

June 2026

Hunstanton u3a Magazine

learn, laugh, live

Keeping our members in touch

A beautiful glass-backed chair at Island Hall, visited by the Art Appreciation group. See the full report inside.



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

From our Chair

Welcome once again to our monthly magazine. Here we are in June already, nearly halfway through the year and the longest day only a week away!

It is that time of year when we begin going on holiday and enjoying the summer weather. I got caught out at the end of May when I went on a two week holiday around England. The weather was cold and wet when I set off for a college reunion (50 years since leaving!) in Derbyshire so I took an electric blanket, warm pyjamas and lots of jumpers and coats. As I was also doing some walking I thought that I might get drenched each day and I did end up walking in hail and a thunderstorm.

Moving on to walk the Malvern Hills, the weather was changing – cool winds but dry and sunny. Finally arriving in Bromsgrove to walk the Lickey Hills, the weather changed dramatically – sunshine, dry and temperatures of 33 degrees. I got caught out because I had not packed summer clothes and so sweltered in what I had. But what a wonderful thing to see the sun and the landscape bathed in glorious sunshine!

So, are you going on holiday in the next few months? If so, have a lovely time and we will see you on your return. If you look at our Hunstanton u3a website under 'magazines/news' you will find the 'u3a Taster Flip Book Spring 2026'. There are lots of holidays advertised in there that may be of interest. Additionally *u3a getaways* is a new programme of bespoke holidays exclusively for u3a members and friends. Find out more on the [u3a getaways website](#).

Enjoy yourselves and have fun!

Hilary (Joint Chair)

From our Committee

Our Committee Members

Role	Name	email
Joint Chair	Hilary Farrell	chair@hunstantonu3a.org
Joint Chair	Ian Holland	chair@hunstantonu3a.org
Vice Chair	Angela Blenkinsop	vicechair@hunstantonu3a.org
Secretary	Virginia Young	secretary@hunstantonu3a.org
Treasurer	Pat Eckersall	treasurer@hunstantonu3a.org
Deputy Treasurer (co-opted)	Amanda Peacock	deptreasurer@hunstantonu3a.org
Membership Secretary	Margaret Oates	memsec@hunstantonu3a.org
Events Co-ordinator	Verity Mitchell	events@hunstantonu3a.org
Webmaster & Beacon Admin	Ian Holland	web@hunstantonu3a.org
Publicity	Verity Mitchell	publicity@hunstantonu3a.org
Speakers Secretary	Ann McKimm	speakers@hunstantonu3a.org
Groups Co-ordinator	Jacquie Yaxley	groups@hunstantonu3a.org
IT	Norman Mitchell	it@hunstantonu3a.org
Newsletter Editor (co-opted)	David LeMoir	newsletter@hunstantonu3a.org
Long-Standing Member (co-opted)	Sylvia Pratt	

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.

Please note that, whenever a Committee member changes, the email address (and all past and future email correspondence) for their post goes to their replacement. This means that you need to change the entry in **your** email app's address book (or contacts list), otherwise the old name will show up on all future email correspondence!

May 2026 Members' Meeting

The ever-popular Norfolk husband and wife duo, Chanter's Jigge, took us back to the days of our youth with a selection of songs that we used to sing on coach trips, danced and tapped our feet to at community events, and heard on the radio. The pair's extensive knowledge and experience has taken them round Europe but their Norfolk roots ensured that the county has been, and continues to be, well served.

Today's jolly repertoire was accompanied by a song sheet that ensured audience participation. The first song was Cockles and Mussels with Elizabeth on mandola and Malcolm on recorder. The duo melded instruments both medieval and modern in songs that stretched from the seventeenth century to the nineteen fifties.

Traditional Celtic airs were sandwiched between lively English ditties such as Widdicombe Fair.

The awkward wooden body of the chalumeau with its mellow tones contrasted strongly with the familiar sound and shape of a saxophone. The remaining selection of instruments included accordion, keyboard, more recorders and whistle.

Given the afternoon's theme of holiday jollity, it was little



surprise that Elizabeth and Malcolm ended with a rendition of I do like to be beside the seaside. Speaker Secretary Ann McKimm thanked the duo for a very enjoyable session.

Virginia

From our Groups

Military Matters

Outing to Sculthorpe Heritage Centre

Six of our group went out for a trip to Sculthorpe Heritage Centre on the 6th May from two different start points, one Heacham and the other Hunstanton. Hunstanton arrived early and loitered around the car park then a single Heacham member arrived but, being a group, we would wait for the others (I would like to point out how cold the wind was on this day).

After a short while we decided to wait in the Heritage Centre itself. Phone calls were made and it seems that the post code for the centre is a 50 /50 chance of getting you there (you can guess... which 50% our group got). Luckily Michael knows his way around and the rest arrived.

The centre is not normally open Wednesdays so we were very fortunate, thanks to Michael again, and got in along with some American visitors. Although a small museum, it was very interesting – along with the little-known information regarding the ability to house 'A' bombs as well as load them from specially designed pits.

The artifacts on show are outdone by some of the stories, and there was a good report and information on the 1953 flooding to our area and those who helped. The tea and coffee was palatable and the snacks were all based on American-style products.



A word about the picture behind the group in the photograph: Apparently this was a take of the picture of the four horsemen of the apocalypse, using caricatures of serving airmen. This was on the wall of the mess hall for flying officers at Sculthorpe and, when it all closed down, the picture was given to the heritage centre for display. This was a U.S. base and many officers had signed the picture. In fact one of the American visitors there on this visit was a man born in the UK while his father was serving at Sculthorpe and he added his signature underneath his father's.

We all managed to get away together and found our way back to our start points. At least I assume we did, as I haven't had any enquiries from anyone asking where their husband is.

Martin Turner

Art Appreciation Visit to Island Hall

The Art Appreciation Group enjoyed a delightful afternoon visiting the mid-eighteenth century mansion, Island Hall, on the banks of the Great Ouse at Godmanchester.

As we arrived early, we took a stroll to the river and enjoyed a view downstream of the bridge over to the island which gave the mansion its name. Nearby is the “fish staircase” completed in 2022, which enables salmon or trout to climb up the steps to fight their way up river to spawn.

We were greeted by Christopher Vane Percy, who was responsible for bringing this Georgian house back into his family after many years of neglect.



The house, a statement of status and prosperity, was originally built for John Jackson around 1794. The mansion is typically mid-Georgian, built of red brick with stone dressings. A balanced and symmetrical composition, with the street frontage and the garden façade house mirroring each other.

John Jackson's son got into financial difficulties and, in 1804, Island Hall was purchased by Jacob Baumgartner, a Swiss-born merchant but also a British citizen. He, and his descendants, would shape the house's character for generations. Through marriage, inheritance and family connections, the house remained associated with the same extended lineage for over two

centuries. Jacob's wife brought substantial property and family connections of her own. They were not aristocrats in the traditional sense but part of the prosperous professional and commercial classes that flourished during the Georgian period. Yet they lived very much in the style of the country gentry. In the Edwardian period, new rooms were added and possibly the first bathroom in Godmanchester, supplied by Thomas Crapper. During the First World War, anti-German feeling led the family to change their German-sounding surname to Percy, which appeared in their lineage.

In WW2 the property was requisitioned. The post-war years proved even more difficult. The mansion was divided into council flats, and much of the original interiors compromised or obscured. Then, in 1977, a serious fire caused substantial damage.

As a schoolboy in 1957, Christopher saw the house from the river and became captivated by it. Decades later, he was able to buy it and began an ambitious restoration programme. An internationally respected interior designer, he spent decades restoring both the house and gardens, rebuilding the Chinese bridge, recovering lost architectural details and transforming the house. He has recovered family records and possessions relating to the family which are now proudly displayed in the rooms. Today it is the home of his daughter Grace and her family.



Original eighteenth-century panelling survived in the principal reception rooms, lending a sense of continuity with the house's earliest years. But, because of the fire, much of the house has had to be restored but not always as you might expect. There is illusion; what appears to be marble is in fact wood. What appears to be wood is in fact paint effect.

In the dining room Christopher has added, piece by piece over the years, a collection of china, light fittings and furniture of the period. But he has also added to the house other items, some quirky, some for sentiment and some for aesthetic reasons. In the red reception room flashy glass chairs [see photo, left] and table fit in perfectly. In other rooms family pictures, both portraits and photographs, adorn the walls.





In the main hall we were treated to a lovely afternoon tea, with a variety of sandwiches and delicious home-made cake.

Going upstairs we were shown the main bedroom and dressing room. The dressing room was my favourite room, very Bridgerton. Christopher told me that what I thought was stencil was in fact wallpaper which had been cut and pasted to get the effect required.



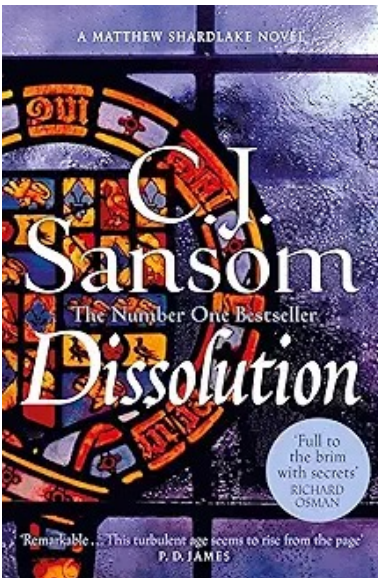
Before we left, some of the group decided to brave the rain and take the bridge to the island.

Linda Nudds

Book Reviews

Book Group 1

Dissolution by **C.J.Sansom** 2003 **4.0/5** ★



This is the first in Sansom's acclaimed Shardlake series, set in the Tudor period. It's 1537 and Anne Boleyn has just been beheaded. Henry VIII is head of the Church and his right hand man, Thomas Cromwell, has begun dismantling the abbeys and monasteries – the Dissolution. He has sent men into the Catholic institutions to seek out any evidence of corruption, financial or moral, so that they can be legally dissolved.

When one of Cromwell's men is murdered in a monastery on the Sussex coast, lawyer Matthew Shardlake is sent by Cromwell to investigate. The febrile atmosphere of the time, where the monks have to watch everything they say (very Orwellian) plus the inaccessibility of the monastery (there's snow and the roads are impassible), add to the difficulty of the investigation. The way Sansom evokes this period – the hardships, living conditions, the attitudes to women, social inequality and the political atmosphere – was regarded by the group as one of the strengths of the book. Shardlake himself is a flawed character, both physically and personally. He has scoliosis, resulting in a hunched back and weakness,

which makes him feel insecure. He is an ardent Reformer and can be inflexible in his attitude, especially towards the monks. But he is dogged and eventually identifies the murderer.

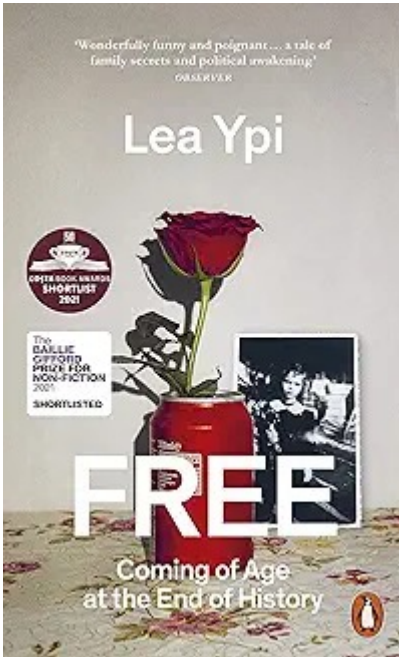
So, interesting times and a complex protagonist. Sansom also weaves historical characters into the story, and what has happened to one of those characters is actually the motive for the murder. A few members of the group found the book slow, one called it turgid, but one member felt that the slowness reflected Shardlake's frustration as the weather conditions slowed his investigation down. A good historical fiction, but if you don't fancy the book, you can find the mini-series *Shardlake* on ITVX and Disney+, starring Sean Bean as Thomas Cromwell.

Julie Barnes

Book Group 2

Free by Lea Ypi Penguin 2021

“The Illusion of Freedom”



“Coming of Age at the End of History”... So describes Penguin’s cover blurb for an astonishing memoir of a girl growing up in pre-1990 Albania – and what happens later.

How many of us have heard of that dystopic little country just outside the former Yugoslavia, at one time the only client state of Mao’s China within the European orbit, roughly 45 miles from Italy and within sight of the twinkling lights of Corfu?

This was the birthplace of Lea Ypi, who had no idea of the history of her parents and grandmother and who went happily to school, joined the Pioneers and whose heroes were ‘Uncle Enver’ (Hoxha) and ‘Uncle Joe’ (Stalin). She writes of her strict teacher, of her father who worked planting trees, of her mother who hated maths but was forced to teach it. And of her grandmother who insisted on speaking to her in French.

Her family life was proscribed by their ‘*Biography*’ which, like a CV today, would dictate what jobs you could do. Her grandfather ‘*graduated*’ from ‘*University*’ at the age of over 70, where his prison guard had made him eat the maths book he had completed in his long confinement. Another great grandfather, a good Muslim in this atheist state,

had jumped out of the window of his apartment crying ‘Allahu Akbar’ to avoid torture. The apartment building had subsequently become a Party HQ.

Lea’s hero, Uncle Joe (Stalin), had had the head of his statue knocked off during a demonstration in 1991 – she was distraught. But as children do, she lived her life within a child’s world without giving a thought to queuing for hours for food, leaving a stone to mark her place in the queue, and pestering the few ‘tourists’ for sweets she knew they would give out. Their family even had a big falling out with their neighbours because this rare object – a Coca Cola can – had been stolen from its pride of place on the mantel piece.

Our group had an intense discussion over the meaning of ‘Freedom’ and the geography and history of this little country whose claim to fame for me were the Chinese broadcasts on medium wave from Radio Tirana. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Albania attempted to change overnight from a communist dictatorship to a ‘democracy’. People weren’t sure what a democracy was, and many did not go out and vote because it was no longer compulsory to turn up and vote for the list of people on a piece of paper – you could stay in bed and save your legs.

Once the confines of Communism were shattered, the language of western democracy took their place; no longer imprisoned in their little state, people migrated to Italy where Lea’s school friend became a prostitute, captured by gangsters. The old rules became the new rules of criminal activity as Albanians sought to emigrate for a ‘better’ life.

It turned out that Lea’s great grandfather had been a former prime minister and justice minister Xhafer Ypi under Mussolini’s fascist protectorate, and on her mother’s side they had been rich landowners. The family had been forced to lie to Lea under communism to protect her.

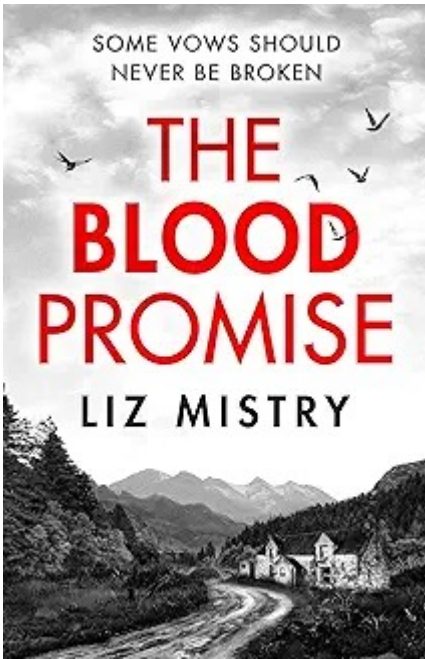
What then, is ‘Freedom’? Lea Ypi is now the Ralph Miliband professor of Politics and Philosophy at the London School of Economics. Our group were unable to come up with an easy answer to ‘Freedom’, but we had great fun in broadening our knowledge of this small slice of Europe, and considering our own position here at an important juncture in the political life and direction of the United Kingdom as we wrestle, as did (and do) the Albanians, over our place in the world of the 2020’s.

Martin Chown

PS We award points for the general reaction to our set books – this one scored 7/8 out of 10, with special reference to the bravery of the subject matter.

Crime Book Group

The Blood Promise by Liz Mistry 3.5/5 ★



The book begins with Imogen Clark waking up on her 16th birthday to find her parents dead at the breakfast table, along with a twisted message from their killer.

Detectives Jazzy Solanki and Annie McQueen join the investigation but the more they discover, the more Jazzy suspects that the killing is a message for her. Jazzy shares the same birthday as Imogen, and believes that this is more than a coincidence. When Jazzy discovers the connection between the killer and the stalker who has been following her for years, she is forced to confront the dark past she was desperate to keep hidden. She must stop at nothing to solve the case, before she becomes the next victim.

I thought the epilogue was very promising because I love a good dark thriller with a helping of blood and gore but unfortunately this book really didn't live up to my expectations. The basic plot was good but the jumping around between the actual plot and Jazzy's backstory became confusing at times.

I did have major problems with the two main characters. At first, I found Queenie really got on my nerves. Her non-stop knitting and abrasive manner were annoying but, once I found out her backstory, I managed to accept, but not like, her. Jazzy was emotionally fragile due to her childhood issues, with an alcoholic mother and absentee father, and had so many PTSD meltdowns and so much self-analysis that it really bogged down the pace of the story. I also had to wonder how two recently demoted and disgraced detectives, carrying so much baggage, could end up virtually in charge of a murder investigation! And, as for their boss (Dick by name and Dick by nature) – a totally unbelievable character.

It became obvious quite early on who the murderer (or was it murderers????) was, with the clue being in the title, but there were quite a few twists and turns before it became clear that the murderer/s had changed names and I for one didn't see that coming!

The plot is not for the faint hearted; there's a surfeit of gore as each murder becomes more and more extreme. To counter this, there is plenty of humour for light relief, although some of the humour was in Glaswegian dialect which I had to look up on a couple of occasions. All throughout the book, it was obvious that Jazzy had a very uncomfortable relationship with the DCS, and it wasn't until the very end that the reason was clarified.

The book was very much like the 'curate's egg', good in parts and some of the group have said they'll probably go on to read the second in the series. One thing's for sure, this book will put you off baked beans forever. Even though it ended on a cliff-hanger, which I suspect won't be resolved in the second or even the third in the series, I won't be reading any more of it.

Jacque Yaxley

From our Members

“Have You Met Someone Famous?”

In the April edition of the u3a newsletter/magazine, David suggested that we write articles for inclusion on various topics. The one that came to mind for me was “Have you met someone famous”. Hence, I will explain below.

The summer I was 16, my best friend and I decided to get a holiday job together. For some reason that I cannot remember, we wrote to all the best hotels in the country asking for work that would also have staff accommodation. The first hotel to come back to us with an offer of three months work as what in those days was called a chambermaid, was The Marine Hotel in Troon, Ayrshire. It is a

beautiful hotel set on The Royal Troon eighteen-hole golf course by the sea.

As two very naive girls, we travelled by train to Edinburgh and then on to Troon. We arrived full of excitement to be met by a formidable lady called Miss Featherstone who was Head of Housekeeping. We were allocated our rooms in the staff accommodation. My room didn't have a window. We were given our uniforms and told to shadow one of the older, fulltime, Chambermaids to learn the ropes. Our hours were 6am - 2pm and 6pm - 10pm. We had two days off each week.

Having completed our training, we were allocated a floor and number of rooms to look after. My first evening shift alone started very badly. The Celtic Football team were staying for a couple of nights with their wives/partners. I was summoned to Miss Featherstone's office early the next morning as a player's wife reported she had had her very expensive engagement ring stolen. I was prime subject and had to account for what I had done in their room the previous evening. I will keep this part of the story short because all I had done was change their sheets, while they were at dinner, because they had clearly been in bed all afternoon!! Unbeknown to me, the engagement ring was in the sheets I had sent to the laundry for washing that evening. The ring was found and when I finished my shift that afternoon, I sobbed with relief in my miserable room.

Now to meeting someone famous. There was great excitement as a special guest was checking into the hotel one day. It transpired that he was going to stay on my floor but, as there were four other chambermaids working on that floor, a 'straw' was drawn to see who was going to look after him. I won. You can imagine how popular that made me with the other ladies.

I was going to look after Sean Connery for a whole week. I started each day by opening his bedroom curtains, delivering his breakfast to his room and making sure the room was immaculate. To start each day, with the sight of Sean sitting up in bed as I made his tea and made polite conversation about the weather, was quite a challenge for me, particularly as he sat up in bed each morning without a pyjama top on and had a fabulous muscular, very manly hairy chest.

He was absolutely charming and to this day he has always been my favourite James Bond.

Over the years if anyone has asked me if there was anything I would like to tell them about myself that they might not guess, I always say, "Well, I did look after Sean Connery in the 'bedroom department' for a week when I was 16". It always gets the same response...

Kim Peach



Source: Wikipedia

Pantos and Other Performances

I was three or four years old when I saw my first pantomime. In a village hall, way out in the Metheringham Fens, in Lincolnshire, a village bizarrely called Sot's Hole.

This was around the end of WW2 and my dad was still away with the army in India. Mum would take me, via the train from Lincoln and a long walk down the bank of a drainage dike to where my great-uncle Bill lived, a tied cottage belonging to the farm where he worked. Just before Christmas it was pig-killing time and Mum would go and help the housekeeper (known as Auntie Ethel) to 'put away' the pig – that is, to turn it into joints of meat, sausages, brawn and crackling (pork scratchings, much better than bought ones). They cleaned the pig's intestines (a smelly job!) and turned the tubes into sausage skins. They boiled the head to make brawn – the teeth would float up and dance on the bubbling water. Lovely! The saying goes that you can make use of every part of a pig, but obviously they forgot about the teeth. I suppose you could make a necklace with those. If you really wanted.

But I digress... Back to the world of theatre. I can still picture the little village hall, where the locals performed their play. What excitement there was. But all I remember of the show is them singing, 'There's a hole in my bucket, dear Liza, dear Liza...'. First time I'd heard it. Magic. I was smitten.

At junior school in Lincoln I took part in the usual Christmas plays. I was Cinderella one year, and went home in tears when told I might have to kiss the prince – some snotty lad of eight or nine. Another year I was Mary in the Nativity play. Somewhere there's a picture of me, sweet and demure in my blue robe and head-dress, with filthy old plimsolls showing under my skirts!

My senior school (Lincoln Christ's Hospital Girls' High School, on the hill just below the cathedral) didn't have a drama group but I sang in the choir and we entered various festivals. I was also in our chapel choir, my dad being choirmaster with a wonderful baritone voice, and my mum was a strong soprano. My sister and I joined in. I also wrote plays, often with songs, starring me, my sister and various cousins who lived nearby.



Inside the Theatre Royal Lincoln
Source: Theatre Royal website

Lincoln has its wonderful Theatre Royal on Clasketgate. I remember seeing several musical shows there, including 'White Horse Inn' and 'The Mikado'. My dad had a friend in the Lincoln Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society (LAODS), some of whose productions we went to see. And when I was sixteen I joined them and was in the chorus of 'The Merry Widow'. That was enormous fun. We did two weeks at the Theatre Royal.

As a family, we went all the way to Nottingham one year to see a bigger panto, with Cherry Lind as the Principal Boy (remember her?). And one of the cinemas occasionally had stage shows, of which I particularly remember seeing Michael Holliday ('Some day I'm going to write, The story of my life') I was fifteen and madly besotted.

Around the same time, my future husband was with the RAF in Aden (now in the Yemen) and, as he later told me, *'for some long-forgotten reason, I found myself involved with organizing Combined Services Entertainment (CSE) shows – which used to be ENSA (Every Night Something Awful, as it was fondly known; think 'It Ain't Half Hot, Mum' and you'll get the idea). The stage was under cover but the audience sat in the lido area, under the open sky. Not that it mattered – it only rained once when I was in Aden, and on that day everyone went out and stood in the downpour fully clothed, getting soaked and loving it. What bliss!*

'I had a good crew of volunteers to help with setting up for the shows. Apart from the stacks of chairs to be manhandled down from the stage and arranged in neat rows, we had to set out the lighting and sound equipment, all at the double since there wasn't much time between the closing of the lido and the start of the show, with the star usually anxious to begin rehearsing. The CSE shows had professional entertainers, some of them big names at the time. Most of them were appreciative of our efforts and co-operated in a friendly way. It was great to be involved and to meet all the 'turns', famous and not-so.



Harry Secombe
Source: Wikipedia

'I particularly remember Harry Secombe and Cardew 'The Cad' Robinson, who were both delightful. Comedian Stan Stennett proved a bit more difficult: keyed up before his show, he couldn't understand why I asked him to delay starting his rehearsals on stage until we had cleared all the chairs.

'But I need to get on! I need to rehearse!' he kept insisting.

'You'd be able to start sooner if I didn't have to stand here arguing with you,' said I.

'After the performance, the artistes were hosted at supper by members of one of the Messes. The best suppers were at the Corporals' Mess at Steamer Point, since some of the corporals worked in the kitchens at various other Messes and could take the excess food, so

their guests always ate well and enjoyed themselves.'

Yes, Chris was a theatre fan, too.

In 1964, with our two-year-old Andy, Chris and I moved to RAF Gatow, in Berlin, while the city was still divided (an interesting time). Some of Chris's colleagues were planning to put on a pantomime and somehow got wind that I had had a go at a version of Aladdin – I'd made it a romance rather than a giggle-fest. They wanted me to be involved in the project but at that time I was rather shy, not to mention heavily pregnant with our second son, Kevin; so I handed them my script and saw no more of it until it was produced. They had turned my love story into a rather rude traditional panto. Of course they had. The audience loved it.

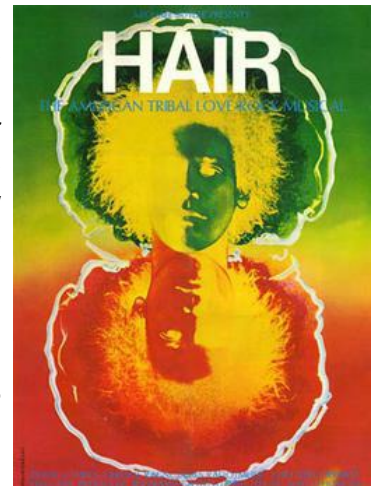
Incidentally, the aforesaid Kevin later also joined the RAF and during one tour in war-torn Afghanistan he too wrote and produced a panto: 'COMKAF and the Beanstalk'. The acronym stands for Command HQ at Kandahar Airfield, which is where they were stationed with the field hospitals. His cast were of various nationalities, including some who had never even heard of panto and found it mystifying, but they joined in with gusto and the entertainment went down a treat, I'm told. Even the CO enjoyed being the butt of some of the jokes. It gave some much-needed light relief amid the horrors of that war.

Sorry, getting side-tracked again...

Back in England, I wrote a couple of Christmas plays for my Mum and the ladies of her Methodist chapel, then Chris's sister (who ran the WI drama group in Heacham) asked me to try one for her. It didn't win any cups at the One-Act Drama Festival but it was wonderful to see it being properly produced.

Through our married lives we went to see a show or a play whenever we could, occasionally in Norwich but more often in London – we saw 'Hair' way back when, and later the original 'Rocky Horror Show' with our teenage sons; there was 'The Nutcracker' ballet; 'Der Rosenkavalier' at the Royal Opera House, with Kiri te Kanawa; 'La Cage aux Folles'; and we saw 'The Phantom of the Opera' twice in London, a few years apart, because we both loved it. Live theatre is such a joy.

Later in life I wrote and produced several plays on the amateur stage and appeared in a lot more while Chris and I were with the Princess Players in Hunstanton in the 1990s. We always enjoyed a chance to get into costume, for plays or fancy dress events. Last time I dressed up was as a witch at a New Year party in 2014, six months after Chris died. That was a rather manic occasion, as some of you will understand.



Source: Wikipedia

A couple of years later, while I was visiting son Andy and his family in the States, they rented a house on Cape Cod for a week. The weather was fantastic, the scenery amazing, the beaches and the sea... what memories it all left me. However, one of the best of those Cape Cod evenings was when Andy and I, with my teenage grandson Ben, saw a production of King Lear in the atrium outside a modern monastery. It was spellbinding, especially when the full moon suddenly rose behind the building and hung there in the sky while poor old Lear went mad below.

As you may have gathered, I love live theatre, wherever it may be found. And it all began back in 1944/5, a panto in Sot's Hole village hall, way out in the fens of darkest Lincolnshire.

Mary Mackie

Dementia is not the end of the world

When my husband was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2020, I was not surprised as I had watched him starting to show signs for some three years prior to this.

This dreadful disease put an end to our happy retirement dreams of an adventurous old age. He had to give up driving, we sold our campervan and holidays were cancelled as he would frequently get lost and become agitated in strange surroundings.

Throughout all this, he remained his usual loving self to me and our dogs. We had met when I was just 16 and have been married now for 55 years. Our marriage has had its ups and downs as most marriages do, but through it all we've never doubted our love for each other.

In December 2023 he had a fall, and ended up in hospital, and was then discharged into a care home as he needed more care than I could provide at home. Gradually his illness has progressed and he is not now mobile and although he talks it is usually impossible to understand what he is saying. He calls me "Dad", but he knows I'm his wife, we hold hands and he's always pleased to see me on my regular visits. Today he quite clearly said "I love you" which made me cry and the years fell away.

My reason for writing in this vein is to tell you all that while Alzheimer's is of course a dreadful illness and has a tremendous impact both on those who suffer from it and those who love them, but somewhere inside the pitiful shadow, the person you love is still there and sometimes he/she will shine through and you can see the person you've loved for years.

He's still the dark handsome youth with the sexy 'Mick Jagger' body I fell in love with all those years ago, and the man I have loved and relied on throughout our long marriage. The man who worked so hard and so long in our early years together to save for our first house, and went without a car for three years while we furnished our home. The man who looked after me through illnesses and was a constant support. The man who cried with me when we found out we couldn't have children, but poured all his love into me and our dogs. Alzheimer's has taken away so much, but it hasn't taken away our love.

Should a similar thing be happening to you or your loved one, I'm not telling you that all will be a bed of roses – it won't be, but love endures, so be strong and treasure each little ray of sunshine and happy, funny moment until the sunlight finally fades forever. My one hope is that a cure for this dreadful affliction is around the corner and the future will be brighter for those in the earlier stages and those not yet affected by it.

Mariana Koziol

Useful New Bus Routes for Hunstanton

Monday 1st June was when Hunstanton had two new bus routes added to the four other routes to Kings Lynn and I do hope members will find them useful – for instance if you live by the lower areas near the sea, you can now get a bus up to the library and the Doctors' surgery, which will save the walk up the hill.

The 33A starts at the Bus Station in an anti-clockwise direction and stops at Oasis Way, Lavender Chase, Lyndhurst Court, goes via Park Road on to the Cromer Road just by the surgery car park, then continues along past the new houses and turns down Lighthouse Lane and the coast road back to the Bus Station.

Stay on the bus and you can get off at Tescos, but this bus turns into the 33B and goes to Ringstead and to Old Hunstanton and then back via the coast road to the Bus station.

At the moment these routes are two-hourly, Mondays to Fridays, but that is better than nothing, and if they are well used then hopefully Lynx will think about increasing their frequency! SO PLEASE USE THEM

Jilly Hall

To obtain details of the 33, 33A, 33B and 33C services, click [here](#)



Nostalgia at its Best!

In the 1990's, my husband Ian was a publishing director with a major company in Peterborough launching a number of national, special interest magazines and I was working part-time as a clerical officer with BT in the telephone billing department. We were both approaching our fifties when Ian had the opportunity to run his own magazine and, around the same time, BT were making a lot of voluntary redundancies and so I decided to leave.

The magazine was called *Best of British* (BoB) and was a celebration of everything British past and present.

At that time the magazine was published every two months and Ian, working from home, was publisher, editor and sales and marketing manager! My function was to deal with the administrative side of things including the accounts, subscriptions, reader offers and a very large postbag.

After a couple of years, and the magazine beginning to prosper, we decided to take a chance and publish it monthly. This increased the workload greatly as deadline day was now every four weeks and the editorial content was enormous. Holidays became a thing of the past.

We moved to a small office in our village and took on our first member of staff, a young mother who lived locally. I was still involved in supporting her with all aspects of the job. My eldest son also joined us as advertising sales manager and proved to be a great success in increasing revenue and helping the magazine to grow. The magazine was on sale in newsagents such as WHSmith and we also had a healthy subscription base in the UK and some copies going as far as Australia, New Zealand and America.

I became Jill of all trades, dealing with the accounts, wages, subscriptions, reader offers and anything else that was needed. I was also the office cleaner in the beginning! The post we received from readers also took up a lot of time on a daily basis.



Ian with the magazine(s)



Heather on the Best of British stand

Over the next few years, we moved to larger premises and employed seven more members of staff in editorial sales and admin roles. I often helped out with the training for the admin staff. I was also on hand if anybody was on holiday, off sick or during busy periods. Christmas was always very hectic as subscriptions were often given as presents. We also produced our own calendar and, along with nostalgic music cassettes, mugs, flags, tie pins, cufflinks and pin badges, there was no rest for the wicked!

One of our main goals was to increase the circulation without resorting to expensive promotional costs. To this end we bought a small marquee and, with our caravan, spent many

weekends in the summer at different events such as steam engine rallies, Christmas markets and county shows. Some of our most memorable were events which the magazine sponsored at the British Motor Museum, Crich Tramway Museum, Duxford Aviation Museum and Blenheim Palace where we managed to sell out of magazines!

However, our most successful events were 1940s re-enactments which had become very popular and where we took along Ruby, our cherished 1937 Austin Seven. Every year we exhibited at two of the largest ones – North Yorkshire Moors Railway and Chatham Dockyards –



Best of British at Gaydon

along with many others. Sandringham Flower Show was also very successful. This meant a seven-day week for Ian for most of the summer but we both enjoyed it and were able to meet many of our readers who treated us like old friends. The only downside was the two of us trying to put up a large marquee in the pouring rain or a howling gale. Much better when the weather was good.

One of the perks of running the magazine were the many press trips that took us all over the country, visiting some very interesting attractions. For several years we went to the Chelsea Flower Show on press day when many celebrities were there. Our most unforgettable press trip was on the QE2 from Southampton to New York and back, a total of twelve days. As Ian was writing an article about the trip, he was given a guided tour of the bridge, engine rooms and the kitchens. We had a wonderful time, and it helped to make up for our curtailed holidays.

Something we were very proud of was to support Canine Partners, a charity that provided assistance dogs for disabled people. Ian ran his 7th and last London Marathon to raise funds to sponsor and train Ivor Bob, a Labrador puppy named after the magazine. Many of our readers contributed to fund-raising and, when he completed his training, Bob went to help a disabled man living in Sussex.

Fifteen years of running Britain's best-selling nostalgia magazine seemed to pass in the blink of an eye and, though it felt quite daunting at the beginning, it was probably the best decision we could have made leaving us with many happy memories.

As we neared our 65th birthdays, we were approached by a large publisher who was keen to acquire the magazine and we took the decision to sell and retire to live in Hunstanton.

Best of British magazine is still being published by a Lincolnshire company but perhaps not the family affair it once was.

Heather Beacham



Ian with Ivor Bob

Beat the Scammers

Following on from last month's information, this time I'm covering a specific type of fraud as well as giving you the update on the scams reported to Trading Standards in the last few weeks.

Banking and Card Fraud – Cards and Contactless Payment

With the increasing use of banking apps on smartphones and tablets, although it's easy and everyone seems to be using them, you must still be careful to protect yourself when you are using the app. Your personal details and passwords must be protected to stop criminals from accessing your account. For example, if you are speaking to your bank on the phone and they ask for your passcode, you are certainly speaking to a scammer and not your bank.

Ways to Protect Yourself

- Choose your password carefully – long passwords are more difficult to crack and should always contain capital letters, numbers and symbols e.g. %, *, £. Here's a tip from me – when you decide on your password, write it down first in your password book. It seems obvious but there have been times when I entered my new password, got it accepted and thought I'd remember it. Then I found I couldn't remember where the capitals were and was it a \$ or a £ and where did I put it.
- Always keep banking apps up to date.
- In public places be sure to shield any PINs when in logging in and don't use public Wi-Fi for banking as it may not be secure.
- Always log out of your banking account or app. Just closing the app, web page or turning off your device may not be sufficient.
- Never share your security codes with anyone unless you know and trust the person and there is a good reason for telling them.

- If you get a phone call from your bank, ask for a reference number, hang up and wait for a few minutes before calling them back using a number you know is safe e.g. on the back of your credit or debit card or the one listed on your bank statement.

Recent Scams in Norfolk from Trading Standards

The most popular scams which come up nearly every month are cold callers offering to fix your roof or do work in your garden. Others are:.

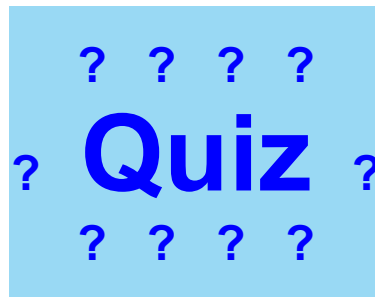
- Cold callers offering to remove spray foam insulation.
- Fake anti-virus software emails and emails from B T and DVLA.
- Fake telephone calls offering pendant alarms.
- Text messages from Barclays Bank or the Financial Conduct Authority.

Stay Safe

If you don't know the person who knocked on your door, on no account let them into your house. Check the back door is locked before answering the front door.

If you feel you are being pressured, remember you do not have to make up your mind on the spot. Say No Thanks or that you have to discuss it with a family member. If at any time you feel uncomfortable or intimidated Call 999 or Norfolk Police on 101.

Sue Hutcheson



Questions to do with Trees

by Carol Gibb

1. Celestial bodies orbiting the sun
2. District in east London part of Tower Hamlets
3. Actor who played Sir Humphrey in TV's Yes Minister
4. The leader of the band of rabbits who leave their home to found a new warren in Watership Down by Richard Adams
5. A receptacle containing sickness, death and many other unspecified evils which were then released into the world the only thing left was hope
6. An English, Welsh and Irish public holiday, observed annually on 29 May, to commemorate the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in May 1660. It was a public holiday at one time, but now is usually informally celebrated in some areas.
7. A system of memory training which gave rise to a card game in which matching pairs must be selected from memory from the cards laid face down
8. A collective noun for articles such as stockings, socks, and tights etc.
9. To express an opinion
10. Song sung by Ko-Ko in Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado
11. A craftsman who joins metals together using heat
12. A cord or string with a weight attached to determine the vertical on an upright surface e.g. a wall
13. A book by Agatha Christie featuring Hercule Poirot. Its title comes from a song in Shake

speare's Twelfth Night.

14. Mr Blobby used to use this substance on guests he didn't like in Noel Edmonds House Party
15. An experienced runner that runs at a set speed in a race, typically a long-distance event. This helps runners finish at their desired time.
16. Member of a borough council
17. Small keyboard instrument, an early form of Harpsichord used primarily in Baroque music
18. Position of the person winning the gold medal
19. A horse of reddish-brown colour, with mane and tail the same or slightly lighter
20. First name of actor in Blackadder who also played Mr Bean

Answers are at the end of this Magazine

Forthcoming Meetings

All meetings start at 2:00pm

- 15th June** **Ghosts of the Norfolk Broads**, a talk by Wally Webb. Tales and fables that happen at the water's edge across the Broads.
- 20th July** **Antarctica** by David Pinion. He first went to Antarctica in 2023 and his talk his experiences and impressions of this incredible continent.
- August** No meeting
- 21st September** **My Creative Journey in Fashion** by Amanda Sutherland. Film, television and theatrical costume design, and an accessories business...

For more detailed information about these meetings, please visit the Events page of the Hunstanton u3a website: <https://hunstanton.u3asite.uk/events/>

Admin...

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

Magazine Copy Date

Items for the next magazine are required before **MONDAY 13th JULY 2026**. Please send them to David at newsletter@hunstantonu3a.org. You will receive an acknowledgement of your contribution. Please submit them in WORD or odt (e.g. from Libre Office) as email attachments. Or you can simply type your text into an email, and I will extract and format it for publication. **No PDFs** please.

Photographs are more than welcome, on their own or accompanying articles. Just attach them to an email.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue.

More please!

Answers to the Quiz

	Answer	Tree		Answer	Tree
1	Planets	Plane	11	Welder	Elder
2	Poplar	Poplar	12	Plumb line	Plum
3	Nigel Hawthorne	Hawthorn	13	Sad Cypress	Cypress
4	Hazel	Hazel	14	Slime	Lime
5	Pandora's box	Box	15	Pacer	Acer
6	Oakapple day	Oak	16	Alderman	Alder
7	Pelmanism	Elm	17	Spinet	Pine
8	Hosiery	Osier	18	First	Fir
9	Opine	Pine	19	Chestnut	Chestnut
10	Tit willow	Willow	20	Rowan Atkinson	Rowan

That's All Folks!