

A lovely photo of
Azeleas at Stody Hall.
Many thanks to Jill
Davis for sending it to
us.



Please send in more
photographs. They need
not have anything to do
with groups' activities.
They just have to be
attractive!

FROM OUR CHAIR

Wildlife

A month ago Buzz (Verity's dog) had a screw inserted in his left leg to stabilise a bone. The limping stopped immediately and we have been instructed to take things easy. Lead walks have been the order of the day for several weeks; with several weeks to follow. Not too long now before Buzz is back to running through the undergrowth flushing out the wildlife. Buzz chases anything that moves but breaks off the chase after a few seconds – the thrill is in the chase rather than the catch.

The lead walks are short and we have been walking in Hunstanton Cemetery – it is round the corner from home. These walks are subdued affairs and we are very respectful of the place. On these walks we often encounter deer. Buzz takes a keen interest but does not get too excited as he is unable to chase. He understands the current limits on his activities.

Frankly, I find it amazing and wonderful that we live in such close proximity to these large wild animals. We are lucky to be able to see deer all over the place: Snettisham & Sandringham Woods, Hunstanton Community Centre, Barrow Common, Courtyard Farm... In short everywhere including strolling down the road!

The British Deer Society (<https://bds.org.uk/>) lists six species of deer living wild in Great Britain: Scottish red deer, Roe deer, Fallow deer, Sika deer, Reeves's muntjac, and Chinese water deer. Scottish red and roe deer are native species. All of these species live in one way or another in NORFOLK. We may not have motorways but we do have deer; I know which I prefer. How many different species have you seen?

Buzz's life will be wild once more when he can resume pursuing the local wildlife.

Keep your eyes peeled.

Norman



FROM OUR COMMITTEE

Our Committee Members

Role	Name	email
Chair	Norman Mitchell	chair@hunstantonu3a.org
Vice Chair	Angela Blenkinsop	vicechair@hunstantonu3a.org
Secretary	Virginia Young	secretary@hunstantonu3a.org
Treasurer	Pat Eckersall	treasurer@hunstantonu3a.org
Membership Secretary	Annette Francis	memsec@hunstantonu3a.org
Events Co-ordinator	Verity Jowett	events@hunstantonu3a.org
Webmaster	Ian Holland	web@hunstantonu3a.org
Publicity / Noticeboard	Addie Thompson	publicity@hunstantonu3a.org
Speakers Secretary	Angela Blenkinsop (acting)	speakers@hunstantonu3a.org
Groups Co-ordinator	Jacquie Yaxley	groups@hunstantonu3a.org
IT	Norman Mitchell	it@hunstantonu3a.org

By clicking on any email address in this list, you can email the committee member directly. Remember that you can also contact any member of the Committee by going to the Hunstanton u3a website and clicking on "Contact Us".

If you have an issue or query that you would like discussed at the next committee meeting, or wish to see the minutes of a particular committee meeting, please contact the Secretary with your request along with your full contact details.

Groups Update

The new bird watching group had its first meeting at the Snettisham Coastal park earlier this week and it was a stunning success under the leadership of Derek Bromage. A full report on this can be found further down in this newsletter.

Sadly, two groups (Craft and Flower Arranging) have been forced to close due to the lack of a leader. Any members who are interested in leading either group please let me know.

The newly formed guitar group is still looking for a suitable venue, suggestions welcome.

If you have a skill that you'd like to share with other members then do let me know and we can set up a group.

Many groups still have places available for new members. Please contact the Group Leaders via the website if you wish to join any of these:

Art Appreciation, Arty-Facts, Backgammon, Bird Watching, Book Group 1, Book group 2, Bucket List, Card and Board Games 1, Chess, Climate Change and the Environment, Country Music, Crochet group 1, Crochet Group 3, Cryptic Crosswords, French Conversation, Guitars, Jigsaws, Coffee and Chat, Local History, Mah Jong 8, Military Matters, Outings and Posh Tea, Painting, Petanque, Photography, Pitch and Putt, Poetry, Recorders, Scrabble 1, Singing for Pleasure, Spanish Conversation, Strollers, Sunday Lunch for MOTO, Table Tennis

Jacquie Yaxley Groups Co-Ordinator

Last Call for Computers

We have now delivered and commissioned twelve All-in-One computers and they have been well received by members. There are now the last few available, and an email has gone out to all members with specifications of what the computers are and how much they will cost.

In short, your outlay would be a mere £25 or so, and that would pay for a new keyboard, mouse and a "dongle" which gives the ability to access WiFi, all of which would be supplied with the computer. The PCs have a 23" flat screen. "All-in-One" means that all other necessary hardware is inside the computer.

The most useful programs are already loaded onto the computer. They are all free because they are "open source". If anything ever goes wrong with them, they can be easily re-installed.

To express an interest in this offer please contact Ian Holland at web@hunstantonu3a.org

FROM OUR GROUPS

Art Appreciation

Exhibition At Ely Cathedral



“The best exhibition I have ever seen” was a comment of one of our group and I fully agree. We had a good day out on 14th May, some travelling by car and some by train. The weather was kind as we met in the Almonry garden for coffee and cake before entering the beautiful Ely Cathedral for the textile art exhibition by Jacqui Parkinson of *Threads through the Bible*, a work which took 10 years, which is not surprising as it consists of 44 enormous panels, each almost 3 metres high and up to 4 meters wide and over 25 million stitches!

The artist describing her work says *‘I start simply with antique bed-sheets, which hold their own tales of life and death. Then I gradually build up my stories by quilting the sheets and painting them. Once that is done, I add layers of silk, which I stitch into place using thick black thread and a free motion sewing machine. This allows me to construct my ‘drawings’ line upon line. Then I add gold and metallic leathers as finishing touches, overall creating great richness as a feast for the eye!’*

It's a story in three parts, on the walls of the right hand aisle is the story of the Creation. On the left hand aisle are dramatic moments in the life of Jesus and in the Lady Chapel are spectacular visions from Revelations. Each panel contains so much detail that it is worth allowing plenty of time to look. I was in awe of the beautiful colours and shapes but also of the amazing vision of the artist to describe the Bible in such depth. This exhibition is well worth a visit, but you'll need to hurry as it finishes at Ely at the end of June.

Hazel Denslow



Cromwell's House in Ely



Did you know that Oliver Cromwell once had a house in Ely?

Well, I didn't. It wasn't until we were researching 'what to do in Ely' for something to add to our planned visit to the Cathedral that we found that Oliver's former home was open to the public and it was just a stone's throw from the cathedral.

Cromwell was born in Huntingdon and although some of his family were wealthy he was not and he had to leave Sidney Sussex College in Cambridge when his father died, in order to look after his mother. After marrying Elizabeth and having nine children his fortunes changed when his uncle left him the leases on various properties in Ely. In 1636 he moved his family into 29 St. Mary's Street, Ely. They stayed for just over ten years.

The house has been refurbished to show how it may have looked during Cromwell's time there. The kitchen dates from around 1215 with other parts being built later. The bedroom is said to be haunted and there is a tithe office where Cromwell probably collected the rents from the

properties he had inherited or the tithes and taxes due from the locals. There is a civil war exhibition with interactive displays – a great place to take the grandchildren!

The house is an award-winning visitor attraction with very simple to operate audio guides included in the admission price of £8. Definitely worth a visit if you are in Ely.

Jill Davis

Birdwatching



The newly re-formed Bird Watching Group had its first meeting on June 4th. On a sunny but breezy morning nine members met at the Snettisham Beach Carpark for a walk around the Snettisham Coastal Park.

The first thing everybody heard was the beautiful purring sound of the turtle dove. This was heard many times as the group wandered along the paths. The delightful chiffchaff serenaded us from the start and a spoon-bill flew over just as we left the car park.

Derek certainly knows his birds and along the way he pointed out the sounds and sights of so many different birds including: Turtle Dove, Blackbird, Greenfinch, Wren, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Sedge Warbler, Linnet, Stonechat and the wonderful sight of a Meadow Pipit seen through Derek's scope. At the same time flying overhead was the wonderful sight of both a male and female Marsh Harrier. A Cetti's Warbler was heard but sadly not seen. Buzzards, Swifts, Swallows and Little Egret all were seen flying overhead.

When the group reached the beach there were Oystercatcher, Black Headed Gulls and of course the delightful Ringed Plovers which nest on the beach.

All in all a great couple of hours!

Although we didn't see the turtle dove, Derek took this picture of it a few days earlier.

Jacque Yaxley



FROM OUR MEMBERS

Me and Chess

We are short of material this month so – as your faithful sub-editor – I decided to write about my own interest, which is chess. I'm sure that many of our members are expert, or greatly interested, in something – probably something more important to people's lives than chess is. If you are an expert in something, your fellow u3a members would be delighted to read what you have to say about it. On the assumption that you would like to read about me and chess, and to encourage you to do something similar, here goes...

There are many better chessplayers than me in this world. According to the world chess federation, I am ranked number 529 in England and number 32,080 in the world. However, in my own small way, I have achieved some success in my chess life. At the age of fifteen, I was West of England Junior Champion, at sixteen I was Bristol adult champion, and at twenty I was West of England adult champion.



Then my career took over, and my chess strength gradually declined until coming to Norfolk in 1998. Newly retired (early!), I had far more time for chess and became Norfolk Champion four times between 2000 and 2007 and, finally, I tied first in the British over-65s Championship a decade ago.

During the days when I had little time to play chess, I developed a growing urge to write about it. There are two main monthly magazines in the UK. Also, despite the presence of much free content on YouTube, many chess books are published every year in the English language – probably at least a hundred. America is a large market for chess; most players in Eastern Europe – where chess is considered to be a sport for the masses – read English language chess books avidly; and India has become a huge market for chess books. The current World Champion is a nineteen-year-old Indian.

During the three decades when I was preoccupied with my career, I wrote half a dozen articles for the two national chess magazines, but when I came to Norfolk I found that there was a Norfolk chess magazine! I honed my skills writing dozens of articles for its readers, and then realised that there might be a book in me. In fact, there turned out to be three. A major chess book publisher took me on, and my books sold quite well – particularly in America. All three have appeared over the years in various foreign language editions.

So, did I get rich on writing chess books? The answer is a resounding NO. Despite all this activity and success, the books probably sold no more than 20,000 copies between them. For a single crime novel – let alone across three – that would be considered a relative failure. The market for chess books is big in total, but is tiny in comparison with fiction.

After my third book, events in my private life affected my health, so I stopped writing books, continued to churn out many pieces for the Norfolk chess magazine (which nowadays I edit and publish), and turned to writing articles for one of the national chess magazines. Then came Covid 19.

Boredom drove me to compile an anthology of my writings – which I self-published through Amazon. Then I had an idea for a book aimed at the popular chess market, put the proposition to the world's leading chess book publishing house and was contracted to go ahead. The book (actually two, as the publisher decided to split it into two volumes) should be out early next year.

The market has changed markedly in the twenty-plus years since my three commercial books were released, so I await with some trepidation its reaction.

David LeMoir

Forthcoming Meetings

- 16th June 2025** *Beekeeping* by Judith Evans MBE.
The life cycle of the bee.
- 21st July 2025** *The Castaway Crew*
A performance by this local acapella shanty group.
- August** **No Meeting**
- September** *RNLI* by Kate Craven.
To save lives, education is the key...

QUIZ

Sadly, there is not a quiz this month. I did ask a couple of Group Leaders to provide questions and answers on a topic, but neither have replied. Out of courtesy I always approach the group leader, but they can ask a member of their group to action the request.

I would also appreciate a reply from the group leader and then I would have time to ask another group to help.

Sylvia

FROM OUR EDITOR

Welfare

If you know of any member who is ill or has recently suffered a bereavement please contact Karen, our Welfare member. Karen will then send a suitable card from the u3a. Email welfare@hunstantonu3a.org

Change of Circumstances

If you change your address, telephone number (landline and/or mobile) or email address please ensure that you pass the new details to memsec@hunstantonu3a.org

Newsletter Copy Date

Items for the next newsletter are required by MONDAY 14TH JULY 2025. Please send them to **BOTH** Sylvia at newsletter@hunstantonu3a.org AND David at subeditor@hunstantonu3a.org. You will receive an acknowledgement of your contribution.

Please submit them in WORD, odt (e.g. from Libre Office) as email attachments. If you are including photographs, we need them as separate files – please do not embed them in the document – that causes us problems! No PDFs please.

Thank You to.....

Our thanks to all who have contributed to this month's newsletter. Group Leaders: please encourage your members to tell us about one of your meetings. Please don't leave it to just a few groups to let us know what is happening.