



# HAVERHILL & DISTRICT

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## News and Views

November 2025

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### From the Chair

I have a book titled "Book of Dates" that I picked up in a charity shop. It gives details of happenings for every day of the year through history. I thought I would highlight some for December. December has long been a month of historic turning points, scientific breakthroughs, and cultural milestones.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus, sparking the Montgomery Bus Boycott and becoming a defining moment in the American civil rights movement.

Just a few years later, on December 3, 1967, Dr. Christiaan Barnard performed the first successful human heart transplant in South Africa, revolutionizing modern medicine.

In the realm of politics, December 2, 1804, saw Napoleon Bonaparte crown himself Emperor of France, symbolizing the rise of a new imperial order.

On December 11, 1936, King Edward VIII abdicated the British throne to marry Wallis Simpson, a decision that reshaped the monarchy and captivated the world.

December also witnessed the end of global tensions: on December 3, 1989, U.S. President George H. W. Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev declared the Cold War over following the Malta Summit. Although they have returned since, when will we ever learn.

Culturally, December 16, 1773, marked the Boston Tea Party, a bold act of protest against British taxation that fuelled the American Revolution.

Meanwhile, December 9, 1608, saw the birth of John Milton, whose epic Paradise Lost remains a cornerstone of English literature.

From revolutions and royal drama to medical marvels and civil rights, December has consistently been a month where history unfolds with intensity and consequence. I hope you enjoyed this wander through history.

At the beginning of the January meeting on the 27th we will hold an **Extraordinary General Meeting** to discuss changes to the Constitution, as outlined in my September Article. You will receive separate details regarding this.

News and Views isn't published in December so I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas, however you celebrate this time of the year, and a Happy New Year.

**Tom Parker, Chair**

### Speaker's Corner

At the meeting in the Arts Centre on the 28<sup>th</sup> October our speakers were Toni Neobard and Kate Broad who gave a light-hearted and quirky look at marriage and relationships through the eyes of the Victorians – For Better or Far Worse! History of Marriage.

We learned about bigamy, whether a widow can marry her late husband's brother and the thinking around that, and how both ladies and gentlemen advertised for suitable marriage partners.

On Tuesday 25th November, we'll be welcoming some very special guests from The Living Memorial Garden in Rettendon — a remarkable project founded in 2009 by landowners Peter and Fran Theobald (Fran being a former RAF servicewoman). They have generously dedicated 20 acres of land to create a peaceful space for dedication plaques and museum huts commemorating WWII. Over the years, the garden has grown to include memorials for post-1945 conflicts such as Korea, Suez, Northern Ireland and Afghanistan.

We will also be hearing about the Red Knights Motorcycle Club and the National Red Plaque Fire Service Memorial.

Doors open at 10 a.m. and the talk begins at 10.30 a.m. Join us for what promises to be an inspiring morning and don't forget, free beverages will be served in the bar.

### **Christmas Concert Tickets 2nd December 2025**

Have you bought your tickets for the Christmas Concert yet? There are a limited number available as many were sold at the Open Morning and at the October Speaker Meeting. Last remaining tickets available - buy online now to avoid disappointment (please see email sent a week or two back which sets out how to do this).

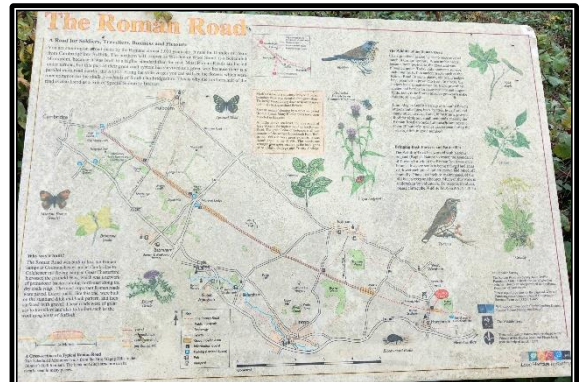
Tickets are just £6 each (which includes glass of wine, beverages and a mince pie) and will also be available at the Speaker Meeting on 25th November, when Caroline and Gloria will be selling them in the bar between 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and, if there are any left, after the Meeting. Entrance is with ticket only on the day.

**Sue Dickinson**  
**Speaker Secretary**

### **Walking, Talking, Munching**

Twelve hardy members of the WTM group braved the wet conditions to meet at The Old Red Lion in Horseheath for the October walk. Horseheath, as the name suggests, has a history of horse racing success and as far back as 1834 produced a Derby winner named 'Plenipotentiary', a commentator's nightmare, one suspects.

Lead by Alan and Gillian Alexander the waterproofed group quickly left the village and headed out into open countryside. The recently rotavated fields making the vast, rain heavy skies, seem intimidating to all who walked below them. It was not long before a section of the Roman Road was reached. This is known as Worsted or Wool Street and is part of a road that ran originally from Godmanchester to Colchester. In this modern day the road is still walkable to Fulbourn.



Because of the inclement weather, not much in the way of wildlife was observed bar one sighting of a Kite swooping toward path-side trees.

Another squall hurried the group on to their lunch at The Old Red Lion which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

**Ken Hainsby**

### **Cycling Group – Bonus Ride**

Due to October having five Thursdays, we had a bonus ride on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October. The uncontrollable parameters

were favourable as well, with blue skies, no wind nor rain.

Setting off from the Sports Centre at 10am were six Hi-Viz clad individuals, on an assortment of bicycles, heading west along the old railway path towards the new western by-pass. The continuing lack of signposting meant that there were virtually no other road users in sight and we negotiated the tricky junction by Bradnams without difficulty.

Onward to Withersfield and with the group all together we turned left towards Horseheath but immediately made a right by the White Horse onto Skippers Lane. One member commented that it was his least favourite road on any of our rides and I think the combination of high speed four-wheeled traffic and regular undulations do make for a less than perfect experience.

Undaunted we were soon past the Jelly Factory and into the quieter lane leading to West Wickham and Streetly End. The sun still shone and by now we were warming up from the exercise. Arriving in Horseheath we turned right to the Red Lion and enjoyed coffee and tea outside in the sunshine. If this pub sold cake it would be a perfect cyclists stopping place!

Suitably refreshed, we mounted up and after crossing an extremely busy A1307 were back on the quiet lanes towards Camps and Nosterfield End where we turned for Haverhill and home. We parted company at the Rec roundabout and went our separate ways.

Our next rides are on the 20th November and 4th and 18th December - weather permitting of course.

**Peter Thomas**

### **London Originals Hemingford Grey Manor**

Before the London Original's visit to one of the oldest continuously inhabited houses in Britain we met for coffee seated at

candle-lit tables at the Cock, in the darkest pub room you could ever imagine.

It was a short riverside walk from there to the topiary-rich gardens of the moated Norman House, built circa 1130. The original thick fortified house walls have survived, although an 18<sup>th</sup> Century extension was destroyed by fire. Every room was a singular experience.

The author Lucy Boston made the house famous as the setting for six "Green Knowle" children's books and the film "From Time to Time". Lucy was a polymath, having also created a spectacular series of unique patchwork quilts, skilfully displayed by daughter-in-law, Diana, and also created the impressive mature riverside gardens.



We listened in awe to the 1930s gramophone which entertained wartime troops in the music room, but failed to hear the haunting unexplained flute music emanating from the attic. Locals called it the poltergeist house and gave it a wide berth.

Thank you Beverly for such an unexpected treat and for arranging lunch in St Ives at the Swan and Angel followed by afternoon tea at the Golden Lion.

**Ian Johnson**

### **Patchwork and Quilting Group**

Our industrious ladies have been hard at work again making quilts for babies at West Suffolk Hospital Neonatal unit. We

had a visit at our October meeting from Janet and Maria from the Neonatal unit, for whom we had made a butterfly quilt for their Parent Bereavement Suite which they came to collect, but they also took away with them about 40 small quilts which are given to each baby to keep and take home with them.



Janet and Maria were thrilled with their gifts and spent some time talking to the ladies in our group and explaining how the Neonatal unit is run. We had a very enjoyable afternoon and it was good to make contact with the people we make our quilts for.

The other news regarding our group comes from The Project Linus who donate quilts and blankets to sick, bereaved, disadvantaged and distressed children.



We have been supporting Project Linus for a number of years and our coordinator, Sheila Walker, has provided us with some statistics. In the past 5 years our group has donated 404 quilts, 22 bags and 19 blankets, that is a total of 445 items to date to children in need of a "hug". This total represents more than one tenth of the total the Linus coordinator has received since 2019 which is 4,132. We have enjoyed making these quilts and have had some lovely letters from recipients.

**Janet Berriman**

### The Hard of Hearing

The Editorial Team has received the following useful information which we are passing on to our members.

"Being an organisation for the more mature, I imagine some of your members wear hearing aids. I have received information, from West Suffolk Hospital, concerning minor repairs and retubing from those who wear NHS supplied hearing aids.

West Suffolk hospital now have Audiology support from 09.00 - 12.00 Monday - Friday for repairs and retubing by appointment. They also offer a walk in service for batteries from 09.00 - 12.00 & 14.00 - 16.00. This runs alongside booked appointments, postal service and Suffolk Hearing Support."

**Bryan Hawes**  
**Haverhill Hard of Hearing Club**

### City Walkers - Of Ghosts and Ghouls and The Paranormal

We met, one mist-shrouded Cambridge night in October at The Copper Kettle, there to strengthen our resolve with hearty victuals and the fruits of the landlord's cella and there, too, to meet our guide, clad in robes of monkish demeanour and of horrid mien, Tony Rodgers (oddly comforting name).



This Cambridge Fellow regaled us with tales of screams in the night, of spectral sightings, of an inept hangman and of furtive lovers, one of whom was locked in a cupboard and perished therein and whose lady duly took flight from the rooftops of Corpus Christi in grief and despair. We heard of Professor Barrett, locked in his study and found dead in a coffin and whose spirit does most woefully scream. Our interlocutor hustled us in and out of The Eagle and its gory tales but that's the way the money goes.

Are there more things in Heaven and in Earth than are dreamed of in our AI-driven philosophy?

**Jim Lindop**

### **Cycling Group 7 go a-twiddling\***

It sounded like a pretty normal trip out involving the old railway path to Sturmer and then minor roads through Birdbrook, past the entrance to Moyns Park (both of them) and back via two Bumpsteads to St Nick's Hospice Cafe for coffee and tea with cake.

However, the 2 ladies and 5 gents were frequently seen to be peddling briskly whilst not exactly covering the ground very effectively. After all, this is East Anglia (just) and everyone knows it is flat so why the need for lower gears and blurred legs?

This topic was discussed over refreshments and it was agreed that the leader had selected a particularly hilly route. Indeed, checking on the Ordnance

Survey App it transpired the distance was a fairly normal 12.6 miles but the cumulative ascent was over 600 feet!

However, we all survived and the short spell of drizzle was soon over and we even got a bit of sun towards the end.

The Group's next rides are 20th November followed by ones on the 4th and 18th December, weather permitting. The leader of the group promises not to include Camps Road to Hazel Stub or Wrattling Road in the itinerary.

*\* Twiddling - Derogatory Term used by keen cyclists to describe the practice of selecting a low gear and pedalling furiously to appear to be travelling very fast whilst not actually changing the scenery....*

**Peter Thomas**

### **Sunday Strollers**

For the last walk of the year 20 members of The Sunday Strollers met at Station Road Linton. Led by David Green, the group walked through The Grip and joined Long Lane before emerging to cross the A1307 and enter Linton Pocket Park. Pocket Park, also known as Leadwell Meadows, is a little hidden gem of a nature reserve, with many little paths and walkways containing diverse plant and animal life.

It was fitting that being Remembrance Sunday, the group paid tribute in silence for two minutes before continuing on.

The walk was to cross 5 bridges over the Granta, all of which afforded a view of the riverbank and the rare chalk stream that the Granta is through Linton.

The churchyard of St Mary's was traversed before emerging by the restored old Guildhall, now a private residence. After encountering an unusual Clapper Stile, where the wooden bars are pushed down for access and clatter back into position after, the walk continued on through the village emerging eventually

onto the playing fields which boast an admirable cricket and football pitch.

They say in good company time passes rapidly and sure enough the walk was over far too quickly.

There is no walk in December so the group look forward to 2026 when more highways and byways can be explored.

**Ken Hainsby**

### **A Winter Walk**

The 1<sup>st</sup> of December  
It's cold and it's damp  
Seven brave walkers  
Who would make so bold  
Set out to walk  
With a firm resolve  
Out of the park  
Along the railway track  
Next it's the bridleway  
At the top of the hill  
Then across the golf course  
And on to Pope's Mill

Then follow the path  
By the side of the stream  
All muddy and slippery  
And really quite mean  
There's trout in the water  
Lost golf balls too  
There's not much else  
Except mud, like glue  
Then crossing the stream  
And back on to the track  
To reach Pooh Sticks bridge  
And then we are back

**David Jefferies**

### **A Huge Thank You**

The Editorial Team would like to thank each and every one of you for the articles and photos sent in during the last year and we are looking forward to receiving even more next year.

The members of the Committee and the Editorial Team join together in sending you all good wishes for the season, and

for a happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful 2026.



**Barbara Lavender, Alice Landsman and Jan Marrone, Editorial Team**

### **Next Meetings:**

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

#### **The Living Memorial – Rettendon**

A memorial garden at Whitehouse Farm, Rettendon with several small museums and covered seating areas. The acres of land play host to dedication plaques and little museum huts for WWII.

You will also hear about the Red Knights Motorcycle Club and the National Red Plaque Fire Service Memorial.

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025**

Christmas Concert 1.45 - 4.30p.m.

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

#### **The Tutu Man's Other Show**

Lestyn Edwards is back, recalling his years touring the variety circuit with his country and western singer father, psychic medium mother, a singing emu and a burlesque giraffe.

Now that sounds like an awful lot of fun!

Deadline for the Rolling Screen:

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026

e-mail to: [chair@haverhillu3a.com](mailto:chair@haverhillu3a.com)

Deadline for next edition:

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026

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