

Blackbourne U3A News

A University of the Third Age in Suffolk

ISSUE NUMBER 52

AUTUMN 2006

From the Chairman . . .

182 people attended the Interest Group Exhibition and judging by the buzz around the hall everyone was enjoying this informal social occasion. My thanks to all the exhibiting convenors for the work they put in, to the caterers and the committee and others who made this possible.

Brian Milner has done a splendid job in drumming up support for several new interest groups, details of which appear elsewhere in this newsletter. May these all flourish.

Last year's members who have not renewed have now been taken off the membership list and those on the waiting list invited to join. So if you are one of the latter, welcome to Blackbourne U3A! We now have 480 members, very close to our limit of 500.

It is a pity we have to restrict numbers but at the monthly lectures it is becoming increasingly difficult to seat everyone at New Green where we regularly get close to the official limit of 250. No doubt this is partly due to the quality of our speakers – the first two of this academic year have been excellent and looking at our programme I am sure there are similar to come.

And now a plea for more committee members. With three existing members retiring in March plus two extra places created by the revised constitution there is a need for five new faces on the committee. This is not an onerous task. The benefits we all enjoy from belonging to Blackbourne U3A depend on a 'well stocked' committee so if you feel you can give something in return please speak to any committee member.

I hope you enjoy reading this special colour issue of our newsletter which includes the winning photograph of the competition organised by Rob Parker and independently judged by Peter Hrebien, secretary of Bury Photographic Society. I hope Rob is willing to organise another for next year.

May I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.
Bryann Ward

NOTICE BOARD

Dates for your diary

Monday 6 November

Frolic, Fervour and Fornication *Pip Wright*

Tuesday 28 November

Visit to Thursford for the Christmas Spectacular (now full)

Monday 4 December

Classical Christmas *Father Christmas – followed by wine and mince pies*

Monday 8 January

Chernobyl – the accident, its aftermath and the situation today
Leonard Green

Monday 5 February

British tunneling design
Abigail Whitworth Peck

Monday 5 March

A walk with a camera around East Anglia *Trevor Burlingham – preceded by AGM*

LECTURE NOTES

Public Speaking is Fun

On 26 July we were treated to an informative and entertaining lecture by Rosemary McCulloch. Rosemary had previously worked for the BBC, local radio and most recently had been chairman of Deeping U3A in Lincolnshire. Preparation is very important as most people find it difficult to speak in public. Her advice is to make sure that you can be heard and understood, relax, smile, speak slowly and think 'these people are lucky to have me'. During the lecture we were asked to turn round and have a discussion with our neighbours – an introduction to public speaking. Rosemary concluded with a poem, one of her favourites, about not spending money, but she had not yet got out of bed!

From Westcliffe to Woolpit

On 2 October we were given an intimate insight into the ups and downs of the theatre world by Michele Lavender. Michele trained as a classical ballet dancer but an injury forced her to retrain as a choreographer and director. She was involved in many West End productions including *Song of Norway*, *Goodbye Mr Chips* and *Oliver*. One of her most interesting projects was the direction of *Dad's Army* where she met a seven-foot banana who later became her husband. Michele has now retired from the theatre and lives with her husband Ian in Woolpit.

Civil War in the British Isles 1642–1651

The first lecture for the new academic year was presented by Dr David Dougan. Dr Dougan is the author of nine books, his latest having been written in conjunction with the Bury St Edmunds U3A.

The 1640s was the worst decade of the war; a quarter of a million people died, there was no harvest and no trade. There were in fact three wars, separated in time but linked: the first from August 1642 to June 1646, the second from May to August 1648 and the third in Ireland, Scotland and England from August 1649 to September 1651. East Anglia was fortunate during the Civil War to escape any major battles, although during the second war Colchester was besieged for ten weeks.

Charles I went to Nottingham in August 1642 to raise his standard: the people of the north supported Charles, but the people of London were in favour of a Parliament. The war broke out initially because of religious differences and also because of royal absolutism, the divine right of the King, who considered he was not subject to the laws of the land. In 1628 Charles had dissolved Parliament, who controlled finance, and so he had to raise money by imposing taxes. In 1644 the first major battle of the war was fought at Marston Moor in Yorkshire.

Oliver Cromwell, the Member of Parliament for Cambridge, began to emerge as a major force. Parliament needed to reorganise the new model army, a standing army paid out of national taxes, disciplined and highly committed.

The decisive battle was fought at Naseby in Northamptonshire on 14 June 1645. Charles was defeated and forced to flee. He

surrendered himself to the Scots who in turn sold him back to the English. He was put on trial for treason. The trial lasted for six days; he was found guilty and condemned to death. He was beheaded on 30 January 1649 at the Banqueting Hall, Westminster.

The Civil War ended in 1651 and Oliver Cromwell became Lord Protector. He died on 3 September 1658. This period of English history is known as the Republic. Charles II, who had been living in exile in France, entered London in May 1660 and received a tremendous welcome. Thus passed England's one and only experience of a republican government.

NEW STUDY GROUPS

Brian Milner has set up the following new study groups. Members who would like to know more should contact the convenors:

Advanced French Conversation *Peter Elliott*

Astronomy *Frankie Mountfort*

Family History and Genealogy *Bob Mountfort*

Garden Visits (now full) *Barbara Milner*

Gi-gong (gentle exercise) *Peter Elliott*

Italian for Beginners *Peter Elliott*

Parchment Craft (now full) *Joyce Kirk*

Short Walks with a Theme (now full) *Richard Horton*

Intermediate Spanish Conversation *Marion Berry*

Photography *Ken Weston*

Videos and video editing *Charles Kirk*

Social History (Barningham) (now full) *Deidre Dobson*

Social History (Thurston) (now full) *Brian Milner*

Alternative Travel Group *Brian Milner*

AUTUMN ACADEMY

The Autumn Academy, organised by the Network of Suffolk U3As, took place at Combs Middle School in Stowmarket on 14 October. Around 180 U3A members went 'back to school' to study, in an informal atmosphere, subjects ranging from creative writing, family history and Samuel Pepys to weather

forecasting, web publishing and genetics. The event was well organised, the study sessions being led by knowledgeable tutors, all U3A members who gave their time and expertise on a voluntary basis. It was a stimulating and enjoyable day; and for Blackbourne U3A members an opportunity to meet members from other Suffolk U3As for the first time.

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 *Third Age Trust Resources*

John Morris *Educational Visits Organiser*

Sally Rands *Membership Secretary*

Jean White *Joint Lecture Secretary*

Yvonne Ryder *Newsletter and Study Groups Co-ordinator*