



HAVERHILL & DISTRICT

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

News and Views

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HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Our 30th Year

April 2024

From The Chair

It was nice to see so many of you at the A.G.M. last month and thank you for unanimously re-electing me as Chair for my final year. I will continue, with the support of the committee, to do my best to ensure that Haverhill and District u3a continues to be as friendly and successful as it has always been. All of the committee members were re-elected and you will find photos of us on the website under the Hu3a Trustees tab. The A.G.M. was followed by a very enlightening talk by the Hearing Ambassadors which Sue will tell you more about in her report.

If you have not yet purchased your tickets for the picnic on 29th June you can do this either by Bank transfer using the reference in my email a couple of weeks ago or at the Tuesday speaker meeting.

Our picture for this month is a beautiful flowering cherry which I can see from my study window as I prepare this article.



Barbara Lavender

Speaker's Corner

On Tuesday 26th March, following the AGM, we were pleased to welcome Gill and Andrew Campbell who visited us from Eyam, Derbyshire as they are Hearing Ambassadors and travel the country providing information and advice on hearing better, and how everyone can assist those whose hearing is diminishing. We were shown a brief You Tube video (How old are your Ears) with the sound starting at a frequency of 8000 Hz which some in the auditorium could hear, but it seemed that higher frequencies were inaudible to the members. It was explained how we can help someone who is hearing impaired in a face to face situation, and also in a group/meeting room. Their website is

www.hearingambassadors.org

The Haverhill & District u3a were awarded with a certificate of achievement for participating in today's learning opportunity.



This month on Tuesday 30th April, Stuart Strickland will be here to talk about the work of Mercy Ships which is an international development organisation that deploys hospital ships to some of the poorest countries in the world, delivering vital free healthcare to people in desperate need.

Sue Dickinson

Haverhill & District u3a 30th Anniversary PICNIC IN THE MEADOW – Saturday 29th June 2024

We were very pleased to see the queue in the bar at the Arts Centre at the last open meeting where members of the committee were busy selling tickets. If you have not had a chance to buy your ticket yet, there are two ways to purchase tickets for you and your friends, the tickets are £5.00 each. Tickets available by Bank Transfer using the reference in the recent email from Barbara Lavender. For further details email: events@haverhillu3a.com The tickets can be collected from the Arts Centre at the monthly speaker meetings (the last Tuesday of the month). Alternatively, they can be purchased and paid for at these meetings using your debit/credit card or cash.

There will be a Grand Raffle at the event, and local businesses have been very generous in donating worthwhile prizes, in addition to the cash prizes.

Would you like to help for a short while at the Picnic in the Meadow? If you are happy to get involved in selling raffle tickets or general help with beverages etc. please email us on events@haverhillu3a.com Thank you!

Entertainment:



Angie Rowland-Green



The Haverhill Youth & Community Band



The Green Dragon Morris
Dancers

Walking Talking Munching

An obstacle course of sorts was faced by group members as they attempted to meet at The Red Lion car park, Horseheath, for the first walk of the year. Due to village footpath works, the group had to negotiate the road barriers to attain their starting point of the pub.

The sun was shining as David and Jean Boxall lead the group back down the village, passing the old water pump, and up Howard's Lane to cross the busy A1307, and then meander down through Cardinals Green. Two large banners halted the group, as they read of an ongoing dispute. It seemed behind the idyllic facade of the hamlet, a clash of personalities was bubbling over.

Re-crossing the Cambridge Road the walk up toward Park farm with its avenue of pink-blossoming trees was a delight, before negotiating some ploughed fields full of flints, which the recent rains had encouraged to the surface. The group then joined part of the Roman Road which originally ran between Cambridge and Colchester. Entering Horseheath from this historic route the group wandered through the churchyard of All Saints and admired the myriad of wild primrose amongst the ancient headstones.

A good lunch was had by all, back at the Red Lion, and a start of another year completed for the Walking Talking Munching group.

Ken Hainsby

London Strollers

A soggy start to 2024. Our first trip of the year to Chippenham Gardens on the borders of Newmarket/Ely was a great day out.

Set in 300 acres of land these lovely well-kept and laid out gardens are worth a visit, a warm cuppa upon arrival was welcome before we set off to explore.

Although the snowdrops and aconites were finished there was a lovely display of daffodils and helibores and some quirky garden ornaments of frogs, hares and unusual sculptures. The paths were wood

chipped which made walking easier in the rain.

This was followed by lunch booked at La Hogue farm shop two miles from the gardens. A very enjoyable day for our group to catch up and have a chat.

A big thank you to Maura and Gill for arranging this trip for us and to our chauffeurs too.

Gillian Johns

Booklovers 2

Lord of the Flies

Did you sigh when you were asked to read 'Lord of the Flies' as a pupil at school?

Well, Booklovers Group II challenge you to give William Golding's best known book another look. Although it may not become your favourite read, looking at it as an adult with many experiences of life, you may well find much much more to this tale.

William Golding's imagination is compelling and the vivid realism with which he describes the disintegration of order among a mixed group of cast away boys alone on a desert island is captivating.

Jean Parsons

Cycle Group

One downfall of having a group for older people, is that there is tendency to forget things. One member of the cycling group, who shall remain nameless (Andy), arrived minus his front wheel.

Not as unlikely as it sounds, as he had driven to Haverhill from Balsham and had simply forgotten to add the wheel to the rest of his bike, in his car. This mishap at least decided the route for the ride as it was agreed for him to return home and the group head out to Balsham, hoping to meet him on his ride back. Even this plan was not without incident, as when a road closure sign was encountered heading out of Withersfield the group were unsure of continuance. Waved through by a friendly worker and thereby enjoying a car free biking experience until the next barrier, where a less than friendly workman initially refused onward passage. Ordering the group to dismount and walk on the grass verge, the group complied and felt

fortunate that he did not ask to see their papers.

The ride from there to Carlton Green and along the single lane road to Little Thurlow made up for all that had gone before. It was a delight of colourful hedgerow plants, wood anemones, violets and naturalised primroses. Passing early flowering fields of Oil Seed Rape stretching as far as the eye could see, a kestrel sat eyeing the riders from his tree perch. Thurlow to Gt Wratting and then the hamlet of Little Wratting saw the group head in the direction of Haverhill and home.

Ken Hainsby

London Originals

Our March outing took us to Caesaromagus, or in English, Caesar's Marketplace, which we know as Chelmsford, with our destination being the Museum in Oaklands Park. On arrival our first stop was the Hive cafe for a welcome hot drink and to peruse the menu before placing our order for lunch.

As well as being the City museum there is an additional wing dedicated to the Essex Regiment.

The first area we visited was The Bright Sparks Gallery where there was a display of items manufactured by the Marconi Company, with a replica of the wireless room from the R.M.S. Titanic.

Next it was the gallery for the Essex Regiment, which was quite large, with a display of their Regimental Silver and war medals, which included at least one Victoria Cross and countless stories of their exploits.



One story told of the Regiment marching for a thousand miles to engage the enemy during the Boer War in South Africa.. They

eventually arrived with their boots in tatters and held together with wire obtained from fence-lines. Their engagement with the enemy was a success!

The main museum had displays ranging from Roman times to the present day and was very interesting. My own favourite was a display of artwork and pottery designed and painted by Grayson Perry.

After a nice lunch we went on to visit the Cathedral which was created in 1914 when the church of St Mary, St. Peter and St. Cedd was chosen as the seat for the Bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Chelmsford and is the second smallest Cathedral in England. The painting of The Tree of Life, by Mark Cazalet is superb and the Cathedral Banner is splendid



After another cup of coffee we returned to our cars and headed home, arriving back in Haverhill at 5-00pm.

David Jefferies

Walking Talking Munching

The weather was well and truly against the group members who met at The Bell Inn car park in Balsham for the April walk. A deluge of rain mixed with hail, had reduced the expected walkers, from twelve to seven.

The hardy, magnificent seven, set out doggedly against a brisk wind, and took the path through the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, to lead to the historic Nine Chimneys house. Built in Elizabeth 1st time the house still retains a Tudor look, despite it having been reduced to Six Chimneys. The village green with its sign depicting the only survivor of a Viking raid in 1015 was noted, before taking the lane that runs between the Old Butchers Coffee shop and

Post Office. Out into open country the wind made itself felt, before sunshine broke through and the group started to hope the worst of the weather had passed them by. No such luck for just as the intrepid seven reached the Roman Road, called the Icknield Way, the rain, wind and hail returned with a vengeance. Thoroughly wet and cold by the time they reached their starting point, the group retreated quickly to the Chestnut Tree, West Wratting for hot beverages and lunch.

Ken Hainsby

Members Portal

I have been asked by members to update their membership record because of a change of address or telephone number.

May I remind all members that by using the members portal on our website, <https://www.haverhillu3a.com/blank-page>, members can view and edit their own record themselves.

If you have already used the members' portal, you can enter it with just your email and password.

If you haven't done so yet you will need to register for a membership account.

*Do not enter an email address or password yet but instead click **register for a membership account**.*



You then have to enter 5 pieces of personal information which are already in your record. You must be very precise. One mistyped letter will prevent you entering. If your name is John but you prefer Johnny, you must use the name you wrote on your original application form.

Click **confirm identity** to continue.

Once you have registered, you will be invited to create a password and from then on you can enter the portal with just your email address and your password.

In your members portal you can:

- view and edit your personal details.
- see a calendar of events and meetings.
- join and leave some groups.
- and at renewal time, you can renew your membership online and pay by credit or debit card, without filling in and mailing any forms.

You can also download a photo of your membership card and keep it on your smartphone to show when required.

If you prefer a cardboard membership card, please see me at any monthly meeting to collect one.

David Campos Membership Secretary

Sunday Strollers

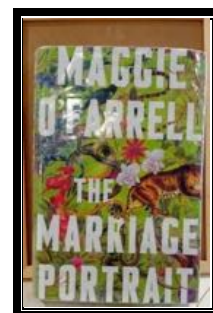
Fourteen Strollers met at Weston Green on a beautiful Spring Morning for our circular walk to Carlton. The sun was shining, pleasantly warm and an almost cloudless sky as we set off at 10.30. There was plenty of birdsong and bluebells to escort us and some excellent views en-route. It was good to see the Stour Headwaters with a strong flow of water, which we crossed twice on our walk.

Our next walk will be at Balsham on Sunday 12th May with parking at the village hall. We set off at 10-30am and the walk is approx. 3.5 miles

David Jefferies

Book Club 3

The chosen book for the month was *The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O'Farrell. It is set in Italy in the sixteenth century and tells the story of Lucrezia, the third daughter of the Duke of Tuscany who was given in marriage to Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, very much against her wishes. It is based on a true story.



From the powerful beginning we know that after her marriage Lucrezia fears for her life.

Then the story rewinds to her birth, childhood and marriage. She is described as a wilful infant and child and isolated by her siblings. She is however very clever and a talented artist. When she is married and taken to live in castles, lodges and country estates and finding herself alone she is able to see the world through her artistic eyes and paints from nature often on stones. There are detailed descriptive passages of her surroundings which some of the group found tedious, but others appreciated the vivid, poetic language.

The Duke commissions Lucrezia's portrait to be painted. The author had carefully researched the painting paraphernalia of the period. The Duke takes an interest in the painting and the artists are relieved when he admires the finished work. This is what the Duke wants, the image rather than the person. At this point Lucrezia realises that her death is imminent.

Most of the group liked the story, some criticised the way it was written in that it moved from place to place and time to time. It was necessary to look carefully at the chapter headings. For some it was a joy to read.

The cover of the book shows a very memorable incident in Lucrezia's childhood.
Sue Lindop.

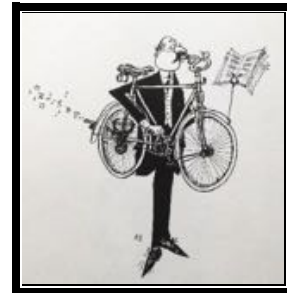
Art Appreciation Group

As our topic of "Art inspired by other art forms" was looked at over two months, this summary must exclude some nonetheless fascinating contributions. The works of artist and theorist Wassily Kandinsky (1866 – 1944) inevitably topped the list of contenders for examination because of his writings which claimed musical sounds and instruments could be expressed as colours and shapes. Such debatable theory aside, his paintings might simply be considered as abstract, albeit striking. The titles of his paintings certainly had a musical connection, such as the 1913 work "Composition VII" which was rather liked by group members.



In a similar manner, Whistler's use of musical terms like "arrangement", "nocturne" and "harmony" in the titles of his works was noted. Reversing the approach to the topic somewhat, the association of the now nonagenarian prolific pop-artist Peter Blake with numerous musicians is clear through the number of album covers he has designed, the most famous probably being that for the Beatles' Sergeant Pepper album, and we looked at an enchanting series of Blake's lithographs for Alice Through the Looking Glass.

In a similar reverse approach, we looked at and listened to online renditions of the so-called "Singing Ringing Tree" sculpture on a moor top above Burnley which had been designed to capture the wind and create flute-like sounds, whilst the singing of a massively scaffolded structure on the windswept Cornish coast seemed to do an even better job, albeit inadvertently!



Cartoonist Ronald Searle had also amusingly depicted how a classical musician might blow a tune out of a tubular bicycle frame.

Neil Dickinson

Next Meetings: Tuesday 30TH April
Tuesday 28th May

Deadline for the Rolling Screen
Tuesday 21st May

e-mail to: chair@haverhillu3a.com

Deadline for next edition: Friday 17th May

e-mail to: havu3anews@gmail.com