

Chairman's Report March 2008

First of all a big Thank you to Lynda. When she passed the torch to me, everything was beautifully organised with information neatly divided into various sections which has made life much easier for me.

Since then I have been on a big learning curve, and hope I have not made too many mistakes. You will see from the reports from the various groups that we are keeping busy. Numbers are increasing - 99 paid-up members at the last count - and new subjects are being suggested all the time. There is, however, a shortage of leaders for the new groups, so if any of you want to come forward you will be most welcome.

We need leaders for Archeology, Art Appreciation, Spanish History, Play Reading, and an organiser for outings and a possible DVD library. It has been suggested that if we cannot find a leader with suitable expertise, an ordinary member might harness their interest into guiding a class. We have in the past had classes in painting and computers, and these might be revived if there were sufficient interest and/or a suitable teacher.

I have omitted some groups from the list of activities either because they are inactive at the moment or because I was unable to obtain a current report.

We also need deputies for some members of the Committee. The reason for this doubling-up of various functions is that most members have to go back to UK from time to time for medical or family reasons. When this happens it is important that the various activities do not grind to a halt.

We have a very interesting programme of speakers for you this Spring. On **27 March** we will be privileged to hear Raquel Peña, famous flamenco dancer and now running the Costa Orihuela Arts Centre. Details of her programme are not yet known. She has asked if she can start at 12.00, so we will get through all the other business first.

Then on **24 April** the speaker will be Jane Cronin, well-known language teacher and comedienne. This time she will be wearing her hat as a Spanish historian, talking about the transaction from Franco to King Carlos. I will not be here for that meeting, and my place will be taken by Jean Wilson, as Deputy Chairman (or Chair if you wish).

We are very fortunate to have as our speaker on **29 May**, Angela Jackson, well-known historian and novelist, who has spent a long time researching the role of the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War.

There's a lot more to tell you about future plans and visits, so that's enough from me. Bearing in mind our aim to provide gentle exercise for both body and mind, here are the reports from the leaders of the activities.

David Evans Tel: 966 723 909

Literature 1 and 2

Because members are away at the moment, attendance is quite thin - only four at the last meeting. However, it is expected that numbers will rise as people return.

Over the past few months both groups have read or are reading *Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins, *Winter in Madrid* by C.J. Sansom, *Samuel Pepys - The Unequalled Self* by Claire Tomalin, *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro, and *Round Ireland with a Fridge* by Tony Hawkes. Altogether a wide range of subjects.

Lynda Kiss Tel: 966 773 022

Our numbers are down as well, as people visit England for various reasons. There were only three at the last meeting, and I have therefore held the current book over until they return.

Jennie Bassett Tel: 965 713 784

Walking

On a beautiful sunny morning with a cool breeze making ideal walking conditions, 20 members of the Walking Group met in the car park of the Information Centre, Pare Natural de la Mata, Torrevieja.



Armchair Travel

January's meeting was held at the 'casita' of Bob & Jean Cook, when Margaret Daniel brought along a stunning DVD of New Zealand made by friends during their trip to this beautiful country. In February we had a complete contrast at the home of Bob & Barbara Hill, who showed a DVD of their visit to the Eden Project in Cornwall. Then on March 11th Ros Ellis talked to us about her experiences as a navy wife, living in Hong Kong and Singapore in the 'sixties. No doubt other members will, at some future date, be able to contrast this with Hong Kong and Singapore of today. The great thing about this group is the diversity of countries and places we 'visit' from the comfort of our armchairs, and the variety of ways in which they are presented. No two meetings are the same!

Future meetings:

8th April. Maureen Moffat will be talking about her recent work in an orphanage in Nepal. Meeting place: Maureen's home.

13th May

Jenny Bassett will be repeating a talk about her links with an Indian family and her visit to the Punjab for a wedding. Meeting place: Bob & Jean Cook

Monthly Meetings - Every 2nd Tuesday - Start: 3:00pm

Music & Theatre Group

This Group is not one comprising of members who play instruments or perform plays: it is a facility whereby, due to the general lack of advance publicity throughout the Torrevieja area, members are kept informed by email of what is scheduled to take place in the serious music and theatre world. Apart from the major cities' professional art centres, local groups tend to provide only four or five days' notice of upcoming events. Consequently, details of performances to be given, for example, by Unions Musical, amateur choirs, amateur theatres etc are often not known until after the event has taken place.

At the end of February several members met to enjoy a programme of *Women in Opera*, given in San Miguel. This was the culmination of a week-long public workshop and included excerpts from several varied operas.

Handel's Messiah

Sunday, 30th March at 8 pm in Pilar de la Horadada's Iglesia Nuestra Señora del Pilar; and

Thursday 3rd April at 8 pm in Los Alcázares' Iglesia de la Caridad

Both performances are free and will be given by Christine Eames' largely expat choir Coro Pilar, with Spanish soloists drawn from Murcia's Conservatorio Profesional de Música. Further details from Dennis Gill 966 762 954

Budding Thespians

An organisation with the somewhat turgid title of "La Marina & San Fulgencio Cardinal Belluga Theatre Group" is looking for volunteers to help back-stage/on-stage with its next production. This takes place on Friday 25th April and further details can be obtained by telephoning:- 966 715 891 or 966 790 396.

Fauré's "Requiem" and one of Vivaldi's "Gloria" Changes have again been made to the date(s) of performances. They are now:

Friday 11th April, 19:30, Los Balcones Church, Torrevieja

Saturday 12th April at 19:30, Capitol Teatro, Rojales

Sunday 13th April at 20:00, La Siesta Church, Torrevieja

Thursday 17th at 20:00, Saint Michael's Church, San Miguel de Salinas

These are all being presented by the Vivace mixed-voice choir. Contact Tom Pargeter for further information:-

Tel: 965 720 919 or tpargeter@aol.com

Graham Evans Tel: 966 723 909

Led by Bob Hill, the 5km walk followed established paths along the lakeshore. We were fortunate to see many wild always in sight of the magnificent lake with an array of birds coming and going. Detours were made to visit the two bird hides along the lakeshore.



As the temperature climbed we were glad of the shade afforded by the pines and eucalyptus trees. After a welcome rest at the picnic area we turned around and made our way via the lookout tower, and the peaceful Cementerio. The final stretch led along the pathway by the irrigation canal which was teeming with fish.

Finally we returned to the car park, taking the path between the neatly tended rows of vines originally planted by the Romans, when the La Mata region was a huge wine producing area.

We are hoping to make one more walk, possibly in May, and will then break through the summer months.

Bob and Barbara Hill Tel: 965 329 122

bobhill2002@hotmail.com

[Click Here for Details of Our Walk on the 10th May 2008](#)

Genealogy

We few diehards continue to meet, now 5 of us in total. Fortunately our resident expert, Keith Jones, has returned and imparted a lot of useful information as well as sound advice. The next meeting will be on 20 May at my home.
Mike Law Tel: 965 319 311

Discussion Group

This was the first meeting of the group and we had a chance to assess the approaches made by members of the group. It was a useful and informative discussion about the problems associated with Binge Drinking. Different points of view were offered with the idea that the phenomenon is not new and goes back to the Romans, who participated in like behaviour. It was also suggested that it is a part of growing up and the bonding pressure of peer groups. Others felt that young females seem to get involved more than before. It was also suggested that the sale of alcohol is too lax. Looking at the problem overall it was thought that each possible solution was fraught with difficulties. The next topic for discussion will be the Internet.
Jean Wilson Tel: 966 798 196

Creative Writing Group

Lunch Club

At lunch last week, 19 March, 48 of us met at La Finca de Edouardos, Campoamor. Everybody seemed to enjoy themselves.

Next month's lunch will be after the regular monthly meeting on **24 April** at Los Arcos, where Angelique will do a Menu del Dia for €8. I will arrange for someone to collect the money for the meal, but any extra purchases must be paid for at the time of consumption and not included on the general bill.

On 14 May the club will meet at Valoriens, just off the CV910, which is the road between Guadamar and Orihuela. I will be discussing this at the **27 March** meeting and providing directions. I am away from 9 April to 5 May, so will draw it all together on my return.

Jean Law Tel: 965 319 311

Holistic Health

The last meeting was on 13 March at the Rocajuna Bar, Punta Prima. The speaker was Penny Wing, who gave an informative talk to a disappointing audience of 6.

The next meeting will be on **10 April at 10.30**, and the speaker will be a practitioner from the Pain Relief Clinic. I will not be there, so would hope as many as possible attend this talk and support Sheila Rolt, who is in charge of the morning.

Mike Law Tel: 965 319 311

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.

Pilates helps to:

Increase & create a balance between strength & flexibility, create an awareness of & strengthen dynamic stability, improve co-ordination, release stress and improve posture, Classes, run by Maureen Moffatt, meet every Monday at 11am at the Asturias Bar. Newcomers are welcome.
Maureen Moffatt Tel: 966 765 747 or 697 202 184

Psychology

On the 10th March we had a look at motivation. The earlier Maslow's pyramid was useful as an introduction to the hierarchy of needs, and this leads us to the E.R.G. approach which later replaced it and is used more now in management training.

This is consonant with the results of research into the fields of "people management" and allows for different levels to be functioning at the same time, and it also allows for regression. Members of the groups drew a flow chart indicating the major changes they have made in their lives and the motivation behind those changes. It was most interesting and gratifying to learn how much expertise and experience club members have.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 31st March when we will explore aspects of learning.

Jean Wilson Tel: 966 798 196

Our modest writing group usually consists of six or seven ladies (as we meet in our bungalow): all keen and having varying degrees of literary experience. As several of our members have a good sense of humour, we have lots of laughs - while learning I might add!

So far, we have covered the 50 word story. Hard(ish) but it exercises the brain box, and I had some interesting results! Each session, we also discuss a new "literary" word, e.g. onomatopoeia (the formation of words whose sound is imitative of the sound of the noise or action designated, such as hiss or splash.)

Members have also written poems and finished a short story (having been given an opening paragraph);also practised dialogue. At our last meeting, I suggested either writing a travel piece (about Spain), a book review, or a letter to a famous dead person. In the past, I mentioned using three or four articles i.e. a pressed flower, a walking stick and so on, to weave a story around and they came up trumps; and one or two people wrote a "pastoral" piece and a few others a mild sex scene (it had to be modest but funny) One or two were. Very!

I haven't enough space to increase class numbers, but those who come along seem to enjoy it. .
Joy Lennick

Qi Qong

Qi Qong is a deep-breathing, energy-related series of exercises.

We meet every other Friday afternoon at 2.30pm at the Rocajuna Bar in Punta Prima. There are usually about six of us. The next meeting is on **28 March**. There will be no meetings in April and the dates for May are:-
The 9th and 23rd.
Mike Law Tel: 965 319 311

Bridge

The group regularly has 4 tables of 'duplicate' each week. Since the first Wednesday in December 2007 16 sessions have been held and the league table positions are:

<u>First</u>	Ray parker
<u>Joint Second</u>	Jean Fawcett
	Dave Girling
	Mike Law
	Alan Fawcett
	Derek Rush
<u>Joint Third</u>	Anne O'Gorman
	Jean law

We currently have 35 members, many of whom come and go back to Ireland and UK. Two are under training with Derek Rush our retired EBU (English Bridge Union) Tutor. Attendance is around 16-18 on average. We have re-introduced the session fee of one euro each player. Since interest groups are required to be self financing, this covers replacement of playing cards and scoring stationery. Bridge Sessions have attracted 12 new members to the U3A and we continue to **meet every Wednesday** at the **Asturias Restaurant 13.00 hrs.** New members are welcome, learners, improvers and experienced – there is a wide cross section of skills.

Bob Kiss Tel: 966 773 022

Future Events

Barbeque

We will have a Barbie at the Rocajuna Bar in Punta Prima on **Saturday 31 May**. As the Rocajuna has no shade on its roof we will hold our bit-of-a-do at 6pm. The cost will be €8 payable in advance, and I will start collecting at the March meeting. We will make no profit on the food or drink, which will be taken by the bar. We will, however, have tables selling odds and ends like books, cakes (baked and donated) and such fete items as a raffle and 'Guess How Many' sweets in a jar.

Quiz Night

This will be on **Friday 14 November, starting at 8pm** in the Rocajuna Bar.

There will be no food laid on, but the U3A will provide nibbles, etc. The downstairs bar will be run by the bar staff. No drink to be brought for consumption on the premises, please.

There will be an entry fee of €2 per head, and teams can be up to 6 people. Again, we will run a raffle and dream up a few more ways to make money for our Speakers Fund.

Christmas Party

You have to get in early these days, so we are making tentative arrangements with Los Arcos for our Christmas party. It will be after the monthly meeting on 16 December, we hope in time to catch at least some of you who will be going back to UK for Christmas.

The meeting is booked for 10.30 as usual, and then the festivities will start at around 12-ish. We will ask Angelique to provide a Christmassy Menu del Dia for €8. Entertainment could be provided during or after the meal. None of these arrangements is finalised, but we can have the hall for the rest of the afternoon if we wish. Let us know what you think.