

JANUARY 2024

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

1. Notes from the Chair (John Dollimore)

1.1. May I first wish all members a "HAPPY NEW YEAR"

Hopefully, 2024 is going to see us continue our steady advancement with new members joining us, new groups being started, and all our members enjoying the activities they take part in.

Our Social programme is already well known and our first holiday in March sold out. The other holidays and day trips are filling up nicely.

Your committee needs support to keep ahead of the game and we are looking immediately for an understudy for our membership secretary who is currently unwell. If you are interested, you will need to be able to attend coffee mornings on a Thursday as that is when most new members join.

If you are interested in helping run your u3a, in either a leading role or as an understudy, then please make yourself known to me, or other committee members.

1.2. Lorna Tomlinson

It is with great sadness that I have to inform fellow members of the passing of Lorna on Boxing Day. She will be greatly missed.

Lorna played a full part in our u3a over many years. She joined the Committee in 2015 taking over the role of Groups Co-ordinator and served until 2020. More recently she started the very successful quiz group with Keith. Our thoughts at this time are with Keith

1.3. Charity Coffee Morning

The first Charity Coffee Morning of 2024 will be on Thursday 1st February in aid of the Nancy Oldfield Trust.

The Nancy Oldfield Trust gives sailing experience to disabled sailors and the reason we are supporting it is because they supply our sailing group, headed by Arthur Newton, with the boats. Arthur will be at the January open meeting to tell members a little about the work of the trust.

Donations????? . Any members who wish to donate unwanted Christmas presents, or other gifts, should give them to Stuart Crowther during January. Any members wishing to make a cake for coffee morning should see Vivienne.

1.4. Special Interest Day

Full details of the events and speakers are elsewhere in the newsletter, but tickets will be on sale from Thursday 4th January from the Social Activities Table in the foyer of Central Hall, priced £20.

1.5. Holidays

If you booked to go to Holland in May, this is a reminder that payment should be made in full by the end of January. Also there is one single room available for the Northumberland holiday in March costing £580

Do you have difficulty reading this newsletter?

You may like to know that we also record this newsletter in audio format and send it to our visually impaired members. We also send it as text only for those who have the appropriate software. Please ask Georgette for more details.

2. Editor's Notes (with a bit of Vice-chair thoughts)

This issue is deliberately biased towards 2024 and the future.

First of all, let us all wish ourselves at Wymondham u3a a Happy and Prosperous 2024. Not prosperous with its financial meaning, but its "success" meaning, looking at both growth in membership and activities.

We are already very successful. You will read in the membership report that we have a net growth of 45% in the last three years, with current membership now at 630. We need to be prepared for more growth in 2024.

There is a common thread within the Chairman's Notes and the Group Co-ordinators report asking for more volunteers to help run our thriving u3a branch. This should come as no surprise with our current membership.

2. Editors Notes (Cont.)

The committee is always looking at succession planning for roles as people retire from particular posts, and that is just to stand still. And, as we have recently found out with a dose of reality, we can lose key people at short notice through illness and still have to maintain operational functionality, and that falls to fewer people to cover those roles.

So as John said, if you are interested in helping run your u3a, in either a leading role or as an understudy, then please make yourself known any of the committee members listed below.

Current officer contact details

Chair – John Dollimore - chair@wymondhamu3a.org.uk
Vice-Chair and Newsletter Editor – John Peat - newsletter@wymondhamu3a.org.uk
Secretary - Howard Brown- secretary@wymondhamu3a.org.uk
Treasurer - Geoffrey Briggs - treasurer@wymondhamu3a.org.uk
Membership Sec. –John Peat -membership@wymondhamu3a.org.uk
Groups Co-ordinator - Stuart Crowther - groups@wymondhamu3a.org.uk
Speaker Seeker – Georgette Vale – speakers@wymondhamu3a.org.uk
I.T. - vacancy

If you have any group or activity news that you think may be of interest to the greater membership, then please send the information to newsletter@wymondhamu3a.org.uk and I will see if I can fit it in.

3. Membership (John Peat)

The branch continues to thrive. There have been 379 new members recruited in the period from January 2021 to the end of December 2023 and a net increase of membership of 196 (45%) in the same three-year period.

In December we welcomed the following new members:

Michael Betts, Robert Dumolo, Keith Grant, Ann Hewitt, David Keep, Linda & Peter Mortimore, Gillian Wintle, and Beverley Wright.

4. Groups (Stuart Crowther)

As we start the new year there is potential for a few new groups.

Book Clubs – Anne Mathon has offered to start another book group on either the 1st or 2nd Wednesday of each month. The group would meet at Ann's home in Orchard Way, Wymondham. We also have Joan Shulver's offer of one being held in Little Melton. If either of these are of interest, please let me know.

Cryptic Crosswords – It has been suggested that there may be interest in learning how to do cryptic crossword puzzles. This could possibly be achieved through online learning material, with a member hosting such sessions in their home. Again, please let me know if this appeals to you.

Canasta – I will shortly be contacting a few members who have already expressed interest in Canasta groups outside of the existing Wednesday morning group. Tuesday or Thursday afternoons or the Sunday coffee mornings have been suggested. Please let me know should you wish to be added to this list, with a note of your preferred day.

Couples Dining Group

This dining group is available only to couples

Sunday 21st January 2024	Breckland Lodge	1pm
Sunday 18th February 2024	The George, Newmarket Road	1pm
Sunday 17th March 2024	Parson Woodruffe, Weston Longville	1 pm

If you wish to go on any of these lunches, please contact Ian & Ruth Tait on 07443-397906 or by email iantait@talktalk.net

And finally, I continue to seek new volunteers to either Group Lead or just host groups in their home. Both roles need not entail excessive effort and the hosting role is a way of meeting friends in the comfort of your own home. Do please let me know if you can be of assistance.

If you wish to discuss anything related to Groups and activities then please contact me by email at: stuartgcrowther@aol.com



We have had a successful Autumn programme with a total of 140 members attending five courses, all of which have been well received.

A reminder that coming up in January are:

Giant Molecules, the Stuff of Life.

The early beginnings of polymers and the problems such natural materials posed. The course comprises 6 x 2-hour sessions Mondays, 8th January to 12th February and will be held in North Wymondham Community Centre.

The Development of the English Language.

A journey from the Anglo Saxons to the modern era, from the spoken word to the internet. The course comprises 4 x 2-hour sessions Mondays, 19th February to 11th March and will be held in North Wymondham Community Centre.

To register your interest in attending these courses, please email courses@wymondhamu3a.org.uk

Returning by popular demand after Easter is Stephen Poulter, with three offerings:

HATCHED, MATCHED & DISPATCHED (4 x 2hr sessions)

EXPLORING THE DIARY OF A GEORGIAN PARISH CLERK (Day School 4.5hrs)

LADY CHARLOTTE ATKYNS: THE NORFOLK PIMPERNEL (Day School 4.5hrs)

Venue and dates to be confirmed.....details next issue

SPECIAL INTEREST DAY MARCH 8, 2024

Central Hall Wymondham 09.30

ENGINEERING OUR FUTURE ENERGY REQUIREMENTS

COP28 in Dubai resulted in major achievement with all participants agreeing to phase out the use of fossil fuels. Perhaps not the tougher agreement desired by many but some progress if the signatories pursue the objective. Climate change fuelled by increasing release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere was first identified over one hundred years ago by the Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius but, increased industrial and transport activity from the mid-20th century up to now has rapidly accelerated the rise in global temperature.

The effects are felt in extreme weather- extremes of heat, rain and storms and coastal erosion. The next 50 years will still see a reliance on oil and gas for energy supply but decreasingly so as time advances. There is an urgent need to develop energy sources that do not emit carbon dioxide but at the same time are reliable. Regrettably, wind power is not reliable (in November there was a week when zero power was generated in the UK by wind power). Solar power may be viable in some areas but not damp and cloudy UK!

To provide some insight for future options this special interest day has been organised featuring four guest speakers. The opening talk will be given by George Freeman, our local MP and until recently Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation. Background on the local effects of climate change will be provided by Dr Sophie Day from the University of East Anglia who will discuss coastal erosion in Norfolk. The prospect for future carbon free energy production will have two inputs. Firstly, the proposed Sizewell C nuclear reactor outlined by Jack Raven and finally the future outlook for fusion energy from Chris Warrick of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority.

Each talk will be about 45 mins in duration with opportunities to ask questions; the content will be pitched for non-specialist audience with speakers encouraged to inform but not baffle the audience. The outline timetable is 9:30AM start with talks to 12:15 including a coffee break. The afternoon session begins at 1:00pm and ends at 3:00pm followed by tea.

The cost per person including lunch and tea / coffee breaks is £20. Tickets for Wymondham u3a members will be available from John Dollimore/Social Activities Table in the foyer of Central Hall from Thursday January 4th, and must be purchased by 28th February.

Special Interest Day

Full details of the events and speakers are elsewhere in the newsletter, but tickets will be on sale from Thursday 4th January from the Social Activities Table in the foyer of Central Hall priced £20

NOTICE BOARD: DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 4th January

At 2.00 p.m.



Wymondham Central Hall Monthly Talks

The History of Spoken English

Charlie Haylock

Charlie shows how the seeds of spoken English was first sown, and how each invading force affected the English language with the different sounds they brought. Charlie includes a dialect tour of the British Isles, demonstrating the different facial expressions of each dialect.



This is definitely not a talk on split infinitives, and what the differences are between the past participle and the past tense.

Free for members - £2 for non-members

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

COFFEE MORNINGS

Thursdays

January: 4th, 11th, and 18th 09.00-12.00
 January: 25th 09.00-11.00



February: 1st, 15th and 29th 09.00-12.00
 8th and 22nd 09.00-11.00

Sundays

January, February and March:
Every Sunday
 in the Tiffey Room 10.00—12.00

CURRY EVENINGS

Rose of India, Attleborough at 19.00

Wednesday February 21st

(Book this one now with John Dollimore)

Other dates for your diary to be booked later

Wednesday May 22nd

Wednesday August 24th

Wednesday November 20th

MONTHLY TALK (FEBRUARY)

Feb 1st. 2024

Circled in the Radio Times
 John Osborne



2024 HOLIDAYS

NORTHUMBERLAND

March 2024

Sunday 24th March to Friday 29th

(N.B. There is one single room available for the Northumberland holiday in March costing £580)

HOLLAND

May 2024

Sunday 5th May to Thursday 9th

(N.B. to be paid in full by the end of January)

PORTSMOUTH

June 2024

Monday 17th June to Thursday 20th

THE LAKE DISTRICT

September 2024

Monday 16th September to Friday 20th

2024 COACH TRIPS

Sunday 17 th March	Thriplow	£25
Friday 26 th April	Neatishead	£25
Monday 20 th May	Burghley House	£35
Friday 28 th June	River Deben	£35
Friday 26 th July	Audley End House	£35
Friday 30 th August	Norfolk Broads	£45
Friday 27 th September	Melford Hall	£25
Friday 25 th October	RAF Duxford	£40
Friday 29 th November	Springfields	£15

Any members wishing to go on the above trips should see John Dollimore, or the Travel Desk, on Thursday mornings

A £10 deposit secures your seat on the coach.

All balances should be paid in the month before travel.

If you cancel, refunds are at the discretion of the Committee.

NOTICE BOARD: DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SPEAKERS FOR 2024

4th Jan 2024 Charlie Haylock:
The History of Spoken English

1st Feb 2024 John Osborne:
Circled in the Radio Times:

7th Mar 2024 AGM

4th Apr 2024 Julia Burton:
The Pantanal

2 May 2024 Nicholas Chapman CBE:
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission

6th Jun 2024 Mike Bowen:
Did you jive in 55?

4th Jul 2024 Lois Willoughby-Easter:
Women in Policing the 1970s

1st Aug 2024 Tanya Harrington:
Self Portraiture

5th Sep 2024 Coop:
Tax, Care and Toyboys

3rd Oct 2024 Alan Bloom:
A Thinker and Doer: Jamie Blake (Bressingham)

7th Nov 2024 TBC

5th Dec 2024 Janet Dann:
Christmas Words

COFFEE MORNINGS 2024



Thursdays: Wymondham Central Hall 09.00 - ?
(Depending on Blood Donor Requirements)

Sundays:
Every Sunday for a Three Month Trial
January 7th onwards
In the Tiffey Room 10.00—12.00

SOCIAL EVENTS 2024

Spring Lunch

Friday 17th May 2024

Wymondham Central Hall

12.30 for 1pm

£15

Chairman's Garden Party

Saturday 20th July 2024

Shackles Farm, Westcarr Rd,

Attleborough NR17 1AN

11.30am, for 12noon

£20

Christmas Lunch

Friday 13th December 2024

Wymondham Central Hall

12.30 for 1pm

£15

6. Activity Reports

6.1. Sentiments of Christmas – talk by Jim Stebbings.

To open the show Jim showed a clip from Norfolk's Christmas Spectacular at Thursford which certainly set the scene.

He then talked about Christmas Trees – everyone knows that Prince Albert popularised the tradition in Britain – but Queen Charlotte was first recorded as having done so in the early 1800s. In Germany it is attributed to Martin Luther 1536. The Trafalgar Square tree has been given by Norwegian Government since 1947 in recognition of help given to them during the war. We then looked at some unusual trees – or more specifically cone shaped structures masquerading as trees. Wells next-the-sea constructs one annually out of lobster pots and we saw a smaller one in a dentists' office made from dentures.

Jim then gave us a rendition of the melodramatic poem "Timmy's Sacrifice" as originally performed by Vernon Watson – better known by his stage name of Nosmo King (a name taken from the sign in a train carriage).

"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear" was apparently a favourite of Queen Victoria. It was Sir Arthur Sullivan who set the poem to music. He also first collaborated with Gilbert for a show called Thespis which opened on boxing day. The reason we call them Fairy Lights was because strings of lights were first used to adorn the fairy costumes in Iolanthe in 1882.

Jim played us "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" – written by Longfellow in 1863 during the Civil War. It is still popular in the USA but not many of us had heard it before.

We then had a very moving montage of the Christmas Truce 1914 to the tune of Silent Night. The mood was lifted by the poem – "Tyrone the Turkey" who was enjoying his wonderful life and was very pleased to meet Bernard Matthews. We joined in 12 days of Christmas written by Frederick Austen in 1909 but the arrangement had a twist which kept catching us out.

The most famous secular Christmas song is of course "White Christmas" 1941. Irving Berlin's son died on Christmas Eve and the original words were much darker. He was rather a recluse for about 20 years until he died aged 101 – but crowds would still gather outside his home to sing it to him on Christmas day – especially if it snowed.

We learned about the song "Oh Holy Night" – originally written by Placide Cappeau as Minuit Chrétiens – but the English/American version was written in the 1850's by John Sullivan Dwight as an abolitionist anthem.

We then looked at the capitalist or commercial side of Christmas – headed of course by Santa's costume of red and white being consolidated by the advertising campaign by Coca Cola. Before concluding this with this entertaining romp through the Christmas season we looked at some ideas for Christmas presents. Adverts included a parking aid which consisted of black paint to obliterate the yellow, and the One-Piece Jigsaw which saves you hours of tedium leaving you free to enjoy Christmas.

6.2. Sunday Lunch Groups' Christmas Lunch (Pam Yeomans)

I arranged a Christmas lunch for the three singles lunch groups at The Crown, Great Ellingham. Back in the summer I had suggested to Alan Provis that we get the two groups together for a Christmas lunch so that we were not working in isolation. More recently Di Gibbins started another group, so I extended the invite to her as well.

I had previously taken a large number of my group to The Crown for Sunday lunch on the coronation weekend so knew they had a large function room on the ground floor, big enough to take just over 100 people. The food is good basic 'pub grub' at a reasonable price. I provisionally booked for between 30-50 people back in August before the Christmas menu was available. Alan, and then, later, Di, let their people know, then gave me a note of who was interested in attending, together with their menu choices, for me to compile a spreadsheet ready to send to the venue on November 16th, as a pre-order. I did place cards for everyone, not only as an aide memoire, but also to help the serving staff.

Thirty-eight people attended and had a really lovely time mixing with the other groups. On the day, everyone arrived on time for 12.30, pulled their crackers and enjoyed their meal.

It was so successful that I have been asked to organise another for next year!

6.3. Christmas Lunch

On Friday December 1st 127 people attended the annual Christmas Lunch in Wymondham Central Hall. The meal as usual consisted of a roast turkey main course and a cold sweet with wine and soft drinks available.

This event cannot go ahead without the help of a significant number of volunteers throughout the process from organising and preparing the lunch, the setting up and laying of tables and the inevitable washing up crew. Many thanks to all that made this happen.



For one person it was the end of an era. For many years Jennifer Attwell has been at the forefront of organising this event and to celebrate that she was thanked by chairman John Dollimore and presented with a hamper.

6.4.. Line Dancing **100 NOT OUT** (Gaynor Barnes)



On December 19th the Line Dancing group held their last session of the year. As well as this being our Christmas Session it was also our 100th Session! Thank you to all our members who have made this milestone possible!

6.5. Stash Busters (Gilly Spencer, Group Leader)

STASH BUSTERS ARE GO - AGAIN!

This group makes fabric quilts that are sent where ever there is a need. To date quilts have been sent to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital Children's ward, retirement homes, and to Norfolk Knitters and Stitchers. Many of our members are new to patchwork and quilting so we are learning and having fun as we go!

The Stash Buster ladies have excelled themselves once more, by creating nine lap quilts for donation to Windmill House Care Home in Wymondham.

The lap quilts were backed by lovely warm fleece to make the quilts cozy, as well as colourful. They were well received by the home, and we had some great photos of the happy recipients that were sent to us.

These stalwarts of the sewing machine, worked as a great team, helped by a delicious lunch provided by Jennifer Attwell and the ladies.

Thank you once again dear and wonderful ladies!



The Stash Buster team displaying the quilts that they have made for Wind Mill House Care Home in Wymondham