



HAVERHILL & DISTRICT

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

News and Views

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HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

January 2023

From the Chair

I hope you all had a very enjoyable Christmas and were able to meet up with family and friends. Although it is nearly the end of January, I would like to wish you all a happy and healthy 2023.

There will be some changes to the committee at the A.G.M. in March. We need two members to join the committee. The Events team would like another helper to assist with the planning of events like the Christmas Concert etc. Gerry our website manager would like someone to help him keep the website up to date. He will give all the training necessary; the only requirement is access to a computer or laptop. If you feel you may be able to help please contact me on chair@haverilu3a.com and I will do my best to answer your questions.

Now, a note for your diary. Unfortunately we cannot hold our Tuesday speaker meetings at the Arts Centre in July and August so we have changed the venue to the Old Independent Church in Hamlet Road. Please make a note in your diary.

Barbara Lavender

Speaker's Corner

On the 29th November, we were pleased to welcome the Sawston u3a Handbell Ringers, 11 ladies led by Mike Rowland. They played for us using hand bells, American hand bells, hand chimes and Indian chimes. There are 23 ways to get a sound from a hand bell and at the end,

Mike showed us very many of the fascinating ways to get these different resonances. The music varied from Christmas carols, a Ukrainian Bell Carol, through to a lullaby, Walking in the Air, classical pieces and many others. The audience commented that the music was "brilliant, entertaining and informative". As Mike said, "There's something about bells that brings out feelings". It was magical.



The next Arts Centre meeting is on Tuesday 31st January when David Green will be telling us about Action for Children which is a UK children's charity created to help vulnerable children, young people and their families in the UK. We are also pleased to announce that Councillor Bruce Davidson (Haverhill Mayor) will be giving a short talk about the role of the Mayor.

Could I please ask that you amend a printer's error in your Programme. The August meeting is on Tuesday 29th August, and not the 20th.

Please let me know if there are any subjects you would like to hear about, or

put a note on your feedback form at the next meeting.

**Sue Dickinson – Assistant Speaker
Secretary**

Walking Talking Munching

A large group met at the Flying Shuttle, Haverhill for the last walk of the year. The recent heavy rain meant a rescheduling of plans and a more local walk was selected.

The group initially headed into the science park and skirted two of the sites originally designated for companies relocating, before circling the well laid out duck pond. The view from the wooden platform across the water was a delight with varied aquatic plants and water fowl.

Crossing the A1307 to join Meldham Washlands better known locally as the Flood Park, the group ambled around its perimeter and delighted in the autumn colours of the plentiful trees. Built in the 1970s it has more than once prevented Haverhill from being flooded. Two members of the group remembered how the lower end of the High Street used to flood and rowing boats were used to rescue people. It is also a favourite spot for local fishermen with a variety of fish, particularly Carp.

A circuit of newer estates followed before heading back for lunch at The Flying Shuttle.

Ken Hainsby

Haverhill 'U3A' - Thursday 7th September 2023

Proposed group visit to Strawberry Hill House and Gardens - Horace Walpole's 'Little Gothic Castle'

Created in the 18th Century, this extraordinary building is internationally famous as Britain's finest example of Georgian Gothic revival architecture and home to an increasingly important collection of paintings and objects.

The House is not open for general public admission on Thursday so is an idea for a Group Guided visit around the House.

Expected cost per person. Entry £15.00. Transport, hired coach basing on 40 - £19.00ish.

Should you be interested in joining this Haverhill U3A day out, please contact:

Alan Alexander T. 01440 712380
E. gillianandalan73@btinternet.com

The Longer Walking Group

This new walking group- or rather this re-birth of an old one - has now had two walks, in October and November, the first starting and finishing at Poslingford, the second at Radwinter.

The idea rose from conversations in two other walking groups which showed there was a nucleus of people keen to take on a longer walk of between 10 and 13 miles once a month. Fifteen members signed up for the group, and seven took part in a lovely route taking in Denston and Stansfield much of it on the Clare to Bury path.



The general idea is that we will walk at a decent pace, stopping for a picnic lunch on the way. The first walk of 11 miles took four hours, including the break for lunch at Stansfield Church.

The name Longer Walking Group is not too inspiring, so we will shortly be deciding between The Red Hot Chilli Steppers and the Walkaholics. For ease of the whatsapp group, I suspect it might be the latter. If you are interested in joining us, we would be

delighted to welcome you. Details can be obtained from:

Graeme Inch, at ginchie58@gmail.com

Camera Group

Photograph Success.

The Camera Group of Haverhill & District u3a scored a notable success as two of the members had their images accepted for inclusion in the 2023 calendar produced by Haverhill Library. Even better was that each member had two images selected, Miriam Humphreys took the honours for March & April with Sheila McHale supplying those for November & December.



The group leader and management committee of our u3a are immensely proud of this achievement which demonstrates the advantage of carrying a camera and knowing how to use it which is what the Camera Group tries to encourage.

The calendar can be purchased from Haverhill Library, Camps Rd, Haverhill CB9 8HB. It features twelve images taken in the locality throughout the seasons.

Peter Tatam, Group Leader

Great Escapes 'Christmas at Wimpole'

Great Escapes completed our 2022 Post Covid programme, with a visit to 'Christmas at Wimpole'.



A (*somewhat dank*) evening outing, saw a full mini-bus of well wrapped up but eager Escapees head out of Haverhill heading for the Festive Illuminations around the grounds of Wimpole Hall. Arrival was right on time for our booked entry at 18.45, and with a recommendation to allow 90 minutes for the trail it was agreed we meet up by 20.30 for our return to Haverhill.

The one and quarter mile trail around the grounds was illuminated by over a million twinkling lights accompanied by seasonal sounds and music; with a dozen varied themed areas, together with an ever changing Kaleidoscope of colour and shapes lighting the rear aspect of the Hall itself. A gentle mingling stroll with other visitors and many excited children and a chat with Santa himself, proved an extremely enjoyable and pleasant, if chilly, evening. The inner person being served by half a dozen wayside concessions, a Woodfired Pizza and Hot Coffee really rounded the visit off very nicely. Might be wrong, but I think other than looking on, 'the Fun of the Fair' was given an Escapee miss!

Alan Alexander

Booklovers Group 11

At the recent group coordinators meeting, we were encouraged by National Office to be pro-active in our discussions towards our attitudes and actions to 'do our bit' for the future of our planet.

Booklovers Group II discussions focused on the proposed Bio (slurry) recycling Plant planned for the Haverhill Business Park. It was thought that we needed more information on the proposal and its effects on our local environment and the increased traffic on the A1307 and the Bypass. We also need to hear more about its benefits for our local area and for our planet in general.

Jean Parsons

Nature group

On a bright but cold autumn day on 24th November, 14 of our members (see the Photo), visited the Suffolk Wildlife Trust site at Lackford Lakes. We were met by Mike, one of the wardens, who introduced us to the layout of the large site and offered the use of binoculars to those that had not got them and said they would carry scopes for us to get an even better view.



We visited several of the hides placed round the eight or more Lakes, although often it was preferable to just look outside the hide. Part of the tour was led by Paul a long-time volunteer with extensive knowledge of the birds on site.

Amongst the birds we saw were a Grey Heron, Egyptian goose, Greylag goose, Swans, Cormorant, Great crested grebe, Little grebe, Teal, Pochard, Tufted duck, Wigeon, Gadwall, Snipe, Lapwing, Little egret, Chiffchaff, Marsh tit, Greater spotted woodpecker, Blue tit, Great tit, Jay, and Chaffinch.

The advertised kingfisher did not make an appearance. We also spied some fungi on tree trunks including a fantastic specimen of a jelly ear fungus.

At the end of the walk the warden told us that, at the moment, the starlings were murmuring at Lackford Lakes and it would be well worth going to watch. Murmuration is where thousands of the birds take to the air and fly in swirling intricate shapes before going down to roost together.

He said about 5000 starlings start gathering around 3.15pm and murmurate until 3.45pm before going down to roost in the reed beds. It would be truly memorable – a spectacular sight with an impressive noise as they chatter together on roosting. Mike also told us they would move on to a larger roost before long so recommended we go as soon as possible. One or two of our number did call back and saw the murmuration.

We rounded off the tour with a light lunch at the visitor centre where we bought some cards and gifts. That and a donation from us all helps to keep the Wildlife Trust going but they say a membership gives them a more reliable income. We must thank them for their hospitality.

Keith and Frances

Remember 14th February



London Originals

Sandra persuaded the White Swan pub in Lode to open late on a Tuesday afternoon (when they do not normally serve food) and to provide us with an enjoyable Christmas meal at 3.30pm after we had planned next year's programme.

At 5.00pm we arrived, well wrapped up against the sub-zero cold, at Anglesey Abbey for their winter light display. It was very well organised, and the timed entry ensured there was no overcrowding. We were free to linger and enjoy particular light sequences like the conifer tree which had a succession of birds and animals projected onto its foliage. The Abbey had scenes depicting the changing seasons, whilst all the way round there were tableaux picking out deer, foxes, owls etc. against a backdrop of colourfully lit trees. All the while, the walk echoed to the sound of birdsong from speakers hidden high in the trees. The path to the mill, with the poplar trees constantly morphing their colours reflected in the river, was an unmissable experience.



We had been disappointed that the café would not be open at the end of the walk, but three quarters of the way round, a little clearing housed a half dozen mobile stalls selling hot coffees, mulled wines and hot foods. This came at the right time to counter the effects of the cold, and we then enjoyed the delights of the winter garden with light tunnels, before heading home.



Ian Johnson

Wild Walkers Christmas Joy

The heavy snow earlier in the week was frozen on the fields, and it was -5.5°C when we set off from West Wrating. The sun shone brilliantly, luckily there was no wind, and we were all wrapped up against the cold, as we walked across the common. Some of the paths were untrodden and we crunched across the icy snow, many of us with walking poles to guard against slipping.

The blanketed open fields and frosty fringed trees were Christmas card images of an idyllic Christmas walk. It was a magical experience. We saw the source of

the Stour, and then walked along the banks of the fledgling river and into the hamlet of Weston Green.



We completed the path loop through the wooded grove, and emerged from a field path opposite to the Chestnut Tree Pub, where nineteen of us were royally served generously portioned Christmas Meals including crackers, mince pies and coffees or tea. Such excellent value. We look forward to more days like this in 2023.

Ian Johnson

Cycling Group

Five hardy members of the Cycling Group shook off the lethargy of Christmas, and met up at the Sports Centre for their last ride of the year, on a bright if chilly day.

A new member, 'Dave' was welcomed and initiated into the procedures of the group before leader Thomas headed up onto the railway path heading west. Following a familiar route out to Withersfield where the now familiar Kites wheeled and soared in the pale blue sky, much to the delight of the riders. The testing hill in the village seemed hard work for those not electrically assisted and those extra helpings of Christmas pudding did not help. What goes up must come down and the free wheel into Wratting was much welcomed. Traversing the crossroads of peril the group undertook the undulating terrain that is Kedington

before heading back into Haverhill for a well deserved coffee.

Ken Hainsby

Cycling Group

Peter Cundall RIP

The Cycling Group and the U3A in general lost a good friend and an enthusiastic member, with the sudden and sad death of Peter Cundall.

Having known Peter for 50 years I know he will be sadly missed by all who knew him. His interest in such a variety of topics and pursuits made him many friends, and one who was both reliable and helpful. His love of life and determination pulled him through some difficult health problems in later life, all of which he met stoically. A loving family man and a good friend who will be sorely missed.

Thoughts and condolences to Brenda and all his family.

Ken Hainsby

I remember these do you?



Art Appreciation Group

The theme of this month's meeting was The Future. Members' contributions were, as always, varied and ranged from the work

of Jadé Fadojutimi as an example of an artist we should look out for because she is young, yet her work is already selling for prices over £1 million apiece; 15 times estimates! What might we expect in the future from her? Her large canvases are abstract, colourful, well-executed and mesmerising. Another approach to the future was a thoughtful presentation on how the two faces of Janus had been an inspiration for artists over the centuries: Janus being the Ancient Roman god of beginnings, doorways, duality, etc. Other contributions were images of future travel, for instance rather fantastical designs such as Moses S. Cole's late 19th century airship that would, on paper, be able to carry passengers and travel anywhere through the skies or bizarre bone-shaker style bicycle designs before proper bicycles were developed. Futuristic travel featured in the 1950-onward boy's comic the Eagle with Dan Dare who evolved as a dashing "Pilot of the Future" from a concept by Marcus Morris, a former RAF padre with a strongly Christian moralistic drive. Whilst Dan Dare had exploits in fictional space, the 1970s NASA Art Program provided artists like Rick Guidice ample opportunity to illustrate further concepts of human space exploration, with the example considered showing a section of a doughnut-shaped space station looking like a sunlit village. Awe-inspiring yet strangely pretty, although everywhere appeared to be an uphill slog from wherever you would have started. I'll stick with Haverhill personally, although it's essentially uphill from town in three directions of the compass as it is. Warwick Goble's late 1890s illustrations for the original magazine instalments of The War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells were a long way from his usual illustrations of fairy tales yet reinforced the credibility of the science fiction which we should recall was contemporarily set largely in Surrey. From a religious viewpoint, "the future" for many represented concerns over the afterlife, and with this in mind, we looked at a section of medieval Flemish stained glass which exists in the chapel of Hengrave Hall near Bury St Edmunds and shows cadaverous bodies rising from the grave for the Final Judgement, with Heaven and God

waiting above for some, whilst the red fires of Hell and its demons just below for others. Earth's volcanic sites were tangible long before space travel confused notions of Heaven even further. Our next meeting will consider the same rich theme of The Future.



Neil Dickinson

Sunday Strollers

Our first walk of the year was a 3 mile stroll around Kedington, with a splendid attendance of sixteen members. Most of the interesting sights in the village were pointed out, which kept most of the strollers' interest. The highlight being the oldest building, an original Hall House dating back to the 15th century.

The next walk on Sunday 12th February, parking at the social centre in Kedington at 10-30 am. The walk is approx 3.5 miles on field paths and we have to cross 2 main roads. A walking pole could be useful

David Jefferies

Spanish Conversation Group

The Spanish group had its first meeting of 2023 with 2 new members. As we meet in members' homes and have 7 members, we are now full.



If anyone would like to join, please send me your contact details through the Haverhill

website and we will look into a waiting list or even a second group.

As usual we started with greetings and introductions in Spanish. We shared some sentences using Spanish words for food. The task for the next meeting is to learn the words for members of the extended family.

We closed with a revision of the Michel Thomas method. This is an aural and oral approach using CDs.

David Campos

Bridge Group

After an exciting Thursday morning, when we received less than 2 hours' notice that our venue was unavailable, due to a power breakdown, we were fortunate to find a replacement Hall and held our annual Christmas Party bridge session. We played 12 boards of progressive Chicago to find a winner of the Terry Keogh Memorial Plaque. This year's winner was Matthew Moss, well done Matthew.



David Jefferies

London Originals

Our January jaunt started with lunch at the Willow Tree cafe in Glemsford. Well-fed and ready to go we moved on to Gainsborough's House in Sudbury. Recently renovated and extended, the childhood home of Thomas Gainsborough has permanent displays of his work together with works by John Constable and Cedric Morris. The museum re-opened in November 2022 and includes many fascinating objects, artefacts and personal possessions relating to the artist.



We finished the afternoon in the museum's café, The Watering Place, where pots of tea arrived with an interesting tea strainer (see photograph) which most of us needed training to use. An amusing end to an interesting and informative day.

Margaret Johnson

Next Meetings: Tuesday 31st January
Tuesday 28th February

Deadline for the Rolling Screen
Tuesday 24th Feb
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