

# NEWS FROM THE EAST



October to December 2021

Your regional team keeping in touch with u3as across the six counties of the East of England

## Festive regional quiz

YOUR Eastern Region team is organising a festive fun quiz with a difference to round off 2021.

All members of the u3as across the six counties are invited.

It will be on Zoom and challenge solo performance.

So forget teams and forget joining with others to represent your u3a, this is a test of individual knowledge.

On top of all that the top ten scorers will receive a u3a beanie hat!

There's no need to book.

Members just have to click on the link or put the meeting id into their Zoom app to join and take part.

The December 10 afternoon, from 2pm, is being run by Aylsham and District U3A on behalf of the region.



The invitation to take part has gone to chairs, secretaries and treasurers as usual, so please pass on to your members.

Click and join link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87861718740>

Via Zoom app:

Meeting ID: 878 6171 8740

One tap mobile

+442034815240,,87861718740# United Kingdom

## May for first Eastern Conference?

PLANNING is moving forward for the first ever regional conference in the East.

The event, a regional part to the u3a's 40th anniversary year, will hopefully be in May and held in Christ Church, Chelmsford.

Barbara Cordina, Hilary Holt, Marilyn Walker and Ray Hardisty are the organising sub committee.



**December  
Forums**

**BOOK your places for the next two Regional Forums . Interest Groups matter on Tuesday, December 7, 2pm to 4.15pm and Recruiting and Valuing Volunteers on Thursday, December 14, 10am to 12:15am**

# Witham bid for quilt

HERE is our potential square for the quilt being created to celebrate 40 years of the u3a.

It illustrates u3a activities members of Witham U3A Patchwork and Quilting Group enjoy.

The nine patches include trips to the theatre, different aspects of sewing [hand sewing, machine sewing and choosing colours], music appreciation, cooking with friends, wine appreciation, gardening and playing cards.

Judging will take place in the first two weeks of December with one of the judges being Stuart Hillier, a past contestant from the great British sewing bee.

We will wait in anticipation the result, as only 40 blocks are required and entries are expected from whole country.

We will not be too sad if it doesn't get picked.

It was an interesting project and resulted in



much discussion about fabrics and the best way to put them together.

A learning curve for us all

**Marion Stubbings**

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## Successful panel event will return

PLANS are already being made for further regional Ask the Panel events after the success of the first one last month.

It was well attended, the questions were many and varied with more than 20 topics covered in just over two hours.

But with a steady stream of new faces

becoming u3a trustees, it is obvious the queries will keep on coming.

The panel mix of national and regional advisers was welcomed and, all being well, the scheme is that national office representation will change to ensure breadth of information being available.

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## Recording shops in Sudbury

SADLY Sudbury U3A were omitted from the list of regional u3as taking part in the national High Street project in the last issue.

This is an update on what members have been doing, from **Jane Crumpton-Taylor**.

Sudbury started and continue to be keen on data- how many hairdressers are there? Do we have too many places to eat?

In March this year a team of 11 recorded the shops and other work places on the main streets of Sudbury.

Over 500 lines of data and hundreds of our pictures are now part of the national project.

We plan to add to the website at least annually, systematically recording changes.

We hope too that our data will inspire related projects by other u3a members: art, photography, writing, history... what about those streets where the ghosts of shops remain only in the size of the front windows?

We could be part of national "collections" too: silk towns, artists' towns, fish and chip shops and so on.

In the future will we struggle to recall the old favourites or those whose life was brief? The High Street Project could help us.



Looking the part as a Tudor theme marks a social return for Tendring U3A.

## Dress to impress social

MUSICIANS from Colchester Waits Band and dancers from Colchester Historical Dance entertained Tendring U3A members at the McGrigor Hall with music and courtly dances from the Tudor period.

Members of the committee dressed accordingly and Mark Riley made the most splendid Henry V111.

We learnt about the differing costume style (all made by the members of the group) and the authentic instruments being played.

Delicious welcoming “toddies” and gingerbread (thank you Carol) were served.

The hall was decorated with fresh greenery and Tudor roses.

A light-hearted but thought-provoking quiz was set by Karen, Mark and Ann.

Many members were encouraged to join in some simple dances.

Huge thanks to Val Duncan and her Social Events Team – what a splendid way to get back to social meetings again!!

**Phyllis Deer**



## Recruiting members at charity event

AYLSHAM and District U3A took part in a town Charities Morning.

Members organised and manned a stand and picked up four new members and the possibility of two more.

It was very crowded but enjoyable and a lot of people were wearing masks



Afternoon tea inside and out.

# Benfleet celebration

MEMBERS of Benfleet U3A celebrated their 10th Anniversary at Benfleet Yacht Club with an afternoon tea overlooking Benfleet Creek at high tide on a gloriously sunny day.

In all, 150 members attended throughout the afternoon and the event was run under the Yacht Club covid guidelines.

Members were treated to a slap up tea to celebrate 10 years together and thoroughly enjoyed meeting face to face after so long apart.

Outing Organiser, Maria Kelly, commented "Benfleet U3A continues to flourish from that little acorn back in June 2011 (when 40 people turned up) to the lovely full grown tree that it has become with all its branches."

We currently have 38 branches (sorry groups) ranging from art to languages, wild-life to long walks, singing to badminton.

We were able to keep over half active during lockdown by a mix of Zoom, Skype and by setting topics and challenges to



Who's for a slice of cake?

group members to action individually such as Woodland for Photography, Summer Solstice for Drawing and Local Farms for Local History.

These were then shared via zoom plus photos and write ups for our web site and Facebook page.

Benfleet is now implementing the full group programme **Alan Aldridge**

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## We've FREE technical and digital advice

MODERN digital technology can be a great help to u3as, but many are not using it to its full potential.

If you want to run hybrid meetings, improve your administration, use generic email addresses, spot scams or help your more isolated members improve their own IT skills. IT Helpers are ready to talk to you.

This is a pilot scheme being trialled by the

East of England Region and must end soon, so 'use it or lose it'.

You can read more about what the scheme asnd its helpers have to offer on the region's web site at

<https://u3asites.org.uk/east-of-england/page/115049>

For help and advice, please contact the IT Coordinator, Ken Wheatley, at [kenwheatley.east.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:kenwheatley.east.u3a@gmail.com)



Left: members pose in costume in front of Southminster Hall for the open days and, right, a view across the excavation site.

# Past promotes today

BURNHAM U3A Archaeological Group has been making headlines by uncovering the past in the grounds of Southminster Hall.

A special site open weekend during this year's Heritage Open Days attracted a total of 533 visitors.

And from the Facebook feedback and emails plus all those who attended, everyone absolutely loved it.

Now, with the trenches filled in, members are gearing up for a year long display of the excavation in Burnham Museum.

The group's finds have spanned from flint tempered prehistoric pottery, to Saxon, to medieval and later.

They also discovered Roman brick and tile, and large amounts of animal bones, amounting to over half a pig.

During the special weekend, the Burnham U3A committee manned a stand by the entrance with roller banner and display boards. They handed out leaflets and talked about the u3a.

U3A members took it in turns to give guided tours of the excavation (in costume) which included visiting the metal detecting site, and having a go at sieving before ending up at the display boards which giving the history and heritage of the area and the various owners of Southminster Hall.

Other members carried on excavating and were finding pieces of pig bone and roof tile even as visitors were going round, and we also had some of our members recording.

**Sue Spiers**



Left: visitors and three trenches. Above: one of the trays of finds.

## Change to annual U3A Day

U3A Day will be held on the Wednesday of the third week of September every year, along with a week of celebrating what it means to age well. In 2022 - our 40th anniversary - U3a Day will be held on September 21 or on a day between 18 and 26 September chosen by individual u3as. (Any queries, contact PR and Media Adviser Ray).



Recollections of engines, like the B17 on the left, steaming through our counties, are wanted by the trust which is also looking for volunteers to help recreate one of them.

# Memories of steam

**John Peat**, of Wymondham U3A, director of the B17 Steam Locomotive Trust, writes:

IF you grew up in East Anglia and like me had an interest in railways, you may well remember seeing these LNER steam icons across your local rail network hauling main line and cross country expresses, including fourteen "named trains", over their thirty year life.

They were also allocated to royal train duties when the royal family travelled to Sandringham House in Norfolk, including royal funeral trains for King George V and King George VI.

With the exception of Bedfordshire, they were a common site in the other five East Anglian counties, being based predominantly at Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester and Stratford (East London), March, Southend, Great Yarmouth and Peterborough.

A total of 73 engines were built, but sadly not one engine survived the cutter's torch. Thirty one of the locomotives were given local names related to our region.

When built, seventeen names were from Norfolk, six from Suffolk, seven from Essex and one from Hertfordshire.

## East link with a very special rail project ... part two

However, subsequent county boundary changes have included other loco place names that now are part of Cambridge-shire.

For more information on locomotive names please refer to our web site: [www.b17steamloco.co.uk](http://www.b17steamloco.co.uk) and then select ClassDetails/Summary of Classes.

I am looking for u3a members to share memories of these locomotives and hoping to hear of the experiences of former LNER railwaymen, or their families, who worked with the locomotives, and hopefully anyone who may have photographs of them.

It is important to gather memories before those who hold them, pass on.

Our trust is also looking for people who would like to get involved and to help us recreate this LNER railway icon.

This can be achieved by financial support, and/or by offering your skills and time to help the project progress.

So why not join me on this exciting project? Email: [b17enquiries@gmail.com](mailto:b17enquiries@gmail.com)

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## Contacting the East of England U3A

Trustee Barbara Cordina .... [barbara.cordina@u3a.org.uk](mailto:barbara.cordina@u3a.org.uk)

Regional Team Co-ordinator Hilary Holt .... [hilaryholt.east.u3a@gmail.com](mailto:hilaryholt.east.u3a@gmail.com)

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