

NEWS FROM THE EAST



March 2021

Your regional team keeping in touch with u3as across the six counties of the East of England

Chief Exec in the hot seat

NATIONAL u3a Chief Executive Sam Mauger is the latest key person to attend an East regional forum.

She is booked for Friday, April 9 at 10am.

Invitations have already been sent to chairs, secretaries and treasurers of all 141 u3as in the region.

But attendance does not have to be the officers. If it is thought other members have questions they would like to ask or hold issues to raise, the invitation can be passed on.

Sam aims to update attendees on the latest news and fresh support from the national team on constitutions and issues.

Then she will open the floor to questions and has not stipulated anything is off limits.

Queries that cannot be asked in person for whatever reason should be sent, in advance to Regional Team Co-ordinator Hilary Holt contact details on the back page who will do all she can to get them answered for you.



Sam Mauger talking to the East of England.

Dates of more regional forums

BUMPER attendances have shown the idea of regional forums has been well received.

Ones involving national Chair Ian Mcanah and U3A Day National Co-ordinator Sue Stokes have already been held.

Bookings for national Chief Executive Sam Mauger are currently being taken.

And two more are already in the pipeline with dates and speakers arranged.

So, please, make a note of the relevant days and times in the diary.

Official invitations follow in due course

On Friday April 23 at 10am the re-launch planning focus will be on Recruitment and Retention.

The topic will cover the pilot Pathfinder project and the toolkit, now available to all on the national web site.

Then on Friday May 14, again starting at 10am, we will be looking at IT issues and navigation of the national web site.

If there is anything special you would like to see covered in a forum, please let the regional team know. Contacts back page.

u3a debate to note

A DEBATE on Zoom, as part of the national learning programme, on Friday May 28 at 2pm, is discussing the motion: 'This House believes older people have just as much to learn from young people as they do from each other.'

Share your u3a day plans

ARRIVAL of regional special PR and Media Advisers has given a brand new slant to the planning of major activities like u3a day and this year's pending relaunches.

Extra support with ideas and suggestions from me and my colleagues brings fresh help and assistance that has not been there for u3as before.

Chairs, publicity officers and working groups have already been in touch for one to one guidance.

But the role also opens the door on such topics as co-ordinated regional publicity and promotion through the regional web site.

June 2 is the first national u3a day and so a landmark event for us all. Whatever we do will start the planning for next year's June 1 u3a day in our 40th birthday year!



So let's shout about what we are doing! Please let me know and we will set up a special u3a day section on the regional web site to tell all and sundry what we are about.

Details on how to contact me by email are on the back page of the newsletter.

Let me contact broadcasters



NO doubt all the u3as in the East have the regional TV stations and their county BBC radio on their publicity lists.

But, I tactfully suggest, that will get most of the u3as contacting Anglia and Look East no TV coverage at all.

And radio stations hearing from a plethora of u3as about activities over and again ... 74 times in Essex for example ... will turn presenters and producers off rather than on.

So, please, let me sort through all the goings on that you tell me about and see what I can interest them to cover.

I have no intention of putting myself forward for interviews and live spots. It's a linking role I am looking to do.

Individual u3a spokespeople might be the best or a Regional Trust Volunteer.

Until you let me know what is going on it is difficult to say.

Offer of FREE training on press releases



I SPOKE about how to write engaging press releases in three u3a day PR and Media Link sessions. but they can be used generally.

If you missed them and would like a session on press releases I am prepared to give them regionally to at least six u3as at once Please, let me know you want one and I'll set it up.

Go online for social bridge

IF you're missing your regular face-to-face bridge group meetings, you're not alone!

Like you, Great Yarmouth U3A Bridge Group wanted to keep playing during these strange and difficult times, so they decided to go online.

Back in July during the first lockdown, Steve and Tony from Great Yarmouth U3A arranged to join forces with bridge players from Palmers Green and Southgate U3A to play online, using Bridge Club Live as a platform.



This hybrid bridge club had been such a great success that they decided to invite other players from other U3As using an entry in Third Age Matters.

More U3A Bridge Groups joined resulting in a trebling of weekly playing sessions and increasing interest.

Bridge Club Live's main function is to provide a service for players from around the world to play with real people (not robots!) at whatever level they choose.

Where it's great for U3As, though, is that it also provides a space for them to meet each other and play in a friendly and comfortable atmosphere.

A recent addition to the service provided by Bridge Club Live is an audio/visual facility.

Although it's still in the early stages of development, members can use the audio link to chat while actually playing.

As the number of members grows, the intention is to create different groups determined by the level of experience of the players.

The club also offers new players the added buffer of Bridge Club Live's Coaching Corner where they can practice and ask questions.

The cost of playing online is hardly any different to normal 'table money' except that where we would normally pay £2 to £3 for a (typical) two-hour session, for the same money you can play 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This includes unlimited play in all rooms and competitions as well as the 'Face-to-face' club sessions.

The club also offers taster sessions and mentoring as well as friendly competitions and challenges.

For further information email Bridgeclubs@eastnorfolk.org or 'phone 07749 888830 (voicemail) or go online at

https://www.bridgewebs.com/cgi-bin/bwoo/bw.cgi?club=eastnorfolk&pid=display_page5



Ken's artistic marathon says 'thanks' to charity

KEN Measom of Witham and District (Essex) U3A has raised money for a charity that is supporting him with blood issues.

He took part in the marathon MDS Charity 20:20 Challenge by painting a picture a day for 20 days.

He raised £1,043.75 with Gift Aid of a total of £43,089.06 collected overall ... and he thanks everyone who supported him.

Dick relives the hippie trail

LEIGH Estuary U3A member Dick Graham explains how memories of almost half a decade ago are now in print.

IN 1973 as a 21-year-old babe-in-the-woods I hitchhiked through a universe that good timing, luck and the pure innocence of being a turnip prevented me from experiencing war, a cyclone and a serial killer.

I kept a diary of my nine-month journey from which I blew the dust during this lockdown, edited it and published it.

I went through Iran, now a country where you run the risk as a UK citizen of being held by the state as a spy. Then Afghanistan, a country where the Taliban bomb at will.

On to Pakistan where Osama Bin Laden was hiding when he was assassinated by US Navy Seals.

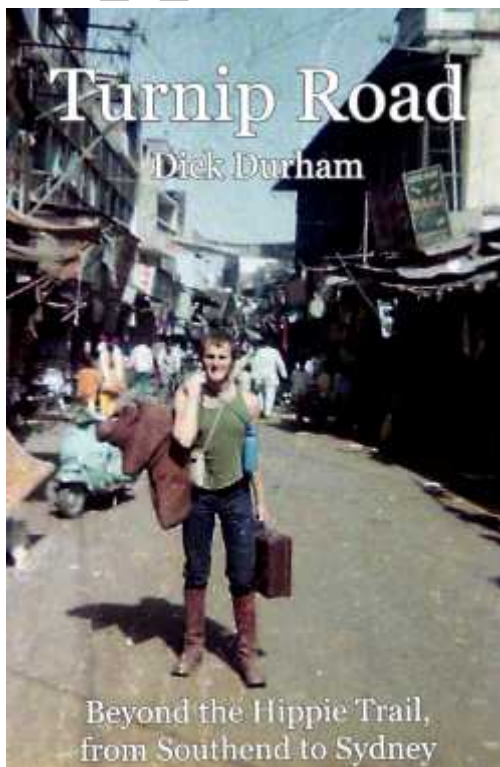
By the time I got to Bangkok the serial hippie killer, featured on BBC TV's *The Serpent*, was just warming up.

But, by the time I got back to the UK, the recession had dried up the work I then did.

So I asked my father for the air fare back to Australia to continue my global wanderlust.

He agreed on condition that I first applied for a job as an editorial assistant in the Fetter Lane office of DC Thomson's *Sunday Post*.

I got the job and a lifetime's journey into Fleet Street began.



Now everyone can share my youthful wanderlust by reading *Turnip Road, Beyond the Hippie Trail, from Southend to Sydney*, available from Amazon Books at £9 for a paperback or £6 for Kindle.

I hope you enjoy the read while I ease out of lockdown through freelancing.

News From The East boosts new project

PUBLICITY over the launch of a brand new Shared Learning Project on evacuees brought contacts through the February edition of *News From The East*.

Members of two of our u3as who had been evacuated during the Second World War were willing to pass on their experiences to the new project.

No longer living where they were evacuated from or to, their stories will boost the rich personal histories vital to first hand accounts.

Now the project is looking for volunteers to collect and help collate the living resource.

Contact Jean St Clair: 07703 260519.

Contacting the East of England U3A

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