

WREKIN REVIEW

OCTOBER 2023

“Making life-long learning a reality for all third-agers in the Wrekin locality”

The Wrekin U3A is an educational and recreational charity registered in accordance with the Charities Act 1993 (Charity No.1098219).

FROM THE CHAIR

The Wrekin Review is an opportunity for every member and group to tell the whole membership about their activities. Giving new members an insight into the opportunities available. Articles and photographs can be submitted to the editor Anne Tranter at any time. A copy of the Review is mounted on our web site and hard copies are available at monthly meetings.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue and to Anne Tranter our editor.

Dates for the diary

Deadline for articles:

January 31st, 2024, for publication in February 2024

May 31st, 2024, for publication in June 2024

September 30th, 2024, for publication in October 2024

Monthly Meetings

There have been three monthly meetings during the summer months since the last Review. A hilarious presentation by Kath Reynolds recalling all our school days entitled Gymslips and Chalk Boards! We roared with laughter remembering the antics of our younger selves. Stories of school milk that turned sour in the heat of summer and ice cold in winter and the pranks played on teachers by our members added to the entertainment! By contrast our own Peter West introduced us to great operatic drinking songs in September. The period ended with an open meeting in October. This was an opportunity for our groups to showcase their activity, attract new group members, refreshed with tea and cake.

I was excited to note that nine new members joined us at the October meeting.

Members and Group Leaders Questionnaire

A Members and Group Leaders Questionnaire was launched at the October meeting. This exciting development acknowledges that some of our existing groups are full and invites members to identify groups in which they have an interest. I appreciate that members unable to attend the October meeting could not complete the questionnaire, so it is included in this edition of the Review.

Other Activities

Denise organised a very successful trip to Norfolk. A report appears later in this Review.

“Come Dine with Me!” said Pam. On Saturday 28th October a new group was launched, hosted this time by Wendy. All the food was Italian, and the quiz questions required knowledge of Italy. Watch out for the next event, a gastronomic experience in a homely setting. All you need to do is purchase a ticket and arrive at the venue. Pam has organised a small group of u3a members who will find each venue, cook, lay tables, serve the food and organise the washing up!

Our u3a is vibrant and bursting with activity.

Tickets for the Annual Lunch in January are on sale and Denise is taking bookings for the trip to Scotland in February.

For details, please look at our web site; - <https://u3asites.org.uk/wrekin/events>

Thank you.

Thank you to all the committee members for their commitment and the entire membership for continuing to make our u3a a centre of learning laughing and living.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Mary Rogers

GET WELL CARDS

Wrekin u3a cares about its members. If a member is seriously unwell or has an operation, the committee feels that it is appropriate to send a Get Well or Thinking of You card to show that someone is thinking of them. This is particularly important for those who live alone. If you know of anyone who is ill and would appreciate a card, contact a committee member giving the reason, Sympathy and Thinking of You can also be sent.

4* Trains and Boats of Royal Norfolk – 8 to 11 October 2023

by

Rog Phillips

On a cool but sunny Sunday morning we boarded our Harry Shaw coach in which we would spend many comfortable hours over the next 4 days. With Denise in the front seat and Craig behind the wheel it was clear we were in capable hands and so it proved for the duration of the tour.

Our first stop, as we headed for Norfolk, was at St Edmundsbury Cathedral. For over 1,000 years, the site of Suffolk's Cathedral has been one of worship and



pilgrimage. The death of Edmund, King of the East Angles, at the hands of the Danes in 869 led to the building of an abbey to house his remains. St James's Church was built within the precincts of the Abbey, becoming a Cathedral in

1914. The Cathedral building has continued to develop over recent years with the addition of the Millennium Tower, completed in 2005, and its magnificent painted and gilded vault, added in 2010.

Following a highly informative tour of the Cathedral we had time to explore, and my first picture was taken from the famous cathedral gardens and shows not only the newly completed tower but also a small section of the ruins of the ancient abbey.

Onwards then to the Knights Hill Hotel near Kings Lynn which we quickly discovered was a friendly and very comfortable place to stay.

On Monday morning after a relaxed start and a good breakfast we headed off to visit Langham Glass at Fakenham. Our tour included a demonstration of glass blowing and my next pictures show John – the master glass blower – preparing and shaping a quantity of molten glass as he prepared to create a cute little fox. After



the fascinating demonstration the staff freely answered many of our questions. There was then, of course, ample time to purchase examples of their work from a beautifully presented showroom.

Then a short drive from Fakenham to Norwich where Paul, a Norwich City Guide, joined us on the coach. First, we had a guided driving tour around the city and then we disembarked and were treated to an excellent walking tour of the city centre. My next picture shows Paul leading a happy group through the colourful market.



After the tour we had ample free time for lunch and to explore Norwich as we pleased. It was a hot afternoon with the result that it was a tired group that eventually reassembled at the castle in late afternoon to catch the coach back to our hotel. As can be seen in my next photograph seating was at a premium as we waited for the coach.



Next day we were up bright and early to catch the steam train from Sheringham. On arrival in Sheringham there was just enough time for some of us to make a quick dash for the beach to see the sea. Back at the station we found our group had been allocated a whole carriage for the short journey to Holt. Seats, sounds, and smells all fondly remembered as illustrated in my next picture!



And then off to Horning for our trip on a Broads paddle boat – the Southern Comfort. During our relaxing cruise we saw not only some sumptuous riverside properties but also many examples of the local wildlife including Marsh Harriers,

Herons, Swans and Crested Grebes; also, for some, a very quick turquoise flash of a Kingfisher.

Finally, on our last morning before setting off back to Shropshire, we had a short drive to Sandringham as we all held our breath that the rain would hold off – it did. As we waited for our turn to enter the house another group photo opportunity occurred.



The house proved to be a fitting climax to our short break. It was, to me anyway, simply awe inspiring that we were walking through rooms and viewing furniture and fittings that in just a couple of weeks would be occupied by the King, Queen, and family as they enjoy their Christmas ‘at home’.

Then it rained and we began our long and very wet journey back to Shropshire – ample time to reflect on many enjoyable moments from our brief encounter with “4* Trains and Boats of Royal Norfolk”.

It was a delightful holiday due to great weather and company amongst the splendours of Norfolk.

Rog



Three of us went for a walk round the grounds and lakes at Sandringham and found it to be peaceful, full of colour and interest as the new vistas kept opening at every contour of the land.

Ann Holt

GROUP NEWS

COME DINE WITH ME

We held our inaugural 'Come Dine with Me' lunch.

The committee prepare, cook and serve a meal on the last Saturday in each month.

The lunches are themed and our first lunch was a trip around Italy with beautiful foods, great company and ending with a quiz about the country we visited.

Lots of fun and laughter and a chance to make new friends as this group is open to every member of Wrekin U3A on a first come basis for the 12 tickets available each month at £15 per person.



Our next food experience is Greek on Saturday 28th November in Wellington at 2pm. Tickets are available by emailing pam1.bourne@btinternet.com

Pam Bourne

BOWLING

Back in May 2023 Sheila Etherington arranged for a few intrepid Wrekin u3a members to join the Bowring Bowls Club in Wellington. Most of us had never played Crown Green Bowls but we were up to the challenge.

Every Tuesday and Sunday afternoon, we gathered for coaching provided by Brenda Carol and Charlie, all experienced club bowlers. They made the first 45 minutes of the session so much fun, and we all gradually realised just how difficult the game can be! Our knowledge and skills have gradually improved and consequently we have been able to play matches against each other. These culminated in a competition won by John Barry, a member of Wrekin u3a. Well done John! We also had time to socialise and get to know other members of the club during the tea / coffee break each afternoon.



Those of us who had the time and skill were encouraged to play in league games against other local clubs. A great opportunity to refine skills and get to know other bowlers.

Bowls is a good way to have gentle exercise whilst enjoying the company of likeminded people. The new season will start next April. If you are interested, then please contact Sue Bogue.

Susan Bogue

John Barry - u3a member is on the left being presented with his "trophy".

OPERA APPRECIATION GROUP

This is a new group, only going since April 2023. We meet in the Seniors' Hall on Curriers Lane in Shifnal on the third Friday of each month except December. Using operas streamed to local cinemas by the Royal Opera House as a basis for meetings, so that members can have some taste or information about these if they decide to see them. So far, we have looked at Donizetti's absurd comedy *The Elixir of Love* as well as Dvorak's fairy story *Rusalka*, not to mention great tragedies like Puccini's *Tosca* and Verdi's *La Traviata*. Goodies lined up for future meetings include *Madama Butterfly* and *Carmen* – two very powerful stories enhanced by fabulous music.

While some people have been to more operas than others and some know more than others, no snobbery of any sort is allowed. What we all have in common is just a delight in great stories brilliantly told with fantastic music.

If you are at all interested just turn up or contact Peter West (mail@dpwest.co.uk).

Peter West

MEMBERS QUESTIONNAIRE



Name Optional

Please send answers to Karen Appleby as soon as possible to
ksabunny21@gmail.com

1 Are there any groups you would like to join but have been unable to as they were full.

Yes / No

If so, can you let us know the name of the group / s?

2 Are there any groups / activities we do not offer that you would like to see
Yes / No

Please identify i.e.: reading

3 Are there any areas you feel we could expand / improve on?

Examples

4 What do we do well in Wrekin u3a?

What could be improved?

SPEAKERS FOR THE COMING MONTHS

28 November	Jack Dent	The History and mystery of magic
23 January 2024	Blood Bikes	The Shropshire / Staffordshire and Cheshire Blood Bikes
27 February 2024	Pen Turner	Travel with a penguin -to Antarctica
26 March 2024	AGM / Speaker Lyn Evans	Torn Paper Collage
23 April 2024	Will Farmer	Talk on Rene Lalique

WREKIN U3A GROUPS LIST

Group	When	Where	Leader
Art Appreciation 1	2nd Monday afternoon	The Old Police Station Shifnal	Bob Vincent
Art Appreciation 2	2nd Wednesday afternoon	Members house	David Tipper
Away Day Group	Various Dates	Various	Moira Curzon
Bowls	Various	Various	Tony Etherington
Bridge	Every Wednesday afternoon	Senior Citizens Room	Jeremy Rubin
Classical Guitar	2nd Thursday morning	Members house	Tony Etherington
Come Dine With Me	4th Saturday of Month	Various	Pam Bourne Wendy Freeman
Country Dancing	2nd Thursday afternoon	St Andrews Youth Club Shifnal	Anthea Frost Jenny Johnson
Cultural Visits	As arranged/published	Various	Denise Smith
Digital Photography 1	1st Thursday afternoon	Members house	Jan Phillips
Digital Photography 2	Last Monday afternoon	Members house	Jane Apling
Discussion	3rd Friday morning	Saxon Park Albrighton	John Boydell
Family History	4th Thursday morning 10:30	Wellington Library	Mary Rogers
French	3rd Tuesday afternoon	Members house	Denise Smith
German	1st Tuesday afternoon	Members house	John Davies
History	3rd Monday 2:00 pm every month except December	Wellington Library	Harry Pettit
Houses and Gardens	As arranged/published	Various	Eileen Dowell
Italian-Beginners	1st Thursday morning	Members house	Susan Luchetti
Italian2	2nd Wednesday afternoon	Members house	Susan Luchetti
Latin	1st Monday afternoon	Senior Citizens Room	Marilyn Higson
Latin 2	2nd Friday morning	Zoom	Janet Bradley
Lunch on the 15th	15th of each month	Various	Valerie Brown Sheila Purbrick
Members on their Own (MOTO)	No formal meeting members arrange events	To Be Arranged	Wendy Freeman
Not another book group	1st Monday morning	Members house	Moira Curzon Celia Vaughan
Opera Appreciation	3rd Friday each month	Senior Citizens Room	Peter West
Out and About	As arranged/published	Various	Angela Barnsley Linda Tipper
Prose and Poetry	Last Monday afternoon	Members house	Pamela Vincent
Quiz Group	Last Friday	On Line	Malcolm Hunt
Reading	2nd Tuesday morning	Members house	Jan Phillips
Science Reading	3rd Monday afternoon	Members house	Jane Apling
Scrabble 1	1st Tuesday afternoon	The Plough Shifnal	Barbara Burtenshaw
Scrabble 2	2nd Tuesday afternoon	Members house	Gillian Whitehouse
Short Walks	3rd Thursday morning	Various	Valerie Brown Gillian Whitehouse
Singing for Fun	3rd Wednesday afternoon	The Old Police Station Shifnal	Suzanne Walker
Walking 6-8 miles	Last Friday morning	Various	Valerie Brown Gillian Whitehouse
Wine and Cheese	3rd Wednesday Evening	Members house	Pam Bourne
Wine Tasting 1	2nd Monday evening	Members house	Alan Cartwright
Wine Tasting 2	3rd Monday evening	Members house	Susan Luchetti

Executive Committee 2023/24

Chairman	Mary Rogers	memgr@aol.com
Vice Chair Beacon Admin	Rog Phillips	raandjmphillips@aol.com
Secretary	Valerie Brown	valerie.caine@me.com
Website Manager	Steve Bourne	steve.bourne@btinternet.com
Treasurer	Neil Nisbet	neil.nisbet26@outlook.com
Groups' Co-ordinator	Val Fletcher	fletchval@gmail.com
E News Editor New Members Liaison	Karen Appleby	ksabunny21@gmail.com
Buddies Co-ordinator	Denise Smith	denisemarg@yahoo.co.uk
Membership Secretary	Jane Pearson	iandjpearson@tiscali.co.uk
Speaker Co-ordinator	Linda Tipper	tippers@blueyonder.co.uk
Floating Member	Pam Bourne	pam.mundy@icloud.com
Non-Committee Roles		
Review Editor	Anne Tranter	annetrranter@yahoo.co.uk
Web Master	David Winterbottom	davidwinterbottom413@btinternet.com
Hall Manager	Harry Pettit	h@hgpettit.co.uk
Refreshments	The refreshment team	

Our magazine provides a space for members and groups to communicate through the medium of the written word and to enjoy a broad vista of our U3A and all the activities that go on in it. If you have not contributed for a while, or would like to for the first time, please write to or email the editor, Anne Tranter (annetrranter@yahoo.co.uk) or, if you have any questions, telephone her on 01952 770323.

Although for reasons of cost, colour printing is only an occasional option, the magazine can always be viewed in full colour on our website.