

Heybridge U3A

News Sheet No. 2010/10

October 2010

Contacts:	Peter Thorpe	Chairman	01621 850828
	Brenda Dewar	Secretary	01245 400492

From the Chairman

Autumn approaches; a time of reflection. As the colours change and we prepare for spending more time indoors we can think about what we want to do during the next few months. Now that our U3A is becoming established, and we are developing our own "personality" as an individual member of a large organisation, we need to reflect on how we are doing. Our membership has grown and we are more than three times larger than when we started (less than two years ago!). We are lucky to be able to meet in the Plantation Hall with its' excellent facilities and meeting rooms. We will, however, have to consider setting a maximum for our membership if we want to continue to meet at our chosen venue. The committee will be discussing this issue when we consider the budget for next year. Brenda has made a "Feed Back" box, which will be available at our regular meetings. Please use it to make suggestions regarding the way we run our U3A. We also want to have your ideas regarding groups, speakers, events etc. It is your U3A, let us know what you think. All of your comments and suggestions are appreciated and will be considered.

We want to make all new members feel welcome and we hope that they enjoy our meetings and our group activities. With this in mind, we plan to have an alternative seating layout in the hall at our next meeting. We want to introduce tables, to break-up the formality of sitting in rows. We hope that this will encourage members to chat together whilst they enjoy their cup of tea. New members should find it easier to introduce themselves and discuss the pleasures of joining a group when they sit near a COG. If you have any friends who might be interested in joining our U3A please introduce them, we are not closing our membership list yet.

I was sorry that Ann and I were not able to attend the last meeting and hear the talk by Peter Webb. I have been told that it was very amusing. At the next meeting we can look forward to Peter Turrall giving us a talk on Marconi. I expect that some members will have had personal connections with that important local name. I look forward to being with you at the next meeting.

Peter Thorpe

From the Editor

A suggestion has been made to me that members may have items that are no longer needed that could be useful to other members. If you have such an item I can insert it into the News Sheet. This could also apply to 'wants'.

This advance copy of this News Sheet is, again, being circulated to all members who have provided their email addresses to the Membership Secretary. If you have an email address and have not received an emailed copy of this News Sheet please let me know.

The Diary on the last page has been updated through to the end of October. It is important that you as COG's, members of Groups or just members of Heybridge U3A, keep me up to date. If anyone has an interesting story, relevant pictures or activity that relates in some way to The Heybridge U3A or the U3A movement as a whole, then please contact me.

Most will know the publication procedure. Copy should be with me by the last Friday of the month. Please continue to send details to me, preferably by email at ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk with 'U3A' in the title. Typed copy can also be provided. Alternatively, phone me on 01621 891184 or see me at the Monthly Meeting to decide other methods of providing copy. Publication will take place some seven to ten days later.

Ian Newman.

Heybridge U3A Meetings

The next Meeting is on Friday 8th October, starting at the normal time of 14.00, in the Plantation Hall, Heybridge. This month we have Peter Turrall who will talk about the History of Marconi. In November we will have a talk on how dogs help people with disabilities. This will be presented by the Canine Partners Charity. In December Keith Baldwin will be providing a Christmas Package full of anecdotes and humour with excerpts from Dickens, Dylan Thomas and others.

From the COGCo (Group Co-ordinator)

I decided to start this article on my return from the September Monthly Meeting whilst the information was fresh in my mind. The numbers at this meeting were down compared to our usual full house, due to quite a few members on holiday, but the rest of us enjoyed a very interesting and humorous talk on the "Good Life". One of the other COGs suggested that Peter Webb might be interested in letting the Bird Watching Group visit his smallholding to see his Barn Owls. He has agreed to speak to Maureen (I have his card). Quite a few of the COGs were missing, and as we had several new or fairly new members attending, I took the opportunity of explaining the procedure regarding the Groups at the main meeting. This also meant I had quite a bit of talking to do about the missing Groups but everyone helped.

One of the groups I attend is the Computer Group where Ian has given us a project. This is to prepare our version of the diary, which is found on the back page of the News Sheet, by making new rows and cutting and pasting information. This was a very good learning curve and thoroughly enjoyable, but it did make me realise just how much work goes into producing the News Sheet. I am therefore very happy with my role as Group Co-ordinator!

Gill Thorne 0162 852294

gillthorne2@hotmail.co.uk

Group Names, Co-ordinator, Contact Telephone

Group Name	Co-ordinator (COG)	Telephone Number
Ballroom Dancing	Joint with Maldon Jo Robson *	* 01621 828236
Bird Watching	Maureen Lenoir	01621 869871
Bridge	Lisbeth Bazzard	01621 843208
Coffee Morning	Margaret Brown	01621 854885
Computer	Tina Abeysekera	01621 858635
Esperanto	Peter Groves	01245 227018
Family History	Lesley Pomphrett	01621 817733
Gardening	Pat Yates	01621 892866
Local History	Carol Greenhalgh	01621 840339
Luncheon	Beth Jeffries	01621 853403

Group Name	Co-ordinator (COG)	Telephone Number
Maritime & Coastal	Brenda Dewar	01245 400492
Painting	Michael Kempen	01621 892974
Petanque	Barbara Barbrook	01621 855605
Photography	Peter Thorpe	01621 850828
Reading & Books	Ann Lees	01245 225153
Scrabble	Ruth Tyler	01621 869865
Theatre	Gill Bridle & Janet Morley	01621 892587 & 892626
Threads & Fabrics	Anne Thorpe & Pat Newman	01621 850828 & 01621 891184
Walking	Elizabeth Eastwood	01621 850618
Weekenders	Marilyn Corbett	01621 817518

Membership Secretary

If you are not a member and wish to join, please contact Lisbeth Bazzard on 01621 843208 or by email lisbethbazzard@talktalk.net. You can also write to her at 2, Silver Street, Maldon, Essex. CM9 4QE or speak to her at the Monthly Meeting.

REPORTS

Art (Painting) Group

Our weekly meetings continue each Friday (not the Monthly Meeting Friday) at Plantation Hall.

Bird Watching

We had a return visit to Northey Island this month as we had expected the waders to have returned from their summer holidays but, unluckily for us, they hadn't arrived yet. We had a wonderful walk round the Island. We did see Red and Green Shanks, Curlews, Cormorants, plenty of assorted Gulls and flocks of Starlings.

There were a herd of young bullocks on the island and, as some of the bird watching group also belong to the photography group, they soon got their cameras flashing.

It was a shame we didn't see any waders today but enjoyed being on this wonderful Island with great views across the Blackwater Estuary.

Having been told we had to make our way off the Island by 11.30, you can imagine our surprise as we stood chatting about a Curlew on the waters edge, we heard the cry of "the waters coming in". Whew, that was a big surprise, as it was only 11 o'clock.... As we paddled over the causeway (See picture) with



water over our ankles, we were a happy group and all agreed it had been an enjoyable morning.

The next meeting is on 22nd October. To join us ring Maureen on 01621 869871 or email symockturtle@yahoo.co.uk.

Maureen

Bridge Group

Please ring me on 01621 843208 or email lisbethbazzard@talktalk.net for details of the next duplicate bridge session.

Liz

Computer Group

Twelve members of the Computer Group met on Thursday 16th September for yet another informative afternoon. Ian reminded everyone that subs will be due next month and it was agreed there would be three more meetings before the Christmas break.

Discussion then took place regarding the home practise. Everyone successfully found the required information on the internet and we were reminded that you can run two search engines at the same time (But who would want to?) not two versions of the same programme simultaneously. Ian then went over the procedure to produce a table in Word, to change column sizes and to delete, insert, copy and paste. More homework will be sent by email. It was agreed that the next meeting will follow the same format with a question and answer session.

Look forward to seeing you all on 21st October at 1300 hrs for yet more fun.

Audrey

Coastal and Marine Group

Our October meeting will be at the Blue Boar and we are fortunate to have John Robson as our Speaker. He has tales of the Pacific for us!

I just would like everyone to come along to the Blue Boar to support our new speaker. The date is Friday 15th October at 14.00. All are very welcome.

Brenda Dewar. (01245 400492)

Discussion Coffee Morning

The last coffee morning was on 17th September and was, as usual, a happy gathering. The next one will be at Linda Ethertons house at 11.00 on the 15th October. Although I will probably not be at the next meeting the details of the venue will be available, as usual, on the information table. Any questions regarding the 15th October will be covered in my absence by Gill Thorne.(Thank you Gill).

You can also telephone me, Margaret Brown, for information, on 01621 854885.

Family History Group

Because of holidays we were a small group of four at our last meeting.

Sally had made great progress working down one side of her family and Dorothy had managed to collect lots of information since the last meeting. Both of these members do not have computers at home and they have used the resources available in the local libraries. As they are both very new to family history group, they have done extremely well.

Marjorie showed how to find military information on the computer. She is also hoping to do some investigation for Dorothy. The next meeting will be Thursday 28th October (10.30 to 12.30) at my house. I will have some record charts available for those who need them. If you would like to join us, you are welcome.

Lesley Pomphrett

lesleypommy@hotmail.com

Gardening Group

The owner of Wood View was apprehensive about



us visiting at the end of September as he thought the garden would be boring. However we found it to be delightful

and still full of interest and really enjoyed our visit, even the extra bit to the allotments in the churchyard. We then met back at my house for a plant swap and tea, with delicious cakes thanks to Thelma and Sue. On October 11th, we are going to BHN Pot Plants (no charge) and Hyde Hall. It will be 11am at the Pot Plants, then on to nearby Hyde Hall where I suggest we meet in the restaurant at about 12.30 – 1pm, as the gardens close at 4pm and there is a lot to see. We can break up into smaller groups if some people are still having lunch. The normal entrance fee of £7 for Hyde Hall will apply unless you are an RHS member. If you need a lift, please let me know.

Pat Yates, 01621 892866 or pat.yates@tesco.net

Local History Group (LHG)

The next meeting of the Local History Group will be at the Burnham Museum on Tuesday afternoon, 19th October. Anyone interested should contact me on 01621 840339 or e-mail george.smeed@virgin.net.

Carol Greenhalgh.

Luncheon Group

Fourteen people made the journey to Fuller Street for a very enjoyable meal at 'The Square & Compasses', last Friday. We set up a list for the 'Thomas Kemble Toby Inn' near Wickford which will be available at the next meeting for anyone wishing to Join us. I understand there is a carvery for a set price (around £8 at lunchtime). There are also other meals available.

We also talked about the Christmas / end of year lunch, which we held at the end of November last year. Valerie had the number for the Colchester College which she says is much better than the Chelmsford College. I tried to ring but was just too late. I will try early next week and email the details round the group.

Beth 01621 853403.

Petanque Group

As promised we arranged a match with Blackwater U3A and we duly arrived at The Promenade Park on 20th September. The weather was very kind to us. We had a very pleasant afternoon pitting our skills against another team but, unfortunately, they beat us by just three points. We played three games of doubles then two games of trebles with all points adding up to 46 to them and 43 to us so you can see that it was very close. Now we stoically accepted the result but we would have won if counting the number of games as we gained three games out of five. Tough!



The Blackwater team went off for a coffee but we stayed for another half an hour as we felt like practising a little longer to redeem ourselves. Now we will wait for them to challenge us another day. It was interesting and we felt we had a good team spirit. It was fun!

Now we shall be playing every Monday until the end of October with a pub meal together to finish the season until we start again on 14th March 2011 unless some brave souls wish to play in the winter.

Barbara Barbrook

Photography Group

We continued our "people pictures" theme at the last meeting. It was encouraging to see so many groups of three photos taken by our members. The standard was very high and everyone had taken a single picture to represent an action shot, a group and a portrait. We are making good use of the projector. It enables us to view and discuss our pictures together, making it a true group activity. Members mostly use memory sticks or cards to present their photos, giving us quick access to their images through a computer connected to the projector.



Author: Peter Thorpe

If you are interested in photography and want to join us, we normally meet in the Claydon Room of the Plantation Hall, on the first Thursday of each month

at 13.00 (lunch time!). We laugh as we learn and you are welcome.

Peter Thorpe

Reading and Books Group

We had a successful meeting in our new venue at Plantation Hall. It seems ideal for our enlarged group. We were able to discuss a list of books at some length and these will be submitted to the very helpful Maldon librarian. This comprehensive list should see us well into next year.

The book read this month was Donna Tarte 'The Little Friend'. What starts out as a child's game soon becomes a dark and dangerous journey into the menacing underworld of a small Mississippi town. It was well written, encompassing greed, racism, lechery, drugs, drink, and religious perversion, much of it explained through the eyes of a child. It was far too long and had a tendency to say the same thing in different ways.

This book was not a favourite of the group and we would all think twice before embarking on another of her books.

The next meeting will take place at the Meeting Room Plantation Hall on Wednesday 20th October at 14.30 to 16.30.

If you are interested in joining the Book Group, please contact Ann Lees on 01245 225 153.

Scrabble

Here are the details of the Scrabble Meetings until the end of the year. Ring me at any time if you are interested in joining us.

- Wednesday 27th October at the home of Beryl Claydon (01621 852082).
- Wednesday 24th November at the home of Elizabeth Eastwood (01621 850618).

Please let the hostess know the day before the meeting, if possible.

Ruth Tyler 01621 869865

Theatre

I have provisionally booked 29 seats for the Christmas Carols Sing-along at the Albert Hall on Thursday, 16th December. It starts at 14.30. The coach will pick up at Plantation Hall at 09.00. to allow people to do their own thing before the production starts. The return time will be approximately 16.30. The cost for this will be £30.00 each, which includes the coach cost and driver's tip. I have 25 names on the list from interested parties so there are still spare seats. The tickets have to be paid for by the 20th October so I should be grateful if anyone interested can please

bring their cheques (made payable to Heybridge U3A Groups) to the next Monthly Meeting on 8th October.

Janet Morley: email dennis-morley@tiscali.co.uk or 01621 892626.

Threads and Fabrics

During this summer I, for various reasons, have been thinking about how lucky we are to be able to make what we choose and buy the rest. The start of these thoughts was reading a book on the Crimean War in which the heroine is a girl whose mother has social and charitable aspirations. The family is part of the new middle classes and not rich enough to employ sewing maids. Therefore, the daughter has the job of making all that the women wear, except for their shoes and corsets, plus her father's shirts and hankies. Not forgetting all the household linen. Oh yes, when she might have a little time to sit with idle hands she has to sew sheets and pillowcases for her Mother's pet charity. Wondering why it was all done by hand, I explored the history of the sewing machine and discovered that domestic models were not available until the end of the 19th century. You will be pleased to know that she escapes this drudgery to the front, when life becomes even more exciting than she ever imagined when she becomes tangled up with the aftermath of a battle. As the author is known for her historical accuracy I am very glad that I live now. (ref. The Rose of Sebastopol/Katherine McMahon). P.S. This was a very good and exciting book, of which very little was about sewing.

The following photograph is of one of our members demonstrating her lacy knitting at our last meeting, which she is happy to do for fun rather than necessity.



Our next meetings are on the 5th October and 2nd November. Please contact Pat or Anne for further information.

Anne and Pat.

Walking

Unfortunately, we did not get out for the September's walk but, hopefully, there will be a hardy group willing to venture out on 14th October. We will try the Dedham walk again but later in the day to give those with morning commitments a chance to join us. It should still stay light long enough to complete the walk and return to Heybridge.

We will meet at the public car park off Mill Lane in Dedham at 14:00 on the Thursday 14th October then walk to Flatford and back north & south of the river. Please contact me on 01621 850 618 or email e.m.e@talktalk.net if you can join us.

Elizabeth

Weekenders

The Weekenders Group seems to be split between jazz followers and quiz fans. On Saturday 11th September, seven of our group attended a quiz and were 5th overall at the end of the evening with their highest score gained on a round entitled 'Demon Drink'. Now we question what they do the rest of the week! Four of us enjoyed an evening of trad jazz at Wickham Bishops. These evenings are highly recommended. Our Monthly Meeting was held at Olivers Nursery and, as I was unable to attend, Sally Bond ably deputised for me and was able to call order among the group present long enough to arrange quite a few future events. A walk has been arranged for Saturday 2nd October to Sparkey Wood and an optional lunch afterwards at 'The Green Man' at Braxted. I shall report on this in the November New Sheet. On Friday 29th October, seats have been booked at £12.50 each to see 'Sweeney Todd' at Witham Public Hall and those Weekenders wanting to go will need to have their payment ready by the next U3A meeting. We are planning a meal at Izumi in Maldon on Saturday 6th November and also at the 'New Times' on Sunday 5th December and for the latter, I shall require a deposit of £5.00 each. There is a further jazz evening on Saturday 9th October and on 13th November it will be a choice between jazz or a quiz. Sheets will be available for all these events at the U3A meeting on the 8th October when you can add your name. I shall be there to answer any queries. Look forward to seeing you then.

Dates for your diary:

- Saturday 16th October: Coffee at Wilkin's Jam Factory at 10.00.
- Saturday 13th November. Coffee at Peartree Pantry at 10.00.

Marilyn Corbett 01621 817518

On the Notice Board

If you are planning to put something on the notice board that is not group related and it is available prior to the first Friday of the month, the Editor would be pleased to include it in this section of the News Sheet.

Members Article

My " African Experience "

A few months ago our friends asked if my husband Vic and I would like to go on a Safari with them. Oh great, I thought, two weeks in fabulous Africa. No, it was one night in deepest Kent. I was a little disappointed but we agreed and paid. Two weeks later when she handed me the booking confirmation I was horrified to discover we would be sleeping overnight in a tent and had to use a toilet / shower block. So it was with heavy heart that on the August bank holiday weekend I packed my overnight rucksack and we set off. We went to the Livingstone Lodge at Port Lympne African experience near Ashford in Kent, where we would see lots of beautiful Giraffes with long eyelashes and baby Giraffes; Black Rhino running alongside the



vehicle; Zebra playing; Wildebeest feeding their young; Ostrich guarding their eggs; Antelope, Water Buffalo, Elephants and lots of other animals roaming free as if on the plains of Africa. (a very close encounter) It is set in 600 acres and there are breathtaking views over the Kent countryside to the English Channel.



We were met by two Rangers. Warren was from Zimbabwe where he had worked as a Conservation Ranger for over 17 years and 5 years in this park. Sheldon was from South Africa and has had about two years experience. Our bags were taken by jeep to Livingstone Lodge where we were staying and our group of 17 people got into a Safari truck for a two hour trip (at 5 mph) where we saw animals very close up and had a running commentary from Warren. What he did not know about wild animals, their place in the wheel of life and the need for conservation, just is not worth worrying about. During the trip we entered an area where all the animals roam free. The day visitors to the park do not go into this area. Eventually we arrived at the Lodge. It is situated high up with magnificent views and right in front of the Lodge area there is a waterhole where the animals come to drink.

Yes, we did stay in tents but they were luxury tents with very comfortable beds and they each had a wooden balcony and chairs so you could sit and watch the animals and soak up the atmosphere whilst having a pre-dinner drink. The toilet /shower block was very modern and warm. At 8 o'clock in the evening we walked to the Lapa (the African name for meeting house according to Warren) where we had a superb evening meal and then sat in lovely comfy settees with a drink and listened to Warren regale us with his tales of Africa and more of the vital conservation work done by the Aspinall Foundation. Off to our tents about 10.30 pm only to be woken at 3.00 o'clock in the morning by the roar of Lions - it did feel like Africa then. At 5.15, Warren was making sure everyone was awake. We had a light breakfast and at 6 o'clock we were back in the Safari truck for an amazing dawn Safari trip. Back to the lodge and straight into the Lapa for a full breakfast. After 9.00 am we were back in the main park. The end of our overnight Safari.

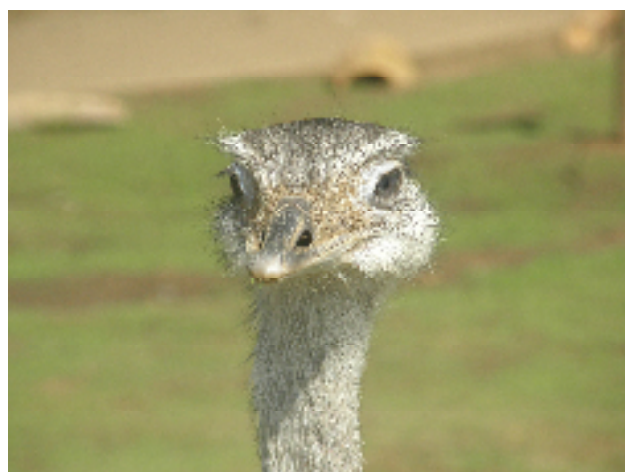
The park does not open until 10.00 am so we were able to go and see the Lion and Tiger enclosures without anyone else being there. I have never been so close to these animals before. This is a very different experience to a normal Zoo or Safari Park.

All the wild cats are in special large enclosures and so are all the Monkeys. It is all very open and not too much wire fencing. We also saw four enormous Silver Back Gorillas being fed. It was



wonderful to see them in their paddock with so much space to move about in and no wire fences.

We were also free to roam around the magnificent gardens of Port Lympe Mansion House and the house itself. This was the home of John Aspinall and it has rooms with walls and ceilings covered in amazing animal paintings. John Aspinall spent his life involved with conservation and this African Experience is still promoting the idea and lots of the animals have been successfully bred and returned to the wild. It is quite amazing how so many of our wild animals are now extinct or are so close to extinction because of mans' ignorance. What a terrible loss for our planet it will be if we do not look after the ones that are left - not just for our Grandchildren or us but for our Great-Great grandchildren.



This was an amazing experience. Warren was a fountain of knowledge and we were lucky the weather was kind to us and such a close up experience with wild animals was unforgettable.

Would I go again? YES. This is probably as close to a real African Safari I will ever get. And with those tents I was dreading? They were more like little hotel rooms rather than the very basic ones I remember camping in when I was a child on holiday with my parents.

Lesley Pomphrett

Week Commencing	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4 th October	4 Petanque 14.00	5 Threads 14.00	6	7 Photography 13.00	8 Monthly Meeting 14.00	9 Weekender Jazz evening	10
11 th October	11 Gardening 11.00 & 12.30 Petanque 14.00	12	13	14 Walking 14.00	15 Coffee Morning 11.00 Painting 14.00 Coastal and Marine 14.00	16 Weekender Coffee at Wilkin's Jam Factory 10.00	17
18 th October	18 Petanque 14.00	19 Local History 14.00	20 Book Group 14.30	21 Computer 13.00	22 Painting 14.00 Bird Watching	23	24
25 th October	25 Petanque 14.00 Start again 14 th March 2011	26	27 Scrabble 14.00	28 Family History 10.30	29 Submit News Sheet text Painting 14.00 Weekender 'Sweeney Todd' in Witham	30	31
1 st November	1	2 Threads 14.00	3	4 Photography 13.00	5 Committee Meeting 10.00 Painting 14.00	6 Weekender Meal at Izumi	7
8 th November	8	9	10	11 Walking 14.00	12 Monthly Meeting 14.00	13 Weekender Coffee at Pear Tree Pantry 10.00 Jazz or Quiz evening	14
15 th November	15	16 Local History 14.00	17 Book Group 14.30	18 Computer 13.00	19 Coffee Morning 11.00 Painting 14.00 Coastal and Marine 14.30	20	21
22 nd November	22	23	24 Scrabble 14.00	25 Family History 10.30	26 Submit News Sheet text Painting 14.00 Bird Watching	27	28
29 th November	29	30	1 st December	2 Photography 13.00	3 Committee Meeting 10.00 Painting 14.00	4	5 Weekender Meal at New Times

Diary of Meetings and Visits For details see articles and co-ordinators above.