

OCTOBER 2023

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

1. Notes from the Chair (*John Dollimore*)

Wymondham u3a Open Day

Saturday 21st October will be the Wymondham u3a SPECIAL OPEN DAY at Wymondham Central Hall. It will be open from 10am to 4pm and there will be **Free Tea and Coffee all day**. Please encourage your non-member friends to come and have a look to see if the u3a could fill a gap in their lives.

There will be Group displays to give both members and non-members the chance to see the range of activities available and ***The 2024 Social Programme will be launched at the show.***

Charity Coffee day

On Thursday November 2nd we will be holding our second Charity Coffee Day, this time in aid of Motor Neurone Disease Research. We would like to make this a special day and raise much needed money to help in the research of a cure for this terrible illness. It is made much more poignant because one of our own members has just been diagnosed with the disease.

Any members who would like to donate Tombola prizes, please give them to Stuart, and any members who would be happy to make cakes, please see Vivienne

Please come and give your support to this worthy cause.

Vacancies for Volunteers

a) IT Supervisor

Would suit a member who understands, and with an interest in, websites, and the workings of computers.

b) Welfare officer

Would suit a caring member of our community who could help others to achieve their u3a goals in a safe and inclusive environment.

c) Head cook

We need a member to supervise the production of the main course at our lunches. At Christmas, this would effectively 'boil down' to cooking the vegetables. (*JD takes the credit for the wording, I wish I had thought of it*)

d) Audio Visual Assistant

Georgette needs support with the set-up of the microphone, and if necessary, the projector to be able to take over when she is not available. To quote Georgette, "It is honestly not too hard". If you think you could support Georgette, please see her, or email her Georgette@ValeMail.uk

e) Group Leaders

Do you think you could lead a group? Do you have an idea for a new group?

If you do, please see Stuart Crowther, or email him at stuartgcrowther@aol.com to see what can be done.

2. Editors Notes (*John Peat*)

This month's newsletter starts to look forward to planned activities in 2024, plus the resources and volunteers we need, to be able to continue to provide them. Please, if you think you have then necessary skills to help with any of the 'vacancies' above please come and help us. This will maintain our existing activities, develop new ones, and ensure that we are compliant with Third Age Trust requirements for the future.

As usual, all of what you need to know is on pages 1-4, and reports on maybe what you would like to know are on pages 5-7. This month The "Need to Know" includes a special request from The UEA looking for volunteers to study "Dementia Research into Driving". Apologies for the length of report on the N. Ireland holiday but so much happened in such a short space of time. I transcribed all my notes, but I have not had time to edit it further as it is more important to meet this newsletter publishing deadline.

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** (Jo Sinclair)

Welcome to the following new members:

Renata Hutton-Mills; Mary Chilcott; Gay and David Beer; Bev Deer and Kevin Harrison; Geoffrey and Irene Craske; Liz and Kevin O'Grady; Karen and Paul O'Reilly; John Millan; Norma Briggs; Kim Thomas; Annie Kerridge; Geoff Harrison.

And a welcome return back to us: Christine Fitzgerald; John Smith; Tom Waterworth

It is with sadness that we have to report the passing of Ann Handscomb, along with our sincere condolences to her family and friends.

A SPECIAL REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA DEMENTIA RESEARCH INTO DRIVING

The UEA is a centre of excellence in the research of Dementia and one of our members, who has been a volunteer for several years, has drawn our attention to a new study, brief details for which are set out below.

"The University of East Anglia is currently looking for volunteers to take part in the SENSOR study. The research seeks to understand the changes that take place in thinking as we age, and how these changes might affect driving behaviour. Volunteers for this study will have a diagnosis of either mild cognitive impairment (MCI), vascular cognitive impairment, or any form of clinical dementia, and still be driving their car at least once per week.

Full details can be found in the *attached participation information sheet* (see note 1) which tells you about the research and what you will need to do if you take part in the study. If, upon reading this, you have any questions you would like to ask, or if you would like to speak to a researcher about taking part in the study, please email:

Sensor.study@uea.ac.uk "

Note 1. Please note that the participation information sheet mentioned above is nine pages long and so it is not included with this newsletter. If you feel you may be interested in finding out more, please email me at:

stuartgcrowther@aol.com and I will forward a copy to you.

4. **Groups** (Stuart Crowther)

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

4.1. Line Dancing REMINDER

An Introduction To Line Dancing Workshop

This one hour Workshop will introduce novice dancers to basic line dancing terms and steps, and will also include learning a couple of Absolute Beginner dances.

Date: Tuesday 24th October:

Time: 11.00am to 12.00pm

Venue: North Wymondham Community Centre,
NR18 0HH: Cost: £1.00

To book your place please contact:

gaynorbarnes@tiscali.co.uk



4.2. It is hoped that the Canoeing Group will become active again and, if you are interested and not already a group member, please contact me on email:

4.3. Our very successful Sunday Lunch for Singles Groups are again fully subscribed, and we would love to find a 3rd Group Leader to run a further group. The Group Leaders of the existing groups will be happy to recommend venues. Please contact me on the above email address if you could help us to get another group going.

4.4. And finally, a request from Group Leaders. If you know you are on a waiting list to join a group but no longer wish to be on that list, please let either the relevant group leader or me, know and we can update our records.

LIFE LONG LEARNING

NOTICE BOARD

(Alan Browne)

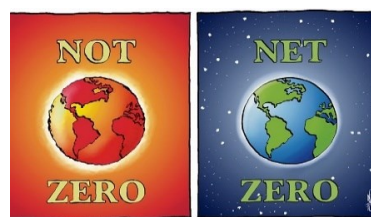
Our first course on the rise of the Highwayman was very well received and our second on Norfolk's Industrial Past is well under way.

Next up on Friday, 24th November 10.00 to 1.00 in the Tiffey Room is "Ignorance is Bliss, or is it?"

This will be in the form of a seminar when participants will contribute their ideas as to what constitutes "Ignorance" and "Bliss" and whether the cliché is true.

Cost £5. More details to follow in an all-member email. Keep an eye out! To make sure this will be viable please email your interest by 21st October to: courses@wymondhamu3a.org.uk

Date for your diary: 8th January to 12th February - **Giant Molecules – the Stuff of Life**. We will explore the early beginnings of polymers and the problems such natural materials posed. The rapid growth of macromolecular science via the personalities involved will be outlined. The characteristic aspects of giant molecules which gives them their distinct properties will be discussed. More details nearer the time.



Special Interest Day

Engineering Future Energy March 8 2024

Climate change and efforts to mitigate it are topics that appear daily in the various media. Attempts at mitigation are in progress e.g. the UK ban on fossil fuel driven vehicles. There are now only two coal fuelled power stations in the UK but there are 32 gas fired power stations all emitting carbon dioxide. Wind and solar power contribute significantly to the electricity grid but are weather dependent.

The availability of continuous power generating engineering with no carbon dioxide emission is a much-desired goal. What are the options? What are the challenges? What are the costs – both financial and social? What are the possible outcomes if the goal is not achieved?

To explore some of these issues and provide insight, you are invited to a

Special Interest Day 'Engineering future Energy' on March 8th 2024 at Central Hall.

The day consists of 4 talks plus questions with coffee and tea breaks plus buffet lunch. Cost is yet to be determined, but efforts will be made to keep it as low as possible. The outline programme is:

George Freeman MP, Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation

Professor Sophie Day, University of East Anglia; aspects of coastal erosion

Chris Warrick, Culham Centre for Fusion Energy; prospects for fusion energy sources in the future.

A contribution from **Rolls Royce on Small Modular Reactors** is being pursued.

[To book a place please email courses@wymondhamu3a.org.uk.](mailto:courses@wymondhamu3a.org.uk)

Your booking will then be confirmed and details of the cost and how to pay will follow thereafter.

NOTICE BOARD
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 5th Oct
At 2.00 p.m.



Wymondham Central Hall Monthly Talks

That Rings A Bell
The History of the Town Crier
Mike Wabe



Hear just how long ago that Town Criers were proclaiming their messages (and what messages they were). Learn about such things as our livery, evolution, rationale, means of attracting attention

Free for members - £2 for non-members
For more information about Wymondham u3a
www.u3asites.org.uk/Wymondham

COFFEE MORNINGS

Thursdays

October

Thursday Oct 5th & 19th 9.00 - 12.00
Thursday Oct 12th & 26th 9.00 - 11.00



November

Thursday Nov. 2nd, 16th, 30th 09.00-12.00
Thursday Nov. 9th and 23rd 09.00-11.00

Sundays

October: Sunday 8th October 10.00-12.30
November : Sunday 12th November 10.00-12.30

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

FRIDAY DECEMBER 1st

Tickets are available: Price £15

NEXT CURRY NIGHT

WEDNESDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 7p.m.
ROSE OF INDIA (ATTLEBOROUGH)

Places still available
Pay on the night

If you wish to go please contact John Dollimore

MONTHLY TALK (NOVEMBER)

Andrew Clarke

Winter is coming – wildlife in a seasonal world

2024 SOCIAL PROGRAMME



**The 2024 Social Programme
of holidays and coach trips
will be formally launched at
the Wymondham u3a Open
Day on Saturday 21st October
at Wymondham Central Hall**

REMAINING 2023 COACH TRIPS



N.B.

There are still seats available on the coaches for these trips

Friday 6th October, **Gooderstone Water Gardens**, £35
(Balance now due)

Friday 24th November: **Springfields Outlet Centre,
Spalding**, £15
(Balance now due)

Thursday 14th December, **Thursford Christmas
Spectacular**, £61
(Balance now due)

6. Activity Reports

6.1. Monthly talk, September 2023:

The RSPCA Norfolk and Suffolk Branch by Leanne Neave (Georgette Vale)

Leanne Neave started by dispelling the myth that the RSPCA is one organisation. A bit like u3a – each is run separately from the national but with common aims. Our local branch offices are housed in the grounds of Ashwellthorpe Hall and was founded 60 years ago.

The first RSPCA was founded two hundred years ago. Richard Martin (known as Humanity Dick), William Wilberforce, Fowell Buxton and Arthur Broome formed the society – ironically, they had their first meetings in a place called the Old Slaughter House. They then got the law passed in 1822 following a court case where a donkey was taken into court as its own witness to show how emaciated and afraid it was. Initially the idea of treating animals with kindness was slow to take off – but the Music Halls were quite instrumental in getting the idea across. The SPCA became Royal due to Queen Victoria being a loyal supporter.

The society has a brief for the welfare of all animals – domestic, farm and wildlife (although Natural England will not allow them to take on non-indigenous species such as the grey squirrel or the muntjac.

In the whole of East Anglia there are only 7 RSPCA inspectors, so they have to prioritise cases of cruelty and neglect.

Locally the group has a 24-hour emergency room for rescues. It also gets involved in rehoming all types of pets – often providing behavioural assessments and we learnt how much this all costs. They also provide some financial aid in the form of neutering vouchers and vet bills so the animals do not suffer if the owners cannot pay. Of course, they need to have the funds to be able to do this and many people just give money to the RSPCA without specifying which branch and therefore it goes to the national organisations.

Leanne gave some pointers about what you should do for injured or orphaned animals. Watch first -preferably from a distance – make sure it is not a false alarm. Make sure it is not you preventing the mother from getting back to her babies. Do not touch – especially deer, seals, otters, badgers, foxes, snakes, birds of prey. It is OK to move a fledgeling to a safe place if necessary. Call the helpline on 0300 1234 999. Under no circumstances should you attempt to remove an animal from a trap. You will make matters worse for them and you.

6.2. Church Crawling (Tony Vale)

Ten members have had the opportunity to road test a potential new activity – Church Crawling. It involved travelling from the churches in Bedingham to Shelton and then on to Saxlingham Nethergate (where tea and cake was served), under the expert guidance of Kate Smith.

St Andrew's Bedingham is unusual in that it is a round tower and once had been a double church. Round towers and double churches are rare but mostly found in Norfolk. There was a priory attached. We saw the rare piscina (sink) with a drainage system.

St Mary's church at Shelton was only built in the 15th century from the legacy of Sir Ralph Shelton. Brick was the fashion of the day, and it has an intricate design late perpendicular style is visible from a distance across the fields. It certainly lived up to its reputation of being "a joy and a delight." It has an elaborate tomb of Sir John Shelton and his wife Anne Boleyn – aunt to the other Anne Boleyn and Governess to Princess Elizabeth.

St Mary the Virgin at Saxlingham Nethergate was our guide Kate's own church. We were treated to tea and cake as they have nice little community room. It is an amalgamation of medieval and Victorian. She mainly focussed on the stained glass – some very early examples and a very recent RAF memorial one.

We were all utterly delighted to see their "treasure." When Matthew "nosey" Parker was Archbishop of Canterbury it was decreed that the chalices for communion wine should be melted down and made into bigger ones so everyone could partake – not just the clergy. This one still has its original straw basket with leather straps and none of us had ever seen anything like it before – a real treat.

The chalice and basket – and outside Shelton Church



6.3. Northern Ireland Holiday (John Peat)

If you think of iconic places in Northern Ireland, what comes to mind? In my case it is the dock area with the Harland and Wolff Cranes and the Titanic Museum, Stormont Castle for all the Northern Irish politics, and The Giants Causeway. And on this trip we visited all of these.

Monday September 4th Travel to Dumfries

We departed from Wymondham Central Hall at 0955 and travelled non-stop to Ferrybridge Services at the junction of the A1 and M62 to change drivers. With several alternative routes that we could have then taken, we continued up the A1 to Scotch Corner and took the A66 across to Penrith to join the M6 northbound. This part of the A66 follows the course of the original Roman Road across the North Pennines. There was plenty of local wildlife to be seen including Highland Cattle and yes, Camels and Llamas. We continued to our hotel for the night in Dumfries and arrived at The Holiday Inn in the grounds of the Crichton Estate where a modern hotel has been blended in with the original country house. The 85-acre grounds house businesses, and colleges of Glasgow University.

Tuesday September 5th Ferry To N. Ireland

At 0800 next morning we set off towards Cairnryan to catch our 11.15 ferry to Belfast, arriving there around 1400. The famous Harland and Wolff dockyard cranes, named Samson and Goliath, could be seen for miles from the Irish Sea. A tour guide had been arranged to join the coach and for two hours we toured the city. We had stops at City Hall and Queens University, and passed through both Catholic and Protestant areas, including the Shankhill and Falls Road areas to look at the wall art on those structures originally built to keep the two communities apart. They are no longer separated communities, but the walls are still in place as it is not economical to try and take them down. After the tour we continued our journey to our base for four nights, the Dunadry Hotel near Antrim.



Wednesday September 6th Antrim Castle and Gardens

This was a more relaxing day with a local visit to Antrim Castle and Gardens, and a look around the town of Antrim before returning to our hotel early afternoon. Due to coach driving regulations regarding driving hours, a local coach company provided the transport. We had a different coach for out and back, and both were regularly used for ferrying the Northern Ireland national football teams to matches and events, and adorned with the appropriate colours and logos.



Thursday September 7th

Giants Causeway and Whitehead Railway Museum



After breakfast we headed off north towards Bushmills, famed for its Irish Whiskey, and the Giants Causeway. We arrived at 1030 and most of the party headed down from the Visitors Centre to see the fascinating Basalt rock structure of the causeway. It was a fifteen-minute walk or a regular bus service for those who would have struggled with the walk.

After lunch in the visitor's centre headed for the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland (RPSI) Museum at Whitehead on the east coast. It was an amazing journey through the Antrim Mountains to Larne before following the coast road to Whitehead. Here we had a guided tour of the museum and its artefacts, with the history of the railways in Northern Ireland.

Friday September 8th

Stormont Castle and Titanic Museum

Today's first visit was to Stormont Castle, the seat of Northern Ireland politics. Even though the parliament is not sitting we underwent a full security check before being allowed to enter. We had the benefit of a tour guide for an hour explaining the history of Northern Ireland politics and the current problems of why there is not a working parliament at the moment.



Stormont Castle from the Drive



Wymondham u3a members in The Assembly Chamber during the guided tour of Stormont Castle

We also learnt the official political description of the difference of lying, and not telling the truth, and why politicians touch the red boxes of state as they speak. These boxes used to carry a religious book of the person's faith, as in swearing on the bible to tell the truth.

After a quick lunch we then travelled to the Titanic Museum at the waterfront. This was an amazing museum telling the history of shipbuilding and other associated businesses, and of course the history of the Olympic class liners built between 1908 and 1915, including the Titanic. It created the dark and noisy atmosphere of building the Titanic but made reading some of the information quite difficult. It continued through its fitting out, sea trials, and fateful maiden voyage. It went into great detail of what went wrong leading up to the iceberg incident, concluding there were several major factors coming together to create the situation.



The Exterior View of the Titanic Museum

Outside the museum is the actual tender boat, 'Nomadic' →



We then returned to the hotel for our last evening meal and to pack our bags.

Saturday September 9th

Ferry to Cairnryan and on to Stockport

We travelled the thirty-minute trip to the Stenna Line ferry terminal at Belfast and finally set sail around 1130, arriving in Cairnryan at 1345. We were back on the road again towards England and the M6 within fifteen minutes, crossing the border into England at two and a half hours later, and arrived at our Holiday Inn in Stockport at 1945.

Sunday September 10th Return to Wymondham

Our originally planned trip to Hardwick Hall on the way back to Wymondham had been cancelled. We left Stockport after breakfast and travelled straight 'home' arriving back in Wymondham mid-afternoon.

With the exception of Hardwick Hall on the way home, all our visits were very successful. And of course we have to thank our weather goddess, Vivienne, for providing two smooth sea crossings, and only permitting rain when we were either inside a museum, or on the coach. To keep us dry in Ireland must be close to miracle proportions.