

Stowmarket U3A



Stowmarket and District Learning Activities in Retirement

Registered Charity No. 1002987



NEWSLETTER

No. 50

AUTUMN 2017

27th AGM, Cedars Hotel, 20th Sept 2017

With over 80 people in attendance (including 4 who joined on the day—welcome!), the meeting started at 2.00pm. After the Chairman had given his opening statement (see p2) and the Treasurer had reported on the Accounts the new Committee were collectively and unanimously elected.

Joyce Kay and Rev Ian Hooper stood down with the remaining members standing for re-election. Ken Snow as new Chairman, Bryan Hilton as Groups Coordinator and new members Elizabeth Gillette and Jane Langley completing the Committee (see full list on p8).

Immediately after the AGM, the Singing Group, led by Hillary Foster, gave us renditions of some well known and some not so well known songs. Either way the audience joined in enthusiastically!









27th AGM, 2017, ANNUAL STATEMENT by the outgoing Chairman, Mr Bryan Hilton

s I'm now at the end of my three-year term of office, I part of the wider U3A movement. can look back over another very active year, recalling some excellent monthly speakers and interesting outings. I must acknowledge the committed support and skills of Keith and Lorraine Shelton who took over from Dee, and Angela Bentley with Linda Benbow, for running the Town & Village History group so well for some time. You know what they say about wanting a job done well – "ask someone who's busy". That's certainly been true of these activities.

But it's also true in another key area – Membership - where Andrea Burton has managed a fluctuating number of around 230 people. It takes more effort than we might realise; so it's thanks to Andrea for all she does - and the care with which she does it.

Then there's the finances which Jean Roche manages so assiduously. We want to keep subscriptions as low as possible, but we must cover all our costs - speakers, hall hire, capitation etc.- and it's Jean who maintains that balance so carefully, and produces the Accounts which you'll see today.

Never forget the Secretary, they say. And quite right! Connie Harford helps us to keep on the right lines as a registered charity (and that's not as easy as it used to be) and to be Bryan Hilton

In this annual roundup, I also want to thank our newest Committee Member Evelyn Russell who has been helping us to understand our Members' needs more clearly, and make better use of the resources we have in-house.

Joyce Kay and Ian Hooper who have given their valuable time to the Committee's work are not standing for re-election this time. But they have made their mark and we have been most grateful. I am pleased to say that other U3A Members have come forward offering to take their place on the Committee.

Overall we have been blessed this past year with a very talented - and committed - Committee, whose experience and skills we continue to put to good use.

In conclusion, I want to add a personal note of appreciation. During the year Keith Shelton covered the Chair's role for me while I was unwell - and made such a superb job of it!

There are still many prospective Members out there who don't know what they're missing by not joining us! So I will be very happy to continue playing a part in expanding our Group.

September 2017

01449 612 730

Groups News

Town and Village History Group

2017 has been another year of very enjoyable outings including Lavenham, Leiston, a boat trip on the Deben, the Suffolk Regiment museum and in October a visit to the Newmarket Racing museum.

The outings have always been very well supported by U3A members, very often selling out within a few days and always thoroughly enjoyed so a huge thank you to everyone who has planned and organised trips and visits over the past years.

At the November 2016 AGM we asked for volunteers to coordinate the group starting in November 2017 but so far no one has come forward.

This means unfortunately that there will be no Town and Village outings in 2018. Linda Benbow

Poetry Group

The re-convened Poetry Group will be now meeting on the 4th Thursday of the month only, instead of twice a month. Jenifer Adams

SEAM

We have relocated to the Maxwell-Charney Rooms in Haughley. This means that we have additional space and will be able to recruit new members. We meet at 2pm on the 3rd Monday of the month. Please note, however, the bus service from Stowmarket does not run at convenient times for the start of the group.

In November we will be looking at the works of the polymath, John Berger.

01449 615 966 Devam Hendry

Discussion Group

Sorry, the Group is currently full but we

have opened a waiting list.

David Warner

French Conversation (2)

If you would be interested in joining a reconvened French (2) group, please give me a call..

Zuleika Dobson 01449 615 811

Mah-jong

Brian O'Shea has started a series of 8 sessions, to enable people to learn the rules of and to be able to play Mahjong. At the end of this period participants will have the opportunity to form a U3A Mah-jong group and then play regularly thereafter. For further inforcall Brian mation, please on 01449 614 129.

n the last issue, I reported that at the July meeting and after a lot of soul searching, it was decided that it was time for the group to reassess its objectives and methods of communication.

A Computer Group has been running in one form or another since the start of Stowmarket U3A 27 years ago (!) so I'm reluctant to abandon it completely. There is definitely a need to change the format, however, because as time goes by people's needs change and improvements (?) in technology complicate matters further (hence the change last year to 'Computing & Technology'). Looking back on a newsletter from 2002 and without the internet available at the meetings, it seemed to be the case that individual members had skills in different subjects (like Word, Excel, Publisher, Photo manipulation and the like) and were prepared to take sessions on these topics or sometimes even run separate regular classes away from the main meeting. To some extent, this was still the situation when I joined in 2007, but diminished considerably as time went by.

I've been looking after things since taking over from Wendy Morgan in late 2010 and would ideally like to hand over to someone else, but for a variety of reasons that's not been possible. So – in thinking about how we could move forward and spread the load somewhat - it occurred to me that perhaps we could look at running the group online either with a Q&A blog – on our Wordpress site - or perhaps a more organised forum. Members could post a query and anyone of the others who had an answer or solution could reply. I floated the idea and it seemed quite well received.

We decided to set up a small working party to look at this idea in more detail and they reported back after our summer break at a special meeting in September. The construction of a full forum is beyond us at the moment not the least in that our version of Wordpress cannot support one. We looked at a page constructed whereby members could post a query and anyone of the others who had an answer or solution could reply. To reduce the chance of abuse and online spammers, this is a password protected page (as a protection against spammers), the password being given only to members. All messages come to me first for moderation and approval.

We all tried it out in principle and in spite of a few niggly restrictions imposed by Wordpress it worked out very well. On this basis, it was agreed that the Group would cease to have monthly meetings (so none in October and November) but perhaps on an occasional basis. To assess the first couple of month's progress/take up of the Q&A page, we will be having our Christmas party meeting on Wednesday 20th December at the Scout hut.

In the mean time if there are any Stowmarket U3A members who are not C&T group members but who would like to try the system out, please feel free to contact me by phone or email (last page) and I'll give you the access password.

The main group page on the website has been revamped to reflect these changes and there is a clear link to the Q&A page,

https://u3astowmarket.wordpress.com/groups/stowmarket -u3a-computer-group/

Gardens & Things, July 20th, Harold Turner

Our visit today was to a much changed Black Cottage farm, last visited some eight years ago, which has since changed hands and renamed Shorelands.

The party of some fifteen members arrived about 10.30 and was greeted with a cup of coffee in a new barn which doubled as an eating area where light lunches could be obtained.

The whole concept was far different to our last visit, with new walk ways both established and some still in the rough state passing through a variety of copses which sheltered wildlife and an array of plants and shrubs.

The owner gave a very interesting talk in the lane leading to the main area, and we were all amazed at the range of different shrubs that would surely have been missed without the knowledge of our guide. The party went for our pre arranged lunch which was very appetizing and filling, after which we were taken round the wildlife park by the wife of our guide. The park encompasses some 20 acres of both grazing and farmed areas. We left around 3.30 pm after a very interesting day - with thanks to the hard work of Dee our organizer.

This will be my last G&T submission as your co-ordinator as I am retiring after some 20 years and will be looking for someone to take over the reins at our 2018 programme meeting on November 16th, 10.30am at Woodfield Bowls Club. I have enjoyed my stewardship and co-ordinating your wishes. I thank everyone who has contributed to the group in any way and hope that the group carries on in strength.

Harold.

Gardens & Things, Muntons 21st Sept

he placard outside the Muntons Factory in Stowmarket states that they are "passionate about Malt". What we did not know, and was soon to find out when the Garden and Things Group visited the factory on Thursday 21 September, was that Muntons are equally passionate about the way they We visited the beds where the barley is tour of the factory.



After an introductory talk about the history and development of this privately own company we broke off into three groups to visit different parts of the site. This meant that we all had to get dressed for the part with each of us donning hair nets, hard hats, white coats, hi-vis jackets and ear defenders to comply with health and safety requirements.





treat their visitors and organise their germinated for 4 days under carefully factory visits. Our group of 29 members controlled conditions to allow the grain had an amazing time during our 2 hour to take up enzymes and minerals and to soften. After a drying and cleaning process the barley completes its transformation into malt. In this format the malt can be transferred, under pressure, to container lorries where it is distributed worldwide. Another area of the factory converts malt into malt extract. Here we saw the malt heated under high pressure until it transformed initially into a bubbling treacle and then into a kind of honeycomb sugar. The finished product is then either bottled and packaged as malt extract or added to other ingredients to make products such as Home Brewing Beer, Cider and Wine Making Kits.

> A third area of the factory that we visited was the "Centre of Excellence". Here we learned of the research and development undertaken on the site, including the Bakery where products which include malt and malt extract are made and tested and the mini Brewery Muntons, can experiment and produce malt new products on a mini-scale, and when yd2l7pk7 completely satisfied can then reproduce the product in much larger scale back at their own factory. We tasted different

types of malt which are used in cakes, breads, crackers and cereals, ranging from malt which had the appearance of a white flour through to malt which resembled dark chocolate powder.

The tour was concluded with refreshments and cake (chocolate cookies and chocolate brownies containing malt extract of course) before we headed home, stunned by the size of their operation which manufactures over 210,000 tonnes of malt annually.

It is not surprising, of course, that Muntons should be located in Stowmarket. With a £10 million pound annual turnover Muntons buys all its barley from within a 50 mile radius of Stowmarket, renowned as one of the world's



prime malting barley growing regions. Half of its products are exported worldwide, including to Seattle, Thailand and Singapore.

More information about Muntons can be found on its company website, where you can also download a large where breweries, in conjunction with range of recipes which contain malt or extracts https://tinyurl.com/

Keith & Lorraine

See more pictures taken on this trip on the G&T page of our website.

Coming Up....

Nov 15: Chocolate (Tony Diamond)

After a brief introduction to the history of Chocolate, Tony talks about the beliefs (factual and nonsensical), amazing myths and areas of ignorance surrounding chocolate.

Dec 13: Christmas Lunch at the Mill

Jan 17: Confessions of a Church Crank (Roy Tricker)

Roy uses his wicked sense of humour to inform us about churches, including the story of the discussions, deals and wrangles leading up to the creation of Suffolk's own diocese (and cathedral and bishop) in 1914. This hilarious talk includes some of the 'closed' material in the diocesan archives and should prove to be quite a revelation!

Play Reading Group

he Group has continued to meet on the second Monday in the month and following "The Constant Wife" by Somerset Maugham we then read "The Cocktail Party" by T.S. Eliot.

"The Cocktail Party" follows Edward and Lavinia Chamberlayne who are separated after five years of marriage; howevkeep up social appearances. By the end of the play they learn some unfortunate results. that their life together, though hollow and superficial, is preferable to life apart.

We are now reading "A Small Family Business" by Alan Ayck- Maureen Wingham-Eaton 01449 77200

bourn. Jack McCraken arrives home to discover a surprise party, thrown by his wife Poppy, to celebrate him taking over the running of the family furniture business, The party is disturbed when Benedict Hough, a private detective, arrives to privately confront Jack with the fact he has caught Jack's daughter Samantha shoplifting. Hough threatens prosecution unless he gets a job with the family firm. Jack shows him the door. However, Jack learns that the firm's furniture is being er Lavinia has left Edward just as they are about to host a copied by an Italian firm and believes there to be a spy in cocktail party at their London home, and he has to come up their firm. Jack contacts Hough and hires him. The investigawith an explanation for why Lavinia is not present, in order to tion involves the activities of other family members with

> The group is full at present, however, I will take a waiting list and therefore if anyone is interested please contact:

"LISTEN, LEARN AND LAUGH"

one or more of our wide range of Interest Groups.

cal, artistic, cerebral or just fun.

But the present list is not finite. Among us are people with fascinating backgrounds, experience and personal interests; and that makes an excellent starting point for a new Group.

n addition to our exciting programme of monthly speakers, Have a look at the preliminary results from our survey (p7) to many of our Members fulfil the aims of U3A by attending see how many ideas have already come from just 25% of our membership.

As can be seen from the current list of groups (p7) there's If you have a particular interest not presently covered by a something here for pretty well everyone: walking, eating, Group, do please let me know, and let's see just how many music, play-reading, card games, for example; in fact: physi- others share it. In recent months we've seen several new Groups started. But there's room for more! And if you haven't joined a Group so far, take a fresh look at the list and see what you might have been missing!

Bryan Hilton - Groups Coordinator - Tel: 01449 258152

July speaker review

"History of Harrods" by Eve Regelous

ve worked closely with Harrods for almost a decade organising their creative and lavish events and gave us a unique, "behind the scenes" insight into this world famous company.



She took us through the store's colourful history, from its foundations to the recent takeover, illustrating daily life in the store for both staff and customers - from when the store first installed elevators and a footman was in attendance at the top of the escalator administering a tot of brandy to customers to help them to recover from their new experience - to the complete reconstruction of the fourth

floor into a village green, complete with pub, cricket match and village activities to celebrate the birthday of the then

owner, Mohamed Al-Fayed.

We were surprised to learn that at one time Harrods had a Pet Department which recently closed after over 100 years in existence and which prided itself on selling any animal of any stripe, size and colour to its customers. Sales included a lion cub, elephant, alligator and camel as well as, no doubt, the more usual, much smaller, range of household pets. The story has it that when ex-President Reagan rang Harrods to

ask if they sold elephants - the symbol of his party - he received the reply: "Would

Would that be African or Indian, Sir?"

that be African or Indian, sir?" As well as sharing her tales and experiences of the store Eve brought with her a plethora of memorabilia, including the famous Harrod's carrier bag and teddy bears.

Keith & Lorraine

Annual Outing, Glemham Hall & Gardens, August 2017

Keith & Lorraine Shelton and Bryan Hilton.

aving driven past Glemham Hall on the busy A12 many times we often wondered what went on in that large estate, and who (?) - if anyone - still lived there . Well, we found out!! A coach full of members descended on Glemham House on a warm August morning for our Summer Outing. We were met by the owner of the house, Major Phillip Hope-Cobbold, and our adventure began. What we did not know



rooms had been left just as the servants had last used them. The cellar, used for shoots and corporate events, was equally atmospheric – you would certainly have a party with a difference down there!

The tour extended to the gardens, which were well laid out

and tended. These were just a tiny part of the 3000 acre estate, with most of it utilised now for agricultural purposes. In the grounds they were setting up for a big modern music festival; this seems to be "what one does" these days, to help cover the overheads. As we strolled around the grounds and admired the view, Major Hope-Cobbold was busy making us a cup of tea

at the time was that this was to be a tour with a difference, more in the envelope of Fawlty Towers than National Trust. During the tour the Major recounted a number of anecdotes about both family life at Glemham and shared a little glimpse of his colourful ancestors.



With over 70 rooms and over 30 bedrooms we felt we had and cutting the cake, in preparation for our refreshments in free rein of the house - nothing was omitted - including a the conservatory, served by the Major himself.

> This was an excellent morning, made all the more entertaining and amusing by both the quirkiness of the house and the manner and wit of the Major.



Back on the coach we ventured to Woodbridge for lunch and a few hours of leisure, exploring the quaint streets, visiting

the range of independent shops and strolling along the river.



Finally, towards the end of the afternoon, we boarded the coach one last time. Tired but

eyes, recalling the day's events in our minds, of an experience not to be forgotten, with intriguing insights into how the Other Half lived in Britain all those years ago.

Go to the 'Outings' page on the website to see all the pictures taken by Stewart Dorward Ed



tour of his bedroom equipped with his dressing gown, toothpaste and toothbrush. We were invited to sit on the furniture (although some members felt that this was not a completely safe option to take as most were created well before the happy we made the journey home. A few of us rested our Health & Safety Executive changed our lives so irretrievably!!) whilst listening to his talk and stories. The attic, in particular, proved to be a fascinating warren of corridors and rooms - many of which seem to have been unused for years, creating an atmosphere of nostalgia and a sense that the

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2017, 25% RESPONSE ...

pproximately 25% of you have completed and returned • committee important information / ideas for taking our U3A what activities they would like to see available in our U3A. forward. We do not know if the views of those who have responded reflect the views of the rest of our membership so please we would like to hear from the other 75% of you!

Here are some of the results of the surveys we have received so far:

- Reasons for joining Meeting people was cited the most frequently followed by (in descending order) attending Suggestions for new groups were made across all six categotalks; joining a particular group; being part of a local group; ries. 9% of respondents indicated a willingness to run groups attend outings; learning new interests and sharing interests. on History, Poetry, German Conversation, Science / Engineer-Being part of a national group was the least cited reason.
- Experience & Skills 35% gained expertise working in the Public sector or Education; 25% in Business & other services, Finance or Insurance; 18% in Health & Social Care; 12% in Hospitality, Leisure, Catering; 9% in Manufacturing, Con- At the last Committee Meeting Bryan Hilton was elected & Wholesale.
- being more informed about what is happening; making annuent their responses. al payment online available; engaging new (younger?) members to take part; improved facilities for monthly talks; more links with other community groups; having a Group Coordinator.

Hobbies, interests and ideas for new groups - Memthe member survey. Thank you, as you have given your bers were asked what their interests and hobbies are and

> The most cited hobbies were Gardening, Reading, History and Art but overall covered a very wide variety. To help with our analysis, responses were divided into six categories: 1. Arts & Crafts, 2. Social/Outings, 3. Walking/Outdoors, 4. Game Focused, 5. Current trends & affairs/ study / research, 6. Active / Health related.

> ing and researching new ideas, 23% indicated a possible willingness to form groups focusing on Theatre Visits, General Friendship, History, Crafts, Painting, Drawing, Sketching, Print Making and Short Courses e.g. OU.

struction, Agriculture; 5% in "Other"; 2% in Transport, Retail Groups Coordinator and the survey information has been provided to him to take forward when possible.

Opportunities for Improvements - 14% of members Please feel free to comment on the information presented offered suggestions for improvements related to the Com- here BUT PLEASE, 75%, LET US HAVE YOUR COMPLETED mittee, the Membership, Monthly Talks and Groups. These SURVEYS. Your committee can then take forward matters in included being open to new ideas and new groups; members the knowledge that the majority of the membership has giv-

Evelvn Russell

STOWMARKET U3A, ACTIVITY & INTEREST GROUPS - October 2017. Please contact the Leader/Convenor for more information

ART APPRECIATION (SAAG)		Monthly: Agreed Tuesday	LUNCH CLUB (1)		Monthly: 2 nd Thursday
Tony Taylor	01449 258 192	9.30am	Angela Bentley	01449 780 274	12.20pm
ART APPRECIATION	(SEAM)	Monthly: 3 rd Monday	LUNCH CLUB (2)		Monthly: 4 th Thursday
Devam Hendry	01449 615 966	2.00pm	Bryan Hilton	01449 258 152	12.30pm
BOOK CLUB		Monthly: 4th Monday	LUNCH CLUB (3)		Monthly: 4 th Thursday
Mary Bradley	01449 775 628	2.00pm	Linda Benbow	01449 673 335	12.30pm
BRIDGE INTERMEDIATE		Weekly: Friday	MUSIC – Classical		Monthly:- 4 th Tuesday
Michael Last	01359 241 703	1.30pm	lan Hooper	01449 770 179	10.00am
CANASTA		Weekly: Wednesday.	MYTHS, STORIES A	ND LEGENDS	Monthly: 1 st Monday
Hazel Burl	01449 615 581	9.30am (Stowupland)	Philip Weir	01449 676 528	2.30pm
COMPUTING & TECHNOLOGY		Online Q&A forum only	PAINTING FOR PLEASURE		2/Month: 2 nd , 4 th Fridays
Peter Dakeyne	01449 781 562		Nina Rouse	01449 612 042	10.00am - 12noon
COUNTRY STROLLS	Longer	2/Month: 1 st , 3 rd Fridays	PATCHWORK		Monthly: 3 rd Monday
Phil Webb	01449 781 872	9.30am (variable)	Kate Riddleston	01449 612 871	2.00pm
Anna Bradshaw	01449 745 829				
COUNTRY STROLLS	Shorter	Monthly: Last Friday	PHOTOGRAPHY		Monthly: 3 rd Tuesday
Elizabeth Gray	01449 678 853	1.00pm	Peter Dakeyne	01449 781 562	2.00pm
DAY WALKS		Usually, last Saturday	PLAY READING		Monthly: 2 nd Monday
Helen Barrett	01449 676 491	c 10.30 am	Maureen Wingham	-Eaton 01449 771 200	10.00am
DISCUSSION		Monthly: 2 nd Tuesday	POETRY		Monthly: 4 th Thursday
David Warner	01449 612 730	10.00am	Jenifer Adams	01449 615 581	2.00pm
ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND REFORM Monthly: 4 th Monda		Monthly: 4 th Monday	SCRABBLE PLAYING GROUPS		Several - By Arrangement
David Chapman	01449 736 223	2.00pm	Michael Last	01359 241 703	
FRENCH CONVERSATION 2/Month: 2 nd , 4 ^{tl}		2/Month: 2 nd , 4 th Tuesdays	SINGING		2/Month: 1 st , 3 rd Thursdays
Andrea Burton	01449 258 865	10.00am	Hilary Foster	01359 241 773	2.00pm
GARDENS & THINGS		Monthly: 3 rd Thursday	TOWN & VILLAGE HISTORY		Monthly: Normally 1 st Thurs
Harold Turner	01449 676 882	9.30am (variable)	Group suspended pending new convenor		

Memory Course

Aughton and Ormskirk U3A have devel-teach peers. oped a "Memory Course". The Memory Course, designed to give practical information to increase understanding about memory and dementia, consists of 4 x 1½ hour sessions over a four-week period. It is for a closed group of 12 people and is required be delivered by two co-

presenters and supported by two ad- as intended. ministrators. It is designed for peers to

delivered, co-presenters will need to have an understanding of group dynamics and person-centred and experiential learning to be able to deliver the course

If you have such expertise and wish to deliver a Memory Course for our own Although there is a pack of materials U3A members, or are willing to act as an which have been produced to inform co administrator for the course, then you -presenters of how the course should be are invited to contact our Groups Coordinator, Bryan Hilton, for more information.

> https://aughton-ormskirk-u3a.co.uk/ memory-course/

Christmas Menu, 2017

To start, a choice of:

- Wild game croquette, with a parsnip purée
- Sweet potato, chilli, coconut, and lime soup - (vegan)
- Ohicken liver parfait, with toasted ciabatta, house chutnev
- ♦ Tian of crab, prawn, and avocado, served with mixed leaves, and a lemon emulsion - (gluten free)
- ♦ Goats cheese, cranberry, and sage stuffing filo parcels - (vegetarian)

Followed by:

- Norfolk bronzed turkey breast, with all the traditional trimmings
- Red wine braised wild game casserole, served with suet dumplings and creamy $\,\,\diamond\,\,$ Mince pies, and your choice of tea or mash

♦ Binham blue cheese, roasted pepper, and spinach wellington, served with creamy mash, and a festive spiced gravy - (vegetarian)

 Classic nut roast, roast potatoes, festive vegetables and gravy - (vegan)

For dessert:

- ♦ Tangy lemon frozen parfait, with a pistachio crumb
- ♦ Traditional Christmas pudding, served with brandy cream
- ♦ Coconut rice pudding, and raspberry compote (vegan and gluten free)
- Chocolate truffle tarte, served with pouring cream
- ♦ Traditional cheese board (+£2)
- ◊ Finally:
- coffee

THE MILL BAR & GRILL.

Stowmarket

Wednesday 13th December

12.00 for 12.30pm Licensed bar for drinks Ample free parking

£25.00

(Payment by Cheque preferred)

Tickets available at the October and November meetings —please choose your menu items

Stowmarket U3A Committee Members 2017/2018





















Ken Snow

Jean Roche

Keith Shelton

Bryan Hilton

Elizabeth Gillette

Connie Hardford Andrea Burton Lorraine Shelton **Evelyn Russell** Jane Langley

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