



Deeping St. James

Issue No.262 February 2025

The Deepings u3a NEWSLETTER

Website: deepings.u3asite.uk

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Deepings website](http://deepings.u3asite.uk)



Market Deeping

Welcome

New members: Eileen Jeavons, Market Deeping; Anne Lees, Glington; Bob and Sue Titman, Deeping St James; Debbie Daley, Langtoft; Pamela Buckton, Market Deeping; Julia Heaton, Market Deeping; Sylvia Reid, Deeping St James; Pam and David Shukman, Market Deeping; Julie Walker, Deeping St James; Carol Bond, Market Deeping; Ming Ming and Colin Wall, Langtoft; Amanda Courton, Etton and Anna Jolly, Deeping St James

NEXT MEETING: 17 February

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 FOR 2025:

17 February: James Webb Space Telescope

Keith Townsend will talk about replacing the Hubble Space Telescope with the JWST, which was launched in 2021 and is looking back to the dawning of the Universe. He will show some of the remarkable images that have been received.

17 March: Development of the English Silver Spoon

Neil Callan will describe how and why spoons have changed through the ages. If any members would like to bring in any silver spoons they have, Neil can give information on the date and hallmark and a rough valuation.

14 April: Fraud Prevention

A talk by Richard Kubon, the Regional Fraud Protection Officer, on how we can protect ourselves from fraud.

MARGARET'S MUSINGS

Dear members

February "filldyke" does seem to have been living up to its name; however it is heartening to see the bulbs poking through the cold earth, the snowdrops being particularly welcome as winter slowly turns to spring. Yes, spring may be on its way, but I wonder why Easter eggs have to appear in the shops even before we have enjoyed our Shrove Tuesday pancakes!

Many members enjoyed the Christmas meeting at the Coronation Hall, though we appreciate that the fairly late change of venue prevented some of you from attending. The Committee would like feedback from all members before deciding on the venue for the Christmas meeting 2025 and you will receive a separate email asking you to indicate your preference.

I look forward to meeting you during the month ahead.

Best wishes

Margaret

Chair, The Deepings u3a

GROUP CO-ORDINATOR

Enquiries from people come in quite often to join our Guitar for Pleasure Group. At present, members meet in private homes, so there is limited space for any further members. Please contact me to discuss any further interest and possible options to start another group.

June Wheatcroft

Group Co-ordinator

01778 344916

SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP

The Sunday Lunch club has been booked for Sunday 23rd February at the Goat, Frognall, 12.30 for 1pm.

If you are planning to join us, please ring either Enid on 01778342936 or Helen on 07707822729 (please note my landline is not working at the moment) or helen.perkins500@gmail.com

Group leaders: Enid Withers, Helen Perkins

NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



Thirteen members of the Natural History group enjoyed a well wrapped up walk at Deeping Lakes. It was very cold and muddy but lots to look at and fortunately we managed to avoid most of the rain. There were not many birds about, spotted some egrets and lots of wild fowl on the Lakes. The trees were looking very good and it was nice to see the hedging and fencing that had been put in by the volunteers' hard work.



CRAFT 2 GROUP



We met to tackle one of Anita's card design cards and we also had a visitor who expressed interest at the Open Day in November.

Thank you to Anita for all the preparation work she did before the meeting and it turned out to be a very cheerful card.

Maureen is undertaking the February project and we look forward to seeing you all on 17 February at 2pm.

Group leader and report Liz Noble

GOOD FOOD GROUP



Our numbers were depleted this month because of holidays, so four of us had a very nice lunch on the theme 'light & tasty'.

We started with Spanakotyropita, a Greek filo pastry dish layered with spinach, feta, leek and dill. We then had Tandoori chicken kebabs with salad and finished with a date and walnut tray bake and cheesecake stuffed strawberries.

We had wine with each course and then sampled some port bought in Porto.

New members welcome. Please contact me or Hilary.

Report by Sheila McGurk

Group Leaders: Hilary Akam and Sheila McGurk

STROLLERS GROUP

Our initial walk of the year turned out to be a success, although the weather had placed it in doubt throughout the week leading up to it.

The storm, named Eowyn, which didn't affect us to the same degree as it did further north and west, passed by during the night and by the time we met at the Crab and Winkle at Werrington, we were blessed with sunshine and a light wind.

There were 13 of us, led by Stuart, which was a healthy number taking part considering the weather forecast. Setting off from the car park of the pub, we walked towards the township part of Werrington and after joining Fox Covert Road, we soldiered on to Cuckoo's Hollow, which is a natural lake, fed by the Werrington Brook, which, in turn, has its origins in North Bretton, or even Marholm.

We passed under Fulbridge Road before joining that road at the end of the Werrington village street.

Eventually, we joined that street and walked through the old village, before heading back to the Crab and Winkle, all of us relieved that we hadn't suffered the worst of Eowyn.

This month's walk will be starting from the Birch Tree Café at Easton-on-the-Hill, where Geoff will lead us along footpaths through the village and down to the Welland Valley and hopefully we will see some the first signs of the floral year, in the form of snowdrops.

Report and Group Leader: Bob Deller

DEEPINGS BOOKWORMS

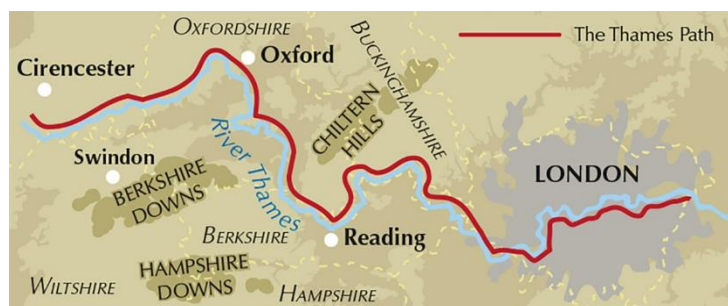
This new group of 11 members meets at 10.15am on the first Monday of each month at the Community Library.

Some allege that physical books are a thing of the past, overtaken by new ways of delivering text. If so, the message has not reached reading groups in The Deepings!

Members not only want to discuss a book each month, but also expand their reading experience by exploring new authors, series or genres. This month's discussion will focus on: 'A Lady's Guide to Fortune Hunting' by Sophie Irwin. Kitty Talbot needs a fortune and love is not required. She has 12 weeks to find a rich husband and save her sisters. A Regency romcom - read our group's thoughts in next month's newsletter!

Report and Group Leader: Tom Baldwin

HISTORY GROUP



A good number of History Group members attended the first meeting of 2025 at the Deepings Sports and Social Club.

We welcomed Mike Parsons whose talk was entitled "The River Thames – outrages and Oddities". Mike was born in Chelsea so his talk was like a stroll along the Thames from Chelsea Reach to Tower Bridge.

We were reminded of the 1969 Marchioness disaster

which claimed the lives of 51 party goers who are remembered annually at a memorial in the nave of Southwark Cathedral.

Around 100 years before this, in 1878, there was another tragedy on the Thames. The Princess Alice was returning to North Woolwich after a midnight cruise to Gravesend and Sheerness when she collided with a coal boat. Nearly 700 people died in this terrible accident.

Mike's talk wasn't all about boating accidents on the Thames. He told us about the river being a place for dumping human evidence and a sad place for suicides. One of the strangest deaths, in 1982, was that of Roberto Calvi, known as God's Banker due to his close ties to The Vatican. In fact, this unresolved death appears to have links to The Mafia, The Vatican and a mysterious Masonic Lodge called P2.

There was so much more that Mike told us on his theme! Thank you, Mike, for the interesting talk.

At next month's meeting the subject will be the Forties, led by Sandra.

And....looking forward to August, Barbara reminded us that our annual trip will be to Ipswich with a cruise on the River Deben.

**Report by Mary Burton
Group Leader: Sandra Jones**

MAHJONG GROUP

We are now gaining more players who need a copy of the book *The Game of Mah Jong*, illustrated by Patricia A Thompson & Betty Maloney. If anyone has a copy that is not being used, we are willing to purchase them for use by new group players. Please let me know if you can help (peg@torrance231.plus.com) or Phone: 01778347601.

Group Leader: Peg Torrance

ART APPRECIATION GROUP



Nineteen of us got together for the annual social event and test of knowledge!!! Below are a few photos of the event showing how testing the quizzes were!

Thank you to Barbara for taking the time to photocopy her Quiz about Mary Cassatt, which tested the memory.

Thanks to David for coordinating the technology which consisted of a short video about perspective and the use of

scale in a painting.

He also set up the Power Point pictures of famous artists and we had the task of identifying them by name. This was won by Kathy's table and closely followed by Margaret's team. There were no prizes though!! There was a good buffet provided by members.



Next month we are visiting the Wild Flower Café in Deeping St James where we will have a demonstration of Indian Printing. There will be the opportunity to purchase coffee and cake. A donation of £2 is also required from everyone to say thank you for the morning.

Please arrive as usual, 10 for 10.30 start.

Report and Group Leader: Sandra Jones

FAMILY HISTORY REPORT



We were delighted to welcome so many members and prospective members (visitors for now) to our first 2025 meeting, as a result of the open day in November.

We met as usual in the Community Centre and Peg Torrance gave a brief talk, followed by questions on some of the basics of how to find out *Who do you think you are!*

Of course, some of the new members will be at various stages of finding out their family history, first timers, those seeking how to record all the details properly and finally those who have met a brick wall! We feel sure we can help each other and next month we plan to split into three or four groups to tackle some of the issues, naturally with the help of laptops and the different software available.

Many thanks to Peg for going back to basics which many of the old hands found useful reminders too. We look forward to seeing you on 10 February and several who were unable to come in January.

Report & Acting Group Leader Liz Noble

JAZZ, SWING AND BIG BAND GROUP

In line with custom, our January programme was devised by Geoff Whittle, who took what he called an 'experimental approach'.

The experimental part of Geoff's programme was to select the same piece of music performed in two or three versions by different artists. The risk, of course, was there would be repetition, making the end result tedious. Well, the experiment was successful and it simply didn't work that way. Take, for instance, the tune most know very well, *Summertime* from *Porgy and Bess*. Written in 1934 yet as fresh as if that were yesterday, when performed by ace saxophonist Charlie Parker, then in an excellent version by Miles Davis in his typical muted trumpet style, and finally these versions were offset by female vocalist Chris Connor. These were the third, fourth and fifth items in the programme which started with the completely different *Limehouse Blues*, by Benny Goodman (clarinet) and the same piece played by the most entertaining Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain. They turned up later in the concert when Stomping at the Savoy following Goodman again playing the same piece. Both performers played in their own style, of course.

And that was the flavour of the concert; the music was complemented by Geoff presenting interesting facts about the music or the artists. It was a cracking idea to hear the various versions of songs or instrumentals. It was a natural response to compare the different versions of the same title.

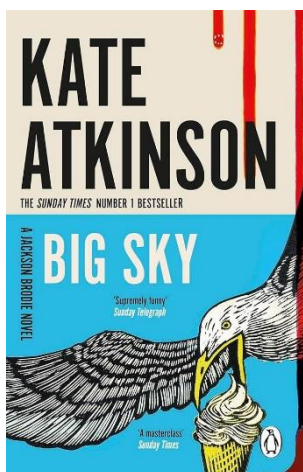
It's obvious that you can't keep a good tune down and yet how different they can be when interpreted by very diverse top-class musicians.

Thanks, Geoff for a very pleasant concert.

Our next meeting will be at the home of Phil Jones on 26 February 2025.

Report by Phil Jones
Group Leaders: Phil Jones, Anne Jones

MONDAY READERS



Our book this month was *Big Sky* by Kate Atkinson. "Big Sky" is the fifth book about the private detective, Jackson Brodie, and in this one he navigates a new case in the coastal town of Whitby. Our group had mixed feelings about it.

The story is layered with subplots involving human trafficking, broken families, and hidden secrets. Kate Atkinson's ability to weave these threads together is impressive. The novel's structure, with its shifting perspectives and timelines, kept us on our toes, gradually revealing the connections between the characters and their stories. Many of us really liked the multidimensional characters, of whom there are many! Jackson Brodie's mix of cynicism and compassion make him a character readers can root for. The supporting cast, among whom are a has-been end-of-the-pier comedian, two engaging young female detective constables, Jackson's own family, and some very dubious businessmen, are very well drawn and that was admired by many of us.

There are moments of dark humour and poignant reflection, and the weaving together into a whole plot is very clever. Some of the plot is very dark, particularly the human trafficking aspect.

However, some of us found the multiple subplots overwhelming, leading to a sense of clutter and confusion. They found it challenging to keep track of the various characters and their connections, which can detract from the overall enjoyment of the story as the initial chapters are slow to build momentum. The unpleasantness of the child sex traffick plot was a turn off for one of us. Some gave up and failed to finish the book.

However, most felt that, if you like a complex and clever plot, with great characters, this would be well worth sticking with.

Report and Group Leader: Liz Waterland

MONDAY WALKING GROUP

Twenty-three walkers met at the White Hart, Ufford and pre-ordered our food and I checked out the available beers!!



Starting off we headed towards Barnack via footpaths, tracks and a bit of road walking. The weather was chilly, but at least not raining. Reaching a point near a stream we were given information by Godfrey about Walcot Hall, which we could see in the distance. It had various owners from 1950s onwards up to the present time, and is now occupied by Darby and Catherine Dennis. Apparently, they sued RAF Wittering for compensation over Harrier Jet noise. The Hall stands in 120 acres of wooded parkland as part of a 1400m acre

agricultural estate.

During WW1, the Hall was HQ for a battalion of the Suffolk Regiment. In WW2, the Hall housed a remote operations room for RAF Wittering.

Onwards to Barnack we skirted the edge of the Hills & Holes, then towards Pilsgate, taking various paths, road in a zigzag loop back to Ufford. We even saw a sign, not seen before, warning of rabbit holes of which there were numerous. Some of the holes were potential leg/ankle breakers, but fortunately, no one was injured.

A good lunch was had by all and the staff were very attentive and the food came out speedily.

A big thanks to Godfrey and David S for leading the walk.

The next walk is from The Moorhen, Hampton Lakes, details to follow.

Still need a volunteer to lead the June walk, or maybe swap their proposed walk date!!



Report by Group Leader: Steve Hanson

THURSDAY GARDENING GROUP



It was good to meet up again in February following our extended Christmas break. Ten members enjoyed the beautiful winter sunshine from the warmth of David and Margaret Scott's conservatory. The photo shows the lovely colourful plants to be enjoyed from there and the promise of more to which to look forward as the bulbs poke up in their pots.

We honed the details of our next meetings, asked each other's advice to address our current gardening problems, and then were entertained by David's light-hearted quiz which, as always, resulted in much levity. We were surprised in equal measure by how much we knew and how much we couldn't remember!

Our thanks to Margaret and David for their generous hospitality.

Our next meeting will be a fish and chip lunch at Eventus.

Report: Ann Pettitt

Group Leaders: Kay Parker and Ann Pettitt

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2024/2025

Chair
Secretary
Treasurer
Membership Secretary
Group Co-ordinator
Gift Aid Secretary
Committee Member(s)

Margaret Beardshaw
Mary Martin
Stuart Wilson
David Perkins
June Wheatcroft
Anne Burton
Phil Jones

Non-Committee/Supporting roles

Speaker Arrangers

Gill Godden
Lynn Ayres
Sandra Jones
Ruth Griffiths
David Scott
Liz Noble

Newsletter Editors

Newsletter Distribution
Newsletter Distribution
Coordinator

Webmaster

Media Equipment Co-ordinator/Asst. Webmaster

David Perkins
David Scott

DEADLINE FOR REPORTS: 7 MARCH 1925
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