

Notice of Annual General Meeting

To be held in New Green Community
Centre, Thurston
at 10am on Monday, 6 March 2017

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 7 March 2016
3. Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts
5. Appointment of Accounts Examiner
6. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and other Committee members
7. Any other Business previously advised
8. Date of next AGM
5 March 2018

Only BU3A members may vote at this meeting.

To be immediately followed by a lecture
by William Tyler
'The Sea and Suffolk – an Historian's
View'

Please note that the Minutes of the
2016 AGM will be available to read on
the [Blackbourne U3A](#) website before
the meeting.



**YOUR COMMITTEE
NEEDS YOU**

From your Chairman

WELCOME to the February newsletter. This is the last one before the AGM and my last one as chairman. I have been looking back at the newsletters on our website and every year at this time, just before the AGM, there is a plea for committee members; this goes right back to December 2005, the first year recorded on the website, when we had just affiliated to the Third Age Trust. So what can I say that has not been said countless times before and much more eloquently? Some of you will have seen the email message that has already gone out which makes some very valid points. As a U3A we are twenty-five years old and one of the principles of all U3As is:

For the members, by the members

Some members help in the setting up of the room for the lectures and others provide the very welcome sustenance for which I am certainly grateful. We have our convenors who run the Interest Groups and as so many people help in so many ways I'm reluctant to continue naming jobs as I am sure to miss someone out and I should not like to upset anyone. Somehow this all has to be co-ordinated and for this we have a committee whose job it is to see that everything runs smoothly – where would be without the Lecture Secretary to book speakers, or the Membership Secretary to record those that are no longer able to attend and offer their place to the next on the waiting list. These two posts and the post of General Secretary will need to be filled this year. Can you see yourself in one of these roles?

I know many of you have done your bit in the past, but with a membership of over 600 I also know there are many of you who could help but so far have not stepped up. Why not? Being on the committee is not too onerous – you would be one of a maximum of twelve committee members, so you would not be alone, you would meet together six times a year and serve a maximum of three years. Think about why you are in this U3A, what you get from it and consider if there is something you can give back!

After the February lecture we, the committee, will gather in the conservatory to welcome any one of you who would like to join us, to talk about the help you could give, be it on the committee or in any other way.

I look forward to seeing you at this informal meeting and also at the AGM when I hope we will have the full complement of officers and committee!

Thank you for the support you have given me in my two years as chairman.

With best wishes to you all.

Anne Ling

Napoleon Bonaparte – The First European



FEW historical figures have generated such divergent opinions as Napoleon Bonaparte. Our speaker for December, David Dougan, said many in France regard him as a hero, France's equivalent of Britain's Oliver Cromwell and creator of the Code Napoleon, while others revile him as the cause of millions of unnecessary deaths resulting from his many military campaigns.

Born in Corsica in 1769, Bonaparte quickly became a

distinguished artillery officer in the French army. Aged 26 he scored decisive victories against the Austrians and Italians and became a national hero. He married Josephine

Beauharnais in 1796 and in 1798 led a military campaign to Egypt that served as a springboard to political power.

In 1799 he became First Consul of the Republic and transformed the country politically, educationally and legally. However, in 1800 he was obliged once again to defeat the Austrians (at the battle of Marengo) and in 1804 crowned himself Emperor of France.

In 1805 Napoleon recorded his greatest ever victory by defeating the combined forces of Russia and Austria at the Battle of Austerlitz. In 1808, in an attempt to stifle British trade with mainland Europe, Napoleon invaded Spain; the ensuing Peninsular War lasted six years and ended in victory for the Allies.

In 1810, following his divorce from the childless Josephine, Napoleon married Marie Louise of Austria. Thereafter, he invaded Russia in the summer of 1812, ultimately being defeated at the Battle of Leipzig. In 1814 he was forced to abdicate and exiled to the island of Elba.

Following his escape from Elba he reassumed control of France. The Allies responded by forming a Seventh Coalition, which, with the British troops led by the Duke of Wellington, defeated Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. Napoleon was finally exiled to the remote island of St. Helena, where this most controversial figure was to spend the rest of his days.

Howard Chandler

Angel Roofs of East Anglia

EAST ANGLIA has the highest number of Mediaeval churches in the UK. This was the arresting statistic with which Michael Rimmer, our January speaker, introduced his presentation on [angel roofs](#). Additionally, East Anglia has 69% of all angel roofs in the UK in addition also to the vast majority of hammer beam roofs.

In the Middle Ages churches began to be highly decorated, featuring stained glass, wall paintings of saints and, typically, a rood depicting the crucifixion. However, many churches were later reduced to their current sparse appearance during the Reformation, commencing in the reign of King Edward VI. The reason for this apparent vandalism was that the images concerned were considered a distraction and 90% of figurative art was destroyed as a result.

Angel roofs were all built between 1395 and 1534 but, because they were regarded as too decorative, their construction ceased when Henry VIII broke with Rome. Fortunately, they were typically spared the destruction of church art during the Reformation because of their inaccessibility within the church.

The angels depicted were frequently shown with musical instruments or depicting Christ's suffering at the crucifixion, and the angel roof constructors, many of them becoming specialist carvers known as 'imaginators', were often influenced by mystery plays.

The first angel roof ever constructed was in Westminster Hall, built for King Richard II. The rationale for the carving of roof angels was to underline Richard's supposed divine status. The principal creator of the Westminster Hall angel roof was Hugh Herland, whose close relationship with several East Anglican craftsmen is considered to be the reason that East Anglia continues to boast so many angel roofs.

One of the most spectacular angel roofs in Britain is contained in St. Mary's Church, Bury St. Edmunds, pictured here. Its construction was sponsored by John Baret, a wealthy local cloth salesman, whose life was not without controversy but whose legacy in the form of St. Mary's angel roof provides a most interesting feature of our local landscape.

Howard Chandler



Brooklands Museum



John Cobb in the Napier-Railton 1935

THE last Educational visit of 2016 was to [Brooklands Museum](#), near Weybridge, Surrey.

On arrival we enjoyed a drink and cake followed by an introductory talk after which we were free to explore at our own pace.

The museum opened in 1991 occupying 30 acres of the original 1907 motor racing circuit including the steepest section of the historic banked track. We were able to walk out onto this and, for those who climbed the 1-in-4 hill built for testing, view it from the Members' Bridge.

At the start of the 20th century international motor races had few British competitors as there was nowhere in Britain where cars could be tested or raced. Local landowners and motoring enthusiasts, the Locke Kings, decided to provide such a track on their estate and in 1906 set about building a 2.75 mile, 100ft wide concrete circuit, with two 30ft high banked sections. This was completed a year later with the first race taking place on 7 July 1907. As well as motor racing the venue was used for many land

speed record attempts both on four wheels and two and in 1926 the first British Grand Prix was staged here.

Many of the original workshops and tuning sheds have been restored and house a magnificent collection of historic racing cars (there is an opportunity to experience a drive in a McLaren F1 car), motor cycles and pedal cycles alongside memorabilia telling the stories of the period. The Edwardian clubhouse includes room settings that evoke the atmosphere of the early 1900s.

In 1909 the area within the circuit was cleared to become one of the first aerodromes and Brooklands became the birthplace of British aviation. In 1915 Vickers started manufacturing aircraft at Brooklands. Hundreds of men and women learned to fly here between the world wars and regular aviation events were held.

Following the cessation of motor racing in 1939 aircraft production took over the entire site. The Wellington bomber, Hawker Hurricane, Valiant bomber, Viking, Viscount and VC10 were built here followed by the BAC 1-11 and Concorde for which more parts were made here than at any other site.

Reflecting this important part of Brookland's history are static displays of aircraft built here, some of which can be explored internally including the initial British production Concorde and the Sultan of Oman's opulent VC10.

Aircraft production ceased in 1988 and in 1990 the site closed to be redeveloped as a business and retail park with only about 10% of the area retained for the museum.

An excellent day out and well worth a visit for those interested in the history of motor racing and aeroplanes.

Thanks to Linda and Maureen for arranging this and the other educational visits during 2016.

Bryann Ward

Garden Visits Group

WE have had a great year of visits ending with a brilliant talk by Allan Gray of Old Vicarage Gardens, East Ruston. He excited us so much that we are treating ourselves to a visit there in April!

On 22 February Jamie Blake of Bressingham Gardens is coming to speak to us about "Around the World in 80 Plants" which sounds very interesting. This session, starting at 2.00.p.m. in New Green Centre, is open to all BU3A members – cost £2 each to include a cup of tea and cake.

The complete programme of our events is on the Blackbourne U3A website. We meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month and booking sheets will be available two months beforehand at the Monday monthly meetings – payment by cheque made out to "BU3A Garden Visits" on signing up please.



One of Philip Webber's photos of Corpusty Mill which we visited in July. A really stunning five acre garden in three distinct parts, noted for its buildings follies. Off the beaten track but such a treasure.

Barbara Milner

Then and Now Group

THEN and Now Group was set up in 2009 by Brian and Barbara Milner with the main objective of learning about our local history and how this relates to the way we live today. Meetings were held ten times a year including one or two outings. The group, open to all U3A members, became very popular, with a fluctuating membership of around 40 for some years. We have enjoyed a wide variety of presentations, mostly by local historians and representatives of local organisations; sometimes one of the members would present a topic that they had studied themselves.

After six successful years Brian and Barbara retired and Doug Cox took over as convenor, with Judith Constantine as administrator. Doug presided over a programme which included topics from the history of aviation, corset manufacture in Ipswich and the building of the Cathedral tower, to stories from old newspapers, later complemented by a presentation from a Fleet Street journalist

Highlights (for me personally) were a visit to Stanford Training Area (Stanta) near Thetford where we walked around mock 'villages' used for training troops in theatres of

war such as Afghanistan and Bosnia; a fascinating account by Dr Pat Murrell brought to life the occupants of Cupola House and how the wealthy middle class lived in 18th century Bury St Edmunds; and a talk by Pip Wright about the 'Suffolk Gipsy' [Revd John Steggles] held in the village where he lived, followed by a visit to the church where he preached.

Doug and Judith decided to step down at the end of 2016, and with no-one willing to take over as convenor we reluctantly had to wind up the group. Our last meeting was in November when Martyn Taylor told us about the two rivers of Bury St Edmunds, the Lark and Linnet, and how they have influenced the history and development of the town.

We have learned a great deal over the years, in an enjoyable way, thanks to Brian and, more recently, Doug. Our grateful thanks go to all those who have contributed to the smooth running of the group – programme organisers, administrators, and those who provided our refreshments.

Judith Constantine

Interest Groups' News

Friday Shorter Walks

Re-starts on 3 March with new convenor, Sylvie Marshall, 01359 241859

Travz

Has new leader, Mary-Jo Pinder, 01379 855064

Social History

Laurie Marshall's new phone no. is 01359 241859

New Groups

Happy Quilters

Started on Monday 23 January at Great Barton.
Leader, Dominique Sutton
01359 231419

French Conversation

Starting Monday 6 February
Twice a month, 2.00-4.00pm
Leader, Joanna Last. 01359 258470

We are trying to start additional groups for **Dining Out** and **Mah Jong**

Meditation

There is a member willing to start such a group but not until March.

For more information please contact the appropriate group leader or the Interest Groups' Co-ordinators:

Stella Chamberlin, 01359 242601
Mary Dunbavin, 01359 233045



Thursday walkers take a break around John Morris' seat on the Peddars Way, Knettishall Heath

ELECTION OF SECRETARY at AGM

At the forthcoming AGM in March we need to elect a new secretary as Maxine is retiring after giving excellent service to our U3A.

At present, we do not have a volunteer to replace her.

After the monthly lecture on 6 February the Chairman and the Committee will be holding an informal meeting in the conservatory at New Green for all members – if you would be interested in finding out more about the secretary's post or can offer any other help, please come and join us or contact:

Anne Ling – Chairman, 01359 231881,
chair@blackbourne-u3a.org.uk

or

Maxine Wilde – Secretary, 01359 230842,
secretary@blackbourne-u3a.org.uk
or talk to any committee member

Please do not assume that 'someone else will do the job'

Deadline for May issue is
23 April

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