



Deeping St. James

Issue No.250 December 2023

The Deepings u3a NEWSLETTER

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Market Deeping

Welcome

New members: Judy Staines, Ginton and Andy McHattie, Market Deeping

Rejoiner: Brian Rowlatt, Deeping St James

NEXT MEETING: 18 December. Unless otherwise stated, all monthly meetings are at the Methodist Church, Deeping St James. Doors open at 9.30am. Coffee is served until 10.20 and the meetings begin at 10.30.

PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS:

18 December (ticket only): Christmas - The Midwinter Festival's Different Traditions

Philippa Massey looks at the seasons, the worship, the feast, the decorations, the entertainments, from pre-Christian celebrations to the present day. This will be followed by refreshments.

15 January: Stamford and the local area

Nicola Sandall will give a talk on Stamford and the local area

19 February: The Third Rock

A fascinating talk by Keith Townsend about The Third Rock.



MARGARET'S MUSINGS

Dear members

As members of u3a we all enjoy a variety of activities, enabling us to enhance our knowledge in various directions, to acquire new skills and visit new places, not to mention our walking groups.

The common denominator in all these pursuits is the opportunity to socialise, share experiences and support one another, for which Christmas is a special time.

The committee looks forward to welcoming you at our Christmas meeting, with seasonal refreshments and entertainment and the chance to enjoy one another's company.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Margaret

Chair, The Deepings u3a



U3a DIARIES for 2024 (Best in the world!)

Nearly sold out! Just four (4) remaining at this moment for you to snap up one of these excellent personal diaries.

If you have already got your copy, perhaps a stocking-filler gift or a small gift for a friend? £4.50 each.

NB They start in December 2023 and follow into 2024 – very useful for reference and for getting started on your regular diary entries.

Contact June Wheatcroft on 01778 344916 or at the Christmas meeting. Can be delivered locally.



POETS & POETRY GROUP

Susanne was our hostess for our December meeting. Many of the poems reflected the Christmas theme we had, *Joy chose you* by Donna Ashworth, *Where Art Thou* by Roald Dahl, *Into the hour* by Elizabeth Jennings, *Sunday Morning King's Cambridge* by John Betjeman, *5th December Mary Celeste* by Judith Nicholson *Innocents Song*, by Charles Causley, *In my Country* by Jackie Kay. We passed a very pleasant afternoon, Susanne spoiling us with all delicious Christmassy treats, thank you.

Our next meeting is on 2 January 2024. We send Greetings for Christmas and New Year to all members of the u3a.

Report and Group Leader: Irene Beeken

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

John Bangay, English Heritage Artist



Twenty-one of our members braved a miserable morning to watch and listen to John's fascinating talk about his life-long passion for drawing church buildings, country houses, cottages and windmills.

He used pen and ink for his work, using an old-fashioned ink pen with a nib. His work was so detailed, it must have taken ages to produce the originals. Much of John's work is sold in Cathedral shops as prints and gift items that have his beautiful prints on them. (For example, I have a chopping board with a print of Peterborough Cathedral on it.)

He interspersed his illustrated talk with video clips and photographs of celebrities he had met. Next time you go to a Cathedral gift shop, see if you can find a gift that has his name on! You can find out more about him on line.



There is no meeting in December but we are back in January for the annual social gathering which includes a light hearted team quiz and a film taken from The National Gallery's Take One Picture competition.

Thank you to David for your help this year and to John for entertaining us. Also, thank you to all our members for their support. Happy Christmas and a healthy 2024!

Report and Group Leader: Sandra Jones

GOOD FOOD GROUP



The Good Food Group started the festive season off with lunch at Hilary and Barry Akam's.

Nine of us contributed to a truly amazing feast.

The afternoon started with a glass or two of Cava accompanied by hors d'oeuvres, smoked salmon canapés and stilton and poppy seed sables. We moved into the dining room to continue the feast. Avocado and prawn cocktail, made with Chris's secret sauce(!) and sour dough crackers started proceedings.

Warm courgette fritters with the option of chilli sauce for dipping came next. Locally sourced venison was the main course. The meat was casseroled with apricots, chestnuts and redcurrant jelly. Roasted and mashed potatoes, red cabbage and carrot and parsnip dauphinoise accompanied this.

Despite being full, we forced ourselves to eat the delicious desserts, apple, lemon and cinnamon strudel and frozen lemon soufflé. Red and white wine was drunk throughout the meal and a chilled Sauternes was offered with the desserts.

The afternoon was full of good conversation and the occasional joke found in the crackers!

After moving into the lounge, the occasion culminated with chocolates and coffee, and a snooze for some!

The venue and date for January's lunch is yet to be confirmed and the suggested theme is 'recipes for Christmas dinner leftovers'!



Report by Hilary Akam

Group Leaders: Hilary Akam and Sheila McGurk

CRAFT GROUP 2



Christmas cards again this month but with teabag folding – some of us love, others.....?! Well done to all for persevering with the folding especially the very small bits!

Traditionally we just have a cup of tea and cake at the December meeting and possibly discuss future projects. However, January is already sorted with Maureen and Anita preparing another intricate cut project to get us off in the new year. Thank you to them both.

See you on 18 December, 2pm.

Happy Christmas to all and best wishes for 2024.

Report: Liz Noble

Group Leader: Liz Noble

JAZZ AND BIG BANDS GROUP

Our November meeting was held at the home of Terry Noble and entitled "The Voices of Jazz".

Beginning with a group favourite we heard Ella Fitzgerald sing *Let's Face the Music and Dance*. Then *Summertime* came from Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday gave us *Good Morning Heartache*, and Dinah Washington sang *A Foggy Day*....

Next, *Corcovado* had Astrid Gilber teaming up with Stan Getz and then another favourite - Peggy Lee, sang a very sad *What I Did For Love*.

Blossom Dearie performed *Manhattan*, The Velvet Fog, as he was known - Mel Torme sang *Blue Moon*. We had to have Bing Crosby singing *The Blue Room*, and he was followed by Nina Simone's version of *Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood*. *Let's Do It*, came from Louis Armstrong, followed by Sarah Vaughan again, this time joined by Billy Ekstine in *Now It Can Be Told*.

Margaret Whiting sang *The Way You Look Tonight*, and Count Basie was joined by vocalist Joe Williams in *A Fine Romance*. *Take the 'A' Train* was Anita O'Day's offering. and then something slightly different was the Bach *Fugue / Prelude and Aria*, from the Swingle Singers. A really interesting item and a fitting end to our morning's music.

Thanks to Terry, with an acknowledgement to Geoff Whittle's programme and format from September 2023 on "The Saxophone." Thanks also to Liz for the lovely refreshments.

There is no December meeting. Next meeting is on 24 January 2024 at Phil's home.

Report: Anne Jones

Group Leaders: Phil Jones/Anne Jones.

MONDAY WALKING GROUP



Our December walk was to be our annual outing to Ferry Meadows, followed by lunch at The Granary. However, due to the threat of flooding after the previous few days of heavy rain, we decided not to follow the planned walk and instead do a few circuits of the various lakes.

This worked out quite well and those who completed the full course did 5.6 miles with no stiles and not too much mud. And, most importantly, the rain stayed away for the whole walk.

Everyone found the walk interesting, with some



people discovering places they had never been before, but the highlight, I thought, must have been the meal afterwards, I can recommend the Ribs.

Report: Brian Thornthwaite

Group Leader: Steve Hanson

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

Our November meeting's subject was a follow on from our October one and the war years.

Members were asked to tell the Group of someone who they had researched in their trees who did war work, not necessarily in the military.

We heard stories and saw photographs of the grandmother who was in the Forage Corps in the First World War doing the heavy work on the land that the men would have done delivering the hay and straw for the horses in France.

Also, the family who went to America then the sons joined the Military, the father who was on the Atlantic Convoys and the hardships they endured and the mother who met her future husband by being a pen-pal.

Finally we were told what it was like to be a mother of a serviceman in a war zone in present times and the "blue letters" – thin sheets of pale blue air-mail paper that the military use, to convey the news of daily life without worrying Mum too much. She also showed pictures of his medals received after service in these zones.

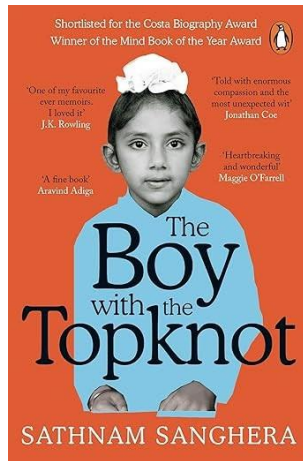
Our December meeting will be a "festive one", with a Quiz and lunch.



Report and Group Leader: Jean Brennan

MONDAY READERS GROUP

Our book this month sparked a lot of interesting discussion. We had been reading *The Boy with the Topknot* by Sathnam Sanghera.



This is described as “A memoir of love, secrets and lies.”. It is a sort of biography of the author, who is a journalist and writer from a family that immigrated to Wolverhampton from The Punjab, in the 1970s.

However, it was not quite the usual sort of biography many of us had been expecting. The author’s father has schizophrenia, which was unacknowledged for years, finally diagnosed and treated, but then entirely hidden by the family, to the extent that the author had no idea about it until his early 20s.

His sister also developed the condition, and this was also never spoken of. The effect of this, and the problems of the culture clashes between the expectations and customs of his family, their interaction with the culture they had moved to, and the world his education and career led him into, provide the basis of the ‘love, secrets and lives’ described in his story.

We found a lot to discuss about the book, including the dynamics of family, and the problems of integration of different cultures that many of us had first-hand knowledge of among people we had met or worked with. Our lack of knowledge of mental health in general and schizophrenia in particular, was also part of our discussion.

On the whole, we felt this was a well written and interesting account of a life lived in two cultures, well worth reading and thinking about.

Report and Group Leader: Liz Waterland

CYCLING GROUP



After the recent icy weather and following rain, the 8 December provided ideal cycling conditions – clear sky, no wind and temperature of around 8–10 degrees. This time only three of us managed the ride. Starting from the bridge in Market Deeping, the route took us to The Pack Horse in Northborough, turning right then left to return to Deeping St James.

Crossing the river by the footbridge we followed Church Street and Eastgate to Casey’s Corner. Passing the level crossing we proceeded on to Frognall via Cranmore. It was then up Meadow Road eventually arriving at Langtoft for a photo stop. Then back to Market Deeping stopping at The Bull for lunch. Our next ride is on Friday 12 January leaving the bridge at Market Deeping at 10:30am.

**Report: Terry Noble
Group Leader: Jim Torrance**

STROLLERS GROUP

Our final walk of this year was another makeshift affair, as the programmed walk to Edenham, and Bourne Wood was in doubt, caused by recent heavy rain, which would have made the ‘going’ muddy in places. Plan B was a return to the Crab & Winkle at Werrington, which was where we started out the year’s walks in January. On this occasion, we went a short way down the old Lincoln Road, before we turned off down Staverton Road and then Carron Drive. Down these streets there were a few wheeliebins lying prostrate on the ground, having succumbed to an early morning squall.

Turning at the end, we went under the Werrington Parkway and over the East Coast Main Line and into North Bretton. After passing the ice stadium, home to the Pirates ice hockey team, we followed Bretton Way, to the Marholm Road and back over the railway line to Lincoln Road.



Passing through Mancetter Square, we saw a familiar name, that of Terry Wrights Cycles, who have relocated there. Then it was under the parkway again to follow the old Lincoln Road, before branching off into Werrington village and on to Fox Covert Road.

This saw us heading back home via the Werrington sports field in time for a good lunch at the Crab & Winkle.

The following Monday, there was a record turnout for the annual planning meeting, where walks for 2024 were drawn up. A programme will be circulated to members of the group in the next week or so and also displayed at the December monthly meeting. I wish all Strollers and U3A members a happy Christmas.

Report and Group Leader: Bob Deller

QUILTING GROUP

At the November meeting we tried out 'string piecing'. The basic design was printed on paper, then cut out into four sections. Scraps of fabric were sewn on to the paper sections and then the sections reassembled. Carol and Christine brought in the items they had been working on at home – a Christmas runner and a bench pillow. At the next meeting we will be making bias strips which are used to bind our quilts.



Report: Liz Lonsdale
Group Leader: Margaret Griffiths

THURSDAY GARDENING GROUP



This month the group met to enjoy a festive meal out at the Waggon and Horses in Langtoft. The tables were laid out superbly in a festive manner. An excellent meal was served to us and enjoyed by all. Together with the crackers, paper hats and silly jokes and a glass or two we had a very good time. We were missing a few of our members who were unable to be present and we toasted their health and wished them all the very best for Christmas and for the New Year. The group would also like to wish all the members of our U3A a very merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

Report and photos: David Scott
Joint Leaders: Kay Parker and Ann Pettitt

HISTORY GROUP

November's talk was on Appeasement 1933-1939 and the Speaker was Henry Roberts.

'The aim of Appeasement was to avoid war altogether, for all time'.



This was a history lesson with a difference. We were pretending to be MPs in Westminster between 1933 and 1939. We had to give **our** vote on what action should take place following important and critical events of the time and compare the actions taken by the **then** Government. The results were extremely thought-provoking.

The conclusions were:

- Lack of Anglo-French rearmament
- Failure to see the real character of Nazism and Hitler
- Failure of UK intelligence on Germany's army
- The Government didn't understand the UK people's resolve

One of our members was nine at the time of the declaration of war and related the feelings of her family. Another's personal comment was how sad it was that we seem to be heading down the same path again.

It was a very interesting morning.

Thank you, Henry. Also, thanks to everyone who helped on the day and throughout the year.

We will need a new Speaker Finder for 2025. Can you help? If so, contact us please so that Lesley can help you with the contacts she has acquired over her 10 years in the role.

Next month is the Christmas lunch at The Wagon and Horses.

We meet again in January 2024! Have a good Christmas and hopefully a healthy and happy New Year.

Report and Group Leader: Sandra Jones



Snow and frost in the Deepings, December 2023

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2022/2023

Chair	Margaret Beardshaw
Secretary	Elaine Batchelor
Treasurer	Stuart Wilson
Membership Sec.	David Perkins
Speaker Finder	Lyall Seale
Group Co-ordination	June Wheatcroft
Team:	Phil Jones
Newsletter Editor	Sandra Jones/ Ruth Griffiths
Newsletter Distribution / Webmaster	David Scott

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