



# HAVERHILL & DISTRICT

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



## **Our 30<sup>th</sup> Year**

May 2024

### **From the Chair**

The committee are continuing to meet every month to discuss the various ways we can continue to keep our u3a as friendly and busy as it has always been.

The events committee are still working hard finalising the details for the picnic on 29<sup>th</sup> June. If you have not already bought your ticket they will be available at the meeting on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May. The entertainment looks great.

We are fast approaching the summer season and I am sure all the walking groups and our cycling group are looking forward to less wet weather.



I was working in the garden the other day and found our first rose of the season which made me very excited. The rhododendrons are showing buds so maybe they will be my picture for next month.

**Barbara Lavender**

### **Speaker's Corner**

On the last Tuesday in April, we were pleased to welcome to the Arts Centre open meeting Stuart Strickland, a volunteer with Mercy Ships. Stuart gave a presentation on the work of the faith-based international development organisation that deploy two ships to some of the poorest countries in the world, delivering vital, free healthcare to people in desperate need.

Some of the individual example cases we were shown included maxillofacial surgery including facial clefts, burn contracture, orthopedic surgery, obstetric fistula, dentistry, ophthalmology (including cataracts) and palliative care. In addition to the volunteer nurses and doctors' onboard working in the many surgical theatres and ICU, they also train local medics to help their own country's children and adults in need.

Many members collected leaflets giving details of how to donate online, plus £138.45 in cash was raised in the collecting boxes, with the u3a donating via bank transfer a further £70, making a total of £208.56. Stuart has asked that I send on their very grateful thanks and be assured that the money will be used to help transform lives through the hospital ships.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May at the Arts Centre (doors open 10.00 speaker at 10.30). Our speaker is Alex Mair whose talk is entitled "Forensic Crime Scene Search" about his experiences during his time as a police search advisor.

Picnic in the Meadow tickets will be available to purchase via cash or card in the Bar at this meeting.

**Sue Dickinson**

### **Cycling Group**

On a perfect day for cycling, the group chose to head out to Clare and sample the bread pudding at Platform 1, the cafe in the Country Park.

Heading to Kedington, the group took Rectory Road, before branching onto Blacksmiths Hill, to emerge opposite Stoke by Clare College. So many lanes and byways have unusual names, but Dead Woman's Lane in this area, must rank with the strangest of them.

Entering the Country Park, via the old railway line, the group dismounted and fought to be first to sample the delights of the cafe's wares.

Emerging replete sometime after, the riders were puzzled by action down on the area between the Old station platforms. A couple seemed to be performing a weird sequence of movements, he with a blue umbrella and she with a strange hand held device. Side to side and back and forth they went in some strange ritualistic dance, while she clicked away on her strange looking device.

Curiosity got the better of this reporter and on asking what it was all about, was told that they were creating online gaming scenarios.

The ride home was arduous with cake and pudding adding to the weight of the cyclists. Cresting the hill by The Hundon Plough, the group took in the fine views before freewheeling down into Kedington once again and back to Haverhill.

**Ken Hainsby**

### **Nature Group**

In March we visited Warley Place Nature Reserve near to Brentwood. It has been managed by Essex Wildlife Trust since 1977.

Warley Place was a Victorian estate owned by the Wilmott family all keen gardeners.

One of the daughters, Ellen Ann Wilmott, was famous for introducing rare plants from all over the world and for remodelling the garden to include an alpine gorge, a boating lake and a glass-covered cave for filmy ferns. Having spent all her money on the garden Emily died penniless.

After her death the house was sold and the garden fell into disrepair. Parts of the original buildings remain and paths are being recovered. Some of the original plants remain, including the rare *sabia latifolia* which, we were told, grows nowhere else in Britain.

We saw large swathes of daffodils and wild leeks (see photo).



A few original shrubs and trees remain including camellias, magnolias, rhododendrons and a terrific line of sweet chestnut trees under which were small cyclamen daffodils.

**Frances Armes**

### **A little something to get you thinking (answers on the last page – no peeking!)**

The answers are all London Tube and/or over ground stations:

1. OK then, a trumpet Mosque
2. Stanley increased
3. Where did she want to go?  
Good heavens!
4. Big gun field



5. Up here it's a road but down there it's only a footpath
6. Name of a small car from the 50's
7. Sick Vicar?
8. This Lord got found out
9. He was very angry
10. That was a pretty good throw

**Mick Smith**

### London Originals

On Saturday 4th May a group of London Originals visited Radio Caroline for a tour of the ship and to watch a live broadcast. The tender, "Razorbill 3" left West Mersea for a 20 minute voyage to Radio Caroline ship "Ross Revenge". We had a very informative talk from the legendary radio broadcaster DJ, Ray Clark.



Radio Caroline started broadcasting in the 1960s with the first DJ being Simon Dee, playing a variety of music. After three decades of struggles, Radio Caroline was finally granted a full license to broadcast globally from the estuary of the river Blackwater in Essex, on internet streams and on 648am medium wave, as it originally did back in 1964.



After a two-hour tour we had a welcoming meal at the Coast restaurant.

**Linda Steff**

### Co-operation between Groups!

Within the fifty or so groups in Haverhill & District u3a, how many could benefit from co-operating with each other on joint ventures? What ventures!



Well, the Photographic group arranged to visit Pakenham Water Mill on Thursday May 2nd and invited members of the History group to come along as the mill has historical interest as well as being photogenic.

Pakenham Water Mill is just off the A143 past Bury St Edmunds. The weather decided to be kind for a change and warm sunshine greeted us by the time we arrived at the venue. Nineteen members were split into two groups for the guided tour and all agreed that the guides were excellent, very knowledgeable and able to explain the workings of the mill in clear language.

The site has had a water wheel, possibly back to Roman times, as a Roman fort was situated only 100 meters away. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086 that was created on the orders of William the Conqueror. The building has been changed and modified over the centuries, but always acted as a water mill. The latest extension is not very modern, only being dated to 1813!

On Thursdays the original mill machinery operates, grinding wheat to produce the flour that is sold in the small shop, so the constant rumble of the water wheel, the rotating gearwheels and the massive stones turning was our background noise for the morning. Behind the mill is a vast mill pond fed by a tributary of The Black Bourne that stores the water that works the breastshot water wheel, where the water enters halfway up the wheel with the weight of the water causing the wheel to turn.



After the tour and allowing a little time for photographs we enjoyed tea and a choice of several cakes, all homemade by the staff. I opted for a cheese scone straight from the oven and it was mouth-wateringly excellent.



Perhaps some other groups could consider joint outings? It increases the numbers and makes visiting some venues more viable where group discounts can be offered.

**Peter Tatam**

### London Originals

Our April visit was to the Cambridge Central Mosque. We were welcomed with coffee by Nadua, a very knowledgeable and friendly guide.



### The Entrance

The Mosque is situated on an old warehouse complex site in Mill Road. After agreeing to buy the site, following discussions with local residents and obtaining planning permission it was 10 years before the Mosque was finally



finished. One main problem was parking as it is situated in a residential road and an underground car park had to be built.

It is the first eco-friendly Mosque to be built in Europe and the first purpose built one in Cambridge and was opened on 24th April 2019 at a cost of £23 million.

The defining feature of the Cambridge Mosque is its timber structure. The columns, or 'trees', reach up to support the roof in an interlaced octagonal lattice vault structure evocative of English gothic fan vaulting, famously used at the nearby King's College Chapel. The timber is sustainably sourced spruce which has been curved and laminated.



***The Prayer Hall***

Roof lights are located above the 'trees', bathing the prayer hall in light. The octagonal geometry has strong symbolism in Islamic art, suggesting the cycle of inhalation and exhalation – the 'Breath of the Divine'.

Worshippers and visitors enter via an Islamic garden before passing through a covered portico and then an atrium, preparing them gradually for the contemplation of the prayer hall, facing Mecca.



***The Prayer Time Clocks***

After the visit to the Mosque we all retired to the Robin Hood pub for a relaxing lunch with lots of laughter and discussions.

***Barbara Lavender***

#### **Nature Group**

Our April walk was to Suffolk Wildlife Trusts' Nature reserve, Arger Fen, and Spouse's Vale guided by the warden, Cormac Adlard. We went with the hope of seeing English bluebells and possibly hearing a nightingale. We did indeed see many spring-time-plants including swathes of the deepest blue bluebells as well as early purple orchids – (see photo taken by Susan Swain), however, no nightingales serenaded us.

The reserve is made up of several woodlands (some ancient), wetlands and former arable land gifted to the Trust at different times starting in 1991. Those plots which were formerly farm arable have been left to naturalise on their own. The latest of the arable plots is still not taken over by scrub and is favoured by skylarks for nesting. If this is allowed to naturalise, i.e. allow scrubland and trees to grow, the skylarks will lose their nesting ground. However, the scrubland that follows favours nightingales. So which to choose?



The older of the plots has pine and fir trees in it, which are not native plants.

These are gradually being removed, however rare barbastelle bats prefer to roost in the crevices of older trees and are also helped by the holly growing there which moderates the temperature in winter. Again, a hard choice for the wardens.

There has been much coppicing in the reserve which has helped dormice to survive.

There are many wild cherries growing in the reserve and it is estimated that these have formed the stock plants for many cultivated cherries in the area.

A fascinating walk with too much to relate here.

***Fran Armes & Susan Swain***

### **Sunday Strollers**

Our walk at Balsham was attended by 10 strollers. The weather was glorious and we did a figure of eight walk down to the Roman road and back.

PLEASE NOTE! - There will be no walk in June.

The next walk is at Clare on 14th July .and is 3.5 miles long.

Parking is at Hermitage Close and the walk starts at 10-30 am.

There are no stiles.

***David Jefferies***

### ***Answers:***

1. Hornchurch
2. Stanmore
3. Pimlico
4. Cannons Park
5. Southwark
6. Poplar
7. Parsons Green
8. Barons Court
9. Brent Cross
10. Fairlop

Next Meetings: Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Deadline for the Rolling Screen  
Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024  
e-mail to: [chair@haverhillu3a.com](mailto:chair@haverhillu3a.com)

Deadline for next edition:  
Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024

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