



# HAVERHILL & DISTRICT

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laugh,  
live  
**News and Views**

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## MARCH 2023

### From the Chair

By the time you read this British Summer Time will be upon us and I, for one, am very thankful. The winter is not my favourite time of year and now hopefully I can start working in the garden again.

As I am sure you all know, the A.G.M. will take place prior to the speaker at the meeting on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March. You will have all received copies of the Agenda, Accounts, Treasurer's report, a report from the Chair, Minutes of the 2022 A.G.M. and a copy of the updated constitution, either by email or letter. You will need to vote to accept the updated constitution at the A.G.M.

The majority of the committee are prepared to stand for another year and with your vote the committee will be:

Chair	Barbara Lavender
Vice Chair	Peter Tatam
Treasurer	Mark Pollington
Secretary	Gloria Shersby
Membership Secretary	David Campos
Assistant Membership Secretary	Alan Smith
Minutes Secretary	Mick Smith
Groups Co-ordinator	Peter Tatam
Events Co-ordinator	Caroline Choat
Assistant Events Co-ordinator	Wendy Foster
Publicity and Website	Gerry Sexton

Sue Dickinson has volunteered to take over as Speaker Secretary.

I look forward to seeing you on the 28<sup>th</sup> and I am sure we will all enjoy the talk by Linda Scoles.

**Barbara Lavender**

### Speaker's Corner

At our February meeting, we were pleased to welcome back Bryan Thurlow whose performance was entitled "Through the Baize Door".

The story was of a retired butler, George Barrington, a Yorkshire man, and his life in service starting as a boot boy in 1868 and working his way up through the ranks to become butler. This was a well re-researched snapshot of servants' lives in the Victorian and Edwardian eras.

You could have heard a pin drop in the auditorium when Bryan told and acted out George's story being various members of the household.

Using the feedback slips, many of the u3a audience asked that Bryan be invited back as they enjoyed the performance and I am pleased to say that he has agreed to tell/act out a story in 2024.

Bryan Thurlow is always well received at the u3a and is the consummate professional. He has worked in theatre, videos and TV, including TV commercials. During the 1970s and 1980s his music hall company, The Berkeley Squares, toured. Bryan is a fan of the late Roy Hudd, OBE, and contributed songs along with Roy to a

BBC radio programme on the history of music halls. He has been involved in many TV productions and played the lead role in a BBC2 play.

He was a regular holidaymaker in Hi de Hi and was a founder member of Quayhole Theatre in Education Company, teaching drama.

The next meeting is on the 28th March when, after a short AGM, Linda Scoles will give a talk entitled "The Yanks Are Coming" – an American's view of a Suffolk village.

**Sue Dickinson**

**Assistant Speaker Secretary**

### **Walkaholics (Long Walks Group)**

This is the name chosen by the members of the newly formed long walks group.

We parked up in the car park area of Arger Fen and Spouses Vale, a Suffolk wildlife trust reserve. From there we walked along the St. Edmunds way through beautiful woodlands and open fields with only sheep for company until reaching Wissington (Wiston) where we visited St. Mary's the Virgin Chapel and saw the 12th Century wall paintings of St. Peter feeding the birds and the famous dragon.

Leaving the chapel we continued along the SE Way to join the Stour valley footpath to cross the river Stour heading to Wormingford where St. George killed his dragon (worm in old language meaning serpent or dragon). Passing through the church grounds to a small wooded area at the rear carpeted in snowdrops, we continued along the SVP, with dramatic views to our right, to reach Bures.

Crossing the river Stour once again through Bures Mill, we left the SVP heading up hill on the SE Way to St. Peter's Chapel barn, where St. Edmund was crowned.

We had our lunch seated on a well placed large tree trunk looking out over to the far side of the valley where the large Bures dragon is set in chalk.

After our much needed break we started our walk back to the car park in Arger Fen, on the way taking a detour to visit Tigerhill Woods (no tiger) to eventually come to the

Suffolk Wildlife Trust and our cars with tired legs, but I think we all had a great time.

Thank you all for your great company.

**David Edwards**

### **A Quick Quiz**

How well do you know the London Underground, can you recognise these stations?

Make 'em sick

Dutch Field

Tardy upon Rock

Regal Tree

Which River Crossing?

Board Game Village

Trunk owner and mansion

Male bird takes on the child

Road toll road

Corn trips amongst the flowers

The wet ones live along that roadway

Small alpine residence

Top horses cry

Miner's forest

I had one of those cars

Envious religious leader

There be rabbits along that road

Riflemen lay them to rest

It fell down!

Imprison 'em down there

Answers on the last page of News &

Views and there may be more next month.

**Mick Smith (a former London Underground Train Driver)**

### **Spanish Conversation Group**

The Spanish Conversation group met twice in January at members' homes.



As always, we started with greetings and icebreakers, such as "How are you?" and "Where do you live?" We then shared prepared sentences using words for personal appearance such as "My brother is short and fat."

We finished with the Michel Thomas audio Starting Spanish CDs. It's encouraging that the members are very enthusiastic and asking for more to study at home.

**David Campos**

## **Great Escapes Cambridge Central Mosque**

As a result of Angela Maggs' dogged persistence with the on-line booking system, a long outstanding visit from our pre-Covid 'To Do' list was finally ticked off!

Monday 6th March, 27 'Escapees' headed to Mill Road, Cambridge, for our booked 2.00pm guided visit of the Cambridge Central Mosque. A genuinely warm welcome was extended to all the group upon our arrival and we were invited into reception for beverage and biscuit refreshment whilst the group assembled.



Having met with our guide, it was back outside for a descriptive overview of the Mosque and its dome from Mill Road (minus Minaret deemed an unnecessary addition in view of modern day lives and respect to the residential location). Re-entering the Mosque, as do all worshippers and visitors, through an Islamic garden with whispering fountains and vaulted prayer spaces, via a covered portico into the atrium in preparation and contemplation of facing Mecca in the truly wonderful simplistically breath-taking prayer room with its vaulted spruce columns.

I really cannot put together a text to do justice to this latest Great Escape experience, such an enlightening and rewarding experience!

*General Public Guided Tours are available weekend mornings, see web-site.*

**Alan Alexander**



## **Sunday Strollers**

Eleven strollers set out on a 3 mile walk on the 12th March. The walk took us along the old railway track to Sturmer then up past the Hall, across the by-pass and back over the railway arches to our cars. A good walk if somewhat challenging.

The next walk is at Little Walden with parking by the pub. The distance is 3 miles and car sharing would be helpful. Because it is Easter Sunday could you please let me know if you will not be coming.

**David Jefferies**

## **Nature Group**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, in East Town Park Centre, the group attended an illustrated talk entitled "Coming Back to Butterflies" by Neil Dickinson.

Neil told us about his favourite colour blue. As a young boy he had been interested in collecting butterflies and pinning them to boards, for which he is now ashamed, but it was the custom at the time. His father had even made a specialised four-drawer cabinet to put them in.

Years passed and Neil was no longer collecting butterflies but had some bad health news and determined to spend more time doing things he loved, including looking for butterflies and photographing them. By this time he was aware that butterfly species were becoming rarer and collecting them was making matters worse.

He remembered his collection and could hardly bear to look at them. When he did he found that all but one had crumbled to dust – the result of an infestation of ‘woolly bears’ (more properly known as the carpet beetle, *Anthrenus Verbasci*). Only one remained almost intact, it was in the centre of a board and it was an Adonis Blue. Hence Neil’s love of blue.

Neil now made it his aim to find and photograph as many butterflies in the UK as he could. Over the years since his health diagnosis he has photographed many butterflies of different hues in many parts of the UK.

He showed us images ranging from the cabbage white to be found almost anywhere (much to gardeners’ disgust), to Purple Emperor often only found at the top of oak trees, to the Swallowtail butterfly now only found in Norfolk. His image of a swallowtail is shown in the photograph.



Some butterflies such as the Red Admiral migrate here and some spend the whole time here. We learnt that there was a White Admiral butterfly as well as a Red Admiral butterfly.

Many butterflies have specialist feeding requirements. For example, the larvae of the Adonis Blue feed solely on horseshoe vetch. Butterflies also have specialist requirements for breeding. Again, the

Adonis Blue requires a south-facing bank. These requirements have meant they have become rarer as modern life and agriculture destroy the required environments.

There were photographs of many species taken locally, e.g. the Holly Blue seen on holly and ivy in Haverhill, the Small Blue at Gog Magog, the Silver Washed Fritillary seen in Bradfield Woods and the Chalkhill Blue seen in the Devil’s Ditch near Newmarket.

We learnt that the Large Blue butterfly had become extinct by 1979 but was re-introduced from Sweden to Collard Hill near Street in Somerset and other sites in the South of England. The Large Blue has a very strange lifecycle. The caterpillars first feed on wild thyme, but then drop onto the ground and are carried away by ants who mistake them for ant grubs and take them to their nest. Here, the caterpillars feed on the ant grubs themselves, rapidly growing in size before turning into chrysalises.

The final image Neil showed was that of a Swallowtail butterfly imaged at Strumpshaw Fen RSPB nature reserve.

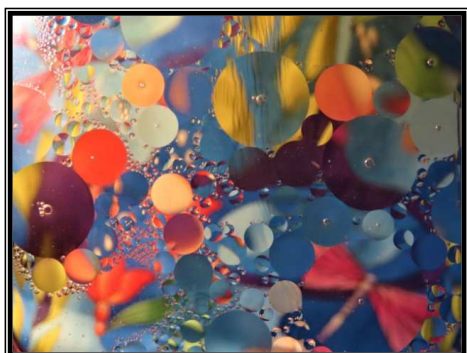
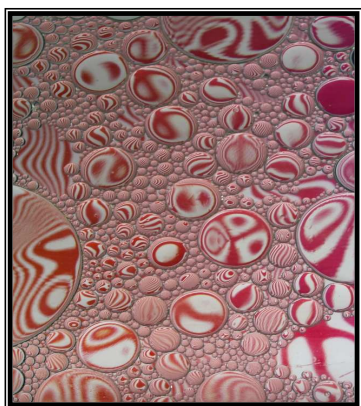
We learnt so much more that it is not possible to recount everything here, but finally we were recommended the book ‘Butterfly Safari’ by Andrew Fusek Peters which has 208 pages in hardback and is published by Graffeg Bird Eye Books. Appropriately, on the front cover is a picture of an Adonis Blue butterfly.

**Keith and Frances Armes**

### **Camera Group**

In January the camera group enjoyed a practical session led by Michael Hickman who showed us how to take ‘Oil on Water’ pictures! It sounds strange, but using a shallow glass dish, some coloured paper as a background and placing a small amount of cooking oil and detergent on the surface of the water a kaleidoscope of interesting images is created. The slides were viewed this month as we could not meet in February, and you can see examples below.





As next month's meeting falls on Easter Bank Holiday, we are meeting a week later to visit Cambridge Botanical Gardens.

If any member is interested in learning more about photography, no matter what equipment you use, please come along to the Visitor Centre in East Town Park on the second Monday of the month at two o'clock.

**Peter Tatam**

### Quiz Answers

1. Make 'em sick – Turnham Green
2. Dutch Field – Holland Park
3. Tardy upon Rock – Leytonstone
4. Regal Tree - Royal Oak
5. Which River Crossing? – Watford
6. Board Game Village – Chesham
7. Trunk owner and mansion –  
Elephant and Castle
8. Male bird takes on the child –  
Cockfosters
9. Road toll road - Turnpike Lane
10. Corn trips amongst the flowers –  
Ruislip
11. The wet ones live along that  
Roadway - Rayners Lane
12. Small alpine residence –  
Swiss Cottage
13. Top horses cry – Upney
14. Miner's forest - Colliers Wood
15. I had one of those cars – Vauxhall
16. Envious religious leader –  
Parsons Green
17. There be rabbits along that road –  
Warren Street
18. Riflemen lay them to rest –  
Gunnensbury
19. It fell down! - London Bridge
20. Imprison 'em down there –  
Clapham South

How well did you do?

Next Meetings: Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Deadline for the Rolling Screen  
Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023  
e-mail to

[chair@haverhillu3a.com](mailto:chair@haverhillu3a.com)

Deadline for next edition:  
Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023

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