

Baddow & Galleywood U3A NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2019

Why I like Retirement

Q - How many days in a week?

A - 6 Saturdays, 1 Sunday

Q - When is a retiree's bedtime?

A - Two hours after he falls asleep on the couch.



Yet More Thoughts of Chairman Mo

Spring has sprung, now Summer too

Is U3A the place for you?

Obviously yes should be the answer if you're reading this article in your own copy of our Newsletter. However if you've just found this in a friend's house or turned up at the URC for the first time today, you may not be so sure. If the latter, hopefully you will have been made to feel welcome by our team of greeters but you may still be uncertain about what might lie ahead. Some people feel daunted by having the word "University" in the title of the organisation and are apprehensive that they might be expected to already hold academic qualifications and certificates or be really brainy. This is one of the concerns being expressed at National level and there is to be a reduction of emphasis on the word (it has now been removed from the official logo) and increasing use of simply the 3 letters U3A. No new strap line has yet been created but I like to think of it as being text-speak (getting down with the kids!) for U – in your 3rd Age.

It may be useful to have a reminder of our ethos, that

"No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with **enjoyment** being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards. There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers. They are all U3A members"

And we have deliberately included this in our newly created Guidance Notes for Interest Group Coordinators (IGCs).

Talking of IGCs, I'm delighted to let you know that Wendy has now taken over from Di in the role of Co-ordinator of Interest Groups, with Di reverting to being our sole Speaker Secretary. Wendy now becomes our one stop shop for the Interest Groups, since she is also Treasurer for the Number 2 Account which deals with Group finances. She has already been doing some research into Group membership and found out that nearly all of our members are active in at least one of our Groups – which we regard as a healthy sign for the future of our U3A.

Obviously if we are going to create more Groups to help others share your interests, then Wendy is the person to speak to initially. As well as talking with you, she now has our Guidance Notes to help get the Group up and running. There is also the possibility of the committee providing some start-up funding for equipment that could be shared with other groups, although groups are expected to be selffunding through their members.

One potential Group that has been discussed (and mentioned at our general meetings) is interested in exploring exercise. With such a wide variety of mind / body /exercise /fitness classes, how do you know what would suit you best or perhaps a combination might work better? The current thinking is to look into Tai Chi, Pilates, Alexander Technique, Yoga, Meditation, Zumba etc. with a qualified instructor from each discipline visiting on occasions to explain and demonstrate. If you would like to take this idea forward as co-ordinator, please have a chat with Wendy or me.

How often do we hear of extreme heat causing the cancellation of one of our Interest Group activities? This was recently the case with the Photography Group. On the hottest day of the year (which may be a distant memory by the time of publication of the Newsletter), they were due to have a photo-shoot in Colchester Town Centre, especially around the Dutch Quarter. It's always easy to be wise after the

event, but in this case (putting his faith in the accuracy of the weather forecasters), Mike proved wise before the event and postponed the day out. I wonder how many more times as the climate continues to change (Yes, Mr Trump – it's a reality, not fake news!) we'll get to hear of sun stopping play? We are currently in the process of drafting Risk Assessment guidelines, but there's no substitute for good old common sense.

At our June general meeting, we had a very good turnout of new members (thanks Wendy for all your efforts and the 3-line whip!) and Interest Group Co-ordinators in the back hall prior to the meeting. The idea was to allow our newer members to find out more about the groups on offer and talk with the coordinators. Due to the parking restrictions in the Vineyards, this early start meant that some of these people then had to leave during the speaker's talk to avoid the hefty car park fines. This is an exercise that we hope to repeat later in the year, since there were many positive outcomes in terms of members signing up to groups. Next time we will aim to improve the organisation of the meeting (which was planned to be casual) following some constructive feedback. Thank you to all who came along.

And finally... the usual reminder that we do have a closed group Facebook page for our U3A. You can find it by using the **Links** page on our website - or typing the following address into your browser **[u3asites.org.uk/baddow/links](https://www.u3asites.org.uk/baddow/links)**

I hope you've had a chance to enjoy some good weather either here or abroad during the summer and that we'll see you back at Interest Groups and General Meetings soon. Our September meeting includes the AGM and then our Vice Chairman, Alan, talking about SS Uganda. Maurice

Our prime purpose in this life is to help others.

And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them. Dalai Lama

Do you want to learn about anything technical?

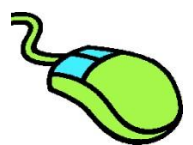
In the early days of B&G U3A we ran courses on many subjects, such as Computer Basics, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access - which were much appreciated. Now, 20 years on, do we know it all, or would we like some more training?

One fairly up-to-date subject mentioned by one member is Social media. You know – Facebook, U-tube, Twitter, Snapchat – the kind of gobbledegook our children and grandchildren are into (and Donald Trump).

Do you want to enter this world? Do you want to tweet, send blogs, stream, download, upload and generally communicate in the 2019 way, or do you prefer to stay in the 1950's? Can you use the internet? Do you use Google? Do you send and receive Emails? Do you want more training at this level, or do you want to tackle more up-to-date technology?

If there is a demand for lessons to drag you into the modern world, it can be arranged. The volunteer tutors will need to get 'with-it' first, then we can prepare formal or informal lessons to meet the need.

The next step is to advise Lorretta Riddel (Coordinator of the Technology Group) or any member of the Committee or me what tuition you require. It's up to you now..... Allen



From there to here, and here to there, funny things are everywhere.

Dr. Seuss

A Note from the Interest Groups' Co-ordinator

Hi Everyone,

You may or may not know that I have relinquished the role of Joint Speaker Secretary with Di, and taken on the role of Interest Groups Co-ordinator. This gives Di much more time to devote to the task of searching and seeking out your Speakers and planning next year's programme.

I have been delighted during this past year to have visited some of your groups as Treasurer of No 2 Account and of course, was captivated, succumbed and joined. I will endeavour to visit more, time permitting.

I may be contacted using the information in the Newsletter about anything you need to discuss or any problems that occur

I would be grateful if the Group Leaders could send me an up to date members list with membership numbers and contact details. I request your account details for no 2 account by December 1st 2019 and attendance registers during that month also.

Please remember I'm only human and may get things wrong from time to time, which hopefully you will tell me about.

I look forward to meeting you all and learning about your wonderful groups. *Wendy*

Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth... these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment. Solutions to one problem must be solutions for all.

Ban Ki-moon

A Note from the Editor:

THANK YOU, THANK YOU to all our contributors, regular and new. What a change from the Summer edition when I began to despair at the lack of articles.

This issue is packed full of interesting pieces; I've had to squeeze some of them in and you will find fewer of my usual 'jokes' and homilies! No doubt some of you will think this is a good thing, however, I am really pleased that I've received so many contributions. (and thanks to Allen B for his photographs.)

Info on where and when to send articles for the Winter/ Christmas issue is on p15, and as this is a busy time for all of us (I have 8 grandchildren to buy for - phew!), I would be grateful if you could send your contributions as early as possible - let's have another bumper edition! I'd especially welcome articles from new members about their experiences of joining our U3A - are we getting it right?

I hope you enjoy reading it.

Maggie

Housework can't kill you, but why take a chance?

Phyllis Diller

INTEREST GROUP REPORTS



Family History

On Friday 10th May a group of us plus friends visited the Valence House Museum in Dagenham.

Of the group only three had previously visited the Museum and that was before their Heritage

Lottery funding [plus a good deal of money from their council]. The lovely little cafe found it difficult to cope with the sudden influx of 35 of us - the Museum staff had not warned them that we were coming, but eventually we all had coffee, placed our lunch orders and settled down in the education room for a talk by one of the curators, Mark. The talk was brilliant and included information about the history of the house, and about what to look for in the Museum itself. We had not realised that to get the Valence House we had passed through the Becontree estate with its homes built after WW1 - homes fit for heroes. <http://hidden-london.com/gazetteer/becontree/>. As the weather was fine, many of us started by going round the herb garden, in case it was raining after lunch. [In fact we had beautiful weather all day!] The museum itself was lovely - everything was well displayed and covered so much of Dagenham and Barking's history. Mark had told us that to fulfil the Heritage Lottery fund requirements they had to give equal priority to the history of both boroughs, and even had to show the same number of women and men!

Tony had worked at Valence House 60 years ago, when it was the headquarters of the local library service, so for him it was a journey back in time.



We had a very good day out and many of us had heard the announcement on the previous day about the Prittlewell treasures which were about to be displayed for the first time to the public in Southend Museum - so watch this space!
Linda

Art Appreciation (June)

Sometimes at the art appreciation meetings we give our gut reaction to a picture – like it or don't like it. That is the easy bit. The harder bit is to explain why. And also to qualify the reaction. Key ideas that influence our response to a picture is the subject matter, the arrangement of the elements within the picture, the colours, the technique, and probably our own perception of the world.

The topic for the June meeting of the art group was 'family' which generated a wide variety of pictures and a wide variety of reactions.

We first looked at some pictures by Angu Walters, a painter from Cameroon. His paintings were exuberant bursts of geometric brightly coloured shapes, with faces hidden within.

Most of the group enjoyed looking at this picture and after our initial reactions we homed in on some of the details to try and work out how he had achieved the effect. We then looked at some other pictures by the same artist, some in a similar vein and others – in the same series of 'Happy Families' rather disturbing and reflecting a different view of African life

In contrast was a picture by Singer Sargent – the Daughters of Edward Darley Boit.

This beautiful picture appealed to everyone, and certainly merited further study. A short YouTube video picked out some of the details of the technique – for example how Sargent created the contrast between the white of the vase and the white of the pinafore of the girl leaning against it. Purely through his skill he has created the effects of a soft drape and a hard porcelain, just using paint. There have been many interpretations of this picture, but the one we found interesting was that it represents stages in the development of a girl from innocence to maturation into an unknown future. Interestingly none of the girls ever married and the two older ones both had emotional disturbances in later life.

A picture that had more of a mixed response was the Wedding March by Theodore Robinson – an American who became friendly with Monet. Monet was very reluctant to become intimate with the American artists who gathered around him as he suspected they had designs on his step-daughters. His fears were justified when one of these artists married his stepdaughter – Suzanne. This picture of the wedding was painted two weeks after the event.

Subject matter, composition, colouration and technique were all mentioned as we discussed this picture and, as usual, we politely agreed to differ as to whether this would hang in our living area, in the loo, or be barred from the house

We looked at around ten pictures in total, some of which generated little discussion and some more, some showed happy families, and some less so, but we all came away feeling we had looked, thought and learned something new.

Debbie

Poetry Appreciation

We are a young at heart lively group of four ladies who love to research and read poetry. We are also experts on knee and hip replacements, pacemakers and cataract ops. We meet on the fourth Monday of each month at 2pm in comfortable armchairs in our homes and we can easily accommodate a couple of new members. I was a total novice when I joined the group many years ago and only knew a few words of poetry from my far away school days relating to clouds and daffodils. I now have a shelf of books and a love of poetry. Recent topics have included poems about Nature and Animals, Favourite Poems, Water, Cats, The Seasons, Walt Whitman and poets beginning with various letters of the alphabet. The meetings end with lively chatter over tea and biscuits at roughly 4.15pm. If you feel you would like to give our group a trial run, whether you be a novice or already know your William Wordsworth from your Pam Ayres, contact our leader Sheila me on

Janet

Spanish

We are constantly told that learning a language is good to keep our brain healthy. And if you have learnt one at school, don't let it go to waste. You'll be amazed how much actually comes back when you try and it could bring you some fun.

We read various articles, write short pieces and talk as much as possible. Variety is the order of the day: social media, fashion, history of the Mayflower, geography, food, Spanish film industry and singers are just a few subjects we have turned our attention to over the last year. Why not join us?

Annick

Strollers Garden Party

Only ten members attended our party in June but it was nice that five original members could be there, Doug, Peggy and Neville and Ann who started the group with me thirteen years ago. My reliable U3A diaries tell me that Ann and I met at Margaretting Tye on Tuesday, 13TH of June, 2006, to explore the first walk for the new group.

Since then we have walked once a month around the county. Sometimes we have had only a few members but on other occasions, such as when we did the Maldon Trail, we had twenty six members and the Blue Lion were hard pressed to squeeze us all in to their dining room.

My own favourite stroll has always been at Goldhanger, a place so quintessentially Essex with farmland and estuary making a varied and charming circular walk.

Strollers have come and gone but three people, Doug, Neville and Peggy have always joined us right from the start and for some years Chris and Linda have always strolled with us, Linda famously inspiring a poem when she got lost, and it was lovely that they joined us at the annual party.

After thirteen years I have decided it is time for me call it a day as coordinator of Strollers. I do hope someone else takes on the role; over the years I gained great pleasure from the group and I am grateful to other members who have led strolls when I was unable to do so.

Ted is putting on a barbecue for us all and maybe someone will come forward then to fill my strolling boots after Christmas. I do hope so, time for new members to step up. Au Revoir. *Isobel*

Old age comes on suddenly, and not gradually as is thought.

Emily Dickinson

Art Appreciation (July)

Discovery was the given topic for the meeting on 12 July. Almost daunting in its scope for interpretation. However, quite a few paintings were sent for us to consider and they certainly provoked interest and discussion. Some of the paintings chosen were new to us but others were old friends.

We started with the *Lascaux Cave paintings*. An almost frightening discovery for the boy who found them. Sensibly he approached his village priest and the village teacher to come and see them. Bulls, horses and animals on a grand scale. Nowadays what visitors can see are excellent reproductions in caves similar to the original and they are still very impressive. The originals have become too delicate to stand up to human breathing such is the interest they have generated!

We then looked at Picasso's *Evolution of the Bull*. Again we saw how Picasso moved from a depiction of a 'real' bull to his viewing of it. How he managed to put a tiny head on such an animal is quirky and typical of his style.

Masaccio - *The Tribute Money* - again much to learn using just a detail of the whole painting which could be divided into three. The tax collector demanding money, Peter extracting money from the fish, and payment being made. The whole story was there and Masaccio's faces were well worth a study in themselves.

Relativity by the Dutch painter Escher – well, this had us almost standing on our heads to discover what he was drawing – quite bewildering.

Then a childhood friend – *The Boyhood of Raleigh* by Millais – it is all there: the fascination in the faces of the boys the arm pointing them outwards to new worlds to be discovered.

The Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus by Salvador Dali was stunning, and, never having known about it or seen it, it was mind blowing!

Cezanne *The Card Players* – one of a series with many faces to study and discuss.

Soldiers Playing Cards – Leger painted this when he was convalescing in Paris having been gassed in the First World War, It shows the idea of men being reduced to mere fighting machines.

The Alchemist – Joseph Wright of Derby. Typical of his work with its bright light but much detail in the shadows.

Alexander Graham Bell – with his telephone machine. Should be in the Boardroom for BT!

Salvator Mundi – Leonardo da Vinci - Accepted as genuine around 2011 after many years.

Foxgloves – Nikolai Astrup - once again learning more about the use of perspective. Could just as easily have been entitled Silver Birches

This is a brief synopsis. There was plenty of material for discussion which we all enjoyed and once again learned more.

Tina

Local History 2

On a very dreary day in May, twelve hardy travellers left Chelmsford for our return visit to Harwich; some of course had been before. By the time we arrived at Harwich station via Manningtree, we were greeted by Bernie our guide for the day and also the Town Crier, who was dressed splendidly in his red uniform. (They were both drenched because the rain was 'coming down in buckets'!)

We then walked round to St. Nicholas Church where the volunteers welcomed us with hot tea and coffee and biscuits. Bernie gave us an introduction and told us a little about this splendid Church, which has been on this site since 1177. Kings and Queens had worshipped here while travelling to and from the continent. SAMUEL PEPYS, twice MP for Harwich, would almost certainly have attended services here. Christopher Jones, Master of the Mayflower, worshipped and was twice married in the Church in 1593 and again in 1603, where some of his children were baptised.

It is built of London Brick and Coade Stone in simple Gothic style. King George IV gave £1000 pounds and his coat of arms can be seen on the Organ loft. The building consists of a Tower with a clock dating back to 1799, a spire with eight Bells, and Galleries on two levels. Seating a congregation of 1500 people, it is the largest Church in the district. (The architect was Mr. M.G.Thompson.)

Bernie took us to the Guildhall, a Grade 1 listed Harwich Town Council building, which dates back to the 17th century. A unique feature is the carvings room, used to hold prisoners waiting to be tried or sentenced who carved engravings of the ships and houses in woodwork.

We also went to Ha' Penny Pier, so called due to the price that was charged for people to use it as the departure point for Paddle Steamers. Opened in July 1853, the pier was originally twice as long. The Victorian ticket office is now a visitors' centre housing the Christopher Jones and the Mayflower exhibition.

Jones (1570-1622) was born in Harwich, lived here most of his life; his old house is in Kings Head Street. In 1609 he became Master of the Mayflower and captained the ship on the voyage that established the Plymouth Colony settlement in the USA. The Jones River in Kingston, Massachusetts was named by the Pilgrims after Captain Jones.

We stopped for lunch and some of us went to Samuel Pepys wine bar and restaurant.

SAMUEL PEPYS (1633-1703), the famous diarist and Naval administrator, who was elected as MP for Harwich in 1679, at the same time as Sir Anthony Deane, a Harwich alderman and leading naval architect to whom Pepys had been patron since 1662. Pepys was often in Harwich on naval business and it is said to have frequented this old Tavern.

Later we visited the Treadwheel Crane and Naval Dockyard, which was part of Samuel Pepys expansion to the dockyard in 1667, to fit Harwich as a base for British Ships in a sea war against the Dutch. We had been to the Redoubt Fort and Bathside Battery on our last trip.

Christine

Music Performing

People go away on holiday in the summer! So it's understandable that our numbers were a little down on usual. It didn't stop us from indulging ourselves in a sumptuous musical feast!



It's interesting to see how people go about performing. Are there nerves? (understandable!) How high do they want the music stand? How many extra cushions on the piano stool? Everybody has their own way of tackling the experience of sharing their music with others. There's no "correct" way of going about things, and, like everything else: "it takes all sorts!"

We play a wide variety of musical instruments, as well as a wide variety of musical styles. Today, these included a cor anglais, a bass clarinet, alto sax, flute, violins, cello, piano, BUT we mustn't neglect the most beautiful instrument of all - the human voice!

The singing group performed with piano, with other instruments and a capella. Handel's "O lovely peace" was performed by ladies' voices with flute, violin and cello, while "Catch a falling Star" was unaccompanied, and included a chap (me), who was allowed to dream about being one of the Kings Singers!

One of the sopranos, (Liz) had a lovely solo - an Armenian folk-song, which reached (I think) a top G - which was encored!!

So those of us not on holiday had a most enjoyable Friday afternoon - thanks again to Pam for organising it all.

Ken

Weekenders

As well as our monthly Sunday lunches and our bi-monthly coffee mornings, our group has been out and about. We have a very large following and never know how many will attend our get-togethers, sometimes 5 and may be 25. Finding eateries for large numbers has in the past been challenging. Sunday lunches we book ahead but coffee mornings we take potluck at how many members attend. We often move tables together to sit together and a large group can make quite a din all chatting away.

When possible, we use our bus passes and senior rail discount cards, and over the last few weeks we have made some great trips.

St Pauls in London for me was a first, I have been to London many times and admired its iconic dome. The interior was most impressive and using the self - guided commentary I learned a great deal about its history. My only disappointment was not being able to visit the whispering gallery as it was closed for some restoration work, still it makes a good excuse to make a return visit.

Valentines Mansion near Ilford is where we had a personal guide, she was dressed in a period costume and gave us a grand tour of the house. The Mansion is more than 300 years old and was built for Elizabeth Tillotson and her family after the death of her husband, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Over the years it has had many owners and uses, it has been home to wartime refugees, a hospital, a public

health centre and a council housing department. It stood empty for 15 years then restored with Redbridge council and the Lottery funds to what it is now. If you enjoy period houses put it on your wish list.

By bus to Stansted and train to **Ely Cathedral** was a very pleasant journey. It was a very warm day, so some of the group opted to spend time down by the river and the remainder to the Cathedral. We had a very knowledgeable guide who showed us around this historic building. It is a most impressive building but the most remarkable part of it for me was the octagon, a unique wooden construction that supports a lantern with highly decorated panels. The whole structure is 142 feet high and weighs 400 tons. At the end of the day we all met up at the railway station, where enjoyed an ice cream before our journey home.

Denis

These sentences appeared in church bulletins or were announced at church services:

Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation

Pot-luck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.

Local History 1

In June, a small (but select?) group of seven attended the Warner Textile Archive, a much more modernised presentation than when we last visited, and which must be a magnificent resource for students. After lunch, we attended a temporary exhibition by the East Anglian Stitch Textiles, entitled Power of Stitch. Two members of the organisers explained brilliantly the objectives and meaning of the exhibits and the work involved making it a very interesting and worthwhile after-noon.

The Roman Circus at Colchester, discovered in 2004, was our venue in July. Although limited physical evidence is visible above ground, an excellent model and knowledgeable guide took us back to Roman times. This is the only positively identified chariot racing track, as well as the longest and largest Roman building known in Britain. It had an overall length of 450 metres and was 71-74 metres wide, with seating for over 8,000 spectators, cleverly represented in the model by 8,000 miniature figures. As it was one of the hottest afternoons of the month, we declined the invitation to walk the full circuit!

We conclude the summer in August with a guided walk on the Forgotten History of Chelmsford. Details of our forthcoming winter meetings will be available in September.

For further information about the Group and its meetings please get in touch. We look forward to meeting new members.

Brian

Italian

Since taking over this group from Lorna three years ago, if my memory serves me correctly, we have more or less settled into a regular pattern at our weekly meetings.

A little grammar to start with, then a page or two about some aspect of Italian culture or history where I try to emphasise the grammar points covered. A break for coffee when I sometimes make the effort to persuade people to gossip in Italian, and then more reading and translating from a novel whose melodrama makes the sometimes tricky vocabulary worth the effort.

Italian is a language of which we all have some vocabulary, whether from eating and drinking (pasta, farfalle, spaghetti, latte), classical music (andante, adagio, basso profondo, alto) pop music and opera (volare, cantare, nessun dorma).

But like any language the grammatical structure is also needed, and there are always traps for the un-wary, when one tries to make a correlation with an English or French word and comes unstuck. Teaching a language therefore will always include more general subjects such as linguistics and etymology. Despite all that, I am often reduced to saying 'That's just how it is'.

It is claimed that learning a language, even at our advanced age, is a good defence against the tribulations which await us. Perhaps we are not the ideal test bed for such theories, but we do, I hope, enjoy the struggle.

Andrew

Photography



Spring & early summer provided some exciting challenges for our group, with a photo-shoot at Barleylands Birds of Prey Centre in April that introduced new techniques for photographing moving subjects, which resulted in some fantastic images from our members.

In May we enjoyed a photo composition presentation by a local professional, Steve who with lots of examples demonstrated the different techniques & useful tips for achieving a good image composition.

We encourage our members to share their own photography experience journey with the wider group, & at our June meeting Denis presented a very enjoyable photo illustration of his visit to a traditional French Kiln work place.

In July our photo-shoot, was a horticulture topic at Hyde Hall, a particular high point in the gardening season, which provided a diverse & wide range of subjects for our members.

July also provides our members with an opportunity to enter our mid-year competition on a gardening topic, Judged by Peter who did a fantastic job making the event a good spirited fun session but still maintaining a learning aspect. All the entries were of a high standard but unfortunately there had to be winners : 1st Linda, 2nd June & 3rd Jos'e



1st



2nd



3rd

Commended: Mike, Lesley & Cherry

In the coming months, we continue with our regular photo-shoots & review meetings but we also have an added interest with a photo editing workshop in August, to help members with editing techniques to improve their photo images.

Mike



Painting and Sketching

Happily there's still a good deal of summer left as I write this. In the Sketching and Painting Group we are looking forward to starting some outdoor art shortly. Venues pencilled in include:

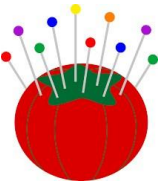
Crossing Temple Barns (the Walled Garden area in particular has plenty of interest for sketchers, including the very clever Willow Woman sculpture), Ingatestone Hall with its Tudor house, lake, and lovely grounds, and RHS Hyde Hall, which is doubtless familiar to all. A couple of other potential venues are being considered not too far from Chelmsford. Fortunately, there is a wealth of interesting areas in and around Essex to keep an amateur artist very happy.

My fingers are crossed for fair weather, but whatever, I pledge not to follow Claude Monet's example and take to my bed in a sulk if it happens to rain on a summer painting day!

We will start back at the United Reformed Church hall on 4th September, following our summer *plein aire* efforts. Newcomers will be welcome.

Ron

Needles and Pins



The Needles and Pins group has morphed into a knit (or sew) and natter group over the past few meetings. We have learnt that just because you can knit, does not mean that you can crochet, and if you like dressmaking, which uses mainly machine techniques, you might not like embroidery or patchwork. Some people like to follow instructions and others to be creative. Some work on a small scale and others on a large scale. So, it is difficult at just one meeting to ensure that everyone is happy.

There are very few sewing projects that can be done in two hours. By the time an explanation has been given of what to do, materials have been chosen, and everyone has had a go at using the iron, or even the sewing machine, it is time for tea – a key moment of the meeting, and then people do a little more 'work' and go home with half done projects.

So, instead of working as a group on a particular project, the members bring their own projects. We all look at what everyone else is doing and can ask each other for advice – there is always someone who is particularly experienced in one aspect of craft who is able to help.

The variety of crafts people bring along include: knitting garments, toys and blankets, learning to crochet, crazy patchwork, quilting, embroidery, long stitch, cross stitch, experimental knitting and crochet techniques and many others.

The purpose of the group seems to have changed from a 'learning' environment to an opportunity for a couple of hours to sit and chat with like-minded people, have a chance to concentrate on doing something we enjoy, but often don't have time to and get a bit of support and help when necessary.

The group is always open to new members – either experienced crafters or beginners. Do contact Debbie if you are interested.

Debbie

Photography

Stone Age & Roman Villa Flint Artefacts Discovery in Galleywood. Flintknapping (controlled process of chipping away ancient flint stone)

A local historian knocked on my door and asked if I could help him as he had discovered two Flintknapping sites: Stone Age and close by a Roman Villa. He said: "I've found a few artefacts, which time has turned into over 500 pieces with at least a further thousand more", & asked if I would photograph a few of these for a talk he is giving.

Anybody who has tried to photograph small objects may know it is not easy, trying to get shadow-less photos, close up & with good detail. He brought me a box of artefacts to try my skills on & after putting the pieces onto white card, setting up the tripod & camera I tried with natural window light, which was not successful. I then used flash both on and off camera but was still unhappy with the results. My eureka moment was when I realised that what I needed was a light box, which is basically an open fronted box in white with a semi-transparent top & sides to allow light over the entire subject without casting shadows. It was a bit of trial and error to start with but once I managed to get a set up that worked I could repeat the process for any artefacts.

Once I had done a few and emailed the images to him, he wrote back thanking me for fantastic set of images, which he remarked as museum quality. "Thank you so much, I'll bring the rest around over the next few weeks!" O.K. so I've got the job, did I really want it?" Well, I enjoyed it immensely and some of the results you can see. Try it at home yourself as it can bring great satisfaction and a new twist to your hobby.

John



I want to lead the Victorian life, surrounded by exquisite clutter.

Freddie Mercury

Gardening



In June some of our group visited a large, pretty garden belonging to Robert and Prue Jones in the centre of Chelmsford. They open their garden to the public once a year in aid of Farleigh Hospice but were happy to welcome members of our U3A to a garden which has been lovingly tended for many years; it includes a vegetable patch, large wine-producing *vines and many attractive plants and trees, some of which have self-seeded. (*In October I help to pick, squish and pound the grapes, which eventually make approx. 25 bottles of red wine – yum!)



Our visit in July was to Dragons, a really vibrant garden belonging to Margot Gryce, which she opened especially for us, (a rather small group) entertaining us with delicious cakes and tea as well as a garden with lots of with nooks and crannies, many seating areas, hidden gems and filled with colourful borders. Up with the dawn, Margot works hard every day to keep this huge garden looking beautiful. We have been there before but each time we visit, it has a different look, and we return home with lots of ideas and feeling really happy. *Maggie*

Reading 2 - Thoughts on "1984" by George Orwell

I've read part of this book and did not like it. However, here are my comments.

1984 is a sort of horror story, an imaginative portrayal of a possible future totalitarian nightmare. It was written just after WW2 and probably used the picture of Germany under Hitler (or Russia under Stalin) as a template. 1984 refers to the all-seeing "Party" in which Big Brother knows everything about everyone. This is not unlike the history of the Nazi party where the SS spied on people and family members denounced their relatives, and some were put to death. The leader of North Korea is reported to have done the same recently with people who displeased him over failed talks with President Trump on nuclear disarmament. In the book they disappeared into Room 101.

There are other parallels with modern life. On p42 we are introduced to "false news", where predictions and promises do not relate to reality. The solution is to alter the predictions after the event so that they do tally with reality. The "Ministry of truth (?)" deals with the "corrections". Donald Trump appears to believe in this approach using regular contradictions on YouTube to tell us what he really said yesterday.

Another worrying feature is IngSoc, mentioned on P54, whose job is to reduce the number of words in the dictionary on the basis that if people do not have the words to express dissent there will be no dissent. They will also cease to think because there will be no words to express their thoughts. The Social Media of 2019 is following this trend with Twitter, Snapchat, Youtube, Cyber-bullying and Scams.

Violence is rampant: on p25 we're told that hanging is a spectator sport. This is not dissimilar to Victorian times, before hanging was abolished. We get virtual hanging on TV every night at 9 pm, when we have the announcement "the following programme contains scenes of extreme violence" and knife crime happens so often in London it barely gets a mention in the news.

On p35 we are told that war is continuous between Oceania, Europa and Eastasia with rockets falling anytime. Compare this with long-term wars in the Middle East and the fragile peace between USA and other nuclear states such as North Korea.

Consequently, I became so depressed I stopped reading this book. It's too near reality! *Allen*

MURPHY'S LESSER KNOWN LAWS :

- **Torch: A case for holding dead batteries.**
- **God gave you toes as a device for finding furniture in the dark.**

Art Appreciation – Sun and Moon

The subject for the group in August was the Sun and the Moon. 16 paintings were selected and my favourites were both by J.M.W. Turner : “Fishermen at Sea” and “Chichester Canal”. Both show Turner’s remarkable talent of painting with light, but they are so very different (in my opinion).



This picture shows a fishing boat lit by moonlight, plus a small lantern. The conditions are rough around the boat, the weather could deteriorate any moment, the boat could capsize or they could be driven onto the nearby rocks. The moonlight is reflected off the tips of the waves and accentuates the potential danger to the fishermen.

In contrast the scene on Chichester Canal is serene. The sun is setting, the water is calm, the weather forecast looks good for the morrow. *Allen*



Age is A Quality of Mind (author unknown)

Age is a quality of mind
If you left your dreams behind,
If hope is cold,
If you no longer look ahead,
If your ambitious fires are dead –
Then you are old.

But if from life you take the best,
And if in life you keep the jest,
If love you hold -
No matter how the years go by,
No matter how the birthdays fly,
You are not old!



(with thanks to Anne Dransfield)

Local History 2

On Thursday 9th May, our group headed off to Harwich. We were welcomed at the railway station by the Town Crier who escorted us to St Nicholas’ church. After a guided tour of the church, we walked to the quay and the information bureau. Our guide stopped several times to point out places of interest.

An excellent lunch was enjoyed by all and we then re-visited The Guildhall and were able to see more this time. The giant crane is always worth a visit, so we finished what had been a lovely day at this extraordinary place.

Kay

My precious sight

When I was told that I had cataracts in both eyes and that eventually I would need an operation, I wasn’t too worried, as I thought it would be a long way off.

I saw the eye specialist in November 2018 and was told that the cataracts weren’t bad enough to operate, but four months later they were equally bad in both eyes. He said he would operate on one eye and when that was healed, he would do the other one in approximately six weeks.

On the day of the procedure, I was very nervous – the fear of the unknown, obviously! But on the day after I took off my eye pad, as instructed, and what a wonderful sight! Everything was full of colour, everything was bright and everywhere I looked things were clear. I felt great, with no pain whatsoever. Roll on six weeks when I have the other eye done.

Doreen– U3A Welcomer

MAIN MEETINGS : SPEAKERS / SUBJECTS

9 Oct	Brian Carline	Life in our Secondary Schools
13 Nov	Mark & Pam Bathurst	The Medway Queen – Paddle steamer Her history and restoration
11 Dec	Jan Ford	Holly, Ivy and Miss L Toe Entertainment by Jan's group
8 Jan	Patrick Chaplin	Recollections of Pub games and Darts

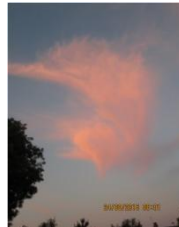


Copy for the **WINTER** issue should be sent to me **on or before 4th November**, please.

Articles, poems (or photographs), from any U3A member, need to be sent as separate attachments.

Thanks

Maggie



Speaker reports from the summer monthly meetings:

In **May** Brian Curtois told us about his 30 years as a BBC reporter in Parliament. He told us that as a schoolboy, he went to the public gallery at Parliament when Winston Churchill was Prime Minister and that visit inspired him to pursue this career. After leaving school he learnt shorthand and typing at evening classes, then secured a job with a Hornchurch newspaper, moved to Nottingham and finally came back to London to the Press Association National News Agency. He reported on The Great Train Robbery and covered Middle Eastern and Northern Ireland uprisings and met many famous Film and TV stars.

Brian now works on local radio stations, reporting on political situations, keeping to more regular hours now that he is semi-retired.

In **June** we welcomed Roger Smith from Stowe Maries Airfield who told us about 'The Air War over Essex 1915 to 1918'. He explained that The Royal Naval Air Service defended our country in WW1 and that coastal lighthouses around Kent, Essex and Suffolk were very important in receiving information from The Royal Flying Corps in France on imminent air raids. He also mentioned the emergency landing fields around Essex at Sutton farm and Hainault farm, as well as North Weald airfield. As public telephones were very few at this time, these communications saved many lives.

In **July** Robin Carsberg, a Royal Horticulture judge, spoke of his passion for gardens and preserving the environment. He concentrated on The Eden Project and The Lost Gardens of Heligan and explained how these derelict areas have been restored and are known worldwide for their produce and floral displays,

In **August** our speaker was from 'The MAF Flying for Life' charity which does amazing work, in under - developed countries around the world. **September** will be our AGM which will be followed by a talk by Alan on his lifelong passion with ships and the sea.

Di

INTEREST GROUP PROGRAMME

DAY		1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH
Monday	a.m.				
	p.m.		Photography German Conversation	I.T. & Computing	Travel Poetry Appreciation
Tuesday	p.m.	Table Tennis Singing for Pleasure Scrabble	Canasta Table Tennis	Table Tennis Singing for Pleasure	Travel Table Tennis Canasta
Wednesday	a.m.	Italian Walking 1 Painting & Sketching	Italian Painting & Sketching	Italian Strollers Painting & Sketching	Italian Painting & Sketching
	p.m.	Reading 1 French Conversation Mah-jong	General Meeting	Mah-jong	Local History 1 Spanish
Thursday	a.m.		Papercraft		Papercraft
	p.m.	Bridge Gardening	Bridge Local History 2	Bridge Discussion	Bridge Paper Craft
Friday	a.m.		Arts & Crafts	Walking 2	Rambling
	p.m.	Music Performing Reading 2 Creative Writing	Family History Cribbage Art Appreciation	Needles & Pins	
Saturday				Weekenders	
Sunday		Weekenders			

Music Performing: .27th Sept, 13th Dec



Published 1st September 2019