

## BLACKBOURNE U3A URGENTLY NEEDS YOUR HELP

All will be explained at Thurston New Green Centre

on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 11.30am

IF more members do not come forward to help, our U3A may have to close. If you do not want this to happen in March and you would like to continue with all the benefits of belonging to our U3A, please give serious consideration to whether YOU could help prevent closure by volunteering to assist the running of Blackbourne U3A in any way you can.

This need not necessarily be on the committee as there are many other jobs to do. However, because our committee members are permitted to hold their post for a maximum of three years, several of them are coming to the end of that time and we are, therefore, looking to fill some important roles in March, most of which can be shared. The minimum commitment is for one year only.

Even if you feel you could give only occasional help, PLEASE come along to our meeting, as detailed above, to find out much more. Alternatively, contact any committee member as listed in your current programme or on our website.

Whether you are a new or a longer standing member but have not yet had the chance to help, why not make it one of your New Year's resolutions to prevent your U3A from closing down, and know that you have done something worthwhile.

Thank you.

*Derrick Haley, Chairman*

### Monthly Lectures

Start promptly at 10.00am  
Coffee served until 9.45am

#### Monday 8 January

Detection and dealing with unexploded ordnance.

*Lee Gooderham*

#### Monday 5 February

To the Hammer Born.  
Stories of an auctioneer.

*Stephen Poulter*

#### Monday 5 March

#### AGM

followed by  
All Aspects of Bee Keeping.  
The importance of bees and gardening to help them.

*Mike Shave*



West Stow Country Park

**Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and New Year**

## Chocolate – its history, fact and fiction

Despite our September speaker, Tony Diamond, announcing at the outset that there would be no free samples, 100% of the audience remained to hear a fascinating account of the history of chocolate.

The first Europeans to discover cacao, the source of chocolate, were the Spaniards following Cortez's invasion and occupation of Central America in 1519. The Spaniards were so enamoured with chocolate, which was considered good for one's health, that they kept it secret from the rest of the world for over a century.

Thereafter it was to become immensely popular with members of the British Royal Family, including Charles II, Queen Anne and later Queen Victoria. Queen Victoria was reputed to be a "chocaholic", allegedly consuming four pounds of chocolate a day, and she lobbied Parliament to abolish the import tax on chocolate, which they duly did, although only for British ships. In Victoria's reign Fry's became the first company to

manufacture a chocolate bar, later merging with Cadbury in 1921.

Our speaker concluded his talk with a description of some facts and misconceptions about chocolate:-

### Some 'Good' facts

Chocolate aids sound sleep, helps regulate blood pressure, enhances cognitive abilities and can delay the onset of Alzheimer's.

### Some disputed claims

Chocolate heals anxiety, cures cancer and is an aphrodisiac.

### Some known negatives

Chocolate causes obesity, aggravates osteoporosis and can poison domestic pets.

### Other facts and figures

The Ivory Coast produces 50% of the world's chocolate. The majority of the world's chocolate is controlled by the City of London, and sales of chocolate in the UK in 2015 totalled £6.7 billion.

*Howard Chandler*

---

## Crippen – story of a legendary murder

AS we learned from our October speaker, Mark Mitchels, Hawley Harvey Crippen was a quietly spoken American homeopathic physician. Following the death of his wife, Charlotte, in 1894 he married a fellow American, Cora Turner (stage name Belle Elmore), who had misguided aspirations to be an opera singer.

In 1899 the Crippens moved to London, where Crippen worked for Munyon's, a homeopathic pharmaceutical company, while Cora became a somewhat unsuccessful music hall singer. They were an ill matched couple; while he was quiet and retiring, Cora was gregarious and flirtatious.

By the time the Crippens moved to Camden in 1905 they were living virtually separate lives and it was then that Crippen developed a relationship with his secretary, Ethel Le Neve Neave. In 1910 Cora disappeared and Ethel was observed wearing Cora's jewellery. This aroused the suspicions of Cora's friends, who then reported the matter to the police.

Police investigations were headed by Chief Inspector Walter Drew, who, following the discovery



of human remains at the Crippen property, issued a warrant for the arrest of Crippen and Ethel. This eventually took place in Canada, to where Crippen and Ethel had sailed in disguise but who were recognised by their ship's Captain.

Crippen and Ethel were subsequently tried separately. However, whereas Crippen had the disadvantage of an outclassed Defence Counsel, Ethel was better served by a more eminent advocate. The outcome was that Crippen was found guilty of Cora's

murder and sentenced to hang, while Ethel was found not guilty and acquitted.

Crippen was executed on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1910 while, on the morning of his execution, Ethel emigrated to the United States. There she married Stanley William Smith, who was unaware of her background and with whom she had two children.

The remaining open question in this entire saga is whether Ethel Le Neve Neave actually instigated the murder of Belle Elmore.

*Howard Chandler*

## COLCHESTER ZOO

### Past, present and future



OUR speaker for November, Rebecca Perry, began by defining a zoo. It could also be an ocean park, safari park, aquarium or butterfly park and if it is open to the public a wild animal licence is needed.

In medieval England wild animals were given as gifts. Henry I had lions, leopards, lynx

and camels in his collection.

Animals were brought back as a novelty from journeys abroad. There were animal menageries and travelling circuses for ordinary people to see wild animals.

Vienna Zoo opened in 1778 to “decently dressed persons” on Sundays! London Zoo opened in 1826 for scientific study and then to the public in 1847.

Colchester Zoo, originally known as Stanway Hall Park Zoo, was opened in 1963 by Frank and Helena Farrar. With the passing of the Zoo Licensing Act in 1981 all zoos needed to be licensed and inspected. Frank Farrar knew that his zoo was in need of major improvements in order to gain a licence so he put it up for sale. It was taken over by Dr Dominique Tropeano in 1983 and brought up to the standard required to gain its licence. It is the largest privately owned zoo in England, with over 260 species. It covers 60 acres and has many award winning enclosures.

The captive breeding programmes are managed at a European level; for example the male offspring of gelada baboons have been sent to zoos in Germany and Edinburgh. There have been successful breeding programmes with Komodo dragons and Humboldt penguins, some of which are now at the Sea Life Centre at Southend. The first elephant to be born via artificial insemination was at Colchester Zoo in 2009.

It has also contributed to in situ conservation programmes around the world, including a nature reserve, UmPhafa, in South Africa. Giraffes, zebras, antelope and rhinos have been released into the reserve and other animals such as ostriches, elands and leopards have moved onto the site.

A local project involves the breeding and release of the Fisher’s Estuarine Moth, which feeds on hog’s fennel as its sole larval food. The zoo planted 27 new sites of the fennel and aims to develop a captive breeding programme. A nature area for bird walks and pond dipping opened in 2011, aiming to increase awareness of native species.

The zoo costs £35,000 a day to run, raising most of its income from admission charges, catering and out of season events at Hallowe’en and Christmas. With one million visitors last year, it seems to be achieving its goal of fostering the understanding and respect for wild animals and helping wild life conservation.

The audience enjoyed this interesting, well delivered and informative talk which was followed by plenty of questions.

Sue Prime

## Schoolreaders

This is a charity whose volunteers go into a local primary school to listen to children read on a one-to-one basis. They are currently looking for volunteers in this area.

The volunteer is matched to the right school to fit in with the volunteers’ location, availability, needs, etc. There is an enormous need for this service as one in three children are currently leaving primary school unable to read properly. The service is free to both schools and volunteers.

Everyone wins from the scheme – the children – the school and the volunteers who get a great deal of pleasure from the experience and in seeing what a big difference a little of their time can make.

If you are interested please call Tracy Rogers on 234 924111 or visit [www.schoolreaders.org](http://www.schoolreaders.org)

## The Edmund Lectures

These are an exciting range of free lectures, open to all, dealing with topics from privacy and surveillance on the internet to whether the British political party system can survive Brexit and the fact that Monet’s actual water lilies originate from Suffolk. They are being launched by the University of Suffolk at West Suffolk College.

The new monthly series, taken by academics who are experts in their subjects, will be held on a Wednesday evening between 6pm and 7pm in the E1.01 lecture theatre at West Suffolk College

<http://www.westsuffolkcollege.ac.uk/news-and-events/latest-news/718/New-Edmund-Lectures-Are-Free-and-Open-to-All>

## Educational Visit 25 September

WE started at Palace House, Newmarket, the home of the [National Heritage Centre for Horseracing and Sporting Art](#) which was opened in November 2016 by Her Majesty the Queen after a renovation costing around £15 million. Palace House was built between 1606 and 1610 for James I and now houses the galleries of British Sporting Art with paintings by Stubbs, Singer Sergeant and Munnings.

Across the road, the National Horseracing Museum traces the story of horse racing from its origins to the present day. The Maktoum Gallery contains an animated display showing how a racehorse runs and how every part of the body contributes to its athleticism. You can follow the bloodlines of many famous horses on a wall chart in the gallery.

There are displays of silks worn by the famous jockeys Lester Piggott and Frankie Dettori, trophies and silver and bronze artefacts as well as other audio visual and interactive exhibits.

The Rothschild Yard has stabling for up to eight former racehorses. Galleries explain the role of the Retraining of Racehorses Charity and tell a few of the many success stories that have seen former racehorses excel in new careers such as dressage, polo and eventing.

After lunch we visited the [Animal Health Trust](#) in Kentford, a charity founded in 1942 by a vet, Reginald Wooldridge and which is celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year.

We had an introductory talk and overview of the Trust which specialises in the treatment of horses, dogs and cats (companion animals) followed by a presentation about equine influenza.

We visited the Small Animal Centre, and saw some of the 'inpatients' who were being treated. We also visited the hydrotherapy unit.

There is an MRI scanner enabling successful diagnosis and management of problems with the brain and nervous system and a state-of-the-art cancer unit treating cats, dogs and horses who seem to tolerate the drugs quite well.

We saw a horse that had come in for treatment for leg problems being assessed by a team who film the animal walking, trotting and being ridden. Nerve blocking is used to eliminate regions from the diagnosis, so if the horse's movement then improves they know they have found the source of pain.

The AHT shares its expert knowledge with other countries and the 76 scientists and research assistants continue to help improve and protect animal health.



*The assessment*

*Linda Wells*

## Educational Visits

2018

Linda Wells and Maureen Morris have finalised the programme for next year, the dates for which are below.

These are open to all members and reservations must be accompanied by a cheque for the full cost.

Linda and Maureen will be at the monthly meetings, or can be contacted by phone, to provide more details.

### **Monday 29 January**

Duxford

### **Monday 26 March**

Roman Colchester & Mersea

### **Monday 21 May**

Bletchley Park

### **Monday 23 July**

Mini Car Plant Tour, Oxford

### **Monday 17 September**

Lea Valley Boat Trip

### **Monday 26 November**

Time & Tide Museum,  
Great Yarmouth

Produced by Bryann Ward

Printed by Profile Business Supplies, Bury St Edmunds

Contributions should be sent to [publisher@blackbourne-u3a.org.uk](mailto:publisher@blackbourne-u3a.org.uk)

**DEADLINE for February issue is 21 January 2018**