

# DISS U3A



## Winter Newsletter 2024

## Message from the Chair

*Fanny Grey – Chairman*

Dear Friends,

This has been a great period in Diss u3a with many new activities and some new groups and with others planning to start in the new year. There has been a visit to the Design Centre with the chance to try 4 different crafts. We were made very welcome and a return visit is planned. The other new event was our inaugural quiz night with fish and chips. Fun was had by all and we are planning another evening in the spring. Our Christmas lunch is at the beginning of **December**, now a well-established annual get together. May I wish you all the best for 2025 and continued success for our u3a.

*Fanny Grey (Chair)*

## INTEREST GROUPS

### New Groups

Since the last newsletter there are three new groups up and running.

**Modern Folk** This group listens to, and discusses, songs from Woody Guthrie (1912-1967) to current singers and songsmiths. Folk songs often reflect the writer's character, their concern with contemporary issues and human emotions. David has a large collection of CDs and LPs and members are encouraged to share their favourites. Meetings are on the 1st and 3rd Monday:

Contact *David Young*: [david12string@gmail.com](mailto:david12string@gmail.com)

**Family History** It is great news that Jackie has been able to restart her Family History group. It meets in her house so inevitably it must be quite a small group. The group meets from 10-12 on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Contact *Jackie Collins* 01379 652609, [Tangles3@btinternet.com](mailto:Tangles3@btinternet.com)

**Jazz** This is a course in the history of jazz. It meets on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays 2-4 in Diss.

Contact *David Young* : [david12string@gmail.com](mailto:david12string@gmail.com)

## Round Tower Churches

This group will start meeting in January.

England's 180 Round Tower Churches (RTCs) are almost uniquely East Anglian, and of those, Norfolk has 124 and Suffolk 38. For example, Wortham Church has a round tower with a 10 metre diameter base, making it the largest base of any round tower in England. Wherever possible, I plan to utilise local experts to guide us through each building visited. There are 12 RTCs within 5 miles of Diss. Contact *Mike Bowen*:

[mike.bowen@mcb-biz.net](mailto:mike.bowen@mcb-biz.net)

## Other Groups

Unfortunately, three groups are not meeting at present. The **Singing for Fun** group had some very enthusiastic members, but sadly not enough. **Bell Ringing** is temporally suspended due to the leader's health. We send her our best wishes and hope that she will soon be back with her normal strength and health. Due to low numbers, the **Art Group** is, we hope, only temporally suspended, and will restart shortly.

Of course, as always, please let me know if you have ideas for a new group which you think would be popular.

*Duncan Livingstone* Groups Co-ordinator

[duncanlivingstone1@gmail.com](mailto:duncanlivingstone1@gmail.com) Phone - 01379 890189

**Birdwatching** *See front cover photos from Maggie Nylk and Gerry Gunton*

For our u3a bird group, 2024 has been a very happy one. We have had a successful, fun year with our group visits to various nature reserves all over Suffolk, Norfolk and some in Essex. We are a friendly group, most of whom are very generous to share their wealth of knowledge with all the others. Good photographers amongst us, take amazing photos to share with rest of the group. We have a wonderful morning every time we meet up to watch birds and wild flowers in their natural habitat. On our visit to Titchwell we spotted 40 different varieties of birdlife!

*Jey Veerasekaran*

## Looking at Buildings

*Fanny Grey*



This has been a very varied and successful time for our buildings group.

It has taken us up the millennium tower in Bury St Edmunds, a fascinating insight into the history of aircraft at Martlesham Heath, a wonderful lunch in a windmill, on a self guided bus, round a brick factory, the highlights of Ipswich and into a convent. In fact far to many excitements to mention. We have many great places to visit in 2025 thanks to the enthusiasm of our members.

## Dance

This new group is well attended in the scout hall in Heywood Rd. We only meet once at month but have fun exercise and a dance like it was still the 1970s. Contact: [fanny.grey@googlemail.com](mailto:fanny.grey@googlemail.com)

## Crime Fiction

We meet in a lovely conservatory just like the game of Cluedo! We enjoy the finer points of all aspects of this genre. Be it film, TV, books or radio, we will include all the latest offerings and share our passions.

Contact: [fanny.grey@googlemail.com](mailto:fanny.grey@googlemail.com)



## Card making and Papercraft Group

We are a small friendly group of likeminded people who create cards and 3D projects. We have been running for eighteen months and meet in the Community Room at Morrisons, Diss. Usually we meet monthly on the second Monday from 10 am to 12 midday. However, at various points of the year this will fall on the first Monday monthly due to scheduling issues at the venue. We link our projects to a monthly theme so over the course of the year you will have cards for all occasions. Some of the techniques we use are stamping, die cutting, embossing and paper folding. Projects are quick and easy to make, and the results are quite stunning. The monthly fee is £5 and you will make up to four projects each month (all funds are used to

provide card making materials). All you need to bring are scissors, small foam pads (for creating dimension to cards) and glue to get started. For further information please ring 01508 498988 or email: **Sandra Balaam**



[quiltingmum64@gmail.com](mailto:quiltingmum64@gmail.com)



## Italian group

There are seven of us in the group. We meet Monday at 9.30am on Zoom about twice per month. We also have occasional coffee mornings and an Italian lunch or two. We provided a team of six for the recent quiz.

We can get by reading Italian but need to improve our grammar, our listening and our speaking. Our experience of Italian varies from a one year beginner's night school to subsidiary Italian at university (a long time ago). We all want to improve our communication skills and to be braver talking in Italian.

If you have some very basic Italian you would be very welcome to join us. If you could teach Italian to us we would welcome you with open arms!

Four of us have been in the group since before lockdown. The other three are newer to the group. We all love Italy and the Italian language and would be keen to hear from you.

*Bronwen Moran*

## Medieval History

Our first Medieval History group started in 2017, and is still going strong. A second group was launched in April this year, attracting more keen members. The two groups which meet monthly in Botesdale, integrate where possible, as on our site visit in July, when members enjoyed a guided tour of Norwich



Cathedral, a jewel of medieval architecture and history. We were particularly interested in the cathedral's unique wealth of over 1,000 carved medieval roof bosses, each one with a story. Afterwards of course, several of us enjoyed eating in the Cathedral refectory. Our canvas is broad. Recently our subjects have featured Charlemagne, Edward I, early riddles, a bird's eye look at the history of some local ancient houses and an Anglo Saxon burial in Winfarthing, among a tapestry of subjects including medieval "roots" of some national ceremonies and institutions. We now plan a Christmas get together with the accent on medieval-style food. Who knows what will appear on the menu. *June Shepherd*

## Looking at Buildings

September visit :  
Emmaus Norfolk and  
Waveney, based on  
the former All Hallows  
Convent.

Over the 160 years the  
Sisters of All Hallows  
were based at the  
convent, they set up a  
House of Mercy for  
'Fallen women' , an  
industrial school, an

orphanage, a hospital nearby in Ditchingham and retreat centres. After lunch we visited Saint Mary's church for a guided tour. Thanks to Chris and Gerry Gunton for arranging the trip.

*Barry Davies*



## Discussion Group

We meet on the second Monday of the month - 10 am until 12  
As we meet in a member's house, we are limited as to size and  
at the moment we have a short waiting list. Some of the topics  
we have discussed this year are:

The significance of symbols in their widest sense

How do we look after the environment?  
What changes are needed in The House of Lords?  
Should we make reparations to our former colonies?  
Discussions are lively and wide-ranging .  
We also go out to lunch once a month as we have become a  
very friendly, sociable group. *Eileen Collins*

## **MOTO**

This is a thriving, happy group of people who now find themselves living on their own. Meeting once a month we have a varied programme chiefly based on fostering sociable activities. We have been out for many enjoyable visits.  
Telephone: 01379 898275

*Winsome Rogers*

## **Writers Group**

We meet once a month at Farnish House, Flat 21, Chapel Lane, Botesdale, IP22 1DF, on the first Friday of the month at 10.30am until 12.30pm. Members are given a printed agenda beginning: 'Welcome, News, Reading Aloud, Comments, Refreshment' and finally a 'Suggestion for Next Month's Theme'.

A few comments from our members:

'I appreciate hearing other writers' stories, and their constructive feedback about mine.'

'I appreciate having a monthly writing task prompt.'

'I look forward to hearing writers' stories.'

'Enthusiastic members' clever literary contributions are encouraging.'

Basil Abbott, Manager of Diss Museum, entertained us with a talk about local history, at the November 2024 meeting.

*Patricia Stammers Tel: 01379 898275 [pls2win@gmail.com](mailto:pls2win@gmail.com)*

## Current Interest Groups

<b>BIRD WATCHING</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>CARD CRAFTS</b>	<b>MAH-JONG</b>
<b>CRIME FICTION</b>	<b>MEDIEVAL HISTORY</b>
<b>DANCE</b>	<b>METAL DETECTING</b>
<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>MOTO</b>
<b>EARLY HISTORY</b>	<b>PETANQUE</b>
<b>FAMILY HISTORY</b>	<b>READING 1</b>
<b>FOLK MUSIC</b>	<b>READING 2</b>
<b>GARDENING</b>	<b>ROUND TOWER CHURCHES</b>
<b>ITALIAN WORKSHOP</b>	<b>TABLE TENNIS</b>
<b>JAZZ</b>	<b>TEXTILES &amp; CRAFTS</b>
<b>LOOKING at BUILDINGS</b>	<b>WALKING</b>
	<b>WRITING</b>

### Previous talks

Berthe Morisot,  
French Impressionist





Harry Parsons,  
Bury Cathedral part 2  
*See website for further details of  
monthly talks*

<https://u3asites.org.uk/diss/welcome>

## **Ancient History**

We restarted the group in April of this year and currently meet on the second Monday morning of each month in Palgrave. We are an inclusive group with members choosing and presenting topics in various styles. Since restarting we have covered the Indus Valley, the Bronze Age in Britain and also in Mesopotamia and for the Minoans. We have also looked at The Terracotta Army and have had an introduction to Magic.

For us it is a journey of discovery which began this year with the Indus Valley Civilisation's cities which indicated remarkable organisation; there were well-ordered wastewater drainage and rubbish collection systems and possibly even public baths and granaries.



With the Terracotta Army we were fortunate to have one member who had actually seen it in China and so was able to tell us about her experience which made for a very interesting session. We also saw the book accompanying the exhibition in the Museum of Liverpool in 2018.

Continuing with China we discovered the story of Fu Hao who lived in 13th Century BCE and was one of the three consorts to the Shang Dynasty King, Wu Ding.

Her remarkable story was pieced together from objects found in her elaborate tomb and from oracle bones..



We have only had a general look at magic at the moment and discovered that the earliest use of the term Abracadabra is as a cure for malaria. The word in the triangle is reduced by one letter every line, which will result in the disease diminishing in virulence. It was thought that the act of writing the magical word helped to cure the disease. *Ref: Chris Gosden - The History of Magic.*

In November one member brought in some Tarot Cards to show us the wonderful artwork on them, but we didn't try to look into the future. We also heard the story of Theseus and the Minotaur.

In December we are going to look at Ancient Winter Solstice celebrations which promises to be very interesting and entertaining.

Sylvia Rogers, Group Leader [sylvia.m.rogers@btinternet.com](mailto:sylvia.m.rogers@btinternet.com)

## **Committee Members**

### ***Officer***

	<b><i>Name</i></b>
Chair	Fanny Grey
Vice Chair	Peter Sorrell
Secretary	Lynda Brooks
Treasurer	Pat Cooper
Membership Secretary	Lesley Morris
Programme Secretary	Helen Rowland
Publicity Secretary	<i>Vacancy</i>
Groups Coordinator	Duncan Livingstone
Health & Safety Officer	Barry Davies
IT Administrator	Tony Callender

### ***Non-Committee***

Badges	Carol Nutt
Registration	Gill Russell
Registration	Marian Wexler
Refreshments Co-ordinator	Alannah Cripps
Newsletter Editor	Georgina Livingstone

*Diss u3a:- Charity Number: 1179720*

### **Message from the Editor:-**

Thanks to all of you who sent in contributions for this edition of the Diss u3a newsletter. I hope you all enjoy it and find it useful.  
Happy Festive Season

*Georgina Livingstone (Newsletter Editor)*

