



Affiliated to the Third Age Trust

Newsletter

Issue 72

January 2012

A HAPPY and HEALTHY NEW YEAR to YOU ALL

From your Chairman

I HOPE you have recovered from the excesses of the festive season and wish you all a Happy New Year. We hear so much about 'Happiness' and what it means to be happy in the crazy world we live in today. I read recently that there are five actions we need to build into our lives to increase our happiness quota:

Connect – with people around you, – family, neighbours, friends, and invest time with them.

Be active – not always easy is it, as age takes its toll? If you can, walk, swim, dance, ride a bike, or if it's possible, try to find something that suits your level of mobility.

Be curious – catch sight of the beautiful, remark on the unusual. Be aware of the world around you and how it makes you feel; note the seasons.

Keep learning – develop new interests, or rediscover an old one, sign up for that course. Give it a go!

Give – do something nice for a friend or stranger. Smile. Look out as well as in. Volunteer your time, join a community group.

It's clear that membership of Blackbourne U3A provides many opportunities to include these aspects in our lives. The key action point on offer this Spring is **to give, to volunteer** your time to ensure the continued success of your U3A, just as scores of members have volunteered to help throughout our Group's history.

At the AGM in March we need to replace four Committee members who have come to the end of their term. Being part of our Committee brings great rewards and satisfaction, so please have a word with me, or any member of the Committee, or just ring me on 01359 232291. Without your help Blackbourne U3A cannot move forward through 2012. Go on, give it a go!

Peter Heath

God Rest Ye Merry?

MONTHLY LECTURES

Start promptly at 10.00 am
Coffee and biscuits are served
between 9.30 and 9.45

Monday 6 February
The Island Parrot Sanctuary
Prof. Christine Rivett

Monday 5 March
AGM followed by
Pakenham Water Mill
David Eddershaw

Monday 2 April
'The Titanic' –
A night to Remember
Robert Burridge

Monday 14 May
Racing at Le Mans
Celia Stevens

OUR speaker for December was Linda Scoles who was visiting us for a second time. Her previous talk, on becoming a British citizen was excellent and amusing, and we were not disappointed this time.

Her subject was much more lighthearted and contained so much humour that the audience was in fits of laughter. It concerned the giving of Christmas presents in her family.

As a child, Linda's mother always seemed to choose the right present for everyone although the children did not realise that the present they received was "just what they wanted". Linda continued this custom when she married her husband Jim and she wanted to choose him the right present. Although they did not have much money, for their first Christmas she gave birth to a baby son – the perfect present and just what he wanted.

On another Christmas morning when she told Jim she was pregnant again this did not get quite the same response but she continued to try very hard to get the just present he wanted. Linda then related some of her attempts. The time when he had wanted a mackintosh only to find that it was too long and when they went to change it the shop had closed. Or when Linda found out that Jim had always wanted a wooden toilet seat to be told by him when he unwrapped it that it was not nice to be given a used item – the seat had a split in it!

There were several other similar instances, told in such a way that made us all chuckle. A very appropriate talk, followed by mince pies and a drink, to end the year.

Joan Smith

Interest Group News

Members have expressed interest in forming two new groups and this is your opportunity to join either or both.

Art Appreciation.

This does not need any special knowledge, just an interest in pictures generally so that you can interpret their meaning in the context of when they were painted and the methods used. By discussing with others you will perhaps see a painting in a different light.

Writing Your Memoirs

Personal stories can provide a wealth of information for family and social historians.

Why not put pen to paper and leave a lasting legacy for your grandchildren?

The group will provide guidance and structure on which to build.

If you wish to add your name to the list of those interested please contact Peter Heath on 01359 232291 and hopefully initial meetings can be arranged

Scrabble Group

Stella Chamberlin has taken over from Lillian Gow as convenor of this group, which has vacancies, and meetings will now take place in Woolpit Village Hall (not the Institute) from 2.00 to 4.30pm on the third Thursday of each month.

The cost will be £1.50 per person.

Many thanks to Lillian for running this group over several years.

Stella Chamberlin can be contacted on 01359 242601

Jersey Zoo

IN November Barry Kaufman-Wright, also known as "The Wildlife Man", told us about the work of Gerald Durrell who founded [Jersey Zoo](#) in May 1959, when his collection of creatures became too large for his Bournemouth garage! He decided to move to Jersey and establish a zoo with a difference where he could breed threatened species – giving the zoo an emblem of a Dodo.

Barry worked at the zoo from 1964 until 1971, mainly in the swannery and with other birds. With a series of magnificent pictures we learnt about the owl breeding programme and how the zoo had helped save the St Lucia parrot, the population of which had been reduced to 100. 1000 of these birds have since been bred in Jersey and now there are about 2000 in St Lucia.

The zoo has a breeding programme for lemurs and is planning to breed the almost extinct wild Bali starling.

Barry then told us of the apes kept by the zoo. He told us that one day a child fell into the gorilla enclosure and Jambo, the male gorilla rescued and protected the child from the females who would otherwise have killed him. Whilst the keepers were locking up the females, Jambo was stroking the unconscious child's head and later a doctor declared that this had been the reason why the youngster had made a complete recovery.



Jambo, the Gentle Giant

Many wild creatures are threatened by the trade in bush meat and the high prices paid for rare birds and animals. Madagascar has the highest number of species and the zoo is undertaking much conservation work there.

Barry's interest and commitment to the zoo is ongoing and he visits once or twice a year.

Joan Smith

Garden Visits

THIS open group had two indoor meetings to end 2011.

In November we had a brilliant Slide Show set to Music put together by members Jo Sweetman, Dawn Smith and Chris Brooks. It was really good to relive some of the visits we had made earlier in the year. We closed with tea and cakes and it was good to get together and have a chat too.

In December we had Susan Cochram who is chief flower arranger at Bury Cathedral and her husband. Susan made flower arrangements to the theme of "The Holly and the Ivy" and her husband gave us Christmas readings. We all thoroughly enjoyed our afternoon and finished off with tea and mince pies. We are able to send a cheque to the East Anglian Children's Hospice for £60, the amount raised from our raffle of three of the arrangements Susan donated.

On **TUESDAY** 24 January we have a talk on "A Garden for all Seasons" by Hilary Thomas, who was Head of Garden Design at Capel Manor College for 15 years and is an author and an on-line Gardening Tutor. This is being held in the Main Hall at New Green at 2.00p.m. – all are welcome but please let Barbara Milner 01284 761508 know or fill in the Application form in the Bar Area on Monday 9 January 2012. The cost of the session is £2 payable at the door.

Travel and Tourism Group

AN interesting talk was recently given by Kathleen and Roger Beaurain following their holiday on the Rhine and Mosel. They told us about life on the rivers with their deep locks, attractive scenery, fairytale castles and small villages and how towns like Rudesheim, Cochem, Benkastel contrasted with the large metropolitan cities like Basle, Strasbourg and Koblenz. Their boat was excellent and the company could not be faulted. Numerous tastings of excellent Rhine and Moselle wines were an added bonus.

This account whetted the appetite of 23 members who will be sailing along the Rhone from Lyon to the Camargue with Croisi Europe in September 2012.

The Travel and Tourism Group had its eighth Christmas event in mid December. 40 members met at New Green for drinks, nibbles and non taxing silly games. Later after much hilarity we went for our Christmas meal to the Orchard Room at Harvey's plants.



Teresa and her Staff served an excellent meal in very pleasant surroundings. She provided an interesting and challenging quiz on parts of the body. As an ex biologist I thought my contribution would have been invaluable – it wasn't!

This was followed by an interesting short talk on Snowdrops and Hellebores.

Tony Sear

Educational Visit

IN October our Educational Visit was to the [Museum of London Docklands](#) situated within a former early 19th century sugar warehouse of the West India Dock, just a stone's throw from the centre of finance and banking, Canary Wharf, the latest development in London's long history.

The Museum explores the early ports of London, from the arrival of the Romans and the historic ports of Norman and Medieval London up to the 20th century when the docks were almost destroyed during the Blitz of 1940. One of the early galleries has a 1:50 scale model of Old London Bridge, the first stone structure over the Thames. One side of the model illustrates the bridge and its buildings at around 1450, the other shows the bridge in all its Tudor glory, 150 years later.

Another gallery, opened in 2007 as part of the bicentenary commemoration of Britain's abolition of the slave trade in 1807, highlights the link between London's sugar trade and slavery. London was the fourth largest slaving port in the world and it is estimated this trade was the source of 25% of the 18th century wealth of the country – wealth which gave England the great advantage at the start of the industrial revolution. London's later role in the campaign to abolish the slave trade is also explored. We were also reminded by audio visual displays that slavery is still going on in the UK today!

During the 19th century the building of vast new docks brought immense changes to London's river and port. A huge docks complex was built on the Isle of Dogs, new bridges spanned the Thames and a tunnel was dug beneath it. The scale of London's commercial activity grew massively and all those changes are portrayed.

It was interesting to experience Victorian Wapping in a full size reconstruction of the maze of the dark, winding streets of 'Sailortown'.

The museum's final gallery focuses on the changes that have transformed the look and feel of East London over the last 60 years. We all came away much the wiser for our experience

Ralph Brighton

Celebrating the Arts in Suffolk

The next Spring Symposium, organised by the U3A Suffolk Network, will be held on Saturday 9th May 2012 at Stowupland High School, when the theme for the day will be "***Celebrating the Arts in Suffolk***". Four excellent speakers will delve into the topics of music, architecture, literature and art, so there should be something of interest for everyone.

Application forms are available at the January 9th lecture meeting, or you can download an application form from <http://u3astowmarket.wordpress.com/news/spring-symposium-2012/>, or contact Lynn Searle on 01787 883368. The cost is £10 for the day to include coffee/tea and biscuits.

Chairman's Charity

For his nominated charity the Chairman has chosen the [Suffolk Accident Rescue Service](#).

Many will recall the talk we were given by this charity in June last year.

Our Interest Groups' Exhibition morning resulted in a surplus of £150 which has been donated to SARS

AGM

Please consider putting yourself forward to serve on the committee and help our group prosper for the future.

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Bird Watching

DURING the year the bird watchers have travelled from the Wash, along the North Norfolk coast and down to the estuaries of Suffolk and Essex. Barry Milner has cheerfully shared his expertise to help us improve our identification skills and it is surprising how many different species are spotted by the group on each trip.

There have been many highlights, one of which was seeing four spoonbills land whilst we were at Hickling Broad in June. They obligingly stayed for a while and from coloured rings on their legs we later ascertained they had been in Holland the previous day. Tony Sear's photograph is reproduced below.

Arriving here from April onwards, the spoonbill is smaller than a grey heron but larger than a little egret and can be identified by its dark spoon like bill with a yellow tip. When flying it sticks its neck and legs out.

It gets its food, mainly insects and their larvae, especially water beetles, dragonflies and caddisflies, by sweeping the bill from side to side.

Single pairs have only bred four times in Britain in the last three centuries. But in 2010 a small colony started to nest at Holkham on the Norfolk coast and six breeding pairs fledged at least six young, so for the first time in over 300 years the UK has its own breeding colony, i.e. more than one pair together. In 2011 this success was repeated but with 8 breeding pairs fledging 14 young.



Short Walks Group

WE have just completed another year of great walks of approximately three miles each including Buxhall, where we saw the Vice Chairman on the Stowmarket Golf Course searching for his ball, in Barrow to one of the highest parts of the county and Hoxne with its historical connections to St. Edmunds. Not one walk was cancelled due to bad weather which confirms how lucky we are to be able to enjoy some wonderful countryside on a regular basis.

There is an ongoing waiting list for this popular

group and I would again appeal to someone who would like to be a convenor of a second Short Walks Group. This would allow others to benefit from gaining local knowledge, encountering various animals and wonderful churches through healthy exercise and perhaps end up in a good pub.

I would be happy to help them set up the admin. side and have a selection of walks which would easily get the group up and running – sorry walking.

Please contact me on 01359 259112 or E-mail barrywells@sky.com

Barry Wells

