

South Woodham Ferrers



Quarterly Newsletter - Summer Edition



Stroller on their March Stroll
having a well-earned rest

Newsletter N° 188

From the Chair

Hello Everybody

It's that time of the month again when I look forward to writing my, from the chair. I hope you are all enjoying your u3a activities and looking forward to the future social events that have been planned. Thanks to Mary and her intrepid team, the Summer Banquet looks like it's going to be an enjoyable event and a fun filled afternoon.

We have our AGM coming up in July and we need to fill certain vacancies on the committee. I will not be standing for election as Chairmen this year and we also have a need for a Vice Chairman. If we do not fill these executive vacancies our u3a will not be able to continue. I'm sure none of us wants that to happen so if you think you might be interested in filling these important roles, please speak to me or any other members of the current committee. Our current committee has a lot of experience in running our u3a so anyone taking on the role of either Chairman or Vice Chairman would be well supported. Nominations need to be with the secretary by Friday 9th June and nomination form may be found on the website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/sth-woodham-ferrers/page/124580> . Forms will also be available at the main meeting in May and June.

We also have committee members who have only one of two years before they have to vacate their posts. It would therefore be prudent to have members shadowing them in preparation for a seamless transfer of their roles. So if you would like to join the committee you need to complete a nomination form.

If you wish our u3a to continue and evolve we must, and I emphasise, must, fill these important roles.

Best regards. Bob Tyas - Chair SWF u3a

Webmaster Report

I'm led to believe that many members are finding it difficult to access our new and current website and have instead been taking a link shown on the old site. The old site will disappear soon meaning that this will no longer be an option. Also, please do not download any of the forms on the old site as they are out of date and not acceptable.

To access our website, you need to type into your browser the following address, which I understand is rather long but was given to us by National u3a.

<https://u3asites.org.uk/sth-woodham-ferrers/welcome>

You can obviously take the above link and once you are into the site, by whichever means, you should then save it into your favourites for easier access next time or bookmark it.

Bob Tyas - Webmaster

Remaining Speakers for 2023

May 3 rd	Plants and Food that changed history. Peter Batty gives us some surprising facts.
June 7 th	My Creative Journey. Amanda Sutherland tells of her involvement in West End productions as a theatrical designer.
July 5 th	A cleaner, greener life. Alison Charles gives us tips on how we can protect the environment.
August 2 nd	The Agincourt Archer. Simon Waterfield recounts this period of history, dressed for the part.
September 5 th	Nature through the Seasons Part 2. Roger Hance visited us in March 2022 with Part 1. Now we see photos of Autumn and Winter.
October 4 th	Continuity Capers. Sally Lawrence amuses us with broadcasting anecdotes.
November 1 st	Lost on the Somme. Julian Whybra prepares us for Remembrance Day and reminds us about the well-known people lost in World War 1.
December 6 th	Christmas Traditions and Customs. Mark Lewis puts us in the mood for the Festive Season.

Social

The arrangements for Summer Banquet on Tuesday June 20th are now well under way. By the time you read this I will have put together the final details but I can now confirm that we have a Ukulele Band 'The Yesterukes' playing for us during the afternoon.

Arrival by 12.30pm to be seated by 1pm departure by 5pm. So please arrange your transport accordingly.

Let's hope the weather will be kind and we can wear our appropriate summer attire.

Mary

Reports from the Groups

Cards and Games

We have been going now for a year and there seems to be a couple of real favourite games that people like to play, Sequence and Rummikub. Sequence is a board game using a pack of cards and counters. The aim is to get two lines of 5 counters in a row to win and, of course, stop your opponent doing so first. This can be played in pairs or 4 individuals. It certainly brings out a lot of competitiveness amongst members of the group, as does Rummikub which is a game of numbers and certainly gets the grey cells moving.

We have other games available, and I am always looking out for new ones that are coming onto the market that might be of interest to the group.

We meet every 4th Wednesday of the month in the South Woodham Village Hall from 2 to 4 pm If anyone is interested in joining the group please give me a call on 07931 559909

Kay Miles

Eco Group

Some members have helped on the Chelmsford City Council work parties along Creekview Road, planting whips (young trees) and giving growing trees some tlc by clearing the ground around them. Anyone can join in with these so let me know if you're interested in knowing more.

Following the hedgehog survey sent out earlier this year, sightings have been plotted on a map in conjunction with those recorded on the Hedgehog Street website. There are three or four areas in SWF which seem to be quite good for hedgehogs. In conjunction with the SWF Wildlife Committee hedgehog holes will be created where requested to create some hedgehog highways. If you would like a hole in your fence, then please get in touch.

Unfortunately, the Town Council are unable to organise a Great Big Green Week this year but one thing we could all do is to visit the website - <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/> - and write a letter to tomorrow. These are letters addressed to your grandchildren or just the future to explain your hopes for future generations if our leaders step up to protect the environment - and your fears about what life could be like if they don't. You could also consider sending your letter to your MP or even the Prime Minister. My letter to my 20 month granddaughter is below.

"Dear Elinor

I am writing this on a spring day when I can see some blue sky and birds - collared doves, blackbirds, starlings and a robin. Unfortunately, our birdlife and nature generally has declined dramatically over the years as the growing human population has meant more housing, buildings and roads and less connected green spaces. We have become a throw away society too, so pollution and waste has become a huge problem. I hope you will learn to value every item you own and make it last as long as possible without demanding a new toy, game or electronic device just because they are the "latest thing". You already enjoy being outside and I hope you will treasure every living creature from hedgehogs and foxes down to tiny ants, bees, butterflies and other insects - even slugs and snails (the hedgehogs will take care of them). They are all important to our survival.

Our world is getting warmer and although many people are doing their best to be more eco-conscious, we need politicians across the world to take action to stop using fossil fuels and invest in green energy. We need cheaper public transport to encourage people to use it rather than jumping in their cars. Or a plastic tax to reduce or eliminate the use of plastic and investment in new environmentally friendly materials to replace plastic.

I hope that when you grow up the politicians will have listened and will have taken action but I have my doubts I hope you will then take up the challenge to push for a greener, cleaner world and the survival of our species and life on earth.

Your grandma"

If you are interested in joining our group - we meet on the 4th Monday afternoon of the month - please drop me an email.

Ann Woolley - ann.woolley.u3a@gmail.com

Gardening

The Gardening Group usually meet up on the 2nd Monday of the month. We have meetings in the winter at Champions Manor Hall and outings from March until November.

We have had two outings so far this year, the first was to Beth Chatto Gardens in March where they opened up especially for our group. The staff and volunteers were so friendly and opened up the cafe for us to have a light lunch and later tea and cake. It felt a privilege to have the gardens to ourselves and to just wander around.

Our April outing was a visit to The Gardens of Easton Lodge. When we arrived, we were served tea and cake and then we were split into two groups and taken on a private tour of the gardens.

Our next outing is to Peacocks in Margaretting on Wednesday 10th May this is instead of our normal Monday as it falls on a Bank Holiday.

If you are interested in joining our group, please come and see us at our table at the main meeting.



Easton Lodge



Beth Chatto Garden

Sue Crann

Gin Appreciation

Our Gin Appreciation group is thriving and indeed now full. We enjoy tasting and giving our verdicts on each one. We are a lively, happy group but I cannot understand why we get louder and louder towards the end of the evening. Answers on a postcard please!!

Mary

Local History

I hope those of you who came to our talks in February and March enjoyed them. Two very different talks, in February Mike Fogg shared his research into the changing retail outlets in Woodham Ferrers and the people who worked in and owned them. Our March talk by Tony Tuckwell took us back to Tudor times with the Palace at New Hall built by Henry VIII. Very little of the original buildings remain today but the Time Team dig, with Tony Robinson, uncovered a considerable amount of the footprint of the earlier Tudor Palace.

Our outdoor visits begin on Tuesday 16 May, 10.50 for an 11am start with our guided talk in Chelmsford with Alan Pamphion on the Industrial Heritage of Chelmsford. Alan took us on a guided In Chelmsford last year, he is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about his subject, so it should be a good guided walk.

We still have a few spaces so if you are interested you can sign up at the May meeting, the cost is £5pp. Starting just off Parkway at the junction with Mildmay Road it finishes in Central Park and lasts 90 minutes.

On Tuesday 13 June, 2pm, we start our visit at **St Thomas's Church Bradwell** where we will have a talk and refreshments and will then travel on to the Chapel of St Peter on the Wall, Bradwell. The cost is £5pp.

A sign-up sheet will be out at the May meeting.

Details of the programme for this year are listed below. Sign-up sheets for July and September will be out nearer the time.

If you interested in joining our group, please come and see us at our table at the main meeting.

Local History Group Programme 2023

Tuesday 16th May	A guided walk with Alan Pamphilon on the Industrial Heritage of Chelmsford, 10.50 for a 11am start.
Tuesday 13th June	A visit to St Peter's Church, Bradwell. Afternoon visit.
Wednesday 12 July	A visit to Prittlewell Priory. Afternoon visit.

Thursday 14 th September	A walk with Stephen Nunn in Maldon.
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Allen, Mary, and Kate

London Walks

Our first walk of the year and only walk so far was an excellent walk about the History of Medicine. We were guided by a very knowledgeable Rick Jones who gave us many facts and put paid to many myths about medicine in general. Please all of you remember to look above your heads at buildings. You never know where you may spot a rat, tick or in fact any little relevant caricature.

Please look at the Events page on the website to see our up-and-coming walks and if you are interested come and see me at the London Walks desk at the main meetings.

Events page: <https://u3asites.org.uk/code/u3asite.php?site=1178&page=3>

Mary Brindley

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 group 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.

Recent themes that we have covered in the group include *Painting in the Style of Picasso* and *Charcoal Reduction Drawing* and our theme for April is *Pastel Skies*, using pastels to capture dramatic or colourful skies.

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**. If you are

interested in joining, there is the option of joining us one month for a free 'taster session'.

Pics and Bricks (Art and Architecture Appreciation)

Pics and Bricks arrange visits to places with an Art or Architectural interest. This will include Art Galleries and buildings with an architectural or historic interest. Typically, we will arrange for an expert guide to help with the enjoyment of the visit by explaining what we have gone to see.

In general, our events are open to all members of SWF u3a. If the number of places are limited by the venue priority may be given to Pics and Bricks Group Members but we would aim to accommodate all u3a members who may be interested. If you would like to become a Pics and Bricks member and be added to our email circulation list either contact Chris Miles (contact details below) or come to see us at our table at one of the monthly meetings at Champions Manor Hall.

Our 2023 programme got underway in March with Maggie Piper's talk titled **Street Art - the things we pass in the street** at Champions Manor. I think those who were there will agree that it was a most interesting and wide ranging talk. I understand that Maggie has lots more material so there is the potential to invite her back again in the future.

Our next visit is on the 25th April to the Fry Gallery in Saffron Walden that will be hosted by Francis Haine.

Coming up later in the year are the following:

Alexandra Palace - Tuesday 23rd May (guided by Adam Scott-Goulding)

Islamic Art at the V&A - Tuesday 27th June (guided by Barry Walsh)

Gainsborough's House, Sudbury - Tuesday 25th July

Turner Collection at Tate Britain - Tuesday 26th September (guided by Simon Whitehouse)

We are also looking into the idea of walking, as a group, part or all of **The Line, a sculpture trail in East London** and tagging on some time at **Trinity Buoy Wharf to see/ listen to the Longplayer**. We are looking at August for this one.

If you are interested in any of these visits either contact Chris Miles directly or come to see us at our table at one of the monthly meetings at Champions Manor Hall.

Chris Miles (chrismilesu3a@gmail.com - 07946 024302)

Singles Social and Dining Group

Four members of the Singles met at the Eatery on April 12th. There was so few of us because members had other commitments as it was Easter Week. It was with some trepidation we met here as it has not been a favourite venue, but we need not have worried. We were made very welcome; the staff was attentive, and the food was good. I certainly enjoyed the lunch, and the company was excellent. In May we will be eating at Club Woodham.

Lyn Kear

Strollers

We had our first walk of 2023 on 27th March, when we walked from Tesco in Maldon along the canal to the Byrththnoth Statue, stopping for coffee along the way back and fortunately the weather was perfect.

We are always happy to see new members, but bear in mind that these walks are only a maximum of 3 miles and in a variety of locations depending on the weather, but we do try and share cars where possible.



With best wishes Jill

Walking Group

We meet on the first and third Friday of the month at various locations depending on the walk. All walks are of about 6 miles in length with the odd one or two of nearer 7 miles. If you would like to join us, please feel free to just turn up, you will be most welcome. However, if you want more information, please contact me on 07889949685.

The next three months walk now follow:

Friday 5th May Goldhanger and Blackwater Circular Walk - 6 miles - meet in Cheques Inn car park for 10 am start.

Friday 19th May Woodham Ferrers/Hyde Hall walk - 6 miles - meet in the Sports Field car park in Lodge Road in North Woodham for 10am start.

Friday 2nd June Bicknacre/Cock Clarks walk - 6.5 miles - meet in the Sports Field car park adjacent to Bicknacre School just before 10am.

Friday 16th June Danbury Thrift Wood walk - 6 miles - meet in Mayes Lane car park in Danbury just before 10am.

Friday 7th July Crondon Park Golf Course Walk - 7 miles - meet in Gallywood car park which is off the Margaretting Road, just before 10 am

Friday 21st July Bicknacre/Cock Clarkes Walk No1 - 6 miles - meet in the Sports Field car park adjacent to Bicknacre school just before 10am.

Details of our 2023 walks may be found on the South Woodham Ferrers website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/sth-woodham-ferrers/events>

Bob Tyas 07889949685

Wine Appreciation Group 2

This quarter we have shared with SWF 1st wine group a wine tasting evening at Bar Vino, with 10 wines provided and plenty of snacks to accompany the event. It was judged a success, although perhaps, not all the wines, but a Gruner Veltliner grape white wine from Hungary was judged highly.

We continue with our quarterly subs of £20 per person which provides cheese and crackers and tasting of 7 wines per monthly session on the second Friday afternoon of the month in the small rear hall of the SWF village hall. With current inflation this may have to be moved up as it has been this way since 2017.

In April the theme was the Torrentes grape from Argentina for the white wine (4) and for the red wine we had two Pinot Noir from Germany and North Macedonia for comparison. Following months, we are targeting new wines from England, and Italy as well as highlighting 2 different women wine makers from Argentina, and France as a theme.

We try equally red and white wines mainly from small wine specialists to taste wines of differing values (usually one over £20) against a different theme, for example grape variety, or country within our budget. We usually don't source from Supermarkets (although Aldi has featured) as the high volumes of wine required by them, shuts out other niche wine producers and gives everyone a chance to try the varieties not necessarily in large outlets.

We have small amount of education combined with a large amount of tasting and friendly chatter at each of our gatherings.

One new example of our efforts is that we take a wine bottle that is covered up as to the label and variety (the first was a Chardonnay) and invite the group to listen to 3 different explanations as to what type /country it is from, of course only one is correct. In other words, a "Call my Bluff" exercise. Different regions and countries often produce a quite different taste with the same grape, and the group tries to guess the correct one.

It is a bit of fun but at least 50% of the group got it right when the cover was off. The knowledge within the group is very diverse and that is what makes it enjoyable which we will be repeated.

We have a full group; we could take one or possibly two more people. Just contact me -Jeff Body if you are interested.

Wine Appreciation Group 3

Wine group 3 continues to meet on the second Friday of the month in the Players' Lounge at the Village Hall.

Our numbers have dwindled a little, but we remain a cheerful group of likeminded people enjoying tasting a variety of wines and each other's company.

Brian and I remain the group leaders, but it was decided that as a group we should take turns in choosing the wine for each meeting in order to give a different take and add some variety to our meetings.

Chris and Michael bravely took on the first month and brought us some excellent wine. Entitled "Off the beaten track" we went to Crete, Romania, Greece, and Lebanon with some unusual grape's varietals and some very mixed comments on the wines. It was great to taste wines that we might otherwise have dismissed on the shelf.

We look forward to many more interesting choices over the coming months.

Sheila & Brian

Groups Monthly Meeting

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		Eco Group
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
Curry Clique 4th Monday of odd months, Singles Social & Dining as arranged					

For more details on any of these groups please contact the Group Coordinator
Allen Surrey 01245 320743

Deadline for Inclusion in Next Newsletter

Please send your contributions to the next Newsletter by Wednesday 19th July,
to Bob Tyas at robert.tyas82@gmail.com or deliver to 55 Clements Green Lane,
SWF. Alternatively, you can ring him on 07889949685.