

Groups Report

Rambling Group

Despite not being able to walk myself this year, the Rambling Group has continued to function thanks to the unfailing support and contribution of its members. Each month, different people have devised and led walks of between 4 and 6 miles, and where possible, have included interesting information or background about features on the walks.

The walks have been from:

Filby	Gorleston	Fritton
Ranworth	Bungay	Martham
Haddiscoe	Corton	Acle
Ludham		

Unusually, the walk from Gt. Yarmouth in December had to be called off because of torrential rain, but at least we had the consolation of an excellent Christmas lunch at the Quayside Plaza instead.

Miscellany Group

The group has had another enjoyable year, with members coming up with yet more activities to keep us engaged.

We have had guided tours of
Great Yarmouth Town Hall
The Lydia Eva
Wymondham Abbey

Had a go at:
playing Petanque and
tried sailing on Oulton Broads
discovered the history of Girl Guiding
had a picture quiz
made table decorations, and 'nally
Rounded off the year by spending two sessions weaving baskets.

My thanks to the loyal members who take the time and trouble to keep the group thriving.

Acle Book Group

Acle book club meets the last Monday of the month between 2 & 4 pm in the house of one of its members. We have really enjoyed a large number of books this year but the favourites have been:

The Housemaids Secret by Freida McFadden - a fast twister thriller

The Nightingale by Kristen Hannah - An emotional WW11 story

The Quiche of Death by MC Beaton A cosy Cotswold mystery and very quick read

All enjoyed with coffee and homemade cakes

Maggie Salmon

Bridge Group

We now meet every Friday morning, in "St Georges Café" which is an Ideal venue. The times are 10:30 to 12:30

The hire cost of the venue is going to be a problem going forward. Most weeks we have enough members to just about cover the cost but occasionally not and this is a slow leak on our reserves.

We have recently welcomed two experienced players who were also U3A members, which has improved the group's balance. In addition, two members are now playing duplicate bridge at the Great Yarmouth Bridge Club with considerable success.

I have said in the past that Bridge has a reputation as a difficult game to play and this is certainly true, but it overlooks the fact that originally it was played in homes by couples who were friends for fun.

We have a surplus of tables and cards so if anyone is interested in availing themselves of the facility to play other card games, we would welcome you. We already have two members that play Canasta, so why not come along to play Crib or Hearts or Solo we welcome all.

Tony Bullen

Country Dancing Group

This dancing group provides an excellent form of physical exercise and mental stimulation in a pleasant and sociable manner. Music and dance moves are modified to meet the specific needs of retired people.

It is common knowledge that dancing is a fun way to keep fit and enjoy yourself. However, not all dance classes are suitable for older people. This u3a Country Dance group is aimed specifically at mature people who are not quite as nimble on their feet as they used to be.

Participants are able to modify moves such as turning or swinging to suit their individual needs and the music is usually slowed down to facilitate that and give a bit of extra time. All the dances are walked through first and then the moves are called with the music and there is no need to bring partner. Although we do aim to get it right there is no pressure at all and usually lots of laughter.

We meet on most of the 2nd and 4th Mondays from 2 to 4 pm at the Old Unitarian Church Hall on Yarmouth Way and the cost is just £2 including refreshments. However do contact me first to check as we do occasionally have breaks. There is free parking for hall users outside the hall (permit available)

Unfortunately over the past year several regular group members have moved away and now we really need more people to come along and participate. Low numbers restricts the type of dances we can do and of course if numbers continue on this decline the group will have to close. There was an issue with the cleanliness of the hall but that has now been sorted so I hope to be welcoming a few more members to our lovely, fun and fitness dance group in the coming year.

Pam Redwood

Crafting for Fun

We have just completed another enjoyable year in a friendly group which has grown steadily as an interactive group, sharing ideas and crafts. Those people that are already crafters have been happy to share their crafts with others so that we get a good mix of something different each month. Crafting alone can be expensive so we try to find ideas to suit everyone's ability and pocket if a project doesn't excite you that particular month you can choose to do something else to amuse yourself in pleasant company with like minded people and enjoy a cuppa and biscuits at the same time. Everyone shares ideas and contribute to it's on going success.

Projects to date:

Quilling.

Beadwork

Jewellery

Key Rings

Bookmarks

Stone Painting

Wreath-making

Marzipan fruits

Bookbinding

Découpage.

Wire-work.

Crochet

Gem Craft

Flowerpot painting/decorating.

Gingerbread Cookies

Macrame.

Viv Sparson

Garden Lover Group

We are now approaching the end of the Garden Lovers Group's fourth year, and what a great year it has been. Our Summer Produce Fair in August was once again a real success. There was fierce competition for best exhibit, giving our judges, Pam and Wendy, the difficult task of choosing an overall winner. In the end, they settled for joint winners, with Lynda Hands and Grace Edwards sharing the trophy. We were sorry to leave Christchurch, but time marches on.

We moved to St George's in September and, over the following months enjoyed our guest speakers' talks covering: Plants on the Isles of Scilly, The Orchids of Costa Rica and Fuchsia Plants. It was then Christmas party time. The sprout and spoon race was a riot, with everyone in attendance receiving their Garden Lovers pen and Christmas spectacles, ready for a photo shoot. We then enjoyed a festive tea, raffle and Secret Santa gifts.

In February, we returned from the New Year break. Over the next few months, we were entertained with a variety of talks, including: Saving Seeds, Lound Lakes and its Wildlife and a visit from Louise from Fritton Owl Sanctuary, who kindly brought a barn owl along to meet us. In between all this, we also managed to fit in The Great Garden Quiz with strawberries, cake and tea. What more could you want?

If you like the sound of all of this and would like to join the Garden Lovers Group, come along at 2.00 pm on the third Tuesday of the month. We will be at our new home, Gorleston Baptist Church, and would be delighted to see you there. For more information and photos, go to the Garden Lovers Group on the website.

Maggie and Terry

Gorleston Book Group

We meet in Gorleston Library on the fourth Tuesday morning of the month.

We plan our books for the year, read one each month and meet to discuss the book. Often the discussions go beyond the subject of the book and it is surprising, when reading older books, how not much has changed today.

Our top scoring book in the past year was "Dark Fire" by C J Sansom an historical novel set in 1540 involving murder and the search for the lost formula of Greek Fire. Several other books scored highly this year including the thought-provoking true story "The Sun Does Shine" by Anthony Ray Hinton a man who was falsely imprisoned for many years

Jean Grist

Needlecraft Group

We continue to meet on the third Monday morning of the month at my home in Gorleston.

Our projects this year have included a patchwork hand bag, beaded Christmas tree decorations, padded coat hangers, peg bags and crochet granny squares which we are making into a blanket. We are a friendly group with various members leading the projects and all sharing our skills.

Unfortunately, as we meet in my home, we have limited space so are unable to take new members at the moment. I would be happy to help anyone who wants to start up another group.

Jean Grist

Play Reading Group

We moved to the new library in September and the room is excellent for our needs, except we can not make a drink like we used to at Christchurch. However the library provides glasses and cold water. We meet on the second Monday of the month at 1-30pm hoping, in the winter to be finished before it is dark.

Play scripts are borrowed from the Millennium Library in Norwich and are selected purely on the length and number of parts. This does not always work as some parts prove to be very small and sometimes members cancel after the play is selected. It would be good to have some discussion about the play but time does not usually permit.

There is a core of members who have been in the group since it's start and others, although they seem to enjoy it, come for a few months and then move onto other activities. We could accommodate another couple of members.

Pam Butcher

Quiz Group

We continue to meet on the last Wednesday of the month at 14:00 to 16:00 but now at St. Georges Cafe. We usually get between 16 and 22 members which means between four and five teams. The composition of each team is randomly selected which means that the same team doesn't win every month, and everyone can contribute. It may well be that you are the only person in your team that knows the vital answer.

Tea and biscuits continue to be provided at half time which gives everyone a chance for a chat and a laugh about the ones that got away. There is always the odd sound of triumph when a guess turns out to be correct and the groan or table thump when they realise that the wrong option was chosen. Fortunately, no grudges appear to be held, which was not always the case when I played. I always try to keep the questions audience appropriate and with a mixture of easy and difficult.

Most weeks there is at least one round where one or more teams scores a maximum of 10 correct out of 10. The quiz is secondary; it's more about getting out and having a chat and a laugh and hopefully learning something new. I was surprised at the Christmas meeting to be sat at a table of eight people none of whom knew that there is a Quiz group, I need to beat the drum.

The move to St Georges has not gone smoothly. The venue is ideal; The problem is the choice of day as it clashes with "The Friends of St George's" who meet every Wednesday every two weeks. We are not the only group affected by this and we may need to consider a different day.

Tony Bullen

Ukulele Group

The Ukulele band continues to strum along meeting at Caister parish hall every 2 weeks on a Wednesday morning. On average, 23 amateur keen musicians meet for a chat and tackle new songs, always with a good laugh. Thanks to Gerry Roper for producing refreshments at the break. Also thanks to our non-Uke players for providing guidance and experience from their pro days.

We have regular gigs around the area, which are generally well received. Gorleston bandstand, Caister town hall, Acle and Caister churches, Bradwell Somerton and Hemsby festivals are among the places we've played this year or will play. Some venues have had us back 3 or 4 times, so we must be doing something right. We are about to make a film of ourselves to put on YouTube, which will hopefully create some interest and advertise our band. Thanks to Lynda Oldfield for collecting subs. Photos and recordings can be found on Facebook Seaside Ukulele Band.

Geoff Roper

Whist

The Whist Group is now meeting at St George's Theatre on the second Wednesday of the month from 2 to 4pm. We usually have 12 - 16 players but would welcome more. No experience or partner are needed, it is a very friendly card game where we change places after each round. By the end of the afternoon, you will have had a chance to play with everyone. Individual scores are kept and a prize is given for the top score and the lowest to round off an enjoyable afternoon.

The Scrabble and Backgammon groups have now joined us to share the cost of the room hire.

Jean Grist