March meeting details of his use of the computer in his role as Secretary of this U3A and completed his presentation with a slide show of his holiday photographs.

In April Fred and Alan led us through some of the intricacies of scanning, also demonstrating the range of possible applications to be used on scanned images.

Wendy took us to the Caribbean in May, describing in pictures, words and song the development of a case study on St.Lucia currently used in our primary schools.

The June meeting gave Harold the opportunity to demonstrate his computer skills honed during his year as Bowls League President and put to excellent effect in the context of his many duties and responsibilities. He is an example to us all in the development of computer skills appropriate to his needs, supported by membership of the group and in return shared with the group. As he pointed out, this is exactly what the U3A is all about!
Wendy Morgan : 01473 824237

Country Strolls :- This group continues to explore the local landscape on a regular basis. They meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month at 1.30 pm and if you would like to join their meanders please contact

The Craft group :- This small but enthusiastic group started with 3D decoupage, but now is branching out into other related talents, such as glass painting, encaustic art and stamping. New members and ideas are always welcome. We will start again in September after our summer break.
Liz Weir 01449 676 528

Democracy and Election Systems :- A new group to discuss the problems of democracy and the electoral system - the different systems we use

in the UK and the various systems they use in other countries. Which of them work best ?

For more information contact David Chapman, Coles Farm, Buxhall IP14 3EB or ring 01449 736 223

Discussion Group :- We have had a very full year of great discussion over a wide choice of subjects, and each meeting has been very well attended. Indeed this group has grown so popular that we have been forced to find a new venue capable of holding some 12 to 14 members and that we feel is just about our limit. Pat Smith, now very kindly hosts our meetings at his home and we thank him and his wife for this hospitality. We meet again for our autumn programme starting on the 9th September refreshed after our summer break ready to put the world to rights at least in our own minds. It really has been a most enjoyable experience, with very open chat.

Philip Weir

01449 676 528

French Revision :- We all have some knowledge of the French language, but we want to be able to speak it. We are doing this by working through everyday experiences - shopping, giving and asking directions, ordering drinks etc..

We are only a small group but this gives everyone the opportunity to be involved. We work hard but we also have fun !!

Mavis Healey

01449 711 515

Gardens and Things :- The season is well and truly on the way and four visits have been made since the set-up of the group. The first visit was to Otley College, when a party of seventeen eager members had a 'hands on' hanging basket demonstration by one of the tutors from the college, and everyone potted up lots of bedding plants, which ended with the final product being drawn for and won by Mrs Killett. I had the opportunity to see the basket a couple of weeks ago and it looked marvelous.

Our next venture was to visit Beth Chato's garden at Elmstead near Colchester, a truly remarkable place and renowned nationally. This was supported by fifteen members of the group and in fine weather we all enjoyed several hours in the gardens, and later purchased some plants.

The June visit was of yet another two gardens in totally different environments. The morning garden was at a well known local garden in

Combs that of Mrs Jackie Collings , who over the years has won the best garden award, and is noted for her flower arranging, In the afternoon we had a walk round Lord Blakenham's woodland garden.

July will see the group at Euston Hall and gardens, where we shall see this moated house from the inside and out. So you see, we are getting a lot of variation in our first season and we have another three months left, but all are already planned and different..Of course the day is not just tramping round gardens as 'G&T' does come into the theme and all outings have a built in lunch at a suitable location near the chosen site - usually a pub. Up to now the group has proved successful and is growing.

Harold Turner 01449 676 882

Music Appreciation (1) :- At last we have managed to move our Music appreciation meeting to the third Monday in the month, which seems to be more convenient !.... From 10.00am to 12 noon with refreshments at 11.00am.

From as much 'exploration' as 'appreciation' as we have come across a selection of Ivor Novello tunes sung by Vanessa Lee, Ivor Emmanuel, Julie Bryan and many others.

At the moment we are looking for a recording of Northumbrian Pipe Music any offers ? The next meeting will include Mendelssohn "The Hebrides Overture" (Fingal's Cave) one of 'Time and Life' recordings ; also, music by Faure and Bizet.

At present we have as many in the group as can be managed, but if you are interested, please ring me,

Eric Adamson 01449 676 446

Music Appreciation (2) :- Our second music group is still struggling to find a regular date for meeting. Thursdays began to clash with other groups so for the rest of the year we shall meet on the second Wednesday of the month, starting from 9th July. I am quite happy to carry on during the summer so the meeting after that will be 13th August. We have a nucleus of about five or six at most meetings, but still have room for more. We mostly play more modern Classical, including Elgar, Debussy, Delius etc., but vary this with Jazz, and other things from my extensive collection. How about popping in to meet us ? I am sure you will find us friendly, and come away having heard something new.

Connie Ruegg 01449 674 673

Myths and legends :- I was not very sure in the beginning in what way this project would develop. Now we seem to have settled down to a regular discussion revolving around the published subject and allied topics. This means that slowly we are increasing our numbers even though we are still few in number, yet we enjoy a very lively entertaining chat with enlightenment and opposing views all given with great good will and humour. Maybe you would like to join us at Kate's when we meet again on September 1st at 2.30pm to consider St Columbanus, the legendary Irish missionary as our first subject for this season.

Philip Weir 01449 676 528

Poetry :- Do you want to explore poetry with a lively, and friendly group ? - then this is the place for you ! We meet fortnightly to study the work of poets of different periods and styles.. Whilst we study seriously , humour is never far away !

Contact Sheila Dobey 01449 677 265

Suffolk at War :- In June we came to the end of the series "Anglia at War" which the group had been watching over the past few months. For myself it was the first time that I had been able to see the horrors of the D-Day landings and the devastation of German cities caused through the allied bombing raids. We were able to be with the armies as they advanced through Europe bringing about the liberation of the occupied countries. After VE Day we followed the final events leading up to the conclusion of the war in the Far East.

The futility of war with all its consequences was vividly brought home to us as we watched the mounting conflict from 1939 through to its conclusion in 1945. Scenes of suffering were heart-rending and moving. We were reminded too of the endless struggle of the women here in East Anglia to feed and clothe their families, and the ingenuity that they employed to make what little food was available to go just that bit further.

We looked back on our own lives during those years and saw how much they were changed as a result of the war.

It was a series well worth watching, and our thanks go to Pat Leon for letting us borrow his tapes.

For further information contact Pat Smith on 01449 675 568

Town and village History :- Unfortunately Liz and I have not been supporting this group as frequently as we would have wished, but in talk with those that have we know that the monthly jaunts are both popular and very successful. The new approach where members take it in turn to organise the outings has borne fruit in as much as everyone is more fully involved and with greater camaraderie being enjoyed by all. For further information contact Ann Watsham 01449 672 706

You will have seen those big black round bales of silage on the farms roundabout. Well there was a rumour going about that one of those farmers was going to be taken to court for not giving his animals a square meal !

Copy for the October edition should be with me by the September meeting at the latest !! Please !!

Overheard in Stowmarket :-

“I don’t think that I have a long shelf life !”

HELP !!

In the current argument about genetically modified things (food included) and their abolition Does this mean that all sexually reproduced organic things are to be eliminated ? If so, will the earth not be made a total desert and lifeless ?

This argument against genetic modification alarms me !!!
Yes I know what they are trying to say, but the language is totally wrong and misleading !!!



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