



Cambourne & District u3a
Bulletin April 2026
Issue No. 84



From the walking group See page 5

Chair piece

Well as I write this on Easter Sunday with the sun shining, I'm pleased to know that our u3a has been saved from closure. Some members have stepped up and offered to take over certain roles -most importantly the officer role of the Chair. One of the necessary 3 officer roles we need to keep going as a u3a. Volunteering isn't always easy as people deal with issues of health, family or other community commitments that can be part of a busy life. So i'm pleased that in a relatively small membership compared to others with recruitment problems, we have found people to take on the roles of Chair, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Speaker secretary and the Newsletter. Wow!

I would like to thank our chief recruiter Gill Habicht for her very productive approach. She had invited potential volunteers to our last committee meeting and their contributions started some interesting conversations. This relates to the central reason of why officer roles do have a limited tenure.

So at the AGM we can welcome Janet Rogers as the new Chair of Cambourne and district u3a. Janet also runs the walking group and made the point that retirees can also have a busy life. That's so true as many will testify. However, she didn't want the u3a to fold so many thanks Janet.

Thanks also to Ian Senior who has agreed to take on the Equality, diversity and Inclusion role. As someone who is sight impaired, Ian has experience in that area in his time at work and the wider world. Some hours after that meeting, Ian found us a great little cartoon film outlining beautifully what the u3a is about. This was relevant to our conversation with Simon Dimaline who among other issues, spoke about exploiting social media more to advertise what we are about. Alan Barwick also came to experience a committee meeting.

As you will know Christine has done a superb job of organising Speakers for our monthly meets. As she says, it is a job she has enjoyed but was ready to step down. Luckily, we have a volunteer who has stepped up and say she will take on that role. Welcome Kate Evans and thankyou very much.

Peter Cornwell who took over the role of Newsletter editor from Christine will also be stepping down this year. Luckily, committee member Paul Middleton who does the publicity, will take over that role. Thank you Paul. Many thanks Peter (who I seemingly persuaded to do the newsletter): as I know you are very busy with your artwork and other commitments in your community. Very much appreciated.

So onwards to a Cambourne and district future that looks good. On behalf of the committee and all members, good luck to our new volunteers.

Kath

EDITORIAL

Sadly this will be my last edition as editor of the U3a newsletter. Having done almost three years (I started in 2023 probably about May/June) it's time for someone else to take a turn. That will be Paul Middleton.

Paul has been a faithful supporter of the magazine, having submitted two wonderful articles in the past. I hope that we can all offer him our support for the future.

In this edition , thanks to Janet Rogers for the photos of her walk at the end of March and to our regular contributor Stephen Attwood for the update on the Art appreciation group.

Details about the forthcoming book sale at the Cabin at St Mary's Hardwick can be found on page 9.

Peter

Friday walking group

Ever optimistic, a small group had a very pleasant walk around the Trumpington Meadows Nature Reserve on the 27th March and it didn't rain! It was uplifting to see the first signs of spring with cowslips and blossom starting to appear.





This could be you!
Support the new editor
by contributing
Letters,
Articles,
Poetry,
PHOTOS,
Book reviews,
Jokes,#
Anecdotes,
Memories
Crosswords
Puzzles
Etc

The giant book sale
[opposite] is a must
for second hand
books. It's not too
late to donate or just
come along next
Saturday.
CB23 7QS.



A Spring Giant Book Sale

Saturday April 18th
10am - 4pm

in the Cabin at St Mary's, Hardwick

Having a Spring clean/de-clutter?

We are happy to receive donations of good quality books. These can be left at the Cabin (in the porch if the door is locked).

Again, the Cabin will be full of a wide variety of books, both fiction and non-fiction.

Cash or card payment

Refreshments will be available.

We look forward to seeing you.

Please, no magazines or DVDs/CDs - Wendy Wooldridge is collecting the latter for Hardwick Scout Group

For our March meeting we had posed the questions: How do you take a blank canvas and start to create your painting? What are you trying to convey, and what influences you? Two of our group - Andrew Winnard and Peter Cornwell - offered to give us their insights into "My Own Work", from the mechanics to the final effect.

Andrew: paints mainly in oils, sometimes in acrylics; images include still-lives, sometimes relational style, sometimes with different perspectives.

MATERIALS

Uses a 'paint stick' (mahl stick) to rest his hand off the canvas and avoid smudging

Tear-off palette is a useful handheld base to mix colours

Use of thinners (non-toxic type) and "liquin" (instead of linseed oil) for ease of application with oil paints to reduce brush retention, plus liquin halves the drying time

Paint brushes: good selection at reasonable prices from Søstrene Grene

TECHNIQUE

Start with a base layer over the canvas, for example of medium brown umber, to produce realism with the final colours

Paint the background and its finish, for example scrambled

Paint in the large areas of dark in your subjects, then add the detail

Acrylic versus oil: acrylic dries quicker, which can be a benefit or a disadvantage, as it can only be easily altered soon after applying

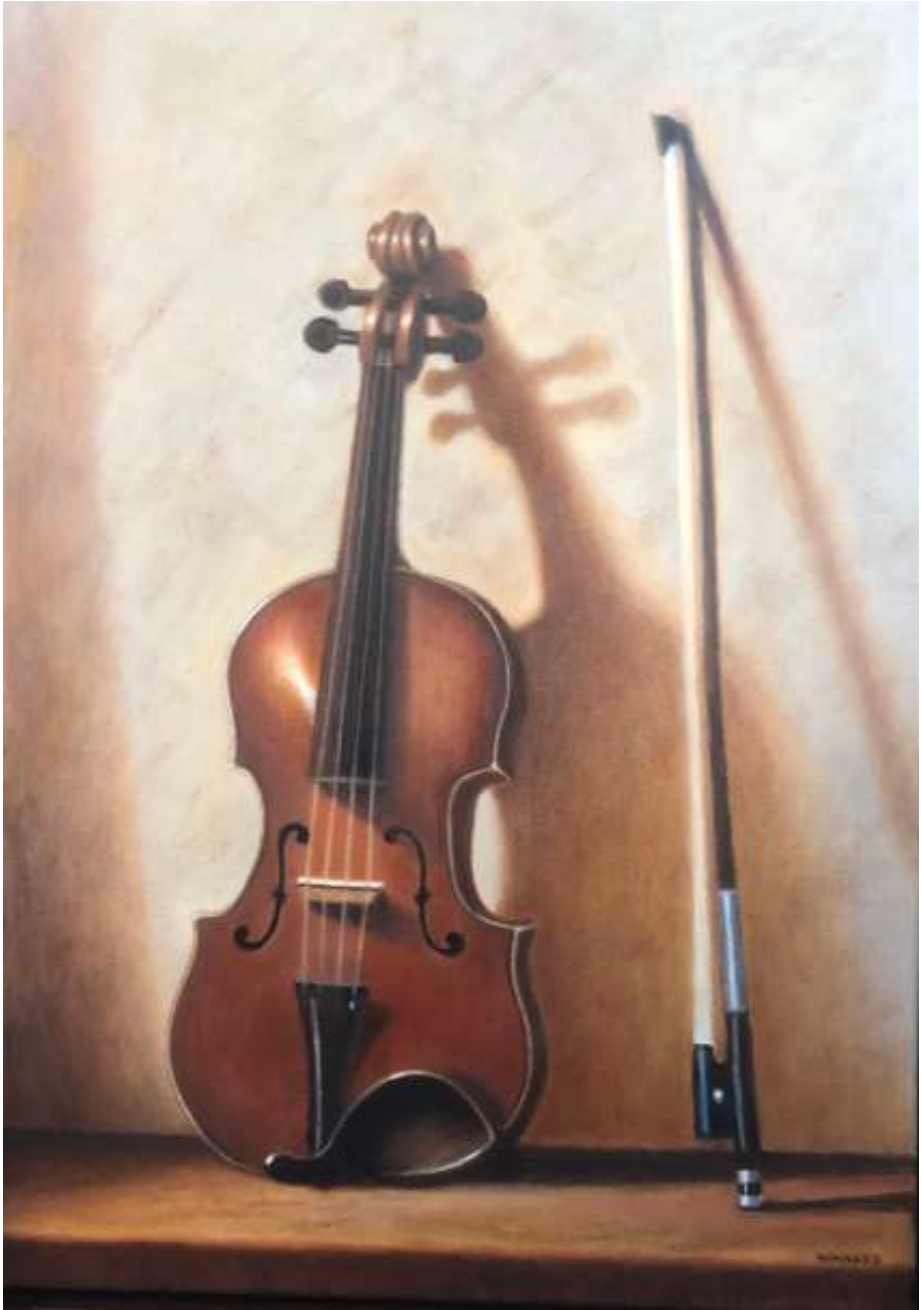
Final application of varnish for an even gloss finish with vibrancy of colours

Has attended a u3a Art Class

How long do you paint for? 1 ½ -2 hours / session.

How do you work? I have 3 on the go at one time, and the joy is in the execution... it's good fun.

So when is a painting finished? When you start making mistakes... and it's not going any further!





Violin & Bow

‘folk art’ [Editor: note multiple perspectives, in the style of Cezanne & Picasso]

Table-

White Cup & Saucer [Editor: in the style of Henri Fantin-Latour 1836-1904, Fitzwilliam Museum]



Peter: produces images in pencil and mixed media, as well as sculptures in metal and wood; his works include images of hands to portray character, as well as abstract images and sculpture.

MATERIALS

Paintings: pencil, mixed media such as aquarelle pencils (use dry and wet for watercolour effect)

Sculpture: metal foil and gauze such as aluminium, on wooden blocks.

TECHNIQUE

My abstract artwork is characterised by capturing 3-D sculpture in 2-D art

How do you paint your abstract work, do you know where it is going? The image evolves as I work on it.

Who influences your work?

Constantin Brancusi (Romanian sculptor and painter)

Naum Gabo (Russian post-Revolution avant-garde sculptor)

Jean Arp [Editor: Arp is quoted as saying "**Chance is my raw material**": Arp famously claimed that his work—such as his 1917 collages—was created by tearing paper, dropping the pieces onto a canvas, and pasting them exactly where they fell. This "law of chance" allowed the work to appear "ordered" naturally rather than forced by the artist's ego. Also "**Play is serious work**": Arp considered this spontaneous, almost childish mode of working to be a serious, "concrete" artistic act. He aimed for a "direct form of production" that mimicked nature, which he saw as a living, growing entity, rather than a mere representation.]

How do you work and where do you get inspiration? I listen to



classical music while working; inspiration also comes from visiting art galleries.



What are you trying to convey with your "Hands" series? Something of the person's character and their qualities, for example a 90-year old woman in a 'prayerful' pose, and a man of integrity .

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Thank you to Andrew and Peter for this insight into their own work, and for sharing their talent and inspiration with us.

Stephen





Speakers for 2026/2027

Date	Speaker	Subject
17/4/26	David Pinion	My amazing visit to Antarctica
15/5/26	Sue Baker	History of Belly Dance through costumes
19/6/26	Suzie Harrison Free	The Cambridge Military Cemetery
17/7/26	Damien O'Dell	Chicksands Priory – England's most haunted house?
Summer Holiday – No Meeting		
18/9/26	Jenny Malin	Behind the scenes at the BBC Broadcasting House
16/10/26	Fiona Rose	Uncompromising genius – The Life and Work of Frank Lloyd Wright
20/11/26	Hemant Jariwala	Flowers through my viewfinder
18/12/26	Christmas Celebration TBA	
2027		
15/1/27	Anne Lawrence	Anti-Terrorism
19/2/27		
19/3/27		
16/4/27	Bruce Keith	Bridgecapes
21/5/27		
18/6/27		
16/7/27		
All meetings are held on the third Friday of each month starting at 10.30 with tea and coffee being served. The talks start at 11.00 and usually finish at 11.45 -12.00.		



17th April at 11.00 am
The Hub Community Centre
Talk on
Journeys to Antarctica
By Dave Pinion

MY AMAZING JOURNEY TO ANTARCTICA - From my first Antarctica experience when we visited the living quarters left by Robert Falcon Scott and Ernest Shackleton on their South Pole Expeditions in the early 20th century. An inspiring 33-day journey through the incredible scenery, wildlife and history of Antarctica, sharing the experience with 80 fellow travellers and a group of experts, all with the same desire to “stand on the shoulders of giants”.

IN THE WAKE OF ERNEST SHACKLETON - My second talk is based on later journeys following the Weddell Sea Party of Ernest Shackleton's disastrous transantarctic Expedition of 1914-17. We start in South Georgia where we pay our respects at Shackleton's resting place Grytviken. We walk with thousands of King and Gentoo Penguins and dodge crowds of curious fur seal pups. We then sail in the wake of the Endurance, past the South Sandwich Islands and deep into the Weddell Sea where the Endurance became trapped in the ice in 1915. We visit the inhospitable Elephant Island where 22 men lived for four months whilst Shackleton and five others sailed a 21 foot lifeboat 800 miles to South Georgia to get help.



Dave is a retired BT engineer who worked on the International Optical Fibre Submarine Cable Systems. Following his passion for the Heroic Age of Exploration, Dave first went to Antarctica in 2023 and fell in love with it – he caught the “Polar Bug”. Beware, this bug is contagious and he has now returned to Antarctica four more times. “Antarctica is an incredible place. Writing this now brings back amazing memories and my passion for the continent, which I hope comes out in my presentations. I encourage questions afterwards”.