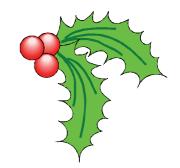


NEWSLETTER ISSUE 11 DECEMBER 2009



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

REPORT FROM THE ACTING CHAIRMAN

How quickly the weeks fly past between newsletters. It is already three months since I accepted the position of Acting Chairman. With the support of a positive, enthusiastic and hard working Committee, there has been a huge amount of work going on behind the scenes.

Following the vote at the E.G.M in October we are now well advanced with our application to become a legally registered organisation. Our objective is to have the papers lodged with the authorities before Christmas.

Membership numbers have grown significantly. More on this in the report by the Membership Secretary on Page 2

I have chaired the first Group Leaders meeting and proposals have been taken from that meeting to the Committee for discussion.

More new Groups have been started. Read the report by Groups Co-ordinator Angela Merrick-Jones on Page 3. My thanks to all the Group Leaders who put in huge amounts of voluntary work to ensure you enjoy your chosen activities.

Work is ongoing to overhaul the website with errors corrected and updates processed in a methodical, structured manner. It is important for us that the webmaster strives to keep our website in the top position on the search engines.

From January, the Terms and Conditions of membership will be printed on the membership forms and displayed at the monthly meetings.

The functions of Events Co-ordinators and Fundraising have been consolidated into a new Social Committee headed up by Jean Law. This committee is empowered to co-opt other members to help with future social events. One proposal for an outing in 2010 is mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. Read about it on Page 4.

With the support of their mentor Angela Merrick-Jones, the Weight Loss Group have achieved a great result, and raised a significant amount of money for Asociatión Española Contra el Cáncer (AECC). Read Angela's

report on Page 3

The end of year finances are forecast to close on a positive note which means annual membership fees for 2010 will be pegged at 12 euros. My thanks to Bob Cook, the Treasurer. Read Bob's report on Page **2**.

Changes are being made to the newsletter. This issue includes for the first time two very different travel experiences from members. We thought you would enjoy reading these. If you have travel experiences to share, please forward a 200 word summary to the Editor, Keith Jones at newsletteru3a@gmail.com We will try to include some of them in future issues. My thanks to Keith, for rushing out this issue in time for the December meeting.

In January 2010, the Annual General Meeting and elections will take place. See Page **2**. The first Groups Exhibition will also be incorporated into the January meeting.

For the Walking Group members, we are planning a three day walking holiday, possibly in April, in the beautiful Espuña National Park. More details of this event shortly.

I believe there will be so much to look forward to in 2010. One thing is certain, I know the Committee will continue to strive to meet the needs and expectations of the membership to ensure you enjoy your involvement in Torrevieja U3A.

The Committee and I hope you have a Wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year wherever in the world you will be celebrating.

Bob Hill Acting Chairman



Your Newsletter is available as a printable image from our U3A web site at www.u3atorrevieja.com.

It is in a PDF format and will require Adobe Reader to read it. This can be downloaded free from the web site. Editor: Keith Jones newsletteru3a@gmail.com

TREASURERS REPORT

This is a short report as I will present my full report at the AGM on 28th January 2010. The achievements of the Club this year have been wonderful. Since we moved to Los Arcos our running cost has increased, but, as we have a stable meeting base, so has the membership. We have managed to save for the Constitution costs, equipment for presentations at our monthly meetings and a small surplus to start next year.

BUT, we still need several items for our meeting to enhance the Speaker's talk, etc. These will be announced at the AGM but they are not large or expensive items!

A big "thank you" for all the help the committee have provided me and in particular, Philip Spear. Also thanks to you all for paying your subs and dues so promptly; it makes my job a lot easier.

Finally, it is that time of the year when members can renew their subs from the December meeting for 2010 and the subs are being kept at €12.00. We hope this will help cut down the blockage at the entrance, with so many people renewing or joining, plus visitors signing in. As at every meeting, visitors are always given a warm welcome and can join the Club and then any Activity Group should they so wish.

Robert C Cook, cook2cookies@yahoo.co.uk

NOTICE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TORREVIEJA U3A

AT LOS ARCOS RESTAURANT ON THURSDAY 28 JANUARY 2010, 10.30 AM

The Agenda:

Report: Acting Chairman

Report: Treasurer

Report: Membership Secretary

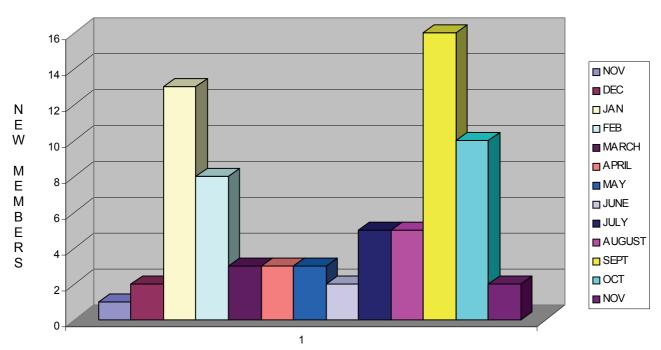
Elections:

For Chairman and

Committee vacancy.

Appointment of Auditors (2)

NEW MEMBERS NOVEMBER 2008 TO NOV 2009



The membership in 2008 increased by 13%, and in 2009 by 15%.. The present membership stands at 197 members.

Will all member please advise me of any change to their phone number or e-mail address.

I can be contacted on 663 191 446 or maggie.oldfield@gmail.com. Maggie Oldfield Membership Secretary.

U3A GROUP ACTIVITIES

It has been a busy time recently with several new groups starting up.

James Cowing has started a **Beginners Bridge** group every Monday at the Old Asturias restaurant, Playa Flamenca on the N332.

Diane Pierrot is now running the **Discussion** group on the last Tuesday of the month at Quesada.

There is a **Mah-jong** group every Tuesday morning at Los Arcos organised by Jane Jones.

A **Rummikub** club is held in San Luis every 2nd and 4th Friday organised by Barbra Dean.

I have started a 'Are you Eating Healthily' group and this meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month at Los Arcos.

Now for some other business. If any regular group member is unable to attend a particular meeting/ session, the group leaders would appreciate being informed.

Finally to reinforce what has previously been discussed, I would be grateful if the group leaders would keep me informed of any changes concerning their group. I hope this will keep the activities list updated with the correct information. Your cooperation in this will be greatly appreciated.

Angela Meyrick-Jones Group Coordinator, Mike Law is now my deputy

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SPONSORED SLIM

On the 6th April, a group of U3A members began a sponsored slim to raise funds for the A.E.C.C. in Torrevieja. Their objective being to help maintain accommodation provided for parents and families of seriously ill children receiving cancer treatment. This allows them to be together for the duration of the child's stay in hospital

Their magnificent efforts have raised a sum of 700 euros and between them a total of 94 kilos has been shed.

Very well done to everyone concerned for the great result you have achieved.

Angela Meyrick - Jones

Pearls of Wisdom Even as an adult I find it difficult to sleep on Christmas Eve. Yuletide excitement is a potent caffeine, no matter your age. Attributed to Carrie Latet. A spark of kindness starts a fire of love

DISCUSSION GROUP NEW GROUP

The Discussion Group had its first meeting in November when we discussed If The European Dream will eclipse that of The American Dream as the dominant social force in shaping the world. We used as a reference Jeremy Rifkind's book The European Dream, and had a lively and friendly meeting which encompassed where and why America's influence is in the world today and the inevitable consequences to us all. We touched on America's work ethic and compared this to the European approach, government intervention and support, health services and immigration problems in Europe.

Altogether a very interesting meeting and as such the group decided to carry this forward onto a similar theme for our next meeting and the subject is Who writes the Agenda in America? This should be another interesting topic with democratic, economic, military, ethnic, religious and political matters etc. to be considered. There is overwhelming evidence that behind the democratic facade, an economic elite of less than 1% of the population is quietly and cunningly ruling America. Do you agree with this?

I must stress that there are no right or wrong answers within this group, merely a sharing of opinion and anyone who watches the news and reads newspapers will no doubt have something they wish to contribute. We are a small and friendly group and you would be welcome to come along and exercise those brain cells a bit.

We plan to select different subjects in advance of each meeting such as Human Rights Issues, Testing on Animals, Does the Environment belong principally to the Human Race, Can Civilisation Collapse etc etc etc

We meet on the last Tuesday of each month at my home in Quesada where your opinion is valued and you will be made to feel very welcome. The next meeting is on Tuesday January 26th from 2 till around 4. No December meeting.

My telephone number is 966 718 710 so please ring if you are interested and would like to know next month's subject and hopefully be motivated enough to join us.

We look forward to meeting you. Diane Pierrot

RUMMIKUB CLUB **NEW GROUP**

We will be starting a Rummikub Club from Friday 15th and then 29th January, at 2.30pm in The Dining Room, a restaurant/coffee shop in San Luis, near the Mercadona.

We will meet the second and fourth Friday of every

This game is played with tiles, easy to learn and lots of fun. If you would like to join us please call Barbra and Tony: 966 718 788 / 670292 538.

email: deanbabsie@gmail.com . Look forward to hearing from you.

BRIDGE GROUP

Wednesdays 10.00 hrs - 12.45 hrs at Asturias Restaurante, Punta Prima

The Bridge Group has been meeting now for the past four years, starting in September 2005. From our humble beginnings at the Asturias Playa Flamenca, when there were sometimes 8 players, now we have a regular attendance of 20-24 members. Many of our members were new to the game of Bridge and in those early days we were indebted to Alan Reeves whose experience was invaluable in advising the method of play we continue to use. Sadly this year Alan lost his 9 year battle with cancer and he is sorely missed by all members.

As reported at our monthly U3A meetings at Los Arcos we are fortunate to have a member Derek Rush, a retired English Bridge Union (EBU) tutor and on hand to give new players and improvers assistance with 'bidding' and 'card play'. To this end he has produced a one page A4 sheet of 'Bridge Basics' which gives aspiring players an introduction to the game and those returning to it refresher hints. An important element of our Bridge Group is the social and friendly atmosphere in which we play in contrast to the strict application of the rules of Bridge Clubs that can be so offputting. As a result of our increased membership and the fall in the euro exchange rate our weekly playing fee was reduced in January this year to 50 centimos. We shall be having a table at the AGM in January where the Bridge Basics leaflets are available together with some publications from the EBU.

If you are contemplating learning to play bridge remember – it's fun, it is played worldwide by more than fifty million people and no one has to be an expert to enjoy it.

Bob Kiss rwkiss@gmail.com

















Trip to Tabarca 2010



The U3A is pleased to announce a trip to the island of Tabarca on Friday May 14th





The boat to the island will leave from Torrevieja for the 75 minute journey and the cost is approximately 6€ each way.





When on the island we will have the op-





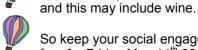
portunity to enjoy a walk, led by the walking group organisers. It is also possible we may learn a little more about Spanish





It will be a do as you please day. We can take picnics or for those who want a meal we will book tables at a restaurant. The cost of a recommended restaurant is approximately 15€ for the menu del dia





So keep your social engagement's diary free for Friday May 14th 2010.

















CALLIGRAPHY GROUP

We only had three meetings this autumn as we were rained off in September when the Gota Fria struck. We are still meeting at Florantilles on Monday evenings from 19.15 till 21.30 and our meetings are every three weeks.

We have been learning a style called English Black Letter most recently and have been using both felt tipped pens and ink. There are 10 of us altogether, so if there is any interest, we could probably take another couple of people.

Bear in mind that getting materials here in Spain is nigh on impossible so you have to do it on the Internet or when you are in the UK.

Anyone thinking of joining after Christmas should contact Mike Law, or myself if he is away, to see what to buy.

I don't know yet when we are starting after Christmas so contact me if you are interested and I'll get in touch when I know.

Chris Johansson 965 352 755 chrisjohan43@yahoo.se

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

At our October meeting, Maggie Aiston, (making an entrance dressed in her wet weather gear!), regaled us



with hilarious moments from her trip down the Amazon. After an extremely interesting DVD, Maggie gave us each an extract from her diary, a small taster of which is written below. If you would like to read more, go to the Addendum on the Newsletter web page.

'In spring of 2008, on a cruise via the Rio Carnaval, the Iguassu Falls and the Falkland Islands, I flew up to the Peruvian Amazon from Lima, preferring mosquitoes and snakes to another bout of altitude sickness in Macchu Pichu'......'At the airport we are told that mosquito spray has to go into hold luggage and so suddenly a walk on becomes a mad dash to weigh in. Our flight has already been called twice. We race for gate 16 – well as fast as cripples and crumblies with an assortment of sticks and limps can race – rather like tortoises not knowing where the lettuce is.......'

In November, another U3A member, Douglas Sidwell, came along to talk about his trip to Nepal and a Ghurkha reunion, and show us an exciting DVD of this beautiful country and its gentle people. We all enjoyed Douglas's contribution immensely, and, encouraged by those disappointed 'Armchair' members who were unable to come, I have persuaded him to repeat his talk at a future general meeting.

December's meeting was our usual glass of wine and mince-pie get-together, with a short film on Maori culture and art, lent to us by Keith and Gill.

2010 programme:

<u>January 12</u>: Bob and Barbara Hill have kindly offered to repeat their talk on the Eden Project in Cornwall, since few of our present members have seen it. In the unlikely event of their not being able to find the DVD etc. amongst their enormous amount of travel literature, we shall have a DVD on 'Planet Earth,' which they have also loaned us.

<u>February 9</u>: Margaret Daniel is providing a DVD on a Mediterranean Cruise and its ports of call. This meeting will be at the home of Bob and Barbara Hill.

March 9: Following the success of her last talk with

beautiful photographs, Lilian Pownall will be continuing her tour of Singapore with a DVD.

April 13: To be confirmed.

May 11: Again, because few present members saw her previous one, Maureen Moffat will be repeating her talk on Nepal, and her work there. This meeting will be held in Maureen's home.

The numbers in our group are generally quite high still. Having said that, there are some members who have not attended for quite a few meetings, nor contacted me. Therefore, I feel it only fair to other U3A members, that, from the January meeting, if any member has missed four consecutive meetings, and I am unaware of the reason for this, I shall delete their names from my list, in order to make space available for other people.

Jean Cook Tel: 620 705 958

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The dates have been set for 2 – 5 March 2010.

We will be staying at the Hostel Venecia situated in the centre of the city on a bed and breakfast basis.

There is no planned sight-seeing as we would not have the use of a coach and as there is such a variety of things to see and do, we could never please all of the people all of the time.

As you know the opera tickets are very

★ expensive at between 75€ and 150€ to see

★ Smetana's Bartered Bride however, there has

★ been some interest and Graham Evans will

★ look into getting tickets. He is also searching

★ for other musical entertainment during the

★ days we will be there.

★ The more people who want to come on the
★ trip the cheaper it will be, friends and family
★ are very welcome. Let me know as soon as
★ possible if you are interested.
★

SPEAKERS SECRETARY

Our new 'term' started well with our first speaker, TV and radio presenter Simon Baldock, giving us a highly entertaining insight into his career, and the personalities he has met.

The speaker in October was well-known local writer and historian, Andy Ormiston talking about the history of Torrevieja, accompanied by illustrations from his recent book 'Torrevieja Cameos'. Andy kindly donated a copy of his book and a copy of his new Fiestas Calendar to our raffle table. He has also given his 50 euro fee, together with a percentage of the book sales at the meeting, making a total of 110 euros to his chosen charity, The Laura Kearns Trust Fund, of which he spoke during the meeting. I feel it is rather nice that, indirectly, the U3A has, in a small way, helped to make this young person's life as comfortable as it can be.

Our last speaker of 2009 was professional gardener Mike Wyatt, who gave us a short, but informative talk on the history of fruit, followed by a very popular 'surgery' where members could speak to him individually about particular gardening problems.

Jean Cook Tel: 620 705 958 cookonejcook@yahoo.co.uk

FOOD GROUP

There was a meeting in my house in October and we had hoped to go out and do some 'ethnic' shopping but the chosen day was so dreadful, weatherwise, that it has been put off until further notice. We will not be having a December or January meeting. The next meeting will be on Monday 5 February at my house. Will everybody who intends to attend please contact me first as the time might be varied.

New members are always welcome. Just contact me on 966 761 648 for further information.

Laurie Miriam Winstanley

ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS BRIDGE (NEW GROUP) NEW GROUP This group is aimed at people who have not played П bridge before. If you have played previously be prepared to start at the very beginning again. Π Venue - OLD Asturias next to Punta Prima Carrefour - Mondays 9:45 am. П П П Would anybody interested contact me by e-mail at jimcowing@talktalk.net Anybody not having access to e-mail please ring Π Jean/Mike Law on 965 319 311. Group Leader **James Cowing**

PROGRAMME FOR WINTER/SPRING 2010

<u>January 28</u>. No speaker as it is our AGM. and 'Groups Fair'.

February 25. Member Janet Pogson will give an illustrated talk on Family History entitled: 'Edward Trow – Where are you?'.

March 25. Lubbertus Fletcher, also a member, will speak on 'Protecting Your Computer for Free'. (To be confirmed). Lubbertus will have the relevant software on the computer he brings along, and has offered to download this for any member who would like it on to a CD he can supply (at cost price of 50 cents) or on to a member's own CD. Obviously, he cannot accept responsibility for the use of this CD afterwards.

April 29. 'Nigel Hopkins – A Musical Journey'. This celebrated conductor, singer and voice tutor, who has recently moved to Spain, and has set up a choral workshop and choir, will talk about his life and work, and entertain us with some of his music.

<u>May 27</u>. I am hoping shortly to confirm that a member of staff from the British Consulate in Alicante will be visiting us.

Jean Cook Tel: 620 705 958 cookonejcook@yahoo.co.uk

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP:-

We continue to meet every third Thursday in the month at 10.30 until 12.30 to hone our skills with the written word. We always seem to have fun and enjoy ourselves while learning something at the same time!

We tackle all forms of writing: poetry, 50 word stories, articles (encompassing many subjects), short stories and amusing exercises.

I have recently welcomed two new members, with a third interested in 2010. However, there may be room for one more member in February. Please see January's newsletter in this regard. May the joys of the festive season be yours.

Joy Lennick 965 327 617 joylennick@hotmail.co.uk

CONVERSATIONAL SPANISH GROUP

Join Ann Marie and Fini for relaxed conversation on Thursdays 11.00 am – 1.00 pm at El Barco Restaurant in the church square in La Marina Pueblo.

Call 656672681 or email <u>amclem1408@hotmail.com</u> for more info.

MEMBERS TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

NEW

The Craziest Fiesta in Spain

Yes, that must be 'La Tomatina' fiesta held each year in Buñol, west of Valencia, on the last Wednesday in August.

As we waited in the crowded narrow street, equipped with non-slip shoes and protective eye goggles, the excitement grew. Eleven o'clock arrived and a hooter sound denoted the start of 'La Guerra Roja' (the red war).

Lorries slowly rumbled from the town square loaded with tons of tomatoes; the local folk sat atop flinging the ripe red fruit at the crowd as they passed. There was a mad scramble to pick up as many tomatoes as possible to return fire towards the attackers. This was made much easier when the back of the tipper trucks opened and deposited piles of ammunition at our feet. Now the fight really got under way.

This mayhem continued for exactly one hour and ended on the sound of a second hooter at twelve o'clock. Happy, exhausted, and some with minor injuries, the red pulp covered crowd made their way over the bridge to the bars offering fun filled outdoor post-Tomatina parties.

It's madness, absolutely unique and a great time was had by all. We'll be back next year!

Judi Dale: Torrevieja U3A Member

TAI CHI GROUP

Vitality - Relaxation - Balance

Tai Chi is an ancient meditative form of exercise that began in China as a martial art more than 700 years ago. It was reformed by the Chinese Government in the late 1950's to enable people of all ages to take part. As a non-impact exercise it strengthens the body with minimal stress to the joints. You do not have to be fit to begin and no special clothing is required. All you need is something loose fitting and comfortable and a change of footwear.

Tai Chi will

Improve balance and concentration
Improve muscle tone and stamina
Improve mental attitude and power of perception
Improve flexibility of joints
Improve respiratory and cardio vascular functions
Improve overall physical fitness

A visit to the United Arab Emirates

Recently we visited our daughter in the UAE with the highlight being a four-day visit to the new Yas Marina Racing Circuit to watch the final Formula 1 Grand Prix in Abu Dhabi. The first day saw us walking down the pit lane, standing on the starting grid and meeting some of the drivers including Lewis Hamilton and Kimi Raikkonen This was followed by three days of racing involving GP2. Porsche, Chevrolet Supercars and of course Formula 1. The noise was tremendous and required earplugs. The excitement of watching drivers jostling for position, bumping into each other, spinning out and crashing (no one got hurt) cannot be described. Our favourite, Jenson Button, could only get third place despite a magnificent tussle with Mark Webber, but it did not matter – he 📙 was already the world champion.

The rest of the time was spent in relaxation by the Indian Ocean in Fujaira, visiting the Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, walking in moonlike landscape in Oman, barbequing in the desert and visiting the Dubai shopping mall with its 1000 shops and restaurants from Amani to Debenhams and Marks & Spencer. All told an unforgettable experience. In Arnold Schwartzeneggers immortal words: We shall return!

Pat and Rolf Buerger. Torrevieja U3A Members

In China a study was made of two groups (Tai Chi students and non students) in the age group 50 - 89. The study found that the Tai Chi students had

- Better cardiovascular levels
- Deeper and more efficient breathing
- Stronger bones and markedly superior use of joints
- Better recovery rates from strokes and heart attacks

At the U3A Tai Chi class we do not take ourselves too seriously but we do concentrate on developing physical skills we already have, particularly breathing. It does not matter if you miss sessions as it is the development of Chi (energy) that counts.

We meet every Thursday afternoon from 4-5pm at the Sophia Wellness Centre, Cabo Roig. For further information give Mike a ring on 965 319 311.

MUSIC & THEATRE NOTICEBOARD

Music

Plans are well advanced for the U3A trip to Valencia in March, as covered elsewhere in this Newsletter. For those members interested, I hope to be able to give details of what Valencia has to offer in the music and theatre scene at our January meeting.

Theatre

The Shakespeare Group is where we discuss and view excerpts from a specific play. To date we have covered Macbeth, Much Ado About Nothing, and Richard III. Meetings are held fortnightly on Friday afternoons at my apartment in San Miguel. In January we shall be starting to watch and discuss Twelfth Night and one of the versions we shall be covering includes a brilliant performance by Nigel Hawthorne as Malvolio.

Anyone wishing to begin, renew, or enlarge their knowledge of the plays will be very welcome.

Contact: **Graham Evans** phone 966 723 909 or noelevans@waitrose.com

PSYCHOLOGY GROUP

The Psychology Group will be meeting on Mondays at 10.15 am on::

11 January Memory and Association

15th February Visual Perception + Listening

15th March Creative/Rational thinking

At the moment it is anticipated that the group will meet at Los Arcos, but if a more suitable venue can be found all members will be informed. Happy New Year.

Jean Wilson Tel 966 798 196 paj781@hotmail.com

I do hope you enjoyed reading this newsletter. I would like to thank everyone for their contributions.

I do wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Editor: Keith Jones newsletteru3a@gmail.com



WALKING GROUP

We have completed four walks since September



beginning with a stroll from the wreck of a salt boat near Santa Pola Sea Front.



Our second walk In October was in the wild Quesada Campo.

In November we enjoyed a walk through the Guardamar



Campo starting from Manolos Restaurant on the Lemon Tree Road. Having to negotiate the mud was an unexpected challenge!! (see photographs).

Finally, in December we enjoyed a short walk from the square in Almoradì to the River Segura concluding with a visit to the market.

We continue to try and find new walks that will appeal to the varying abilities and interests of our members. Inevitably this means that on occasions we will have to drive a little further to the start of the walks.

The 2010 season of walks for members commences on Saturday 30th January when we plan to walk to the Bateria de Cenizas, near Portman. Full details of this walk will be available before the January meeting.

2010 will see a new venture for U3A Walking Group members. We are proposing to organise a three day walking holiday in the stunningly beautiful Sierra Espuña Regional Park. More details about this in due course.

Bob and Barbara Hill Walking Group Leaders