HBU3A Committee Monthly Update

We would like to thank everyone for attending our meeting on 13th March when Bob Fossey, Mill Assistant from the National Trust Horsey Wind Pump project, came to talk to us not only about the work being undertaken there but also about exciting opportunities for us to get involved.

Our May meeting should have been our AGM. We are taking advice from head office about how to proceed. We are fortunate in that the AGM was called prior to the need for its cancellation, which gives us some flexibility in how we proceed. We will keep you updated with how we take this forward, but in the meantime, Steve is diligently working on our accounts which will be completed as normal.

Hickling Broad U3A is stringently following government advice and so all meetings, both monthly meetings and interest groups, are now cancelled until such time the current restrictions are lifted.

We have been most fortunate in that several of our speakers have agreed to change their dates with us. Our dear friend Pat Neary, who was booked for May, has now put our December meeting date in his diary. We are sure that his cheeky humour and Norfolk songs will be just the thing to help us all kick off the festive season in style!

Hickling Village show is planned for the 26th July. We are really hoping it will be able to go ahead, if not in July, it will take place later in the year. You will find attached to this news sheet the class list. All members of Hickling Broad U3A are entitled to enter the show, so why not have a look through the categories and have a go at some of the categories? It is hoped that having this to work towards will give us all some inspiration in the difficult weeks ahead.

The spirit of the U3A, and especially Hickling Broad U3A, is friendship, fun and support. Please can you take a moment every now and then to contact any of your U3A friends to let them know that you are thinking of them. This is a very lonely and frightening time for many of us, and a simple act of friendship can make a huge difference to someone on a dark day.

Please can everyone remember to wash their hands regularly several times a day with good old-fashioned soap and water, stay indoors and away from others for 7 days if they get a cough and/or temperature, or 14 days if a member if their household displays symptoms. Do not be afraid to contact the NHS on the website (or by telephoning 111 if you are not online) if your symptoms continue and/or get worse. It is particularly important, if you live on your own, that you let a friend or relative know that you are unwell so they can keep in touch with you to monitor your progress.

Your April Newsletter

Your newsletter this month is a little different.

Of course we don’t have any interest group meetings or our monthly meeting in April. However, our newsletter is a good way for us to keep in touch and still feel part of our U3A.

The group co-ordinators who did have chance for their groups to meet early in March have included a report and many of those who unfortunately couldn’t meet have come up with something interesting to say about their groups.

Our ‘Members Corner’ section will become particularly important now and you are encouraged to participate and send something in for publication. As always, you will find the email address at the end of the letter. Please send your contributions in so that we can keep our newsletter alive throughout this trying time when people are feeling isolated.

To get the ball rolling, you will find a recipe you might enjoy making. Who doesn’t enjoy a good home-made chicken and ham pie? Read on for how to make your own.
In spite of the current Coronavirus situation U3A continues to try to support its members. Unfortunately I can’t come to your U3A to talk to Group Leaders or members about projects or help or advise in person, but am interested to know if you have completed any during the past year. These could be shared learning projects or research projects undertaken by a group in your U3A.
Also have any of your members decided to take part in the national Living History project? This asks any member interested to keep a journal (which can be intermittent) of thoughts and comments about their life during this time of unprecedented social distancing and isolation. I have been asked to receive and collate any material that members are willing to contribute to add to a Mass Observation survey of our urban and rural lives.
I look forward to hearing from you. Ann’s email address is: higliann68@aol.com

New U3A Discussion Forums - Using digital platforms to stay connected

During these unprecedented times, the Third Age Trust has been looking at different ways to support our amazing U3A community. We wanted to enable and support U3As, members and Interest Group leaders, to stay active and connected with each other. To this end, from today, Monday 6 April 2020, we have launched three online discussion forums so that you can share ideas and support each other. Thanks to the Beacon users, we are doing this by extending the existing (and successful) Beacon User Forum to all U3As, regardless of whether or not you are using the Beacon management system at your U3A yet.
It is easy to get started. All you need to do is visit the forum website at https://forum.u3abeacon.org.uk, click the ‘register’ button and fill in your details. From there you will be able to explore the forums and get involved in the discussion.
If you are not familiar with online forums, we have prepared a how-to guide to help you get started. We welcome your feedback on the guide. Your feedback will help us develop our guide which will be available on the national website in the next few days.

There will be three forums that you can join:

- **Learning** – discussions around subjects and all forms of interest and learning
- **Our U3A Community** – discussions around how we support each other
- **Beacon** – discussions around using Beacon, the U3A management system

This is just an outline of what the forums are about because it will be led and developed by you when you join and the conversations that are happening. A volunteer team will moderate the site and support you to use the forums in a safe, positive and productive way. We will send more details through the week as we have them on our website and in the newsletter.

Please join us, sign up and get chatting. Together we will network, share ideas and stay connected.

News from our Interest Groups

Group Contact Co-ordinator

**Art: 4th Friday (2:00 – 4:00pm) in the Methodist Hall**

Due to the current Coronavirus epidemic all Art Groups meetings are suspended but under different circumstances the Art Group meet on the 4th Friday each month 2pm – 4pm at Hickling Barn. I’m sure the Art Group members are continuing their drawing and painting at home. Stay safe everyone and let’s hope we are back to normal soon.

Here is Phil’s painting of Logan Rock in Cornwall after he and Moira recently visited there.

All items for the newsletter should be sent to: hbu3anews@gmail.com
British History: 3rd Thursday (2:00 pm)

Country Dancing: 1st and 2nd Monday (2:00 pm) in the Barn

Creative Writing:

BLURR – The Camera Group:
3rd Monday (2:00-4:00pm) at Hickling Barn

There were 32 colourful images submitted this month on the theme of sunrise and sunset. Many global locations featured including Iceland, Tenerife, Namibia, Egypt, San Francisco, Mars (lookalike) and Hickling. The colours ranged from excessively vibrant to cool and muted and 60% included reflections from oceans, rivers and lakes. Martin’s perfect image of the Hickling boat sheds down Hill Common was chosen for the newsletter.

Last meeting’s practical, Portrait at Arm’s Length, produced only 13 images, but the discussion on the merits of monochrome as well as being mindful of the backgrounds were prominent. John Gladwell’s moody image of Rich is an excellent representation of the genre.

Several images were displayed from the group’s visit to Bill’s restaurant in Norwich; the place was crowded with artefacts, mirrors, varied lights and inconsistent lighting, so required some thought as to how and what to photograph. An interesting challenge.

Although the group’s meetings have been postponed for the foreseeable future, our next month’s images on the theme of Monochrome will still be submitted and circulated to members via wetransfer.
**Bookworms – Reading Group: 1st Wednesday (pm)**

Under normal circumstances Bookworms will meet on the first Wednesday of the month and we take turns to host our meetings. The host will have chosen the book to be discussed.

At our last meeting before the lock down Sue chose The Colour of Milk by Nell Leyshon. This is Sue’s review:

>“The novel is an account of one year in the life of Mary, a 15 year old disabled girl, youngest of four daughters, who exists on an English rural farm in a life of hardship and rough endurance. Although she is largely unloved and uneducated, her indefatigable spirit persists throughout, as she finds warmth in the flanks of the house cow, and spiritual enlightenment in the beauty of the sunsets and the countryside around her. She endures sexual abuse as the price for learning to read and write, and the only choice she is able to make leads to her inevitable death. Divided into four parts, charting the seasons in the year of 1831, Mary introduces each section by reminding her readers that the account is written by her own hand. Herein lies the irony: her newly acquired literacy skills lead to the fatal denouement, and she is accepting of her fate. Leyshon keeps the narrative simplistic, with no capitals, no specific dialect and few unforced spelling errors. This latter feature is a literary choice: she wants there to be no obstacles to our understanding and empathy.”

Everyone in the group loved this book although one or two of us thought it a bit difficult to get into due to the lack of punctuation etc, but once this was overcome we all found it a compelling read which is how we arrived at a score of 9/10.

Bookworms are keeping in touch via email and phone, talking about the books we are currently reading and generally keeping up to date with each other. It's working very well.

As all groups are suspended Sue has come up with a quiz for us which should be fun, so watch this space!

**Croquet: Tuesday mornings**

Due the Coronavirus outbreak Croquet will not be played until further notice. Needless to say the situation will be closely monitored and fall in line with the decision of the U3A Committee. When play is finally restored do come along at 10.15am on a Tuesday morning and enjoy some gentle exercise in the fresh air whilst learning to play a competitive but fun game. There will always be tea, coffee, biscuits and sometimes even cake!

New Members would be welcomed as no experience is needed.

**Gourmet Diggers: 4th Monday (2:00-4:00 pm)**

Well without our usual meeting I thought what can I write about and this month and then I thought of this. With all the mad panic food shopping going on Andy and I went on hunt for various items, included was some plain flour for my sister. After a hunt I found some in Tesco. Success! So dropping this off at my sister I was given 3 home grown leeks. Love a bit of bartering. Armed with leeks I searched the recipes. Result - leek and bacon risotto. Unfortunately, it needs a little wine. So, we had to drink the rest of the bottle. Well what else could we do in these circumstances? If anyone would like the recipe, email me and I’ll send it to you.
Pub Lunches: 3rd Wednesday

Obviously, the pub lunch group was disappointed not to be able to meet in March when we were due to go to “The Black Boys” in Aylsham. Those of us who had been for lunch with the group three years ago were looking forward to a follow-up visit and those who hadn’t been were keen to sample the delights from the menu. Rest assured that when we are back to normal, “The Black Boys” will be first on our list.

In the meantime, keep safe and well

Sailing: Friday mornings throughout the summer

Study Group
If this interests you please contact me.

Voices of Hickling: 2nd Friday (11:30 – 1:00 pm)

Walking: 1st Wednesday at 10:00 am

The walk started at Reedham Quay where the group were told about the area being a large boat building centre concentrating on wherries in the 19th Century. The walk made its way to Reedham Ferry, en route passing the memorial to the 21 US airmen who died in a collision between two US "Flying Fortress" bombers returning from a bombing raid on Germany in 1944. The bombers crashed into Reedham Marshes and were featured on a timelapse search in 1999. The group then saw the ferry operating after returning to service from its 5 year inspection and maintenance at the builders on Oulton Broad. Passing Reedham station, the first passenger line in Norfolk, opened in 1844, the group were told how the line plus all stations were built in one year, not bad when you think of HS2! Crossing the rail line where the newly reopened Berney Arms branch was operating, we made her way to St John the Baptist Church. This church goes back to the 7th Century, has recycled blocks from a Roman building, was destroyed by fire in 1984 and has been rebuilt showing some of the original Roman brickwork, there is an excellent historic display inside the building. Walking from there towards the river the group crossed the railway again (Berney Arms branch line), and continued on to the Reedham swing bridge, which carries the railway (Lowestoft line) over the river Yare.
The group learned about the bridge, its age (1902), the fact it was out of design life and some of the problems Network Rail face keeping it operational. The bridge opens on average 1300 times a year. Some of the group finished the walk with lunch in The Lord Nelson pub on Riverside. We enjoyed excellent weather throughout the walk.

Wildlife Group:

The wildlife walk for March was an exploration of the NWT Reserve at Hickling. A small group of eight people took the opportunity to walk the site and try out the various hides. It was chilly with strong winds and a few glimpses of the sun although some of the paths were still under water from the wet winter. It is a well laid out reserve and fascinating place (free for all residents of Hickling and members of NWT). A little early in the season but we saw Greylag and Canada Geese, Egrets, Lapwings, Coots, Moorhens, Mallard and Marsh Harriers. The Warden felt we were too early for the Cranes, Bittern and Bearded Tits that we may be lucky to see there later in the month.
This is a space for all of our members to use. If you have anything to tell us, maybe something you’ve done, or an event that’s coming up that you think other members would enjoy, or perhaps you have something to sell or donate that someone else might need. Email Rose at hbu3anews@gmail.com with a brief description and maybe a photo. Space permitting, we will include it in a subsequent newsletter.

A recipe for you for April.

**CHICKEN AND HAM PIE (4 servings)**

**Ingredients for the filling:**
- A small roasted chicken (or 2 large chicken breasts)
- 12 button mushrooms (quartered)
- 6 asparagus spears (blanched and cut into 3)
- One small leek (blanched and sliced)
- 200 g cooked ham (cubed)
- Handful of chopped parsley
- Handful of chopped chives
- 1 tsp thyme leaves
- I sheet of puff pastry
- I egg + 1 beaten yolk
- Salt, pepper and Olive oil

**Ingredients for the sauce:**
- 60 g butter
- 50 g plain flour
- 650 ml chicken stock
- 225 ml double cream
- 1 tsp thyme leaves

**Method:**
- Chop the meat into bite sized pieces.
- Fry the mushrooms with olive oil until golden.
- Combine chicken, mushrooms, asparagus, leeks, ham, parsley and chives.
- For the sauce:
  - Melt the butter, add the flour and stir, cooking for 2 minutes.
  - Add the stock, ladle by ladle stirring to keep smooth.
  - Add the cream and simmer for 5 minutes stirring all the time.
  - Remove from the heat, add the thyme and season if needed.
  - Pour over the chicken mixture and combine. (At this point, chill if wished and use later)
- Roll out the pastry and cover the pie mixture.
- Brush with egg wash and sprinkle with thyme, salt and pepper.
- Chill for 30 minutes
- Cook in a pre-heated oven at 180C/gas mark 4 for 45 minutes until golden brown.

Substitute what you don’t like for what you do and enjoy!

**2020-21 Subscription Renewal**

Obviously in these unprecedented times we are unable to meet so those members who have not renewed their membership will not be able to do so at the April meeting.

Your committee have discussed this and decided, because many of our payments have to be made soon and nearly 2/3rds of you have already renewed, that we will keep the April 30th cut-off in place for members renewing to get the prompt payment discount of £5 off the annual subscription. After that date members renewing will have to pay the full rate of £15 (or £11.50 for associate members).

Obviously, we will “compensate” members for missing out on meetings by either extending the next renewal date or reducing the amount of next year’s subs accordingly so you will not lose out by renewing now.

**To qualify for the reduced rate of £10 (£6.50 for associate members) please pay by one of the following methods by 30th April:**

1. Use online banking and make payment to our bank account - number 53118193 sort code 20-62-53 - quoting your name(s) as the reference. **This is the preferred option.**
2. Send a cheque payable to "Hickling Broad U3A" to The Treasurer, Hickling Broad U3A, c/o 18 Beckmeadow Way, Mundesley, Norfolk, NR11 8LP.

Thank you and we hope to see you all soon.

**What’s on Next at your Monthly U3A Meetings**

Due to the emergency situation with the Covid-19 pandemic, all group interest meetings, our monthly members meetings and our AGM in May are now suspended until further notice. Keep watching this space for further updates.

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