



Wroxham and District  
Membership Number: 962/940/13

Chairman: John Long, 01603 722254 Secretary: Sue Badger 01603 737572

Membership Secretary: Marlene Corke 01603 781012

## NEWSLETTER MARCH 2017

### General meetings

Our guest speaker for February was Karen Norton, who gave a personable talk about her life, her approaching blindness and her relationship with her guide dog, Holly.



Karen Norton's best friend, excluding her husband, is Holly – a cross between a black labrador and a golden retriever. Holly has been with Karen for 5 years, has been her constant companion, her reliable guide while on the streets, and appears to have a unique understanding of Karen's shopping requirements (in Stalham, the command "in" signifies Tesco's; the command "over" means the doctor's surgery).

20 years ago, Karen, a primary school teacher, was diagnosed as having a vision defect which she knew would be gradually progressive, it being hereditary, and where her vision would become increasingly limited to a central area, with the periphery being blurred. Within 4 years she was medically assessed as being partially sighted, and was eligible to apply for a guide dog. After many years of uncertainty and denial that her condition was serious enough to merit the ownership of a guide dog, Karen suddenly experienced a loss of confidence in walking the streets unaided, and knew that she needed extra support to maintain her independence.

Enter Holly, aged 2, fresh out of guide dog training, (which lasts 2 years and costs an eye-watering £56,000 for the 2 years). Karen and Holly were assessed as being compatible, and Karen was given her own basic training as to how to direct Holly, with and without the harness. Holly's basic training consisted of being socially integrated as a puppy in normal domestic routines, then advanced training in cities and towns, gaining experience, not just on responding to commands, but on judging and manoeuvring widths and heights of obstacles and street furniture to allow her reliant person to follow safely.

Holly's regime is strict and non-negotiable – it has to be. Adhering to commands, a controlled diet, complete differentiation between 'working' and 'playing', Holly is there for a purpose. But it is easy to see that she is adored, is part of the family, and will remain with them even after she is officially retired (at 10).

Please note that there is a change of speaker for March. **Mike Trendell** will give a presentation on the Heritage of the Churches on our doorstep. Mike is a keen photographer, and has spent much of his free time during his life learning about and taking photographs of churches in Norfolk. Some of our members have already seen this presentation and can thoroughly recommend it as an hour of great interest.



### **Visit to Jarrolds Printing Museum**

This visit has been organised for Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March, meeting at the museum at 1.30. Details of car-sharing will be discussed at the next general meeting. You might be interested in a preview via the museum's website: [www.jarrold.com/what-we-do/museum.aspx](http://www.jarrold.com/what-we-do/museum.aspx)

**Summer Party** This year we are hiring the Southern Comfort 'paddle steamer' which can accommodate up to 100 people on **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July from 6 – 9 pm from Horning**. Make a note of the date, and tickets will be on sale in a few months at £7.50, including buffet (provided by us). There is a bar on board. Partners welcome.



**Parking at General Meetings:** Most of you will know now that we have booked the Church Hall next to The Hub for General meetings only to ease the situation with parking at The Hub.

**Erratum** Please note that the AGM will be on Tuesday April 18<sup>th</sup>, not April 20<sup>th</sup> as on the little programme cards.



### **"Masters of Japanese Photography" exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre:**

I have now made two mistakes in trying to arrange a visit to this exhibition – sorry! We finally hope to go on **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March**, meeting at the Centre at 10.30 am. Even if you signed up initially, please ring me if you wish to come. We can probably arrange car sharing. Corrie Mould 01603 782755

**Committee Meeting: Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2 pm at The Hub.** Thanks to the two people who volunteered to join the committee, which will be made formal at the AGM, but meanwhile they are invited to attend.

## Activities

**Walking:** We had a bright dry morning for our walk towards Horning and so avoided any mud. There will not be a walk in March as I am away. Maggie Lomax 01603 783870

**Classical Music** come for a relaxing afternoon at Brian Keane's home at Prior Thatch, Beech Road, Wroxham, on **March 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>**. The tea is good too! Brian 01603 782774

**Photographic/Camera Club** Mary Long writes: The Photographic Group met on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February with ten members present. We had a very successful afternoon catching up on numerous projects that had been completed over the past months. Our challenge for the day was taking photographs of The Road!!!

The March challenge is lighthouses. Hopefully there will be some unusual angles taken which will be discussed on **March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2 p m at The Hub**. Mary 01603 722254

**French Conversation** is held every Thursday afternoon at 3 pm at Bouchon (opposite Hoveton station). All welcome whatever the standard. Jane 01603 782496

**Play Reading Group** meets the first Tuesday of the month, ie **March 7<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm** at the home of Sue Badger, Hawthorn Cottage, Market Street, Tunstead. (6<sup>th</sup> house past The Olive Branch, with solar panels on the roof. Ample parking in the drive.) More readers would be made very welcome.

**Lunch Out** In February we will venture to "The Lighthouse" at Walcott on **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> Feb at 12.30**. The March outing will be "The Bridge Inn" in Acle on **Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March**. Please let Corrie know at the latest 2 days beforehand if you wish to come. 01603 782755.

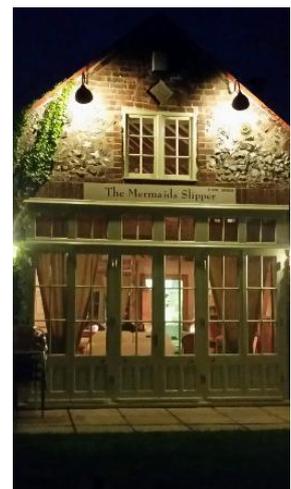
**Bird Watching:** Many birds were spotted on the last local walk: a marsh tit was a rare visitor, spotted flying over the River Bure in Wroxham.

This always takes place on the first Saturday of the month, which will be **4<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30**, meet outside Di's home beside the double roundabout in Hoveton. It depends a bit on the weather which bird haven we will visit but bring your binoculars! This is then followed by "**Bird Banter**" on **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30** at Bouchon in Hoveton to talk about all aspects of bird life over a coffee. Di Stagg 01603 784214



**History Group** meets on the last Thursday of the month, which will be **March 30<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm** in the Hub. Ann den Engelse 01603 782121

**Evening Dining:** The group enjoyed their meal very much at The King's Head in Coltishall in January, made even better because there happened to be a 2 for 1 offer on! Maggie Flatman is hoping to arrange a visit on **Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 6.30 pm** to "The Mermaid's Slipper" in Stalham. The restaurant is usually closed on a Wednesday, but they will open specially if there are at least 12 people. So please let Maggie know as soon as possible if you wish to come. If there are fewer than 12 people she will make other arrangements. Maggie Flatman 01603 783091



**Swimming:** There has not been much uptake by U3A members of the swimming at the Victory pool in North Walsham, but those who go enjoy a pool almost clear of other people (and it is one of the warmest places to be!). Forthcoming dates are **March 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting at the pool at 2.15.** Enquiries to Corrie Mould 01603 782755

**Mah-jong :** The advanced group is continuing on Friday mornings, and the beginners group have had their last session. She welcomes more students – but please ring her before to confirm time. Carol 01603 929368

**Gardens Group:** The group met on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February to meander around the amazing snowdrop display at Horsford House. The setting was most picturesque: banks of woodland carpeted in snowdrops, with the River Bure flowing through. This was part of the National Gardens Scheme, and all proceeds go to charity.



There will be no meeting in March.

If you have a garden which you would like to show to other members, please don't be backward in coming forward: we would love to visit it. Contact Penny on 01603 783552.

**Chess Club** A middle game plan? What middle game plan?! Survive the opening, practice the end game and let the adrenalin flow in the middle game! The group has entered the world of pins, forks, skewers, combinations, decoys and sacrifices. Nothing is what it seems, especially 2 moves on! Hold your nerve. Drink more coffee.

Try this one: 1q5k/ b4Bp1/ 3n1pP1/ 8/ PP1Qb3/ 8/ 1K6/ 6R1 White to move.

**Editorial note:** Full marks to the leaders of the Walking group and the Photographic Club for always providing information in good time (ie before the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month) to insert in this newsletter. It would be helpful if other groups could also inform me of any changes or activities or anything else they would like inserted. Corrie Mould 01603 782755 [candrm@staithehome.co.uk](mailto:candrm@staithehome.co.uk)

Also, please, please, please: if you offer dates for the newsletter, please check that they are accurate. Too many discrepancies creeping in.