

South Woodham Ferrers



Quarterly Newsletter Autumn & Winter Edition



From the Gardening Groups recent visit to Braxted Park

Newsletter N° 186

From the Chair

Hello All

I hope that you are all well and have been enjoying the relatively fine weather we have been having in recent week. My only regret at this time of the year is the dark nights which means I have to play golf earlier in the day.

This is my first 'from the chair' having somewhat reluctantly taking over from Ian, who did such an excellent job and will be a hard act to follow. However, I will try to continue where Ian left off until the AGM in 2023 when I hope we can find a new Chairman.

On the 23 September, during the week celebrating 40 years of the u3a we had a stand in Asda's foyer. We hope now that more residents of SWF will have a better understanding of what we are about and that it will encourage a few more people to take up membership. All those involved felt it was a worthwhile exercise and were encouraged by the response from the general public.

The photo below shows Ann our Secretary and Kate, Vice Chair and Treasurer manning the stand.



If you have friends or relatives, who perhaps are unaware of our u3a, and you think might be interested in joining, please try to bring them along to our next monthly meeting.

Some of you will have recently received an email regarding our u3a being able to claim back tax as a gift aid on your annual subscription. It does not involve you in any additional cost or tax. Please think about doing this, as it would enable us to use that money to the benefit of our u3a and its members.

I look forward to seeing you at our next monthly meeting.

Best regards

Bob Tyas – Chair SWF u3a

Webmasters Report

You will have recently seen my email regarding the fact that we have a new website together with a new web address (<https://u3asites.org.uk/sth-woodham-ferrers/home>) . Apologies for any inconvenience that this might have caused, but there were some very serious reasons for this update and change which I will not bore you with. I can assure you I could have done without the extra work necessary to produce the new site had I had an alternative option.

The new site is developed on a National u3a available platform called Sitebuilder and you will see further changes to the site in the new year when National migrates from Sitebuilder to Wordpress. Ideally it would have been better to wait until the introduction of Wordpress but as I have implied above that was not an option.

Navigation within the new site is very similar to the previous version and the opportunity has been taken to review its content. You will notice that the Events page is much more detailed than the previous version, and should I hope, allow you the members to be better informed about what is going on within our u3a. However, the information presented here is only as good as the information given to me by Group Leaders; so, group leader please keep me up to date with what you have planned and when it is happening.

If you have any comments regarding the website, if you notice any errors, or if you think anything needs changing to improve its format, please email your comment to myself at robert.tyas82@gmail.com

Bob Tyas - Webmaster

Cluster Group

Don't forget that our u3a is a member of the Maldon and District Cluster Group and that it allows you to join any of their activity groups not offered by our u3a, provided there are vacancies. To see what activity groups are being run by the u3as in the cluster group follow the link <http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk/activitygroups/ClusterGroupActivitySchedule.pdf> given below.

Speakers for the next Three Months

November - A volunteer will come with a canine helper to talk about the charity "Hearing Dogs for Deaf People" (Paul Westgate, Maggie Gleesinger and Ludo).

December - Karen Kirby is bound to make us laugh with Anecdotes and Jokes she shares on Kirby Coach Trips.

January - Speaker is Eve Regelous. Her talk is called "A year in the life of a celebrity agent and event organiser ". She provides a personal insight into some of the many personalities she has worked with.

Quiz Night

The annual Quiz Night was a huge success. Ninety-six tickets sold which I believe to be a record. Chris the quizmaster had compiled an excellent mix of questions. He was extremely organised, with the help of his Mum, in keeping us up to date with everyone's progress.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the setting up and clearing away.

Mary

Reports from Activity Groups

Cards & Board Games

Cards and Board Games has now been going since March and is doing very well.

We have now quite a selection of games to play, so there is plenty to keep the brain working, that and a cup of tea, biscuits and a very friendly atmosphere makes for a fun afternoon.

If anyone would like to join us, we meet every 4th Wednesday of the month in the small room at South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall.

Contact Kay Miles on 01245 401915 or 07931559909

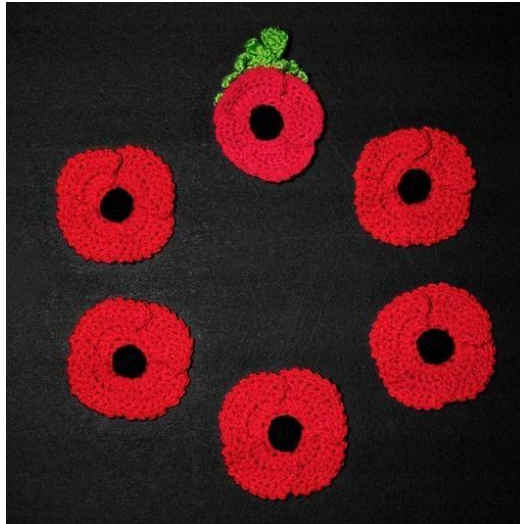
Climate Change Group

I am hoping to start up a climate change/environment learning and action group. This will possibly be linked in with the Essex Wildlife Trust's Urban Wildlife Champions initiative ([Urban Wildlife Champions | Essex Wildlife Trust \(essexwt.org.uk\)](http://UrbanWildlifeChampions|EssexWildlifeTrust(essexwt.org.uk))) as well as the SWF Town Council's Emergency Climate and Ecological Toolkit ([Climate and Ecological Toolkit - South Woodham Ferrers Town Council \(southwoodhamferrerstc.gov.uk\)](http://ClimateandEcologicalToolkit-SouthWoodhamFerrersTownCouncil(southwoodhamferrerstc.gov.uk))) If you are interested in joining such a group please contact me. Ann Woolley

ann.woolley.u3a@gmail.com (07956 918521)

Craft

Some of the members of the craft group are crocheting poppies that are being donated to charity shops. The photo below shows just some of them with plenty more to go.



Sandra Rolfe

Gardening Group

18 members of the Gardening Group visited Braxted Park Estate in October.

We were given a warm welcome and treated to a talk and slides showing the progress of the gardens throughout the year.

Head Gardener, Andrea, took us around the beautiful gardens and answered our questions.

Braxted Park is used for weddings, special dinners, shoots, a cookery school and has a weekday 9-hole golf course.

At the close of the afternoon, we were served tea and delicious cakes. A very successful visit enjoyed by all.



Couple of views taken at Braxted Park

Shirley

Local History Group

Our September guided walk in Chelmsford was very enjoyable and informative, I think we all learned a lot about Chelmsford from the first settlement to more recent times. During the walk our guide pointed out some of the blue plaques which have been put up by the City Council to commemorate individuals and landmarks. If you are in Chelmsford look out for the plaque to mark the site of the 16th Century Black Boy Inn, now the Metro Bank, the house built by Doctor Pugh, now the former Royal Bank of Scotland building in the High Street and the plaque to commemorate Ann Knight, a mid 18th century social reformer, opposite the railway station, to name just three.

Our last visit of the year is to the Bata Heritage site in October.

I hope you have enjoyed the History Group visits this year. Allen, Mary and I will be starting to put a programme together for next year shortly. If you have any ideas, please let us know, either by email or at the main meeting.

Thank you for your support.

Kate, Mary and Allen.

London Theatre

Only Fools & Horses - Evenings only - 10+ £40 if paid by 29th Aug then 15+ £45. Tickets booked for 14th November. Tickets circulated.

The Choir of Man - Fri Mat - 20th or 27th January -10+ £22 - The Arts Theatre - Booking to 5th Feb '23. Please indicate which dates you are available, and I will make a booking after the meeting.

Six, the musical - Thurs 5.30 - 23rd or 30th March -10+ £46. Booking until 2 April 2023. There are 8 names on the list, however, I'm proposing 23rd or 30th March so please indicate which dates you are available, but we can't go ahead without 2 further people. Good Friday is 7th April.

& Juliet - Thurs Mat -10+ £40.00, 20+ £35.00. Now extended until September '23. Unfortunately, not everyone was available for the proposed dates so I will look again during the spring. Please add your name if you're interested.

Moulin Rouge - Wed Mat - Band A £85, B £65, C £52.50, D £42.50, E £32.50. Booking until 7th January 2023. There are no group rates for this show, however, tickets can be held for 2 weeks. There are currently only 4 names on the list. If you are still interested, please let me know which dates you would be available and which price range you require, and I can make a booking.

Pauline

London Walks

London Walks take place on the third Wednesday and fourth Thursday of the month.

We meet a qualified guide in London and are taken on a two-hour guided walk, often seeing parts of London that we didn't know existed. It is not two hours of solid walking and often we find we haven't covered much of a distance. The guides are both knowledgeable and entertaining.

After our walk most of us find a suitable place for lunch. All in all, it is a really nice day out with friends whilst seeing the sights of London.

We are coming to the end of the year now and will start again in April when I'm afraid I will have to increase the rate to £10pp. I will soon be planning the walks for next year so please let me know if there are any particular parts of London that you would like to see. Come and see me at the main meeting with your ideas and any questions or contact me on my email below.

Mary

rbmb4546@yahoo.co.uk

Paint and Pastels Art Group

Our Paint and Pastels art group meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 10.00am. We aim to have a theme for each of our sessions although members are always free to 'do their own thing' at the meetings - there may be a painting or drawing that you have started that you would like to spend time on or perhaps discuss with the group.

Our theme for October was portraiture which I think we all enjoyed and is a topic that we certainly plan to come back to in the future. The theme for November is 'working large'.....

If you would like more information about the group or, indeed, would be interested in joining please feel free to call Chris on **07946 024302**.

Pics and Bricks (Art and Architecture Appreciation)

Our programme of visits for 2022 is complete and we have started working on ideas for 2023 with the aim of finding a balance between Art and Architectural interest in the places we include.

If you are a member of Pics and Bricks and you have ideas of visits to include in the programme, please send them via email to Chris Miles. Please also contact Chris if you would like to become a member of the group and be added to our email circulation list. Chris's email address is: chrismilesu3a@gmail.com

Singles, Social and Dining

On Wednesday 21st September we meet at Shaw Farm for our monthly lunch. There were 7 of us. The venue was easy to access, and a table had been booked for us. The staff members were friendly and attentive. The menu was adequate if a little expensive. I especially liked the half a sweet and coffee option. The company was brilliant and I for one thoroughly enjoyed the outing. We will go there again.

I would like to thank everybody who reads their emails and replies by the given date, it makes my job so easy.

Lyn Kear.

Walking Group

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month at 10.00 and our walks are in the region of 5 to 6 miles in length with most walk within a 10 miles radius of South Woodham. At the completion of the walk, we usually visit a nearby pub for a drink and a chat but it's not compulsory.

We are always happy to welcome new members so feel free to just turn up. However, if you want more information to help you decide, please contact Bob the group leader on 07889949685 or email him on robrt.tyas82@gmail.com Walks for the next three months:

November

Friday 4th – Stock/Margaretting Walk – 6 miles – meet in Stock Village Hall car park just before 10.00.

Friday 18th – Maldon/Beeleigh/Langford Walk 6.5 miles – meet in Tesco Maldon car park for a 10.00 start.

December

Friday 2nd – Burnham-on-Crouch Walk – 6 miles – meet in the Marina car park just before 10.00.

Friday 16th – Woodham Ferrers/Hyde Hall Walk – 6 miles – meet in the Sports Field car park in Lodge Road in Woodham Ferrers for 10.00 start.

January

Friday 6th – Purleigh Walk – 5.5 miles – meet in Purleigh Sport Field car park for 10.00 start.

Friday 20th – River Crouch Walk – 6 miles – meet in Compass Gardens car park just before 10.00.



Photo call during a summer walk

Bob Tyas 07889949685

Wine Appreciation Group 1

We are a small friendly group who meet between 2:00 and 4:00 PM at Champions Manor Hall on the second Friday of the month. We enjoy tasting 6 various wines at each meeting, usually following themes based on grape variety, country of origin or style. Part of the fun is learning the background to the wines being tasted. We are a mixture of novice to some experience, but everyone is very welcome to enjoy the tastings and socialising. We each pay £5 when we attend a meeting and an annual subscription of £10. New members are very welcome as several couple moved away after the lockdowns.

Contact Janet Tipping dandjtipping64@gmail.com 07732114205

Wine Appreciation Group 2

The group 2 wine group meets every second Friday of the month in the Small Hall, at the back of the SWF Village Hall. Once year we have a, Garden Party or BBQ. The photo below shows the happy group from this year.



We have 18 members which is considered an optimum number as tasting with 35 ml of wine (we have a measure) for each bottle which ensures we have a good enough sample of each wine tasted, for every participant. We plan to have 6 or 7 different wines split between red and white and within our budget but at different price points. The cost is not revealed until the group have completed the tasting. This is done so when we have different wines from separate countries, but the same grape the group can judge their taste, opinion and scoring and experience for both location and price as to value. We have in the past selected a country for the tasting but as most people who have been in the group have been round the wine world a few times therefore we have now embarked on grape varietals as a theme.

There are approximately 10,000 grape varieties for making wine in the world, and for example in Italy alone there are over 1300 different grape varieties used. However, we have had tastings from Eastern Europe, and of course Germany, although the best wines from there are not evident on Supermarket shelves or even specialist wine suppliers. These are just some examples of what the group are currently sampling through, but the objective is to enjoy the wines, the company, and a little bit of knowledge in equal parts to understand what each member likes and to help them when choosing a wine rather than admiring a pretty label, when staring at a 100+bottles on a supermarket shelf.

We have an excellent group with differing levels of experience and knowledge to be shared and recognising that everyone has a differing view of which wine they enjoy, but often a majority consensus is found. There is not a right or wrong answer when choosing wine. In fact, in one monthly session, we tasted 4 separate covered bottles of the same Italian red wine from Aldi, M&S, and the other two from a wine merchant with differing price points to establish personal preference and value for money, and the result was enlightening. We currently have a subscription of £20 a quarter and try to have one bottle that will be over £25, with the median of the balance around £10 to evaluate taste versus cost/value, as noted above, But the group do not know the cost before sampling. The group is fully subscribed, since the number and the budget costings mean that the optimum usage per bottle determines this, so the differing value of each bottle of wine can be explored within our budget. We do not have a waiting list at present so if anyone is interested in joining our group on a waiting list, please let me know.
Jeff Body

Wine Appreciation Group 3

Well, the group continues to enjoy some good wines. Back in August – which seems ages ago now – we spent the afternoon in the beautiful garden of Roy and Mary Brindley. It was promising to be extremely hot and although Mary had several shady places for us to sit, we decided to delay our meet up for a couple of hours in the hope that it might be a little cooler. A gazebo provided some extra shade, and we enjoyed a very pleasant few hours together with a simple BBQ and wine. Mary was insistent that we continue with our plans even though she was nursing a broken arm. We thank them both for their hospitality.

We have been continuing our theme of tasting the grape as a single varietal but choosing examples from different countries, this has proved quite interesting. Climate and soil play a major part in the taste of the grape as geographical location was to show.

This month we have taken advantage of the offer in Sainsbury's of buying 6 wines with a 25% discount on the purchase, making some of the more expensive wines more affordable. Is an expensive wine necessarily a better wine? – We'll let you know in due course.

We will be going out for a belated "Christmas" in February. With so many groups that we all belong to, slotting in a date is never easy and can be expensive, so we have chosen to get together for lunch in February, weather permitting. November we will taste some wine recommendations for Christmas and in December we will revisit some of our past favourites together with festive nibbles.

Thank you to all our friends in the wine group for their continued support. Brian
and Sheila

Groups Monthly Programme

Days of the week	Weeks of the Month				
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Monday	AM	Golfing Book Group 1	Golfing Paints & Pastels Art Group	Golf	Golf Strollers
	PM	Book Group 2 (NCA)	Gardening		
Tuesday	AM				Picks & Brick (Art & Architecture)
	PM	Gin Appreciation	Local History Tai Chi		Picks & Brick (Art & Architecture) Tai Chi
Wednesday	AM		Fine Your Voice	London Walks 1	
	PM	Monthly Meeting	All Kinds of Music (NCA)		Cards and Games for Fun
Thursday	AM	Craft Science & Technology	Craft	Craft	London Walks 2 Craft
	PM		French		
Friday	AM	Bowling Walking	Bowling	Bowling Walking Digital Photography	Bowling
	PM		Wine Groups 1,2, &3		Whisky Appreciation

Theatre as arranged, Curry Clique 2nd Wednesday of odd months, Singles Social & Dining as arranged
 For more details on any of these groups please contact the Group Coordinator Allen Surrey.

Deadline for Inclusion in Next Newsletter

Please send your contributions to the next Newsletter by Wednesday 18th January, to Bob Tyas at robert.tyas82@gmail.com or deliver to 55 Clements Green Lane, SWF. Alternatively, you can ring him on 07889949685.