



# HAVERHILL & DISTRICT

**u3a** learn,  
laugh,  
live  
**News and Views**

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## March 2025

### From the Chair

This will be my last article for News and Views as the Chair of Haverhill and District u3a, I cannot believe that it is 3 years since I wrote my first article, time goes by so quickly. I have enjoyed my time as Chair and am very grateful that I have been supported by such a dedicated committee and cannot thank them enough. Our membership keeps growing each year and the groups continue to be very active.

It is our A.G.M. on 25th March and you should have all received the necessary paperwork in preparation for this. The new committee will be voted in and it is essential we have a quorum in order for the A.G.M. to go ahead so I look forward to seeing you there.

Winter seems very long and the flowers very late in appearing, however, at the end of February I was walking at Wandlebury and took this picture of some aconites. There was a huge carpet near the car park which looked spectacular and several bunches in different parts of the park.



As I said earlier this is my last “from the chair” report so I thought an extra cheering picture would be a good idea. I recently returned from a holiday in Spain and took this picture at the Orchid House in Estepona. I hope you like it as much as I do.



***Barbara Lavender***

### Speakers Corner – February 2025

February Speaker Meeting – A Change of Plans!

Unexpectedly, on the day before our February Speaker meeting, our scheduled speaker had to cancel due to unforeseen circumstances. This meant that The Undertaker Entertains talk did not go ahead.

However, in true u3a spirit, our Vice-Chairman, Peter Tatam, stepped in at short notice—and what a fantastic job he did. Peter, who leads the u3a photography group, treated us to a visual tour of a few Suffolk’s villages, sharing 200 stunning photographs. The images were

accompanied by a brief history, entertaining anecdotes, glimpses of charming churches, vibrant village houses, and welcoming pubs.

The villages featured included Boxford, Hartest, Linsey, Elveden Clare, Moulton, Debenham, Orford, Hoxne, Thorpeness, Ixworth, Kersey, Somerleyton and Orford. Peter's engaging commentary and beautiful photography made for a great meeting. A huge thank you to Peter for stepping in and delivering such an enjoyable talk.

### **March Speaker Meeting (& AGM)**

Our next Speaker Meeting is on Tuesday 25th March at the Arts Centre (doors open at 10.00, with the talk starting at 10.30 – and free beverages available in the bar).

After a brief AGM, we will be welcoming Henry Wilson MBE, who will be sharing insights into the wide range of initiatives that Reach undertakes to support the people of Haverhill and the surrounding villages. Reach works tirelessly to create circles of support, helping families and individuals flourish, tackling the root causes of financial hardship and advocating for meaningful change by ensuring the voices of our community are heard.

Some of you may remember that Henry spoke to us a few years ago, and at that time, we organised a food bank collection. Thanks to your generosity, we managed to fill several boxes with much-needed items. If you'd like to contribute, we are collecting the following items:

- Long-life milk:
- Long-life juice
- Tinned vegetables
- Coffee
- Sugar

Please bring your donations along to the March meeting – we will put out the boxes in the passageway leading to the car park. If possible, kindly bring them in a carrier bag, as these are often in short supply.

Your kindness will make a real difference to those in need, and I thank you in advance for your support.

### **Change to your Programme**

We have a small change to our printed programme for 26th August 2025. Originally, we were expecting a talk on the history of marriage but unfortunately, this has had to be postponed until later in the year. However, we will be delighted to welcome Charmian Thompson, who has kindly agreed to step in with her talk, "The History of Haverhill Art and Artists, from 1575 to Current Times."

**Sue Dickinson**



### **Singing for Pleasure**

The Singing for Pleasure Group have been very busy these last few months.

Before Christmas we were very busy rehearsing for the U3A Christmas Party which took place at the beginning of December. Our performance was a great success and many of the audience mentioned how lovely our interpretation of the carol The Bells Ring Out was sung with the help of an orchestra tape giving it so much fullness. We also had fun singing "The Twelve Days of Christmas" –

however, Diane and Roz put in different verses so the first day involved the u3a Membership Card which was followed by glasses, walking sticks and bus passes, which was also a great success with the audience singing and joining in the fun. Then we met again for our own Christmas get-together when we sang many Christmas Carols and enjoyed our tea break with warm mince pies, Christmas cake and fun raffle.

At the beginning of the New Year, we were busy rehearsing for our performance which took place on Sunday 16th February at the Haverhill Art Centre and which was a great success. We were very privileged to sing at the Haverhill Youth and Community Band's concert to raise funds for the Polished Brass Trust which helps young brass players and brass band percussionists from the Haverhill area with the cost of instrumental examinations. The u3a Singing for Pleasure Group were really thrilled to be invited to give our support for such a worthy cause. Our songs were well received and we felt sure we could have given some more popular songs as the audience were invited to join much of our repertoire and really enjoyed the inclusion.

Our meetings take place on the fourth Monday of the month at St Mary's Church Hall at 1:30 p.m. Usually we just sing for our own amusement singing a variety of songs, ranging from traditional folk tunes up to more modern pop and show tunes. All are welcome to come and join in the fun. Don't forget singing is good for you.

**Aldine Horrigan - Adm.**

### **Sunday Strollers**

This month's walk was very kindly led by David Green, as I was on holiday in Spain, It rained almost every day. David had more luck than me and walked a 3 mile circular route from Linton via Hadstock back to Linton, with nice weather.

Seven strollers enjoyed a sunny day and very little in the way of muddy conditions was encountered. It was nice to hear the

birds singing and enjoy the view of spring flowers at their best. Thank-you David.

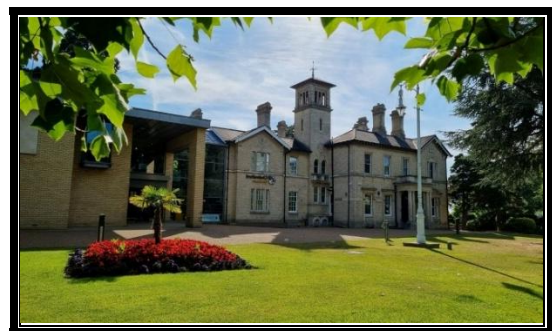
The next walk, of 3.5 miles will be from Weston Green on Sunday 13th April at 10.30a.m., parking near the Reading Rooms.

**David Jefferies**

### **History Group Trip to Chelmsford Museum**

In March, sixteen members of the History Group visited the Chelmsford City Museum using shared cars. The museum, which also houses the military museum for the Essex Regiment was refurbished in 2019, making it a very modern premises. It is sited in the old Oaklands House, so the exhibits are mostly housed in individual rooms, each with a different theme covering everything from the Ice Age, ancient geology and Roman Britain, local industries such as Marconi and Hoffman Bearings and famous residents of the area including the potter Grayson Perry.

Several exhibits of a more modern era are also on show covering the music scene of the sixties and sport in Essex. One interesting feature on the first floor is an indoor beehive with a plastic tube through the wall allowing the bees to come and go. It was fascinating to sit and watch the bees working through the Perspex panels as they attended to the queen and built the honeycombs.



Visiting the museum was free, but I understand that a small charge will be made from April this year.



Part of the building is the Hive Café where we lunched. Good food and reasonable prices with pleasant and helpful service.

**Peter Tatam, Group Leader**

## **The Grand Canyon**

When working, I used to travel to the USA for business but often took a couple of days' holiday there to visit parts of this amazing country.

So, it was on one occasion that I took a flight to Phoenix Arizona to visit The Grand Canyon. I took a car to the site via "Indian" territory, enjoying their arts and crafts. Classic giant cactus trees (as you see in old western movies) lined my journey.

Once at my objective, I made my way to the helicopter station/pad and booked a one-hour flight over the canyon. As a single visitor I was lucky to be seated in the front seat next to the pilot – a very interesting man.



He told me that he had flown helicopters in the Vietnam war and recounted various tales of daring do, hiding, I am sure, some of the less romantic instances of his experience

We followed the edge of the canyon in line with local flight path rules and after a short while turned to port and flew into the abyss ... the Grand Canyon. Quite breathtaking. The enormity of this natural wonder cannot be fully appreciated by any pictures or

film...you have to be there to experience the grandeur.

My pilot friend then made a statement "am I not lucky to have the best job in the world!?" We conducted a substantial tour of the canyon, so colourful with different strata of rock, carved by the Colorado River over millions of years. We descended to within 100 meters of the river and then gradually ascended via naked rock formations poking into the sky.

And then it was over all too soon. An experience I would recommend to anyone visiting this wonder of the world.

**Tony Vermot 820**

Next Meetings: A.G.M.

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April

Deadline for the Rolling Screen

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April

e-mail to: [chair@haverhillu3a.com](mailto:chair@haverhillu3a.com)

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Please either post to:

The Editor U3A

c/o Haverhill Arts Centre

High Street

Haverhill CB9 8AR

OR

e-mail to: [havu3anews@gmail.com](mailto:havu3anews@gmail.com)

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**[haverhillu3a.com](http://haverhillu3a.com)**