

JANUARY 2016 MONTHLY MEETING

Beccles U3A Meeting on 20th January at the Public Hall in Beccles

The talk given by John Humphery, Oceanographer:- Global Warming and some effects on the sea was attended by 184 members and guests. This is an all time record in terms of attendance at our monthly speaker meetings. We also had 26 new members join our U3A.

The chairman referred to national events which are available to all members, further information is available on our notice board and on the website.

He announced details regarding the Beccles Showcase Event which is to be held at Beccles Public Hall on Friday March 11th 9.15 am to 12.15 pm. This is where the interest groups can display and explain what Beccles U3A has on offer. It is an opportunity for existing and potential members to find out in more detail what is involved within the groups. There will be displays, demonstrations and live music and singing performances. The webmaster and events secretary will also be in attendance. At this event members will be able to renew their membership 2016/17. The membership year starts on 1st April and members were reminded that they would have to be members to attend groups and visits, for insurance purposes.

The chair drew attention 24 hour Free Legal Helpline which is available for all members should they require it. The National Office said that when using this service that they must state that they are U3A members as there is no insurance number to quote.

Your U3A Executive Committee seeks feedback from its members, wish lists and constructive criticism and have decided to instigate a Suggestion Box at the monthly meeting to receive your comments. This was considered to be a better idea than having a general survey.

VACANCY - Publicity.

Beccles U3A is marketing itself but we need someone to write reports for the local press and the website and to produce a quarterly newsletter for our members who do not have access to our website. The chairman appealed for a creative wordsmith for this important position.

The Groups Coordinator said there was a possibility of 2 new groups - card games and a travel group. New groups with Convenors were English Country Dancing. Ian McIntyre gave a presentation on this. John Hickling then talked about a new language group - German for beginners which will start in March. Finally Michelle Golding announced that a fifth French language group, Tourist French, would be starting on 21st January. Full details to be found on the interest groups French page.

Before introducing the speaker Jacquie Greenfield took the opportunity to appeal for more members to join the Short Tennis Group which meets every Thursday between 4.15-5.15pm in the Scout Hall in Common Lane.

John Humphery: A career in oceanography and thoughts on global warming

John gave a very informative and thought-provoking talk which covered two related subjects. The first was his experience as an oceanographic engineer over 35 years and John showed us

various pieces of technical equipment he had worked with to measure wave height and density. 3D currents and sediment concentration which helped build wave climate maps throughout the UK. This information also provided data on the situation of shipping channels for port operators.

He utilised the Holyhead tide-gauge to measure the time of tides to an accuracy of 1cm every 15 minutes. Taken over a long period enables us to see a trend, for example the sea level rise at Newlyn between 1915 and 2012 demonstrated that the sea became 10 inches deeper and the average rise is 1/10th of an inch per annum. This rise is not specific to Newlyn and similar rises can be seen throughout the world such as Africa, Honolulu and San Francisco. He then went on to give his thoughts on global warming as follows. The earth is warming and water expands when heated and so will rise. Global ice is melting due to warming of the atmosphere producing yet more water. NASA satellites have shown that between 1980 and 2012 the amount of ice has been halved. When white ice reduces, this results in reduced light reflection off the ice meaning the earth gets warmer. In 2015 NASA showed that sea ice maximum (i.e. In March) was at its lowest on record.

He explained that when SEA ice melts it does not add to the volume of water in the sea, however when LAND ice melts it does add to the sea volume. If/when Greenland ice melts the sea level will rise by 7 metres and places such as Seychelles, Maldives and Bangladesh will flood. If the whole of the Antarctic ice melts sea level will rise by 61 metres worldwide. However even the world's best maths modellers cannot all agree on this subject.

He summarised by outlining the possible effects of global warming which included heavier rain, more droughts and heat waves in summer and more hurricanes.

On 12 December world leaders of 195 countries gathered together and adopted the historic Paris agreement to control climate change. (Vicki John)