

North Walsham u3a Newsletter February 2026



It is exciting time at the North Walsham u3a – we have new groups starting and our 20th anniversary this year. Keep a close eye on your emails for further announcements....

Also, winter is drawing to a close – there are snowdrops out all over the place and other plants are beginning to bud. Roll on Spring! This is when new growth on beech trees forces out the old.

Photo: Beech Leaves by Paul Heinrich

Thanks to all of you who have contributed to this month's issue. It is nice to receive everybody's contributions, particularly from those who have not previously sent articles. I am particularly pleased that so many are sending photos.

The copy deadline for next month is **Thursday February 26th**. Please send any comments or articles to me at ralph4ed@hotmail.com.

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Thoughts From the Chair

u3a has made a lively and successful start to 2026. Our festive meal at The Beechwood was well attended and enjoyed, setting a great tone for the year ahead. We are also pleased to have launched two new groups—Darts and Healthy Ageing—both of which are off to a strong start. Looking ahead, February will bring further taster sessions, including Art and Tai Chi, giving members even more opportunities to get involved.

We have begun linking with a range of local organisations, including the Men's Shed, South Repps Bowling Club and the local bowling club, with discussions at an early stage. We have also been offered an event by the Reflex Theatre. It is encouraging to see community groups keen to work with us and to explore how we can support one another.

We have also started planning for u3a's 20th anniversary. A well-attended meeting brought together 15 members, including two members who were involved right from the very beginning—indeed, even before u3a officially started. Their dedication, along with others who distributed leaflets and posters across the town, encouraged people to try this new-fangled organisation, and helped firmly establish the u3a in North Walsham.

A working group is now in place to focus on publicity and anniversary events, including a celebration for current members. Plans are developing and we will keep you informed, with opportunities for members to share their views along the way.

Overall, it is an exciting time for u3a, with growing connections, new activities and a milestone anniversary to look forward to.

Maureen Cavanagh

Chair, North Walsham u3a

Announcements

The next monthly meeting at the Sacred Heart Hall at 2.15pm on the 6th of February is a talk by Simon Partridge on "An introduction to Chocolate".

The March monthly meeting on the 6th of March the author and broadcaster Chrisine Weber will be speaking about Positive Ageing

Members are warmly invited to a special talk by members of the Reflex Theatre on Friday 13 March in St Benets Hall at 3.15 pm (Free Event)The company will be visiting North Walsham u3a as part of their intergenerational project Call Me John, exploring storytelling, memory and social history. The session follows a workshop with our Life Story Group and will introduce the themes behind the project and talk about the theatre production.

The project aims to create a "Diary of East Anglia", gathering real stories and reflections from communities across the region. Members attending the talk will gain insight into how personal memories and lived experience can inspire creative work and help preserve local and social history.

There is further opportunity in that the production -Call Me John will be performed at Aylsham Town Hall on 30 April, with both a matinee and evening performance.

Further details will be sent out by email.

NW u3a Groups and Days

Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
1	Monday	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i> 	Jazz Appreciation <i>Jim Costello</i> 
	Tuesday	Darts <i>Trevor Cheeseman</i> 	
	Wednesday		Mac Users <i>Richard Nevill</i> 
	Thursday		Digital Photography <i>Richard Nevill</i> Mind, Body, Spirit <i>Chrissie Kimber</i>
	Friday	Paddling Partners <i>John Harris-Hall</i>	Monthly meeting 
	Sunday	Sundy Lunch <i>Jazz Waspe</i>	

Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
2	Monday	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i> 	Classical Music <i>Jean Simpson</i>
	Tuesday		
	Wednesday		
	Thursday	Ten Pin Bowling <i>Diane Mulligan</i>	Book Group <i>Yvonne Dickinson</i>  U3Sings <i>Patsy Tomlinson</i>  Wine Appreciation <i>Roy Tuff</i>
	Friday	Paddling Partners <i>John Harris-Hall</i>	History <i>Brenda Tibbles</i> Life Story <i>Maureen Cavanagh</i> 

Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
3	Monday	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i> 	Committee Meeting
	Tuesday		Gardening <i>Steve Guratsky</i> Quiz <i>Brenda Redding</i>
	Wednesday		Rock & Pop <i>Marilyn Nevill</i>
	Thursday	Current Affairs <i>Steve Guratsky</i>	Easy Bytes <i>Richard Nevill</i> 
	Friday	The Big Question <i>Steve Guratsky</i> Walking <i>Chrissie Kimber</i> (please check first) Paddling Partners (<i>John Harris-Hall</i>)	Brain Games <i>Janet Head</i> Scrabble <i>Jane Harris-Hall</i>  Mah Jong <i>Ralph Edwards</i> 

Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
4	Monday	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i> 	
	Tuesday	Walking <i>Chrissie Kimber</i>	
	Wednesday		Knit & Stitch* <i>Brenda Tibbles</i> Quiz Group <i>Brenda Redding</i> † 
	Thursday	Cryptic Crosswords <i>John Harris-Hall</i> 	
	Friday	Family History** <i>Marilyn Nevill</i> Paddling Partners (<i>John Harris-Hall</i>)	

*Last Wednesday of the month

**Last Friday of every other month starting September

†Last Wednesday of the month 7.30 pm

News from the Groups

Book Group



We were a small group when we met earlier this month as the bad weather and other commitments meant that members could not attend. However – several people emailed me their thoughts and scores on "The Zigzag Girl" by Elly Griffiths. The scores ranged from two to nine, most of them over six. Most comments were positive, readers having enjoyed the story and the twists. The book is set in Brighton and has a magician as the main character, Max Mephisto. The plot centres around the murder of a previous assistant of his, but his role as a member of an elite team during the Second World War also features. The reader is left wondering where his present role and past role are connected. We are familiar with the author, who has written many books set in Norfolk, so had an idea what to expect, she did not fail to live up to expectations in most cases.

Our next book is "The House on Bellevue Gardens" by Rachel Hore, about a former model trying to save her London townhouse. We are hoping for a change of pace and no murders this time!

Yvonne Dickinson

Coffee Mornings

Richard Nevill is still holding coffee mornings on Zoom every Monday between 10 and 12. If you are interested in joining the fun, get in touch with Richard via the website.

Richard Nevill

Cryptic Crosswords

At the January meeting of the cryptic crossword group, a full complement of members attended.



Following our, now customary, discussion about what Trump has been up to, we warmed up with a *Guardian* "Quiptic". This took us a little longer than normal at 35 minutes as we had a lot of clues that were not straightforward. Our unanimous COD* was:

Clean ersatz stool (7)¹

After a cerebral break to recharge the neurons, we tackled a *Times* cryptic at a level of 86; a little higher than normal. One of the many joys of solving these crosswords is coming across new words that almost never would be used in normal speech but are fun to solve. One example was: DISHALLOW². NAIL SET also, meaning a tool to help with woodwork, was unknown to all bar one of us.

There were a couple of contenders for COD* but the winner was:

Layer cake infilled for this reason (5)³

We finished in 50 minutes after a very enjoyable brain workout.

The group considered trying to compose a cryptic crossword to celebrate the NW U3A's 20th anniversary.

Happy solving.

John Harris-Hall

*COD: Clue of the day

¹SHAMPOO

²"To make unholy"

³HENCE

Current Affairs

Topics discussed this month were:-



ID cards – pros and cons

Government U-turns

Greenland & Trump

The politics of tyranny

Dementia care & local authorities

Religion & politics

Ralph Edwards

Jazz Appreciation

The u3a Jazz Group's next meeting takes place on Monday 2 February, starting at 2pm, and this time we'll be spending the afternoon enjoying the wonderful music of Duke Ellington — a truly marvellous musician, composer and leader of one of the greatest big bands of all time.



If you're not a regular member of the Jazz Group but fancy joining us, you'd be very welcome. Just drop me a message or give me a call. You don't need any specialist knowledge of jazz — just an appreciation of good music.

The North Walsham U3A Jazz Group meets on the first Monday of each month at 2pm at St Nicholas Hall, just behind the church. We ask for a small £3 donation per session to help cover the room hire, plus tea, coffee & biscuits!

If you'd like to know more, feel free to get in touch.

Jim Costello

jamescostello@yahoo.com

Quiz Group

Ten of us braved the cold and went to the Black Swan's new year's evening quiz on 2nd January. Two teams of 5. There were several rounds of questions on various topics.



We had the dubious honour of our teams coming last and 2nd from last. Not perhaps our finest hour but it was still an enjoyable evening.

The afternoon quiz consisted of 2 teams of four. This is a much quieter quiz with less teams and participants and often has tea and coffee offered to for a small cost.

Brenda Redding

Ten-Pin Bowling



We braved the cold weather to enjoy our morning of bowling, I am sure all will agree it was most enjoyable. It was good to welcome back Mandy after a long absence, she had not lost any of her skill that was obvious.

Sorry to have to report the cost has gone up, it is now £11.95 for 2hours including coffee or tea at half time.

Bowling is open to any who would like to join, just email diane_mulligan@yahoo.co.uk alternatively the list will be on the raffle table. The date for our next session is February 12th at 10.00am

Diane Mulligan.

U3Sings



Due to very icy pavements and untreated roads sadly some of the members of the group were unable to join us. However, eleven of us enjoyed an afternoon of singing and laughter. After warm up exercises including clapping and 3 Part Rounds, we sang Dona Nobis Pacem, Gaudete, Down By The Riverside and Jonah-Man-Jazz. We all had a good chat and catch up during the tea break.

Come and join us at our next session on Thursday, 12th February in The Sacred Heart Church Room at 1.45pm. First taster session is free..

Patsy Tomlinson and Margaret Jeppesen

Wine Appreciation

This month we sampled some 'Bin Ends' from CH Wines
With our Scores they were:



6.0 Bodegas Manzanos 1890 Finca Manzanos Blanco Rioja – Spain – 12.5%

6.1 Sancerre Rosé Domaine Raimbault Pineau Vigneron – France – 13%

6.9 Ciello Rosso – Nero d'Avola 2024 – Sicily – 12.5%

7.8 Coquille de Terre Old Vines Carignan – France – 12.5%

Next month (February 12th) Roy and Eva will be hosting us

Cheers !

Roy Tuff

February Walks 2026

Walking Group Coordinator

Chrissie Kimber at rebnikc@btinternet.com



Friday February 20th 10am start approx. 4.5 miles

Leader Diane Wiles

Start point Queen Elizabeth Hall car park for Ruin Road, Worstead, NR28 9WH

Walk is around Worstead going past the sawmill through Frankfort and back, mixed terrain, waterproof foot wear essential

Tuesday February 24th start time 9:30 approx 5.5 miles

Leader Jeanne Heal

Ebridge Mill car park NR28 9QG

The walk includes a stop at the pop-up cafe approx. half way at Honing village hall Tea/Coffee and cake for £1. Cash only

Please note that Feb can be affected by the weather so if the weather on the day is too bad for a walk then you can generally assume it is cancelled, if in any doubt contact the walk leader directly.

Also note, walking conditions can be muddy and the path sometimes flooded so you may wish to use a walking stick to aid stability and please wear appropriate boots.