

**Welcome** to the warmer weather and our latest (and my last – see below) Newsletter!

A note from the chair

The sun is shining, flowers are blooming, it seems that we are finally entering the warm weather season and our joints breathe a sigh of relief. We should be looking forward to the bright, sunny uplands of the future at this time of the year. However, I must accept that Ken has decided to step down as editor of the Chatterbox after many years of putting together a key link holding our community together. I would like to thank him publicly for the work he has put into this newsletter. Having previously edited a newsletter for another charity, I do understand the amount of work and stress that goes into producing something like this and can assure Ken that I understand his desire to hand it over. There are some ideas floating around as to who, what and how the newsletter will continue, the only certainty at time of writing is that it will change.

Another change that has been floated is the idea of moving our open meeting back by thirty minutes. This got a lot of support and perhaps I shouldn't have been so quick to speak up. We obviously need to clear this before it is possible. That means getting agreement from the KEC staff to move our reservation, and deal with the speakers who have already been booked – and Brian has been extremely efficient in booking speakers up to the middle of next year. They were told that they would have an hour and promised they could leave by 12:00 noon. I'm sure that for some it will not be a problem to thirty minutes late, but we must bear in mind that they have other commitments and some need to leave on time. More on this in following issues as things get cleared up with everyone.

If you missed our previous open meeting, you missed a great talk by Mark from the Museum of Armed Police. He gave a fascinating talk about the history, training, and work that the various branches of armed police carry out. Between the protection of royal family members, politicians, and potential terrorist targets, we don't see them that frequently in the Fenland, however the museum is in Chatteris and Mark, based in the museum, is the representative of the police firearms association federation, which he founded in 1996. He demonstrated various weapons, which he assured us were not loaded.

Coming up:

- 08 June: Committee Meeting at the KEC
- 16 June: Open Meeting
- 24-25 June: Chatteris 1920's fete
- 08 July: Manea Gala

More information, of course, on everything we are busy planning, organising and doing can be found on our website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/chatteris/>.



Our speaker for this month will be:

## Chris Carr - Life on the Edge: The Bronze Age in the Fens



Last year Chris came and captivated us with her talk about medieval medicine and folklore. She is a professional historian and re-enactor with an interest in many different periods of history. Chris is returning to tell us about life in the Fens during the Bronze Age, a topic for which she is well equipped as after finishing her MA she worked at Flag Fen Bronze Age Centre for over 10 years developing and delivering the Education programme before leaving to deliver talks and workshops on a range of historical subjects. Her main interest is in social and domestic history and her talks reflect this rather than the doings of kings and politicians.

Come along to the KEC at 10am on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June to hear more.

### TRIPS

Where has the year gone, already we are thinking about Christmas..... there will be signup sheets available for the following proposed trips, as usual costs will be based on 30 people signing up and going.

In August at day at the seaside at Wells, coach only £24.00, in October we have Wimbledon – still needs 16 more people, November planning to go to Burghley House Christmas Fair on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November, and December a bit up in the air at the moment but will let you know soon.....watch this space as they say.

**Sandringham Flower Show - Wednesday 26th July is now fully booked. For those who have booked please can you bring £28.00 payment to the Open Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June**

Day at the Seaside - Wells - Saturday 12th August leaving Furrowfields at 10.00am and returning approx. 4.00pm - Pack your bucket and spade, pennies for the arcades, sunscreen and sunglasses and join us for a trip to the seaside. We still have seats available for this trip so please put your name down, coach cost is £24.00 per person, and we will be taking payment at the June Open meeting. There will be plenty of room for buggies and walkers on the coach and for all your sticks of rock to bring home.  
For more information contact Jan ( )



Princess River Cruise and Lunch – There are still several people who need to pay for this, please do so at the Open meeting. There will also be a list with your name on to make your choice for the main meal, the options are Roast Pork, Roast Chicken, Stuffed Pepper filled with stir fried veg and savoury rice or Vegetable Lasagne. Dessert is Black Forest Gateau and cream followed by tea or coffee. Any questions please ask a member of the team or contact Jan on website

If you have any suggestions or ideas you would like the committee to look at please let us know.

## GROUP NEWS

### **WALKING HERE (Group B)– Brian Windsor**

May 2023

Yet again our walk was dry in this rather wet spring. On our walk this month we walked out down the old railway line to Pocket Park. We walked up through Pocket Park and up the gravel lanes to come out onto London Road. After walking down Wood Street we turned down Victoria Street to look at the pair of semi-detached houses built from stones recycled from old abbey buildings. Further down the road we noted the wall part built out of very old stones recovered from the priory with colouring that showed the impact of fire and suggests these stones could date from the early abbey which burnt down in 1312. Before returning to our starting point we stopped at the site of the Devil in Market Hill.



We are a group who enjoy sharing our knowledge of Chatteris and its history during these gentle strolls around the town and if this appeals to you come and join us on our walks to explore Chatteris, its buildings and its history. During the winter months we will always be walking on firm paths within the town.

### **WALKING THERE – John Parry/Brian Windsor**

May 2023

Our May walk was a 4.6 miles circular walk from Aldreth. We started down the track of the causeway built by William the Conqueror in his pursuit of Hereward the Wake down to the River Great Ouse which we followed on the Flood bank for 1.8 miles. Turning away from the river we followed a deeply rutted farm track to reach a concrete road which had been made by POW's in WWII. This road returned us back to the cars. After changing out of our boots we retired to Normans house where Norman and Linda provided refreshments while we sat in their delightful garden. A very pleasant and relaxing end to this months walk.



It is Spring renewal and we are changing the format. Time for more people to join the group and encourage us to read different things.

At our May meeting, we discussed "**The Kite Runner**" by Khaled Hosseini.

Published in 2003, the Kite Runner tells the story of Afghanistan from independence through Russian occupation to the Taliban dictatorship through the memories of Amir and his friendship with Hassan, a servant of the same age. It received the South African Booker Prize in 2004 and "Reading Group Book of the Year" in 2006 and 2007.

The group gave the book an average score of 8.1/10 with a high scores for how gripping the book was. One of the questions that we score is how relevant is this book to your environment or life; it should be expected that a book about Afghanistan did not rank high on this – otherwise the average score would have been higher. This gripping book leads us through a (biased) view of Afghanistan through the Russian invasion in 1979 and the subsequent takeover by the Taliban. The book was banned in the USA for promoting Islam and in various Islamic countries for denouncing it.

Some of the comments raised during our discussion included (no spoilers):

- The main protagonist is not likeable
- Extremely well-written book, though in places painful to read
- A country ravaged by war and greed and religious fanaticism and how it affects the boy's family
- Heart-breaking, thought provoking, uplifting
- Cleverly interwoven plot; when the truth comes out the first part can be read in a completely different light
- Interesting insights into Afghan culture and how racism is taken for granted

## **8<sup>th</sup> June**

Our next meeting, in June, will discuss Aldous Huxley's "**Brave New World**".

Written in 1931, this book is very contemporary in some of the topics it covers. It discusses the trade-off between happiness and freedom of choices. It was banned in Ireland from the time it was published for "anti-religion, anti-family, and blasphemous content". It is still the third book on the list that Americans most want to ban for Insensitivity, offensive language, racism, sexually explicit content and, as one American parent said "the novel's dystopian setting disallows students from understanding ethical citizenship and morality."

## **Later...**

We will continue to meet every 2nd Thursday of the month until June to discuss books that our members recommend or want to discover, whether they are banned or not

8<sup>th</sup> June: Brave New World - Aldous Huxley

7<sup>th</sup> July: A Passage to India – E. M. Forster

We had another fun, information and exercise packed meeting this month.

We learnt from our speaker Sarah why the Mediterranean diet is particularly good for people with arthritis due to being mainly whole foods, fruit and vegetables, oily fish and olive oil.

Sarah explained what makes up a healthy balanced diet and why keeping your BMI below 24.5 takes the pressure off your joints. She finished with a fun quiz which new group member Patricia won.

Lesley has been investigating whether Covid jabs or having Covid exacerbates arthritis and joint pain in general. A reply from Arthritis Action's medical advisor confirms it to be true along with other viruses and infections. What to do with the information is for another day.

Our fitness must be improving because Sarah upgraded those who wanted to, to some standing exercises behind a chair for part of her session. We're getting better but I don't think we'll be troubling the couch to 5k brigade any time soon.

### **Chatterbox Newsletter**

As mentioned earlier, I am stepping down as editor after some 4-5 years on & off editing Chatterbox so we are now appealing for someone to take over the reins. You do not need to be a committee member, just have some basic Word editing skills. It has been suggested that we move from the current format to a smaller 2 page 'bulletin' most months with a full edition every 3 or 4 months, which should cut down the workload. If anyone wants to give it a go please speak to me or Phil Green or any committee member.

Thank you to those of you who bothered to read it!, and to all who contributed over the years, it has been a pleasure reaching out to everyone.

Ken

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Chair:	Peter Leeson	Vice Chair:	Ken Robson	Trips / Theatre	Jan Fieldhouse
Secretary:	Jan Fieldhouse	Membership	Terry Bosworth	Publicity:	Jan Bradford
Treasurer:	Lesley Gibbs	Groups:	Georgina Plumb	Welfare	Gabi Leeson
Webmaster:	Phil Green	Speakers:	Brian Windsor	John Parry	Caroline Hopper