

The deadline for contributions to the next Newsletter is Wednesday 28 September 2023

Please send items for publication to the Newsletter Editor

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Hello fellow u3a members, hope your summer so far been good, we have had typical English summer weather, rain, cloud, grey, but also some lovely sunny days, all things normal.

My garden been doing ok, lots of vegetables, and small tomatoes ripening, but bigger ones stubbornly stay green, may need recipe for green tomato chutney.



Those that have been away on holiday, hope you enjoyed that experience, I still have mine to come, hopefully an Indian summer

Please read this month's newsletter, it will have all the up-and-coming events, including Barn Dance 13th October - tickets will be available at September meeting, it's a real fun evening, come and have a go.

Also, we will be rolling out the Christmas dinner booking details, I know it's early, I know you don't even want to consider that, but we have only two meetings to sort this out, it was very popular last year.

Also, a coach holiday to Harrogate, this proving very popular, numbers are good, I think you all received a separate email, with booking information.

If you have any issues please see a committee member, they will lead you in the right direction, we have people around to talk to, be it a group you may wish to join, or a group you may wish to start, we very open to suggestions, polite ones!

We think of a few of our members who have had operations, feel unwell, we do have a welfare officer, if you know anyone who may benefit for a card or a call, I personally broke a wrist, quite limiting, a card was most welcome.

Look forward to seeing lots of you in September 7th.

One final thing, last of our celebration anniversary projects will be presented on Thursday! Happy days

Lady Chair, Beryl.

NEXT MEETING

7 September

**Doors open at 1:15 pm
Meeting starts at 1:45 pm**

FORTHCOMING SPEAKERS

7 September
Andy Strange
*WW2 Airfields,
East of England*

5 October
Jamie or Kevin
The Vulcan Restoration Trust

2nd November
Sally Lawrence
BBC Continuity

7th December
Christmas Party

Noticeboard

CHANGES TO PERSONAL CONTACT DETAILS

Would members please remember to forward any changes in contact details (address, phone numbers, email address etc) to our Beacon Administrator so that the Beacon System can be kept up to date.

Please forward any changes to:

Pam Foster

Thank you

New Group Suggestion

As the fruit and veg group has closed this year Paul Nice has suggested starting a gardening group for all those interested in gardening (rather than the garden trips already running)

Paul and I are thinking of setting up this new group and anyone interested in either joining the group or helping out please let the group coordinators Carol Edwards or Rae Hill know at the September meeting.

We are thinking of setting up a first meeting in Sept/early November with those interested to understand what members would like from this group.

Thanks
Paul Nice and Marion Cain

Dates for your diary

BARN DANCE

Saturday 13th October 2023

Due to the success of last year's Barn Dance, we have chosen to repeat it for this year. Apparently most fun can be had watching everyone else try to join in - and getting rather mixed up! This will be held at Ashingdon Memorial Hall cost yet to be finalised.



CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT SAXON HALL 14th DECEMBER 2023

We have now negotiated the menu for the Xmas lunch at Saxon Hall on the 14th December. We will be taking choices at the next meeting so if you wish to attend, please bring either cheque/cash/ pay by card at the meeting along with your menu choices written to be handed in at the end of the meeting.



Serendipity Future Plans

Serendipity Visit for September

September 21st. Serendipity Visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

We will take the 9.18 train from Rochford to Liverpool Street, Circle Line to South Kensington, a 10-minute walk to the V&A. Entry is free.

Some free tours are listed below:

1. Designing the V and A architectural tour which will take you through the history and setting of the collections. 11.30 -12.15.
2. Fashion Tour. Discover the fascinated garments and fashion. 12.30-13.30
3. Treasures of Europe. 13.30-14.15
4. British Galleries Tour. 15.00-15.45
5. V and A highlights tour. 14..00- 14.45

Note. Tours are subject to change depending on volunteer availability.

Anne & Rae Hill. Serendipity organising group.

October, Battlesbridge, tour, (free), own/shared cars to Battlesbridge, Christine Perkins

A Serendipity trip to Tower Bridge has provisionally been arranged for Thursday 23 November. There will be two guided group tours depending on numbers, of both Towers, the Walkway and Engine Room. The price will be £19 per member. I am sorry it is this amount, but, once again, cost of living controls the price. I have already been on the tour in the past and felt it was worth repeating especially for new members and those members who did not take advantage of the previous Serendipity tour.

If you are interested, please place your name and membership no on the usual list at the back of the meeting hall. Monies can be paid at the desk of Noreen Bishop by card machine or a cheque made out to Ashingdon & Rochford U3A.

Shelagh Nicholas
Visiting Coordinator

(December nothing)

January, New Year lunch, Sue Horncastle

Sue Horncastle, Group Coordinator

Health Walks from Magnolia Park

Rae, Anne and Richard invite any of our u3a members to join us on our weekly, Monday walks from Magnolia Park. We start walking at 10.am so meet at 9.45.am to allow time to put on boots etc., to enable a prompt departure at 10 am. Walk distance is about 2 to 3 miles at a pace to suit the ability of the slowest walker. Please use suitable foot wear for unmade sometimes muddy footpaths and bring suitable rainwear etc for our changeable weather

Richard Paternoster

Walks with Phil

On Friday 8 September we will do a longer walk taking in a break for sandwiches etc purchased and consumed at Paper Mill Lock cafe. We will meet at Ashingdon and East Hawkwell Community Hall car park by 9.45am. We will car share for making the journey to a small free car park at Lingwood Common in Little Baddow. We will walk in a north westerly direction to join the River Chelmer about a mile west of Paper Mill Lock before turning east along the river. Paper Mill Lock café also has toilet facilities for customers, and is usually a very pleasant location for looking at wild fowl and other activity around the lock. After a decent break we will head another mile further east along the river before gradually making our way back up to our cars, completing a clockwise circuit. Total distance does not exceed 7 miles. We should be walking less than 3 hours but add on the break at Paper Mill Lock and the journey each way, and we should be back in Ashingdon by around 3pm. This walk has some very decent peaceful and varied countryside and some good vistas. There are some ups and downs but nothing very steep.

On Friday 22 September let's meet at Hockley Woods car park where the charge is 50p for 2 hours or 70p for 3 hours. Cash accepted. Be ready to walk by 9.45am. We will walk up through the woods and out on the north side somewhere before perhaps dropping down to the stream near New England Woods and then perhaps circuiting anticlockwise back via Gusted Hall. I would expect to walk for about 1 hour 40 minutes or so. Perhaps we could have a coffee or beer in the Bull pub garden afterwards. Decent views on emerging from Hockley Woods and a variety of open pleasant non-intensive farmland, and of woodland.

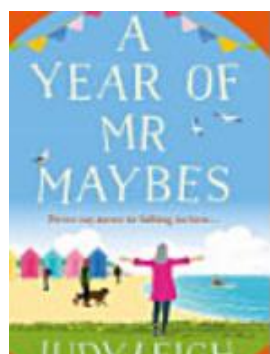
All members with a reasonable level of walking fitness and sturdy footwear are very welcome to come on either or both of these walks. Just turn up, bringing sufficient fluid if the weather is hot. But any concerns please phone or text me.

Hoping you can join me - Phil Kelly

Group News Roundup

Friday Book Group

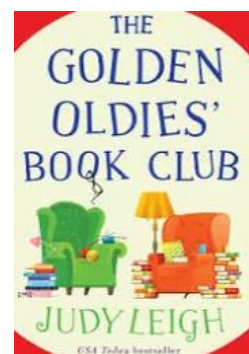
This month our group read a completely new author named Judy Leigh. She was recommended to me as a light hearted summer read.



All books were, in the main enjoyed although in some cases felt to be overly imaginative and unrealistic. As one of my members rightly explained it is fiction, and therefore, "make believe". My personal view is that it was similar to Enid Blyton for grown-ups.



Due to the invasion of our roads by ECC Highways pot hole repair programme ahead of an imminent cycle race, City Fibre and Bloor Homes causing traffic chaos we met in my garden. By way of compensation this allowed for tea and biscuits! For all but one member the arrangement provided an easier journey. (Carol, my apologies.)



Our next meeting is on September 8 at Rochford Library 1.30pm. This month the genre is Thrillers.

Wendy Paternoster

Calligraphy

All is going well; I think everyone is enjoying the class. We have a serious time and a social time, but the result is that my ladies are doing great and their writing is improving every month.

I am sure they will prove to be proficient calligraphy writers

Barbara Baker

History Group 3

Lifeboats and Lunches

In July we visited one of the two Southend-on-Sea lifeboat stations (one at each end of the pier: the only place to have this out of the 238 stations in the U.K. and Eire). Southend-on-Sea is also one of only four stations which have a hovercraft. How unique are we? Southend-on-Sea has 110-120 'shouts' each year. Callouts are called 'shouts' because originally people would run through the town shouting "Launch the lifeboat!". Today the crew members have pagers and within 10-15 minutes of being paged, the crew can be at the sea end of the pier. Each one of the forty crew members at Southend-on-Sea can dress themselves in 90 seconds or less: thermal layer, waterproof suit (which needs to be 'burped' to get the air out), very heavy lifejacket, helmet, neoprene gloves and head-camera! We didn't try to beat the record! There are 6-7,000 volunteers in the R.N.L.I., providing 24/7 cover, aged between 17-45 years old. Each crew member must live/work within 3 miles of their station. Despite these extremely brave crew members being volunteers, the R.N.L.I. costs £108,000,000 a year to run. Sue Morris gave a heavy bagful of our U3A's R.N.L.I. jars to our host. It was very much appreciated.

The History Group 3 was so impressed by what we learned from the visit and talk that we decided to make a collection for the R.N.L.I. at our August lunch meeting. We had a great time in Sue Mitchell's beautiful garden and managed to dodge the raindrops. Thank you, Sue, for all your hard work.



Karen Hunter

Bird Watchers, August

The six of us that went to Two Tree Island on the 14th had a great morning. On the way up to 'Monty's Lookout', which I'm sure get further away each time we go, the tide was coming in and there were Curlew and Oystercatcher feeding along the waterline. Looking out from the hide the lagoon was alive with birds, there was a large flock of various Waders, mainly Black-tailed Godwits, with some Dunlin, Redshank and Greenshank. All around were Little Egrets, Avocets, Oystercatchers, a large number of Gulls, one Grey Heron and a lot of Starlings.

We finished the morning sitting in the sunshine at the café, having coffee and sarnies and of course a chat before heading home.



Various waders



A rather scruffy Black-tailed Godwit

Paul Nice.

Garden Visits

Our group visited Hyde Hall on Friday, 28th July armed with a variety of clothing due to the unpredictable weather we had been experiencing of late. Although cloudy we all thoroughly enjoyed each other's company and in particular the cottage garden and annual bedding section which was a blaze of colour. Luckily we stayed dry.



Janet Arrowsmith

Card and Papercraft

Huge thank you to Janet Arrowsmith for her demo of Christmas cards using a die cut dove! Lots of interesting options.



All good wishes

Wendy Paternoster

A Seat in the Gods - Alan Perkins

In 1950, after I had finished my National Service, I obtained a job in London, at the General Electric Company (GEC), in Kingsway, Holborn. Five years later I moved on to join an advertising agency in Lower Regent Street, just off Piccadilly Circus. Both locations were near to the heart of London's Theatre land: (The Aldwych, Charing Cross Road, The Strand, Leicester Square etc.)

At that time, if you hadn't booked seats in advance at one of the major theatres, you could always queue in the evening - around 6.00pm - for the chance of a seat in the Balcony. Better still, from about 10.30 am one could book a place in the queue by purchasing ticket for a small fold-up stool, which then represented your place until you were able to replace it by yourself at the Balcony door shortly before opening time.

The way it worked; you turned up at around 10.30 am, paid a small sum – sixpence or a shilling- in exchange for which you were given one half of a sort of raffle ticket: the other half was stuck on to a stool. The stools were then lined up in small blocks of numbers, say 4 or 5 abreast, outside the external Balcony doors. In the evening - well before opening time if you were wise - you replaced the stool with yourself.

Once the Balcony doors were open, it was every man or woman, for themselves. The Balcony seats were at the top of the theatre, up several flights of stairs. The rush to these stairs generally sorted the men from the boys and whatever the female counterpart is or was. My fitness as a runner proved very useful in those days and of course it all counted as an extra bit of training!

Arriving at the balcony one was greeted by a few rows of tiered benches each with a seat depth of about 10 inches, these gave a vertiginous and almost vertical view between one's knees of the postage stamp that was the stage.

Not the most comfortable of theatre experience and I cannot remember now anything that I saw under those circumstances, but it was all great fun at the time. So far I have not found anyone else who remembers the delights of that form of theatregoing. Do you?

| GROUP MEETINGS CALENDAR | | | |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| MONDAYS | | | |
| Walking | Weekly | 9.45 | Richard Paternoster, Anne and Ray Hill |
| Are you Curious | 4 th Monday of month | 2:00 - 4:00 | Dave Lazell & Graham Collins |
| Beer Appreciation | 2 nd Monday of month | 2:00 - 4:00 | Terry Lake |
| Bird Watching | 2 nd Monday of the month | TBA | Paul Nice |
| Calligraphy Group | 2 nd Monday of the month | 10:30 am | Barbara Baker |
| Card and Paper Craft | 3 rd Monday of month | 1:30 pm | Wendy Paternoster |
| Discussion | 3 rd Monday of month | 2:30 - 4:30 | David & Barbara Hine |
| Knit and Chat | 4 th Monday of month | 2:30 - 4:30 | Barbara Hine |
| Petanque (Boules) | 2 nd and 4 th Monday of month | 10:00 | Linda Deadman |
| Rummikub | Weekly | 2:00 – 4:00 | Pam Leys |
| Supper Club | 1st Monday of month | 6:00 pm | Val Stenson |
| TUESDAYS | | | |
| Book Club (2) | 3 rd Tuesday of month | 10:30 | Maureen Pointer |
| French Conversation | 1 st & 3 rd Tuesday of month | 2:30 - 4:00 | Sue Horncastle |
| Local History (2) | 2nd Tuesday of the month | 2:00 | Graham Collins & Carol Collins |
| Petanque (Boules) | 1 st & 3 rd Tuesday of month | 2:00 – 4:00 | Beryl Horrex/Janet Toms |
| Short Mat Bowls | Every other Tuesday | 2:00 – 4:00 | John Stenson |
| Ten Pin Bowling | Fortnightly | 11:00 | Jacqui & Keith Baker |
| WEDNESDAYS | | | |
| Card & Papercraft 2 | 4th Wednesday of month | 10.00 – | Denise Astor |
| Knitting & Sewing | 4th Wednesday of month | 2:00 - 4:00 | Katherine Lake |
| Line Dancing | 2 nd and 4 th Wed of the | 2:00 - 3:00 | Jill Nettleship |
| Local History (1) | 2 nd Wednesday of month | p.m. | Sandra Dawson |
| Table Tennis | Weekly | 7:30 | John Owen |
| Yoga | Weekly | 2:00 - 3:00 | Barbara Ferdy |
| THURSDAYS | | | |
| Cribbage (cards) | 4 th Thursday in month | 10:00 - 12:00 | Keith Baker |
| Fruit & Veg | 3rd Thursday of month | 2:00 - 3:30 | Roland Drage |
| Knitting (2) | Fortnightly | 2:00 - 4:00 | Sue Dodkin |
| Serendipity | Monthly (Normally a | All day | Various |
| Snooker | 2nd Thursday of month | 11:00 - 1:00 | David Lazell |
| Snooker (2) | 3rd Thursday of the month | 11:00 – 1:00 | Peter Saville |
| FRIDAYS | | | |
| Canasta | 2nd Friday of the month | 2:30 - 4:30 | Ian Foster |
| Book Club (1) | 2 nd Friday of month | 1:30 | Wendy Paternoster |
| Flower Arranging | 4 th Friday of month | 2:00 - 3:30 | Maureen Pointer |
| I.T. | 4 th Friday of month | 2:00 - 4:00 | Dave Pointer |
| Local History (3) | 1 st Friday of month | 10:00 | Sue Morris. Sue Mitchell & Karen Hunter |
| Photography | 2 nd Friday of month Inside | 2:30 - 4:30 2:00 - 4:00 | Roger Young |
| | Outside | | |
| Solo/canasta | 4 th Friday of the month | 7:00 - 9:00 | Ian Foster |
| Walking | 2 Fridays per month | Mid | Phil Kelly |
| SATURDAY | | | |
| Petanque (Boules) | 2 nd & 4 th Saturday of month | 10:00 - 12:00 | Rosemarie Barrows |
| SUNDAY | | | |
| Sunday Lunch Club | Monthly, various dates | 1:00 - 3:00 | Carol Collins |
| Other Various Dates | | | |
| Garden Visits | | | Janet Arrowsmith |
| Theatre Trips | | | Claire Ham |

Committee Members Contact Details

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Lady Chair | Beryl Horrex |
| Vice Chairman | Ian Foster |
| Business Secretary | Carol Collins |
| Hon. Treasurer | Noreen Bishop |
| Joint Membership Sec. | Val Stenson |
| Joint Membership Sec./Beacon Admin | Pam Foster |
| Joint Group Coordinator | Carole Edwards |
| Joint Group Coordinator | Rae Hill |
| Committee member | Phil Kelly |
| Committee member | Anne Hill |
| Committee member | Roger Blight |
| Committee member | Marion Cain |
| Committee member | Ann O'Brien |
| Committee member | Wendy Paternoster |
| ExOfficio/Minutes Sec | Janet Berry |