

NEWS FROM THE EAST



October 2022

Your regional team keeping in touch with u3as across the six counties of the East of England

Barry leads the way

BARRY Linton of **Thorpe Bay u3a** ... known to many u3a members for Essex Police talks on cybercrime ... has stepped up to join the Regional Support Team and will be starting his Trust Volunteer training soon.

Barry, who is also a Group Leader of Astronomy, retired from a lifetime working with computers.

He stepped up after the need for more volunteers in the September edition of News From The East.

And he will be working with existing Essex team member Ann Long on County Links across Essex.

But there is plenty of room for more.

Of our six counties, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk have no team member living in them, for example.

Every month stalwarts come to the end of committee life with home u3as due to serving the maximum time on committees.



Knowledge of such volunteers is invaluable and it would be good to use it to help other u3as in need of support.

Anyone joining will, of course, join the national Volunteer Team after undergoing training, currently a half day session online.

One of the existing regional team members will mentor you and, of course, support and advice is regularly available from other members as required.

Meanwhile a monthly team meeting ensures we all keep in touch with each other and Regional Trustee Barbara Cordina.

Ray Hardisty
PR and Media Adviser

Have a chat about taking on the role

THOSE interested in joining the Regional Team can find out more from Regional Trustee Barbara Cordina.

She will have a chat with you about the contribution you could make.

Please get in contact her by email.

Those joining will undergo training as a Trust Volunteer and regularly attend Third Age Trust workshops to keep updated.

barbara.cordina@u3a.org.uk

Opportunity for Herts u3as to get together

YOUR Regional Support Team have set up an opportunity for Herts u3as to meet together again following the unfortunate demise of the Herts Network.

Some u3as have asked if it can be reinstated so a meeting has been set up for Wednesday, November 2, in Watford, to which all Herts u3as have been invited.

Two places for each u3a committee are offered but this may be increased depending on take-up.

We are currently working on the programme but the following will be included:

-)] Coffee and biscuits on arrival with opportunity to network with colleagues you may not have seen for some time;
-)] Question and Answers session with Alison May, Head of Third Age Trust Member Services – questions in advance and on the day;
-)] Discussion on possibilities for a more informal network for Herts, suggestions include no constitution, no fee,



no elected officers, an informal network with shared responsibility for all;

-)] Peer support group discussions to enable sharing good practice and ideas.

Further information will follow before the event and a buffet lunch will be provided at no charge.

Please do not miss this opportunity to get together.

Sign up online here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc5kHSAUda2DIQTnNXYPZfBBa4_W7KMWTTrG7nvtEVDfwuJGAA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Members reveal their frustrations

MORE than 2,000 u3a members participating in a survey with Design Age Institute this year said packaging is the most frustrating every day object as we age.

Over 60% of all respondents chose it as their main frustration.

Things such as struggling to open a carton of orange juice, or peel back plastic wrapping on food can cause tempers to fray.

Other items which were identified as causing significant frustration and annoyance include:

-)] Duvet covers 13.3%
-)] TV remotes 5%
-)] High cupboards 5%
-)] Keys and locks 3.5%

You can read the full report at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/our-impact/design-age-institute-design-report>

Newsletter
links info

All the underlined blue text links in this PDF newsletter are hyperlinks Highlight them with your cursor, hold down the control key and click link to activate. If no response, simply copy the text and paste it into your browser.



Conference speaker turns to crime

ONE of the speakers at our regional conference earlier in the year has just published his fifth novel ... on crime.

Maldon u3a member Patrick Forsyth, 79, has even set it in his home town.

Where There's A Will is based on Kathy who visits a prison inmate as a favour to a distant relative but has an unexpected encounter and forms a new friendship.

They then must prevent a tragedy following a disturbing rumour.

Patrick said: "Over the years most of my writing has been non-fiction, but I enjoy writing fiction too and this is my fifth novel.

"I guess it's what has recently been christened 'cosy crime', because the protagonists are ordinary people caught up in circumstances that involve them with difficulties or crime of some sort – here a planned assassination."

The book is available in print and e-book form,

Help u3a team study housing

FUTURE Lives Group, a national team sharing information with u3a members about how we can improve our future lives is currently looking for personal information about housing.

They want members to consider whether our homes will support our independence.

Hopefully, by planning early, we can create homes to help us have a better future life, and avoid the need for a forced move if circumstances change. Perhaps some members have already moved.

They believe questions will set you thinking about what is needed before completing the questionnaire on the link below.

• How strong are my ties to this neighbourhood?

• Is my home close to shops, bus, amenities?

- Is it the right size? Number & layout of rooms
- Is it affordable? Rent, mortgage, service charge, bills
- How accessible is it? Slopes, steps, transport
- Is it safe? Security, hazards and risk of accident & falls
- How many stairs? Can lift be fitted?
- Could a toilet/ shower be put on ground floor?
- Will adaptations be practical and affordable?
- Will it be affordable to heat and repair?
- Will it be easy to look after and clean?

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdXVKjJkwTQqq3P5dNs3fHJXxrWQzvX4nH8Sjp1jCeYPuuqag/viewform>



Group leader Terry Cook and member Mick Broad supervise and assist trainees in their first efforts at looking into the past with trowels, trays and buckets.

What a great day!

BURNHAM u3a Archaeological Group held its first training day for other u3a members from as far afield as Norfolk and Thorpe Bay.

We welcomed 17 trainees with tea and biscuits, then before we started we observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect for the Queen's passing.

After health and safety announcements by Peter Burton, Terry Cook our group leader welcomed the trainees and explained what they'd be doing throughout the day.

Within a short space of time the trainees were digging, metal detecting, dowsing, finds processing, sieving, surveying and generally having a good time.

Many of them found pot sherds, one piece of medieval floor tile and several metal items.

They all made friends and 10 joined up

to become permanent members of our group.

This was a new venture for us, our hope is that other archaeological 'hands on' groups will be set up across the region, we can provide training in the varied skills needed to excavate properly.

The trainees were astonished at the volume of recording data needed, it's not just about digging!

We were pleased to welcome Barbara Cordina, Ray Hardisty and Ann Long from the East of England Regional Team

It was a roaring success and we hope to hold another training day next spring when we return to our site at Mayland after a winter break.

Sue Spiers
Deputy Leader
Burnham u3a Archaeological Group



Trainees experiencing what it is like to be part of an archaeological dig.

Positive response

TRAINEES who attended the first u3a training day gave a great response to the efforts of **Burnham u3a** Archaeological Group..

Going through the feedback forms the comments in response to 'What did you enjoy most today?' ranged from:
 'Enthusiasm of Burnham members',
 'Sieving and dowsing',
 'Zoe was brilliant',
 'Having the opportunity to try a variety of things and being able to chop and change',
 'finds',
 'The relaxed approach'
 'Well done, thank you'

All in similar vein, not one negative comment.

The trainees were a nice bunch, all eager to try out new things and learn how to do them. six of them joined as new members

at the end ... some because they said they want to see how the dig progresses.

All the trainees had a go at the different things and were full of enthusiasm.

It was also encouraging for them as they found fragments of medieval pot and floor tile, along with coffin nails.

Despite being from different u3a groups as far apart as Diss and Thorpe Bay they all chatted away to each other and to us, asking us questions which was great.

We also received a welcome bit of money in donations.

The weather was mostly kind right up to during the afternoon tea break when rain forced an end.

We look forward to, hopefully, doing it all again in the spring.

Sue Spiers



Ann Cole and Dave Rae ready to serve, trainees on a break, metal detecting for finds and some of the stonework revealed at the site.



Group makes Third Age Matters headlines



MEMBERS are celebrating making a front page picture and four pages of illustrated coverage inside the Autumn edition of Third Age Matters magazine in recognition of their achievements.

U3a help to restore my doll Elizabeth



Two ages of Shirley and Elizabeth ... a doll as old as many u3a members.

MY interest in knitting has been rekindled by joining **Stanway u3a** Needles and Pins Group.

It has meant I received the necessary advice for knitting for my much loved doll Elizabeth.

She is a Pedigree 'walkie talkie' I was given as a three-year-old.

For many years she was kept in storage but. I am pleased to say, was re-discovered for a restoration project.

Help from Needles and Pins leader Maragret Meen led me to sourcing a pre-term baby pattern so I could knit the right size cardigan.

Then, because I am no dressmaker, Margaret, armed with my pattern, brought her sewing machine to a group meeting and showed me how to layout and cut the pattern.

Elizabeth now has a new dress, new cardigan and new cotton knickers.

She originally had woollen knickers ... just imagine having woollen knickers ladies!

New socks complete her up to date ensemble but, for a while at least, she has her original shoes.

Taking her hair out of pigtails has much improved her looks.

And, all being well, she will soon have her voice restored.

My husband Nigel has kindly located a voice box that we can record on.

I am thinking what she should say!

Meanwhile I am proud to have her with me on the sofa. So much better than being shut up in a plastic box.

Shirley Munson

Ray at next Network Link

REGIONAL PR and Media Adviser Ray Hardisty is speaking at the Network Link meeting on October 19.

He will be explaining the role and how it is of use to u3as.

The meeting, on Zoom, from 10am is open to all u3a members. Book on:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/u3a-thames-valley-network/t-avvrgrd>

October regional workshop

INVITATIONS will soon be going out for the next Regional Workshop ... Keeping It Legal ... on October 31 from 10am.

This event will be of interest to all new and existing u3a committee members as the topic is wide ranging.

Please forward to other members in your u3a when it arrives.



Bury St Edmunds joy over event success



BURY St Edmunds u3a enjoyed a very successful event in the beautiful surroundings of the medieval Guildhall.

Designed as an afternoon of both celebration and recruitment, 25 interest groups set up stalls with displays to show both existing and potential members what u3a has on offer.

The display stands proved very attractive, as there is nothing like a 'visual' to enhance an event - the theatre and photographic stalls particularly proved this!

All the group leaders present put in a lot of work to make their stalls look attractive, and happily spent the afternoon chatting away to the many visitors.

Volunteers circulated spotting potential new members to make them feel welcome.

Large boards were used to show photographic displays of members enjoying activities over the past year.

The Recorder Consort provided the entertainment.

The event allowed us to celebrate the revival of our social lives, the 40th Anniversary of the movement, and to promote the joys of positive ageing.

We can't wait to do it again next year!

u3a learning extras

THE NATIONAL Learning Team is reminding everyone about the many additional opportunities available for all u3a members.

They range from subject networks aimed at supporting groups with the sharing of resources and ideas... to the competitions, challenges and projects which complement local learning opportunities.

It also has interest groups online (formerly Trust u3a) which offers members the chance to engage in a wide range of subjects and join an online u3a community spanning the whole of the UK.

New initiatives this autumn include:

Speaker Swap

Looking for new speakers for your group? If you or someone in your group has a talk to exchange then join the speaker swap scheme.

Those offering a talk can access a database of speakers and unlock new opportunities for your u3a by contacting others.

Limebrook u3a at Maldon is one of those already involved from our region with History Group leader Mike Stringer having already visited other u3as to give talks.

While face to face is often preferred the swap system also reduces costs by holding talks over Zoom to cuts down on travelling time and costs.

Details at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/speakerswap>



Repurpose and Upcycle

View and share images, inspiration and up-cycling tips.

U3a Radio Podcast

Listen in to stories from across the u3a movement in new episodes every month.

All of these opportunities and much more are detailed at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>

The team says: "Please encourage members of your u3a to make the most out of their membership by getting involved with the national learning programme, offered to all u3a members."

If you have questions, ideas or need support accessing any of these opportunities call 02084 666139.

October national workshops

TWO national u3a workshops are being run in October over Zoom.

Finance Matters: October 10, 10am

This session is suitable for Treasurers and any other committee members who would like to understand more about u3a financial matters. It covers how to ensure good financial practice within your u3a including reporting requirements, speaker fees and paid tutors, information about Gift Aid and where additional support and guidance is available.

Growth Matters: October 17, 10am

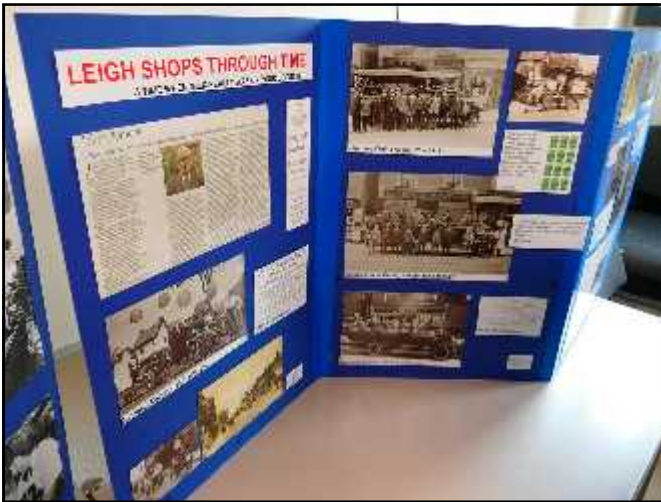
This session is suitable for committee members, group leaders and co-ordinators and those interested in encouraging more people to join their u3a and why it is a benefit. It provides ideas and information as well as some of the challenges, how these can be overcome and an opportunity to speak to other members and ask any questions you might have on the topic.

To book please visit:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/workshops>



Shops Through Time



Open Day on way
 Leigh on Sea u3a is holding an Open Day on Tuesday October 18th at West Leigh Baptist Church to demonstrate activities members enjoy.

MEMBERS from Leigh on Sea and Leigh Estuary u3a's were delighted with the turnout at their public exhibition 'Leigh Shops Through Time' at Leigh Community Centre.

It had provided funding for a downstairs room for the displays of photographs and artefacts from shops remembered, but, sadly, no longer in business.

The display boards had explanations about the shops that then flourished, and quotes from those who worked there or remembered shopping in the past.

Many people attended with memories of shopping trips in The Broadway, whether they had lived there for five or 50 years.

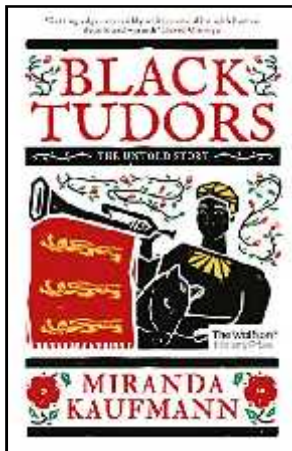
The exhibition had a display board documenting cinemas and bingo halls with comments from people who remember the treat of a cinema visit in days gone by.

'Boozers in the Broadway' showed the development of both the Grand and the Carlton with pictures showing trams and horses and carts and an advertisement from the Old Leigh Regatta programme of 1913.

The two-day free exhibition was held as part of the national u3a movement's 40th anniversary celebrations.

Christine Major

Topical studies



Study aids ... Black Tudors, Thomas Clarkson and a BBC still of TV's Black and British.

AFTER watching David Olusoga's BBC TV programme "Black and British" and reading Miranda Kauffman's "Black Tudors", I began to realise that there was a certain part of Britain's History that was being either ignored or forgotten or, worse still, hidden.

Having run a History 4 Fun Group for several years it was interesting to see that there was a chunk of History, as taught in schools, which was being ignored.

We began as a small group and started researching certain periods of History, beginning with the obvious, the Romans.

By the very means of developing their army and conquering new lands the Romans assimilated many nationalities into their army with the promise of the reward of becoming a Roman citizen after 20 years of service in the army.

So, looking at Hadrian's Wall, and then Septimus Severus, who was born in Libya and became an emperor of Rome it became obvious that this was just a starting point.

Further research was easy to find but not well known. It was all there waiting to be found and so it was not actually hidden but just not on the curriculum when we were at school.

This is not a case of re-writing History just a case of showing what is there, and always has been there, but ignored for whatever political reason.

During our studies we found out about the Beachy Head skeleton from Roman times and Julia Tertia, also known as the "Ivory Bangle Lady" found in Roman York.

She had rich grave goods and was proved to have North African, as well as "white" characteristics in her heritage.

Evidence is found in second and third century Roman Leicester and London.

We also found that a skeleton from medieval times was found at Greyfriars in Ipswich. That was quite a revelation as most of us live within four or five miles of Ipswich and knew nothing about this man.

In her book "Black Tudors" Miranda Kauffman shows that parish records can help find that the ten African people she describes were not necessarily slaves but free men and woman who had skills and were independent.

We have now moved onto the time of the slave trade and the abolitionists.

One of the greatest of these, Thomas Clarkson, is now buried less than four miles from where I live in the village of Playford, near Woodbridge,

There is so much more to research and explore but that is for the future of our group.

If you think about starting a group about this subject I am certain you will be surprised what you can find.

**Chris Gregson,
East Suffolk u3a**





Handbell ringers from our six counties rallying for the 40th anniversary.

Anniversary ring-in

HANDBELL groups from u3as across the East of England joined forces to celebrate the national 40th anniversary by holding a mini rally in Ickleton Village Hall.

We started the afternoon with a rousing Cwm Rhondda by John Hughes and arranged by Sandra Winter.

This was led by Mike Rowland who had the tricky task of playing bells and directing the music.

Castle Suite, an original composition by Angela Jones was our next piece, which I had been "volunteered" to conduct.

There's a first time for everything and nothing like being thrown in at the deep end, but we managed to get to grips with the tricky middle section and I enjoyed the experience.

By popular request we then rang Vasylyna's Tears written by US composer Don R Edwards. A beautiful and moving piece written in 2016 in honour of the Ukrainian people and their continued struggle for freedom; very relevant today.

A break followed, for the obligatory tea, cakes and lots of chat and then Maggie Bullen conducted an arrangement by the

Bedford Brothers of Crimond and Now is the Hour.

We rounded off the afternoon by playing an arrangement of the Ukrainian National Anthem.

The event was a great success.

Some learnt new handbell techniques, others took the opportunity to try hand chimes or bass bells for the first time and everyone enjoyed the experience of playing with a larger group of ringers.

Unfortunately, Melbourn u3a (Scrambells) weren't able to join us, hopefully next time.

If there are any other u3as in the region with a handbell, handchime or bell plate group who might like to come along to a future event, then please make contact - hilaryholt.east.u3a@gmail.com

Many thanks to Sawston u3a for hosting the event and providing refreshments. Special thanks also to Maggie from Bedford u3a and Mike from Sawston u3a who organised a great day.

**Hilary Holt,
Bedford u3a**

Dunmow celebrate 40th anniversary in style

DUNMOW u3a saw two art groups displaying 40 pieces of artwork in Dunmow Library for a week in September

The cycling group offered a ride and the walking group and open invitation for the public to join three walks (2, 4 or 6 miles).

All part of celebrating the national 40th anniversary, the monthly meeting had an

Afternoon of Entertainment featuring technology, gentle exercise and Italian singing.

There was also a photo display and celebration cake cut by the Mayor of Dunmow.

During September, interest groups did their own thing like the Grow Your Own group potting up yellow and blue plants and the golf group using yellow balls.

Sampling the 1940s



MEMBERS of **Stanway u3a** enjoyed a taste of the 1940s with a visit from Essex to the Chatham Dockyard in Kent.

There was non stop music from the era, plenty of authentic looking re-enactors and great exhibits to view.

Volunteers explained the background to displays and passed on little known facts about life during the time.

Doreen Willers



Help, advice and assistance for u3as across the East

Your regional team at the East of England U3A

Trustee Barbara Cordina barbara.cordina@u3a.org.uk

Regional PR and Media Adviser and Newsletter Ray Hardisty rayhardisty.east.u3a@gmail.com

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