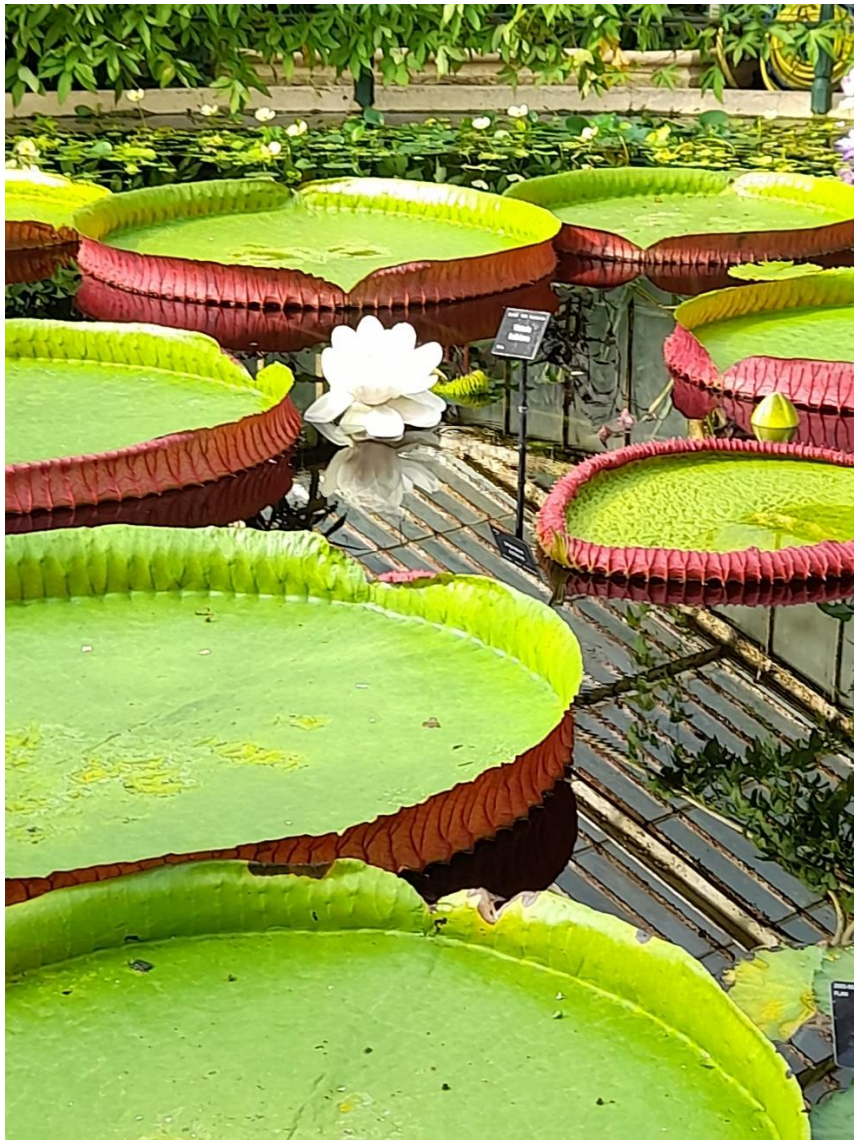


South Woodham Ferrers



Quarterly Newsletter - Winter Edition



Giant Waterlilies - Gardening Group Kew Garden Visit

Newsletter N° 190

From the Chair

I hope you are well and enjoying the good weather we've been having until recently, however, we're near the end of October and should be getting ready for the winter months- keep wrapped up.

This is my first "From the Chair", having taken over from Bob at the AGM earlier this year - I hope I can live up to the high standard he has established. Bob remains on the committee, so I intend to benefit from his experience and (hopefully), advice.

We had 7 new members join at our last meeting, but we still have room for new people so if you know friends or family who may be interested - please let them know about us, they can join us as a guest at the monthly meeting for £1.50, (which is refundable if they decide to join), to see if it's something for them. They don't have to live in South Woodham, we have members from Cold Norton, North Fambridge, Danbury, and other local places.

Lastly, Kay Miles, our Membership Secretary has stepped down from that position after many years of outstanding work, handing the baton over to Janet Kelly who I'm sure will do an admirable job of this very important position. So, on behalf of the committee and I'm sure the entire membership, I would like to say: "Thank you Kay for a fantastic job". By the way, Kay also organized the refreshments at our monthly meetings, so a double thankyou is in order.

Hope to see you at our next monthly meeting, November 1st, when our speaker is Julian Whybra on "Lost on the Somme", about some well-known people of the time who lost their lives, which is rather appropriate considering we're approaching Remembrance Sunday.

David Hayes, Chair SWF u3a

From the Committee

We thought it would be useful to update members on what we have been doing and any changes now that we are four months into the new committee year.

At our August meeting we welcomed Eileen Drane as a Co-opted member, bringing the total number of Committee Members to 13. In October Kay Miles stepped down from the Committee, after nearly 10 years carrying out a variety of roles, the most recent being Membership Secretary and organising the all-important refreshments at our main meeting. She will be missed on the Committee. The

role of Membership Secretary has been taken over by Jan Kelly and our new 'milk monitor' is Eileen Drane.

In September we organised a stall outside Sainsburys to promote our u3a as part of National u3a Week, some of you may have seen the article in the Focus advertising it. We had a number of visitors to the stall and welcomed new members and visitors at the October meeting. A big thank you to those members who manned the stall along with committee members.

At our September meeting we reviewed our budget for the year, based on current costs and membership numbers we agreed that we will not need to increase our membership fee for 24/25.

Some of you may have seen the notice board, which is on display at our monthly meetings, where you can find information on group activities and other information which may be of interest to members. We hope you find this useful to keep in touch with what is going on.

The annual quiz night in October, organised by Mary, was very popular again and enjoyed by everyone.

If you have any ideas, want to find out more about being on the committee, how you can help or want to set up a new interest group then please let us know. All committee members wear a blue lanyard and badge at the main meetings so we should be easy to find, or you can find our contact details on the website.

The Committee

On-Line Events

u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership!

Most of these opportunities are presented by members themselves, sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement. We also have a wide range of talks on offer from well-known speakers and organisations, plus in-person events at venues like the Royal Institution.

All of these events can be booked below on Eventbrite. At the time of booking, please ensure that you can attend and if you later find that you're unable to, please cancel your place through Eventbrite to avoid others missing out unnecessarily. All events are for u3a members only.

This is the link for information about the events and how to book onto any you may be interested in.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Remaining Speakers for 2023

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 6th	Christmas Traditions and Customs. Mark Lewis puts us in the mood for the Festive Season.

Speakers for 2024

January	Bill Neobard - Japan
February	Amanda Sutherland - Theatrical costumes
March	Joanne Larner - Handwriting Analysis
April	Lindsay Whitehouse - A line of duty
May	Peter Guide - Changing Rooms
June	Andrew Baker - Greatest post war leader?
July	Fran Sandham - Solo walk across Africa
August	Douglas Gee - Mister Gees
September	Sue Coleman - Snakes aren't sneaky
October	Lucy Allen - Witches
November	Commonwealth war graves commission
December	Eve Regelous - It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas

Past Speaker

Some of you may remember Bobbie Darbyshire who gave us a talk in April 2022. She was telling us about how authors got their ideas. She would like us to know that her new novel "The Third Bus" has just been published.

An unappreciated man walks out of his 42-year marriage with no destination in mind. At Victoria coach station he boards a coach to Norwich in search of a new start.

A late-life coming of age story, mixing humour and sorrow, hope and regret.

It's available to buy now.

Shirley

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 given below:

<http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk/activitygroups/ClusterGroupActivitySchedule.pdf>

Social Activities

Advance notice of our planned annual u3a outing to take place, hopefully, on Tuesday June 25th, 2024, to Lodge's Museum in High Easter. More details may be found at the web address given below.

<https://www.lodgecoaches.co.uk/museum-tour>

Please keep this date in your diary and more details will be announced in the New Year.

I hope you have enjoyed this year's events and may I be the first to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mary

News from the Groups

Eco Group

The Eco Group meet on 4th Monday of the month (when I'm not away!). At the September meeting we looked more into electric cars and how viable they are. We were also joined by my neighbour who has owned an electric car for several years and his input was very informative.

This month we had a taster session of plant-based foods. Everyone brought something to try. We had a lovely selection - soups, different sausages and burgers, lentil bolognese, hummus, chickpea & spinach flan, pea & bean stick snacks to name but a few. We also had oat and soya milk and learned how cows can suffer to provide us with dairy milk.

Next month (27th November) we are planning to look into the cost and efficiency of solar panels.

Things you can do to help make a difference:

- Eat plant-based meals two or three times a week.
- Cut down on beef and lamb.
- Look into changing to solar power.
- Use your car less (unless it's electric) and public transport more (or walk/cycle)
- Consider changing to a renewable energy supplier.

Ann Woolley (ann.woolley.u3a@gmail.com)

Cards and Games

The Cards and Board Games Group that meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month 2pm to 4pm in the SWF Village Hall continues to be a great afternoon of fun.

We have changed the format a little now, we meet at 2pm and the first hour or so we play games as usual then as we break for refreshments we gather around and enjoy a quiz.

We have a great Quiz Master and it wonderful to see the depth of knowledge among the group. I for one have learnt things I didn't know.

We will be having an early Christmas with a Quiz at our November meeting which will be on the 22nd November this is due to not meeting in December.

If anyone would like to join the Cards & Board Games group please contact me by phone on [01245 401015](tel:01245401015) or by email kaysusan6970miles@gmail.com



Few Photos of Our Group

Kay Miles

Find Your Voice

On 13th December, the choir have been invited to sing with the children at Elmwood School. We'll be sharing Christmas music with the youngsters and then going out for lunch at Club Woodham.

We are always looking for new members. No experience necessary, just enthusiasm! We sing at South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10am. Come and sing, laugh and eat cake afterwards.

Shirley

Gardening

On Monday 9th October, members of the Gardening Group took their annual coach trip to a garden. This year we went to Kew Gardens.

Kew houses the world's most diverse collection of living plants. It is the largest UNESCO World Heritage Site and a world leading scientific research centre.

On arrival, we were split into 2 groups for our tours which took us to interesting areas such as the Waterlily House the Hive and the Pagoda.

The weather was very kind, and we all enjoyed the day.



Shirley

Local History

Our September guided walk around Beeleigh was the last event for this year. It was a lovely sunny afternoon for our guided walk with Stephen Nunn. We heard about the history of the canal at Beeliegh Falls, the history of the mill site, up to the fire in 1845 which destroyed the thriving mill built in 1797. Our walk took us past the remaining cottages linked to the former Mill and Beeliegh Abbey. Stephen had arranged for us to go into the grounds of the Abbey to hear more about it's history which was much appreciated.

Thank you for your support this year, I hope you have enjoyed the events we have organised. We will be putting together our programme for 2024 in the next few months and will send out details in the New Year. If anyone has any ideas for places to visit or speakers, please let us know.

If anyone would like to know more about the group, please come and see us at our table at the main meeting.

Kate, Mary and Allen

London Walks

London Walks takes place on the third Wednesday and Fourth Thursday of each month. We meet a Guide at different places in London who will take us on a fascinating two hour walk pointing out many interesting places that you probably have never had reason to know existed. Although the walk lasts two hours you really don't travel very far in each area.

We are coming to the end of our walks for this year and will be starting again in March. I am currently asking for requests of specific areas that people would like to see.

If you would like your names added to the list for these walks, please email your details to me or come and see me at the desk at the main meeting.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

22nd February 2024 there will be a talk at Champions Manor on The History of the City of London from the Romans to modern day.

Mary

rbmb4546@yahoo.co.uk

Paint and Pastels Art Group

Firstly, to say, we have changed the day for our group meetings. We now meet on the 3rd 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 include *drawing or painting negative spaces* (the gaps between objects), *Still Life* and *Abstract Art*.

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'.

Beginners and more experienced artists are welcome.

Below is an example of Abstract Art created at our last meeting:



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 are seeing.

In general, our events are open to all members of SWF u3a. If the number of places is 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 programme for 2023 is now complete and comprised the follow:

- A talk by Maggie Piper titled **Street Art - the things we pass in the street** at Champions Manor Hall
- A visit to the Fry Gallery in Saffron Walden when we learnt about the Great Bardfield Artists, an Essex based group of artists from the 20th century.
- A guided visit to the Alexandra Palace
- A guided visit to the recently renovated Gainsborough's House and Gallery in Sudbury, Suffolk
- A guided tour of the Turner Galleries at Tate Britain.

One of the highlights of the programme was the Gainsborough House visit where we learnt about the life and work of the artist Thomas Gainsborough. The Galleries include exhibitions by other artists with connections to the local area. When we visited there was work by Maggi Hambling and Suzanne Cooper on display, two examples of which are shown below together with a view of the house gardens:



The garden at Gainsborough's House



Appledore by Suzanne
Cooper

Tory by Maggi Hambling



Chris (07946024302)

Strollers

Just a reminder that October was the last walk of this year, and we now take a break until Monday the 25th March 2024.

I would like to thank you all for supporting me throughout the year and I hope you have enjoyed the walks as much as I have. I look forward to meeting up with you again next year.

Jill

Walking Group

The walking group continues to walk right through the winter and will only cancel if the weather is bad. We meet on the first and third Friday of the month at 10 am at the designated start point, and walk anywhere between 5 and 7 miles, normally finishing up at a nearby pub for a well-earned pint. Anyone is welcome to come along and join us but must have appropriate footwear, clothing and stamina. Walks for the next three months are given below.

November

Friday 3rd - Danbury/Sandon (new) Walk - 6.5 miles - Meet in Mayes Lane car park in Danbury for a 10 am start.

Friday 17th - Woodham Walter Walk 5.5 miles - Meet in Lay-by opposite Bell Public House (or nearby) in Woodham Walter just before 10 am.

December

Friday 1st Burnham on Crouch Walk - 6 miles - Meet in the Marina car park just before 10 am

Friday 15th - Woodham Ferrers/Hyde Hall Walk - 6 miles - Meet in the sports field car park in Lodge Road for 10 am start.

January

Friday 5th - Danbury Circular Walk - 7 miles - Meet in Mayes Lane car park in Danbury just before 10 am.

Friday 19th - River Crouch/Stow Maries Walk - 6 miles - Meet in Compass Gardens car park for 10 am start.

Bob (07889949685 or robert.tyas82@gmail.com)

Wine Appreciation Group 2

This quarter we have had our once-a-year members and partners garden event for the August wine tasting slot and were lucky enough again to have fine weather with some 14 bottles of wine to share.

We continue going forward with our quarterly subs now raised to £25 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 and the Chancellor's wine tax increase that came in August has made this change necessary, after 7 years at £20. It also allows to provide for some more expensive wines in the monthly line up. The group fully endorsed the move which currently stands at 18.

In early October nine of the group went on a 4-day trip to Porto in Portugal, where we had a full day tour of the Douro valley with red and white wine tasting and a short trip on the river. We followed, of course, with a tasting afternoon at 3 smaller PORT houses, which also was educational as well as very pleasant. We experienced the different sorts of Port and manufacture.

Below are two pictures of the group that went, all of whom enjoyed the trip, and we are already planning next year's jaunt.



This quarter, we are targeting wines from the Languedoc region of southern France, a region which produces 3 times more wine than the Bordeaux region and more than the whole of Australia.

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

The knowledge within the group is very diverse and that is what makes it enjoyable.

We have a full group; we could take one or two more people.

Just contact me -Jeff Body if you are interested and happy to discuss further detail.

Jeff Body

Wine Appreciation Group 3

Wine group 3 continue to meet in the Players Lounge at the Village Hall on the 2nd Friday of the month.

We are a small friendly group, who are by no means experts, but enjoy our wine and have a nice social afternoon.

Continuing our recent theme, members have been taking turns in presenting their choice of wine for the afternoon. Some have chosen their particular favourites or finds; others have gone off the beaten track to try something a little more unusual or have offered a blind tasting. All have proved to be very enjoyable and great fun.

At or Octobers meeting we had a guest presenter in the shape of the wonderful Mr Gee (Douglas Green). Doug spent 5 years in Australia at a winery working as a cellar boy, (can you picture this??) and then helping build the company wine sales and his knowledge of wine. What a wonderful afternoon we had! Doug's knowledge of wine is fantastic, and his tales and anecdotes had us all captivated making for a super afternoon. He also told us about the Foundation and his plans for a "men's shed" in the village. Allegedly retired, this man is an inspiration in his efforts for the town.

Christmas is approaching and we are giving thought to a meal out for our December meeting and planning next year's program. If anyone would like any more information about the group, please speak to Sheila at a main meeting.



Photos taken at our October Meeting

Sheila

Groups Monthly Meeting

Days of the week		Weeks of the Month			
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Monday	AM	Golfing Book Group 1	Golfing	Golf Paints & Pastels Art Group	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 (NCA) Science & Technology (NCA)	Craft (NCA)	Craft (NCA)	London Walks 2 Craft (NCA)
	PM		French		
Friday	AM	Bowling Walking	Bowling	Bowling Walking Digital Photography (NCA)	Bowling
	PM		Wine Groups 1, 2, &3		Whisky Appreciation
Curry Clique 4th Monday of odd months, Singles Social & Dining as arranged					

(NCA) = Not currently active

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 January 24th, to Bob Tyas at robert.tyas82@gmail.com or deliver to 55 Clements Green Lane, SWF. Alternatively, you can ring him on 07889949685.