



Those were the days!

Perhaps like me, when searching on YouTube, you are suddenly invited to wander off into a topic that wasn't even faintly on your mind. This isn't of course just random, but due to the algorithms that the website uses. Recently I was 'directed' to a series of videos on childhood going back to the 40's and 50's. Memories came flooding back. In those days if you hadn't decided what to do, your mum would probably say "Well off you go, be careful and be home in time for tea". Nobody worried, so the whole day was yours to fill as you pleased. Only once you became adult did you realise just how wonderful that was. If you hadn't made any plans, you would go round and knock and ask if a friend could come out to play. If there was no answer, you would try again at another house until you were successful. There was no phone!



Once a few started playing outside, others would join and soon the pavement and the street were filled with activities and imagination. There was street football with jumpers as goalposts, skipping competitions, hopscotch, and a large collection of bikes to swap rides on. This was how you learnt to ride a two-wheeler, bike, by falling off and getting back on again. Mastery, confidence and bravado might lead to two riding on one bike and finally the accolade of cycling with your hands off the handlebars. Even learning to skate, strapping the skate to your shoes meant bruises and grazed knees, but this was all part of life's adventures.



Swings and slides without a challenge were boring, so you would swing until you could go no higher and jump off and hopefully land safely on the hard concrete. Repeating it but standing up on the seat, meant you were hailed as a champion. Running up the slide chute and not using the ladder was fine if your shoes weren't slippery. Better still, why not run up one side of the see saw and down the other? Another trick involved two sitting on one end, leaving a friend dangling in the air. There were no traumas from social media posts, no dangerous websites, nor knives carried to school. Yes, we are a lucky generation.

From the Chairwoman



Thanks to Sue for loaning her dog Barney, for the demonstration of massage techniques by Steven Sugden. An unusual experience?

We have had a successful start to 2026 with enthusiastic attendance at both monthly talks and an encouraging number of new members. Increasing membership not only improves our income, it brings new ideas and renewed energy. Perhaps you have a neighbour or friend who you believe would enjoy our u3a, please encourage them to join. A kind volunteer will be leafleting the new Hopkins development. If you can deliver some leaflets, please ask for a supply at the next meeting from Rachael, or via our website.

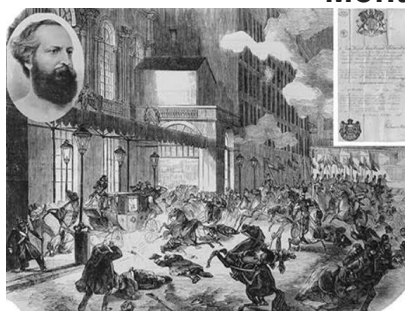
VACANCIES: We have vacancies for various volunteer roles. These are not committee roles and are not time consuming.

Web site support. We are fortunate to have Nick Amery as our webmaster. However, Nick ought to have an apprentice for holiday cover etc. Our website is built in WordPress which is very easy to use. If you have knowledge of WordPress or are happy to learn about the process, we would love to hear from you.

Facebook support. Our Facebook presence is very limited and we should be more visible and post our events. If you are a Facebook user and could help us with this please let us know.

Without these roles covered, we have too many single points of failure. Monica Edmonds

Monthly talks at the Cut starting at 2.00pm



Tuesday 17th March. Passports Assassins Traitors and Spies.

Martin Lloyd worked for HM Immigration Service for 24 years. He now writes books, appears on television, talks on the radio and to groups such as U3As and the Arts Society.

'Thrill to stories of how three passports have played their influential role in the course of history: an attempted assassination which altered the regulations for issuing passports; the capture of a spy which caused a worldwide modification to the design of the document and for one person the passport itself which turned into a killer.'



Tuesday 21st April. The Science of Astrophotography Chris Mead will describe the techniques used by amateur astrophotographers, to capture images of distant objects and the science underpinning the techniques. Those who have visited Dash Astro will have seen examples of Chris's brilliant photography. His talk will be illustrated with images of gas nebulae and galaxies. This image of the Bubble Nebulae was taken from his back garden in Wrentham and Chris will explain its capture and processing.



Tuesday 19th May Norwich Castle Keep – A Palace Reborn!

Dr Tim Pestel, Senior Curator of Architecture, Norwich Castle Museum presents Norwich Castle's imposing Norman Keep, recently been the subject of a £27million transformation. One of the largest recent heritage projects in the UK it was documented in a recent Channel 4 programme. The reborn Keep has recreated the original room spaces, fittings and furnishings and there is an impressive new Gallery of Medieval Life created in partnership with the British Museum.

All talks are free to Halesworth u3a members. Non-members ticket costs £4 each.

u3a Film Club - Tuesday 3rd March 2026 starting 2pm- the Cut "MID-AUGUST LUNCH" (U, 75 mins, 2008).

On Tuesday take a seat for a charming Italian comedy set in Trastevere, Rome. Middle-aged Gianni is unemployed and looks after his ageing and demanding mother in her apartment. During the August holiday of Ferragosto, Gianni is reluctantly persuaded by his landlord to look after his mother and aunt as well. Over the next 24 hours, chaos ensues as Gianni tries to juggle all the conflicting personalities, diets and medications. A semi-autobiographical film from star / writer / director Gianni Di Gregorio, with at its core a touching relationship between a mother and her only son. Tickets are available for a donation at the Cut Box Office on the day. Why not meet up for a lunch and a coffee before or after the screening in the café?



Our Next Film Day. Following many requests after the Film Noir Day in January, we are pleased to announce the date of the next Film Day on **Wednesday 27th May 10.15 - 3.45. Further details later.**



The Bowling Group has been dormant over the winter as we are focused on outdoor Lawn Bowls. We have an enthusiastic group which has been running for two years. We use the Green at Halesworth Angel Bowls Club which is at the top of Dairy Hill (IP19 8JS) and they kindly lend us bowls (woods). We meet at 2.00pm. every Wednesday afternoon. Members contribute £3 for an hour and a half session, which usually finishes with a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit.

Bowling is a low impact sport, so it is kind to our joints. Anybody can participate, no experience is necessary and full instructions are given. Our season starts, weather permitting, on **15th April**. We would welcome new members. Contact Ben the group organiser via our website.



Art Appreciation Group. The January meeting at the Halesworth Museum looked at the art of the Christmas card. Members brought along cards featuring images of paintings of any period and / or hand- crafted cards or cards which have unique images created by artist friends and was followed by discussion. The March meeting will feature women artists; the venue is to be decided.

Other future venues to consider are: The Red House, Sainsbury Art Centre, Norwich Castle Gallery, Snape Maltings and Christchurch Mansion Ipswich. Trips further afield will also be discussed.



Church Crawlers Group takes place on the fourth Wednesday afternoon of each summer month and will commence again on **22nd April 2026**. Please contact the group leader via the u3a website for more information. We visited these two very interesting churches to round off the 2025 season:

St Peter's Church in Theberton. A thatched church with a very pretty round tower and amazing gargoyles (right image). In the porch are the remains of a WW1 Zeppelin which came down on the edge of the village in 1917.

St Mary's Church in Dennington. There is so much of interest to see in this impressive 130 foot long church, with many beautiful carved bench ends including all manner of imaginary animals, while Sir William Bardolph and Lady Joan repose (left and centre images).



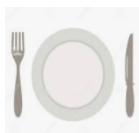
Our group started the year with a post festive lunch at The Angel, delicious as always. We played in the street for the 'Big Headshave', for the National Breast Cancer Foundation, which set the tone for a wonderful gathering. Yes, it was January and we played outside, and Halesworth U3A members Christine and Linda had their heads shaved in the street, but it was dry, not too cold and our playing definitely helped to start filling the collecting buckets.

The first event this year, is our bi-annual visit to Suffolk Sight, who meet at the Co-op community room, on 9th April, closely followed with a fundraising concert for St Peter's Church, Holton, on the afternoon of Saturday 11th April. We are always happy to welcome new members to the group. If you can sing that would be a bonus, but is not compulsory. If you would like to come and have a go, we have several ukuleles you can try and a wealth of knowledge, in true U3A spirit, to help you learn. Just contact our co-ordinator, Chris.

Kurling Group. You may have watched the Curling from the Olympics in Milano-Cortina. It looks intense and hard work. Our Kurling with a K, not a C, is a much more relaxed and less physical game. Yes, we have stones, which weigh approximately 1.3kgs, whereas the Curling stones used on the ice weigh approximately 19kgs. We only use pushers to push the stones towards the target. No energetic brushing in our game. And most importantly of all, we have a loud cheer when we've managed to knock the opposing team's stones off the target.



Come and try our Kurling session and see what you think. It's £5.00 pp to cover the cost of hiring the hall and the equipment. We meet on the last Thursday of the month from 2.00-4.00pm at Westhall Village Hall (next to the Racehorse pub). New members most welcome. Please contact me if you require a lift - Sandy Clisby.



Lunch on Friday Group. An excellent Christmas lunch was enjoyed at The Huntingfield Arms, followed by a visit early this year to The Huntsman and Hounds, Spexhall and The Kings Head, Yoxford. Thanks to Cherie and Mike for organising the lunch.



The Jazz Group. The next meeting of the Jazz Group will take place at 2.00pm on 16th March in Halesworth Library when Ben Cardwell will present a review of the work of Ron Carter, the most recorded jazz bass player of all time. Further details on our page on the Halesworth u3a website: https://halesworth.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/jazz/

Malcolm Ballentine



The Halesworth Music Collective was established in 2023 and is a non-profit team of music enthusiasts who have been organising regular events at The Cut Arts Centre, Halesworth. **Among the founder members of this collective there are several members of our u3a.** The 2026 season features five standout sessions exploring artists and eras that shaped modern music, from Mark Knopfler’s narrative guitar craft and the raw energy of Grunge’s Big 5, to Bob Dylan’s poetic legacy with the vibrant soundscape of the 80s and the winter lit world of Nick Drake.

Thoughtfully curated and culturally rich, each event offers an engaging journey for music lovers across Suffolk. Visit The Cut website for further details and tickets.



The u3a Walking Group, well wrapped up, on a circular walk from Dunwich beach, through Dunwich woods on 12 February.



The Music Appreciation Group had to cancel its February meeting for the first time in eleven years, due to technical problem, so fingers crossed for next month.

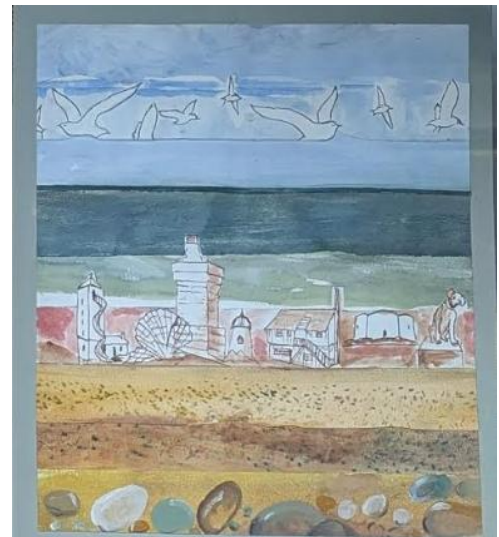
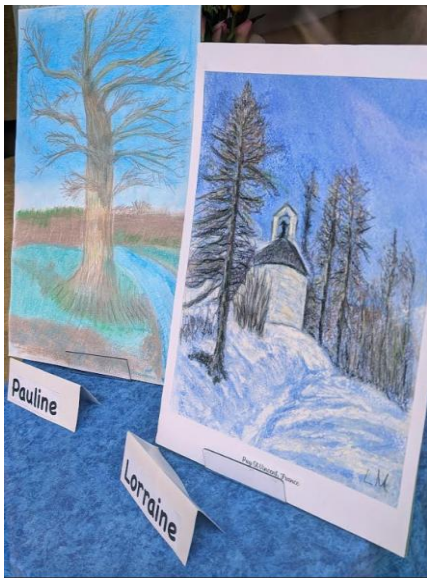
March 26th ‘What are conductors for?’ (the postponed presentation!)

April 23rd Film ‘The Choral’ starring Ralph Fiennes and Simon Russell Beal
Written by Alan Bennet, it portrays an amateur choir struggling to survive in 1914

May 28th ‘A morning at the Opera’

New members welcome for a free taster session.

Drawing For The Terrified



Marianne

Members have been building sketchbooks, whilst learning a variety of techniques. Here are some recent examples of their work. A memorable session was held in the Art House and South Lookout in Aldeburgh, thanks to Caroline Wiseman. All this eager scribbling has culminated in a one week display in Halesworth Library. We may run another group next winter (too busy enjoying ourselves in the summer!), so watch this space. Paul and Marianne Beamish.

Bird Watching Group

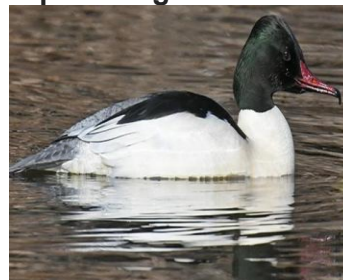
New group coming - More details soon



Barnacle Geese



Common Crane



Goosander



Nuthatch

For the last meeting of 2025, the group visited RSBP North Warren seeing 38 species, making the total species for the year 108. Our first meeting of 2026 was in January in Southwold. On a chilly, and in places, icy morning, a total of 39 species seen or heard. Snipe were showing on the marsh, Redwing and Fieldfare were in and out of the brambles, but the highlight was a flock of 500 plus Barnacle Geese flying overhead and spooked by a passing helicopter.

The February meeting was at RSPB Minsmere, taking in both Island Mere Hide and woodland as well as the scrapes and beach. 66 species were seen or heard by the two groups with the highlights being Common Crane and Peregrine Falcon flying overhead, Goosander and Red-throated diver on the water.



Grand Driver Scheme is run by the Suffolk County Council Road Safety Team. It's a scheme for anyone 60+ who drives and would like to keep driving for as long as possible. **There are two parts to the scheme - a theory workshop, and a driving assessment. The workshop** lasts for three hours and we discuss how driving has changed, and how to cope with this as we get older. There is a chance to discuss any concerns you may have about driving. We also have a refresh on the Highway Code. **The driving assessment** is at a time and place to suit you, using your own car and lasting about an hour. The trainer will discuss any aspects of the drive that are increasing your risk and offer suggestions and alternatives to reduce it. You'll receive a written report outlining what was discussed. Spaces are limited.

For more information -please contact Jane Holland on: 01473 341157 or email: jane.holland@suffolkhighways.org