



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

# Heybridge U3A

## News Sheet No. 11/2013

### December 2013

Contacts: Joyce Woodham: Chairman 01621 841066

Brenda Dewar: Secretary 01245 400492

<http://www.heybridgeu3a.org.uk>

#### From the Chairman

Anyone who had doubts as to whether they would be sea-sick if they went out in a small boat would have their fears confirmed simply by watching the video clips at our last Monthly Meeting. They were shown, of course, by the RNLI speaker. It was a fascinating account of what they do on a daily basis. 'They' being life-boatmen, most of whom nowadays do not come from a sailing background and are not necessarily 'men' as there are now a number of women taking on this dangerous life-saving activity. Those present at the meeting were obviously very moved by what they saw and heard, and donated a massive £250 to the RNLI.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> November, a meeting of the Essex Association of U3As was held in Chelmsford. Our first speaker was Barbara Lewis, Chairman of the U3A Trust, who talked about the U3A AGM which is held in September each year. She was extremely enthusiastic about this annual meeting which has many facets with many ideas of how we could develop our own U3A. (It is in our business plan that we should send delegates in the future).

Our next speaker was Angela Pleasance, our Treasurer. Angela gave such a confident talk and so re-assured members regarding the task of being a Treasurer that she got a spontaneous round of applause when she finished talking and a barrage of questions followed. It was very clear that this is the kind of information that members want.

As Christmas is nearly here, this is the last Newsletter for this year, the next one will be in February.

All the committee wish you a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Joyce Woodham: phone 01621 841066 or Email [woodham359@btinternet.com](mailto:woodham359@btinternet.com).

#### Important Notice: Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Committee Nominations 2014

There will be an AGM on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

Committee members are elected to stand for 3 years before requiring to be re-elected. One post, Membership Secretary, will require an election. Nomination forms will be attached to February News Sheet and at the February Monthly Meeting. One form needs to be completed by each person wishing to stand for a position on the Heybridge U3A Committee. The Nomination Form needs to be signed by the Nominee, Proposer and Seconded and given to or posted to the Secretary at "Drifters", Church Road, West Hanningfield, Essex, CM2 8UJ, to arrive by Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2014. If there is more than one person nominated for any one position, a vote will take place at the AGM on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

The names of Nominees and positions will be published in the March issue of the News Sheet, which will be available prior to the AGM.

#### From the Editor

There will be no January 2014 issue of the Heybridge U3A News Sheet. Therefore, you will find additional text and dates have been inserted in this News Sheet. This issue contains planning information, not only about the rest of December 2013, but also about January and February 2014. The team that have produced this Diary hope that they have successfully produced a three month Diary. Having squeezed the Diary onto one page there was still the need to reduce the text font size to 9pt. Those reading the News Sheet on their PCs or laptops can enlarge the text. If you find this smaller text size is difficult to read please let me know.

A report on the Study Day has been included in the section on page 7 of this News Sheet

Please read the section on the AGM opposite

The Diary on the last page has been updated to the end of February 2014. Please keep me up to date with any interesting stories, relevant pictures or anything that relates to The Heybridge U3A or the U3A movement as a whole. Please continue to send details to me, preferably by email with 'Heybridge U3A' in the title. Alternatively talk to me at the Monthly Meeting.

The Events Secretary has put in place a number of special visits. Please read her report, read the notice board, put your names down on the sheet and most important of all, provide a cheque for the appropriate amount.

Ian Newman: Email [ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk) or phone 01621 891184.

#### Membership Secretary

There were four new members in November, so membership is now 177. New members are always welcome. If you are not a member and would like to find out more about the Heybridge U3A, you are welcome to attend a Monthly Meeting (held in the Plantation Hall at 14:00 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month) as a guest. There is no need to book, just turn up and sign in.

#### Third Age Matters Magazine

The next copy of the U3A magazine should have arrived. If you do not receive your copy, please let me know.

Jenny Parker

For any queries regarding membership, please

Email [jennyparker14@hotmail.com](mailto:jennyparker14@hotmail.com) or phone me on 01621 843581. Or, If I am not available, please contact Angela by Email [angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk) or phone on 01621 850310.

#### From The Treasurer

We are not having a News Sheet in January so could I remind the CoGs that our financial year ends on 31<sup>st</sup> January. I would appreciate having their half-yearly financial reports at the February Monthly Meeting. This will allow me to finalise the accounts, which have to be independently scrutinised, and prepare my report to the AGM. Thank you.

### Heybridge U3A Monthly Meeting

The speaker at our next Monthly Meeting, on December 13<sup>th</sup>, will be Tony Bertolla, with a subject entitled 'Spontaneous Christmas verse'. The venue, as usual, will be Plantation Hall, Heybridge, starting at 14.00.

As there is no January News Sheet, you will need to insert in your diaries that the January Monthly Meeting speaker will be Dudley Chigwell giving an illustrated talk on New Zealand Flora and Fauna.

A list of other potential subjects for the following Monthly Meetings are as follows:

- February:- Kathleen Morgan, will talk about Nelson Mandela.
- March:- Bill Prier, a retired Essex Police Officer.
- April:- Leila Sullivan will give a talk on "Her Irish, Victorian Grandparents".

### Group Name, Co-ordinator, & Contact Phone Number

Group Name	Co-ordinator (COG)	Telephone Number
Art (Painting)	Michael Kempen	01621 892974
Bird Watching	Maureen Lenoir	01621 869871
Coffee Morning	Margaret Brown	01621 854885
Computer	Ian Newman	01621 891184
Creative Writing	Angela Pleasance	01621 850310
Family History	Lesley Pomphrett	01621 817733
French Conversation	Jenny Parker	01621 843581
Gardening	Pat Yates	01621 892866
Italian	Janice Slight	01621 853393
Local History	Carol Greenhalgh	01621 840339
Luncheon	John Harrison	01621 854851
Patchwork	Anne Thorpe	01621 850828
Petanque	Barbara Barbrook	01621 855605
Photography	Peter Thorpe	01621 850828
Reading & Books	Carole Overy	01621 893450
Scrabble	Linda Etherton	01621 843702
Solo Whist	Dave Mason	01621 858635
Spanish	Dave Wilson	01621 840945
Technical Computing	Colin Mason	01621 854906
Ten Pin Bowling	Glenn Cousins	01621 816721
Threads & Fabrics	Pat Newman	01621 891184
Walking	Elizabeth Eastwood	01621 850618
Weekenders	Marilyn Corbett	01621 817518
Wine Group	Jackie Jones	01621 817117

### From the COGCo (Group Co-ordinator)

May I please remind all members that some of the CoGs put out sheets at the main Monthly Meetings for forthcoming events. These sheets are in the Meeting Room (where you sign in) for people to add their names to the various lists. These are mainly for the coffee morning, jazz, various weekend events, wine appreciation, local history and luncheon. The CoGs go to a lot of trouble to print up these sheets and it would be appreciated if you could take the time to add your names if you are interested. Where these meetings are held at a member's home, it is a matter of courtesy to give the host/hostess some idea of numbers. Where the meeting is at a public place, it is essential that the Cog knows numbers as they need to book. Other groups have their own way of contacting their members, and members just turn up (this is not a problem where the various rooms are booked at the Plantation Hall, with the exception of local history), but some rely on these lists.

I have been advised that Anne Thorpe is giving up her position as joint CoG of the Threads and Fabrics group, with Pat Newman taking sole charge. Anne has been involved with this group for approximately four and a half years and will now be concentrating on her Patchwork group. I would like to say a very big thank you for all that she has done for this group, which continues to flourish.

One of our members, Alf Bell, who has had some experience of Ballroom and Latin American dancing, would be interested in setting up a new group. He would like to know if there is any interest, and if so, please see me at the monthly meeting and we can get together to discuss this. Perhaps you have been inspired by Strictly Come Dancing and would like to learn to dance.

On a lighter note, I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Gill Thorne: Email [gillthorne2@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gillthorne2@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 01621 852294.

### Events Secretary

#### Foundling Museum

The Foundling Museum; the title itself tells of Mothers in desperate situations leaving their babies to be 'found' and taken in by strangers. Thomas Coram, a retired sea captain, returned to England on retirement and was appalled to see abandoned and dying children in the streets of London. He persuaded well known and influential people including Gainsborough, Hogarth and Handel to support his efforts and established the Foundling Hospital in 1739. It was the first orphanage and the first art gallery open to the public in London. It cared for 25,000 children up until the present day. Each child on admittance was christened and given a new name. The first two were Thomas Coram and Eunice Coram. Mothers could leave babies at the hospital and some left small tokens for identification should they return for their child. One mother wrote that she was in prison under sentence of death and must part with her precious baby.

We enjoyed the paintings, sculptures and photographs on display, many illustrating the life of Coram children. There was a live concert and some of us listened to Handel whilst relaxing in cosy armchairs. A very interesting and thought provoking museum, in the heart of London.

Three members from Maldon U3A and six from Blackwater U3A joined 27 Heybridge U3A members on the trip.

#### Fish and Chip Supper

Join friends and make some new ones at a fish'n'chips supper at Plantation Hall on Friday January 17<sup>th</sup> from 18.00 to 21.00.

Relax and enjoy a game of Scrabble, Pictionary, Rummikub, Jenka or just chat while waiting for the meal to arrive. The cost is approximately £7.50, for the evening, including the meal. Don't let lack of transport, or reluctance to venture out on a January evening deter you! I will arrange for anyone who needs it to be collected and taken home. Please bring your own drinks!

#### Royal Opera House, Thurrock

Please check with me if there are any places left for our visit on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2014 to the Royal Opera House workshop at Thurrock. On this occasion we make our own way to Thurrock, so car sharing is highly recommended. A good meal may be had at *The Fleet* pub before the tour begins at 15.00. The tour costs £7.00 and lasts for 45 minutes. Cheques please anytime from now to January 2014, when directions will be available and meals booked.

#### Royal Greenwich.

May 30<sup>th</sup> 2014; a guided tour, starting from Plantation Hall at 08.00. Cost approximately £38.00. Please see new poster in the committee room and sign in for what promises to be a very interesting London trip.

#### Ely

A visit on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2014 to the beautiful city of Ely is proposed. Lots to see and do there; enter the cathedral, known as the 'ship of The Fens', enjoy a stroll by the river, perhaps a visit to the weekly market and/or inspect the house where Oliver Cromwell lived (admission £4.10).

Apart from the above, the cost will be for coach only- approximately £15.pp . Please add your name to the list.

#### Looking forward to September 2014

A visit is planned to the Historical Dock Yard at Chatham for their famous 1940s event. Details later.

If you are interest in any of the above please add you name to the appropriate list in the committee room or contact me.

Pat Smith; Email [patcleary98@sky.com](mailto:patcleary98@sky.com) or 01621 856569

### **REPORTS**

#### **Art (Painting) Group**

As there will be no news sheet in January, this edition may hang around the house until February. It may be worth noting that a couple of spaces have recently become available in the Friday painting group.

Although we usually have a waiting list, the people on it sometimes find other groups to join while they are waiting.

So, if you would like to join us now, or in the New Year, it might be worth ringing (number below) our COG Michael Kempen to reserve a place. You can also put your name and number on Michael's list to await future vacancies.

Why not make it your New Year's Resolution to get creative?

Don't forget, Christmas is a good time to stock up on paints and paintbrushes, watercolour paper and all the bits and pieces required to participate in this fascinating and absorbing hobby.

Please note that there will be no Art on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December as Plantation Hall will be closed over the holiday period.

Report by Gill Carpenter

For information about the group contact, Michael Kempen: Email [m.kempen159@btinternet.com](mailto:m.kempen159@btinternet.com) or phone 01621 892974.

#### **Bird Watching Group**

Only three of us met at Tollesbury Wick on a sunny but very cold morning. We made our way to the hide to get away from the wind.

From the hide we looked out onto a man made lake and Islands. We watched Shelduck and Shovelar, Curlews and Lapwing. On the grass banks were a mixture of Canada and Brent Geese. We had only been at the hide for about half an hour when they all took to the sky in a big rush. Looking up, we saw a Kestrel, it stayed hovering over the area, so we had no point in us staying around at the hide, so decided it was time to visit the lovely Loft Café for a warming drink and a toasted teacake. It was a great way to end our morning.

No Bird Watching in December as its Christmas week. We hope to be back to our usual day (fourth Friday) in January and February, but as always, it will be weather dependent.

Maureen: Email [symockturtle@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:symockturtle@yahoo.co.uk) or phone 01621 869871.

#### **Computer Group**

The Computer Group will not meet in December this year. The January meeting will be back as usual on the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Following the U3A Study Day where the use of the spread sheet and Word programs were extensively used, the Computer Group was given an overview and introduction to what was behind the output. This presentation gave an insight into what can be done including lists, badges, mail-merge and data manipulation.

The January meeting will cover the basics of the Word program followed by a 1 to1 session.

If you would like the help of a more experienced computer user to enable you to get more from your own computer please come along to our next meeting. Normally the Computer Group Meetings are held in the Claydon Room in Plantation Hall on the third Thursday of each month when you will be made welcome. Just come along.

Ian Newman: Email [ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk) or phone 01621 891184.

#### **Creative Writing Group**

We had a lively meeting in November with lots of reminiscences and stories sparked by things within our houses. Articles on tea sets had to be followed with tea served in bone china cups and saucers. As is usual in our group, the chat ranged over several subjects and one member suggested looking on the internet for Anthony Wilson, poet, and his inspirational website. We were also treated to some hilarious writing rules that might give inspiration for part of our assignment for January.

We will not be meeting in December so we have set ourselves two projects for January. The first is to write a story in exactly 50 words, excluding the title. (No three paragraph titles please!) The subject is "Christmas". This is quite challenging. Try it for yourself. The second project is "A Mistake" or "Mistakes", so I should have plenty to write about.

Please note that we have changed our usual meeting date for January and will meet on the fifth Wednesday in the month, the 29<sup>th</sup>, usual place and time. February will be back to the usual day and time.

Angela Pleasance

01621 850310 or email [angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk)

Angela Pleasance: Phone 01621 850310 or email [angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk) .

#### **Discussion Coffee Morning Group**

Our November get together as usual covered an interesting variety of subjects. It's amazing how we managed seamlessly to discuss so much. TV programmes, current affairs,



homosexuality, NHS reforms etc, yet still found time to enjoy the tea, coffee and chocolate biscuits provided by Linda.

The next meeting will be on 20<sup>th</sup> December at Margaret Clark's house.

The January meeting will be on 17<sup>th</sup> at Gill Thorne's house. The February meeting will be on 21<sup>st</sup> at Jean Murray's house, all at the usual time of 11.00.

Please contact me if you have any queries or need more information.

Margaret Brown: phone 01621 854885 or Email [mbandmeg@btinternet.com](mailto:mbandmeg@btinternet.com).

### **Family History Group**

We welcomed a new member to our Group this month. Bill has already accumulated a lot of information but was unsure of how to organise it. In our group, four keep their family trees on the computer and the rest of us keep it on paper. Jackie was able to provide Bill with charts to help him start to get his information organised and Norman showed us how he keeps all his records and family tree on-line and it is quite impressive. Norman also showed us some Parish Records on Seax and Marjorie showed us some information she had found on a site called Victorian Crime & Punishment - I think we will all be looking at this site to see if we can find some skeletons in our cupboards.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014. The February meeting will be on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at my house as usual 10.30 to 12.30. I would like to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year, and to thank the committee for all their hard work.

If you would like to join our group please see me at the Monthly Meeting.

Lesley Pomphrett: phone 01621 817733 or Email [lesleypommy@hotmail.com](mailto:lesleypommy@hotmail.com).

### **French Conversation Group**

In November, eight of us had a lively session. After talking about what we had done in October, Jenny produced a copy of an article from a French newspaper, on a telephone call from Marilyn Monroe to Jackie Kennedy about JFK. We then tackled a quiz on how to behave when invited to dinner in France. A rough translation of the questions can be found below:-

1. If invited to dinner should you take? (a) flowers, (b) your dog, (c) wine or a box of chocolates.
2. It is necessary to arrive, (a) exactly on time, (b) 10 or 15 minutes late, (c) several minutes early?
3. During the meal, where does one put ones hands? (a) on the table, (b) on ones neighbours knee, (c) under the table
4. What do you do with your bread? (a) cut it with a knife, (b) mop up your gravy, (c) pull it apart with your fingers.
5. How do you eat your green salad? (a) with fingers, (b) with a knife and fork, (c) with a fork and bread.
6. If the hostess offers you seconds, you (a) accept with thanks, (b) refuse until she insists, (c) refuse and say you don't like her food.?
7. If you don't want more wine, do you? (a) turn your empty glass upside down, (b) leave a little in your glass, (c) put your glass under the table.
8. What shouldn't you talk about during dinner? (a) the other guests personal lives, (b) the food and wine, (c) money, politics and religion.

Some of the differences in table manners surprised us.

See how you do! The answers are as follows:- c,b,a,c,c,b,b,a.

Our meetings are held on the second Wednesday in each month i.e. 11<sup>th</sup> December at 12:30, 8<sup>th</sup> January at 10:00 and 12<sup>th</sup> February at 10:00.

Report by Pat Newman.

For further information please contact Jenny.

Jenny Parker: email [jennyparker14@hotmail.com](mailto:jennyparker14@hotmail.com) or phone 01621 843581.

### **Gardening Group**

There is no report this month.

Pat Yates: Email [pat.yates@tesco.net](mailto:pat.yates@tesco.net) or phone 01621 892866.

### **Italian Conversation**

Unfortunately, due to my husband's on-going health issues, only the Beginner's Italian Group met during November. As everyone had been away to interesting places, a good part of the meeting was taken up with discussing the places we had each visited. We then went on to do some general revision, which is particularly useful at the moment as we are not able to meet so often. We finished the meeting by looking at the Imperative Tense.

The next meeting for the Beginner's Italian Group is due to be on Monday 13th January

The next meeting for the Advanced Italian Group is due to be on Monday 2nd December

Other dates will be confirmed once I know how Peter's treatment is going.

The next meeting for the Advanced Italian Group will have taken place on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December by the time you have read this News Sheet.

Janice Slight: Email [janice.slight@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:janice.slight@tiscali.co.uk) or phone 01621 853393

### **Local History Group (LHG)**

We covered a wide range of topics at our November meeting which gave us a very interesting afternoon. We heard about: 'the worst blizzard ever known' of 1881, Mr Pink of Crittalls and the art deco houses of Silver End, Prentice Hall in Tollesbury mentioned in the Doomsday Book, George Smeed the brick-maker and barge owner, and we had extracts from the diary of Frederick Mott of Bentalls – giving an account of local and national events spanning the period 1870 to 1930 [including several local suicides!]. Much discussion ensued from this information, all brought by members of the group. A letter from Stephen Nunn to the Maldon and Burnham Standard led us to some theories on the location of the Battle of Maldon. We shall try and get Stephen to come to one of our meetings to explain his ideas.

We do not have a meeting in December.

Our speaker for January will be Christine Raymond with her talk entitled 'Crackbones – butchery and the Raymonds, a Maldon story spanning eight centuries'.

We are awaiting confirmation from our speaker for February. Carol will email the group when this is finalized.

Our talks are in the Committee Room of the Plantation Hall, on the third Tuesday at 15.00. Numbers are limited so it is essential you let Carol know if you would like to come.

Carol Greenhalgh: phone 01621 840339 or Email [george.smeed@virgin.net](mailto:george.smeed@virgin.net).

### **Luncheon Group**

Sixteen of us met at Scrimshaws Restaurant (attached to The Whalebone pub) in South Woodham Ferrers on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2013. Interestingly I only found out much later the

origin of the word "Scrimshaw". It is Sailors' Slang, to ornament ivory or whales teeth by cutting or carving and usually rubbing colouring matter into the incisions

We had pre ordered our meals. Beryl and myself arrived nearly ten minutes late to find the first courses being delivered from the kitchen; a very prompt service. The main courses followed quickly. Many were surprised by the (large) size of the portions with only five facing the challenge of a dessert.

All the food was delicious, hot, and nicely presented. The costs were also very reasonable even allowing for seven of us going for The Senior Citizen's Lunchtime Special, the average for food and tea/coffee was only £13.

As reported previously, our Christmas lunch on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2013 is booked at The Hurdlemakers Arms in Woodham Mortimer for 12.30. Sixteen have already confirmed their place. Anyone else interested, please check the list and menu in the Committee Room on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December or contact me.

Following the regular 4<sup>th</sup> Friday in the month, the next dates will be 24<sup>th</sup> January, 28<sup>th</sup> February, and 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014, all at 12.30.

No bookings have yet been made. I expect to get "new year" menus in January. January is likely to be at The Blue Anchor at Feering, the newest of The Blue Group's restaurants.

Any queries please speak to me at Friday's Monthly Meeting, phone or e-mail.

John W Harrison: email [johnwharrison@sky.com](mailto:johnwharrison@sky.com) or phone 01621 854851.

#### **Patchwork Group**

The next meeting of the Patchwork Group will be in the Claydon Room on Monday the 9<sup>th</sup> December at 14.00.

Anne Thorpe; Email [Anne.thorpe@btinternet.com](mailto:Anne.thorpe@btinternet.com) or phone 01621 850828.

#### **Petanque Group**

I am sorry that our meal and the last game of Petanque was ruined by the "Big Storm" but safety had to come first and it seemed the right thing to cancel. So enjoy your winter rest and maybe the extra games of "10 Pin" and I will see you in the Spring. We should be starting again on 17<sup>th</sup> March. So "au revoir" and Happy Christmas and see you at the meetings.

Barbara Barbrook. Email [c.barbrook@sky.com](mailto:c.barbrook@sky.com) or phone 01621 855605.

#### **Photography Group**

It is hard to believe that this is my last contribution to the News Sheet for 2013. What is it that changes as we age, to make time pass so quickly? Perhaps it could be that as members of the U3A we are able to involve ourselves in the things which interest us most. We also now have the freedom to choose what we do and how we spend our time. Digital photography is one activity our members can enjoy whatever the weather, but in reality, we prefer plenty of bright daylight and less wind and rain. Many of us, during dingy winter days (like today) can also use our computers to review and edit our digital photos in the comfort of our homes. All of which leads me to our November assignment; "Autumn Colours".

The experts told us that the unusual weather during the early part of the year would produce a spectacular range of colours this autumn. What they did not say was that autumn would occur later than usual! Our intrepid band of photographers were out and about during September, looking for bright and colourful shots, but the leaves remained mostly greenish and the sun hid behind the clouds. However, undeterred, many splendid photographs were taken of selected leaves, berries

and other autumnal crops. Some were artistically arranged as outdoor still life pictures and others were of plants and trees in gardens. What was so encouraging was the number of members who stuck to the subject and brought along such a wide range of well composed photos for us to share. One member however had a distinct advantage over those of us who were restricted to Essex for our photographic canvas. New York's Central Park in September was spectacular this year. Jenny was there and took some superb pictures showing the range of colours autumn can produce when the conditions are right. Jenny's shot of the fallen leaves has an amazing range of colours and I am assured that these were as taken and not enhanced by Photoshop! It was interesting that many members commented that the trees looked very colourful as they drove to the meeting, but alas it was too late!



Autumn Leaves: Author – Jenny Parker

The aim of our group is to enjoy, improve and share our photography together, so if you are also interested in digital photography, come and join us. You will be made welcome whether you are completely new, experienced or just want to discover your "photographer's eye".

Peter Thorpe: Email [thorpe101@btinternet.com](mailto:thorpe101@btinternet.com) or phone 01621 850828.

#### **Reading and Books Group**

Our book for November was 'Dead Man's Grip' by Peter James. One of the main characters, Carly, shocked after a traffic accident that kills a teenage American student, receives news that the drivers of the other two vehicles involved have been found tortured and murdered and she could be next. Some members of the group thought it was an easy read but not memorable, others felt that the characters were unrealistic and criticised the plot and style of writing.

However, Ann Lees brought along delicious cake to celebrate her birthday and we could hardly believe a year had passed since we celebrated her last birthday. We are also looking forward to our Christmas lunch at the Chequers on 4<sup>th</sup> December. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December in Plantation Hall at 14.30. The first two 2014 meetings are on the 15<sup>th</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> February.

For further information contact Carole Overy.

Email: [caroleovery@sky.com](mailto:caroleovery@sky.com) or phone 01621 893450.

#### **Scrabble Group**

Seven members attended a scrabble session at Beryl's on 26<sup>th</sup> November and had two very good games with a tea break between. Thank you Beryl for your hospitality.

I am absolutely delighted to tell you that Linda Etherton has volunteered to be the CoG of this group from the beginning of next year so I will be handing the reins to her.



I have therefore been to the Plantation Hall and booked the Meeting Room for three months, i.e. 28<sup>th</sup> January, 25<sup>th</sup> February and 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

I look forward to seeing you in the New Year and I am sure Linda will have your full support.

Gill Thorne: Email [gillthorne2@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gillthorne2@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 01621 852294.

Linda Etherton: Email [ethertonbikes@aol.com](mailto:ethertonbikes@aol.com) or phone 01621 843702

### Solo Whist

At the November meeting of Solo Whist there were just three of us, so we played the game three handed (obvious I suppose).

It seemed almost like a different game. However, we all had some good calls including my Misere Ouverte (which I had never done before playing three handed) also several abundances were won.

Tea/coffee and delicious home made cake were served by Tina and in all a very pleasant afternoon.

The next meeting is going to be at Margaret Brown's house. (Telephone 854885). The first Wednesday in January is actually New Years Day ( I would assume we will not be playing on that day) So this will be arranged at the December meeting. The February's meeting will be on the first Wednesday ie; 5<sup>th</sup> at 14:00. The venue is to be announced at a later date. So come along and enjoy the game.

Dave Mason: phone 01621 858635 or Email [tina@tina832.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:tina@tina832.orangehome.co.uk).

### Technical Computing Group

Our last meeting took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November at my house, where we began by discussing different methods of video editing that some members had tried, this was followed on with installing a copy of 'Norton Ghost' backup software on a laptop, and starting to back up the laptop drive to an external hard drive in a caddy, whilst it started to work, it seemed to take a long time, in fact it had not completed by the time the meeting ended, another method worth trying is Microsoft own backup software, which is included in most versions of Windows OS, this could be a project for January's meeting. Nothing will be happening in December as we are taking a break this month.

The January's meeting will take place at Ian's house.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Technical Computing Group to wish all our readers a Very Merry Christmas, and all Good Fortune for 2014.

Colin Mason: Email [colin@mason20.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:colin@mason20.wanadoo.co.uk) or phone 01621 854906.

### Ten Pin Bowling

Nine members attended the first November meeting, playing on three lanes. The top scorer was yours truly with 123. A total of 30 games were bowled for which the average score was 86, a slight drop on last month. As I write this report we are looking forward to playing our first 'extra' session next Monday and then our Christmas Session followed by lunch at Izumi. Please refer to the diary for dates. If you wish to lunch please book with Lynne Morrison by phone on 01621 891288 or e.mail [lynne-morrison@supanet.com](mailto:lynne-morrison@supanet.com), if you have not already done so.

Dates for the Diary :-

- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December; 09.45 ready to start bowling at 10.00.
- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 13.45 ready to start bowling at 14.00.
- Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 13.45 ready to start bowling at 14.00.
- Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 13.45 ready to start bowling at 14.00.
- Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 13.45 ready to start bowling at 14.00.

Glenn Cousins. phone 01621 816721 or Email [maureencousins@btinternet.com](mailto:maureencousins@btinternet.com)

### Threads and Fabrics Group

At our November meeting I became aware of how the year is rolling round to Christmas. Several people were in the stage of planning new seasonal decorations and others were planning presents. With the sun shining as I write, in the middle of November, I cannot put my mind to being so efficient. For me everything will be decided at the beginning of December. My photograph this month is on the theme of preparations, the tools of a seamstress with her mind on Christmas.



The Tools of the Seamstress: Author Pat Newman

The meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month.

Pat Newman. Email [ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk) or phone 01621 891184.

### Walking Group

Our November walk around Danbury involved a change from the planned route necessitated by the wet conditions underfoot. In the event 18 of us took a pleasant walk around the Blackwater Nature Reserve and Danbury Common in the afternoon sunshine, finishing up at the teasop on the Green.

Next month we will have a pre-Xmas Maldon walk before lunch at Izumi.

Meet at the Izumi car park at 11.00 on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December. There is no need to book, but please let me know if you plan to join us.

As in previous years there will not be a January walk, but there are provisional plans for a snowdrop walk at Marks Hall together with the gardening group on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February. This will depend on opening dates and weather conditions - to be confirmed closer to that date.

Happy Xmas and New Year to all.

Elizabeth: Email [e.m.e@talktalk.net](mailto:e.m.e@talktalk.net) or phone 01621 850618. (Mobile 07581029816).

### Weekenders Group

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November, ten of us went to see the Witham Operatic Society presentation of 'Oliver' and it was excellent, such a professional performance. Despite half of those saying they would like to go on a London Walk on 13<sup>th</sup> November and then not responding to my final email. However, enough of us were able to go as the guide was able to gather more folk from other U3As. We had an enjoyable walk around Southwark seeing places we probably wouldn't have been aware of otherwise and an interesting history of the area as well. The photographs show us joining with the other walkers and one of the places of interest along the route. Afterwards we had a well earned rest with a little sustenance thrown in. Our December Coffee

Morning will be at Hyde Hall where, I believe, there should be an avenue of Christmas trees provided and decorated by various WIs from Essex. Our New Year venues have a canine theme. All I have left to do now is wish you all a very Happy Christmas and will see some of you at the Christmas Dinner on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> at 15.00.

#### Dates for your diary

- Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup> Hyde Hall at 10:30 (Note time)
- Saturday January 11<sup>th</sup> 2014 at 'Salty Dogs ', Goldhanger at 10.00
- Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February at 'The Red Dog Cafe', Inworth at 10.00
- Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March at Maldon Golf Club Cafe at 10.00



Southwark Walk Author Peter Board

Marilyn Corbett: Email [mars42@btinternet.com](mailto:mars42@btinternet.com) or phone 01621 817518.

#### Wine Appreciation Group

Four of us enjoyed a morning at the Grape Passions Christmas Wine Tasting Event on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November. There were lots of bargains in the bin ends and an opportunity to taste wines that we could never afford to buy. The Group have decided to take a break during December 2013 and January 2014, so our next meeting will be a planning meeting at my house in Tiptree on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February, when we shall discuss ideas for future visits to Vineyards and Wine Merchants, including our return to the popular "Spring Event" at Langford Village Hall in March 2014 and a return to the Coggeshall Wine Barn.



Miriam with the Bottles - Author Gill Thorne

Jackie Jones: Email [jachjones@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jachjones@tiscali.co.uk) or phone 01621 817117.

#### Association of Essex U3A's Study Day

The Study Day 2013 Committee met and from the feedback report the Study Day was deemed to be a success. As always,

lessons can be learnt and these have been documented in preparation for a new Committee.

I must again thank all those of you who either participated or assisted on the day.

Ian Newman: Email [ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk) or phone 01621 891184

#### On the Notice Board

A welcome to a New Year of music for U3A Members.

Following on from the delightful concerts this autumn, we now have a list of presentations of over 80 operas. Paul Foss of Bristol U3A has very kindly offered to make these available to U3As.

Each presentation is of a single opera or operatic works of a composer or covers opera history and are all designed to fit into a 90 minute session. Most also have a handout. I have a list of the CDs, so if any Group wish to take advantage of this, please contact me, or email Paul directly at [paulfoss123@btinternet.com](mailto:paulfoss123@btinternet.com).

#### NEWS OF THE U3A NATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOLS

The dates for these are Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July to Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July at Harper Adams University, Newport near Telford; and Monday 18<sup>th</sup> August to Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August at the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester.

The programmes for both these events are extremely varied and interesting. A full board residential delegate in en-suite accommodation costs £285 per person. Details will be placed on the notice board, but if you would like more information, please telephone me.

The next U3A event at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, London is to be held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014. This is "U3A Explores Science" and includes – "Bubbles, the bath and beyond"; "The conversational racetrack" and "Biological clocks, light and what happens in a cave" Intriguing titles!! Admission by ticket - £20 - apply asap - contact me for more details.

For more information contact Brenda on 01245 400492, or see the notice board.

#### Letters to the Editor

Foundling Museum: We had a wonderful day at the Foundling Museum. With Handel, Hogarth and other works of art, which balanced the harrowing tales of abandoned children. Lunch was good too, Many thanks Pat.

Lois Wilmot (8.11.2013).

#### From other U3As

Chelmsford U3A recently set up a Travel Group and it already has over 50 members. It is arranging a variety of trips in 2014. They include a trip to Lake Garda with visits to Venice and Verona on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014 - over 40 people want to participate and we plan to confirm the booking w/c 26<sup>th</sup> November; Northern Ireland on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2014; Edinburgh; Copenhagen; Amsterdam; and Prague/Vienna/Budapest in the autumn. For further information please contact David Gout on 01245 268923 or email [david\\_gout@hotmail.com](mailto:david_gout@hotmail.com).

(Note ' \_ ' between 'David ' and 'Gout'.

## Diary of Meetings and Visits

For details see articles and co-ordinators above.

Week Commencing	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9th December	9 Patchwork 14.00	10 Ten Pin Bowling 10.00	11 French Conversation 12.30	12 Walking 14.00	13 Monthly Meeting 14.00	14 Weekender Coffee at Hyde Hall 10.30	15
16th December	16	17	18 Book Group 14.30	19	20 Painting 14.00 Coffee Morning 11.00 Luncheon	21	22
23rd December	23	24	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26 BOXING DAY	27	28	29
30th December	30	31	1st January NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 Photography 14.00	3 Painting 14.00	4	5
6th January	6	7 Threads 14.00	8 French Conversation 10.00	9 Technical Computing 14.00	10 Monthly Meeting 14.00	11 Weekender Coffee Salty Dogs 10.00	12
13th January	13 Patchwork 14.00 Beginners Italian 10.00	14 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	15 Book Group 14.30	16 Computer 14.00	17 Painting 14.00 Coffee Morning 11.00	18	19
20th January	20	21 Local History 15.00	22	23 Family History 10.30	24 Painting 14.00 Bird Watching Luncheon	25	26
27th January	27 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	28 Scrabble 14.00	29 Creative Writing Group 14.30	30	31 Painting 14.00	1	2
3rd. February	3	4 Threads 14.00	5 Solo Whist 14.00	6 Photography 14.00	7 Committee Meeting 10.00 Painting 14.00	8	9
10th February	10 Patchwork 14.00	11 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	12 French Conversation 10.00	13 Technical Computing 14.00	14 Monthly Meeting 14.00 Walking 14.00	15 Weekender Coffee Red Dog Cafe 10.00	16
17th February	17 Advanced Italian 10.00	18 Local History 15.00	19 Book Group 14.30 Wine Tasting 14.00	20 Computer 14.00 Walking 10.00	21 Painting 14.00 Coffee Morning 11.00 Luncheon Bird Watching	22	23
24th February	24 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	25 Scrabble 14.00	26 Creative Writing Group 14.30	27 Family History 10.30	28 News Sheet Copy to Editor Painting 14.00 Bird Watching	1st March	2