

AUGUST 2023

'Self-help educational and leisure activities organised for and by older people'

1. Notes from the Chair (John Dollimore)

Many of you will have heard that the u3a movement is currently having to review all the details it needs to hold about members and the way it operates. Group Leaders have already attended one meeting about risk assessments. I myself have had to ask members holidaying in the Isles of Man, and Wight, for their full Christian names and dates of birth. This is all being driven by London and Head office of the u3a.

This week we have sent out new membership forms to all members whose surname starts with 'A' and over the next few months we shall be going through the Alphabet. When it comes to renewal in March everyone who has not filled in a form will be asked to do so. This is so that we hold all the necessary information and can make Group Leaders jobs easier.

If anyone wishes to know more, then please feel free to ask , or email me, their queries.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that the Committee has conferred Life Membership to Edith Pleasance. Many of you attended her 100th birthday party last December and the Committee felt this was a suitable way to commemorate Edith's contribution to Wymondham u3a since it's conception.

Our August coffee morning and open day is the first of our Charity Days. This is in support of Norfolk Knitters and Stitchers. We hope everyone will come and support this worthy charity. If you cannot come on the day, and wish to donate, then please put it in an envelope and send it to me. The next Charity day will be in November when we will be supporting Sue Heal and The Motor Neurone Disease Charity. There will be further days in February and May next year. We have not decided which charities we will be supporting next year, so if you have a Charity you support, why not suggest it for a future day.

STOP PRESS

**Christmas Shopping trip to
SPRINGFIELDS OUTLET CENTRE, SPALDING**

Friday 24th November

Coach leaves Central Hall at 09.30am

Cost £15

2. Editors Notes (John Peat)

Another full issue with news, information updates, and reports. I have introduced an additional Notice Board to cover Life Long Learning topics, dates , cost etc. That is on Page 3: probably not the Page 3 content that some/most of you may remember being in The Sun Newspaper many years ago!!! The visit reports include a rare aquatic species that was spotted.

Audio Recording of the Newsletter.

Our Wymondham u3a newsletter is now being recorded for those who are unable to read print. If you are struggling to read this – or know of any other member who is having difficulty do have a word with Georgette or email her Georgette@ValeMail.uk

Audio Equipment at Central Hall – Can you help?

Hopefully, the sound at open meetings will be improved, or at least more reliable, because Central Hall has now purchased a new amplifier and mixing desk. I have been given instruction on its use and have written an idiot's guide on how to set it up. There may be times when I cannot be there, so it would be rather nice to have a couple of other people who would be willing to learn how to do this job.

Any offers? Please see Georgette or email her Georgette@ValeMail.uk

3. **Membership** (Jo Sinclair)

It was agreed by the committee recently that a new and updated application form will be used for new members joining the u3Aa from August. As you will have read above, this new form is also being used to update existing members' details and information and then stored in our Beacon system as it is now.

Therefore over the coming weeks you will be receiving an email from myself with the form attached for completing, signing and returning to us at Central Hall or by post to the address given on the email. Should you wish to have a copy of the members application form for completion rather than printing one off, or you do not have a current email address, please request a form from Jo Sinclair, Membership Secretary on a Thursday at the coffee morning. Thank you for your help and assistance in this matter and helping us to have up to date records on our system and also information regarding your membership of the Wymondham U3A which you should be aware of.

Welcome to the following new members:

Mary Groves, James Lynch, Christine Upton, Carolyn Webster ,and Susan May

Our condolences go to the family and friends on the news that our long standing member Julian Halls has sadly passed away. (See Group News)

4. **Groups** (Stuart Crowther)

I start this month's update with an important request. Please, please, please ensure that you communicate fully with your Group Leaders and, in particular, keep them advised as to whether you will be attending meetings/ activities. For some activities the invitation will ask for a YES I WILL / NO I WON'T response. In the case of regular meetings at home venues, again advice of whether you are attending or not is extremely helpful. We had a recent instance where only one member turned up for a scheduled meeting which is not very helpful or considerate for the host.

4.1. Philosophy

I am delighted to report that Philosophy Group 1 has held its first meeting and arrangements are in hand to form Philosophy Group 2. Watch this space.

4.2. Sign Language

Sign Language – Linda Burkett is now in the process of forming Sign Language Group 2.

4.3. Current Affairs Discussion Group – Bob Linnell, who hosts this group at his home in Carleton Rode every 2nd Wednesday in the month between 2.00 and 4.00 pm, has advised me that he now has capacity for up to 5 new members. If this is of interest, please contact Bob by email at: rlinnell@enablinged.co.uk

4.4. Astronomy Has Lost A Star

The Astronomy group was very sad to hear that its leader Julian Halls has passed away after a very short illness. Julian always prepared comprehensive notes for the monthly sessions but was able to explain the complicated subjects in a way that ordinary people like us could understand. The sessions were always fun even on nights when there was too much cloud cover to actually see any stars. What a loss. He will be missed.

4.5 And finally, I am still looking for volunteers (either on their own or with others) to:

Group Lead Strollers (2—2.5-mile strolling group)

Sunday Lunch for Singles Group 3

Book Groups

Historic Buildings

Local History group.

If you are interested or just wish to discuss what might be entailed, please contact me by email at:

stuartgcrowther@aol.com

LIFE LONG LEARNING

NOTICE BOARD

THE FOLLOWING EVENTS HAVE NOW BEEN CONFIRMED

Stand and Deliver

Highwaymen vs the Georgian judicial system.

10.00 – 15.30 on 15th September

Cost £12 per member, £14 for non-members.

Venue: North Wymondham Community Centre

Norfolk's Industrial Past.

A short course:

Friday mornings 10-12 from 22nd September to 13th October

Cost £20 per member, £25 for non-members.

Venue: North Wymondham Community Centre

An improvisation workshop

A day course on 24th November.

Cost £10 per member, £12 for non-members.

Venue: Central Hall, Tiffey Room

Ignorance is bliss or is it?

A morning seminar on 15th January.

Cost £5 per member, £6 for non-members.

Venue: Central Hall, Tiffey Room

Giant Molecules - the stuff of life.

A short course

6 Tuesday mornings, 23rd January to 27th February.

Cost still to be confirmed.

Venue: expected to be Wymondham Library

The Development of the English Language

A short course

Monday mornings 10-12 from 19th February to 18th March.

N.B. change of day from Tuesday to Monday.

Cost still to be confirmed .

Venue: North Wymondham Community Centre.

Special Interest Day:

The engineering problems and solutions of future energy generation.

Friday March 8th

Cost to be confirmed.

Venue: Central Hall

The opening talk will be delivered by George Freeman MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science, Research and Innovation. Other aspects to be covered include the influence of climate change on coastal erosion; the future prospects for fusion energy and engineering for net zero energy supply. Other speakers to be confirmed soon..

Expressions of interest in any of the above please to courses@wymondhamu3a.org.uk

**NOTICE BOARD
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

MONTHLY TALK (AUGUST)

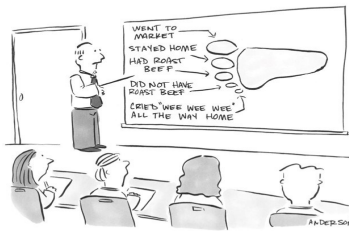
**Thursday 3rd August
At 2.00 p.m.**



Wymondham Central Hall Monthly Talks

**Alistair Bielby of Footsure
OUT ON A LIMB**

Feet, foot health and the role of the podiatrist



- Common foot complaints with a focus on how diabetes affects foot health
- Keys to keeping feet healthy— foot health advice and tips on shoe selection

Free for members - £2 for non-members

For more information about Wymondham u3a
www.u3asites.org.uk/Wymondham

COFFEE MORNINGS

**Thursdays
August**

Thursday 3rd, 17th & 31st 9.00 - 12.00
Thursday 10th & 24th 9.00 - 11.00

September

Thursday 7th & 21st 9.00 - 12.00
Thursday 14th & 28th 9.00 - 11.00

Sundays

Sunday 13th August 10.00—12.30
Sunday 10th September 10.00—12.30



Appeal for Donations

On Thursday August 3rd we are holding our first Charity Coffee morning. There will be a Tombola in aid of Norfolk Knitters and Stitchers that will continue into the afternoon Open Meeting

N.B.1. Any members who would like to contribute prizes, please give them to Stuart Crowther or John Dollimore.

N.B.2. Would any members who are willing to make a cake, please tell Vivienne Dollimore.

SUMMER LUNCH

Friday, August 4th

There will be a Raffle with members' seat numbers as their raffle entry ticket.

MONTHLY TALK (SEPTEMBER)

Thursday 7th Sept at 2.00 p.m.

The RSPCA by Leanne Neave

This talk looks at the history of the RSPCA, busting a few myths. Advice is given on how you can help with injured or orphaned animals, and how you can support your local branch.

CURRY EVENING (Wednesday 16th August)

Rose of India in Attleborough at 7pm

A few places still available

If you wish to go please give your names to John Dollimore

HOLIDAYS



Monday 4th September to Sunday 10th September
Northern Ireland: £790 per person

Due to enforced cancellations **there are 2-twin rooms available for this holiday.**

- N.B.1.** If you would like to share a room, and need a person to share with, **OR**
N.B.2. If you would like to share a room with a friend, who is not a member,

Then please contact John Dollimore



COACH TRIPS

Seats are still available for the Norfolk Broads Cruise

Friday 25th August, **Norfolk Broads Cruise, £45 (N.B. BALANCE NOW OVERDUE)**

Friday 29th September, **Kew Gardens, £45**
(Balance required by the end of August)

Friday 6th October, **Gooderstone Water Gardens, £35**
(Balance required by end of September)

Thursday 14th December, **Thursford Christmas Spectacular, £61**
(Balance required by end of September)

6. Activity Reports

6.1. River Orwell Lunch Cruise June 30th 2023

On Friday 30th June, over forty of our members set forth, by coach, to travel to foreign parts (Ipswich) for a lunch trip on the River Orwell, aboard the good ship 'Orwell Lady'. Her captain gave us a great running commentary, He was saddened by the port's decline in container shipping, a graveyard for old, rusting containers. The main imports at Ipswich are now grain and timber.

The River Orwell is about 20 km long and flows from the River Gipping, at the tidal limit at the west of Ipswich waterfront, to the River Stour estuary at Harwich and the UK's largest container port of Felixstowe, into the North Sea. Thousands of birds nest on the Orwell's mud flats during the winter and Peregrine Falcons, once wiped out by D.D.T. etc., have returned to healthy numbers and build their nests under the bridge.

Once we had passed through the lock system at the east end of Ipswich quay we headed eastwards towards The North Sea and Felixstowe and Harwich. The first major landmark was the magnificent Orwell Bridge opened to road traffic in 1982 and carries the A14 (formerly the A45) over the river. This road is the main artery for heavy container traffic from the Midlands through to the docks at Felixstowe. The main span is 190 metres which, at the time of its construction, was the longest pre-stressed concrete span in use in the UK. The total length is 1,287 metres, the width is 24 metres with an air draft of 43 metres; the bridge had to be at least 41 metres high.



There were various marinas en-route which were stuffed with expensive boats. The riverside between the towns is beautiful, tree lined and with lots of fields. We passed a folly, built in 1578, which also has been a smallpox hospital and is now a holiday home of six stories. Sailing is popular on the river, and there are several sailing clubs as well as marinas. Pin Mill is a hamlet set in a sheltered anchorage about halfway up the river, and along with The Royal Harwich Yacht Club, are the sailing centres on this stretch of water.

Our guide pointed out a building that was known locally as 'The Cat House.' One owner was involved in the smuggling along the river. He had a beloved white cat stuffed after it died. He would place the cat in the window as a signal that all was safe from the 'Revenue Men.' We passed the Ipswich Observatory and an area that was used by the Desert Rats during their training for D. Day.



For most of the outward journey the Port of Felixstowe can clearly be seen on the north side of the river. It is the United Kingdom's largest container port, dealing with 48% of Britain's containerised trade. The port has two main container terminals as well as a roll-on/roll-off terminal. There is a continuous quay of over 2.3 kilometres (1.4 mi), equipped with 29 ship-to shore gantry cranes. The main navigation channel is dredged to accommodate the world's latest generation of deep-draughted vessels that are capable of carrying 18,000 containers.

On the opposite bank towards Harwich is the site of HMS Ganges. HMS Ganges was a training ship and later stone frigate of the Royal Navy. She was established as a boys' training establishment in 1865 and was

based aboard a number of hulks before moving ashore ending up at Shotley (from 1905) and remained in service at RNTE Shotley until October 1976. HMS Ganges was also known as Shotley Training Establishment.

As the boat turned for its return journey we approached Harwich with its Lighthouses and Lifeboat Station. Harwich High and Low Lighthouses are a pair of early 19th-century towers in Harwich, Essex, which were built as leading lights to help guide vessels into the harbour. Although they no longer function as lighthouses they both house small museums.

The Lifeboat station is positioned on the southern side at the mouth of the estuary. The station serves a particularly busy section of coastline covering Harwich ferry terminal and the Port of Felixstowe.

We then returned to Ipswich Quay travelling along the north bank of the Orwell before rejoining our coach at the quayside. As well as lovely sunny weather, we enjoyed a delicious buffet lunch and a well-stocked bar. So, in conclusion - we all had a really GREAT day out.



Thanks again to John and Vivienne for organising this memorable day.

6.2. Monthly Talk July 2023:

The Yellow Caravan by Juliet Webster

(Georgette Vale)

Three young ladies went on a trip in June 1912. Honor Elwes, her sister Win and their friend Judes, hired the yellow horse drawn caravan and set off, accompanied by odd job man Mr Canham and the dog Kaiser – Kai for short. Juliet Webster found her great aunt Honor's manuscript after she died – having had no inkling about the trip.

In the presentation we had the chance to relive it a bit by romping around Norfolk with them through their photos and especially through the quirky rhyming poem which Honor wrote at the time. Judith and her cousin Ben recreated the journey - and many of Ben's pictures featured alongside Honor's originals – a then and now story.

The trip was mostly in North Norfolk. They did come as far south as Crownthorpe – but it rained. They visited friends along the way, The boated on the broads, and they even went into pubs. They cooked over open fires – mostly sausages and stew and dumplings.



They had adventures – being mistaken for suffragettes or tinkers. Black Shuck also got mentioned – but she specified that he is a headless ghostly dog. At Blakeney they got stuck in the mud and had to have a horse at each end to pull them out. Judith and Ben also got the car stuck in the mud and a man just lifted it out for them and said he was in training for Britain's Strongest Man.

I heartily recommend the book that Judith has published – available on Amazon for £10

6.3. Isle of Wight Holiday

The sun shone as thirty members set out for the Isle of Wight with Les, our driver, and his wife Linda, who came along for the ride, (or should that be Ryde!!!!) Our first comfort break at South Mimms wasn't much comfort because **"THE CONVENIENCES ARE CLOSED DUE TO A POLICE INVESTIGATION"**

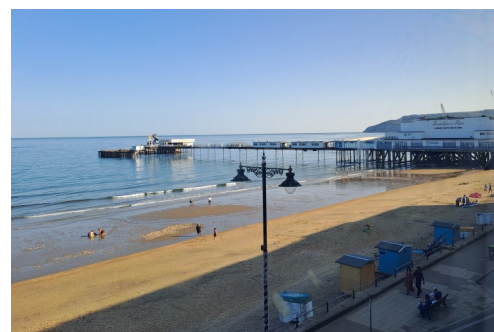
We never find out what it was, but for the purposes of this write up we should make it murder at the very least. We reached Portsmouth on time, only to find out that the ferries were all delayed by an hour. However we managed to get on a late-running earlier boat and undaunted we arrived at Sandown's comfortable Trouville Hotel.

The Trouville Hotel is situated on the Esplanade and many of the rooms had sea views across the beach and the bay. The pier was very close - pretty lights at night (but full of amusement arcade and fun fayre when on the pier itself).

Sandown is a bit run down. Strolling along Sandown's promenade with horses bathing in the sea is marred by the derelict state of former hotels, and the Town had many empty shops. We were even asked in the hotel to pay by card as much as possible, because there are no banks left in the town where businesses can take their cash. Sounds a bit familiar?

There were no complaints about the standard of the rooms or the food. There was entertainment every night, and a games room including Table Tennis which some of us put to good use. There was no pool in the hotel but the gigantic pool called the English Channel was just outside the front door with a beautiful beach just right for swimming and quite warm enough too, although only three of us actually tried it.

The sighting of the rare aquatic species in the English Chanel



Our first trip was to Osbourne House where Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's created a family home which was their retreat from Court life, until Albert's death in 1861. The Queen's interest in India is reflected in a collection of paintings and memorabilia and the stroll through an avenue of trees imported from far and wide to the beach was a memorable experience. On the way back we stopped at the Lilliput Toy museum, a dear little exhibition of all sorts of toys of mainly Victorian era.



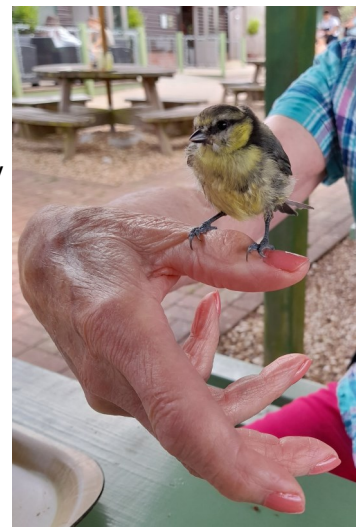
The next day was the free day. The Island's floodplains provided a rich hunting ground for legions of dinosaurs whose remains are preserved in Sandown's Dinosaur Museum and we learned that there are more fossils found on the Isle of Wight than the Jurassic Coast.



Most of our party took the chance to do an extracurricular boat trip to Portsmouth Harbour with an opportunity to view both sides of the Solent.

Osborne House could be seen from a different angle, and the concrete islands built to defend Portsmouth Harbour from the French. In the harbour was the new Queen Elizabeth Aircraft Carrier, HMS Victory and Warrior, and several modern frigates. Also, relics from the Napoleonic War and Rat Island where they buried the dead from the prison hulks. Les and Linda joined us on this trip for a true 'busman's holiday.'

The next day the outing was to Monkey Haven, a new attraction on the island. It is actually a rescue centre for animals who could not live in the wild, mainly because they had spent much of their lives being kept as pets, neglected, or no longer wanted by zoos. The name Monkey Haven is a bit of a misnomer as there were reptiles, Birds of Prey, and Meerkats and the visit included talks from the very knowledgeable staff.



In the café area was a baby blue tit who decided to attach himself to people. It had been hand reared by some of the staff and had just been released back into the wild, but obviously not too successfully.



The afternoon we went to the beautiful Model Village at Godshell, a model of the Village as it was in the 1930's including the model village within the model village. It was unusual not only in the contents of each display but in the background details.

No trip to the I O W would be complete without seeing The Needles so on the last day started with a trip to Alum Bay to a waiting boat for a choppy half hour at sea to have a closer look at the Needles and the lighthouse at the end. The geology was fascinating. The glorious, coloured sands, twenty-one different hues in vertical stripes down the cliff, stopping abruptly when the white chalk takes over and breaks up into the sea stacks of the needles.



Lunch was at the Isle of Wight Pearl shop with its stunning views from the clifftop and an opportunity to learn more about how pearls are formed and watch some being jewellery being crafted.

The rain held off for the last trip of the day was to Ventnor Botanical Gardens on the site of an old 18th century T B Hospital and early sun recording system. It has a remarkable microclimate which allows the growth of many species of plants and trees from round the world, but it would have been nice to have had a few more labels to know what they were. A red squirrel was spotted, the Island being one of the last remaining places in the UK where they still exist.

Our original return ferry was cancelled necessitating a scenic journey across the island to Yarmouth, sailing to Lyminster and driving through the new forest to get to the M25, a much prettier route.

Thanks to John and Vivienne for another great trip, and also time to thank Les our driver for all the service he has given our u3a over the years .

6.4. Woodbridge Tide Mill (Andy Speller, Ferro-equineology Group)

The U3A railway group aren't just train spotters, railway enthusiasts, & breakfast regulars at Wymondham Station Bistro! We also like to visit other noteworthy engineering & mechanical projects. This time, a day trip to the **Woodbridge Tide Mill** combined with an Anglia Day Ranger ticket to travel on the iron roads.

If you want to see all the facets of the East Anglian countryside let the train take the strain with an Anglia Day Ranger ticket. We travelled on the lines to Ely, to Ipswich, to Lowestoft (via Woodbridge), to Norwich & finally back to Wymondham. We saw Norfolk's arable lands, Thetford's forest, the Fens, the undulating mixed farming Suffolk countryside & the Southern Broads. In between which was a 3 hour stop-over in Woodbridge - for lunch, visiting the Tide Mill museum, seeing the Mill in operation & the Saxon Ship project on the adjacent quay.

Changing trains might seem like more strain than train but it allows the group to circulate & chat to everyone. There's no opportunity for cliques to form, everyone's involved, no lost voices, plenty of banter & of course a large dollop of Craic all round!

Lunch was pre-booked at the Whistlestop Café in the former station buildings. Highly recommended & enjoyed by all, portions were generous (though most members found room for a slice of cake or ice cream – large vase size!).



The Tide Mill



Woodbridge Tide Mill on the estuary of the River Deben dates back to the 12th century. Now fully restored, it operates by a pond filled by the incoming tide. The present pond – smaller than the original – allows the Mill wheel, when the water is released, to turn from about 20 minutes. Their website gives details of operating times (woodbridgetidemill@gmail.com) so plan your visit to see the water operate the mill.

A marvel of early engineering, water mills were the cutting-edge technology for their time. Perfectly balanced and set up with Oak shafts & wheels, cogs of iron and sprockets with Hornbeam teeth. There are only a handful left in the world. The museum has many exhibits relating to corn & milling. An explanation of a Bushel – the Winchester Bushel – abolished in 1835, will appeal to historians.



One unexpected surprise was to visit the "**Sutton Hoo Ships Company**," housed in the Longshed on an adjacent quay. They are building an exact replica (90 foot long) of King Raedwal's Sutton Hoo burial ship. We saw the team working on the ship, riveting planks, using axes to shape wooden sections & planing planks. When complete it will have 3,500 numbered rivets, oars for forty rowers (warriors?!). The boat is due to be launched in 2025 with final fitting out on the quayside.

A great day out, the group thoroughly recommend visiting both attractions. Check their websites for opening times & other information.