



Affiliated to the Third Age Trust

Newsletter

ISSUE 67

AUTUMN 2010

From the Chairman

HELLO everyone and welcome to the Autumn edition of our Newsletter. Over the past few months our Membership Secretary, Joan Smith, has been working flat out with membership renewals and the joining up of new members and it is to those new members that I and the Committee extend an extra warm welcome to Blackbourne U3A.

At the last Committee meeting and after much discussion, it was decided to increase the membership from 500 to 550 and whilst I know this will cause concern to some members it was done for the following reasons. We had a waiting list of over one hundred, some of whom had been waiting for two years, and we wished to get that number down. Secondly the group needs new blood if we are to build on our current Interest groups total of twenty eight and thirdly our average attendance at our lecture meetings over the past three years has been 41% of our total membership of 500. In other words out of the 250 capacity for New Green only 205 average have been attending. By increasing our membership to 550 and still working on 41% attendance we can accommodate all those who wish to attend with space to spare.

For those of you who read this column regularly you will recall that I have for some time been campaigning for more interest groups to be formed and with this in mind at the end of this Newsletter you will find a questionnaire entitled "What do you want from your U3A". The reason for this will be self explanatory but please do give it your serious consideration and support. After all this is OUR U3A and we should all try to get as much from it as we can.

The Interest Groups' Exhibition this year is on Monday 18th October at New Green. The usual excellent array of displays will be adorning the hall together with food and wine "a plenty", so don't forget to get your ticket, still only £3 with any surplus after costs being donated to St. Nicholas Hospice, from Joan Bailey or Christine Glover at today's meeting.

Colin Avis

OPEN MEETINGS

Monday 18 October

Interest Groups' Exhibition

With cheese and wine

11.00 am to 12.30 pm

Entry by ticket. £3 per person

Available from Joan Bailey on

01359 232990 or Christine

Glover on 01284788075

MONTHLY LECTURES

10.00 am prompt start

Coffee and biscuits served between

9.30 and 9.45 am

Monday 1 November

Are we alone in the universe?

Dr. Frank Flynn

Monday 6 December

History of the English

Language - with local interest

Charlie Haylock

Monday 10 January

Bury St Edmunds and the

Wars of the Roses

Brian May MA (Oxon)

LECTURE NOTES

East Anglian Air Ambulance

IN July we had three visitors from the East Anglian Air Ambulance charity, who told us there is no government or National Lottery money available for this essential service and until the year 2000 there was no air ambulance service in East Anglia.

In June of that year, the plane carrying the jockey Frankie Dettori crashed at Newmarket and he was eventually flown to Addenbrooke's hospital. In August the famous jockey returned to Newmarket and launched a fund-raising appeal. By December, enough money had been raised to fly one helicopter just one day a week. Twelve months later the support was such, that enough money had been raised so that a full seven day week could be covered. By 2007 a second helicopter was in place, both covering the 5,500 square miles of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. It is one of the busiest air ambulance services in the country, flying an average of four assignments each day.

At the moment all doctors on board are volunteers, who give their free time to assist the service. It is hoped that, eventually, doctors will be part of the official team. As there are always two medical personnel on board, patients can receive essential preliminary treatment at the scene before being flown, in no more than 13 minutes, to the nearest specialist hospital.

Most hospitals have a helipad, the one at Bury St Edmunds being opened in 2004. Addenbrooke's hospital is planning to install a lit helipad, which would enable it to be used 24 hours a day.

After our meeting the East Anglian Air Ambulance thanked us for the £470 given on the day [this included their fee]. As public donations are so essential to maintain the costs of £300,000 per month, they were delighted with our members' generosity.

Elizabeth Sharpe

OPEN VISITS

TO THE THEATRE

Thursday 2 December
CHESH, Theatre Royal, Norwich
Leave New Green at 9.00am
(to allow for Christmas shopping)

Wednesday 23 February
2011

Matthew Bourne's **SWAN LAKE**
At Milton Keynes Theatre
CANCELLED BECAUSE OF LACK
OF INTEREST

June 2011 - Covent Garden
MADAM BUTTERFLY. This will
be an evening performance with
tickets likely to cost £120 to
include coach etc.
Please let Sue know as soon as
possible if you are interested.

Visits to see
WAR HORSE and
LOVE NEVER DIES
are also also being considered for
2011.

Contact Sue Russell on 01359
321385

GARDEN VISITS

Wednesday 27 October
2.45p.m. at New Green Centre
PLANNING MEETING FOR 2011
VISITS and general get-together
with tea-party

Wednesday 17 November
2.00pm.at New Green Centre
Bob Flowerdew will talk about
NO WORK - OR AT LEAST,
LABOUR SAVING GARDENING
Tickets £5 each

Contact Barbara Milner on
01284 761508

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

At the end of October - date to
be confirmed - a visit is planned
to **THE QUEEN'S GALLERY** and
THE ROYAL MEWS

Visits are also planned to the
PORTRAIT GALLERY in
November, the **GEFFRYE**
MUSEUM in December and the
BRITISH MUSEUM in January

For more details please contact
John Morris on 01284 723684

LECTURE NOTES - continued

From Vicar's Son to BBC Producer

FOR our first talk after the summer break we were entertained by BBC producer, Charles Garland. In typical show biz fashion he warmed up the audience with light hearted comments including explaining that he travelled all over the country to give his talks and today he had come via Coventry although he lives in Great Ashfield.

For some 30 years he has been associated with entertainment, both writing and directing. Born in Hampshire, he moved to Hartest when his father was appointed vicar there and went to school in Bury St Edmunds. His first words as an infant were '*mother is always right*' and she was large, both in presence and stature. None the less she was a marvellous lady.

His first experience of TV was the Coronation and from then on he was hooked on the medium.

The family later moved to Surrey into a house with central heating! What a difference from the rectory at Hartest where it was so cold that he dressed in bed. However he hated the school in Surrey and left as soon as he could but did not tell his mother. When she found out she asked him what he was going to do and was told he was going to be an actor.

After a time at drama school he decided acting was not for him and tried ballet dancing. This too was not a success and he enlisted in the army and became a musician in the regimental band. His impressions of playing whilst marching were most hilarious.

Leaving the army, he was lucky to find work playing at the Old Vic but as this provided an unreliable income his desire to work in TV was rekindled and he started writing to Mr Green at the BBC. The BBC's policy was to reply to every letter and so letters went back and forth between the two, even continuing with Mr Green's successor, Miss Jones. Eventually his persistence paid off and he secured an interview with a Mr Norman of BBC TV who asked if he could read a musical score, which of course he could and this was the start of his dreamed of TV career.

Charles has been involved with many of the comedy shows such as *Hi-de-Hi*, *Are You Being Served*, *Hello, Hello* and as director of the *Dads' Army* series. He recounted numerous anecdotes of the times spent filming both on and off set.

Although this was a most amusing and at times hilarious talk, Charles concluded with a serious thought. Ask yourself - what do you like doing, what have you a passion for, what turns you on? Then go for it - never give up and you will achieve your ambition.

Joan Smith

INTEREST GROUPS' NEWS

THEN AND NOW GROUP

OUR Group has been out and about these last three months.

In June we had a most interesting Historical and Botanical Tour of the Abbey Gardens led by the Head Gardener and his assistant.

In July we went on a walking tour of the town of Clare led by Daphne Parr, a Green Badge Guide - it is amazing how much knowledge these guides have, and no notes to crib either.

In August a dozen or so of our hardier members braved the atrocious stormy weather and visited the Suffolk Horse Museum in Woodbridge for a most interesting introduction by Roger Clark, well-known farrier, judge of, and consummate authority on, heavy horses, who still uses Suffolk Punch horses on his farm in Colchester. After our private visit exploring the treasures of the museum, instead of our planned open-topped bus trip to view the numerous places of interest in the vicinity of Woodbridge, we took advantage of the various eateries in the town.



TRAV2

IN June over 40 of us travelled by Galloway Coaches to the beautiful area of Monchau in the Eifel district of Germany. The village itself, set deep in a valley, was a gem – the buildings really old and the scenery superb. We were lucky with the good weather too.

Most of the group went on our planned day trips to Valkenburg,



Cologne and Maastricht whilst others just enjoyed the immediate area around the village and the Eifel lakes. There was so much to see – it was a truly enjoyable visit.

As you are picking up this Newsletter at the October meeting, a group of

Trav2 members is travelling down to Cornwall for 5 days to visit various gardens in the County - the Eden Project, Trebah Gardens and also The Lost Gardens of Heligan.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM GROUP

Summer Barbecue

WE were pleased to accept the kind invitation of Jan and John Dockerty to hold our annual barbecue in their garden again this year. Once again we were blessed with a beautiful sunny day in an otherwise very unreliable week of weather. As usual, we erected the gazebo which seems to act as an insurance policy against rain. Long may it continue to do so!

Only 2 of our members were unable to attend which shows how popular this social event has become. We all enjoyed excellent barbecue food from our local village butcher together with salad and lovely home-made rolls made by one of our members. The meal was completed by a good choice of cheesecakes and cream. There was the usual light hearted competition and raffle and we all enjoyed a very pleasant sociable time together. Thanks to all who made this possible.

The Travel & Tourism Group has sadly lost a few members this year as a result of bad health so we do have room for a few new members. If you are interested in joining a group of around 40 people who are interested in travel and tourism and who meet on a monthly basis to share ideas and experiences, you will be made very welcome. There is quite a lot of travel experience within the group and people are always willing to advise and help anyone thinking of undertaking a particular trip.

Our main function is not to organise lots of trips but we do enjoy travelling together once or twice a year. A large number of us are going to Jersey in June of next year, flying from Norwich, and we are also planning a trip to the Dordogne region of France by train in September. Some of our trips have been by air and others by short coach journeys but you might like to experiment with us on a trip on Eurostar instead. If you would like further details of either of these trips please contact Tony Sear on 01359 230423 We will be happy to include you if at all possible.

Ann Sear

ODE TO AUTUMN

Most of us learnt this John Keats poem at school but how much can you remember now?

SEASON of mists and mellow
fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing
sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and
bless
With fruit the vines that round the
thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd
cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the
core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the
hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding
more,
And still more, later flowers for the
bees,
Until they think warm days will never
cease;
For Summer has o'erbrimm'd their
clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy
store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad
may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary
floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing
wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound
asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies,
while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its
twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou
dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours
by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay,
where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music
too,
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft
dying day
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy
hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats
mourn
Among the river-sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from
hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with tre-
ble soft
The redbreast whistles from a
garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the
skies.

GARDEN VISITS GROUP

SINCE the last Newsletter the Garden Visits Group has been to Mannington Hall and Gardens in Norfolk, stopping at Peter Beales' Roses on the way. What a delightful day we had – both weather-wise and enjoying the beautiful gardens themselves. Our timing of the visit was spot on – the roses were spectacular!

In July we also travelled to Norfolk, to Raveningham Gardens and had a guided tour by their head gardener. An added bonus to this visit was that we also were allowed into the Hall itself and taken around by the owner. Raveningham's grounds are vast and so varied with lakes, parkland, walled gardens and the ruins of an old priory – a haven of peace.



Barnsdale Gardens which we explored in August lived up to all our expectations – they certainly do credit to Geoff Hamilton's memory – the gardens being perpetuated by his son and daughter-in-law who continue to develop the garden within the parameters of Geoff's vision.

Our visit in September was to Wimpole Hall, a National Trust property not far from

Cambridge. We had beautiful weather and the walled garden, as always, was really colourful and humorous with its scattering of W.I. Scarecrows! It was hard to decide which were most spectacular, the dahlias and other flowers or the enormous apples and pears. A great deal of hard work had also gone into the display of various pumpkins and gourds. Lots of our members also visited the Hall itself.

GUNPOWDER TREASON and PLOT

SEPTEMBER'S educational visit was to the [Royal Gunpowder Mills](#) at Waltham Abbey.

Accompanied by enthusiastic and knowledgeable guides we watched an award winning film about the history of explosives and learnt about the development of the site in a 'hands on' exhibition that also explained how gunpowder and cordite are made. There is also an extensive collection of firearms where an expert was on hand to answer questions.

We were given a trailer tour of the 175 acre site where our guide explained what the various buildings on the site had been used for and how the canal system was used to transport the hazardous products. We also caught glimpses of the deer that inhabit the site. There is a display of post war rockets where another volunteer explained the development of the propellants used in their launch.

The mills have been involved in the production and development of explosives for over 300 years. Gunpowder was the first, and for some centuries the only explosive and propellant.

Later the site manufactured guncotton, nitro-glycerine, cordite and the high explosive tetryl. After World War II production ceased and the site became a research establishment for non nuclear explosives and rocket propellants

Finally closed in 1991, a charity was set up to restore some of the buildings and safeguard the site and its history.

A great day out – look out for next year's special events!

More information on their website – www.royalgunpowdermills.com

POND DIPPING

THIS activity is usually associated with school children, but belying their age, members of the Wildlife Watching group recently spent a morning pond dipping at Suffolk Wild Life Trust's reserve at Lackford.

Supervised by the education officer, Emma Kerridge, and her two voluntary assistants, it was amazing to discover how many different creatures live just under the surface. Each forms part of the food chain with the larger generally preying on the smaller. Those that survive in this watery jungle eventually transform themselves into often quite beautiful creatures that fly and breed and may provide a meal for other creatures.

We identified a range that serve as indicators of good water quality.

After tipping most of our catch back a few specimens were taken to the centre for closer inspection under microscopes loaned to us by Thurston Community College. Group member and retired science teacher Tony Sear helped us to focus on living amoebae, caddis fly larvae, dragonfly exuviae, leeches etc. and we were amazed again by their intricate beauty.

Like little children, we were all thoroughly absorbed for over two hours and left realising what a wonderful world in which we live.

The group was able to make a donation of £50 towards the Trust's work.

Bryann Ward

WEBSITES

Our website is

www.blackbourne-u3a.org.uk

Please send your contributions, with relevant photos about your current activities to our Webmaster, Sue Prigg, at

webmaster@blackbourne-u3a.org.uk

If you do not have Internet access you can contact Sue on 01638 751289

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BLACKBOURNE U3A

Dear Member

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM YOUR U3A?

As I am sure you are aware, Interest Groups are the life blood of all U3A's and we at Blackbourne are no exception. We currently have 28 Interest Groups up and running covering a wide range of subjects. However, the members of the committee and myself felt that with 500 members we should be able to accommodate more.

So, we are asking you what Groups you would like to see at Blackbourne U3A, particularly if you are a new member.

Please don't feel afraid to put an idea forward because you feel you may get "lumbered" with running the Group. If enough people have a similar interest, responsibilities are usually shared. Equally you don't have to be an "expert" in your subject. It may be that you and others would like to explore a long held fascination and can by a process of self help develop more of an understanding of that subject.

Funding is available from the Committee if required to help set up new groups and buy equipment and of course the options are endless.

If it has a title, you can explore, discuss, visit, paint, photograph, touch, climb, play – in fact do anything with it, so long as it is legal!! So come on, don't be shy. By way of some thought prompters there are listed below a number of ideas to consider. If any of these appeal to you please circle them or make a note of others in the space provided and hand your response to Peter Heath or Joan Bailey at the Interest Groups Exhibition on 18th October (they will have a table there) and leave the rest to us!

Suggestions for New groups.

Architecture	Art Appreciation	Aviation	Bee Keeping	Bowls
Canals and Inland Waterways	Creative Writing	Darts	Drama	
Dining	Environmental Studies	European Studies		
Furnishing and upholstery	Fishing	Folk Dance or other		
Food/Cooking	Geology	Golf	Languages	
Living History	Model Railways	Philosophy		
Sailing and Water Activities	Science and Technology			
Story Telling	Wine Appreciation	Etc Etc.		

Add your ideas/suggestions below and if there is enough interest we will promote them.

Your Suggestion(s)

.....

.....

Name.....

Telephone Number.....