

Dear Members,

EASTER will be upon us before we know it. Spring is such a lovely time of year and a time of renewal. It has been a time of renewal for the U3A Committee – with myself as the new Chairperson and also continuing as Lecture Secretary, Margaret Knock stepping up to be Vice-Chair, Brenda Last remaining as our indomitable Treasurer, Sue Adams joining us as our new Secretary, Andrew Adams remaining as Membership Secretary, Bryann Ward continuing as our Newsletter Publisher (non-committee) and Anne Ling continuing as our Website Co-ordinator (non-committee). We are all eager and willing to serve our members as best we can. We welcome ideas and feedback from all of you, particularly as we have had Covid to contend with and the government regulations regarding Covid are now relaxing considerably.

We are still searching for an energetic and enthusiastic member to volunteer to be Interest Groups Co-Ordinator. If you feel you might enjoy this role please come and speak to any of the new Committee. We would welcome any other members who feel they would like to come and attend committee meetings and contribute ideas and thoughts. We are much better as a large team and able to be more representative of our membership if there are more of us. Also, 'many hands make light work'.

Many thanks to all those now retired Committee members who continued to carry out their duties well past their three years. Managing to continue lectures throughout the pandemic would not have been possible without your grit and determination.

Finally, I just wanted to ensure that you are all aware that the national U3A Newsletter is available online and is frequently a very interesting read. This month there is an opportunity to view someone's travel experiences in Japan; a huge list of new skills to learn if you feel bored and a suggestion for personal giving to Ukraine.

I look forward to seeing and getting to know more of you personally over the next three years and let's hope that the coming months offer some hope for our fellow members in Ukraine.

To end on a happy note there is no increase in membership fees this year.

Bernadette, Chairwoman

Committee 2022–2023

Chairman and Lecture Secretary-

Bernadette Pitt

07711019877

Vice Chairman

Margaret Knock

01359 240604

General Secretary

Sue Adams

01359 408151

Treasurer

Brenda Last

01359 221307

Membership Secretary

Andrew Adams

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Jean Williamson

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Monthly lectures

10.00am at New Green Centre

Tuesday 3 May

The railways of East Anglia

Douglas Bourn

Monday 6 June

The Rougham Estate

George Agnew

Monday 4 July

St Paul's Cathedral

An Unusual Guide

Gary Powell

There is no meeting in August

Origins of Surnames

FOR our December lecture meeting we were pleased to welcome back Charlie Haylock to talk about the origins of surnames

Before 1066 there were no surnames. There would have been nicknames, by names, extra names, warrior names, non-complimentary names, place names, physical attributes, counties, trades, heraldic charges, and almost every object known to mankind, but these would not have been handed down. When communities were small each person was identifiable by a single name, but as the population increased, it gradually became necessary to identify people further, leading to names such as John the butcher, William the short, Henry from Sutton, Mary of the wood, Roger son of Richard.

After 1066, the Norman barons introduced surnames into England, and the practice gradually spread. Initially, the identifying names were changed or dropped at will, but eventually they began to stick and get passed on. So trades, nicknames, places of origin, and fathers' names

became fixed surnames – names such as Fletcher, Smith, Redhead, Swift, Green, Pickering, Wilkins and Johnson. By 1400 most English families, and those from Lowland Scotland, had adopted the use of hereditary surnames.

New surnames continued to be formed long after 1400, and immigrants brought in new ones. Many Irish and Highland Scottish names derive from Gaelic personal names, as do those of the Welsh. There are a number of ways “son of” is represented – for example Williams or Williamson. In Welsh, Ap is used as in Ap Rhys Price, Ap Richard Pritchard, in Scotland Mac and in Ireland Mc. O’ is grandson of. From French there is ett, itt and ott meaning little and also fils, son, becoming Fiz or Fitz.

We were reminded of the history of spoken English and how pronunciation had changed over the centuries. This means that some surnames have changed so much since their origin making identification of the original difficult.

Mary Dunbavin

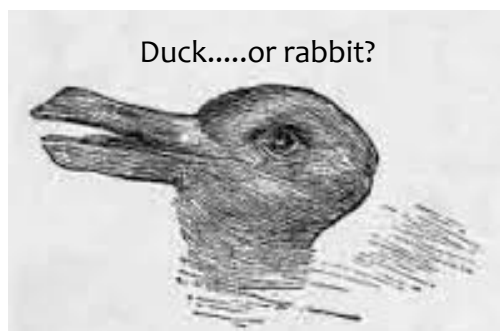
Illusions and Delusions

THE MARCH talk was given by Dr Alex Carter from Cambridge University.

The title itself caused me concern but research tells me that an illusion is something caused by outside influence whereas delusion is caused by one’s feelings.

Dr Carter advised us that it is his aim, as a university lecturer, to get his students to feel the pain of problems. May I say that this U3A student felt the pain.

The talk was based on the philosophy of Rene Descartes that one should think for oneself. One should believe that something is incredible to prove that it is credible.



Dr Carter showed a number of pictures and asked whether they were real or illusory. All were genuine and

this confirmed the belief of most of the audience. The fact that some thought that some of the pictures had been “doctored” showed the ability to confuse the mind of some observers.

If someone suffers from Visual Agnosia they are unable to describe an object that they are looking at in a way that would enable another person to name the object but the patient could pick up the object and know what it was and how to use it.

If Descartes’ theories are correct we might always be deluded. We can certainly always disillusion ourselves. What is a promise if nobody ever keeps their promise?

Dr Carter discussed dreams and asked when are we dreaming and when are we awake? If you look at your hand but see no lines you are dreaming but if you see lines you are awake.

The talk culminated with the malignant demon that suggests that nothing really exists although the demon makes me believe that they do. The suggestion was that none of the audience actually exists, apart from me that is.

As the talk came to an end I wrote in my notes “Dr Carter asked many questions, answered none and left us as confused as we were when we started but at least we now know that we are confused”

As the meeting closed the audience were discussing their confusion but everybody felt that they had been brilliantly entertained.

Laurie Marshall

A Royal Visitor



She married the German Prince Albert in 1840, and they went on to have a total of nine children, although Victoria professed that she didn't really like babies! To give their large family more freedom to roam than in London, they purchased Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, where they had a telephone installed as well as electricity. Queen Victoria was somewhat of a pioneer in the use of medicine, e.g. she was the first to use Sir John Snow's invention of anaesthetic during childbirth.

In 1851, the Great Exhibition organised by Prince Albert enjoyed such success that a surplus of £18,000 (the equivalent of about £2million today) was used to build London's Victoria & Albert Museum and the Albert Hall.

The Victorian era heralded so many innovations and inventions, most of which the Queen enthusiastically supported. In 1869 the Suez Canal was completed, giving easier access to her "beloved" India and, although she never actually visited there, she was made Empress of India in 1876, and had one room at Osborne House decorated entirely in the Indian style.

When her mother died in 1861 and Prince Albert later in the same year (at the age of 42), Victoria went into mourning and 'retirement', wearing black for the rest of her life and spending most of that time at Balmoral. Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli eventually coaxed her out of retirement by encouraging her to write several books.

Having survived seven assassination attempts, she had 42 grandchildren and was called the "Grandmother of Europe" as all her children had married into European royalty. Summing up her long reign, Queen Victoria speculated about what future developments may happen in the next 100 years.

Stella Chamberlin

RATHER appropriate in this Royal Jubilee year, those who attended our February lecture meeting were honoured to be in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Victoria (a.k.a. Georgette Vale), suitably attired in her iconic-black widow's clothing, made of silk bombazine fabric which was largely woven in Norwich from the 19th century. Taking us back to the year 1900, the by-then elderly Queen had a wonderfully clear voice and, seated on her golden 'throne', she told us about her eventful life, giving us a royal insight into the many major changes which had occurred during her long reign (1837-1901).

Victoria, born in 1819, was only eight months old when her father died, and six months later her grandfather, George III, also passed away. She endured a very restricted, sheltered, and somewhat lonely childhood in London's Kensington Palace, overseen by her over-protective mother. However, after her rather calamitous coronation in 1838, she became Queen at the age of 18, and then began to gain more freedom and confidence, under the watchful fatherly influence of Lord Melbourne.

THURSDAY Walks with Interest Group had plenty to interest them on their February walk from Ixworth, led by Helen Taylor. Across the open fields to the west of Ixworth Church a group of hares were seen getting ready for Mad March by running around in circles.

Further along a group of roe deer were seen, initially the deer were as interested in watching the walkers as were the walkers in watching them. Later a red kite was spotted soaring in the sky.

Continuing the walk the group arrived at the Pakenham Water Mill where tea and coffee had been arranged followed by a very interesting tour of the mill.

Thanks to Dave Wilding for the photo.



Social History Group

THE Social History Group reconvened in February after the latest Covid 19 episode. The pandemic story we have all lived through this past couple of years will more than likely be an interesting topic for a future Social History Group presentation. However, today's lecture was a journey through the history of social housing. This month's speaker was Social History Group leader Laurie Marshall.

Laurie took us from the early days of the Industrial Revolution and the increasing migration of labour to towns and cities. This movement of labour created a huge demand for housing to accommodate the workers, invariably this housing was of poor quality. The consequence was poor health and low life expectancy. Early attempts to improve the workers' lot was mostly by 19th century philanthropists but the scale of the problem was huge and it took society and government 150 years to find an effective solution, or at least the start of a solution. Successive governments from 1919 to the start of World War 2 enacted various Acts of Parliament to promote and develop what we now know as council housing.

WW2 stopped progress and huge numbers of dwellings were lost through enemy action. The new Labour Government, elected in 1945, established big targets to address the huge post war demand for housing and much of this demand was met using prefabricated types of construction. Successive governments from the 1950's continued to set annual targets and so by 1980 there were around 5 million council dwellings. Subsequent changes in government policy has meant that a significant proportions of this social housing has either been sold or transferred to Housing Associations.

Laurie presented a well-researched lecture on this important area of social history in an easy style and provoked lot of comment and interaction from the group.

New members are always welcome. The group meets on the third Thursday of the month at 10.00am in the Conservatory, New Green Centre, Thurston. If you wish to join the group please contact Laurie Marshall on 01359 241859. Speakers usually come from within the group but members do not have to give a presentation if they do not wish to. The presentations are always interesting and there is usually something new to learn.

Bill Blackaby

Annual General Meeting

THE 2021/22 AGM was held on 7 March prior to the lecture. 105 members attended and there were 17 apologies.

The minutes of the previous AGM were approved and Peter Lester, the outgoing chairman said that, despite the interruption caused by the pandemic BU3A was still going strong thanks to the efforts of the committee and group convenors.

All but three committee members were leaving, having completed at least three years in office and with only three new members willing to stand, the new committee will initially be just six.

Brenda Last, treasurer, ran through the accounts which were approved as was the re-election of Grant Elliott as examiner.

The election of officers took place. Bernadette Pitt was elected as chairman and Brenda Last and Andrew Adams re-elected as Treasurer and membership secretary respectively. New to the committee were Sue Adams (as general secretary), Margaret Knock and Jean Williamson.

Flower Arranging



IN December, the newly formed Flower Arranging Group did some small Christmas arrangements for the Wesley Cafe in Elmswell as a thank you for letting us use it as a venue for our meetings. In January we met to do a modern linear arrangement, using a few flowers as they are not at their best in January and can be expensive.

We would love to have more people join us, so if you are interested please let me know.

margaret.knock@sky.com

Garden Visits

We have received an invitation from Bury U3A to any of our members who would like to join them on the following visits:

Wednesday 11 May

RHS Hyde Hall

Wednesday 8 June

Peter Beales rose garden

Anyone interested should contact Caroline Robinson
01284 765763
07927057332
thecarolinerobinson@gmail.com

Thank you to all the contributors to this edition, especially the three stalwarts who write the reports of the lectures. Reports and pictures from Interest groups are always welcome and provide a varied content and view of BU3A activities. They may be sent to bryann@brysuward.plus.com Dead line for the next edition is 25 June