
North Walsham u3a Newsletter August 2026



The big event this year for NW u3a is the 20th anniversary celebration on August 7th. Please make every effort to be there.

The organisation has existed for so long due the efforts of many people – people willing to work on the committee; group leaders; group members and those who just turn up for the next meeting. Long may it continue. To misquote John F. Kennedy – ‘Don’t ask what the u3a does for you – ask what you can do for the u3a:

Photo: Rainbow Arc by Carol Skipper

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 August 27th**. Please send any comments or articles to me at ralph4ed@hotmail.com.

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Thoughts From the Chair

Over the last month I have been reading through years of committee minutes, AGM reports and newsletters in preparation of the 20th Anniversary Event. I have come away feeling humbled by the incredible amount of work, care and commitment that has gone into making North Walsham u3a what it is today.

What has stood the test of time is our ethos. Monthly meetings continue to bring people together, groups continue to develop and evolve, and members, group leaders and committee members have consistently worked together to make our u3a flourish.

It has been fascinating to read about groups that have come and gone over the years—the Humour Group, Foodie Group, Travel Group, and the Art Appreciation Group, which ran from 2007 until 2025. Then there are groups like Jazz, which has been part of our u3a for the full twenty years, and the Computer Group, started when computers were still unfamiliar to many of us. Even more wonderful is knowing that some of those original group leaders are still sharing their enthusiasm today.

One message comes through time and again: the friendships made through u3a often become lifelong friendships. Alongside learning and laughter, there is a genuine sense of kindness, respect and community that makes North Walsham u3a such a special place.

Our story continues as membership grows and ideas abound. This membership year we have started nine new groups, four groups led by people who had never led a group before. Every new member brings fresh ideas while building on the foundations laid by those who came before.

As we celebrate twenty years, it is interesting to wonder what the next ten years might bring. Technology will undoubtedly continue to change how we learn and communicate, but I believe that sharing experiences, learning from one another, enjoying a chat and making new friends will never be replaced.

Our first twenty years have been built by generations of members and volunteers. The next chapter is ours to write.

Maureen

P.S. Read on to hear about the possible return of one of our much-loved group

Maureen Cavanagh

Chair,

North Walsham u3a

Announcements

7th of August 2026 – North Walsham 20th Year Anniversary Event at the Sacred Heart Hall. Lunch from 1.00pm. We have access to the outside space and games will be set up. Inside we will have a display about the 20 year history and Saffron Summerfield will sing in the background.

4th of September 2026 Talk from Alan Gray East Ruston Old Vicarage Gardens on “The Creation of the Garden”. Recommended as an eloquent speaker that people could have listened to all afternoon, an hour was not enough!

The new membership year will be starting on the 1st of September 2026, during August we will be in touch about renewing memberships

Proposed Humour Group

Would you like to take a kick at the miseries that beset us?

Having lain dormant for several years, thanks in part to Covid, a Humour Group might re-emerge if there is sufficient interest.



There is a caveat, however, gloom, solemnity and gravitas have to be abandoned on entry.

Anyone irreverent enough to wish to participate should contact Stewart Casimir via Maureen Cavanagh email Cavanagh_m@yahoo.co.uk

Beware, though, you have to be willing to not take life too seriously for at least 2 hours a month.

Stewart Casimir

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NW u3a Groups and Days

Week	Day	Morning	Afternoon
1	Monday	Coffee Morning <i>Richard Nevill</i>	Jazz Appreciation <i>Jim Costello</i> Croquet <i>John Grier</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		Quiz Group <i>Brenda Redding</i>
	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>
	Wednesday		Rock & Pop <i>Marilyn Nevill</i>
	Thursday	Current Affairs <i>Steve Guratsky</i>	Easy Bytes <i>Richard Nevill</i> Healthy Living <i>Suzanne Lakin</i> Book Group 2 <i>Yvonne Dickinson</i>
	Friday	The Big Question <i>Steve Guratsky</i> Walking <i>Chrissie Kimber (please check first)</i> 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		Gardening <i>Steve Guratsky</i> Meditation <i>Chrissie Kimber</i>
	Wednesday		Knit & Stitch* <i>Brenda Tibbles</i> Art <i>Stella Shanahan</i> Quiz Group <i>Brenda Redding</i> †
	Thursday	Cryptic Crosswords <i>John Harris-Hall</i>	Tai Chi <i>Maureen Cavanagh</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 7.30 pm

News from the Groups

Art



We enjoyed an informative and interesting session learning about the history and development of the vase. Starting in Neolithic times and moving through centuries, we looked at examples of vases in all their simplicity and splendour. Everyone took home mini packs of clay to make their own! It was with sadness that some members learned that the Willow Pattern story was actually fabricated and not truly Chinese!

No meeting in August.

September 30th will be a talk by Professor Willmoth.

Stella Shanahan

Book Groups



Book Group One

The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy" by Douglas Adams had us deep in discussion. Some loved it, some did not! This short book is the first of a series about the travels through the universe of Arthur Dent, a citizen of Earth, and his friend Ford Prefect, not of this world! Our scores out of ten (from 2 through to 10) reflect our enjoyment. However, it did manage an average of 6 out of ten so not a bad read overall.

Book Group two

We collected our first book, "Belgravia" by Julian Fellowes, and will review it when we meet in August. We talked about our favourite books and also about how film and T.V. series adaptations of them often did not do them justice. We appear to have a wide range of literary interests – just the way we like it, so we will have lots to talk about and compare in the future!

We now have a second full group, with over eight members, so will have to consider starting a waiting list for anyone wishing to join.

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



We were nearly a full house for the group's July meeting. Our "warm up" was again the current *Oldie* crossword and this took us nearly one hour! After a cracking start, we got stuck in the NE corner mainly because we solved this clue: "Small rowing boat creates suspicion" with SKIFF and the correct answer was WHIFF.

This was a challenging crossword with lots of misdirection from the setter ("El Sereno"). It also gave us experience in the full range of devices used for clueing (from anagrams to fully cryptic clues). We identified a probable "dud" clue where the definition did not seem to be included ("Country mostly invaded by force repeatedly (6)" – WAFFLE). If anybody has any suggestions as to where "WAFFLE" is defined in this clue, please let me know (and do join our group; looks like we need you).

Our CoD* was:

"Offer one extremely simple batter in kitchen" (9)¹

After a break and the usual wide-ranging chat (including fashion tips for our new PM's wife!) we tackled a *Times*' cryptic. This only took 35 minutes (maybe because our "warm up" had got our brains really fired up.)

A fully cryptic clue: "A common mathematical expression?" (6,8)² amused us quite a bit.

An old crossword favourite using the word "number" NOT as a numerical item but as an anaesthetic (ie: something that numbs you) gave us ETHER as part of this clever clue: "Number wearing jewellery chattering" (10)³

A couple of new words for all bar one of us (he knows who he is!): AIT and EYOT both meaning a small island. Also APOGEAN was new to all of us as the adjective of APOGEE.

We had several contenders for the CoD but his one was very good:

"Unremarkable actions helping criminal" (7,7)⁴

We meet on the fourth Thursday in NW Library and would welcome a few new members if you would like to join this very friendly and interesting group. Please contact me via the website.

*Clue of the Day

¹ TENDERISE

² VULGAR FRACTION

³ BLEATHERING

⁴ NOTHING SPECIAL

John Harris-Hall

Current Affairs

The summer holidays meant that we had a reduced number at this month's meeting, although we had a good chat about the police & crime commissioner elections, Andy Burnham, the Anne Widdecombe murder and immigration

Ralph Edwards



Drama Group

We held a taster session for a new drama group on the 14th July. This was hosted by new u3a members Tony and Carmel Brown who both help run 'North Walsham Drama' a local drama group. Although numbers were quite small for the taster session, it was enjoyed by those who did come along. The session consisted of a short warm-up drama game followed by some script reading. There was lots of laughter and everyone really got into the spirit of things!



A second taster session is planned for Tuesday 18th of August 2 – 4pm in the St Nicholas room (St Benet's hall) and Tony and Carmel would love to see a few more members attend

Tony Carmel

Gardening Group

Imagine that you had just moved house and now owned an empty, medium-sized garden full of shingle with nothing but a few random paving stones dotted about. Underneath the shingle was a membrane sitting on top of sour soil.



All pretty disheartening. This is what Roger was faced with a decade or so ago. You would never have guessed this, looking at that same garden today. It took Roger around five years to achieve the look that he was after by deploying his multiple skills, physical strength and can-do attitude. Upcycling all that he was able to lay his hands on, Roger created a series of garden rooms, ranging from a fruit garden (see pic 1), water garden (pic 2), raised veg plot, chicken run (pic 3), barbeque area, greenhouse section and an arboured seated area (pic 4) not far from the central rectangular lawn and patio. Roger also added an all-important shed and working area. If further proof was needed that Rogers has green fingers, we only had to look up and admire a towering architectural tree that had grown so large it now needed lopping – it was once a bonsai tree!

Equally impressive has been his choice of plants, each one carefully placed to complement the one sitting next to it (pic 5 – with Felmingham church tower in the distance). No amorphous, undifferentiated sea-of-green for him – foliage colour and form being on equal terms with flowers. In addition to an Allium cepa 'Stuttgart(er) Giant' onion, Roger brought out a trug of Cara main crop potatoes gleaned from two sources: one from two plants grown in open soil and the other from a Grow Bag containing a single plant of the same variety of potatoes. He was curious to know which growing method would yield the most. The result really surprise me; it was the Grow Bag that produced the bigger harvest (pics 6)! This was an inspired and beloved garden;

every inch served a purpose. Because the garden was not revealed in one glance, it had the same appeal as unwrapping presents – each path (or enrobed trellis) drew you towards a new vista.



Veronica Korczak

Paddle Group

In July the paddle group had some great outings including a launch from Wroxham near the Norfolk B-roads Yacht Club. As it was a bit hot, we didn't go as far as normal but had a great trip to Salhouse Broad and a little further on. Lots of Blackcaps were heard and a number of herons (more than usual) were our intermittent companions.



The ever-popular launch from 8th Norwich Sea Scout base in Norwich was another great paddle. It's good to paddle into Norwich itself and this provided a change from the usual scenery of our trips.

We also have two new members and we welcome John and Chris to our group.

If anyone is keen to join us you would be most welcome but please note, we do NOT provide any equipment or formal training, just mutual support. Please contact me via the u3a website if you are interested.



John Harris-Hall.

Quiz Groups



Tuesday afternoon group had 8 people, so two teams of 4.

This is a quieter quiz as there were only 3 teams at the Black Swan, but we all enjoyed tea and cake and friendly rivalry.

Wednesday evening quiz was held on one of the hottest evenings of the year.

Again, there was only 8 of us, due to holidays and illness from some of the regular quizzers.

It was a lively evening, with a new quiz master, who after a few teething problems, asked a variety of questions on different topics.

Both these quizzes are held at the Black Swan theatre

Next Tuesday quiz is 18th August starting at 230pm

Next Wednesday quiz is 26 August starting at 730pm.

To book a place for these friendly groups or any more information please contact either Brenda Redding or Karen Fox

Bredding@tiscali.co.uk

Dollydaydreams100@hotmail.com (Karen)

Brenda Redding

Tai-Chi

Rachel, our teacher, guided us through a flowing sequence of tai chi movements, and before we knew it the session was over. She reminded us that tai chi is all about balance, concentration and controlled movement. A practice that many people find useful is to stand on one leg to clean your teeth.



Tai chi may look peaceful and graceful, but don't be fooled – it takes strength, coordination and plenty of concentration. It is as much an exercise for the brain as the body. During the class you soon discover that if your mind starts wandering to what you're having for tea, your body has a habit of wandering too!

By the end of the session, we all felt calmer, a little more balanced, and with a renewed respect for anyone who can stand on one leg without wobbling.

Can you add please contact Maureen if you would like to try a session and join tai chi on Thursday the 27th of August at 4.10pm. Email cavanagh_m@yahoo.co.uk

Maureen Cavanagh

Ten Pin Bowling

On a hot day it was good to be inside in the cool of Strikers with our merry band of bowlers. Plenty of good natured banter was going on, Mike Tyrell claimed victory the first game on his alley, on the second game, Chris was victorious, poor Theresa was beaten by the time running out.



On the other alley Nena in her usual good form won the first game, on the second game Carol romped home after getting a few strikes, she looked so surprised and happy, well done to her. There will not be a game in August due to school holidays, so next date will be September 10th at 10.00am.

Diane Mulligan

U3Sings

Our July get together of U3Sings was happy and very enjoyable. David took us through the warm up exercises and then we sang Dona Nobis Pacem, Banaha in two parts. We then went through Gaudete, Rhythm of Life and Sloop John B.



Our next session is on Thursday 20th August at 1.45pm in The Sacred Heart Church Room, North Walsham. We welcome new members. We just sing for fun.

Patsy Tomlinson and Margaret Jeppesen

Wildlife and Woodland Wanderers



What a brilliant start to our Wildlife & Woodland Wanderers adventures. Twenty-one people joined us for our very first walk around Saddlers Wood in North Walsham, and the atmosphere was fantastic, curious, friendly, and full of that gentle summer energy.

Mother Nature is having her quiet moment right now. Most birds are moulting after the hectic fledgling season, so the woodland wasn't filled with much birdsong. A few butterflies drifted past us, though not in huge numbers, just enough to remind us it's still midsummer.

What was abundant were the trees. We loved pausing to notice just how many species live in Saddlers Wood: Scots pine, rowan, beech, oak, hawthorn, holly... a beautiful mix of young growth and truly ancient elders. Some of those old trees have been standing watch for decades, even centuries. It's hard not to wonder what stories they'd tell if they could speak.

And a huge cheer for a couple of our young-at-heart U3A adventurers who took absolute delight in having a go on the zip line. Whoever said growing old was boring clearly hasn't met our lot.

A big thank-you to everyone who came along. It was a joy to wander, notice, chat, and share the wood together.

Love a wander, a chat, and pointing out interesting bits of nature along the way? You might be just the walk leader we're looking for. We've got a wonderful group already, and with a few extra leaders we can split into smaller groups and make our outings even more fun.

Debbie Walmsley

Wine Appreciation



This month we enjoyed a further selection of Bin Ends

With our Scores they were:

6.3 Ca'Tesore Pinot Grigio Rosé 2024, Italy 11% £13.95 or less CH Wines

6.8 Ca'Tesore Pinot Grigio 2024, Italy 11% £13.95 or less CH Wines

7.3 Chablis 2022, France 13% £29.30? CH Wines

8.2 Tonada Merlot 2024, Chile 12.5% £9.49 CH Wines

7.3 Mirlo Merlot 2023, Spain 13.5% £12.99 Avery's

Our next Tasting will be in September (10th) – Richard and Marilyn will be hosting us with a BBQ

Cheers !

Roy Tuff

August Walks 2026

Walking Group Coordinator

Chrissie Kimber at rebnikc@btinternet.com



Tuesday August 11th start time 9:30 approx 5.5 miles

Leader Andrew Lamymand

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

Tuesday August 25th 10:00 am approx. 6 miles

Walk leader Myra Burgess

Walk will start at Trunch, parking at Trunch village hall, NR 28 OQG, walking over to Mundesley where there is a nice new coffee shop, Rustons. Then back another way. The coffee is very good. Plenty of time to refresh before returning. Brand new loo. Terrain, easy, flat walking