



Affiliated to the Third Age Trust  
Registered Charity No. 1165448

# Newsletter

Issue 94

September 2017

From your Chairman

WELCOME to this September newsletter. I trust that those of you who have been away on holiday, either with family or friends, have had an enjoyable break.

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to those of you who have renewed your membership, and also our brand new members. You all should have received the new 2017-18 programme with your membership badge and I hope there will be something of real interest to you during the coming year. The talks are sometimes surprising and not what you were expecting, which is what makes our monthly lectures so interesting.

Then we have the Interest Groups, run by Group Leaders, ordinary members like yourself who have taken the ethos of the U3A movement to heart, i.e. everything we do is run **“for and by the members”**, and we are all very grateful to them. This is one of the great strengths of this Blackbourne U3A. We are very well aware that a number of those interest groups are full, so why not consider starting another new group for the same interest? That is how so many have started in the past and will do in the future.

We shall be holding our Interest Groups Exhibition in October. This is a very sociable event, giving everyone the chance to see what’s on offer, talk to the Group Leaders in person and an opportunity to meet and network with other members.

Now I come to the point which will be repeated over and over again before our AGM in March – new committee members will be needed then. As existing members are aware, Stella Chamberlin took on the role of General Secretary at the last minute, otherwise this U3A would have closed, which sounds dramatic but that is fact. However, because she had already served three years in that role in the very recent past, she agreed to only one more year now. Therefore, we shall be looking for a new General Secretary, as well as having other vacancies on the committee, so please think seriously about joining us to help run our U3A - the tasks are not onerous, but we do need a committee to have a U3A at all. Surely, out of a total membership of over 600, it must be possible to find sufficient committee members to ensure the continued survival of our U3A! Please remember that, because many of our longer-standing members have already served on the committee, we look to our newer members to provide us with fresh impetus and ideas, so please think seriously about whether you might be able to help us.

Current committee members will be on hand before the start of September and October’s lecture meetings to Meet & Greet our new members, and I would like to invite all new members to stay behind for a few moments at the end of those two lectures to give us the opportunity to welcome you personally to Blackbourne U3A.

My best wishes to you all for the coming year.

Derrick Haley

## Monthly Lecture Meetings

Start promptly at 10.00am with coffee served until 9.45am

Monday 2 October **Crippen**

**Mark Mitchells**

Crippen suffered at the hands of a bullying, abusive wife while finding moments of consolation with his adoring secretary Ethel LeNeve. This is the story of that marriage and the events which followed its collapse.

Monday 6 November **Colchester Zoo**

**Rebecca Perry**

The zoo past, present and future and its current conservation work and breeding programmes.

Monday 4 December **Women can fly**

**Sally Dearman - Cummings**

The speaker shares what led her to becoming the first woman to pass the RAF’s fast-jet flying training system, some animal facts relating to military flying, and how to attract or repel low-flying jets in your area depending on your proclivity.

## Interest Groups’ Exhibition

This popular and informative event will take place on **Monday 16 October at New Green**

This is an opportunity for new members to find out more about the varied activities on offer and discuss their interests with the convenors.

FOR NEW MEMBERS ONLY doors open at 10.00 and for all others at 10.30

There is no charge for tickets which will be available at the door on the morning of the event on first-come-first-served basis.

## Snippets

### 2018 Diaries and Lanyards

These should be available for sale at September's lecture meeting onwards. The pocket diaries are now £2.50 and are china-blue in colour, while the lanyards (with transparent badge holder) remain at £2. Di Finney will have these in the rear bar area, as usual.

### Programmes and Membership Cards

If, by the time you read this, you have not received your 2017-18 programme and membership card/badge in the post, please advise our Names Registrar, Chris Ives, on 01359 231746 or by e-mail via the website.

### Change of contact details

A reminder to advise our Membership Secretary, Teri Carpenter, as well as the Group Leaders of any Interest Groups to which you belong, of any changes to your contact details. In particular, a number of e-mails will have changed recently, i.e. those formerly with Freeserve, Orange, FSN, and Wanadoo.

### Chairs at Monthly Meetings

Please help with this task, if you can, from 8.30am onwards. The more helpers we have, the quicker the task is completed and the fairer for everyone.

### Disabled Parking at Monthly Meetings

The trial period for this new system seems to be working well and will continue until at least December. These spaces (being the whole of the front smaller car park at the NGC) are for any disabled members or those with limited mobility, but this will not be "policed" by anyone, so we are relying on members' good sense and sympathetic understanding.

### Third Age Trust's AGM with Annual Report & Accounts 2016-17

Copies of all these will be available to read at our autumn lecture meetings.



OUR May speaker, Grant Elliot, introduced his lecture by playing three different types of jazz music, which revealed the way jazz had developed. Jazz started in New Orleans, the gateway to the oceans and to trade. There were Spanish, Caribbean, African and other influences in an area which had suffered Yellow Fever, Spanish flu, high infant mortality, but where music was always in demand.

Jazz music was developed by the blacks and used by the whites, who "smoothed it out". Louis Armstrong, one of the greatest jazz artists, perfected the improvised solo. Improvisation is the most defining feature of jazz: creating or making up music as you go along.

During the early 1900s the ragtime music of Scott Joplin was popular. He was not interested in ordinary jazz music, but placed the accent between the second and third beats (syncopation). We listened to The Maple Leaf Rag, one of his compositions, influenced by European rhythms like the polka. Ragtime put the swing into jazz, which led to dancing and the big bands. New York became the centre of jazz music and the saxophone became

a prominent instrument in the history of jazz. As the bands grew bigger, it was necessary to write the music down, leaving room for improvisation. Louis Armstrong could read music, many could not, and this led to him having solo parts in the big bands. The leaders of the big bands were stars such as Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey and Duke Ellington, who "plays the piano but his real instrument is his band". He played at the famous Cotton Club, where the musicians and dancers were black but the audiences white

and wrote music such as "Ebony Rhapsody" based on Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No.2.

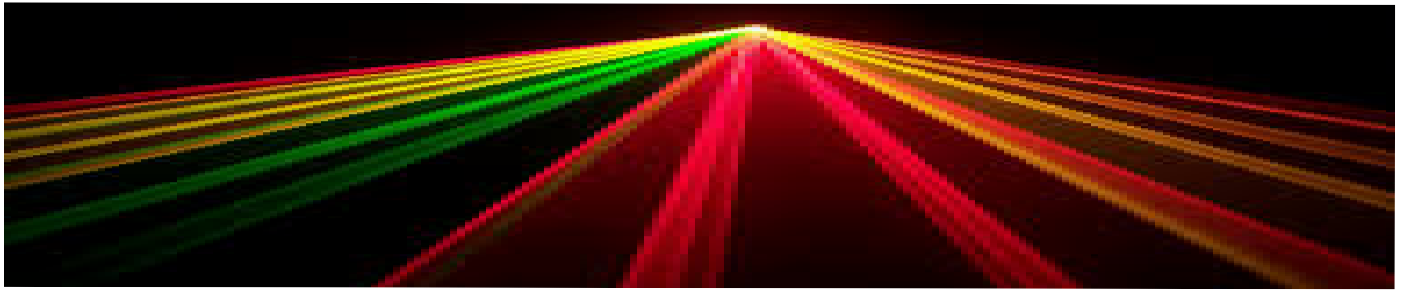
The first well known integrated band was the Benny Goodman Quartet, Benny on clarinet, Gene Krupa on drums, and two black musicians, Lionel Hampton on vibes and Teddy Wilson on piano. Benny Goodman and his band had a concert at Carnegie Hall in 1938 and it was described as "the single most important jazz or popular music concert in history: jazz's coming out party to the world of respectable music".

The entry of America into World War 2 meant many musicians were called up, there was a shortage of shellac, so no new records were produced. Some black musicians developed their own style like Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie and their bebop music went from the dancehalls into the nightclubs. Bebop was considered jazz for intellectuals, for listening audiences.

Grant finished his entertaining and informative talk by answering questions from an appreciative audience.

Sue Prime

## Lasers – The Light Fantastic



THE July lecture by Dr Stephen Ashworth gave us all a chance to catch up with scientific developments over the last 60 years when most of us had already fully completed our scientific education. The first laser, demonstrated in 1960, was a flash bulb.

Laser is, as is so often the case in modern science, an acronym - **L**ight **A**mplification by **S**timulated **E**mission of **R**adiation.

Of the six ways to make light only four will produce a laser. To produce a laser it is necessary to have light waves moving in the same direction rather than the more random movement of light from a light bulb. Dr Ashworth suggested that a laser light was similar to an army marching in the same direction with the same step length and at the same speed compared to a group of shoppers moving at random speeds with different step sizes in totally random directions.

Dr Ashworth had a number of experiments, assisted by several audience volunteers, that showed clearly the properties of laser light.

We were advised that although we all use lasers in our day to day activities they are dangerous and need to be used with care. The holograms in our bank debit card and in our currency are produced by lasers. It is possible to engrave a message on a human hair by using a laser and this image is itself more clear than one produced by formal drilling methods.

Dr Ashworth maintained the interest of his audience throughout and added greatly to the scientific knowledge of most, including mine.

*Laurie Marshall*

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## Boudica

OUR June Speaker, Nick Sign, started by explaining that over the centuries there has been considerable debate among scholars and historians concerning the spelling and pronunciation of the name of the Queen of the Iceni. At various times her name has been spelt as



Boudicca, Bodicca and Boadicia. However, historians nowadays typically refer to her as Boudica, which derives from the word “bouda”, meaning victorious.

Following the invasion of Britain by the Roman Emperor Claudius in AD 43, Boudica’s husband, Prasutagus, King of the Iceni, ruled as an ally of Rome until his death. However, following his death his legacy was ignored and his kingdom annexed. The Romans thereafter treated the Iceni as slaves and, according to the historian, Tacitus, Boudica was flogged and her daughters raped in her presence.

In retaliation Boudica led an uprising against the occupying forces of the Roman Empire in AD 60. Following a battle at Colchester the Romans were defeated and Boudica’s army sacked the city.

Thereafter Boudica led her troops south to London, where the Roman reinforcements sent from Anglesey were unable to halt her progress. As a result, the rebels burnt down London before proceeding to St. Albans (Verulamium), where they sacked that city also.

Significantly, Boudica’s victories to date had occurred when her army was attacking Roman troops on the move. Matters changed dramatically when the rebels fought the Romans in a pitched battle at a location close to the junction of the Fosse Way and Watling Street. This was to be a fateful event for Boudica, with the Romans, fortified by auxiliary cavalry, out manoeuvring and finally destroying the rebel troops. It is estimated that the Roman dead totalled approximately 400, compared to almost 80,000 rebels.

Following the Roman victory it is rumoured that Boudica poisoned herself to avoid capture, while their victory then spurred the Romans to move on and conquer those parts of Britain not already under their control.

*Howard Chandler*

## Visit to Northern Ireland, May 2017



At the beginning of May 2017 22 members of Trav 2 visited Northern Ireland. I had never been there before so perhaps my expectations were affected by years of news reports during the troubles. This account is how it seemed

to me.

Flying from Stansted was an easy way to get to Belfast for five days of interesting and at times almost overwhelming experiences. The first of these was on the journey from the airport to our hotel. We were taken on a tour of the city and visited the Falls Road area and saw the West Belfast murals on the Peace Wall. These were on a huge scale and seemed to go way into the distance. They are still being updated and replaced and graffiti added, for example “on behalf of intelligent americans we apologise for Trump”.

The following day held another “Titanic” experience when we visited the Harland and Woolf shipyard where that vessel was built. The building which housed it is enormous and contains, it seems, every known detail of the construction of the vessel and its fitting out. From one gallery with glass walls and shaped like the prow of the vessel we could look down and see marked on the ground the outline of the ship. That area was Titanic Slipways from which the Northern Irish contribution to “Proms in the Park” is broadcast each summer. The



Giant's Causeway.

Barry Service

Titanic experience in the morning followed by a visit to the Crumlin Road Jail, complete with a tour of the death cell in the afternoon, made quite a day!

In contrast, we drove through some picturesque countryside visiting Mount Stewart, the Irish family home of the Marquesses of Londonderry, now owned by the National Trust. The extensive gardens here were wonderful and the trees particularly tall. Perhaps it was the rain! Another great ride was to the Giant's Causeway along the coast road and then on to Derry for our last two nights.

Derry was a lively city. We visited Derry cathedral which was beautiful and rather modern looking for an 11th century original building. We also had a good view of the city from the vantage point of a walk round the old city wall which is still intact. We saw things of interest within the walls and also the Bogside which was without (more murals!). We had an enthusiastic guide who, at the end of the tour, led us to a bar for lunch and then went back to the tourist office to get our coats.



Enjoying dinner.

Rosemary Stratton

We also managed to include a visit to a distillery and a visit to an outdoor museum telling the story of emigration from Ulster to America. So much in six days and five nights and all in excellent company. Many thanks are due to Mary-Jo for organising it.

Joan Bailey

## Interest Groups News

During the current year the following new groups have started.

### **Mah Jong 2**

Contact Chris & Carol Ives  
01359 231746

**Dining Out 3** Meeting on the second Saturday of the month for lunch. Contact Lynn & Michael Altuccini  
01284 752798

### **Meditation**

Meeting in the mornings on the third Monday of the month. Contact Jo Buchanan  
01359 230343

### **Mixed Media Art Group**

Has a new convenor, David Morley 01359 230193  
Please amend your new programme

### **Spanish**

This group ceased at the end of April as the convenor is moving out of the area. There are some who wish to continue so if there is anyone with sufficient knowledge of the language willing to help please contact me.

### **Witchneedle Craft**

Ceased at the end of July.

With the new year perhaps it is time to consider new interest groups, or support groups / discussion forums, something scientific, something mathematical, something creative – what about writing or poetry? If anyone would like to start/join a group then contact me, the Interest Groups Co-ordinator.

01359 233045 – or via the website  
Mary Dunbavin

## Educational Visit, 22 May 2017

### Boughton House, Kettering



Our day started with a visit to [Boughton House](#) which was purchased in 1528 by Edward Montagu, Lord Chief Justice to King Henry VIII. Ralph Montagu, 1st Duke of Montagu, inherited the house in 1683 when work began to convert it into a mansion with most of the work being credited to him. As he was a former ambassador to France there are strong French architectural influences, earning the house the title 'The English Versailles'.

We had a guided tour of the the house which contains a large collection of valuable and rare fine art - paintings by El Greco, Van Dyck, Gainsborough and Batoni, magnificent ceiling paintings by Chéron, a large collection of Sèvres porcelain as well as exceptional French furniture by André-Charles Boulle the master cabinet maker. There are also huge tapestries in most rooms, some of which have been restored at great expense, and beautiful 16th-century carpets.

After the death of the 2nd Duke, the House passed through the female line to noble families whose main residences were elsewhere. The Dukedom of Montagu became extinct and for two centuries the House and its artefacts 'slept'.

However in the 20th century it once again became a beloved family home, the residence of the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, a descendant of the Montagus.

An interesting feature was The Chinese Gazebo which, for preservation purposes, is sited in the area of the house which has not yet been refurbished. Our guide said it is the original IKEA as it can be taken down like flat pack furniture albeit grandly decorated with Chinese dragons and covered in blackout paint for means of protection when it was originally housed outside.

After a lovely lunch we set off on our coach for a short tour around the Boughton Estate villages with one of the estate Guides.

Our first stop was Grafton Underwood war memorial dedicated to the brave men of the USAF who flew from the airfield built there during WW2. We next visited St Edmund's Church in Warkton noted for its chancel which contains an exceptional group of four world class marble sculptures dedicated to the last three generations of the Montagu family. The detail on all the figures is so realistic you forget that they are made of marble, the fabrics on the clothing are superb and one of the small children even has a teardrop on his face.



Our last stop in the village of Geddington was to see the best of the three remaining 'Eleanor Crosses', built to mark the resting places of Eleanor Castile, the first wife of Edward I, during her funeral procession from Lincoln to Westminster Abbey.

*Linda Wells*

### Conveners' Meeting and Luncheon

Monday 19 June 2017

This year's Conveners' Meeting and Luncheon was attended by a total of 37 conveners and committee members. A number of issues were discussed. Everyone enjoyed a delicious luncheon which served as a huge thank-you to all our Group Leaders for their sterling work over the past year, their efforts being much appreciated by all our members.

*Mary Dunbavin*



## Guildhall and Emirates Airline Pod, 31 July 2017

WITH our Blue Badge Guides, Claire and Ian, we were given a short walking tour of the area around [Guildhall](#) starting in Paternoster Square where you could sit in a deckchair and watch World News on a large screen or study a statue by Elizabeth Frink of a shepherd driving his sheep.



The Great Hall

Guildhall is a Grade 1 listed building some 600 years old, the ceremonial and administrative centre of the City of London. The term Guildhall refers both to the whole building and to its main room which is a medieval great hall. During the Roman period it was the site of an amphitheater, the partial remains of which are on display in the basement of the Guildhall Art Gallery. Construction on the current building began in 1411 and was completed in 1440. It is the only ecclesiastical stone building in the City to have survived to the present day.

The complex contains other historic interiors including the large medieval crypts, the old library and the print room.

Trials here have included those of a Protestant martyr Anne Askew, Lady Jane Grey, Francis Dereham and Thomas Culpeper (lovers of Catherine Howard) Thomas Cranmer, and Henry Garnet for his connection with the Gunpowder Plot.

There are memorials to Pitt the Elder, Pitt the Younger, Admiral Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington, William Beckford and Winston Churchill.

The Great Hall did not completely escape damage in the Great Fire of London of 1666 and was partially restored with a flat roof in 1670. More extensive restoration was completed in 1866 but the replacement roof was destroyed again as a result of a Luftwaffe fire raid during the 29/30 December 1940. The present roof, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, dates from 1954.

The most notable event held at Guildhall is The Lord Mayor's Banquet, hosted by the new Lord Mayor of the City of London in honour of the immediate past Lord Mayor.

After lunch we went for a flight on the [Emirates Airline](#), the cable car link across the River Thames. At a cost of about £60m it was opened in June 2012 and runs between the Greenwich Peninsula and the Royal Docks. The crossing time is approximately 10 minutes, reduced to 5 Minutes during rush hour when they increase the speed! There are 36 gondolas, 34 in use at any one time, each with a maximum of 10 passengers and accessible for wheelchair users. The length of the crossing is 3,600 feet and the highest point 300 feet, giving amazing views over the River Thames.



In the gondola

It is estimated that the service can carry 2,500 people per hour and, as well as tourists, it is used by residents on both sides of the river cutting down on trips by car or public transport, therefore making it better for the environment.

Linda Wells



Main entrance, Guildhall

## Adios

THE Spanish group met for lunch on 25 May at the Bunbury Arms to say a fond farewell to our teacher Liz Aquiler who is leaving the area.

This very successful group has gone from strength to strength under Liz's tuition and we will all miss our friendly classes and the always smiling Liz.

Gifts were given to Liz to say thank you for all her help.

The photo is of those able to be present.



Unable to be present were Ingrid Dale, John Williamson and David Ellis. Rosie Ellis took the photo

Contributions from *all* Interest Groups are welcome. How about a piece from your group, perhaps with a picture? These should be sent to: [publisher@blackbourne-u3a.org.uk](mailto:publisher@blackbourne-u3a.org.uk)  
**Deadline for December issue is 19 November 2017**