



HAVERHILL & DISTRICT

u3a learn,
laugh,
live
News and Views

Supported by



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

AUGUST 2023

From the Chair

Sadly summer is almost over and autumn is nearly upon us, hopefully bringing some wonderful colours to the trees.



The arrangements for the Christmas Concert are almost complete and the format will be similar to last year as I know this was enjoyed by all who attended.

The price is £6.00 per ticket and they will be on sale at the Open Day on 26th September. As numbers are limited the tickets will be sold on a first come first served basis and to give all members a chance to buy a ticket we are limiting the number of tickets each person can buy to 4. If all the tickets are not sold at the Open Day they will be on sale at the Tuesday meeting on 31st October. I look forward to seeing you at the Christmas Concert.

The new online membership renewal system has been very successful and I would like to thank all the members who have so far renewed their membership this way. If you have not yet renewed your membership please consider the online renewal system but do not forget you can still renew at the Open Day which will not require the use of a computer.

Barbara Lavender

Speaker's Corner

On the 25th July Tony Diamond came out to speak to us on the subject of chocolate. The talk included both the history of chocolate, its uses through the ages including its medical good and bad aspects, up to the present day and its economic impact on England. Tony is an experienced speaker and gave a flamboyant talk which some of our members thought to be bizarre, though entertaining.

We didn't know that Tony was intending to give out chocolate bars (and some copies of his self-published books) and at the end of his talk he devised a strange number game to choose the winners!

The venue of the Old Independent Church was glorious with the light from the many stained glass windows. Some of our members had driven past the church for years and not been in, making it a lovely surprise.

Unfortunately, the speaker booked for the 29th August, Fenland Flowers, has cancelled but we have been lucky to book at short notice Barbara Meyer who is a wildlife photographer. The title of her talk is "Big Cats Around the Globe" where she explores what are big cats, where do they live, what are their situations and problems in their natural habitat, as well as conservation efforts. It will cover a wide range of cats from tigers and lions to clouded leopard and the bob cat. The meeting starts at 10.30am in the Old Independent Church in Hamlet Road, Haverhill.

Sue Dickinson, Speaker Secretary

Walking Talking Munching Group

The Group met at Debden Barns and admired the stock of garden ornaments, which ranged from Samurai Warriors to Frogs in Yoga positions.

The group set off, led by David and Jean Boxall, and headed in the direction of Debden village, traversing a mini flower meadow alongside fields of golden barley which waved lazily in the summer breeze. Reaching the village, the group admired a model of a colourful full size cow in a garden, before they wandered on.



The route took the group through the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin with its modern extension and matching pinnacles to the older building.

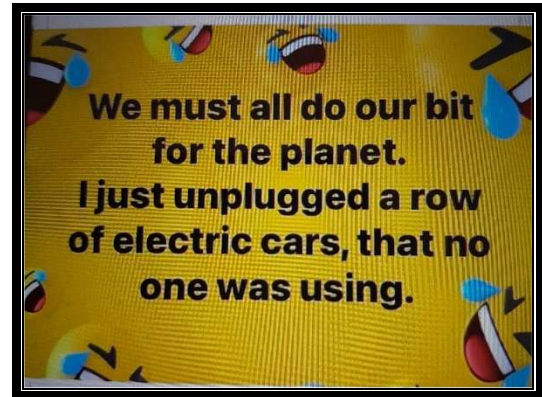
The sunny day had turned wet and the church porch provided sanctuary to those less prepared for the weather. Luckily the squall passed reasonably quickly but loud rumbles of thunder reminded all that this July is not a predictable one.

Reaching a large lake the group stopped for a group photo before wending their way back past vast fields of broad beans and wonderful views.



A fine lunch was had at Elder Street Cafe and Deli, the most popular venue of the Barns complex.

Ken Hainsby



Art Appreciation Group

Our theme for the July meeting was "High and Low" and, being suitably vague, this prompted members' imaginations so much that we have enough for our next meeting too.



We looked at artworks by Eric Ravilious (always a favourite) from his Second World War art commissions aboard submarines (low) to flying in aircraft (high) and the claustrophobic paintings of working in the confines of coal mines by ex-miner Norman Phillips (1920-1988).

The differences between heaven and hell were illustrated by a wide range of carvings and paintings over the ages depicting visions of the Day of Judgement. Artistic concepts of what tortures could exist in hell seemed to know no bounds, whilst heaven appeared to be pretty, but all rather uninspiring by comparison.

One group member associated high with the heights of atomic mushroom clouds or the psychoactive properties of eating mushrooms with a large bronze sculpture commissioned in the mid-1960s from Henry Moore entitled Nuclear Energy. Was it a deformed skull or a mushroom cloud, and did it meet its brief?

The growing or shrinking in size of Alice (in Wonderland) as depicted by Sir John Tenniel evidently depended on which side of the mushroom she had eaten.



One of the largest paintings ever made was by Raoul Dufy in 1937 entitled La Fée Electricité and we looked at a preliminary watercolour showing the ancient gods floating above the turbines of a power station and the scientists who had contributed to the invention of electricity. Very French, but remarkably inspiring.

Neil Dickinson

Obituary – John Cahill

The Guitar Group was saddened and shocked to hear of the death of founding member John Cahill following a short but devastating illness.

John was a quiet, well-respected member of the group, 'Forever Young', and was also the lynchpin in keeping the group updated with music to play at sessions. His quiet but assured demeanour gave those less adept at guitar the confidence to reach levels above their ability.

Blessed with a good voice he sang regularly with the group at many Charity and u3a Christmas concerts. John had a lifelong love of gadgets and his enquiring mind made him a font of interesting facts

and information when the group took a break from playing. A much loved and dependable family man, one who will be missed by not only those close to him but by all who came within his sphere of influence.

RIP

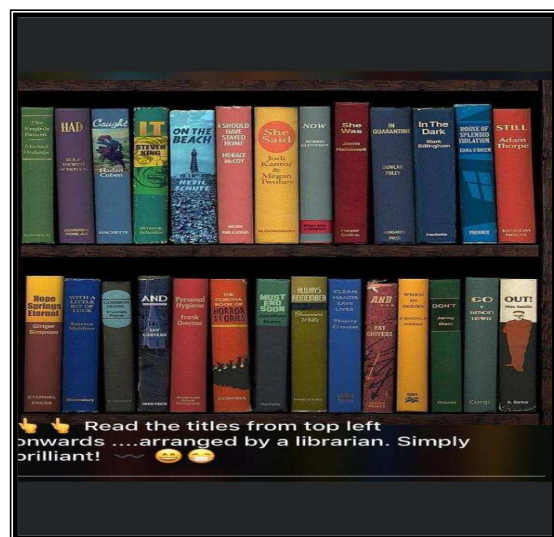
Learn to Play Bridge

Bridge is described as the King of Card Games and is a whist-based game where the decision regarding whether each hand is played in a suit or no trumps is decided by each person using a bidding system.

The Beginners' Bridge Course provides a weekly 2½ hour session spread over approximately a year giving systematic teaching of the Standard ACOL Bidding System. We practice set hands and provide easy to read, short handouts. At the end of the course all players should be able to participate in the u3a Bridge Club. The next teaching course will start at 10.00am on Wednesday 11th October at my home in Kedington.

I will be at the Open Day on 26th September to answer any questions you may have. Alternatively, please e-mail me on barbaralavender1944@gmail.com.

Barbara Lavender



London Originals

Our July trip to the end of the pier show at Cromer was halted at Swaffham market place, where ducklings in the road were being guided to safety by well wishers.



Shaken by the experience we stopped at the nearest Waitrose for a coffee break. Keith our driver then made sure we were at our chosen restaurant (No.1 Cromer) by 12.15pm where we enjoyed a meal overlooking the sea. We had intended to visit Tides restaurant on the pier, but another group just beat us to it.



After lunch there was time to explore the town and have an ice cream before the 2.30pm matinee. Our little enclave in the circle enjoyed a very professional show, with a varied programme despite the small cast.



This year a filmed backdrop added greatly to the spectacle, especially when the aerial balancing act appeared above our heads accompanied by a raging thunderstorm, and we also joined the Chitty Chitty bang bang car looking down over the re-ceding countryside.

With the minibus waiting at the end of the pier, our homeward journey in the rain showers had only one hold up.....yes the Swaffham ducks.

Ian Johnson

How many do you remember?

Headlight dip-switches on the floor of the car.

Ignition switches on the dashboard.
Trousers leg clips for bicycles without chain guards.

Soldering irons you heated on a gas burner.

Using hand signals for cars without turn indicators.

Older Than Dirt Quiz

Count all the ones that you remember, not the ones you were told about. Ratings at the bottom

1. Sweet cigarettes
2. Coffee shops with juke boxes
3. Home milk delivery in glass bottles
4. Party lines on the telephone
5. Newsreels before the movie
6. TV test patterns that came on at night after the last show and were there until TV shows started again in the morning. (There were only 2 channels [if you were fortunate])
7. Peashooters
8. 33 rpm records
9. 45 RPM records
10. Hi-fi's
11. Metal ice trays with levers
12. Blue flashbulb
13. Cork popguns
14. Wash tub wringers

If you remembered 0-3 = You are still young

If you remembered 3-6 = You are getting older

If you remembered 7-10 = Don't tell your age

If you remembered 11-14 = You're positively ancient!

I must be 'positively ancient' but those memories are some of the best parts of my life.

Cycling Group

On a rare summer's day the Magnificent Seven met for the first of their August rides. Led by Yul Edwards, the posse of riders headed for Balsham and The Old Butchers watering hole.

Heading West along the old railway track, to pick up the trail to Withersfield, their steeds champed at the bit in their eagerness to reach the crossroads. Once onto the plains of Skippers Lane and under a huge pellucid sky of the palest blue the views were magnificent. Golden fields of harvested and unharvested corn gave perfect contrast to the birds of prey that hovered and swooped from on high.

Through the Wild West of Wratting and onto the border outpost of Balsham, the Seven unsaddled and entered the staging post that is The Old Butchers. Refreshment was partaken by all and some mighty fine chow was consumed. Saddling back up the group headed for the Wild West of Wickham before regaining the trail back to Haver (Boot) Hill.

Ken Hainsby

**Ill never forget the
look on the cashiers
face, when she
scanned the packet of
bird seed,
And I asked her how
long does it take for
the birds to grow once
I plant them.**

Nature Group

Our July visit was to Wicken Fen Nature Reserve where we were given a guided tour by David, a regular volunteer at the centre.

Wicken is a globally rare alkaline fen produced by calcareous water flooding the peat. It is divided by a man-made

watercourse called "Wicken Lode". Centuries of cutting the fen sedge has led to over 9,000 different species colonising the area, the largest of any site in the UK.

Today the sedge and any young trees are cut using a large machine. Tree growth must be controlled to prevent the fen becoming scrubland. A pump is used to control the level of water in the fen.

In the 19th Century, when the sedge industry was declining, naturalists paid local people to supply them with rare beetles, moths and butterflies which were only found at Wicken Fen.

The land was then purchased by these naturalists and given to the National Trust, becoming their first nature reserve.

Konik ponies and Highland cattle are used to manage new areas of the fen. They keep the landscape open and allow wetland and grassland plants to become established.

Swifts, swallows and house martins were seen near the visitor centre and a reed warbler was spotted from the broadwalk. Marsh Harriers and Hen Harriers together with the Short-Eared Owl can often be seen. Butterflies and dragonflies flitted past and we even spotted a grass snake and a green musk beetle whose larvae live on pollarded willow. It proved to be a fascinating visit.

Hilary Thomas & Fran Armes

Country Strollers

Our July walk started from Balsham on a bright sunny morning. We set off from The Bell Inn down West Wratting Road and took the footpath to the church where a very nice lady was sweeping the path for us. We continued through the churchyard and past the village hall, where John noted the bowling green, across the recreation ground and on to Nine Chimneys Lane.

A discussion ensued about the age of the very old house at the head of the lane and as we walked along the lane we counted how many chimneys there were - there weren't nine!

Entering Woodhall Lane we passed The Old Butchers' shop. Have you ever noticed the top of the thatched roof? No, we hadn't either. There is a thatched effigy of a dog playing with a string of sausages.

Further on down we passed through the hedge and came out at the top of a field with a panoramic view of Cambridgeshire before us. So we did the usual thing of trying to find Ely Cathedral on the horizon and decided it was a lot more East than we could see. We walked on down through the crops and joined the Roman Road, walked along and turned up the Icknield Way path. There were acres and acres of blue flax in flower, a wonderful sight - it looked like the sky had fallen down. We carried on, passing between paddocks admiring the sweet little horses, across another couple of fields, between houses and, to some walkers' surprise, came out into the pub car park. The pub provided excellent fare and everyone agreed it had been a good day.

Helen McFeely

Haverhill & Local District History Group

During the month of September the Suffolk Family History Society with the Haverhill & Local District History Group of Haverhill have formulated a programme of heritage events in Haverhill.

One of the events will take place at St. Mary's Parish Church at 10.30am on Saturday 30th September when Derek Hunt has been asked to give another talk on stained glass and conservation.

Derek has previously given a talk to u3a, is the resident painter at Ely Cathedral and at the moment is involved with the BBC doing a documentary. So if any of you are interested and may also remember his talk and would like to hear more please do come along, you would be most welcome.

Aldine Horrigan

Sunday Strollers

Ten Strollers enjoyed a 3.25 mile walk around Linton on Sunday 13th August. We walked from the old station, down Stantons Lane and on to the Old Magistrates Court,

after passing the old Union House. We then undertook the strenuous climb up to the Grade II water tower before retuning to our cars via the Guildhall and the Church. A very pleasant morning's walk with plenty of interest on the way.

The next walk, on the 10th September of approx. 3.5 miles is at Steeple Bumpstead and will be lead by Helen. Parking at the recreation ground car park for a 10.30am start.

David Jefferies

Next Meetings: Tuesday 29th Aug. 2023
At the Old Independent Church

Tuesday 26th Sept. 2023
At the Arts Centre - this is the Open Day to renew your membership and meet the Group Leaders

Deadline for the Rolling Screen
Tuesday 24th Oct. 2023
e-mail to: chair@haverhillu3a.com

Deadline for next edition
Friday 15th Sept 2023

Please either post to:
The Editor U3A
c/o Haverhill Arts Centre
High Street
Haverhill, CB9 8AR
OR e-mail to havu3anews@gmail.com

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