

# KING'S LYNN



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



# *KaLeidoscope*

Spring 2019

For members, About members, By members

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Cover photograph of the “Baden Powell” pictured during last year’s Hanse Festival, taken by Norma Chaplin.

The Editors wish to thank all members who submitted photographs for this issue of *KaLeidoscope* - please keep them coming!

## Editorial



My prediction in the Autumn that you may soon be reading a *Summer* issue of this magazine may be self-fulfilling as we are a little later in publishing this one, however this is part of the plan devised by your Committee to ease the burden that other events during the year place upon us, or so I thought - Often cited along with death of a loved one, major illness, job loss and divorce as one of the most stressful life events is of course Moving, and one of your Editors can now attest as to the veracity of that assertion. As a result, this issue of *KaLeidoscope* has been collated in a series of short sharp bursts between wading through the complexities of selling & buying property. Hopefully, by the time the next issue of this magazine is in preparation, yours truly will be ensconced not only in a new home, but one that has dedicated office space in which to work from!

I would like to pay tribute to my co-editor, **Norma Chaplin** who as usual has undertaken all of the hard work of the physical editing of this publication - all I had to do was throw it together in some sort of order.

Neil Prew

## From Your Committee

### Retiring Chairman's Annual Report

Well, here we are again; another AGM and my last as Chairman. Looking at what I wrote last year, I see that 2018 was largely a year of consolidation. Our membership has now risen to **just over 400** and the **number of groups to 67**, with new ones coming on stream all the time. It is particularly encouraging that so many people have come up with suggestions for new groups, and that Julie Carter has been able to follow these up and find people willing to lead them. The lifeblood of any U3A is its special interest groups and, by this token, I think we can congratulate ourselves on being part of a very healthy organisation. It is also very pleasing that we have been involved with the local community through the **Shared Learning Partnership**, participation in Heritage Open day by the **Madrigal group** and also by the **Memory Matters** group. They have continued to work closely with the Library service to take memory boxes into local care homes and have facilitated two seminars with another one in the pipeline. The exhibition from the SLP was mounted again for ten days in the Red Barn at the Arts Centre, culminating on Heritage Open Day when it attracted some 160 visitors. It was only possible to have it open for so long because 28 members volunteered to steward it.



Our U3A is also involved in a local network, the Wash and Fenland Forum (**WAFF**), originally convened by Edward Harrison, which enables us to exchange ideas with other U3As in our area. Besides assisting Jennifer Simpson as SLP Coordinator for the Easter Region, Ann Higgins has now

taken on the role of Regional Representative.

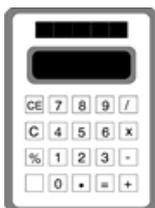
Here in King's Lynn we have had another year of excellent **talks** at our monthly meetings (thanks to Ann Higgins), two **theatre trips** to "The King and I" and "Chicago" (thanks to Sylvia Cliffe), and both a Group Leaders' meeting and very successful **Open Day** masterminded by Julie Carter. Neil Prew and Norma Chaplin have continued the good work of Morag Bean and produced two editions of **KaLeidoscope** - many thanks to them. Ann Smith and Sheila Burney have made sure that reports of our activities have found their way into the local press and *Third Age Matters*. Ann is stepping down from the committee this morning, having been an active and valuable member of the committee, but Sheila will take on her role of **Publicity Officer**. I am also delighted that we now have our very own leaflet, again thanks to Ann Higgins for the initiative and to Geri Coates who designed it.

Behind the scenes, the committee has been as active as ever. During the year Marion Newell has taken over from Edward Harrison as **Membership Secretary**, which is quite a mammoth task. This has been made a bit easier through the introduction of the U3A's Beacon management system, but it has taken some coming to grips with for all of us involved with it. Marion also took on the role of **Speaker Organiser** from Ann Higgins at the beginning of the year, so has plenty on her plate. Vic Newell has also now just completed a year as **Treasurer**. Many thanks to them both.

The problem of overcrowding at some meetings does not go away and we are constantly trying to think of ways in which we can mitigate this. I am afraid it is a problem I am going to have to leave to my successor and the committee, but I hope the projected move to Gaywood Community Centre next year will go some way to easing the problem. I know some of you have seen how much improved that Centre is already, partly thanks to the efforts of a few of our members, particularly Denise Mansell. (And thank you to everyone who came to the Burns' Night *ceilidh* there in January - besides being an enjoyable evening, it raised over £1000!) And, as always, thanks must go to our faithful "door ladies", Pam Rowe and her team, who turn up early at every meeting and make sure everyone pays their entry money.

*Penny Dossetor*

### **Treasurer's Report** **Report on 2018 Income and Expenditure Accounts**



The 2018 accounts have been signed off by the U3A member verifiers: Barry Keenan, Doris Watson and Ron Graham. The U3A has had a positive year financially with both accounts ending in surplus after taking account of 2 inter year adjustments for an outstanding Gift Aid claim and prepayments on a 2019 trip. The overall carried forward balance is £8,229.08, an increase of approximately £650 over the previous year largely due to the increase in membership numbers (now approximately 420).

**Travel Account:** The annual surplus on the Travel Account was £105.60 as all trips made a small surplus apart from the lost deposit on Deane Park. When added to the previous accumulated surplus this equals a carried forward balance of £837.56 which helps to cover the cost of advance booking necessary for trips.

**Main Account :** The annual surplus on the Main Account after including an outstanding receipt for a Gift Aid claim is £546.09. When added to the previous accumulated surplus this equals a carried forward balance of 5384.42. The main expenditure items were the hire of the Duke's Head Hotel and providing refreshments for the monthly meetings and various fees due to the U3A main office

The main income items were receipts for Membership fees and attendance at monthly meetings

**CIOF Charity Saving Account:** The balance on our CIOF Saving Account remains unchanged at £2000, this represents an amount set aside for unforeseen events.

*Vic Newell*

### **HAVE A GO - Reflections of a Recent Member of the U3A Committee**

When I was asked to stand for the U3A Committee in February 2016, I felt that I had the time and experience from my working life to give to the U3A. I was invited to attend the January 2016 Committee Meeting and was interested to find that I already knew a few of the members from U3A Groups I belonged to.

I was duly elected and took my place a month later. I was soon asked by the Chairman to take on the role of Press and Publicity Officer. I felt that this job sounded interesting and, with help, was not beyond me. I have enjoyed my links with the local press and with the U3A magazine *Third Age Matters*, sending the latter newsworthy items and photographs to put King's Lynn U3A on the map.

Gradually, at the first few Committee Meetings, I began to feel that I could contribute to discussions and got to know the strengths of the committee. Now after three years, I can sum up my experience in the hope that other U3A members will be inclined to take up the challenge and offer their help to the Committee. If I could do it, you certainly can!

I was amazed at the amount of work the executive members of the committee have been involved in. Developments have been communicated in a variety of ways and this is where our bi-monthly meetings have played their part.

We have dealt with matters highlighted by U3A Headquarters, usually internal matters affecting any U3A, but also those that mean all U3As having to meet national norms. The need to work with other local U3As has seen the birth of The Wash and Fenland Forum.

However the main thread of our work has been the continued development of King's Lynn U3A. Finding premises for our monthly meetings large enough to hold our growing numbers (from just over 200 in 2016 to 400 in 2019) has been a constant item on our agenda. Streamlining administration, e.g. membership applications, is under review all the time. The need for all committee members to share the workload has been an interesting and worthwhile development. I could go on!!!

In conclusion, it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with such a hard-working committee. I have learnt so much about U3A in general too. I resigned because I thought it was the right time to do so and make way for younger U3A members with new ideas to contribute.

Please consider if you would like to get involved. Come on. Have a go. You will enjoy it.

*Ann Smith*

## Meeting Reviews

### October: "Thursford" by John Cushing

We enjoyed a lively and entertaining talk given by John Cushing of Thursford fame at their October monthly meeting.

Mr Cushing spoke about his father's humble beginnings in the small Norfolk village of Thursford, a few miles from Fakenham and Wells. He described rural life at the turn of the last century and the beginning of his father's love for steam engines of the type that were used in road making throughout the country. He bought his first steam engine when he was only 17 and thus began the long history of his use, purchase and preservation of steam engines of all types.



From small beginnings in a field at Thursford (which I recall visiting with my young family in about 1970) for which at first there was no charge to the complex, to the colourful and unique entertainment that Thursford has become today, Mr Cushing traced his own involvement for the last 42 years.

The word Thursford needs no explanation to the people of Norfolk nor throughout the UK. It usually means the approach to Christmas, a coach ride through Norfolk country lanes, a large marquee for mince pies and mulled wine, or a cup of tea, before the show. There is a chance to see Santa's World, buy a Christmas souvenir before settling into your seats in a building holding 1400 people when the curtain goes up for music, glamour, humour and a feeling that Christmas is not far away.

From the first 'Thursford Christmas Spectacular' when choristers from King's College, Cambridge, entertained in a small building, Mr Cushing described all the detailed planning necessary to prepare for next year's show: the ideas, London auditions, choice of entertainers, costumes, music, orchestra, scenery down to accommodation for the entertainers and the help in the laundry to ensure all costumes remain as colourful and attractive on the final performance as on the first. The whole year is taken up with preparations, rehearsals and performances.

*Ann Smith*

**November: "Portrait of an English Merchant City 1680-1780"  
by Dr. Paul Richards**



Paul informed us that the generic "town" grew in its modern form in the 18th century, when England and Wales had a population of 6 million, compared to 26m in France and 80m in Germany. King's Lynn was a hugely important port trading with Europe, having had links with the Hanseatic League. The League had been run in practice as a huge family mafia, with sons and cousins of merchants being sent to the various trading ports as quality control, often staying abroad for twenty years or more. Internationally the wealthy merchants rose in

importance compared to the aristocracy.

The River Great Ouse, rising near Oxford, carried goods through Bedford and Cambridge and onto King's Lynn, which eventually overtook Cambridge in importance with its ability to accept bigger ships. The investment in large cranes and numerous public quays, as well as in the various buildings and public spaces, all enhanced the image of the town and helped to 'market' it for trade.

The addition of the Assembly Rooms, and local moneyed merchants having their own private salons, made this a place where the great and the good sought wives amongst the merchant class. These various venues offered dances, soirees, concerts, where eligible daughters of wealthy local families were presented to prospective bridegrooms.

Coal was a very important commodity in this period, being shipped from the North East prior to the railways, and King's Lynn merchants preferred this trade to that of the West Indies as being far safer, with no pirates!

Investment in the port here continues to this day with the newest crane being bought in 2017 for £1.5m, and we can now accommodate 5000 tonne ships.

*Sheila Burney*

## December: Entertainment by our Groups.

After the usual information meeting and then a refreshment break with mince pies, King's Lynn U3A members settled down for a Christmas entertainment which show-cased some of the work of the arts and music U3A groups. In many cases members had learned their skills from scratch as members of their groups or had renewed skills not used for many years.

The programme began with a presentation from the **Scottish Country Dance Group**. The large audience was treated to a deft-footed and disciplined group of dancers who presented three Scottish dances. The pleasure of the dancers was obvious to all and the audience showed its appreciation with warm applause.



The second item on the programme was provided by a member of the **Humour Group**, Antoinette Knight, playing a lady with a broad Norfolk accent who said she came from a nearby village. Her dress took us back to a bygone age when an old mac tied at the waist with binder twine, black wellingtons and a shapeless, old, red felt hat could often be found in rural Norfolk. She proceeded to regale her audience with stories about some of the inhabitants in her village and the amusing experiences they had in their village or during a visit to Lynn. Her reminiscences were over far too soon for the audience which had laughed its way through her anecdotes.



The entertainment concluded with the **Madrigal Group** and the **Recorder Group** presenting together a short programme of Christmas music and carols. It came as a complete surprise towards the end of the programme to see all the performers don Christmas hats or reindeer antlers for a performance of 'Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer' and finally two jolly drinking songs. Once again, the performance was warmly received by the audience

## January: “From Sandringham to Chelsea” by Tamara Bridges

Based in Norfolk, Tamara Bridge’s much enjoyed and well-received illustrated talk covered her journey from gardening student to multi-award-winning independent garden designer. While still a trainee gardener at Sandringham, and as a student of the Historic Botanic Garden scheme, one of her projects was to design and implement a garden for the Royal Sandringham annual Flower Show in 2011. This she did with some advice from her mother, herself a diploma garden designer. Her winning project, selected from a number of applicants, was to be completed at zero cost. So all plants were grown from seed or cuttings, or begged and borrowed from around the estate, as were the bench and urns included in the design. The plants were grown in the Sandringham staff car park, which, as they grew, almost filled it. The garden plot was room-sized; Tamara and her 10-strong family-and-friends helpers had just 4 days to lay out, plant and finish the garden. This compares to the Chelsea Show gardens, which allow 3 to 4 weeks for completion. Her garden won *Best in Show* as well as *People’s Choice*. Tamara learned a lot about propagation, growth timescales, and watering/feeding, which she has carried forward and built on throughout her career.



The major flower show gardens, unlike her first project have generous budgets, with landscapers and plant sourcing paid for. At the end of her training she established herself as a self-employed garden designer. Her first flower show success spurred her on to compete regularly at Royal Sandringham shows. At Tatton Park flower show in 2015, with her *Sunset Garden*, she won *Young Designer of the Year*, *Gold* and *Best in Show*. It was here she met and formed a working partnership with Kate Savill. Together they entered the 2017 Chelsea Flower Show with their design for the *Jo Whiley Scent Garden*, part of the Radio 2 group of five *Gardens for the Senses*. Again, at Chelsea in 2018 they were invited to design an artisan garden for the Warner Edwards gin distillery. The planting was inspired by gardens and hedgerows, showcasing many of the natural flavours used in the creation of Warner Edwards’ hand-made artisan gins. They included bee-friendly plants, a bee bole set into old stone walling to reflect the distillery farm’s apiary, and two copper seats designed to represent the Warner Edwards’ stills, *Curiosity* and *Satisfaction*, offering the perfect place to sit and enjoy a G+T after a long day. This delightful garden won the prestigious Silver Medal. Tamara is currently working on her commissioned design for the 2019 Chelsea Flower Show.

*Sheila Burney*

## February: Play Reading “A Day at the Seaside”

Following our AGM, the Play Reading and Theatre Appreciation group gave us their spirited rendition of *A Day at the Seaside* by Agatha Christie.

Performing this in the setting of a radio play, with no costumes and only the addition of hats and scripts, this group gave us a highly entertaining reading of this whimsically funny one-act play set in a 1960s British resort. Several people, including three family groups, are interacting on the beach, sitting on deckchairs by a row of beach huts. An emerald necklace has been stolen elsewhere in the town the previous evening and the burglary is being investigated by the police inspector. Meanwhile Noreen, the much younger wife of Arthur Summers, and a young man, Bob Wheeler, flirt and frolic in and out of the sea in their bathing costumes, while her older husband sits grumpily by. Percy, the henpecked and downtrodden son of manipulative and crotchety Mrs Gunner, watches on wistfully, while Mr and Mrs Crum bicker nearby. Enter a saucy lass in a teeny bikini, (remember – no costumes, so this was left to the imagination) who flirts with the two young men while the police inspector searches the beach huts. After a mix up of trousers, pockets and accents, with the saucy lass being revealed as an undercover policewoman, the stolen emerald necklace, and its thief, are eventually revealed. The reading was interspersed with audience laughter, and at the end, was greeted with huge applause.

*Sheila Burney*

### **March: “Sandringham Secrets & Society Scandals” by Susan Barnett**

Susan, a freelance broadcaster, author and house steward at Sandringham, has a wealth of information on the House, which she shared with us in her gossipy guided tour of the six rooms (of a total of 250) which are open to the public. Briefly we learned that Queen Victoria and Prince Albert bought Sandringham for their son Prince Victor Albert, later King Edward VII (nicknamed ‘Edward the Caresser’ because of his 60-plus mistresses) in an attempt to draw him away from the theatres, gaming houses and ladies of London, although he later demolished and rebuilt it as it is today as the original



was too small for his social needs! To pick out a few of the many descriptions and snippets on our verbal tour: we looked at the statue outside the main entrance of “Estimate”, the 2013 Ascot Gold Cup winner owned by the Queen. In the entrance hall are the jockeys’ weighing scales on which Bertie, then Prince of Wales, was accustomed to weighing his guests ‘in and out’ to see how much weight they had gained as a result of his hospitality. A portrait of Queen Victoria shows her wearing the pearl and sapphire choker we remember being also worn by the Queen Mother and Diana, Princess of Wales; similarly the portrait dress was copied several times by fashion designer Norman Hartnell for the Queen Mother. A painting of Princess Alexandra shows her silver taffeta dress with large sleeves which Diana mirrored in her own wedding dress. The Dining-room table extends to seat as many as 29 adults; the main drawing room is used by the extended Royal

family for their gatherings, and the library is in what was once Edward VII's bowling alley; today the ballroom is easily converted into a cinema.

The talk concluded with opposing spectrum points: George V made his first radio broadcast from his study here in 1932, while at another time in the 1930s Prince Edward's house guest Lady Idina Sackville introduced her game of Trivial Pursuits, a bedroom-partner swapping exercise, with quite scandalous results! Laughter and loud applause ended this highly entertaining talk.

*Sheila Burney*

### **April: "The Wonderful World of Great Ormond Street" by Marilyn Horner**

The speaker, in her role as Voluntary Community Ambassador for Great Ormond St Children's Hospital (GOSH), gave an inspiring illustrated talk on the history, development and future plans of this world-leading hospital for sick children. It was founded in 1852 by Dr Charles West and opened in a town house in Gt Ormond St with 10 beds, at a time in London's history when 1 in 3 coffins were being made for children. People were afraid that the sick were the source of infections and there was little uptake until Charles Dickens promoted the hospital's



work in his weekly column and public support soared thereafter. Queen Victoria made a cash donation, which inspired the public to follow her lead. Today the NHS provides the basic running costs but the major research and ongoing developments are funded solely by charitable giving. In 1961 the fatalities from acute myeloid leukaemia were almost total, but the research work carried out at GOSH has made this dreadful disease 90% curable. GOSH surgeons performed the first bone marrow transplant there in 1980 and to date 1500 have been carried out; 1988 saw the first heart transplant and to date there have been over 500. Most recently, GOSH surgeons carried out corrective surgery on an infant *in utero* with spina bifida. Today the hospital specialises in 63 paediatric fields, with 300,000 annual appointments, admissions and re-admissions of children from birth to 18 yrs. Today GOSH has 436 beds, 36 wards, 4500 staff, and a free of charge hotel across the road for families whose children await discharge. New wards and more space are needed as are new isolating facilities and a new surgery centre. GOSH is a world-leader in the research into rare childhood diseases, covering some 7000, the Hospital sees more rare disease children than any other. Staff engage in reading and singing to children and play is a major feature of their natural childhood development and ongoing care. The spiritual team offer a multi-and-no-faith support and listening ears to everyone including all the staff. This truly inspiring talk was listened to in complete rapt silence and was greeted with huge applause.

*Sheila Burney*

## Special Interest Groups Updates

### In Great Taste

At a recent meeting of our group the special ingredient chosen to cook with was Cinnamon. Here are two of the recipes which our members came up with-

#### **Roasted Cinnamon Almonds.**

1/2 cup Soft Brown Sugar.  
 1/2 cup Granulated Sugar.  
 1 tablespoon Cinnamon.  
 1tsp Salt.  
 1 Egg White.  
 1tsp Vanilla.  
 3 cups Almonds.

Preheat oven to 130c or gas 1/2

Line baking sheet with baking parchment

In a large bowl mix Sugars with Cinnamon and Salt. Whisk Egg White and Vanilla until frothy. Add Almonds to Egg White and mix until coated.

Then put Almonds into Sugar mixture and toss until well coated. Pour Nuts onto baking sheet and spread evenly. Bake for one hour stirring every 15 minutes. Cool completely on the tray then store in an airtight container.

#### **Cinnamon, Sweet Potato and Carrot Soup**

300g Sweet Potato, chopped.  
 300g Carrots, chopped.  
 1 pint of Water.  
 1 small Onion, chopped.  
 150ml Coconut Oil.  
 1 tsp Cinnamon.  
 ¼ tsp each of Ground Cloves, Nutmeg and Allspice



1. Steam Sweet Potato and Carrots
2. Cook Onion with water to cover in a Microwave Oven for 6 minutes
3. Combine in a Blender with the water
4. Add Coconut Oil and Spices, blending until well mixed
5. Reheat or serve cold.

*Denise Mole*

## Local History Group

As most members are already aware, Anne and Keith Lemmon have recently decided to pass on the reins of the Local History Group to a new leader, Norma Chaplin, who has already organised a trip to visit Langham Glass. For May, she has arranged the following -

**Four Churches:** A guided walk by Sally Turff, a King's Lynn Town Guide, on Wednesday May 15<sup>th</sup>. Meet by the St James' Street entrance to the Tower Gardens at **1:45pm**. (This is slightly earlier than usual due to there being a service at our first port of call at 2:30). Walk includes the Methodist Church, St John's, the Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation in London Road, and finishing at All Saints' where Refreshments will be available.

To mark Anne & Keith's 'retirement' a surprise party was arranged by members of the group, and the Lemmon's provided us with this response -

*'A wonderful surprise'*

*I am writing this to thank everyone from the Local History Group for our wonderful surprise tea party at Dobbies on Wednesday 23rd and for the beautiful flowers and gift vouchers.*

*Special thanks must go to Judith and Edward Harrison and their helpers who hatched the cunning plan! We really had no idea until I saw everyone sitting in Dobbies!*

*I didn't realise how much of a problem I caused when I wasn't able to go on the week before.*

*Sorry everyone!*

*We've really enjoyed organising the Local History meetings over the past 6 years, and hope that everyone liked them.*

*We hope that Norma gets as much pleasure running the group as we did, and hope to continue going to the meetings.*

*Anne and Keith Lemmon*

## Memory Matters Group

Our Memory Matters group is one of only two such groups within the national U3A network. It is unique in that it works together with the local library service and a number of local care homes and day centres in Kings Lynn and surrounding area. The project aim is to promote and develop reminiscence work.

In essence, Memory Matters members order and collect reminiscence material from Norfolk libraries and deliver it to Activities' Co-ordinators and Care Staff in the various homes, etc. They borrow the material which is used

## Photo (and Food) Gallery



**Above: The History Group** about to enjoy Afternoon Tea at Dobbies, to celebrate Anne & Keith Lemmon's 'Retirement' as group leaders.

**Below: The Spanish Improvers Group** prepare to partake of Tapas.





**Above: The Play Reading Group**, also about to enjoy Afternoon Tea at Knights' Hill Hotel.

**Right: The Friday Lunch Group** at their Christmas meeting in Andel Lodge.

**Below: The Play Reading Group** again, this time in performance at this years AGM.



to trigger memories and promote discussion, thereby enhancing residents' conversations, social interactions and quality of life. The materials reflect all aspects of life from wartime activity to employment, domestic and leisure activity. After a specified length of time a "Kit" is collected by a Memory Matters' member and is replaced with another on a different theme.

The members of this enthusiastic U3A group enjoy a lively, welcoming, productive interactive working relationship with the Activities' Co-ordinators and their Managers.

The project has been very well received; as a result, the Memory Matters Group has convened two Seminars, still on the theme of developing reminiscence work in our community.

At the Seminars all participants, including a few residents from the various care homes, can meet together in a relaxed atmosphere to share ideas for ways forward. At the first Seminar the Activities' Co-ordinators had the chance, perhaps for the first time, to meet each other and share ideas, problems and hopes for the future. These key staff now have a functioning social and shared experience network amongst themselves as well as with the Memory Matters members. The latest Seminar, again under the group leadership of Pat Jones, was building on the success of the previous one, both of which had been hosted by care homes within this shared learning project. Pat had brought along a number of 'memory trigger' materials kindly provided by the Alzheimer's Society, some of which were new to the Activities' Co-ordinators, and which the library service is now keen to add to its stock of items for public use.

Out of this happy and lively session came lots of new ideas as well as interactions with regional care home managerial staff, who offered valuable advice and assistance in Activities' Co-ordinators' training, and included the use of social media. We introduced 'Virtual U3A', a relatively new on-line project within the U3A which provides inclusion for those members unable to travel to group venues and is available to the clientele we now look to include. All of this is an exciting widening of the existing network and we look forward to expanding on these successes in future Seminars, and also to widening the numbers of care homes participating in the future of this innovative scheme. It would be hard to over-stress the enjoyment and social benefits enjoyed by all of the participants within the Memory Matters and care homes network. This shared learning three-point project is a hugely valuable resource for those unable to live independently, as well as for those living with dementia, and is also often enjoyed by family members and visitors alike, and we would love to see this spread to other U3As throughout the country.

*Sheila Burney*

## Outings Group: Trip To Bletchley Park

20 March 2019

It was an early start for those choosing to join us on the trip to Bletchley Park near Milton Keynes on a bright, if chilly, Wednesday morning.

A short stop just beyond Peterborough for morning coffee still meant we got to Bletchley earlier than we had anticipated; however the staff there didn't seem at all fazed, and in short order we were given entrance tickets and ushered through the doors.

I chose to go on one of the conducted tours rather than the audio version and the guide proved to be a mine of information and anecdotes about the place. At the centre of the estate was the splendid nineteenth-century house built by the English financier and politician, Sir Herbert Samuel Leon, and inside the rooms we were introduced to some of the people involved in working there. The thick layers of secrecy demanded by their work put an extra level of strain on them, as even their families could not know what their relative was doing to help the war effort.

Inside the buildings there were various displays, including an Enigma machine and an impression of Turing's Bombe that helped to decipher the code. There was also a tribute to the Polish decoders that had preceded the Bletchley workers in developing the Bombe.



An Enigma machine

A view of the Bombe model

All in all a very pleasant and informative day enjoyed, I hope, by all.

*Niki Jenkins*

“Sometimes it is the people who no one imagines anything of  
who do the things that no one can imagine.”

— *Alan Turing*

## Quiz Group

At a recent meeting of the Quiz Group the members puzzled over a set of anagrams devised by group leader Stella Mills. Appropriately, they are all of King's Lynn U3A Group names. The top score achieved was 19 out of 20 - see if you can work them all out!

- |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. QUEEN PAT (8)                 | 11. DARING MACK (4,6)             |
| 2. YE LONG AGE (9)               | 12. RAP PEAR CITATION (3,12)      |
| 3. ALL CHOIR TOYS (5,7)          | 13. RED SCORER (9)                |
| 4. LP PLAYER FINED (5,8)         | 14. NORTH FINANCE COVERS (6,12)   |
| 5. COUSINS REX (10)              | 15. LEAVE MEN SING (7,5)          |
| 6. MOB AND TIN (9)               | 16. ALWAYS OLD MIRE (5,8)         |
| 7. GRAND MISS GAIL (4,9)         | 17. SEATING TREAT (2,5,5)         |
| 8. BET TEN NAILS (5,6)           | 18. WINE LAGER GUNK (3,3,7)       |
| 9. TRY WE CANT NURSE DON (7,3,7) | 19. SID COUSINS (10)              |
| 10. FEAR NOT NO EAT (9,3)        | 20. GROUP IN TRIFLE SWEAR (7,3,8) |

*(Answers on Page 25)*

## Walking Group

It has now been just over a year since 14 intrepid souls set out on our first walk around the Leziate and Ashwicken area. Although that number has not quite been equalled since (we did have 12 walkers recently) the group now regularly attracts six or eight members.

We have managed to average a couple of walks each month, though during the hot spell of last summer we decided to forego meeting as a health and safety precaution. The group leaders also let our members have a few weeks off during the Christmas period, but rest assured they have been cracking the whip since the beginning of the year!

Most of our walks have taken place within a ten-mile radius of King's Lynn, but the group has also ventured into North Norfolk and Breckland. With routes ranging from 4 up to 8 miles in length we have been able to enjoy historic sites such as the restored Bone Mill at Narborough as well as ruined Churches at Babingley and West Raynham. The Raynhams walk also had the group walking through carpets of Snowdrops on a



February day which felt more like May in temperature. Other floral highlights were the Bluebells of Bulfer Grove, and strolling through the colourful Rhododendrons in Sheringham Park.

During the year we have enjoyed paddling in the sea at Holkham Beach, been blown along the ancient trackway of Peddar's Way, negotiated footpaths blocked by fallen trees, foraged for Chestnuts and Walnuts along the way and even managed one pub lunch - something which we will definitely have to improve on. Our members have also discovered for themselves that contrary to Noel Coward's assertion Norfolk is certainly NOT flat!

New members are always welcome, and you can find full details of our walks on the King's Lynn U3A website as well as photographs taken on our previous outings. Why not join us for some fresh air and good company?

*Marilyn & Neil Prew*

## **Remembering the 1953 Floods**

In July 2017, the BBC contacted our U3A with this request.

*"We are hoping to film an item about the 1953 floods in Norfolk, about the terrible loss of life and the damage caused to the towns and countryside in the area including Kings Lynn, Snettisham and Hunstanton. We are keen to speak with people who remember the floods and who might be willing to share their memories with us of this awful tragedy. We are also particularly keen to speak with people who might remember the actions of the Queen at that time."*

Two of our members were selected to be interviewed, Terry Greenacre and Margaret Neal. [Evie Scott, another interviewee, has since become a member.] On the 10th June 2018, *Countryfile Royal Special - Sandringham* was broadcast. Each had about a 15-second spot describing their experiences of the flood. Terry felt that so much had been left out of his interview that he would like share his memories.

"I was born on June 28th 1932, at 24 Winfarthing Avenue, South Lynn. Our house faced some allotments and a playing field which was very near the banks of the River Ouse. My father, brother and I regularly walked along the river bank collecting driftwood which we then cut, made into bundles and sold as kindling during the winter.

"In 1948 we had some very high tides. The river came over the wall near the mouth of the River Nar but that didn't trouble us, as it did not reach near us. The next year in 1949, the water came up to our back gate but no further. In 1950 it came back over the bank but did not reach any parts of South Lynn.

"On Friday 30th January 1953, the evening tide reached 29 foot but did not breach the banks. The next day, Saturday, the evening tide had reached well over 30 foot and breached the banks of the river. I was at home alone with my

mother at Winfarthing Avenue, my father having died in 1950. I knew it was going to be a big tide as the wind was blowing very strong from the North East and had been blowing all day. I could smell the drains which were all connected to the River Nar system and in turn to the main River Ouse. About 5 o'clock in the evening, I knew the tide was coming up high. I went outside twice to see if I could see anything but it was pitch black and all I could smell were the drains. The third time as I opened the backdoor, a tidal wave of water hit me and knocked me over. The lights went out and I just had time to grab hold of my mother and managed to open the middle door and get to the hall. I had a job getting the door open as the carpet jammed under the bottom. We managed to get to the stairs with the water up to our chins. We only just made it. The water was nearly 6 feet deep at the front of the stairs by the time we got to the landing. Looking out of the bedroom window, I could hear pigs squealing as they were swept along the street. Later when it became light, I could see sheds and rubbish that had been carried along by the water and there was a large dead pig stuck in a tree at the end of the street.

“The water went down almost as quickly as it came up. Mr Doughty, who had a bus business and lived in our street, came round while it was still dark, picking up people and taking them to safety. We were taken and dropped off at the Gaywood clock which was a short walk from Gaywood Park School, where my uncle was the caretaker. Walking along the pavement, roof tiles had been blown off houses and rubbish was all over the pavement where we had to walk; it was very frightening. We made it to Gaywood school safely.



“We went home the next day to see what damage was done. We decided to stay at home and clear up the mess. All carpets and mats had to be thrown away as there was mud and rubbish inches thick throughout the house.

“The first time I went out, after we got home, and had cleared as much of the mess as we could, I walked to the shop for some milk and food. On the way home, I was near our house when I saw an ambulance. I saw the ambulance people carry out the bodies of my friends Mr and Mrs Lloyd and take them away. There were several people in our Avenue who were also drowned.”

15 people in King's Lynn died in these floods, 84 in total along the West Norfolk coast and 300 along the East Coast of England.

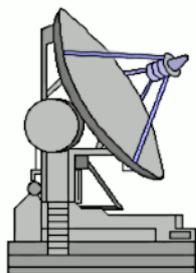
The economic impact of the storm surge was enormous. Many thousands of homes that were flooded could not be repaired, so they had to be demolished, meaning tens of thousands of survivors of the flood were displaced. Many herds of cattle and other livestock drowned; huge areas of low-lying arable land flooded and became unsuitable for crop-growing for many years afterwards due to contamination by the sea water.

The British Conservative government of the time, headed by Prime Minister Anthony Eden, instigated the rebuilding of sea defences where they had existed and instructed the building of new flood protection. The Met Office established the 'Storm Tide Forecasting Service' which provided details of tidal surges and forecasts of wave activity over the next 24-hour period.

*Edward Harrison/Terry Greenacre*

### **Visit to the Royal Institution October 15th 2018**

Each year the main U3A combines with the Royal Institution to produce two afternoons of science-based talks given by renowned figures from the scientific world. These are usually fascinating and the one in October was no exception.



First, Stuart Eves, a space satellite engineer, explained the various missions within the solar system which have taken place. He pointed out that progress in exploration has been made possible by great strides in technology. He started with Mercury and showed its very old and cratered surface. He then went through the planets, but also included Ceres, a minor planet in the asteroid belt, with its very large ice mountain which could be used as fuel for rockets. He ended with the *New Horizon* flyby of Pluto, which during the planning stages had been downgraded to a minor planet, which nearly caused the US to back out because they were so angry. In the end a local law was passed where it is an offence to downgrade Pluto. He suggested that, as Mars is smaller than the Earth, it will have cooled faster. Life may have started there and seeded the earth through meteorites as they have found unequivocal evidence of water and possibly bacterial life there.

Next, Professor Tim Specter of Kings College London spoke about the flora of the gut. He feels that the trillions of unicellular organisms in the gut make it another organ, as so much good work is done by them. It has been found that their diversity is essential to our health. Healthy people have a greater diversity than others. This can be a factor in depression, autism, cancer and much else. What he calls the biome sends chemicals to the brain which affects everything from hormone production to mood. Eating in MacDonald's for ten days caused a serious drop in the gut flora, reducing it by 40%. We should drink fermented milk as in Kefir as well as full-fat live yogurts. Much of the food we eat is of no direct benefit to us but feeds the bacteria. Fibre is the prime example, previously felt to be a bulking agent but it turns out to be vital for the health of our gut bacteria. He suggests that in the future we will all

have personalised eating plans all based on the “Mediterranean diet” (lots of varied vegetables) as each person responds to foods differently. I suppose this is why some slimming regimes suit some people and not others. He has written a book called “The Diet Myth” which is probably well worth reading.

After the tea break we had Professor Alison Woollard of Oxford, a geneticist, who had given the 2013 Christmas lectures on “Life Fantastic”. She explained that by using model organisms, in her case the nematode worm, a great deal can be transposed to humans in understanding such diverse things as behaviour and cancer. She works on cell changes from fertilisation to fully-formed embryo and maintains that we are all mutants in one way or another. She is now working on the effects of cell division and formation in ageing.

Altogether it was an excellent afternoon. Despite being an expensive day out with trains, taxis and the cost of the session, it was worth it.

Janet Burns

## Still Moving Well?

Young children flow and sparkle; but a familiar road sign has the elderly bent with age, creeping slowly. Mostly we can do better.

We know that a variety of activity is good for us. As older people, perhaps as grandparents, we see teenagers, hunched over screens, missing out on real life and relationships, heading away from our evolved nature and perhaps towards problems such as myopia and obesity. Our school days often had, added to gym and games, creative movement inspired by Rudolf Laban, a pioneer of modern dance theatre. This encouraged expression and sharing, a preparation for personal life that today’s exam targets neglect.

Movement that is efficient and pleasing brings benefits to health and socially, our bodies function comfortably, we feel and look better. Words are a poor vehicle to portray a creative movement session: let’s begin with body basics.

For posture

- ❖ Stand feet slightly apart, feel weight shifts and sense balance; symmetrical, let the spine extend upwards from its base, head erect.
- ❖ Lie on your back on carpet, facing up, straight from feet to head, knees perhaps pulled up a little; let raised arms open out to extend sideways, then brush around from your sides to beyond the head; readjust to lie comfortably and roll a little side to side.
- ❖ When walking (a mental tune may help rhythm) have a sense of lift and looking alertly about.
- ❖ Sit with poise, and interrupt with movement if prolonged.
- ❖ When lifting weights, prefer bending legs to an awkward back posture.

The simplest of breathing exercises is to fully expel air and then allow an easy in-breath. The simplest of cardio-vascular exercises is one minute of

energetic movement (from stepping on the spot to star jumps) that leaves you slightly puffed. Many everyday activities are better than machine workouts.

From Laban analysis can come 'movement prescription', perhaps a designed sequence or an activity (our U3A provides many) to balance life. Imagine someone whose work is heavy and ponderous choosing badminton; a solitary person enjoying line or circle dance; a computer user who swims. Traditional movement and dance forms have characteristic shaping and dynamics – yoga, tai-chi, jive, tango.

Creative dance invites versatility, expression and impression (action influences self). Laban's four pillars are body function (physical organisation); relationship with others; shaping (placement and pattern in space), and dynamics (qualities of effort varying speed, strength and flow). Movement is never mechanical, there is some degree of meaning ('reaching towards, closing up, dashing, leading, calming...'). Often individual invention is incorporated in dance and something of art emerges from a group whole. Solo exploration can begin by observing the movement quirks of others, or by yourself speaking, as if to many, words you think significant and noticing your accompanying movement: then developing it.



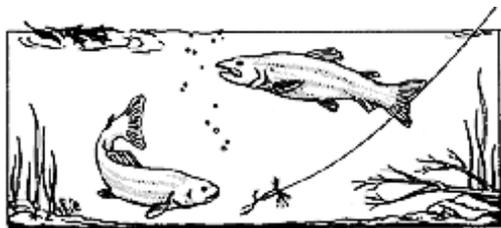
Even with our restrictions and handicaps we can enjoy actions nicely done. Too many human lives narrow down as body and mind forget charm and curiosity. Movement with the process of spontaneity, awareness, invention and performance, is an accessible way toward vitality.

(My thanks to a local group who tried out this text in a practical session)

*Edwin Salter*

## Tales From The River Bank

I have continued to survey the River Gaywood in my capacity as a volunteer River Guardian. The hot weather last summer and the problems caused by dredging and bank cutting have been an issue, particularly after the heavy rain



in August. The river level rose in the lower part at Gaywood Stone Bridge, which in turn led to a panic by the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) resulting in dredging of the water plants and stress on thousands of fish fry. By disturbing the black silt they lowered the oxygen in the water leading to the fish gasping for air at the surface, made

worse by the hot weather. I also found a raised nitrite level, in spite of dilution by rain water, which could have been toxic to wildlife. There was also a raised level of nitrite up as far as Bawsey ruins.

Earlier in May and June the river was murky for 2/3rds of its length, with an accompanying scum floating on the surface, all the way down into the Walks

in town. The scum contained live nematodes which can be parasites from livestock. I subsequently discovered two sources of this pollution and reported my findings to the Environment Agency (EA). As a result the Recycling Plant at Bawsey and a local farmer are being investigated. The ambitious plan for restoration and improvement by Laura Quinlan received the funding and "The Hidden River Heritage" project is now run by Sam Garrod from the Council, the EA, Norfolk Rivers Trust (NRT) and Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

In spite of the sighting of two mink last year, we have a healthy population of water voles at three sites. Otter prints have been found at Church Farm. The NRT and NWT have laid coir matting on the banks near Lynnsport impregnated with wildflower seeds adapted to chalk habitats. Suspended solids from bank cutting and dredging (bed levelling) remain a problem, especially for the trout.

If you would like to see more details of my surveys you can read them on my regular newsletter on the [gaywoodconservation2019.btck.co.uk](http://gaywoodconservation2019.btck.co.uk) site under "Tales from the river bank". There is also a drone film on YouTube. Look up River Gaywood. The overhead film covers the river from the Gaywood Bridge up to the source at Well Farm, Gayton. I also now have access to the other main spring source at Grimston Church in the old School House.

*Alistair Milner*

### **Bridge - with Mark Keightley**

Bridge is a fascinating game and players become completely absorbed to such a degree that nothing else going on is of any interest. Eric Logan wrote a letter to the Bridge Magazine about an incident that happened to him during the war.

Four of us were enjoying a game of bridge in a candlelit hut, from which no streak of light was allowed to escape. We heard an enemy airplane approach, we could easily distinguish the sound of a Fokker engine, but we could not interrupt our rubber for little things like that sort.

We should never have finished it. Besides, Jerry, we knew, could not see us. As dealer, I called "One no trump!" The opponent on my left made it "Two diamonds."

At that moment there was a most appalling crash, all the lights were blown out and the hut rocked. We hurled ourselves to the ground to miss the flying splinters. Breathlessly, we waited for another bomb to fall, but out of the silence and darkness came the matter-of-fact voice of my partner: "Two no-trump"



A similar event occurred on the QE2 when there was a bomb scare, all the passengers enjoyed the spectacle of the bomb squad being air dropped except for the Bridge players who continued with their game,

### The Finesse:

West x x x

A Q x East

Most bridge players with the above situation will play a small card from West and play the Q hoping the K is in North's hand and half the time their luck will hold out and half the time it will not as the K will be in South's hand. In actual fact you can increase your chances of two tricks slightly. Play a small card from West and go straight up with the Ace, return to the West hand with another suit and play another small card to the East hand if the K is played N you can win the Q later. If the Q is in South's hand nothing is lost the Q was never going to make. Playing the suit this way safeguards losing to a singleton K in South's hand a very annoying situation that often arises.

One very common mistake is this finessing situation

West Q x x

A x x East

All too often do you see a novice play the Q hoping the K is in North's hand and then play a small card from dummy. If they are playing an experienced pair and the K is in North's hand, they will play it on the Q thus forcing out the A resulting in only one trick for E/W regardless. The best way to play this suit is to play a small card from East and take the trick with the A, then play a small card from East hoping that the K is in South's hand and if they then play the King then the Q is good.

Always remember though that if you plan the play carefully there may be a better way to play the hand other than having to resort to a finesse.

#### Those Anagrams Unscrambled -

- 1.PETANQUE 2.GENEALOGY. 3.LOCAL HISTORY. 4.APPLE FRIENDLY
- 5.EXCURSIONS. 6.BADMINTON 7.SING MADRIGALS. 8.TABLE TENNIS
- 9.COUNTRY AND WESTERN 10.AFTERNOON TEA 11.CARD MAKING
12. ART APPRECIATION 13.RECORDERS 14.FRENCH CONVERSATION
- 15.EVENING MEALS. 16.MODEL RAILWAYS. 17.IN GREAT TASTE.
- 18.NEW AGE KURLING. 19.DISCUSSION. 20.WRITING FOR PLEASURE



## The Dawn Chorus

5.30 a.m. I hear the dawn chorus  
 Those blasted birds – it does nothing for us.  
 I give in to the furore  
 Switch on Radio 4,  
 And who do I hear, but - Boris!

Bleary eyed, I stagger from slumber  
 Pull back curtains, knock over a tumbler.  
 What a start to the day,  
 Please get better, I pray,  
 Or at least, let nothing encumber.

The sun is now shining,  
 No real cause for whining,  
 Get out there and pick up a pail –  
 Fill it with flowers,  
 Thanks to April showers.  
 Oh, no, I've just stepped on a snail!

This day's a disaster  
 Can't it go any faster,  
 Just let me get back to bed  
 And feel no guilt  
 As I pull up the quilt  
 To completely cover my head.

I see verdant panoramas,  
 But prefer my pyjamas  
 A snooze is just what I need.  
 I can catch up tomorrow,  
 It's no great sorrow,  
 My conscience is fully appeased.

Let the birds sing their hearts out,  
 Boris to drown out,  
 Whilst I'm deep in blissful repose.  
 Tomorrow will dawn  
 (One snail less on the lawn)  
 And the new day will bring – who knows?

*Morag Bean*

## News From The South

We recently received an e-mail from Rosalind Greene, who of course was our Outings organiser from 2009 until last year as well as being a much missed member of our U3A -

*Well it's now been just over a year since I left King's Lynn for the sunny south and thought I'd just drop you a line to let you know how it's all going. It is very beautiful here, but nobody warned me when I was looking at my flat, that being right on the shore meant sometimes terrific winds and pounding seas which produce spray up to 20 feet high holding big pebbles from the beach which get thrown for yards along the roadway, making walking very hazardous. It can be very exciting to take the dog for a walk and as he is now 18 yrs old (about 92 in people years), he is often blown sideways and as his hips are a little dodgy he sometimes falls right over. I'm not much better and do get blown off course. However, apart from the wind, it is a lovely place to live and very close to some pretty villages and towns along the coast and up in the South Downs.*

*I have been on many trips with the local coach company and don't have to organise them! Also it is possible to get around on the regular bus which stops almost outside our little complex. There are no big grocery stores in Chichester, so I do my regular shopping on the outskirts of Chichester or in Bognor Regis or a sweet little town called Havant both of which have Morrisons and Wilkinsons.*

*The U3A group here is rather sedentary and I tried to get a Tennis Group together but so far have only one regular partner with two other ladies dropping in erratically. The only group I belong to is Mah-jong and we meet twice a month and though I still can't keep score, my game is getting better. I do miss the Scottish Country Dancing and think of you every Thursday and the very interesting monthly meetings as the group here is quite small and does things rather differently - I have dropped the occasional hint which falls on deaf ears, but so far I have kept to my resolution and have not got too involved. Keep doing what you are doing, I really do miss you.*

*Best Wishes - Rosalind Greene*

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**Above:** 2018 **Kurling** Champion Bob Stewart receives his trophy from group leader Ann Smith, and Anne Lemmon poses with her award for most promising player.



Members of the **Pétanque Groups** pose with their awards, following their Christmas Lunch at The Farmers Arms

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