
North Walsham u3a Newsletter May 2024



At the time of writing, it's very cold! Hopefully the weather will get warmer and allow for plants to develop, like the bluebells in this photo.

It is well worth going onto the national u3a website, where there are all sorts of things to do. Details of one of these can be found on page 5.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter. We are always looking for ways to improve. Please email your comments or suggestions to me at the address below.

Thanks to all you who have contributed to this month's issue. It's nice to receive everybody's contributions, particularly from those who have not previously sent articles. The copy deadline for next month is **Thursday May 30th**.

Please send any comments or articles to me at ralph4ed@hotmail.com.

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Thoughts From the Chair

This month, I'm going to start with a question. How often do you take a raincoat or umbrella with you when you leave home on foot? Is it only when it's already raining or when there's a more than a 50% chance of rain or less than 5%, 'just in case', or maybe something else? This may seem like an odd question, but apparently the answer could say a lot about your attitude to uncertainty (and to getting wet, of course).

I've been thinking about this after reading an interesting article about how people respond to the possibility of bad consequences if they do or don't do something. You can find it at <https://www.theguardian.com/wellness/2024/apr/09/uncertainty-mental-health> if you want to.

It turns out some people are so anxious that it stops them doing things most of us don't worry about at all while at the opposite extreme others are quite reckless; and of course most people are somewhere in between and attitudes to uncertainty are actually on a spectrum. (I said it was interesting, not that that it was surprising. And yes, the Pope is indeed Catholic and bears do sometimes do exactly what you think they do in the woods.)

Anyway, if you do a Google search on 'uncertainty', you get pages of links to scholarly articles about it and tools to calculate it. What you don't get, it turns out, is funny stories about people misjudging the consequences of their actions. This was very disappointing and no help at all in writing this month's 'Thoughts from the Chair'.

So, now that my 'Plan A' to plagiarise the rest of this piece has failed, I am resorting to 'Plan B', which is to get you, dear reader, to do the work for me. Yes, it's a questionnaire!

For each question, the answer can be always (2 points), sometimes (1 point) or never (0 points).

1. Do you go out without a raincoat or umbrella when you leave home on foot? (Yes, I recycle!)
2. If your partner has bought a new item of clothing that is likely to invite more ridicule than admiration, do you tell them the bad news?
3. Do you regularly try new places to eat out?
4. Do you try a new colour scheme each time you redecorate at home?
5. Do you agree to look after friends' or relatives' pets when they ask you to?
6. Do you read books by authors you haven't heard of?
7. Do you buy supermarket food with yellow stickers that you haven't eaten before?
8. Do you try new sports or physical activities or challenges when you have a chance to?
9. Do you try to visit places you haven't been to before?
10. Do you start quizzes without knowing if they'll turn out to be a waste of time?

So, if you've got this far, you can now work out your score. If it's under 5 or over 15, you really should reconsider some of your life choices. If it's in between, you're a lot like most other people and can safely get on with life as usual.

Of course, I could be just making that up. Maybe scores below 8 and above 12 are the ones to worry about. Or maybe you didn't answer accurately and your score is misleading anyway. Or perhaps the whole quiz is pretty silly and nothing should be read into it at all. That's the thing about uncertainty; it just gets everywhere...

Best wishes,

Steve Guratsky,

Chairman, North Walsham u3a

Notices

GENERAL MEETING, FRIDAY 3RD MAY, 2.15, AT ST. SACRED HEART CHURCH HALL

At this month's meeting will be a real springtime treat! Saffron Summerfield will be singing and playing guitar for a selection of songs on the theme of 'When Birds Sing'. This is a return visit by Saffron whose music was greatly enjoyed at her last North Walsham u3a concert.

NORTH WALSHAM BIG BASH

A very big thank you to Maureen Cavanagh, Sue Cody and Janet Strickland for helping at North Walsham Big Bash on Saturday 20th April. The event was organised by North Walsham Community Network and enabled 47 local organisations including North Walsham u3a to tell the public and each other about what they do. We gave leaflets and chatted to dozens of local people and we're hopeful that many will join us. Various other organisations also agreed to display our posters and/or give out our leaflets. And there was a very nice free buffet lunch!

COMMITTEE VACANCY

The u3a's management committee has a vacancy for a co-opted member to serve from now until the AGM in November (and after that, subject to election at the AGM). If you think you may be able to help and would like to know more about what's involved in being a committee member, please email steve.guratsky@gmail.com or phone 01263-834006.

TRIP TO PETER BEALES ROSES

A coach trip is being planned to Pete Beales Roses near Attleborough on TUESDAY 25TH JUNE.

This will include a guided tour of the two acre rose gardens and tea and cake and there will also be time to visit the garden centre and gift shop. All parts of the site are easily accessible.

The cost is £24.00 each, which includes return coach travel from Sacred Heart Catholic Church in North Walsham, leaving at 1.00 pm and returning at approximately 6.00 pm. Cars can be left in church car park.

32 places are available on a first come, first served basis. To reserve a place, please contact Brenda Redding at bredding@tiscali.co.uk.

Once Brenda has confirmed a place is still available, payment of the full amount must be made by bank transfer by 31st May. The u3a's bank account details are as follows:

Account name: North Walsham U3A

Account number: 00852956

Sort code: 30-96-16

Reference: Peter Beales and your name/s

SACRED HEART CHURCH HALL AND ALTERNATIVES

We're very pleased to be able to tell you that Sacred Heart church hall is now will be available again.

From Monday 1st April, Geraldine and Arthur Williams will be taking over responsibility for hall bookings and invoicing. They can be contacted by email at artfwilliams@outlook.com.

If Sacred Heart hall isn't suitable or isn't available when you need a venue, other options include:

- St Nicholas Room and St Benet Hall, next to St Nicholas church. They're suited to a range of activities and both have kitchens. They have a shared entrance, with accessible toilets. They cost around £23 for a morning or afternoon. For further information and bookings, contact the Halls Manager Mrs Ann Herd annherdb.ed@gmail.com

- North Walsham Community Centre, next to the library with several rooms of different sizes. More information is available at <https://www.northwalshamcommunitycentre.co.uk/>

- North Walsham Library, which is happy to host small groups and doesn't charge.

THIRD AGE MATTERS

Articles from recent editions of Third Age Matters are listed under Screenreader Editions at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/publications>

COVID REMINDER

When planning to attend any face to face u3a event, especially an indoor one, please remember that covid, flu and other infectious illnesses are still around and may affect you and other older people badly. Vaccination greatly reduces the risk of serious illness but none of us are indestructible!

Therefore, before coming to any face to face meeting, you should consider whether you are happy to take the risk of being exposed to covid or another illness. In doing so, you should take into account your own personal health and circumstances and those of anyone else you live with.

In any case, please stay away if you or someone else in your household has symptoms of an infectious illness. For covid, these include a high temperature, a new continuous cough and the loss or a change to your sense of smell or taste.

JAZZ EVENT

The u3a regularly holds Zoom meetings on various topics; here is one that jazz fans may be interested in.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-harlem-renaissance-tickets-868211874087?aff=oddtcreator>



NW u3a Groups and Days

Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
1	Mon	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i>	JazzAppreciation <i>Jim Costello</i> Croquet <i>John Grier</i>
	Tue		
	Wed		Mac Users <i>Richard Nevill</i>
	Thur		Digital Photography <i>Richard Nevill</i> Mind, Body, Spirit <i>Chrissie Kimber</i>
	Fri		Monthly meeting
	Sun	Sundy Lunch <i>Jazz Waspe</i>	
Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
2	Mon	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i>	Classical Music <i>Jean Simpson</i>
	Tue		
	Wed		
	Thur	Ten Pin Bowling <i>Diane Mulligan</i>	Book Group <i>Yvonne Dickinson</i> U3Sings <i>Patsy Tomlinson</i> Wine Appreciation <i>Roy Tuff</i>
	Fri		History <i>Brenda Tibbles</i> Life Story <i>Maureen Cavanagh</i>
Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
3	Mon	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i>	Committee Meeting
	Tue		Gardening <i>Ronnie Cooke</i>
	Wed		Art Appreciation <i>Mave Edwards</i> Rock & Pop <i>Marilyn Nevill</i>
	Thur	Current Affairs <i>Steve Guratsky</i>	Computer Group <i>Richard Nevill</i>
	Fri	The Big Question <i>Steve Guratsky</i>	Brain Games <i>Janet Head</i> Scrabble <i>Jane Harris-Hall</i> Mah Jong <i>Ralph Edwards</i>
Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
4	Mon	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i>	Folk Music <i>Jean Simpson</i>
	Tue	Cycling <i>Roy Smith</i>	
	Wed		Knit & Stitch* <i>Brenda Tibbles</i>
	Thur	Cryptic Crosswords <i>John Harris-Hall</i>	
	Fri	Walking <i>Chrissie Kimber</i> Family History** <i>Marilyn Nevill</i>	

* Last Wednesday of the month

** Last Friday of the month

News from the Groups

Art Appreciation



We met this month to watch a film made for BBC4 in 2020 about the life and work of Maggi Hambling, mostly shot in her Suffolk studio, in the garden of a house left to her by an East Anglian art school, led by another artist, Christopher Morris, as well as locations around Aldburgh. It was a fascinating look at a strong minded, opinionated, witty, reflective woman. I thought her portraits were terrific, bold and beautiful. Her later landscapes, especially those connected with the sea, very powerful, from a woman much concerned with we are doing to the Earth. She loved her native Suffolk. We all admired her now iconic memorial to Aldburgh's greatest son, Benjamin Britten, the huge scallop shell on the beach.

One of the group had known the artist's sister very well. She was a teacher and rather strait laced. A fascinating contrast with her younger sister, though Sue said they were close.

Myra Burgess

Coffee Mornings

Richard Neville 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

Book Group



We had an interesting meeting of the book group. The book under discussion was, "To Kill A Mockingbird" by Harper Lee. It was liked by everyone and scored nine out of ten on average.

It is set in the south of the USA in the 1930s where there was a lot of racial tension. The book deals with the happy childhood of two siblings and then moves onto a trial of a black man accused of raping a white woman. This is when the children experience the tension and prejudice of the adults around them and to some extent lose their innocence. However the book has its heartwarming moments and there are some adults who stand up for what they think is right.

Our next book is "Elizabeth is Missing" by Emma Healey, which deals with dementia. We like to have a change!

Yvonne Dickinson

Cryptic Crosswords



Diminished team of three raced through 2, tried to boost our bravado with even harder cryptic, but came a bit unstuck- gave it a good shot, managed half, would John being there have helped????

Sandra Bonney

Current Affairs



Our first topic this month was Police and Crime Commissioner elections. This relatively new innovation replaces the county council police committees, and represent a democratic deficit, as only about 15% vote in these elections.

We then moved on to the controversy about Muslim worship in schools, which rapidly widened to talk about religious worship in schools generally; most thought that schools should be secular.

Our third topic was the progressive smoking ban, which most thought would probably wouldn't work. The discussion then moved on to the desirability of health interventions generally.

We then went on to discuss the environmental impact of road improvements with particular reference to the western link of the Norwich northern distributor road.

Ralph Edwards

Jazz Appreciation



Last month's meeting of the Jazz Group had us all choosing songs on the theme of 'Trains & Boats & Planes'. The song selections were varied & enjoyable ranging from 'Red Sails in the Sunset' to 'Dive Bomber' with, of course lots of tracks mentioning trains. It was a very relaxed & entertaining afternoon session.

For our May meeting Alistair has volunteered to tell us the story of a chap called William Alcott Savory who was an American audio engineer. Savory recorded many jazz musicians especially in the 1930's & he had an extensive collection of private recordings which were only recently discovered; these have now been released on cd. It should be a fascinating afternoon hearing the story of Savory complimented by some great music.

The Jazz Group meet on the first Monday of the month at 2pm. We are a friendly welcoming group who have a common interest in music. If you would like to join us, email Jim via the website.

Jim Costello

Ten Pin Bowling



We did not have a session this month, so we are looking forward to 9th of May at 10.00am, I hope to see our merry band of bowlers then.

All are welcome to come along to "Strikers" it costs £9.95 for 2 hours which includes coffee or tea. No experience is needed, it is all about socialising and having fun.

If you want to join us, the list will be by the notice board, or you can

Email diane_mulligan@yahoo.co.uk

Diane Mulligan

U3Sings



The Singing Group were pleased to be back in The Sacred Heart Parish Hall which was light and recently decorated.

After our usual warm-up exercises we practiced Dona nobis pacem and The Cornish Folk Song Hal-en-tow. After the break we sang You'll Never Walk Alone and The Windmills of Your Mind.

Our next get together is on Thursday 9th May. Come and join us for an enjoyable afternoon.

Patsy Tomlinson and Margaret Jeppesen

Wine Appreciation



This month we enjoyed Wines from Lidl's Iberian Wine Tour

The results were:

Lidl Score Wine Price Strength Our Score

87 White Paco de Bispo, Palmela, 2022 £6.99 12.5% 7.3

88 White Laus Chardonnay, Somontano, 2023 £6.99 13.5% 7.2

89 Red Hacienda Uvanis Garnacha, Navarra, 2021 £7.49 14.0% 7.8

90 Red 270 Alta Expression, Ribera del Duero, 2021 £8.99 14.0% 6.3

Interestingly, their highest was our lowest ...

Next month (May 9th) Tony is sharing South African Wines with us following his serious research Cheers !

Roy Tuff

May Walks 2024

Walking Group Coordinator

Chrissie Kimber at rebnikc@btinternet.com



Friday 10th May 10:00 am start approx. 4.5 miles

Walk Leader Jayne Potter

Mundesley Walk

The walk is about 4.5 miles and leaves from Jayne's house: 10 Hawthorn Rise, Mundesley, NR11 8JY. Plenty of parking in the road but please park on the 'even numbered' side of the street to give access to emergency vehicles.

We will do a figure of eight so there is an option to drop out after 2 miles if you like a shorter walk. We will walk along the tiny river Mun, around the Golf course and then, for those doing the longer walk, up to the Windmill, around the holiday chalets and along the cliff top back with lovely sea views back on to the village. There is the option of The Ship and a couple of cafes if anyone wants to stop for lunch but they will need pre booking.

This is a memorial walk for Neil Potter but please come, even if you didn't know Neil, as it is a lovely walk and it will be lovely to see familiar and new faces.

Jayne

Tuesday 21st May 10:00 am start approx. 5.5 miles

Leader Chrissie Kimber

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

And Finally – Some News You May Have Missed....

As a bit of a nerd, I'm always on the look-out for weird and wonderful bits of technology, so I was very happy to find this article about some 'you couldn't make it up' examples...

Shock of the old: 11 transport fantasies that never got off the ground – from jetpacks to swan-powered paragliders <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2024/apr/18/shock-of-the-old-11-transport-fantasies-that-never-got-off-the-ground-from-jetpacks-to-swan-powered-paragliders>

And following the recent London Marathon, where just taking part is both weird and wonderful, even if you're not carrying a domestic appliance, here are some more examples of admirable/ reprehensible/ bizarre (delete as applicable) things...

Orkney shop owner raises £3,000 for charity after Easter egg error | Scotland | The Guardian
<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2024/mar/28/orkney-shop-owner-raises-3000-for-charity-after-easter-egg-error>

Hardest Geezer: The man who ran the entire length of Africa <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-sussex-68725446>

Man pleads guilty to theft of £4.8m gold toilet from Blenheim Palace
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/apr/02/man-pleads-guilty-to-oxfordshire-theft-of-48m-golden-toilet>

Man embarks on B-road coast-to-coast challenge for MND charity <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-68711630>

Portlaoise Panthers: Irish basketball team refuse to replay last 0.3 seconds of quarter-final tie
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/basketball/68724337>

A 73-year-old scuba diver lost her leg to a shark. Now she's back in the water
<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2024/apr/09/a-73-year-old-scuba-diver-lost-her-leg-to-a-shark-now-shes-back-in-the-water>

German art museum fires worker for hanging his own painting in gallery
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/09/german-art-museum-fires-worker-for-hanging-his-own-painting-in-gallery>

Hearing loss leads musician to make music from nature - BBC News <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-68847740>

Cecil the campervan nearing 900,000 miles and helping clean up UK coast
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/apr/17/52-year-old-cecil-the-campervan-still-helping-clear-uk-coast-of-plastic>

And of course, the usual selection of animal stories...

Justice for gulls! They steal our chips – but also deserve our love, empathy and respect
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/apr/01/justice-for-gulls-they-steal-our-chips-but-also-deserve-our-love-empathy-and-respect>

Get your goat: Italian island overrun by the animals offers to give them away
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/04/get-your-goat-italian-island-overrun-by-the-animals-offers-to-give-them-away>

Balloon syndrome hedgehog found in Gloucestershire field <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-68833432>

Elephant seal makes 'epic' trek back after Canadian officials relocate him
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/apr/17/canada-elephant-seal-relocation-attempt-failed>

Earthworm crowned UK invertebrate of the year by Guardian readers
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/apr/15/earthworm-crowned-uk-invertebrate-of-the-year-by-guardian-readers>

Love nest: how a musk lorikeet fell for a red-tailed black cockatoo
<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2024/apr/19/musk-lorikeet-red-tailed-black-cockatoo-friendship-bonorong-wildlife-sanctuary-raphael-george>

And finally, some astonishing video of a volcano blowing smoke rings...

Mount Etna puffs 'smoke rings' in rare display <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-europe-68752290>

If you want to share a news story with other North Walsham u3a members, send a message through the website at: <https://www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us>