

u3a

Minutes of Hunstanton u3a Members Meeting

Monday 20th April 2026

Chair

Seventy-four members and two guests were welcomed by Chair Hilary Farrel. The standard health and safety statements followed and the speaker volume was turned up considerably after Ian asked for members' feedback. Seemingly a number of members had found difficulty hearing talks in the past.

Secretary

Virginia Young, Secretary, presented the treasurer's report: the balance of the accounts totals £9,255. It is split into the Main Account with £8,198 and Social Fund with £1,057. The social fund is higher than usual due the fact that the bill for a future Art Appreciation visit is yet to be paid.

Ruth Freedman, Hunstanton's choice, is our new regional Council representative to serve alongside Ian Matthews (who has been in post for a year). We look forward to news of her in the East of England Bulletin.

Today's Speaker Kevin Mackie



Kevin, son of member Mary Mackie, has spoken about his nursing expertise on an earlier occasion and this time he regaled us with facts and anecdotes about a life in music. We were originally advised that the title of today's presentation would be *My Life in Brass* - but the range of instruments on display promised much more than that.

At age five, Kevin was given a recorder and began to play the tunes he'd heard on television and radio without teaching or help of any kind. A few years later he was thrilled to see a local brass band and a love for the euphonium was born. Kevin trained as a nurse with the NHS before joining the RAF, where he discovered plentiful opportunities to continue his music. This was best illustrated on the screen showing himself as a player in the Massed Bands of the Royal Marines at the De Montford Hall. This is but one of the vast range of bands, orchestras and ensembles Kevin has joined, managed or created.

Back to Kevin's musical versatility. The euphonium took pride of place among recorders, trumpet, trombone, tenor horn and guitar. He played each in turn, accompanied by stories about when and how he came to try them out. Kevin explained and demonstrated how each particular sound is produced. He is self-taught without exception.

However, the unexpected star of the show (Michael McIntyre watch out!), not because of its tone but because its size and novel sound technique, was the didgeridoo. This huge ancient Australian instrument is played by circular breathing, a skill as fascinating to watch as to hear.

Kevin ended his presentation with a rendering of *Carrick Fergus*.



Warmest thanks were expressed on our behalf by Ann McKimm. Coffee, a selection of teas and luxury biscuits followed.

The next members meeting will be at 2pm on Monday 18th May at the Community Centre, when Chanter's Jigge will entertain us with Norfolk songs.