



Talking Shop!

U3A

The Newsletter for Members of STAR - The
University of the Third Age -Stowmarket U3A

August 2001

Chairman's Report 2000 - 2001

A really hard act to follow! As you all know, I took over as Chairman at the last Annual General Meeting, as my predecessor, Ann Watsham, had most successfully completed her three years in office, the maximum allowed in consecutive years, as recorded in our trust document.

We have again held our monthly meetings in The United Reformed Church Hall and, apart from the occasional problem with the amplifying equipment, have found the facilities to be excellent.

Our membership has continued to be about the 100 mark throughout the year. Whilst we continue to encourage new members, I am mindful of losing the friendly and personal atmosphere we enjoy in Stowmarket, if our branch becomes too large. (A close friend of mine is a member of Sheffield U3A with 1,500 members and they have never met as a unit!)

It is with great sadness that I have to record the passing away of Robert Wright and Douglas Smith, and I am sure you all wish to join me in extending our sincerest sympathy to members of their families and friends.

My grateful thanks to everyone who has contributed to my year in office, without whom I could not have succeeded. Thank you to all the group leaders for their unstinting commitment. The committee members for their great contribution, the programme secretaries, treasurer, magazine distributors, tea ladies and of course, members. Last but by no means least, my thanks to the Secretary, Brian Killest, for his sterling and conscientious contribution throughout the year.

To summarise, a successful year, and a solid foundation from which to progress in the years to come.

Don Marper.

Reports from our Group Leaders

3D Découpage

Now that we have completed our first year and had regular meetings, which have been organised once a month to suit as best we could all those who wished to come, it is only too obvious that the course has been thoroughly enjoyed by one and all.

Progress has been good and we have managed to produce quite a number of attractive cards and pictures. Once again it has been proved that the old motto of 'keep it simple' has won the day, especially as none of us is very expert, though maybe we shall be more adventurous in the coming season, after we have made all our Christmas Cards.

The more elaborate designs will require a much higher degree of skill, and that should become a much more worthwhile challenge.

Our next season begins in September, and we hope to have some new participants to join us in this engrossing hobby. Those interested should speak to Liz Weir (01449 676528).

Liz Weir

-o-o-O-o-o-

Archive Films

It may be all on film but...

we have laid a telephone cable
from Amersham to Aylesbury;

we have sorted letters on the night
mail from London to Edinburgh,

and, at the moment, we are seeing
this country down the ages through
the eyes of John Betjeman

and watching the story of the
Windsors!

If you would like to join our Archive Film
Group please ring me on 01449 676446.
Two places are available.

It is a pleasant way to spend an afternoon
plus the bonus of superb refreshments
provided by our 'room' hostess, the Rev.
Elizabeth Brown.

We meet on the fourth Monday of most
months from 2.30 pm to 4.15 pm.

E.S.H. Adamson

-o-o-O-o-o-

Bird

**SURPRISES IN SUFFOLK - home and
away with the Bird Group**

Did you know you can see a Spoonbill
in Suffolk? The Ogre's (Ornithology
Group Rambling in England!) could
not believe their good fortune on seeing one

in May (F & M restrictions lifted just in time).
This rare visitor from across the channel feels
at home in the reed beds of Minsmere - along
with many other species, some common, all
just as beautiful.

Just over the Suffolk/Norfolk border lies
Breckland where, on a good birdwatching day
in June (a bit of wind, no sun) we looked on
fascinated as the rare Stone Curlew wandered
about within our vision. It is nothing like a
curlew, but is the colour of stones, so those of
us who are visually challenged needed the
guidance of the quicker-eyed to see it.

Every month is a highlight in our Group -
February was no exception when with other
interested U3A members we spent a
memorable evening floodlit Swan Watching at
Welney. So winter and summer, good weather
and bad, there is always something to see and
somewhere to go in Suffolk.

Janet Sparrow

-o-o-O-o-o-

Computer (ICT)

Since last year's report several things have
happened. Firstly, we were unsuccessful
with our bid for a grant to buy a
computer and projector.

Secondly, the Department for Education and
Employment has made Individual Learning
Accounts available. This has meant that about
£200 worth of instruction can be obtained from
a variety of providers for about £25. Several
members interested in learning computing
skills have found this very useful.

It has also meant that the group has settled
down to about ten members meeting at my
house on about a fortnightly basis, providing a
forum for the inter-change of ideas coupled
with a bit of trouble-shooting!

We will be pleased to show any members who
may be thinking of getting a computer what
one can do for them.

Do get in touch if you wish to discuss any aspect of computing - although we cannot accommodate any more at one time, we could no doubt devise another session if enough are interested.

Brian Killett

-o-o-O-o-o-

Country Strolls

This group, which has been going for some six or seven years, continues to thrive with a steady membership of twelve to sixteen.

We have re-walked some of our favourites, and still there are more footpaths to be explored.

Unfortunately the foot and mouth crisis caused the suspension of our activities for many weeks. We all suffered withdrawal symptoms and eagerly awaited the official opening up of the footpaths.

There are few better ways of enjoying the fresh air and countryside together with like-minded folk and we warmly welcome newcomers to join us. This past year we are pleased to have Katie, Freda, Maureen and two Barbaras with us.

We must mention the awful soaking we endured when walking at Lopham Fen recently. A dry start turned into heavy rain and we just had to keep going, arriving at the tea-room looking and feeling a bedraggled bunch of individuals. We all survived however, and it did happen to be Friday the thirteenth!

Details:

Walks: 2nd. & 4th. Friday afternoons.

Distance: 3 - 4 miles.

Time: 2 hours approximately.

Refreshment: A friendly and necessary "cuppa" at a hostelry or tea-room afterwards.

Joyce Markwell

Joyce Walden

Creative Writing

After a few months break the group reconvened in February of this year with just four of us, including myself. We have continued to meet at my house on the second Wednesday of the month.

We have all enjoyed ourselves and have been amazed at the diversity of work that we have produced. Our aim is to put together an anthology at the end of the year as a follow on to "WRITINGS FROM No. 18" which we published in 1999.

More members would be very welcome.

Pat Smith

-o-o-O-o-o-

Crochet

A few members have met on several occasions but there has been a break while our convener has been away. It is hoped that the group will continue ere long!

Brian Killett

Group Coordinator

-o-o-O-o-o-

Cross Stitch

Several people have shown interest but due to their absences for a variety of reasons regular meetings have not been possible.

I would be pleased to hear from any member willing to be a leader for this group.

Brian Killett

Group Coordinator

-o-o-O-o-o-

French Revision

Our French group has stayed very stable over the last year. Members seem to enjoy themselves whilst eagerly awaiting the next instalment of the light detective story we are using.

We may be able to accommodate two more members so those who are interested in joining the group please get in touch with me.

Mavis Healey

-o-o-O-o-o-

Music Appreciation

Thanks to the kindness of Mrs. Sylvia Webb who offered us a venue and use of excellent audio equipment we have been able to get the Music Group off again to a happy start.

Programmes cover a wide range

from

Scott Joplin and Gershwin

to

Chopin, Mozart etc., etc.,

and artistes such as

Kathleen Ferrier,

Lesley Garratt

and many others.

We meet on the second Monday in each month for two hours, 10a.m. to 12 noon.

If you are interested please ring me on 01449 676446.

At the moment the group is full but we will be happy to put you on the mailing list.

E.S.H. Adamson

-o-o-O-o-o-

Poetry

There are six of us in the Poetry Reading Group - all enthusiasts for reading and listening to poetry. Since we started in November, 2000 we've met sixteen times and have ranged widely in our choice of readings both in time and type of poem.

We roamed the countryside with the Romantics, laughed with the Comedians, and

revisited both well loved and new Narrative poems. We've even dipped our toes into American poetry and ended each session by quietly listening to tapes from the BBC's "The Nation's Favourite Poems".

We've enjoyed ourselves immensely and would welcome new members with open arms. Our meeting place is 53, Lavenham Way and our times are 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. on the 2nd. and 4th. Thursday of each month except August.

Sheila Dobey

-o-o-O-o-o-

Town & Village History I

(First Wednesday in the month)

Since the last Newsletter we have visited Sudbury, Brandon, Sizewell, Mildenhall, Redgrave & Botesdale. In addition we went to "Peters" Ice Cream Factory at Ipswich.

Following the Foot & Mouth problems, we invited a speaker to tell us the history of the Chapels, both past and present, of Stowmarket Congregational Church (now United Reformed Church).

However, the numbers in the group have been steadily decreasing through the year. In June, only four people turned up. As it can take a week to obtain the information, write it up, and carry out the pre-visit, it's just not worth the effort for that number.

Very much a *secondary* issue is the cost - somewhere in the region of £25 to £30 per month, (this excludes any cost on books). There are normally nine outings per year, and I'm in my eighth year of leading the section.

So following the July trip to Orford Ness, I have decided the group should have a break, and reassess its future. I also appreciate that everything has a finite life and maybe "my" group has reached this point, (certainly it will be a nice change for me to read something other than Suffolk history!)

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the local Library for all their help; the members who have in the past helped out by

organising a walk when I was unavailable; to Elizabeth Brown for inviting us into her home during the winter months, and to my wife for accompanying me on the many trial runs during these past eight years, when at times she may have wanted to go elsewhere!

Finally, a general thank you to everybody who has attended the group, I feel we have had some good times.

Pat Leon

-o-o-O-o-o-

Town & Village History II

(Third Monday in the month)

Due to reasons beyond our control there have not been as many history walks as usual. At a meeting at our house in January we told the group that after four years we had decided to give up organising the group.

Among visits we enjoyed was a guided tour at Hengrave Hall, taken round by Sister Kate - the morning was spent in Fornham All Saints, and a pub lunch in the village.

Christchurch Mansion was another guided tour, and this proved another interesting and informative morning, marred only by the persistent rain.

Our final walk took place on a beautiful summer's day - first to Clare to look at the Priory (the house not open to the public) and into the Priory Church. We then walked through the Country Park into the town and visited the beautiful church, and looked at some of the very old buildings - then back to the cars and to Cavendish to Sue Ryder's for lunch. A visit to her museum followed, and then a walk to visit Cavendish's beautiful church.

We do hope that someone or two can be found to carry on where we have left off.***

Ann and Ray Watsham.

(***Please see table of group contacts on back page - Brian Killett, Group Coordinator)

-o-o-O-o-o-

Thanks are due.....

to all those members who volunteered to read examination questions to pupils at Stowmarket Middle School in May.

We were asked whether we could provide twenty people at each of four sessions each of about an hour during the week 14th - 18th May.

Some twenty-eight members assisted me in arranging this and I think it is true to say that all found the task very interesting and rewarding. I have written to the school saying how impressed we all were with the school and its pupils.

The school is really keen to extend this link and would be pleased to hear from any member willing to assist with reading support (for about an hour a week), with their more able pupil programme or becoming a governor.

Brian Killett

Secretary

-o-o-O-o-o-

Subscriptions!

Please note that the new year's subscription is due in September and it would be convenient if you would come prepared to pay the Treasurer the £7 fee. Please make cheques payable to

S.T.A.R.

Closely linked to subscriptions is the price of refreshments. When the subscription was raised to £7 last year the committee intended to remove the 25p. charge for refreshments.

However, as a bowl was put out to allow members to contribute if they wished, this caused some confusion. And, of course, the £1 increase in subscription was more than offset after four free helpings of refreshments!

Your committee have therefore decided that with effect from the September meeting refreshments will be available at monthly meetings for 30p.

Retirement!

I can readily identify with the sentiments of the writer of some notes applicable to those born before 1940 which I thought you might like to hear.

The notes are entitled 'We Are Survivors!' I do not know the name of the author and I have added a few words of my own.

We were born before television, before penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, xerox, plastic, contact lenses, videos, frisbees and the Pill..

We were born before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens.. before dishwashers, tumble driers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip-dry clothes.. and before man walked on the moon.

We got married first and then lived together. We thought 'fast food' was what you ate in Lent, a 'Big Mac' was an oversized raincoat, and 'crumpet' was something we had for tea.

We existed before house husbands, computer dating and dual careers, and when a meaningful relationship' meant getting along with cousins, a 'shelter' was for protection against bombs rather than husbands, and 'central heating' was a nip of brandy to warm us up.

We were before day centres, group homes and disposable nappies. We never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters, wordprocessors, yoghurt or young men with ear-rings. For us 'timesharing' meant togetherness, a chip' was a piece of wood or fried potato, 'hardware' meant nuts and bolts, and 'software' wasn't a word. The 'net' was to prevent the neighbours from prying and the 'web' was an indication of a lack of attention to detail when cleaning.

Before 1940 'Made in Japan' meant junk, the term 'making-out' referred to how you did in your exams, 'stud' was something that fastened a collar to a shirt, 'trainers' were people who coached athletes, and 'going all the way' meant staying on a double-decker

bus to the terminus. Pizzas, McDonalds and instant coffee were unheard of.

In our early days, cigarette smoking was 'fashionable', 'grass' was mown, 'coke' was kept in the coal house, a 'joint' was a piece of meat you had on sundays, 'pot' was something you cooked in and 'ecstasy' was sticking your aching feet in a bath of hot water. 'Rock music' was a grandmother's lullaby, 'Eldorado' was an ice-cream, a 'gay' person was the life and soul of the party and nothing more, while 'aids' just meant beauty treatment or help for someone in trouble.

We who were born before 1940 may be forgiven for considering ourselves to be a hardy bunch when you think of the way in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make. No wonder we are sometimes confused and there is a generation gap but no doubt it will always be so.

Brian Killett

-o-o-O-o-o-

Maturity

YOU KNOW YOU'RE GETTING
'MARVELLOUSLY MATURE' WHEN :-

1. You and your teeth don't sleep together.
2. You try to straighten out the wrinkles in your socks and discover you aren't wearing any.
3. At the breakfast table you hear snap, crackle, pop and you're not eating cereal.
4. Your back goes out but you stay home.
5. When you wake up looking like your driver's license picture.
6. It takes two tries to get up from the couch.
7. When your idea of a night out is sitting on the patio.

-o-o-O-o-o-

Notice of Annual General Meeting

To be held at The United Reformed Church Hall, Ipswich Street, Stowmarket,
at 2.30p.m. on Wednesday, 19th. September, 2001

A G E N D A

1. Present/Apologies
2. Minutes of last Annual General Meeting
3. Matters arising
4. Minutes of Special General Meeting held on 16th. May, 2001
5. Chairman's report
6. Presentation of Accounts by Honorary Treasurer
7. Election of Executive Committee (See below)
8. Any other business



In accordance with our constitution (recently amended), we need to have a committee of between 5 and 10 members including the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. The officers and committee members serve for up to three years if they are willing. Those presently serving are:

Office	Name	Elected	Willing to continue in office	Needs to be re-elected
Chairman	Don Marper	Sept 2000	Yes	No
Secretary	Brian Killett	Sept 2000	Yes	No
Treasurer	Gladys Miller	Sept 2000	No	-
Member	Eric Adamson	Sept 2000	Yes	-
Member	Rose Emond	Sept 2000	Yes	No
Member	Mavis Healey	Sept 2000	Yes	No
Member	Sheila Henry	Sept 2000	Yes	No
Member	Christine Law	Sept 2000	Yes	No
Member	Alan Sills	Sept 2000	No	-
Member	Ray Watsham	Sept 2000	Yes	No

The Meeting will therefore be looking for a proposal for an Honorary Treasurer and a committee member.

Although those members shown are willing to continue in office for a further year you may nominate other members for office if you wish to have a change. If we get more nominations than places then existing members may stand down or there will be a vote.

If you wish to nominate a member to serve please complete and detach the nomination form printed at the end of this newsletter and get it to your Secretary:

Brian Killett at 16, Bures Close, Stowmarket, IP14 2PL,

by 6th. September, 2001.

A Reminder of Group Contacts

Archive Film	Last Monday	Eric Adamson	01449 676446
Bird	2nd. Wednesday	Alan and Janet Sparrow	01359 241968
Computer	Various by arrangement	Brian Killett	01449 676139
Country Strolls	2 nd . & 4 th . Friday afternoons	Joyce Markwell Joyce Walden	01449 613702 01449 615591
Creative Writing	2 nd . & 4 th . Wednesday mornings	Pat (William) Smith	01449 675568
Crochet	Various by arrangement	Enid Monseair	01449 678058
Cross Stitch	VOLUNTEER	NEEDED!!	
Découpage	Various by arrangement	Liz Weir	01449 676528
French Revision	4 th . Friday 10a.m.-12noon	Mavis Healey	01449 711515
Music Appreciation	2 nd . Monday 10am - 12 noon	Eric Adamson	01449 676446
Poetry	2 nd . & 4 th . Thursday 2pm - 4pm	Sheila Dobey	01449 677265
Town & Village History	3 rd . Monday	Audrey Burn Alicia Beaton	01449 720919 01449 616172

S.T.A.R. - The University of the Third Age

Nomination of member to serve on the Executive Committee 2001/2002

If you wish to nominate a member to serve on the Executive Committee for the forthcoming year please complete this slip and return it to the Secretary at 16, Bures Close, Stowmarket, IP14 2PL, by 6th. September, 2001. *Please ensure that the nominee agrees by getting him/her to sign below.*

I..... nominate.....

to be elected to the Executive Committee as.....(insert Chairman,
Secretary, Treasurer or Member as appropriate).

I second the above nomination.....

I agree to be nominated as above and to become a Trustee.

.....
(Signature of person nominated.)