



HAVERHILL & DISTRICT

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

News and Views

Supported by



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 2022

From the Chair

I am confused, I thought autumn followed summer but this year we seemed to go directly from summer into winter and it will not be long before we are celebrating Christmas.

On a recent visit to Lancashire we decided that National Trust and English Heritage properties are very good stopping points for lunch and a break in the journey. We called at Nostell Priory on the way up and on the way home Brodsworth Hall. To me, this is a very good way of adding interest to what could be a very dreary journey up the A1.

Gerry has been working hard developing and updating our website so please have a look, haverhillu3a.com.

This is the last edition of News and Views for 2022 so I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year. I look forward to seeing you at the Tuesday speaker meetings in 2023.

Barbara Lavender

Speaker's Corner

Jo Porth and Linda Bevan spoke about the Victorian Schoolroom Re-enactments they have run as part of Sturmer Local History Group activities. There was considerable background information on Victorian Education in Haverhill as well as Sturmer. Sadly the pictures they had hoped to show had gone missing and did not turn up until a couple of days before their presentation, leaving them with too little time to put them into the presentation.

The audience was very kind to the ladies, who were doing this talk at my instigation.

We really were guinea pigs but I had several suggestions on the feedback sheets which I have passed onto them. These were warmly welcomed and they hope to improve their talk for their next booking.

Our November speaker is actually a group of hand bell ringers led by Mike Rowland, a member of Sawston u3a. The group will be entertaining you with Christmas songs, very apt considering they are the final, formal "entertainers" of the year. Once again I am really disappointed that I shall be unable to join you but you will be introduced to the ringers by Sue Dickinson who is working with me to take over as Speaker's Secretary from the AGM next year.

For our January meeting we will be informed about Action for Children by David Green, who has very kindly come to stay with his brother, Steve. You may think you are seeing double! Action for Children provide protection and support for children and young people. Providing practical and emotional care.

Wendy Foster

Les Wood Tribute

It was with very sad news that we heard that Les Wood one of our founder members died on Wednesday 12th October. Les joined the u3a under Edith Hill who actually brought the u3a to Haverhill in 1993. Les joined in 1995 and found himself very involved with the running of the u3a. Slowly as our membership grew he became Secretary and, with his guidance and expertise he was able to offer great encouragement to many members to form groups.

Les had worked in the early days with Ralph Reader so he had great knowledge as to bringing groups together. He was involved with the start of the Walking Group – oh! what fun it was walking all over muddy fields and bringing our dogs for their run – not, I believe, allowed today!

He also started the Bridge Group with the then Chairman Colin Spencer and he eventually started a teaching group for those wanting to learn to play Bridge. Through the Bridge Club he organised the club to join the Ipswich Bridge Branch which took us abroad for two weeks holiday each year to many different parts of Europe. Also many members joined these events which lasted for many years.

Les was also involved with the start of the History and Singing for Pleasure Groups.

He went on to write up our Constitution and it was his suggestion to produce the News & Views monthly.

Also as Chairman in 2005 we went into the schools giving the students an idea what the u3a club was all about and as you can guess it was given with Les's great sense of humour which the students really enjoyed especially when he told them that one day they would retire! His drama bit really came into it and it was greatly appreciated by many of the teachers.



However possibly the biggest achievement of all was his drama group known as The Cheerups. He produced hilarious Christmas Shows for 14 years. He wrote all the shows and took part himself. His sense of humour in all his shows was truly great and after every one of his shows all members came away with the most wonderful feeling that the

Christmas pantomime season was really with us.



In 2016 we were able to offer, at our Christmas Party, a lifelong membership certificate of the u3a to Les thanking him so much for his wonderful contributions which has made the u3a what it is today.

Sadly we send our deepest condolences to Joan and all his family.

Aldine Horrigan

Walking Talking Munching Group

Assembling at the Chestnut Tree, West Wrattling, to order their lunch, the Walking Talking Munching group then drove onto the Village Hall at West Wickham for their monthly walk.

Led by local residents, David and Jean Boxall, the group headed off across country. Autumn was showing off its myriad of colours in the leaves of the distant trees and bushes, no artist's palette would or could match its magnificence.

It was not long before the group entered Yen Hall Farm which nowadays is a stud. The picturesque former farmhouse and large pond fronted the American-style horse stables with their exercising circuit adjacent. A shredded waste carpet cover was spread on the ground to prevent the horses from damaging themselves during exercise.

Entering Rand's Wood and then emerging high above the surrounding countryside Red Kites were seen circling and undulating looking for prey.

Crossing the village High Street the walk completed a figure of eight before finishing

back at the start where the group headed for their well deserved lunch.

Ken Hainsby

Nature Group

This fungi walk, held at West Wood Nature Reserve on Thursday 20th October was beset with problems. The weather had been so dry in the months prior to the walk that the fungi season was delayed in this area added to which we had to bring forward the walk due to the leaders being away.

In the weeks before the walk Keith and Frances had surveyed several different nature reserves nearby to Wandlebury and decided that West Wood, which is located at CB10 2SA off the B1051 between Great Sampford and Thaxted, was the most promising. It is owned by Essex Wildlife Trust who kindly allowed us access to park on the reserve. They informed us that its name was believed to be derived from *Wet Wood*.

On the day, the weather was unkind and it bucketed down with rain until just before 10am putting off several members from joining us. The entrance was hidden so one of us was there to guide and a ribbon was put on the hedge before the entrance. In the end seven hardy souls met in West Wood armed with wet weather gear, fungi books and a mirror to look at the undersides of fungi.

Keith and Frances had found, amongst other fungi, a giant puffball in the wood two weeks before the walk and a group of shaggy ink caps the day before and luckily taken photos. On the day of the walk Frances proudly went to show off the ink caps which had deliquesced in the rain leaving only small remnants of the caps. This is how they spread their spores and it was noted that in the past ink was made from the ink caps.



On the day of the walk the puffball was found to have matured into a brown ball ready to burst and release its spores.

However the group found many other fungi including Candle Snuff Fungi, several kinds of Brittle Cap Fungus, Turkey Tail Fungus (see photo), Yellow Jelly Fungus, White Coral Fungus and the Varied Slipper Fungus.

Fran Armes

Great Escapes

On Thursday 20th October, 20 escapees assembled at Audley End station to catch the 10.19 departure to Liverpool Street, then by way of Bank and DLR to Greenwich. First port of call, for inner fortification, was WD Wetherspoon's 'Gate Clock'.

We met up with Barry, our Blue Badge Guide, who led us passed the Cutty Sark then along Thames Path into the World Heritage Site of Maritime Greenwich. There was just sufficient time for Barry to give us some historic background to this magnificent site before the heavens opened. Hastily we retreated into our first booked location, the splendours of the Painted Hall. Having marvelled at London's '*Sistine Chapel*', with Barry pointing out and explaining many of the ceiling and wall scenes, we moved on to our second location, the National Maritime Museum.

Barry then left us to spend our time wandering through the many galleries, including the Navel Life of Lord Nelson with the 10 x 14.5 metre ensign flown at Trafalgar by the surrendering Spanish Warship, *San Ildefonso*. With the museum's imminent closure, it was time to

head back to Greenwich Pier for the 17.17 Thames Clipper upriver to Westminster.

With the sun setting, our westbound progress passed the many Thameside landmarks including a segment of the new 'Tideway' sewer complex (*a subject covered during our Crossness visit*). The familiar London backdrop became increasing silhouetted, culminating with a very appropriate (given the day's political events) gathering storm cloud as we approached Westminster Pier! One being very tempted to ask "Is this the queue to become the next Prime Minister?"

Back on to the underground for Liverpool Street and the 19.07 train back to Audley End.

Alan Alexander

Spanish Conversation Group

The group met on Friday 28th October. We greeted each other in Spanish to practice how to say "Hello, how are you."



We each shared short descriptions of ourselves in Spanish which generated interesting conversations in Spanish and English.

We practiced the first 6 tracks of Michel Thomas' Foundation Spanish Course which uses an oral repetition approach to language learning instead of the written method we all experienced (and hated) at school. Have you ever seen a 2-year-old doing worksheets?

New members are very welcome, whatever your standard. Don't be shy, give us a try. Our next meeting is on 11th November 2022. Contact David Campos for details.

David Campos

Country Casuals

The Country Casuals October walk was around Clare, once again in bright sunshine. We had arranged lunch at the

Swan and after sorting our lunch choices, we left through the car park and out on a path towards the common. We turned right up the hill towards the allotments and walked past some grounds already planted, perhaps ready for Christmas?

Emerging into Sheepgate lane we walked to Callis Street and turned left and walked across to the Stour Valley Path, noting that in a couple of minutes we were out in the countryside, where we turned right and strolled back to Harp lane. After crossing Cavendish Road some of us ventured through Clare Castle Country Park on our way back to the Swan and lunch.



A very enjoyable short stroll around this historic town.

Tony Turner

Craft Group

For our November meeting we did some resist work with various resist mediums, stencils and watercolour. There was a varying degree of success but we all had fun, a great stress buster. In case you are wondering, or would like to have a go yourselves, the best resist was oil pastels. Here are some of the results.



Next month I am hoping to help them to make an economical wreath.

Wendy Foster

City Walkers

On the 11th October, 15 City Walkers visited the Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds for a backstage tour. Little did we know, it was the 203rd Birthday of the opening of the Theatre in 1819.

As we toured the only remaining Regency theatre in the UK, our superb guide, Rory described 19th Century society, performances and the behaviour of theatre goers.

Regrettably decline in use led to eventual closure in 1920 when it was sold to Greene King who used it as a barrel store. Thankfully the basic structure was untouched and following refurbishment reopened in 1965.



We all ate together with excellent service from the Dog and Partridge en-route to the Cathedral.

After lunch the party regrouped for guided tours of the Cathedral and the Treasury which holds a collection of Church Plate from churches around East Anglia including St Peter and Paul's Church, Kedington. Early printed, hand-written and illuminated books are also on display along with a magnificent copy of the 12th Century Bury Cross, the original believed to have been carved in Bury, and which now resides in the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

Both the Theatre and Cathedral offer affordable and highly recommended public guided tours.

Iris and David Cook

Cycling Group

On a bright and breezy day, nine riders took part in the first of the cycling group's November outings.

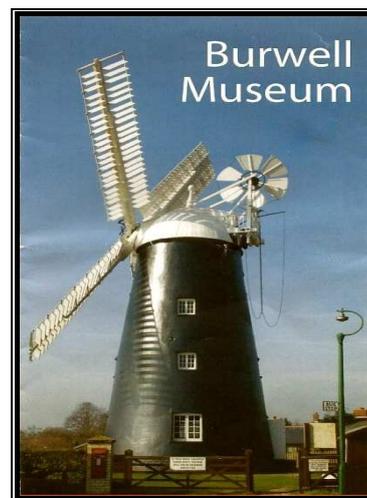
Heading west along the old railway line, signs of the recent downpours were visible, the overflow water meadows were at maximum capacity and ducks were taking full advantage. The busy and winding road to Withersfield again highlighted the indifferent attitude of some motorists to their two wheeled travellers. Happily once in the village, the route took Skippers Lane, a road that is quieter and straighter.

A sharp left after a mile or so took the group through West Wickham High Street before halting at the enigmatic named Ivy Todd Farm House. This farm house dates from the late 17th Century and is a Grade II Listed Building of some note. Continuing on through Streetly End to Horseheath and crossing the Roman Road, known in distant times as Worsted Street, Wool Street and Wolves Street, the group then dived with death by crossing the A1307 to take Howard's Lane on to Mill Green, Nosterfield End and then a free-wheel back down into Haverhill.

Ken Hainsby

Strollers

A depleted group of Strollers made their way to Burwell on a very wet Thursday in October.



The Burwell Museum is run by an enthusiastic band of volunteers and as a group we were greeted and guided by

Brenda who showed us around the many separate buildings, starting with the 18th Century re-erected timber-framed barn where we learnt about fen farming and home life. Onto the Nissen hut and wartime life, then the upper gallery which houses the interactive UAX telephone exchange, Victorian schoolroom and village shop.

Next stop was the tea room, followed by a tour of the windmill, then the Roman pottery area and finally the Vintage Vehicles.

It had stopped raining so we did the short walk to the Five Bells pub for a very welcome lunch.

Peter Cundall

Church Crawlers

The October Crawl saw 16 members of the group meet at Hadleigh in Suffolk to visit St. Mary's Church. Hadleigh was one of several 'wool towns' in East Anglia that prospered in the 15th Century.

The church sits beside the Deanery Tower and the medieval Guildhall, just off the High Street. The Guildhall buildings comprise three separate structures, all of which lie to the south of the churchyard: the Market House, the Guilds Halls and the New Town Hall (Grand Hall).

Local historian, Roger, was on hand to give us a wealth of information about St. Mary's and its history. Guthrum, King of the Danes who was defeated by King Alfred at the Battle of Edington in 878, is buried in the grounds of St Mary's.

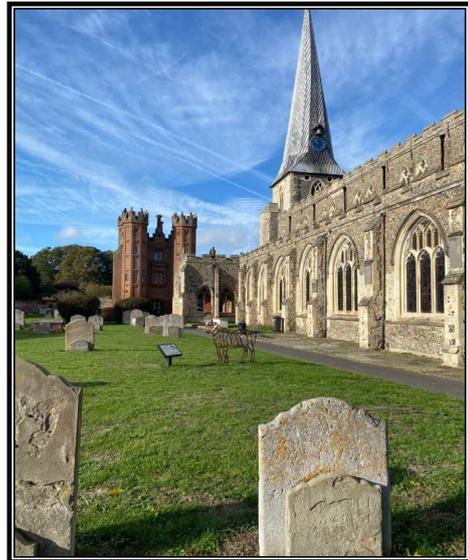
In 1950, the church was designated a Grade I Listed Building. Many reparations have been carried out over the centuries with most of the stained-glass windows being Victorian.

From there we moved on to The George where we took a most enjoyable lunch.

The second church we visited was St. Mary's at Boxford. Boxford is another town that prospered through the wool trade in the 15th Century.

We were warmly greeted by Father Rob Parker-McGee who had enlisted the help of Christopher Kingsbury, one of the two church wardens.

We were given a full and fascinating history of the church which has a fine 14th Century wooden porch. The 17th Century font cover has hinged folding doors



painted with passages from the scriptures.

Much of the original decoration has been lost over the years and covered with limewash. However, over the top of one of the arches remains part of a medieval painting.

The only stained-glass window was designed by Rosemary Rutherford and installed in 1973. It depicts the Transfiguration. There is no evidence of



any other stained-glass windows ever existing in this church.

The bells were retuned, restored and recast as appropriate in 1996 and the tower was repaired and restored in 1997 before the bells were rehung in a new steel frame.

Following our talk, we were offered refreshments before departing for home.

John Cahill

A Queen Elizabeth Tale

We will always remember her sense of humour and that beautiful smile.

I was on Guard of Honour duty, waiting for the King of Saudi Arabia, on Horseguards. On the right flank: Scots Guards (100 guardsmen); a gap; HM The Queen mounted in uniform, alongside her the CO Colonel Gerald; another gap, then on the left flank, the Queen's Company Grenadier Guards (100 guardsmen).

We were stood at ease waiting. Suddenly the silence was broken by Colonel Gerald's charger erupting with horse farts at full volume for two minutes.

Embarrassed and staring straight ahead Colonel Gerald says, "Sorry about that your Majesty!"

She replies, in a wonderful voice, "That's alright Gerald, I thought it was your horse!"

Two Hundred guardsmen silently cried with laughter and tapped their rifle butts on the gravel.

From that moment, every man there adored her!

Forwarded from u3a main office

Sunday Strollers

Our walk, on Remembrance Sunday, started from the Reading Rooms in Weston Green. Ten of us set off in thick mist to do a 3.5 mile circular walk to Willingham Green. We stopped for the 2 minutes silence at 11.00, standing under the trees alongside the River Stour, which at this point is just a small stream, in what

was a very peaceful setting. We arrived back at our cars just as the sun was beginning to break through the mist.

Please note, there will not be a walk in December. The next walk will meet at the community centre car park in Kedington on Sunday 8th January 2023 at 10-30 am.

David Jefferies

A Thank You

As this is the last edition of News and Views for 2022 the editorial team would like to thank everyone who sent in articles and pictures for inclusion in the magazine. Any member of Haverhill and District u3a can contribute articles for inclusion in News and Views, we could not produce it without your input.

However, it would be most appreciated if photographs etc. could be sent as a separate attachment to your email, rather than embodied into the text of your article or e-mail.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Barbara, Alice and David

Next Meetings: Tuesday 29th Nov 2022
Tuesday 31st Jan 2023

Deadline for the Rolling Screen
Tuesday 24th Jan 2023

e-mail to chair@haverhillu3a.com

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The Editor U3A
c/o Haverhill Arts Centre
High Street
Haverhill
CB9 8AR

OR e-mail to havu3anews@gmail.com

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Learn, laugh, live



The Committee
would like to
wish you all a
very happy
Christmas and a
healthy and
peaceful New
Year