

Blackbourne U3A News

A University of the Third Age in Suffolk

ISSUE NUMBER 50

APRIL 2006

From the Chairman . . .

With the spring comes a new committee for our U3A following the recent AGM. I am pleased to welcome four new committee members: Sheila Linke, Sally Rands, Brian Milner and Bob Mountfort.

Anne Anstead and Adam Edmondson are standing down. Anne has had a very busy year with much time being taken up by our application to join the Third Age Trust (TAT). We are most grateful to Anne for her commitment to Blackbourne U3A throughout her term in office.. Adam has completed three years on the committee and we thank him for having been a most efficient badge secretary and newsletter distributor.

I hope we can all take full advantage of our TAT membership. We will disseminate information as it is received and would appreciate your feedback. An immediate benefit is the invitation to participate in the Autumn Academy organised by the Suffolk and District Network of U3As (see page 4).

This newsletter also contains notice of a Special General Meeting to approve amendments to our constitution. With nearly 500 members it is felt that we should have the facility to increase the maximum number on the committee from 10 to 12. Furthermore there have been problems in finding a new chairman each year so it is proposed that the incumbent chairman may stand for re-election for a second consecutive year. I will be pleased to clarify any of the proposed amendments.

*Finally, this is **your** U3A and the committee is here to take on board your comments and suggestions for its enhancement.*

Bryann Ward

CHRISTMAS LECTURE

Two Suffolk lives around Snape Maltings

For our pre-Christmas lecture on 5 December, we were given a very entertaining talk by Bob and Doris Ling. Now in their eighties they told us of their early lives around **Aldeburgh** and **Snape**. Bob's great-grandfather had worked at the Maltings which was built by Newson Garrett. Bob went to work there in 1938. It was hard work: he had to lift 'combs' of malt (12 stone) and barley (16 stone).

Doris, one of 13, came from a very happy family. She worked in the laundry at Aldeburgh. The couple met at a dance when Doris decided that Bob was the man for her. They were married at Aldeburgh in April 1941 during an air raid. Bob was called up for the Royal Navy and served in minesweepers in the Atlantic.

After the war Doris and Bob settled in Snape with their young family and Bob returned to the Maltings. In 1965 the company went into liquidation and they had

to find other work. For five years they were travelling grave diggers. When the **Maltings** was converted into a concert hall Bob became the concert hall manager. They lived in a flat there for 20 years and came to know **Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears** well. They met many musicians, dancers, politicians and also members of the Royal Family. They met the Queen Mother several times and were invited to Buckingham Palace for her eightieth birthday. They also attended her funeral. We could have listened to Bob and Doris all day!

Their presentation was followed by mince pies and wine. Owing to the large attendance the Christmas lecture next year will be restricted to a maximum of 230.

NOTICE BOARD

Dates for your Diary

Monday 3 April

The lost city of Dunwich *Mark Mitchels*

Monday 8 May

Forensic aspects of teeth *J G Ritchie*

Monday 5 June

Suffolk curiosities *Peter Driver*

Subscriptions

As confirmed at the Annual General Meeting on 6 March 2006, subscriptions for 2006/7 will increase to £7 in order to cover the Third Age Trust affiliation fee of £2.50 per member.

Printing

The Committee is considering buying a printer for our publications. Would a member be willing to take on the job? Would any study groups use the facility? If so, please contact any Committee member.

U3A NOTICES

The Suffolk and District Network of U3As will be holding its Autumn Academy on 14 October 2006 at Combs Middle School, Stowmarket. The Academy offers the opportunity for affiliated U3A members to participate in two study group sessions of your choice.

Click to view the choice of **subjects** on such diverse topics as creative writing, genetics, photography, music and dance. Leaflets with full details and booking form will be available at Monday lectures in April, May and June. You can also download a **booking form** and programme details here.

Completed application forms should be sent to the organiser **Suzanne Gould** by 30 June

LECTURE NOTES

Pearl of the Orient

Ken Smith was headmaster of Blackbourne Middle School. He was helping to set up a computer system for the school when he encountered a particular problem which was solved via the Internet by a young man called Eric who lived in the **Philippines**. Since then they have met and stayed in each other's homes. With the aid of some wonderful computer graphics Ken told us something of the history of this country and what it is like to live there today.

The Philippines was named after Crown Prince Felipe. The people call themselves Pinoyas and their languages are Pilipino, Tagalog and English. The population is around 84 million of whom 8 million (mainly women)

work overseas. Some 35 million are below the age of 19. The majority are Christians of whom about 80% are Roman Catholic. The climate is hot, up to 40°C, with two seasons – wet or dry. The time zone is GMT + 8 hours with a flight time of 16-17 hours from London.

Ferdinand Magellan of Spain was the first European to arrive in 1521, followed by the Portuguese. Britain attempted colonization in 1762, then in 1764 Spain regained control. In 1898 the Philippines was sold to the US for \$20 million and in 1935 partial independence was granted. The Japanese invaded in 1942, then in 1946, after the liberation, the Philippines became a republic. Since then there have been a number of presidents of whom the most notorious were the Marcos (1965-86). They were followed by Corazon Aquino (1986-92).

There are many places of interest. In Manila there is Malacanang Palace, Rizal Park and the walled city. Elsewhere Cebu City, Palawan Island, the chocolate hills of Bohal and beautiful beaches are well worth the long journey. Sadly there is also poverty. Ken told us about the **Amos Trust**, run by the church, which provides food, medical aid and education to street children. An impromptu collection raised £160 for the charity.

Birds in Springtime

On 6 March we enjoyed an illustrated lecture by Trevor Gunton who was with the **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds**, Sandy, for 30 years. Now retired, Mr Gunton told us about the migration of birds at this time of year. Geese, swans and widgeon that have spent the winter in Britain are now starting to move north, while millions of birds are migrating from Africa and the Mediterranean. Many will die en route, partly owing to natural hazards, partly to the predatory activities of certain countries who do not observe European directives on bird conservation. The arctic tern for example winters on the south polar ice cap, then flies about 10,000 miles to breed in Greenland, Iceland and the Orkneys. Our estuaries are vital staging posts for wading birds. In the UK are some of the world's most important breeding colonies of seabirds: gannets at Bass Rock, guillemots at Staple Island.

Closer to home, there are nature reserves around disused gravel pits, such as **Paxton** in Cambridgeshire and Lackford in Suffolk, that are very active in Spring with species such as the great crested grebe, coots, herons, kingfishers and cormorants all breeding successfully. Management of the woodland and scrub areas is vitally important for black caps, garden warblers and nightingales. At Paxton there are some 26 singing males whose song can be heard during April and May. Gravel pits are important for education and for local communities to enjoy.

Mr Gunton told us to keep feeding our garden birds throughout the year and to report any unusual bird deaths to the RSPB or to DEFRA. Finally he said that the most important thing that we can do as individuals is to care about birds and their **conservation**.

GROUP NEWS

Poetry Appreciation

This group, now nine in number, has been meeting for a number of years. During that time a wide variety of themes has been explored and several poets examined. We have had lively discussions on the merits or otherwise of 'modern' poetry and the nature of poetry itself. We meet on the third Monday morning of each month at Horringer.

Jean Oldham

Electoral Systems

The next subject for the Electoral Systems Group will be to discuss the proposal for Northern Ireland which will provide a system that will give more seats to the moderates and fewer to the extremists. New members are very welcome – no previous knowledge is required. Please contact the convenor for more details

David Chapman

*A Study Groups timetable is posted on the notice board at Monday lectures. For more information contact the group convenor or visit the **Blackbourne U3A website**.*

Study Groups Exhibition

The annual cheese and wine event will take place on 16 October 2006.

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

The Wildlife Watching Group thought that it would be nice to have our own 'U3A Wildlife Photographer of the Year', and have launched a very light-hearted competition open to all Blackbourne U3A members, with the entries to be exhibited at the October Wine and Cheese event.

Rules For The Blackbourne U3A Photography Competition

1. The subject is 'Nature in Suffolk', and could be any bird, beast, plant or landscape that takes your fancy.
2. Any current member of Blackbourne U3A may enter, and must have taken the photograph personally.
3. Entries should be in the form of prints, at the standard size of 7 x 5 inches.
4. On the reverse should be:

Title: (given by entrant)

Subject: e.g. Great Crested Newt

Date and place taken:

Entrant's name:

6. Photos must have been taken since the announcement of the competition on 9 January 2006.
7. Only two entries per person will be accepted.
8. Digital and conventional work will not be separated. Digital entries may be cropped and red-eye eliminated, **but no other digital manipulation** is permissible.
9. Closing date 2 October 2006 (the Monday lecture). Prints should ideally be delivered by hand at the October lecture. Alternatively they may be sent before that date in a sealed envelope to:

U3A Photo Competition

66 Cornfield Road

Bury St Edmunds IP33 3BN

10. An independent judge will be appointed, and judging will take place between 2 and 15 October and as many as possible will be displayed at the Wine and Cheese event on 16 October.

11. Prizes will be awarded as follows:

Wildlife Photographer of the Year [£20 in Jessops or Boots tokens]
Runner-up (a different competitor) [£10]

Please note that we cannot guarantee to return entries. Prints should be collected after the prize giving, or at subsequent lectures.

Rob Parker

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

In January 97 members on two coaches went to London to visit the Cabinet War Rooms and Westminster Abbey.

During World War II the **War Rooms** were the control centre of the chiefs of staff and Mr Churchill (as he was then). All the equipment and maps were left there after the war. There was 24 hour cover on a shift pattern and food was served. We also saw some bedrooms. In the Churchill Museum the great man's voice followed us around!

Westminster Abbey was up to expectations with many tombs of our kings and queens. Seeing the restored fabric of the building which we had been told about by Geoff Roberts last September enhanced our visit.

In addition to the visits listed in the December edition of *Blackbourne U3A News* a further trip to **Windsor Castle** is being arranged for May/June.

John Morris

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Over 230 members attended the AGM on 6 March. Our Chairman, Anne Anstead, reported that 2005/6 had been another successful year with excellent lectures, 22 active study groups and interesting educational visits. At the Special General Meeting held on 17 October members decided to become affiliated to the Third Age Trust. This is effective from 1 March 2006. There are now 472 members. Anne thanked the Committee and others for their hard work and support.

Ann Edmondson presented the financial report. Although costs have risen the bank balance stands at £5535. Subscriptions will increase to £7 for 2006/7. Roger Beaurain was

thanked for his work as external examiner and was reappointed for 2006/7.

Bryann Ward was elected as Chairman for 2006/7 and Ann Sear as Vice Chairman. Eight members were elected to serve on the Committee (see details opposite). Adam Edmondson and Anne Anstead have retired.

At the AGM Peter Pinel was presented with a framed certificate to mark his appointment as an Honorary Life Member for services from 1996 both on the Committee and as Technical Manager

COMMITTEE 2006/7

Bryann Ward *Chairman*

Ann Sear *Vice Chairman and Joint Lecture Secretary*

Bob Mountfort *Secretary*

Ann Edmondson *Treasurer*

Sheila Linke *Badge Secretary and Newsletter Distributor*

Brian Milner

John Morris *Educational Visits Organiser*

Sally Rands *Membership Secretary*

Jean White *Joint Lecture Secretary*

Yvonne Ryder *Newsletter and Study Groups Co-ordinator*

Blackbourne University of the

Third Age

NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Dear Member,

A Special General Meeting will be held at Thurston New Green Centre on Monday 8 May 2006, after which we will have the lecture 'Forensic Aspects of Teeth' by J. G. Ritchie. We shall endeavour to keep this special meeting as short as possible so that we have plenty of time for the lecture.

At this Special General Meeting we will be asking you to consider and vote for the resolutions concerning the amendments to our constitution which are spelled out below. It is the recommendation of your committee that the resolutions be adopted.

Bob Mountfort
General Secretary Blackbourne U3A

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

WHEREAS at a Special General Meeting of the Blackbourne U3A held on 17 October 2005 it was resolved and agreed that the Blackbourne U3A apply to be affiliated to the U3A Third Age Trust, and

WHEREAS the U3A Third Age Trust has approved said application and granted the Blackbourne U3A full membership commencing 1 March 2006,

Now be it **RESOLVED** that the Constitution of the Blackbourne U3A be amended in recognition of same by removing the reference in the Constitution to simply the 'U3A' and replacing it with 'Blackbourne U3A' throughout the document, and

WHEREAS it is considered that it would be to the advantage of the Blackbourne U3A that the Chairman serve an additional year without a break, should he or she so wish, be it further

RESOLVED that the Constitution be amended to permit same by amending Article 4 MANAGEMENT by adding the words 'with the exception of the Chairman' after the words 'Any person' in line 3 of clause 4.1 and by deleting the word 'not' in line 3 of clause 4.2 and adding at the end of the same line the words 'for one further year only', and

WHEREAS it is the recommendation of the Committee that the number of members serving on the Committee be increased from ten to twelve be it further **RESOLVED** that Article 4 MANAGEMENT Clause 4.1 be amended in line 3 by removing the word 'ten' and replacing it with the word 'twelve', and

WHEREAS in recognition of current accounting practices and regulations it is desirable to amend the Constitution in recognition of the same by changing from Auditors to Examiners be it further **RESOLVED** that Article 6 FINANCE Clause 6.2 be amended by removing the word 'audited' and replacing it with the word 'examined' in line 2 and that Article 7 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Clause 7.2 (c) be amended by removing the word 'auditor' and replacing it with the word 'examiner' and by removing the word 'auditors' and replacing it with the word 'examiners'.