



Deeping St. James

Issue No.230

# The Deepings u3a

Reg. Charity No: 1166782

## NEWSLETTER

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Market Deeping

FEBRUARY 2022

### THE GOOD TIMES ARE RETURNING!



Members of the Thursday Walking Group once again enjoying lunch after their walk. Guess who like the deserts best!! Report page 5

### 'MARGARET'S MUSINGS'



Hello again everyone,

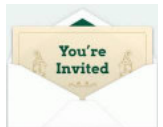
I write this with a view from my window of the rooks circling and coming to roost in a neighbour's mighty Horse Chestnut tree. Soon all the birds will be nesting in our gardens and the countryside. Many of us will enjoy encouraging and supporting the birds.

I wonder if some of you have been playing Wordle (six chances to guess a word by a process of elimination). It's a word game that's fun, usually quicker than a crossword and certainly quicker than a game of Scrabble!

While looking forward to seeing many of you at the monthly meeting, I also send best wishes.

*Margaret* (Chair.)

### Now two invitations:



#### 1. From the Science Group

We have booked an external speaker for our meeting on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March. Mr Colin Ray will present "Talking Machines – the history of recorded sound" and will have a number of artefacts to show us. The meeting will be in either the Learning Room or the Main Hall of the Deepings' Community Centre, depending on the level of attendance. There will be a charge of around £3 per head, again depending on the numbers attending. The meeting will start at the usual time of 2pm. If you are interested in attending, then it would be useful if you could let Garth Perry know on [g.perry985@btinternet.com](mailto:g.perry985@btinternet.com), so that we have sufficient biscuits available!

#### 2. From the Jazz, Swing and Big Band Group

Here is an invitation to anyone with a liking of Jazz, Swing or Big Band music—or you might like to find out a little bit more about the music. If so, this friendly group would be ideal. Please email [phil.jones8@btinternet.com](mailto:phil.jones8@btinternet.com).

### PROPOSED COACH TRIP 16th AUGUST TWO GARDENS OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



I am proposing to organise a coach trip to see the garden at Coton Manor and another (yet to be decided) on 16th August. Before I commit to booking the coach, I need to have some idea of likely numbers.

The gardens will be in full summer colour and refreshments are available. This should be a very good day out. We will leave at about 9.00 am and return by about 6.00 pm.

Please let me know by email: [eddieandchris@trebartha.f9.co.uk](mailto:eddieandchris@trebartha.f9.co.uk). More details will follow once I have some idea of the interest.



### Committee Members 2021/2022

Chair	Margaret Beardshaw
Secretary	Elaine Batchelor
Treasurer	Anne Burton
Deputy Treasurer	Stuart Wilson
Membership Secretary	Liz Noble
Speaker Finder	Lyall Seale
Group Co-ordination Team:	June Wheatcroft
	Phil Jones
	Jennifer Rogers
Vote of thanks org.	Kath Allen
Newsletter Editor	Ann Holmes
Newsletter Distribution / Webmaster	David Scott

### Programme of Speakers - 2022

- 21 February **DEEPING ON SEA** by Greg Guthrie. Greg is a Coastal Engineer and will outline the latest projections for sea level rise in the UK, discuss the impacts and risks to communities and the way we live, and explore different approaches for adapting to the rise. How vulnerable is Deeping?
- 21 March **LIFE AT NORMAN CROSS, the world's first POW camp**, by Stuart Orme.
- 25 April **DEENE PARK** - home of the Brudenell family since 1514, by Kelly Holland, Deene Park Administrator

Unless otherwise stated all monthly meetings are at **THE METHODIST CHURCH**, Deeping St James. Doors open at 9.30 am. To enable us to set out chairs, etc. please do not arrive before this time. Coffee is served until 10.20 and meetings begin at 10.30 am.

**EDDIE ADAMS**



*I have to hang my head in shame and begin this month by apologising for no less than three rather major errors in last month's Newsletter. I apologise most sincerely to the Groups concerned and promise to try harder to get it right in future.*

*Unfortunately I omitted the following report from the January Newsletter. My fault entirely—Sandra actually sent it to me on Christmas Day! ANN*

**U3A ART APPRECIATION GROUP  
(JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022)**

**John Singer Sargent  
Jan.1856—April 1925**



The artist for this month is well known for his portraits of Edwardians, showing the luxurious side of life for the better off in society. He was an American ex-patriate.



He influenced many aspiring artists of the time and completed over 900 oil paintings and more than 2,000 watercolours. He also completed countless sketches and charcoal drawings. He was considered to be a Generalist. He travelled widely from the Tyrol, Corfu and to the Middle East.

This article is hopefully the last of the remote reports. We are

planning to meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in January at Deepings Sports and Social Club, 10 until 12 noon for a social gathering and a light hearted picture quiz. If you would like to bring some refreshments to share please do so. If you are on our e-mailing list, Yvonne will be in touch before we meet.



Cost for each session is £2. This normally includes coffee and biscuits.

We are looking forward to meeting face to face again. If you would like to join us please contact either Yvonne or Sandra. Should Government instructions change, we will let you know.

Happy New Year!

**Sandra has asked the following be added to bring the report up to date for February. A**

We postponed the meeting for January. We intend going ahead in February. Third Tuesday of the month at the Sports and Social Club on Outgang Road. Lot of parking. It will be an informal meeting with a DVD about Quentin Blake. £2 entry fee which includes coffee and biscuits. New members welcome.

Group Leader SANDRA JONES

The report on page 2 entitled “**U3A LISTENING TO MUSIC GROUP**” was in fact the report of the December meeting of the **JAZZ, SWING AND BIG BAND GROUP**.



This photo and report was of the **GARDENING 4 PETALS & PRODUCE GROUP** meeting **NOT** the **WEDNESDAY GARDENING GROUP**.

**DID I DO WELL ? SORRY NOT ON THIS OCCASION!!**

**U3A QUILTING GROUP**



Our first meeting in the New Year entailed members present making lined gift bags with very pleasing results. Samples of other designs of bags were brought in by Ann and these techniques were discussed as part of our ‘show and tell’. We have found from experience we have learnt a great deal from these ‘show and tell’ sessions.

It is proposed that the group (or those who want to) will revisit ‘The Paper Piecing Technique’. Carol has offered to help with this as she has mastered this skill well. It is a technique that ensures perfection on the points. A task difficult to master using other sewing techniques.

Liz has offered to demonstrate the technique of ‘quilt as you go’- again something new to most of us and a good way of joining blocks together more easily. There is no timescale set for these sessions. It is anticipated this will take time.

All the small children quilts are now completed and will be given to a charity to be decided by the group.

MARGARET GRIFFITHS  
Group Leader

**U3A SCIENCE GROUP**

We had a very good and well attended start to our year in January, when David Blessett gave us a very informative and well delivered talk on “The Measurement of Time”. This was illustrated by some cunning home-produced models, to help us visualise the early development of the sundial, and the intricacies of clock mechanisms (incidentally he didn’t have the answer to “where the last two years went!”)



Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm in the Learning Room of the Community Centre, when Garth Perry will enthral and amuse everyone with Heaven knows what – that’s Monday’s job!  
Report: GARTH PERRY

Group Leaders: GARTH PERRY / DAVID SCOTT

**U3A FAMILY HISTORY GROUP**

The Family History Group’s February monthly meeting at the Community Centre saw Brian Thornthwaite, one our members, give a very entertaining talk of his experiences in the Territorial Army in the 60’s and 70’s, with stories and anecdotes of a young soldier and the friendships made in these times.



As a young man he spent many weekends and evenings training to be a Regimental Signaller with the 5th Battalion The King’s (Liverpool) Regiment rising to the rank of Corporal, travelling around England, Germany and Cyprus on Exercises with the Regiment. A highlight of his time was being part of the Military Escort for the Queen for the opening of the Kingsway Mersey Tunnel in June of 1971.

JEAN BRENNAND  
Group Leader



## U3A CYCLING GROUP



Firstly a Happy New Year to all U3A members.

Our 2022 first Ride consisted of five of us, on a cool but clear morning, start from the bridge at Market Deeping. From here, Terry took us along the Stamford Road to West Deeping and then on to Maxey. From here we turned at the church and navigated through Helpston past what used to be the Exeter Arms and the Bluebell pub.

On the outskirts of Helpston, we went "Off road" and used the footpath toward Woodcroft Castle and from there along Woodcroft Road to Hurn Road which then took us to the footbridge over the main North/South Railway line. Here we carried on towards Werrington and around the new railway works for the new tunnel under the main line. The pathway was closed but as we arrived some kind workers moved the bollards and told us to carry on through (saved about 300m).

We stopped on the newly refurbished pedestrian bridge over the line for the obligatory photo shoot and then continued around the outskirts of Werrington over the railway line again onto Foxcovert Road. From here it was a short ride to Peakirk and lunch at the Ruddy Duck (very nice). Distance to here was 12 miles but we then had to add on the 2.5 miles back to Deeping.

All told this was a 15 mile ride which was thoroughly enjoyed by all and with the hopes that we can enjoy a full year's worth of monthly rides in 2022 and our thanks to Terry for planning the route

JIM TORRANCE  
Group Leader

## U3A "CHURCH MICE" GROUP

February's visit was to the Abbey and Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul at Bourne. Twenty two members attended and waited and waited. After Sandra Jones had filled in by reading a description of the church from her phone (thank you, Sandra) our guide appeared (he had forgotten).



Google illustration

The Abbey was founded in 1138 as part of a sub-division of the Augustinians. The building followed the present one, of a nave, a chancel and two aisles. The Abbey continued with a number (never more than 12) of canons, with the nave being the parish church of Bourne. The chancel fell into disrepair and was rebuilt in the early 19th century. Other changes and additions were made in the Victorian era.

After the visit most of the group adjourned to the Waterside garden centre and ate and drank and talked and talked. Many thanks to Margaret Beardshaw for organising the visit.

HENRY ROBERTS  
Group Leader

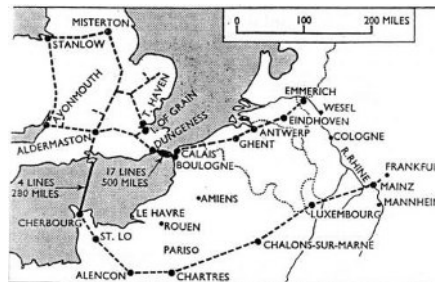
## U3A HISTORY GROUP

Today's talk was given by Brian Thornthwaite and was part two of his Liverpool talks. The first being Liverpool in the Blitz. It was dedicated to his family's associations with Liverpool during the second world war and beyond. It was a most interesting talk and was illustrated with slides which must have taken an age to collate. Brian was thanked for being so accommodating towards the group. He had been on standby, been cancelled and postponed throughout the Covid period. The following pictures were part of his story.

EVERTON MINTS. Kept everyone lubricated and the factory produced a number of other sweets, which were of course strictly rationed.



PLUTO PIPELINE MAP



Operation Pluto was an operation by British engineers, oil companies and the British Armed Forces to construct submarine oil pipelines under the English Channel in support of the Allied invasion of Normandy

PLUTO!!The anachronism for the pipeline carrying essential fuel. (PIPELINE UNDER THE OCEAN).



ALBERT DOCKS as is today. A big improvement on the previous site which was an essential part of the war effort and was constantly in use regardless of the pressure it was under.

GRACIE FIELDS entertained the factory workers as well as the troops. Do you remember Workers' Playtime? It ran from 1941 to 1964. Gracie used to perform for workers during their lunchtimes. A real morale booster.



LITTLEWOODS FACTORY. It was adapted from pools coupons to censoring mail. A similar thing happened to Vernon's factory.

David was thanked for his lovely memory slides which entertain the members each month. Today there were 35 people in attendance. A big thank you to everyone who helped out. (We tried to restrict the number of heavy chairs that were put out but we couldn't do it so needed a lot of cooperation from individuals in collecting their own.)

Next month's speaker is Tony Plunkett who has a tantalising tale of the 60s. 1860 to 1960. Third Wednesday at the Green School. Coffee from 10am.

SANDRA JONES  
Group Leader

## U3A QUIZ GROUP

This Group is looking for at least two new members. We meet in member's homes on the second Friday in the month at 2 pm. If you are looking to join a small, friendly group and have an interest in quizzes, why not come along to one of our meetings to meet us and see if you would like to join us? Contact -



DAVID MACVITE  
Group Leader

### U3A JAZZ, SWING AND BIG BAND GROUP

Our January meeting was held at the home of Phil Jones who gave us the intriguing title for his selection of ' **DELICIOUS HOT, DISGUSTING COLD**'.



What else could we begin with but the Bonzo Dog Do Dah Band and 'Jazz, Delicious Hot, Disgusting Cold'. 'The Best Is Yet to Come' from Sylvia Woodard Thompson with The Billy Taylor Trio and 'Warming Up' following on, gave us a taste of what was coming.

We heard from Chris Barber, Andre Previn (no jokes please) 'Sweet Georgia Brown' from the delightful Marion Montgomery and then Acker Bilk who played 'Marching Through Georgia', leading us on to Dizzy Gillespie's 'A Night In Tunisia'. It was a long night lasting 90 mins.57 secs. but worth staying up for!

'Clarinet Blues' came from Freddie Randall and we heard from him again later. These were followed by offerings from George Chisholm, OBE and Joan Lamb and the strange song, new to most of us, 'I Want a Big Butter and Egg Man'. A candidate for 'The Big British Bake Off' perhaps? Louis Armstrong gave us 'Shadrack' and 'When the Saints Go Marching In' which brought back a few memories for Peter.

'I Cover The Waterfront' from Ivy Benson and her Band was great and then we had a slight change of programme, hearing 'Mac The Knife' in place of 'Snake Rag' from Micky Aston's Rag Time Band, perhaps something for another programme? Gerry Mulligan, Anita O'Day, and Bob Wallis with his Storyville Jazzmen; Lonnie Donegan and a second helping of the Bonzo Dog Do Dah Band led us to the closing item with Dizzie Gillespie once more and, what else but - 'That's All'.

Variety we certainly got this morning and it gave us a lively and enjoyable meeting, so a big 'Thank You' Phil, for putting it all together and for Kath, keeping up the refreshment supply. Next meeting is on February 23rd at Terry's home (102 Church Street, Deeping St. James). Report: ANNE JONES

Group Leaders: PHIL JONES / ANNE JONES

### U3A POETS AND POETRY GROUP



Once again we met at Kathleen's home and were given her usual warm welcome. We welcomed another member into the Group this month to enjoy our selection of Poetry.

We had 'Undermilk Wood' by Dylan Thomas; 'Up in the morning early' by Robert Burns, 'Unattached' by Lord Tennyson, 'Unwelcome' by Mary E Coleridge; 'Unburn The Boat' by Duncan Forbe; 'Upon Westminster Bridge' by William Wordsworth; 'Ulster' by Rudyard Kipling; 'Upon the Launching of a Sputnik' by Dimitry Bobyshev; 'Unless thy Feet' by Rudyard Kipling. The poem that made us smile was 'The Unisex Salon' by Pam Ayres.

We all enjoyed an interesting afternoon and will be meeting again on Tuesday 1st March when the initial for our poems will be "V".

Many thanks to Kathleen for her hospitality.

IRENE BEEKEN  
Group Leader

### U3A "WEEKENDERS" GROUP

Our first meeting in the Green School on Saturday, February 5<sup>th</sup> was a success with 23 members attending. The chatting didn't stop all morning as we had a lot of catching up to do!



The next meeting will be in the Green School at 10:30 on March 5<sup>th</sup> with Pam and Dot on the coffee rota.

All welcome to join us for coffee and biscuits and a chat with old and new friends. Report: BARBARA MCNICOL

Group Leaders: ANN BRADSHAW / BARBARA MCNICOL

### U3A "PACERS" WALKING GROUP



On a very mild day, at least for February, ten Pacers walked around Werrington led by Geoff. The idea was to avoid the mud that can be a problem at this time of year. We started at the Crab and Winkle where we were able to pre-order lunch, walked along beside the railway line, turned right up Fox Covert Road, took a circuit of Cuckoo's Hollow (where the photo was taken by the large mural on the bridge) and finished by walking through the playing fields, past the William Law school and back to the pub. A nice easy 4.4 miles.

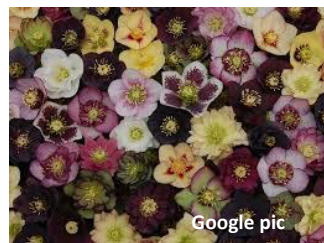
There we were joined by four members of the group who are not able to walk at present for a very pleasant meal. All our orders were ready and correct so the pub can be recommended.

New members are always welcome, please contact one of us if you fancy a not too hard walk on the first Wednesday of the month. We usually walk between four and five miles. Next walk on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March will be led by Geoff Whittle - details as usual by email. Report: GEOFF WHITTLE

Group Leaders: GEOFF WHITTLE / MARGARET BEARDSHAW

### U3A THURSDAY GARDENING GROUP

We had a lively meeting at Linda Hill's to start off our gardening year, planning our future events with a mix of home meetings and garden visits and we're very much looking forward to getting out and about again as a group after such a fragmented couple of years. As this is the Thursday Garden Group, we managed to make sure there will be plenty of food involved too.



We also heard from group members about some of the trials and tribulations following storm damage, plans for future gardening and were amazed by some of the before and after photos shared by Roy and Ann Pettitt of their lovely garden.

Our next meeting will be at 10.30 on Thursday 3rd March.

Report: LINDA HILL  
Group Leaders: LINDA HILL / KAY PARKER

### U3A GOOD FOOD GROUP

As the month includes Valentine's Day, we decided to have Red as our theme for this month's shared lunch on Monday February 7th.



Our appetisers were Tomato salsa and pink Taramasalata with red Beetroot crackers, red Peppers and Radish for dipping. The soup course was Herby Tomato and Bean soup, then Beef and Beetroot stew and Pork and Red Pepper stew with red and wild Rice. For dessert we had Plum Crumble and Summer Pudding.

All delicious and washed down by Red Wine, of course!

Report: SHEILA MCGURK  
Group Leader: KATHLEEN TANNER



## U3A MONDAY WALKING GROUP



Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February saw 11 walkers set out from the Horse and Jockey pub at Manton. We crossed the A6003 and headed North up a path to the entry gate leading into Martinsthorpe deserted Medieval Village. At the gate we turned left, downhill, into Fox Covert. We crossed a small Listed bridge over the river Chater and crossed two fields before heading uphill towards the visible church spire of Preston.



At the top of the hill we again crossed the A6003 and turned onto Preston Road, on the boundary of Preston Village. This quiet road took us to the village of Wing. We walked through Wing to view the unusual, ancient, MAZE.



After discussing the Maze we walked back through Wing on TOP ROAD. We then turned

down MIDDLE ROAD, then onto BOTTOM ROAD. On leaving BOTTOM ROAD we entered a field where Brian Littler decided to do a BOTTOM slide. Fortunately he was uninjured, however his new coat (first outing) and trousers were muddy christened. (Poor Brian, what will Nora have to say?)

Passing under the railway tunnel at Manton Junction we made our way, uphill, to Lyndon Road. A short distance then led us to the Horse and Jockey for lunch.

Distance 5.8ish miles. Time 2 hours 40 minutes. Weather fine and still. Next walk from The Bull, Market Deeping, led by Bruce Zenthon. Details to follow. Report: RICHARD COULSON

Group Leader: STEVE HANSON

## U3A WEDNESDAY GARDENING GROUP

Ten members of the Wednesday Gardening Group met at Pam's house on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> February. Pam had very kindly put together a slide show of various gardens and plants – some from Madeira, some much more local and others from unknown locations! The photographs were beautiful and colourful – just the thing on a somewhat dull February morning. Many thanks to Pam for all her hard work as well as the refreshments afterwards.



The next meeting will take place at Jane's house where Johnny Walker will give us a talk and show slides. Please come if possible as the cost of the talk will be £50 to be divided between the members attending. Report: JANE COOKE

Group Leaders: JEAN FOSTER / JANE COOK

## U3A LISTENING TO MUSIC GROUP



We held our monthly meeting for February 2022 at Anne Jones's house. For this occasion, Anne hosted the venue and I provided the music. Anne wanted a programme on the theme of Winter. So, starting with *Winter* from Vivaldi's *The Seasons* we progressed historically through Rimsky Korsakov's *Snow Maiden Suite*, and two movements of Tchaikovsky's *First Symphony* which is known as *Winter Daydreams*. Into the 20<sup>th</sup> century we heard a short song from the renowned singer Cleo Laine titled "*I think it's going to rain today*" and the chilling first movement from Vaughan Williams' *Symphony No. 7* known as *Sinfonia Antarctica* complete with wind machine.

When preparing this programme, Anne suggested to me that it would be lovely to finish with a number celebrating Spring to banish the cold effects of winter. Here there must have been some sort of voice distortion when we discussed this over the 'phone because I thought she said "*The Rite of Spring*" by Stravinsky whereas she actually meant the piano classic "*The Rustle of Spring*" by Sinding! Needless to say, this was the cause of great amusement because Anne had memories of her as an eight year old at a ballet class with three others all with crossed hands dancing across a stage to the Sinding piece. The image of four eight year olds dancing to the complex and atonal Stravinsky piece (which caused a riot when it was first heard in Paris) was unimaginable.

Sorry for the error Anne – I must listen more carefully over the phone next time.

Our next meeting is at Ann Holmes' house, 9th March at 10:00 AM.

Report: TERRY NOBLE

Group Leaders: TERRY NOBLE / JIM PRINGLE

## U3A 'WANDERERS' WALKING GROUP



COVID and colds restricted our numbers at the last minute but 12 of us set off on a bright, clear February morning for a stroll around the outskirts of Ferry Meadows in Peterborough. Good option at this time of the year as we managed to stay on hard, stable surfaces enjoying a variety of terrains - lakeside, riverside, woodlands and boardwalk.

The sunshine definitely made it special along with the unseasonably warm temperatures and although we missed the otters there was plenty of other flora and fauna to enjoy along the way.

Good to be getting back to some kind of normality and we had lots to catch up on. Lunch at The Granary on Ham Lane was great and we were very well looked after. Report: MARJE ARMSTRONG

Group Leaders: BARRY & HILARY AKAM

## U3A CRAFT GROUP

Craft Group 3 appears to have become a casualty of the COVID lockdown. Is there potential for starting up another craft group in its place? If you are interested please contact me -



JUNE WHEATCROFT  
Group Co-ordinator



### U3A THURSDAY WALKING GROUP



On a mild and sunny February morning, we commenced a walk which some individuals had partially done before but which was a new walk for the group as a whole. Leaving the Whistle Stop pub, 18 of us headed straight across the main east coast railway line (just as the barriers came down again!!) and through Tallington village before turning right just before exiting the village. This led us down Casewick Road and onto the Casewick Estate with its vast open spaces of parkland to admire and spot a group of deer running across. We eventually reached a junction which led to Casewick Hall and a few dwellings before leaving the Estate to what we anticipated would be a nice muddy field, but the farmer had kindly left tracks well bedded down so it wasn't bad at all. We then arrived back at the main line again. Were we going to have a five train wait to cross the line or would be lucky and be able to cross the line without waiting. That was the burning question!! Alas, only one train sped by us so the wait was minimal.

Once over the main line we then headed in the direction of Barholm before turning right down a country road, crossing a field footpath before arriving once again at the railway track on one side of the footpath and the cement works on the other side. From here it was an easy walk back into Tallington and quite conveniently coming out on the A16 directly opposite the Whistle Stop where a pleasant meal and drink awaited us.

Many thanks to Richard and June and the team for organising the walk and arranging the lunch.

The next walk on 10 March will be led by Steve Hanson commencing from The Woodhouse Arms, Corby Glen. If you would like to attend this walk,

GODFREY PARKES / DAVID SCOTT  
Group Leader / Deputy Group Leader

### U3A ANTIQUES AND COLLECTABLES GROUP

#### **THIS GROUP ..... needs some help !**

Irene Beeken and Pam Pendry have led the Antiques Group since its inception but feel it is now time for new blood to take over. There are several members of the Group and new members will be warmly welcomed. However, like all groups, it needs refreshing and new ideas.



Please don't let this interesting group fold - all tasks can be shared among many so give it a go! - Irene and Pam will willingly help new leaders with useful contacts, etc. if required.

Please contact me if you are able to offer some help, however small, or need further information. I look forward to hearing from you.

JUNE WHEATCROFT,  
Group Co-ordinator

### U3A "STROLLER'S" WALKING GROUP



Although there have been many glorious sunny mornings in January, unfortunately, the day of our first stroll of this year wasn't one of them. We were greeted by a dull lifeless morning, although it was dry. Meeting at our start point of Stamford Garden Centre on Casterton Road, ten of us set off down the hill to the eponymous village, before we walked underneath the A1 trunk road, which reminded us of the fact that the road we had just left was the old Great North Road.

Arriving in the quiet Rutland village of Tickencote, where we had views of the River Gwash which meanders north of Stamford before joining the River Welland near Uffington Road. Returning back we crossed a field which had some very early lambs which seem to be sticking close to mum, either to keep warm or alarmed by this invasion of their pasture.

Back at Great Casterton, we walked to the bridge over the Gwash, with the traffic on the A1 providing background sound effects as traffic whizzed north and south. The group photo was taken at this point. At this point we were sandwiched between the old and new primary routes from London to Scotland which have served this country for centuries. Finally we arrived back at the garden centre for lunch.

This walk was our final walk on a Monday following the decision made at our planning meeting last year to change to a Friday. Our inaugural Friday walk is on 25 February when Geoff Fitzjohn will lead us starting at Easton on the Hill, meeting at the Birch Tree Café.

BOB DELLER  
Group Leader

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### SNOWDROPS IN UFFINGTON CHURCHYARD

(Thanks once again to David Scott)





### U3A MONDAY READERS GROUP

This month's book was a historical novel, set in Georgian London, and with a rich sweep of characters from across the social spectrum. It was *The Foundling* by Stacey Hall. It was, coincidentally, the subject of BBC Radio 4's Book Club last week, when the author was interviewed by James Naughtie.

*The Foundling* had been chosen from the Readers' Group list by one of our members who had visited the Foundling Hospital Museum in London, and it was there that the novel opens, when a poor shrimp girl, Bess, is forced to take her baby to the 'lottery day' at the Foundling Hospital to take her chance that the baby will be taken in. The author's inspiration for Bess had been Hogarth's *The Shrimp Girl* and the portrait of this strong young woman adds to our feeling for the character.



.../...

.../...

Six years later, Bess returns to collect her little girl, only to be told that she has already done so, the day after she left her! The very well woven plot follows on, as Bess tries to find her child again.

Our group found the book very engaging and interesting, and enjoyed the satisfyingly happy ending. We agreed that the period was very well invoked, and the wide cast of characters very well drawn. The two main characters, the poor shrimp girl and, Alexandra, the rich but mentally damaged woman who becomes central to the mystery of the child, are cleverly contrasted and a supporting cast of Londoners, from an immigrant black family, and a link boy, to the fish market stall holders, and the rich benefactors and staff of the Foundling Hospital, are beautifully researched and imagined.

We would recommend this novel to anyone who enjoys a clever story with a strong sense of time and place and a happy ending.

LIZ WATERLAND  
Group Leader



David (and Margaret) were 'out and about' this month visiting Ponton Hall and were kind enough to give me access to the photographs taken there to share with you. Thank you both, more and more of us have become 'home-bound' since COVID it is really good to see pictures like this to remind us life still exists outside four walls! Roll on summer and Eddies outing.







### VALENTINE

Will you be my Valentine?  
The reason for my question:  
well, time is running out you see  
which prompted this suggestion.  
This card will create a mystery.  
I hope it makes you smile.  
Because I know your history  
so pause a little while...  
Can you guess, I've given clues?  
They fell on stony ground.  
So I have nothing left to lose  
and the answer I have found!  
Hints were given here and there  
so this card, well I designed it.  
And in desperation. Dear,  
I've finally decided to  
SIGN IT!

ANNE JONES

