

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT June 2007**

In May it was a year since our first meeting at the La Gamba Restaurant, Torre de la Horadada. From the attendance at that meeting and the enthusiasm encountered during numerous telephone conversations in response to newspaper adverts, those present decided to establish a branch of the University of the Third Age here in Torrevieja. During this first year we have had five different venues, La Gamba - the Olympia - Torejoven Restaurant - Club Nautico and now the Asturias - where we now feel at home. The management at the Asturias have made us very welcome for our monthly meeting as well as the venue for several of our interest groups. Here we are in June 2007 part of a flourishing U3A with a membership of 98. The monthly meeting on June 4th will be the last of our 'season' and we are celebrating our first year with a barbeque. A representative of the cancer charity A.E.C.C. has been invited to the meeting to receive the proceeds of our Quilt raffle. Other guests will be members of Calpe and Javea U3A and Jane Cronin from Crossroads, who have been so supportive in the formation of this new U3A. We welcome Jean and Mike Law to the Committee helping us in the task of running the U3A on behalf of the members. It has been decided to delay officially registering the branch until October when our activities restart after the summer break. Please consider joining us on the Committee - more hands make light work - in November we will be seeking nominations in order to conduct an election for Officers and a Committee, at our first Annual General Meeting in January 2008.

[www.u3atorrevieja.com](http://www.u3atorrevieja.com) is our best communication tool. Andy Voaden our web master has produced a most attractive site, always up to date. By the time you read this we may well have our 'blog' page where we welcome contributions from members. Read the profiles of our interest group teachers - how fortunate we are to have these skills within our membership. The pleasure of learning is the driving force of a U3A and members see themselves as both learners and teachers. We now have 18 activity groups - I hope you enjoy reading about some of them in this issue of our newsletter. Many thanks to all those who have contributed to our first successful year - Committee, Tutors and Leaders of Activity Groups, and those who welcome us in their homes. Enjoy the summer - safe journey for those returning to the cool of the UK. We look forward to meeting you all again in October.

### **U3A Torrevieja Quilt made by our Needlecraft Group to raise funds for A.E.C.C.**



**ARMCHAIR TRAVEL** Our April Armchair Travel meeting was hugely successful. We had eleven members crowded into our little static home - very cosy! Keith Jones took us on a very informative and very entertaining journey across China. His photographs in DVD format were of a superb quality and had us all glued to the TV set, as we listened to his excellent talk on part of the history and background to the places he and his wife visited. Bob and I have always wanted to visit this part of the World but I in particular have always worried about Chinese Delhivery - if you can call it that! Watching this excellent presentation, I could feel I was really there. The views of the Yangtze dam were stunning, as were those of the Terracotta Army, the Forbidden Palace and the Great Wall. Many thanks Keith we hope to hear more of your travels in the future. By the time you read this we will have had our May meeting, again at our 'casita'. Lynda and Bob Kiss will be talking about their experiences of Spanish Paradors - on a holiday visiting Segovia, Chinchon and Carmona, and showing a DVD of the treasures of the Royal Summer Palace at Aranjuez. Our last meeting will be on June 12 at the home of Jenny Bassett who will be talking about 'Africa'. **Jean Cook**

**PSYCHOLOGY / PHILOSOPHY** The group meet monthly and have become a cohesive group whereby subject matters can be discussed openly. The topics we have covered were aimed at awareness of some of the aspects determining human behaviour, such as genetics/personality/socialization/non-verbal body language/the ego/defence mechanisms/projection/memory and subliminal persuasion and touching on N.L.P. There is much more to cover such as learning theories, the psychology of cultures and religious thought, which leads to a

look at philosophy, some of which are best covered as discussion topics, and it would not be appropriate for newcomers to join at this stage for obvious reasons. However, it is possible that a new group can be started in September or October should there be sufficient people wishing to join. This again would be once a month, days and time to be arranged. Jean Wilson

**GENEALOGY** A small group of enthusiasts meet at Jean and Mike Law's home on the first Tuesday in the month. We are very fortunate to have Keith Jones to help and advise us on the resources available in our search for our ancestors, especially finding our way through the various web sites.

**BRIDGE** The Bridge group started playing in October, fortnightly on Wednesday mornings 10.30-1.00 p.m. Since March it has been a weekly game and for the majority of this time the venue has been the Asturias Restaurant. On average three tables have operated. Bridge have 25 players and in February purchased from the English Bridge Union, equipment necessary for Duplicate Bridge to be played. This cost €125 euros and the income from the activity has more than covered this expense. Marjorie O'Callaghan is the winning member of the Duplicate Bridge league and will receive a prize of a U3A membership fee for 2008. **Bob Kiss**

**WALKING GROUP** Our first walk in January took place near San Pedro and there have been 3 further walks covering three sections of the Maritime Walk from Torrevieja to Cabo Roig Marina. These have been very popular and we need more volunteers to organize further walks.

**FOOD** 10 members responded to Laurie Winstanley's invitation to form a group which would make our 'food life' in Spain easier. Looking for Spanish equivalents for flours, spices, meat, fish, fruit and vegetables. The main purpose to use Spanish products and the more unusual vegetables and fruits which are not available or known in the UK. The first meeting discussed the types of fish available at the fish counters. Knowledge of herbs was shared and soup recipes using the jars of pulses readily available. In April several members visited San Pedro Market, said to be the best market in the area.

**DISCUSSION GROUP** A group was started in January – 10.00 a.m. every Monday at the Asturias. The activity got off to a slow start and has been taken in hand by Mike Law – one voice at a time, everyone can have a say of a few minutes, splitting the meeting into three periods of forty minutes. The discussion subjects chosen by those present on local and national issues, or topics of the moment. Three meetings have now been held – monthly instead of weekly – subjects discussed *The right to die Help organizations – help or hindrance? Does America deserve 'the big stick', Post tsunami – can the UN and other organizations be more effective?* Meetings will resume in October.

**NEEDLECRAFT** This was one of our first activity groups. Peta Neale has been passing on her skills with patchwork to a small group of members, the result of which is the Charity Quilt. Individual projects are now under way. The group meets fortnightly and other needlecraft skills can be learnt and new members are welcome.

**FIRST AID** I saw there was a need to help people understand what to do in a given emergency, so volunteered to commence a basic Home First Aid Group. To cover problems and emergencies within the home. We meet 2nd Thursday of the month at 4.00 p.m. at the Asturias. Topics covered so far – Contents of First Aid Box, Rescue Breaths and Chest Compressions, Shock, Choking, Injuries and Bandages. We will cover illness at a later date. It is a fun time but with a serious side and all who have attended so far have found the sessions very helpful. Wendy Withrington

**CREATIVE WRITING** A 'writing for pleasure' group led by Celia Bentley meets once a month at Torre La Mata. Joy Lennick a member of the group is profiled on our website.

**MODERN JIVE DANCING** Joan and Colin Seamer gave lessons in modern jive fortnightly throughout the winter months at La Gamba Restaurant, Torre de La Horadada. The teaching method was aimed at people who have never danced before or who have two left feet. You do not need a partner as the teaching method ensures everyone will have a chance to dance. A fun way to meet people and get fit at the same time. Lessons re-starting in October.

**PILATES** Pilates called his method Contrology, which refers to the way the method encourages the use of the mind to control the muscles. The program focuses on the core postural muscles that help keep the body balanced and are essential to providing support for the spine. In particular, Pilates exercises teach awareness of breath and alignment of the spine, and strengthen the deep torso muscles, which are important to help alleviate and prevent back pain. The simple exercises can be adapted to suit almost everyone even for those who are chairbound. **Maureen Moffatt** "If at the age of 30 you are stiff and out of shape, you are old. If at 60 you are supple and strong then you are young" **Joseph Hubertus Pilates** Pilates helps to:

- Increase & create a balance between strength & flexibility
- Create an awareness of & strengthen dynamic stability
- Improve Co-ordination
- Release stress
- Improve posture

**HOLISTIC HEALTH** Holistic meaning whole, as in the treatment of the whole person, body, mind, emotions and the spiritual. Holistic therapies work on the theory that energy systems within the body become blocked due to stress, poor lifestyles, disease etc. and take in such treatments as Indian head massage, acupuncture, reflexology, shiatsu and many others – some of which we have discussed in our group. Allergies & Nutrition, Vitamins & Tissue Salts, Relaxation and Meditation, Spiritual Healing and we are fortunate to have within the group a Reiki Master. *Reiki – is a Japanese form of healing which can ease stress, clear the mind and restore clarity. Universal energy is transferred through the hands, the practitioner being a medium for this energy.* At our last meeting of the year Jean Wilson, who runs the Psychology and Philosophy group, spoke on how her subject is linked to Holistic Health. **Jacquie Collyer**

**SALZILLO EXHIBITION** Salzillo a Spanish Sculptor born in Murcia 1707 died 1783 – a sculptor in wood of religious figures. Special exhibition in the Salzillo Museum in Murcia 2 March – 31 July 2007 Exhibition free – C/Doctor Quesada Very near Bus Station. Telephone to book day / time of visit. Tel: 902929034 or 902101070 [www.salzillo2007.es](http://www.salzillo2007.es) **Chris Johansson**

**COMPUTER GROUP** Three courses of lessons have taken place since February – *Introduction to Word, Introduction to Windows, Desktop Publishing*. Each course consisted of 4 one hour lessons at the Mail Room, Playa Flamenca. The cost of each course was 32 euros. We had an excellent tutor Crystal East Tel: 655036231 who also provided a set of very clear notes for reference, after each lesson. Crystal will give private tuition if required. It is hoped more courses will be arranged for next season - we can repeat the subjects or new areas can be covered. **Graham Feltham**

**LITERATURE GROUP** As we come to the end of the first year of the U3A in Torrevieja, we in the Literature group look back with enjoyment at the books and the company that we have shared so far. At our inaugural meeting we set out our aims for the group and agreed that as well as the group being a social gathering to discuss books we wanted, in line with U3A aims, we would learn from what we read and hopefully develop our tastes. We hoped to do this by selecting titles that perhaps we might not normally choose but would try, due to suggestions by other members of the group. As I am involved in running a similar group for my local U3A in England, I was able to explain how that was organized so that the group here could decide whether we should follow the same route. It was decided that we would choose books from several genres so that we could cover a broad spectrum of literature. Consequently, we opted for a children's book, an historical novel, a travel book, a mystery title, a classic and some modern novels as well as an autobiography/biography. With all members of the group making suggestions, we came up with a suitable list which we felt broadened our horizons

‘The Cult’ Anita Burgh (novel)

‘Knots & Crosses’ Ian Rankin (mystery)

‘A Tale of Two Cities’ Charles Dickens

‘Strange Places, Questionable People’ John Simpson (travel)

‘Act of Treachery’ Ann Widdicombe (novel)

‘The Kite Runner’ Khaled Hosseini (novel)

‘The Philosopher’s Stone’ Harry Potter J.K. Rowling (children’s)

‘A Long Walk to Freedom’ Nelson Mandela (autobiography)

‘The Founding’ Cynthia Harrod-Eagles (novel)

‘The Men and the Boys’ Joanna Trollope (novel)

We have a month in which to read a book and then meet at a member’s home to discuss it. As I, personally, am in England more than in Spain, I email my comments to Lynda Kiss and she takes them to the group meeting. A report of the meeting is emailed back to me. So you don’t have to be in the Country to take part! Now come to the summer holidays but there is no let-up. We have the last four books on the list to keep us busy over the summer months. At our meeting on June 1st we will be selecting our books for the coming year, hopefully they will be as enjoyable as the ones that we have already shared. **Jean Reeves**



**PAINTING** We have found an excellent tutor for this activity group, who is Maria Moreschi. Classes will start in October. At the moment there are just one or two of us who are very keen to take up our paint brushes again. We are not experienced artists but want to extend our painting knowledge and explore new mediums. I am sure we all know, amongst our acquaintances, people who have only taken up painting in retirement and found great success and pleasure in a previously unknown ability – you could be such a person – come and join us! **Lynda Kiss**

**LUNCHEON CLUB** Our first lunch was at the Olympia Restaurant in January, we have had a lunch date every month since then in different restaurants recommended by members – Casa Nicholas, The Banana Tree, Budapest and our last meal was at the Jean Luc in Torrevieja. Jean Luc Philitas is the owner/chef from Guadeloupe in the French West Indies. A chance for 25 members to experience some Caribbean cooking. A good time was had by all and we called the chef to the tables for a round of applause in appreciation. The very nature of the Luncheon Club

gives people time to sit and chat, meet new faces and relax in friendly surroundings. An opportunity to improve the social aspect of the U3A and is a compliment to our monthly meetings. **Jean Law**

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**MUSIC & THEATRE** Theatre and concert visits have proved much more difficult to set up than we expected. If you don't mind we would like to outline the problems in case you can help find a solution. We found that there were plenty of concerts of popular music and stage shows in Torrevieja, we assumed Torrevieja residents could quite easily book for and travel to themselves, so we would concentrate on other things.

Most classical music concerts seem to take place outside Torrevieja, usually in the Narcisco Yepes concert hall in Murcia or, for chamber music, in the Casas de Cultura in the various villages in the Vega Baja. However, we found the cost of hiring a coach/people carrier and drive for one evening made such a trip prohibitively expensive, so it would mean a drive home late at night on strange roads for members wishing to attend.

For Murcia concerts there is sufficient advance publicity for us to circulate members and make advance reservations, but members would have to make their own arrangements to get there. Furthermore, we have not yet found anywhere near the concert hall where we could get together before the concert for a meal or a drink. That being so, there is no point in our simply acting as an auxiliary box office for the hall, and then we all make our own arrangements for getting there. If anyone can suggest a solution we would all be very happy.

The concerts in the smaller venues are not publicized until just beforehand, often not on the net but by fliers in the village concerned. For example on the 23 May the Musicians Union in San Miguel announced a concert of chamber music on the 26 May in the Casa Cultura.

An exception is Almoradi, which runs a series of well-publicised regular Thursday evening chamber concerts. All these concerts are free so there is no need to book seats. Apart from letting members know there is no reason for us to get involved. Incidentally, we have been to quite a few chamber music concerts in such venues and we find the standard very high. Theatres pose a different problem.

Although there are a number of amateur groups in our area who give advance notice of their performances, we are most unsure of the quality, judging by the ones we have seen and are reluctant to make arrangements for a visit which might be absolutely dire to a more discriminating audience. In view of the advance publicity these groups put out, we are sure members would be able to make their own arrangements to attend.

However, if we do come across a theatre company which we think is worth a visit we will let you know. The good news is that we have a list of members who are interested in such visits and that is a base we can build on in the future.

**David Evans / Graham Evans**



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**MONTHLY MEETINGS** Monthly meetings are held at the Asturias Restaurant on the N332 at Playa Flamenca ( adjacent to the new Carrefour ).

Meetings are held on the 1st. Monday of the month at 10.30 am, except in July , Aug. and Sept., when there are no meetings.

There is a Guest Speaker at each meeting and general info. on Group activities etc. Attendance is free, and everyone is welcome.

Those wishing to join the U3A can pick up an application form at the meeting or download one from our new web site.



**The Asturias Restaurant**

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**SPEAKERS** Speakers for the following months are:

October 2007: Gordon Henderson - "British Bakery in Spain"

November 2007: John Howes - "Gardening in Spain"

For December 2007, we are planning "Christmas Entertainment " for the monthly meeting and an Evening Dinner Dance.

Details will be announced at our monthly meetings and on our website.

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**TREASURER'S REPORT** Subscriptions were first taken at the October monthly meeting – the report of the Membership Secretary explains the various rates taken for the period to December 2007. The 1 euro charged for attendance at the monthly meeting covered the expenses and fees for our speakers. The Committee have now agreed that there will be no charge for monthly meetings for the remainder of the year. Each member pays one euro to participate in a meeting of an activity group. All 18 activities are each now generating a modest income, to meet their running costs – with the exception of the Lunch Club and the Computer classes. It is hoped that this source of income will be sufficient to cover future Speakers' costs. **Bob Kiss**

**MEMBERSHIP** It is gratifying to note that we now have 98 members, which is more than three times the number we started with just 12 months ago. Our membership card, with the view from the Campoamor restaurant in the background, fits nicely into the free plastic lapel badge holders, and when worn, these are a great help in getting to know members by name. Please see me if you don't have one. The agreed membership fee for the coming year 2008 will be:- €9 euros, i.e. for 9 monthly meetings. New membership cards will be issued in January, and these will have the Asturias Restaurant in the background. New members wishing to join this year may do so at a reduced fee. **Sheila Hodgkinson.**

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### **ANDY'S COMPUTER TIP**

Online Security –

Go into the START menu and right click on the big 'E'. (do not go into icon 'E' on your desktop) This brings up a pop up menu. Scroll down to Properties. Left click on Properties. This will bring up the 'Internet Properties' Pop up Window. Along the tabs at the top of the Internet Properties Window, there will be a Tab at the right hand side with the wording 'Advanced'. Left click on this tab. Scroll down until you see the 'Security' section, (you should see a padlock). Place a tick into the box alongside the wording:- 'Do not save encrypted pages to disk'. Then left click 'Apply' and then left click 'OK'. Job Done...

**Andy Voaden**

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