



WSPu3a Newsletter

October/November
2023



Old Woodhall Station, River Witham

Photo by Geoff Noel

The Committee's Briefs

Contact the Committee

You can use this link to send a message to any of our Committee:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/contact>

Chairman's Chat

Sometimes objects suddenly make you pause for thought. Maybe I am particularly susceptible?

When Glenis and I were on our bus trip, we visited Hildene, the house of Robert Lincoln of the Pullman Company fame. The house itself was delightful, especially the magnificent pipe organ, which cost \$11,500. (1908 prices) and played when you entered the house. We toured the house and then entered a small room and came across this hat and mirror.

I have always admired Abraham Lincoln not only for his achievements and character but also for the quality and style of his writing and oratory. The stove pipe hat was Lincoln's trade mark. There are only two left in the world; the other is in the Smithsonian. The mirror too is unique. The last sight that Lincoln had of himself before his assassination was in this mirror. It makes you think.

Malcolm Capps – Chairman



Groups News

If you haven't looked at the table with the groups' sheets for some time, then I recommend that you do see what's on offer. Alternatively, they are all listed on the website. We now have 30+ active groups, and 4 in the 'pipeline' hopefully to be started very soon. One of those we would like to start is [LINE DANCING](#). Cowboy boots and Stetsons are not compulsory, but if you have them then do join in and wear them! One group which seems to be overlooked is [DOG WALKING](#). Meeting on the first Saturday

of every month for gentle, local walks, and the dogs enjoy each other's company too. We are just about to start a [FRENCH GROUP](#) with a meeting being held this week to establish when, where and how to progress. It seems that all members that have signed up are (or were!) quite fluent but are now rusty! If you fit into that category why not join them for some stimulating French conversation?

Val Shurben – Groups' Coordinator

Joining u3a Groups

If you wish to join any of our groups then the procedure is to either enter your name, email address and phone number on the relevant sheet at the monthly meeting, or contact the Group Leader or myself. Details can be found on our u3a website.

It has happened twice recently that members have arrived at a group's meeting/activity without having signed up. The reasons given above should be followed, as:

- *The group could be full with a waiting list and you could not be accommodated, nor would it be fair to those already on a waiting list*
- *The Group Leader needs to know who the group members are and whether they are actually u3a members.*
- *Non-members are not allowed to attend group meetings as a) they are not covered by our insurance and b) our members have paid a subscription which entitles them to belong to groups.*

If you have any queries with the above then please contact me.

Val Shurben – Groups' Coordinator

Groups List

You can use this link to find a current list of the groups we support, and how to join up:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/groups>

Group Leaders' Afternoon Tea



The Group Leaders were invited to an afternoon tea served at Coronation Hall as a 'thank you' on behalf of the Committee and all Woodhall Spa u3a members for the effort and dedication they have put into all our groups over the past year on our behalf.

Without our groups Woodhall Spa u3a would be a rather boring club with only a monthly meeting with a cup of tea and a speaker. Instead we have the choice of joining over 30 groups which take up most days in the month. Many friendships have been made at our groups, as well as new interests explored, but none of this would be possible without committed members looking after the groups.

Once again, thank you Group Leaders!

Val Shurben – Groups' Coordinator

Photos by Ced Shurben



Obituary

This obituary acknowledges members who have passed away recently.
We remember them for their contributions and for sharing something of themselves with us.

Cynthia Marriott

We sadly have to report that Cynthia Marriott passed away on 19th October following a very short illness. Cynthia had been a member of our u3a for many years and always enjoyed the monthly meetings, especially the speakers. At one time she was a very active walker with the Woodhall Wanderers, and more recently enjoyed trips with the Bird Watching Group. Our condolences go to her family.

If you are aware of the recent passing of one of our members, please inform one of the Committee, lest we miss the chance to honour them here.

[Woodhall Spa u3a: Committee and Contacts \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://u3asites.org.uk)

Online u3a

Find out more:

You can use these links to search for ways of furthering your interest in specific subjects, or even take part in some competitions:

Our own website

[Woodhall Spa u3a website](#)

u3a – Online Learning Events

[u3a Online Learning](#)

u3a Radio Podcast October 2023

[u3a Radio, October](#)



Jayne from Cheadle u3a shares the tragic story of her son who passed away whilst travelling after catching dengue fever. Also, the u3a subject adviser for maths talks about how maths can be fun and the fascinating mathematic patterns that can be found everywhere, including in the natural world; members talk about a research and shared learning project exploring old theatre programmes; and Karen from Mawdesley u3a talks about her 'give it a go' group and the adventures that members have shared together..

The curious history of labyrinths & mazes

[u3a Event – Labyrinths](#)

Fri, 10 November, 10:00 – 11:00

With its true origins still shrouded in mystery, the chronicle of the labyrinth, and more recently of the maze, spans the past four thousand years, taking many twists and turns. It is a truly fascinating social history.

Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners:
6 Session Course

[u3a Course – Cryptic Crosswords](#)

December 5 – January 23, 10:00 – 11:30

Please note registration closes on Friday 17 November 2023. This six-session course will teach you how to solve cryptic crosswords. It starts with the simplest ideas and easiest types of clue and gradually builds to the more advanced aspects of clue solving.

Coming Soon

Upcoming Events list

You can use this link to find more details on all the events in our diary:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/events>

Monthly Meetings

Nov 2nd

2:30pm to 4pm
Coronation Hall

Tax, Care and the New Guy

Ria Hambridge: An outline of the legal issues surrounding finance as we age

Dec 7th

2:30pm to 4pm
Coronation Hall

An introduction to gemstones

Jason Middleton: A hands on history of precious stones

Group Noticeboard

Outings

Pretty Woman

Payment is now due for our theatre trip to Hull to see Pretty Woman the Musical on 8th February. Please pay at the November meeting and make your cheque for £54 payable to "Woodhall Spa U3A Social"

York

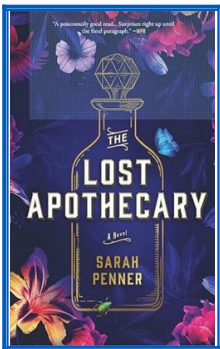
A reminder that the coach leaves at 9am for our last trip of the year to York on 30th November.

Sue Pollitt – Group Co-Leader

Around the Groups in 30 days

Reading

Members of the Reading Group take it in turns to choose a book for everyone to read and then host the meeting to discuss what we all thought of it. Here we all are at our October meeting. Tea and cakes are all part of the enjoyment. Helen makes particularly good ones.



Our August book – *The Lost Apothecary* by Sarah Penner – was generally enjoyed by the group, even though some members found parts of it rather historically inaccurate and far-fetched. The plot switches between London in the present day and London in 1791. It interweaves the story of 18th century Nella (an accomplished maker of potions and poisons) and Eliza (her young assistant), with Caroline – a modern-day American with an interest in historical research. We think it would be a good read if you like things a little macabre.

In Complete contrast, *The Charity Shop Detective Agency* by Peter Boland was simply a bit of fun for most of the group. A little like Richard Osman's 'The Thursday Murder Club', the story is about three disparate older ladies, who volunteer in the Dogs Need Nice Homes Charity Shop. They turn amateur detectives when a series of murders are committed in their neighbourhood and eventually help the police to unmask the murderer.



Our November book will be *Commonwealth* by Ann Patchett.

Barbara Michaelides – Group Leader

Home Computing for Fun

Windows 11S Explained

If you are thinking about purchasing a new computer there is a lot to consider. If you are looking for a Windows PC you would now find yourself with an option of either a Windows 11 or Windows 11S operating system. A lot of new PCs come with Windows 11S installed, particularly the budget ones. This is the operating system that runs on your PC and is an alternative to Windows 11.



So what is the difference?

Essentially, Windows 11 in S Mode is Windows locked down for security and performance, so it's much harder to make mistakes or change settings that could give you problems. This ensures that even after using and updating it for many months, Windows will still work as well as it did the first day you set up your PC.

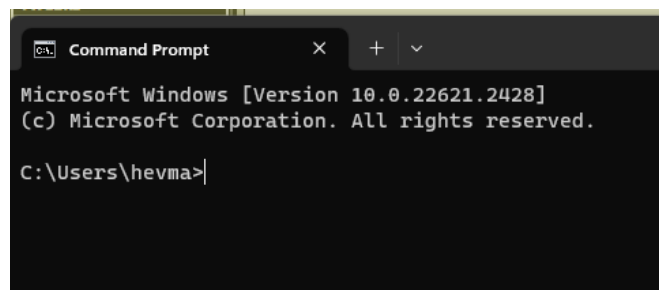
It is possible to switch to a full version of Windows 11 if the 11S version does not suit your needs. However, once you have done this you cannot set it back to 11S without putting your PC back to factory settings.

So what are the benefits/disadvantages?

The main benefit is security.

You can only install applications from the Microsoft store, which have been vetted by Microsoft. This is because sometimes when you install software from unknown sources you run the risk of downloading malware or viruses.

Also, you cannot access the command line on your PC. On Windows 11 you would get this screen by typing cmd.exe in the search bar, and it allows you to run DOS commands to make changes to your PC. This isn't something most users would want to do anyway, but preventing it stops external forces from adding malware or computer code that could damage your system.



The other benefit is improved performance.

CPU (power) and RAM (memory) use is reduced and battery life is extended as the number of applications running is reduced.

The disadvantages very much depend on the specifications of your PC and your requirements. For example, Windows 11S includes Windows Defender security, which is a rated antivirus software. If you feel that this isn't enough for your requirements there isn't really an alternative in the Microsoft store that would work without causing issues with your PC's performance. However, Windows Defender and the extra security that comes with 11S should be enough for most users. You also are restricted to using Microsoft Edge as your browser and Bing as your search engine. However, Edge offers extra security with Smartscreen which blocks unsafe websites.

[Continued](#)

Windows 11S – Continued

So, who should use 11S?

If your computing consists of surfing, reading emails and the basics on a lower powered PC then 11S would be ideal for you. Your requirement to add extra software would be low, your use would be mostly at home and you would have no interest in changing any settings via the command line. However, If you are more technically minded and like to personalise your system, you want to install lots of software and have lots of power and memory, 11S would not work for you. Also if you often connect your PC to public WiFi you would want to upgrade your antivirus from Windows Defender.

So, to sum up...

Windows 11S is best suited to users who may have a PC of a lower specification, whose use is mainly web browsing, email and document production. The extra security provided by 11S and the installed Microsoft Defender protection would be sufficient.

And because Windows 11 in S mode runs more efficiently, it's ideal for low-powered computers. However, anyone who has a device with more CPU and RAM and uses more applications, games and social media would not gain any benefit from 11S. They would also have space to install their own choice of antivirus and security products.

Finally, when buying a new PC, be wary of 'free' trials of software. This can sometime be a way of getting you to sign up to an auto renew subscription at a high price once the free period has ended.

Your monthly guide to what it means....

HDMI

Stands for High Definition Media Interface. It is a connection, for example, from PC or other device to a television that transmits high definition audio and video.



Firmware

Firmware is a software program, or set of instructions, programmed onto a hardware device. It provides the necessary instructions that the device needs to communicate with other hardware. A device stores its firmware in a ROM (Read Only Memory) chip, typically flash memory, which can be updated and rewritten to update a device's firmware.

Heather Maslen – Group Leader

Find out more

If you have any questions about these articles, or have topics you would like me to cover, please contact me by clicking on the bird on the Home Computing for Fun page on the Woodhall Spa U3A website:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/115109>

Croquet

The season 2023 started in April but, unfortunately due to exceptionally wet weather we didn't actually start playing croquet until second week in May. From May onwards to end of September our golf croquet season turned out to be a most enjoyable one.

During the playing sessions the coach walked the lawns and observed the playing technique of the members and giving advice where necessary on how to improve their game. This was found to be more of an advantage than having time spent in groups and demonstrating the many techniques required to be an accomplished player, rules were learnt as play continued resulting in all of the members getting more enjoyment from the sport of 'Croquet'

As group leader and coach I would like to thank all members of the u3a croquet group for a most enjoyable season, although our group is relatively small in numbers everyone joined in to make the weekly sessions friendly and joyful as well as being helpful to each other's game. Croquet will start again in April 2024 I sincerely hope that our group of 2023 will be signing up again with possibly a few new members to join us. So once again many thanks for the enjoyment, which I myself have had with your company on Tuesday mornings and I look forward to seeing you all again for another season of gentle exercise and good croquet skills.

Bob Potter – Group Leader and Coach



Photography

We can't expect to become a David Bailey or The Earl of Lichfield overnight, but little by little our group's knowledge is growing about what are the components that go into making a great photograph.

The very first thing we need to learn is how to take a picture without the camera set at AUTO. So getting to know how YOUR camera works is a priority. Either by trial and error, or using the camera's manual. Probably both is the best bet, it's a skill you will get with practice.

Once mastered and you are aware of all the elements that physically your camera does for you, with the setting you have applied, you take your photo. What you see in the resulting image is, we hope, very much what you set out to achieve in your mind's eye BEFORE you press the shutter. Did the result turn out as hoped? In very many cases, to even the experienced photographer, the answer is no, 'not always'. Capturing the moment is practice, patience and a creative eye on your subject.



As an exercise at our last meeting we set up a simple desk top studio to demonstrate how the position of a light source will affect highlights and shadows on a subject.

If I have piqued your interest and you have not as yet added your name to the group sheet, we would be pleased for you to join us.

Ced Shurben – Group Leader

Interlude



Jubilee Park

Photo by Ced Shurben

Poetry

The theme for October's meeting was 'Fire', which evoked some personal memories amongst our group. The first of our poems presented here describes the dreamlike state of watching a fire, and the other draws on the recollections of fireworks night as a child.

We also like to read poems chosen, on the same theme, from published poets. One such was the first four verses of [The Burning Of The Leaves by Robert Laurence Binyon](#)

Tom Sefton – Group Co-leader

Read more:

Use this link to see what else the group has written this month:

[Poetry \(u3asites.org.uk\)](https://u3asites.org.uk)

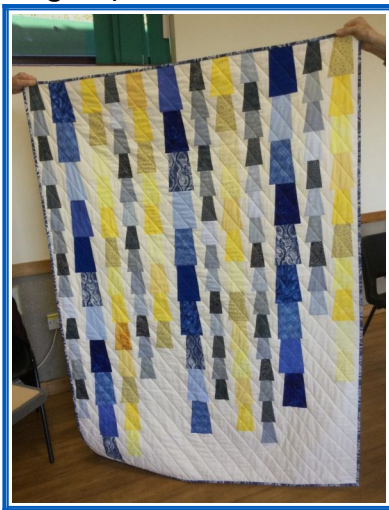
Mesmerised	Fire
<p>End of a full day of activity Feeling muddy, achy and tired. The body is feeling exhausted But the mind is buzzing, it's wired.</p> <p>Pioneer Camp full of us teens Learning skills that we'll never use. Working as a team to solve the problems Not caring I've got yet another bruise.</p> <p>We all need to settle down now, get ready For sleep time in that great bell tent. So it's time to light the big fire And discuss how the day has been spent.</p> <p>Mesmerised by the leaping flames Shooting up into the night time sky. Feeling the warmth on my now cool skin As we reflect on the day gone by.</p> <p>Marshmallows are stuck on sticks Toasted over that roaring heat. Slightly burnt but oh so perfect As our end of the day little treat.</p> <p>We all sing a little campfire song, Attempt to do it as a round. Our voices combining with the crackling fire Make the most wonderfully beautiful sound.</p> <p>Those flames seem to entrance me As I watch them flicker and leap. Their beauty and power enthrall me. I'm relaxing, now ready for sleep.</p> <p>Time to put out our beautiful bonfire, Douse those wonderful flames away. So sad to see them diminish But it's been a perfect end to a perfect day.</p>	<p>Remember, remember the 5th of November Well I can recall when a child We'd build up a fire at the end of the garden The weather always seemed to be mild</p> <p>My sister and I and the young boy next door Had been round and about finding wood And fearing the locals might pinch it We'd hide it as best as we could</p> <p>Mum made toffee apples, there'd be Yorkshire parkin And bottles of beer for the chaps With potatoes to roast in the base of the fire Pails of water in case of mishaps</p> <p>We'd saved up for weeks for a special firework But only to find it a dud So my uncle set about it with a red hot gas poker Then it lit and my word it was good</p> <p>We had sparklers to write out our names with Roman candles and catherine wheels And rockets galore, jumping crackers and more But now the date no longer feels</p> <p>As exciting as then. Times have changed for us all But the memories still never end Though the grown ups are gone, Thoughts of them linger on Of the times round a fire with friends</p>
© Rosemary Brown 2023	© Jean Ellis 2023

Sew & Sew

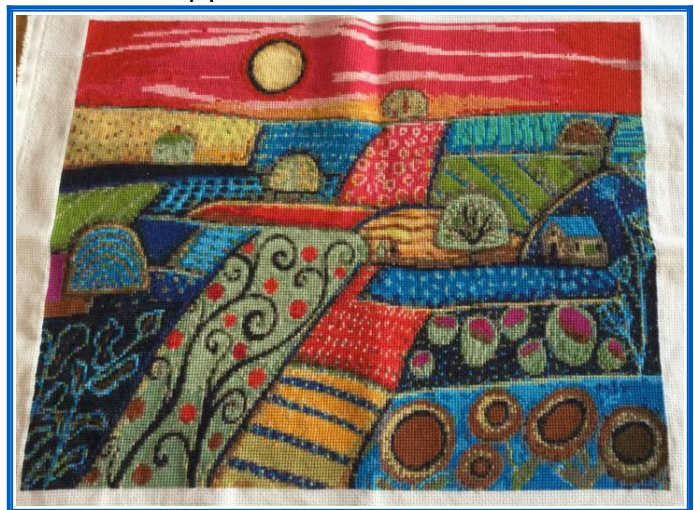
Barbara has been busy completing projects. Her cushion cover started with 4 'blocks' which are units of fabric sewn together (or 'pieced') to form the desired pattern. Leaves and stems were then hand-sewn (or 'appliqued') on top, before being machine-quilted. Barbara found the pattern and thought it would be a good way to use her fabric stash, which was also further reduced by completing a quilt called 'Garlands'.



As an experiment, Barbara used fleece instead of cotton for the quilt backing, which made a lovely soft, warm finish. She will donate this quilt to the Linus project, which distributes new homemade quilts and blankets to sick, disabled, disadvantaged or distressed children. I am sure it will be well received and appreciated.



Val has set aside her own Linus quilt to concentrate on making some pouches for Christmas presents.



Katherine has completed a lovely, colourful contemporary cross-stitch pattern. Part way through, she admitted to having doubts as the red sky seemed to be over-powering, but the colour balance was restored as she continued with the patchwork of fields and trees.

Occasionally, we may lose faith half-way through a project and this example reminds us that sometimes it is definitely worth persevering. Katherine has already started an advent sampler.

[Continued](#)

Sew & Sew – Continued

We sewists often use abbreviations or acronyms for projects that we temporarily abandon, but Barbara recently showed me this 'Quilter's Code', which introduced me to a few more and made me chuckle. My husband can testify to me having many WIP – most of them are items he has requested.



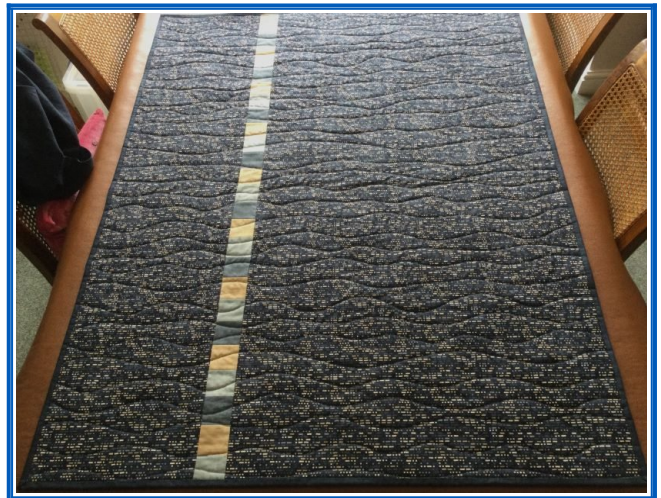
Barbara recommended an excellent book called 'Walk' by Jacquie Gering, which gave me the guidance and confidence to quilt the wavy lines to represent sea. Allegedly, the fabric pattern on the reverse of the quilt is the alphabet in Morse code – unless someone can advise differently.

Next month, the Sew & Sew group will move to our new venue – the Cricket Clubhouse in Woodhall Spa.

Carmel Sefton



I have however, finished a lap quilt for a good friend's significant birthday. She lives on the Isle of Wight, hence the nautical theme.



Visiting Churches

Roughton

The history of a village such as Roughton is less well documented and researched than that of larger settlements such as Horncastle or Louth, but in its own way can be just as interesting and perhaps, for members of Woodhall Spa u3a, more personal.

The heart of Roughton for a thousand years has been St. Margaret's church. Set in a rural village alongside the River Bain, we know that Roughton was an Anglo-Saxon settlement, one of a number scattered around Horncastle, but the earliest written record is where the village is given two entries in the Domesday Book, a reasonably large and prosperous farming community nine hundred years ago, with a cultivated area of land, enough for 12 ox-teams to plough in a year, plus an additional eight farmers with 160 acres of land between them. There were also 15 acres of meadowland, 40 acres of woodland with some pasture, and a fishery worth two shillings a year.

The land belonged to one William Despenser, who was Steward to William the Conqueror,

likely to have been one of the Norman lords to whom William granted estates for services rendered during and after the Conquest. At about this time, St Margaret's church started to take the shape we know today with its simple Norman nave and tower base. The font base and some double-shafting in the north-west corner of the nave are also from this period. But no written records of the early building have come to light and few records of the village exist for the Middle Ages. In 1202 its name had changed to Ructon and by 1521 to Rughton, with the first appearance of the modern spelling of Roughton in 1564.

It is difficult to imagine Roughton as the large and busy village it was until just over one hundred years ago. At the present time there are only perhaps six or seven buildings of any age in a village that was certainly an Anglo-Saxon settlement, if not earlier. The common thread through the history of Roughton is St. Margaret's Church- it has seen all of village life for the last thousand years with upkeep and repair in the hands of the village.

Halham church: St Benedict

The church dates from the early 12th century, with alterations and additions made later during that century, in the late 13th century, and in the 14th and the 15th centuries. In 1842 it was described as "an ancient structure and was restored in 1880 and again in 1891, when the seating was increased from 67 to 140. It was declared redundant in October 1977.

St Benedict's is constructed in greenstone rubble with limestone ashlar dressings and gables in red brick (which has also been used in places for patching). The roofs are slated, and the bellcote is timber boarded. The church plan consists of a nave with a north aisle, a south porch and a chancel. The bellcote sits towards the west end of the nave roof. At the west end of the church is a 14th-century doorway above which is a three-light window dating from the 15th century. In the west gable are two re-set medieval stones carved with heads. The north isle has a two-light window in the north wall, a blocked doorway, a two-light and a three-light window in the north wall, and a three-light window in the east wall.

[Continued](#)

Halham St Benedict – Continued

The north wall of the chancel contains a two-light and a three-light window and two blocked ogee-headed windows. The east window has four lights and contains Decorated tracery. In the south wall of the chancel are a two-light and a three-light window, two ogee-headed windows, and an ogee-headed doorway. The south wall of the nave contains a two-light 13th-century window with Y-tracery and a gabled porch dating from the 14th century. It has an arched doorway, stepped angle buttresses with crocketed pinnacles and a cross finial. The inner doorway is Norman in style, with a round head, three orders of roll moulding, and a carved tympanum containing a Maltese cross in a circle, a fan-shaped shell to its left, and a knot in a circle to the right.

Bicker: St Swithun's church

The present church is built on a site that has been used for religious observance for over 1000 years. Archaeological evidence shows that a church existed here in Anglo-Saxon times and may have been of wood, if not stone. There is part of an Anglo-Saxon cross and, in the south porch, a 14th century piscina with interlaced decoration which would have been used by worshippers for handwashing. But the heart of St Swithun's church is its impressive Norman architecture. Two massive pillars exist with a further 2 pillars embedded in the west wall. Archaeological evidence proves that the church was much

larger, extending further west into the church grounds. The pillars support characteristic Norman arches with chevron carving. Clerestory windows were added above the arches to allow additional light into the church and there would have been a vaulted ceiling in this part of the church.

On the south side of the Lady chapel, another piscina which would have been used for washing holy vessels used during Mass. The village clock and stained glass windows at the east end of the church were donated by the Parker family during the early 20th century.

Langrick: St Margaret of Scotland

Saint Margaret of Scotland Church was built during the early part of the 19th century. It was not dedicated until 1922 and is a Grade II listed building, restored and altered in the late 19th century and twice during the 20th century.

The name Langrick appears to come from "Long Creek and is at the very southern edge of Wildmore Fen, in an area which was once the manor of Armtree, in the parish of Coningsby. It was once the site of a hermitage belonging to Kirkstead Abbey. When Langrick and Langrville were enclosed

in 1812, not a single house existed. Langrick's importance was that it was the site of a ferry crossing over the River Witham, reputedly built by Robert Dymoke. The river was straightened in 1833.

A steel bridge, still in use, was built in the southern neighbouring settlement of Langrick Ferry in 1909, replacing a previous ferry over the Witham

The registers of births and deaths date from 1831 and those of marriages from 1837.

Today, the church forms part of the Brothertoft Group, in the Diocese of Lincoln.

Michaela Moody – Group Leader

The Final Word

Feedback

You can use this link to view past issues of the Newsletter, or to send a note to the Editor:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/113917>

If you have any suggestions or comments about the Newsletter I'd be happy to read them. You can email them to me via newsletter@woodhallspa-u3a.org.uk, or use the link above.

I am indebted, as always, to those who have taken time to contribute to this edition.
Many thanks.

Tom Sefton – Editor

