

Hello Everyone,

As I am a relatively new member of Stowmarket u3a, I thought I would briefly introduce myself. I have lived in Stowmarket for about seven years, having lived just a little distance from the town for a number of years before that. I spent most of my working life in London, in recent times as an adjudicator involved with construction disputes, retiring some twenty years ago.

Upon attending my third talk at the URC I was very concerned to hear that the branch needed a new Chair and in the event of one not being elected the U3a would have to close. As I am sure many of you will agree, this would have been a very sad situation, as it is a very worthwhile and friendly branch. For this reason I put my name forward, which was proposed and seconded by Keith and Lorraine and was duly elected at the September AGM.

As you are probably aware a new committee has been assembled made up of existing and new committee members. A number of longstanding committee members had expressed a wish not to continue, which is quite understandable and I thank them for their invaluable input.

At the first new committee meeting held in October it necessitated a little bit of juggling to fill the vacant major outstanding posts. We have now achieved this. We are now coming to grips with the intricacies of running a u3a which for some of us means a lot to learn. In this regard, I would particularly like to thank Neil our Secretary who has worked tirelessly to unravel some of the mysteries.

Again we have some very interesting monthly talks coming up. Sadly I missed the 'From Fast-Jet to Wobbly Head' talk but did attend 'A Few Suffolk Villages'

talk by Peter Tatum which was excellent and even I recognised a number of the villages of which he spoke. The upcoming 'Witches, Ghosts and Demons of the Fens' talk is very apt for this time of the year and I am sure will be very interesting.

The organisation of the fast approaching Christmas Lunch on the 13th December is well under way, with an excellent menu and I think is very competitively priced. Look forward to seeing many of you there.

Lastly I would mention the hand made Christmas wreaths (page 10) and table decoration workshop being held at the URC in December, do join them, there is nothing like having made your own!

Take care everyone,

Chris Meara,
Chair

Stowmarket u3a Committee Members 2023/2024



Chris Meara Neil Instrall Steve Barber Barbara Cutting Barbara Gort Mike Taylor
Jackie Durrant Anne Weedon Keith Shelton Stew Dorward Glenda Taylor

Chair	Chris Meara	01449 775 942	chair@u3astowmarket.org.uk
Vice Chair	Jackie Durrant	01449 672 690	vicechair@u3astowmarket.org.uk
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Treasurer (+ Beacon Admin)	Ann Weedon	01449 771 947	treasurer@u3astowmarket.org.uk
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Programme Organiser	Keith Shelton	01449 768 744	programme@u3astowmarket.org.uk
Groups Coordinator	Barbara Cutting	01449 615 346	groupscoord@u3astowmarket.org.uk
Committee Members	Stew Dorward	01449 774 213	
	Barbara Gort	01473 834 027	
	Glenda Taylor	07549 167 313	
	Mike Taylor	01449 678 638	

July:

This year's annual event was a coach trip to the **Cambridge Botanical Gardens**. The trip was met with enthusiasm, as we had a full coach of 35 participants and even a waiting list of 7 members. The trip's popularity was evident in that we experienced very few cancellations. Thankfully, the weather was on our side, providing the perfect setting for a enjoyable outing.



During the trip, 13 of our members had the opportunity to partake in a 90-

minute guided tour, full of fascinating information about the beautiful gardens. There are numerous trees from around the world all with different characteristics. Most fascinating was the tree that fuses its branches. The flower beds are laid out in families and we were surprised to learn that the use of DNA in plants is showing that some plants that were not previously put together in the same family do actually belong together.

There was plenty to see for those who did not participate in the tour including the lake, the green houses and the spiral walkway through plant time. The shop and café were both well supported and some of us will be returning to see things we missed as time passed all too quickly.



Click the picture above to see more on our web site.....

August:

Conserving Antarctic History by **Geoff Cooper**. Geoff's talk shed light on the remarkable and challenging task of conserving the historic huts used by explorers such as **Scott** and **Shackleton** during their pioneering expeditions to the South Pole. These huts, now designated as a World Heritage Site, stand as a testament to human resilience and exploration in one of the most extreme environments on Earth. Geoff and his colleagues' dedication to preserving these invaluable pieces of history, despite the harsh conditions of the Antarctic, showcase their commitment to safeguarding our past for future generations.

Scott's Terra Nova Expedition (1910-1913) and Shackleton's Nimrod Expedition (1907-1909) are tales of endurance, courage, and scientific discovery. These huts, frozen in time, offer insights into the living conditions,

scientific methods, and the unwavering spirit of exploration that defined the early 20th century.

The huts are fragile structures that face the constant threat of deterioration due to extreme weather conditions. Geoff shared the challenges **UK Arctic Heritage Trust** conservationists face. Working in temperatures as low as minus 40 degrees Celsius and winds reaching speeds of 200 kilometres per hour is a testament to the inhospitable environment of Antarctica. The extreme cold and harsh conditions made even the simplest tasks a test of physical and mental endurance.

Preservation efforts require a delicate balance between maintaining the huts' historical authenticity and ensuring their structural integrity. There were so many fascinating facts in this talk, from the ways they have to lift and re-lay linoleum using the original nails, to the way the conservators restore belongings left behind including

slippers, tins, bottles and pictures that we were spell-bound as we listened.



Geoff's dedication to conserving the Antarctic huts of Scott and Shackleton serves as an inspiration to us all, reminding us that no matter the obstacles, human determination and adaptability can overcome even the most extreme challenges.

Clearly, these huts are not just structures frozen in time; they embody the indomitable spirit of exploration and human resilience.

September:

The September meeting was a tale of two halves, each filled with its own significance. The AGM marked the official beginning of our September meeting, and it was heartening to see such a robust attendance, with over 80 members coming together to hear about our activities over the past year. This is a testament to the active and engaged community we have within our U3A group.

We elected the new Committee that will guide us through the forthcoming year. We expressed our gratitude to the outgoing Committee members for their hard work and welcomed the new team

with anticipation and enthusiasm.

Following the AGM, the second half of the afternoon was devoted to a presentation by the much-admired **Sally Dearman**. Many of us remembered her captivating talk from the previous year and, responding to popular demand, we were delighted to have her back to share her new presentation, **'From Fast-Jet To Wobbly-Head.'**

In this talk, Sally regaled us with her extraordinary journey, from the challenges and thrills of jet fighter pilot training to her transition into the role of a Search and Rescue Helicopter pilot. Her first hand accounts of the trials and tribulations she faced were nothing short of inspiring.

Sally also shared the personal aspects of her journey, including how she met her future partner and how this relationship influenced her life choices. She spoke of her transition from a "trained killer" in the military to a "nurturing mother" as a civilian..

Her current venture, running workshops and retreats, is a testament to her personal evolution and her commitment to finding her own path to self-discovery and fulfilment.

Sally's journey is an example of resilience, transformation, and the pursuit of one's calling. Her story left us with a sense of empowerment and a renewed belief in the potential for positive change in our own lives.

October:

Exploring Suffolk's Hidden Gems: A Journey through "A Few Suffolk Villages" by Peter Tatum

Peter's talk took us on a delightful whistle-stop tour, revealing the hidden treasures of several villages in Suffolk. While many of us were already familiar with these villages, Peter's presentation brought a fresh perspective, encouraging us to see them through a different lens.

He invited us to explore the villages

from a different angle, whether through a historic building, the warm embrace of the local village pub, the stories told by village signs, or notable events that had shaped their history.

The talk was complemented by a collection of photographs that captured the splendour of the villages, allowing us to appreciate the beauty and nuances of these villages in a way we had not seen before. His images brought to life the distinctive character of each place, enriching our understanding and appreciation of our

region.

Many of us now view these villages in a slightly different light, with a desire to explore them further and uncover their hidden gems. Peter's presentation was a testament to the charm of Suffolk's villages and the countless stories that make our region so special, a reminder of what surrounds us, waiting to be uncovered, and the importance of seeing our familiar surroundings from a more novel perspective.

Peter generously donated his fee to the Diabetes Society.



Group News



From the Groups' Coordinator

Following the Annual General Meeting in September, the committee now consists of many new faces.

So, I should like to introduce myself as your new **Groups Coordinator**. I have taken over from **Liz Power** who has done an excellent job and I should like to take the opportunity to thank Liz for all she has done for the Groups. Also, for her 'words of wisdom' over a coffee

to help me understand the role.

Hopefully in the next Newsletter I will be able to inform you of any new Groups being formed. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any suggestions for a new Group. Even if it's just an idea, I am sure that between us we could get one up and running.

In the mean time, **Zena Dakeyne** would like to restart a **Scrabble** group at her home in Bacton. If you are interested and can travel, please call her on 01449 781 562.

And **Nancy Dickson** would like to know if you are interested in starting a **Spanish Conversation** group? All levels except absolute beginners would be great! Please contact her on nanceroo2@gmail.com

I hope to have a meeting of all Group Leaders soon, so I can get to know more of you and discuss how Groups are progressing.

Barbara Cutting

groupscoord@u3astowmarket.org.uk

Walk and Talk

With new members continuing to join, the group goes from strength to strength. Having enjoyed excellent weather in June, July was more of a mixed bag.

July 7th. Roger Crouch writes:- Linda and I thought it would be a good idea to walk the area between **Bilderston and Wattisham**; but we were unable to find any recognized walks. Checking the public footpaths in the area on the OS maps, we found a path which led from Bildeston, that was in a valley, with a tributary of the river Brett and an old Roman road from Long Melford to Coddtenham. This terminated at the Wattisham Airfield which was constructed in 1913.

We then turned towards the village of Wattisham past the moated Hall and onto the redundant church of St Nicolas for a break. Apparently there is an 18th century memorial inside the church to six people of the same family who had all lost their feet due to gangrene. The 15 walkers hot footed back to Bildeston via an area known as Clayhill and lunch was enjoyed at Battisford Punchbowl, the community public house.

July 21st. Seventeen group members joined a 5.1 mile walk led by **Mike and Glenda** around the **Beyton and Rougham** area. The walk was mostly



Beyton & The White Horse

along good, well defined footpaths with a little walking on quiet country lanes adjoining the Rougham Estate. Afterwards, a tasty lunch was enjoyed by eleven of the group at 'The White Horse' public house in Beyton.

Aug 4th. We enjoyed a walk from **Claydon** led by **Amanda Park**. The walk was quite undulating with lovely views and took us via **Akenham**. Although the



Claydon

weather had been kind to us during the walk the heavens opened just as we were changing for lunch.

Aug 18th. The walk, Led by **Phil and Anne Webb** saw us in **Thorndon**. Starting at the Black Horse we walked down a path through Ganderwick Wood and then around the outskirts of **Braisworth** before returning to the Black Horse for lunch.

Sept 1st. A circular walk around **Needham Market** led by **Colin and Linda Geyman**, - initially taking in the high ground to the south of the town, before returning along the banks of the river Gipping to Needham Lakes. Lunch was enjoyed at the newly refurbished Limes Hotel.

Sept 15th. Led by **Keith and Lorraine Shelton** and starting at **East Bergholt** we followed a number of paths until we dropped down onto the Stour Valley,

with long views across to Maningtree. We then followed the Stour Valley Path to **Flatford** where we had a short break to enjoy the scenery before climbing back to our starting point. Lunch was then enjoyed at the Carriers Arms.

Oct 20th. There was only one walk in October, which was led by **Stephen Barber** from **Combs to Badley and back** on the day that storm **Babet** hit Suffolk. Initially we believed it would be just a wet walk but when it was time to head for lunch at the Battisford Punch Bowl,



the roads en-route were flooded. Notwithstanding we all battled on and made our journey to the pub who



welcomed us warmly. The journey home however was a totally different matter, with those who lived outside Stowmarket facing long delays and in the case of some abandoning cars and in one instance having to stay with friends overnight!

Phil Webb, Keith Shelton

French Conversation (1)

We now have a couple of spare places. We're a friendly group which meets in Stowmarket on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month from

10.00-12.00.

If you're interested or would like to know more please contact **Helen Mead** on **07827 814819**.



Aviation Group

The Aviation Group took off in March this year with several enthusiasts meeting the first Tuesday of each month to talk about all things aviation. We hear a presentation about a particular topic followed by discussion related to the presentation or any other items of interest.

This summer we went on field trips to the Clacton Air Show, Debach Museum and the Stow Maries Museum.

With the cooler weather we are now back indoors talking about airplanes.

There is a newly organized East of England Aviation Group that meets monthly via zoom with aviation enthusiasts from all over the country. We have guest speakers making presentations on all sorts of current and historical aspects of aviation. In March we will hear from Capt John Hutchinson about his experiences as a British Airways Concorde Captain.

Please contact **Don Mobley** at oneisbingo@gmail.com if you would like to become a member of the either the local and/or Regional Aviation group.



Click on the picture above for a **Debach virtual tour**.



Red Arrows display

Computing & Technology.

We continue to have Bi-monthly on-line meetings. These now tend to be more a catch-up for the members to raise any IT issues that have arisen since the last meeting rather than working to a fixed agenda. The format is proving quite popular and the 2 hour session never seems quite enough!

As mentioned before, we do have a **WhatsApp** group where members can raise any problems as they occur. This

group is also open to any u3a member who wishes to join. Just follow [HERE](#) to get the invite link.

Back in the Spring edition of the Newsletter I mentioned, for the first time, ChatGPT. Since then there has been an explosion of news about AI (Artificial Intelligence) both in praise of its use to individuals and more recently warnings about the destructive potential of AI in the wrong hands.

The u3a has recognised that the whole

topic of AI will become of increasing importance to our membership and so a new subject advisor has been appointed— **Barry Claydon of East Suffolk u3a**.

Read what he has to say [HERE](#), plus I've adapted a couple of his documents for easy reading, just follow the links:- [ChatGPT](#) and [Bing Image Generator](#) And a couple more I've found:- [5 Incredible AI Tools](#), and [5 More...](#)

Enjoy!!

Peter Dakeyne

Play Reading – Virtual

The Virtual Play Reading Group has continued to meet twice a month on 2nd and 4th Monday, 11.00am – 12.00 noon.

Following reading "The Crucible" by Arthur Miller, we changed the mood by next reading "Blithe Spirit" by Noel Coward. We have now commenced reading "Present Laughter" by Noel Coward.

I anticipate that the Play Reading Group will continue as a Virtual Group for the foreseeable future. If anyone is interested in joining the Virtual Group, please contact me.

Anyone who is interested in joining the Group once we return to live meetings, please contact me and I will keep you informed when the situation changes.

Maureen Wingham-Eaton

Tel: 01449 771200 – email:

Maureen.wingham@mwmedia.uk.com

Table Tennis

Our group is going from strength to strength with currently 29 members. We play every other week at the St Peter's Church Hall in Stowmarket.

Plus we were recently please to entertain two guests from Southport u3a TT Club.

Qualification to join—be a Stowmarket U3A member! You will be made very welcome *irrespective of past experience*

Get all the details from our information sheet on the web site [HERE](#).

Peter Dakeyne 01449 781 562

Sunday Lunch Club

With 20 or so members, this group is thriving. As most venues are limited to the numbers they can take, I email everyone and accept the first 12 responses.

If you would like more details, please contact me.....

Melanie Westenra-Hartley on
01449 767 757

Gardens & Things (G&T)

The Gardens & Things Group (G&T) had several interesting outings throughout the summer. We kicked off in June by going to **Melford Hall** in Long Melford. This property has been owned by the National Trust since the 1960's. It was once a home for Benedictine monks and later owned by the Hyde Parker family, a member of which still lives on the premises.

The grounds are immaculate and great for a walk.



Next was a tour of **Christchurch Mansion** in Ipswich. Originally built in the 16th century as a private residence the mansion is home to **Christchurch**

Mansion Museum and Art Gallery which houses the largest number of Gainsborough and Constable outside London.



In August, a select group of 10 visited the recycling centre in Great Blakenham. Numbers were limited due to safety issues and not the least because of the



300 stairs that had to be negotiated. Over all, quite an eye opener!!

Our last trip of the season was to London for a **tour of the Houses of Parliament**. The tour was fabulous, interesting to stand in the Chambers. Lots of history and beautiful architecture. The tour was followed by a boat ride to Greenwich. The weather couldn't have been better. It was an early start to catch the coach but well worth it.



We hope to arrange a tour of Bletchley Park in 2024; stay tuned...

Val Fazzari & Liz Power

History Group

Church Tour – 10th August.... Following the well-received talk on Monumental Brasses by **Martin Stuchfield** in May, a field trip was arranged for the group to visit a few Suffolk and Essex churches with Martin to examine some brasses.

We started at the splendid, mainly 15th century church of **St Mary the Virgin at Stoke-by-Nayland** and Martin showed us:

A large figure brass that commemorates Sir William Tendring, d.1408, also his wife, Lady Catherine Tendring, d.1402, who lies nearby. Lady Catherine Howard, d.1465, was an ancestor of Ann Boleyn and Queen Elizabeth I is depicted wearing a heraldic mantle. In 1485 her husband was killed fighting for King Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field.

We then moved on to the church of **St**

Peter and Paul at Little Horkesley. This church was rebuilt in 1958 to replace a medieval building that was almost destroyed by a German landmine in 1940. Although much of the interior was destroyed, Martin told us that the monumental brasses were recovered from the rubble and later, painstakingly reconstructed at Colchester Castle Museum.

There is a large, almost complete brass to Sir Robert Swynborne, d.1391, and his son Sir Thomas, d.1412, beneath an ornate double canopy with an inscription in Old French. Another reconstruction is in the north side of the chancel. This commemorates Dame Brygete Marney, d.1549 who is shown flanked by her two husbands.

After lunch at **Polstead**, there was just time to travel the short distance to the local church of **St Mary**. Martin showed us a brass depicting a priest in mass vestments dated to c.1430, that may

represent Nicholas Blundell, who was rector of Polstead from 1417-28. Nearby, in front of the pulpit is a figure brass to a civilian and wife with a group of five sons thought to date from the 15th century.

Grateful thanks were extended by all to Martin for his valuable and insightful input throughout the tour and the group then headed homewards after a most interesting day.

Mike Taylor & Martin Stuchfield



More pictures and a **full account** of this day on the website - ['Outings'](#) page



On Thursday 3rd August the group participated in a guided tour of St Mary's Church in the grounds of the abbey in Bury St Edmunds. Our tour guide was very informative and we learned lots of interesting facts covering the life of the church from its inception in the seventh century, founded by King Sigeberht. until today and the interesting characters who have connections to the church.



Mary Tudor, Duchess of Suffolk and sister of Henry VIII, has a tomb in the church. She was buried here after living in Westhorpe Hall near Stowmarket. Sir Robert Drury also has a tomb in the church. He was an English knight, Lord of the Manor of Hawstead, Suffolk, and Speaker of the House of Commons. His London townhouse was on the site of today's Drury Lane and he was known as The Muffin man who lives down Drury Lane.

The church visit was followed by a picnic in the Abbey grounds. Unbelievably after all the rain we had been having the sun came out and we were able to enjoy a chat and food outside.

On the evening of Thursday 7th September, members of our **History and Walking groups** embarked on an enlightening journey through **Stowmarket**. This historical walk was organized as a collaborative effort between our groups and our members, **Barry and Heather Salmon**, who last year were Stowmarket Mayor and Consort. The event was to support their chosen charity, Greenlights at the MIX, which has since been renamed Empower.

Commencing at the picturesque gates of **Abbots Hall**, a fitting location to embark on a journey through time, the

knowledgeable and enthusiastic guides, Darren and Hannah from the **Stowmarket Historical Society**, led our group on a captivating journey through Stowmarket's rich history.

Darren and Hannah shared fascinating insights about the town's historical past, particularly focusing on the grandeur of the buildings that once adorned Ipswich Street. The walk was not only informative but also highly entertaining. Our members enjoyed the anecdotes and stories that brought history to life.

At the culmination of the history walk, our members made voluntary donations amounted to a generous £75 to support Empower's valuable work within our community. Darren and Hannah informed us of some future walks that they will be leading of behalf of Stowmarket Historical Society .

In the September monthly meeting of the group, **Barbara Cutting** led a discussion on the history of Scouting in Stowmarket, drawing on her four decades of active involvement in Scouting, as well as research and materials from the 1st Mendlesham Scout Group's centenary celebration in 2009. The presentation covered several key points:

1. Historical Context: Barbara provided insights into the global origins of the Scouting movement and its introduction to Stowmarket.
2. 1st Mendlesham Scout Group: A significant portion of the presentation focused on the history of the 1st Mendlesham Scout Group, highlighting its important milestones, leaders, and memorable events.
3. Visual Aids: Barbara used photographs and memorabilia to visually depict the evolution of Scouting in Stowmarket, showcasing scout camps, troop activities, and changes in scout uniforms.



4. Personal Stories: Barbara shared personal anecdotes and stories from her own Scouting experiences, offering a glimpse into the past.

5. Lockdown Research: During the COVID-19 lockdown, Barbara conducted research using memorabilia she had received, unearthing historical documents, photographs, and memorabilia related to local Scouting history.

The audience actively participated by asking questions and sharing their own Scouting memories. The meeting left us with a deeper appreciation for the significant role Scouting has played in our community and underscored the importance of preserving our local history.

Uncovering History at Sutton Hoo: A Wet but Wonderful Adventure!

In **October**, our group embarked on a memorable expedition to **Sutton Hoo**, organized and led one of our members, **Brenda Brown**. Brenda, who also volunteers as a guide at Sutton Hoo, set the stall for a fascinating day.

Brenda's passion for history and her dedication to Sutton Hoo added an extra layer of enrichment to our outing, allowing us to benefit from her knowledge of the site and its history.

The day began with Brenda's talk, where she shared insights about the ongoing renovation work at Sutton Hoo and the efforts to preserve and enhance this historical treasure.

However, the highlight was Brenda's discussion about the **Rendlesham Hoard**. This significant archaeological discovery, found not far from Sutton Hoo, has provided a glimpse into the wealth and culture of the early Anglo-Saxon period. Brenda's explanations painted a vivid picture of the artefacts, their historical context, and their importance to our understanding of the past.

..... Rendlesham Hoard artefacts....



Brenda then led a walk to the viewing platform where we had a great view of the burial mounds. What made our day particularly insightful was Brenda's ability to share additional information beyond what an "official" tour might offer.

Despite the rain and less-than-ideal weather conditions, our group of approximately 13 members braved the elements and remained undeterred. Our shared enthusiasm for history and the stories Brenda shared warmed our



spirits, making the day an enjoyable and very informative experience!

Keith & Lorraine

Photography.

We continue to meet on line every month. Recent topics explored are 'Wood(s)', 'Metal', 'Bizarre' and in October, 'Glass'.

Here are some of our 'Bizarre' pictures.

Make sure to visit our [website](#) gallery where examples of all our pictures since we started the group in 2013 are displayed.



Singing Group

The Singing Group has remained steady in numbers since the spring.

We continue to meet on the first and third Monday of each month from 2 pm until 3.30 pm at the United Reformed Church in Stowmarket. It's a warm and attractive venue with great acoustics and certainly adds to the pleasure of singing.

New members are always made really welcome by this friendly group - we are keen to attract folk who enjoy singing

lots of different songs in good company. between the members.

The variety of songs we enjoy is very broad as everyone has their own preferred style and genre. We usually learn a few new songs each term but continue with firm favourites every session.

Mostly we sing to accompaniment on the piano or piano accordion, but we usually start the session with unaccompanied warm ups and /or rounds.

The group also meets up once each term for a meal or afternoon tea. It's an

Anyone interested in joining the group should contact...

Hilary Foster

07842189794

The Discussion Group...

...has continued to meet despite some venue issues.

We've discussed relevant issues of the day including Climate Change, the NHS and UK's Benefit Culture, Strike Action in the UK. All topics are open for discussion except for politics and religion.

We are always looking for new members so feel free to contact me if you have any questions. It's all very informal and not too serious.

Liz Power

elisabethz252@gmail.com

Coming up....

Dec 13th. Christmas Lunch at the URC Church Hall (p 10).

Jan 17th. "Journey to Citizenship". Linda Scoles

Feb 21st. "Suffolk Prickles" Hedgehog Centre Museum, Paula Baker

Mar 20th. "Medical Detection Dogs Charity" Norma Howell

opportunity just to chat and get to know each other better and has helped to forge stronger friendships

Learning Events

Did you know that u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership!?

Most of these opportunities are presented by members themselves; sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement. There is also a wide range of talks on offer from well-known speakers and organisations, plus in-person events at venues like the Royal Institution.

All of these events can be booked below via Eventbrite. At the time of booking, please ensure that you can attend and if you later find that you're unable to, please cancel your place through Eventbrite to avoid others missing out unnecessarily.

The full list of courses for November and into December can be found by following this [LINK](#). Just click on any of the pictures for information and reserve a spot via Eventbrite

If you are considering offering a talk or workshop please get in touch at events@u3a.org.uk - the u3a would love to hear from you.

The online events are hosted on Zoom. There are some '[How to Guides](#)' for using Zoom (and many other platforms) if you are unfamiliar with video conferencing. Don't forget u3a also runs many [projects, initiatives and competitions](#) available for all members to get involved in too.

From the editor. If you decide to take part in one or more of these events, it would be most interesting for everyone to hear about the experience—which can be published in the

next (March) newsletter. Please let me know newseditor@u3astowmarket.org.uk

Interest Groups On Line

Interest Groups Online offers a variety of peer led, online learning opportunities for its subscribers.

As part of the u3a movement, members generously volunteer their time and share their knowledge, skills and experience with the members in their groups. Some groups are more interactive than others, with an expectation that all members take it in turns to present their knowledge. If in doubt, give it a go. The more groups you try, the more likely you'll find the one you love.

To join a group you must already be a paid up member of Interest Groups Online. **It costs £12 to join for the year**, which runs from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

Follow this [LINK](#) to find out more

"Third Age Matters" Screen Reader Editions

Just a reminder that you can access all editions of the 'Third Age Matters' magazine on line. *Unlike the printed versions this is at no cost to Stowmarket u3a nor yourself!*

You can browse all recent editions (no pictures, though) and find any particular topic that interests you from the menu at the beginning.

Find it all [HERE](#).

PD

CHRISTMAS FLORAL WORKSHOP



At URC STOWMARKET

TUESDAY 12th DECEMBER, 2023

10.00 am - 12.30 pm

TICKET £15.00...

...available until Monday 20th November from:-

Lorraine (01449 768 744) or Anne (01449 614 616)

Includes Coffee/Tea + Mince Pies

Please bring your own greenery and secateurs or scissors.

Everything else will be provided

Stowmarket u3a, Christmas Lunch 2023

URC Hall, 13th December 2022, 12.30 pm for 1.00 pm,

Price £27.00 pp – for 3 courses, £22.50 pp for 2 courses (main & dessert)

(Ticket price includes serving staff gratuity)

Tickets on sale at the November meeting.

Menu

Prawn Cocktail, *D/F, GF if advised, or

Cream of Tomato and Basil soup, Veggie, G/F. Can be D/F and vegan if advised, or

Brie and Cranberry Tart, Veggie

Traditional- Roast Turkey

Chipolata sausage, stuffing & Cranberry sauce, D/F can be G/F if advised, or

Fillet of Salmon served with watercress and lemon sauce, can be G/F & D/F if advised, or

Mushroom Stroganoff served with wild rice. Veggie, can be vegan and D/F if advised

All served -with roast potatoes & a selection of vegetables

Homemade Christmas pudding with Brandy butter & cream, Veggie, pudding is D/F without cream
and brandy butter or

Profiteroles served with salted caramel sauce, Veggie, or

Fresh Fruit Salad, Veggie, vegan, G/F, D/F, or

Cheese selection and biscuits Veggie, can be G/F if advised

Coffee & Mints

Homemade Mince pies Veggie, D/F

Please feel free to bring your own soft drinks/wine & glasses, should you wish.

*D/F dairy free, G/F gluten free

Activity & Interest Groups, November 2023

If you have an idea for a new group and would like some assistance in setting it up, please contact Barbara Cutting, Groups Coordinator on 01449 615 346, or email groupscoord@u3astowmarket.org.uk

AVIATION	
Don Mobley	07398 300 952
BOOK CLUB	
Sylvia Downs	01449 612 661
BRIDGE INTERMEDIATE/IMPROVERS	
Carol Gibson	07918 743 154
THE CAKE WALK	
Anna & Robert Bradshaw	01449 745 154
CANASTA (1)	
Hazel Burl	01449 615 581
CANASTA (2)	
Carol Gibson	07918 743 154
COMPUTING & TECHNOLOGY (Virtual)	
Peter Dakeyne	01449 781 562
DISCUSSION	
Liz Power	07799 761 336
FRENCH CONVERSATION (1)	
Helen Mead	01449 677 846
FRENCH CONVERSATION (2)	
Neville Cox	01473 657 374
GARDENS & THINGS	
Liz Power	07799 761 336
Val Fazzari	07720 391 443
GEOLOGY	
Linda Reynolds	07880 516 926
HISTORY	
Lorraine/Keith Shelton	01449 768 744
LUNCH CLUB (Sunday)	
Liz Power	07799 761 336
Val Fazzari	07720 391 443
MUSIC - CLASSICAL	
Ian Hooper	01449 770 179
PATCHWORK	
Jean Roche	01449 675 984
PHOTOGRAPHY (Virtual)	
Peter Dakeyne	01449 781 562
PLAY READING (Virtual)	
Maureen Wingham-Eaton	01449 771 200
POETRY	
Jenifer Adams	01449 615 581
QUIZ	
Melanie Westenra-Hartley	01449 767 757
SCRABBLE PLAYING	
Barbara Cutting - for information	01449 615 346
SINGING	
Hilary Foster	01359 241 773
TABLE TENNIS	
Peter Dakeyne	01449 781 562
WALK and TALK	
Phil Webb	01449 614 616
Keith Shelton	01449 768 744

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Mindfulness Course - please note this is not a u3a sponsored activity but is free of charge to all Stowmarket u3a members

The Gatehouse Charity is offering an online **mindfulness** course that is NHS fully funded to support older adults (over 65) in Suffolk, led by a clinical psychologist. The course has been run successfully in the NHS for several years in later life and stroke services.

The course is based on the mindfulness-based stress reduction course developed by John Kabat Zin but has been adapted for this population.

We have had really good feedback from participants, and we have found that it improves peoples' attention and memory, as well as reducing loneliness, low mood, stress, anxiety and chronic pain. We have also worked with memory clinic patients, and it has improved memory functioning in people in the early stages of dementia, mild cognitive impairment or people suffering from carer stress. Many participants have found it simply helps them deal with day to day stresses.

The course will start on **6th December at 12:30 pm**, involves a weekly meeting via Zoom, with audio recordings of the practice and handouts.

Each session is **1.5 hours long, with a coffee break**, and the course runs for 6 weeks (Excluding 26th December 2023 and 3rd January 2024) with a further optional 3 weeks for those who wish to carry on practicing together.

Places are free but limited to around 15. Those who attended the course last time are also welcome to attend again.

For joining details, please contact - **Raechel Schoder**. Assistant Psychologist

Gatehouse-Caring in East Anglia

raechel@mindfullife.uk

07801 954 941

Several of our members attended the same course in May 2020 during lock down. Keith Shelton wrote a review in the July Newsletter, that year, see [HERE](#) page 6



**Free NHS fully funded
online mindfulness course**

Course length
6 WEEKS
(Excluding 26th December 2023 &
3rd January 2024)

Start date
6th December 2023

When?
EVERY Wednesday VIA ZOOM

What time?
12:30-2 pm - MINDFULNESS FOR
OLDER ADULTS (**OVER 65**)

**Would you like to learn
about mindfulness?**

Mindfulness has been shown to:

- Improve sleep, de-stress and reduce anxiety and depression.
- Combat feelings of loneliness
- Improve memory, attention and concentration
- Help relieve chronic pain

All courses led by a clinical psychologist

To find out more and to book, visit:
www.the-mindful-life.com