



Issue No.296

May 2026

The Deepings u3a **NEWSLETTER**

Website: deepings.u3asite.uk

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



Welcome

New members in April: None

NEXT MEETING: 18 May

Unless otherwise stated, all monthly meetings are at the Methodist Church, Deeping St James. Doors open at 9.30am.

PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS FOR 2026:

18 May 20 26: Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies

Martin Lloyd explains how three passports have played an influential role in the course of history.

15 June 2026: Life of a TV journalist

Award-winning reporter Bharat Patel has covered major stories both in the UK and overseas, everything from earthquakes to interviewing the world's oldest donkey and the parrot who spoke five languages.

20 July 2026: William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement

Don Chiswell will tell us about the English textile designer and artist, William Morris

MARGARET'S MUSINGS

Dear members

Here we are in the "merry month of May", nearly half way through the year. We mark the year's progress through the changes in our gardens and the countryside, though the strange weather patterns this year have encouraged spring flora to bloom together rather than in sequence – daffodils, tulips, wallflowers and bluebells for instance. I was lucky to enjoy a second show of spring blooms on a visit to my son and daughter-in-law in Stirling, where everything was a week or two later.

I travelled by train, enjoying, as always, the interesting and scenic route of the east coast main line; there is so much to view from York onwards. With the international situation threatening flights abroad, there is plenty to amaze and entertain us in our islands.

Talking of which, there are still spaces on the trip to Higham Ferrers and Northampton in July. So join us to enjoy the art of the early church builders and that of Scottish architect Rennie Mackintosh.

I look forward to seeing you at the monthly meeting.

Best wishes

Margaret

Margaret Beardshaw

GROUP CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Many thanks to all Group Leaders and Representatives who met on 10TH March for the many ideas and improvements which will keep Deepings u3a relevant to all its members. Group Leaders should have received an email detailing all that was discussed, and the Committee will be debating and actioning many of the points raised, and report back to all members via the Newsletter. There were lots of great ideas, so please be patient!

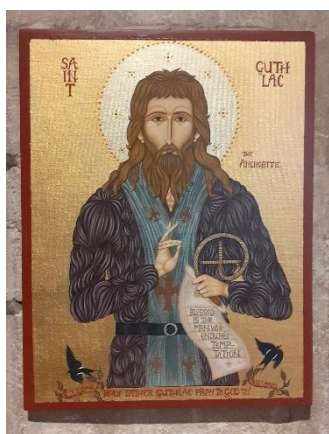
This Month: The Committee decided that three meetings will take place over a two-year cycle: Group Leaders; Open Day; and New Members. This system will allow some flexibility; enable all members to have a voice; and encourage new members to join. The Membership Secretary will send the names of new members to the Group Coordinator each month. The Co-ordinator will email a welcome to all new members, advising them of the advantages of membership (joining a group; starting a group; monthly meetings, etc.).

Next – and this is not new, but will now form part of a coherent system: at each monthly meeting a Comment Sheet will be placed (by the boards advertising groups) at the rear of the hall. Please write any comments (ideas for new groups; what could be improved, etc.). The Comment Sheet will be placed and collected by the Co-ordinator at the end of each meeting. Finally, your committee is updating and reviewing policies and guidelines - time consuming, but essential!

Next month, new groups and increasing membership. Do send me your ideas for new groups/leaders to either groups@deepingsu3a or my mobile number (at the end of the newsletter).

Tom Baldwin, Group Coordinator

CHURCH MICE



April's visit was to Crowland Abbey. 17 members went in the early Spring sunshine to be addressed by David, with help from Michael. We heard of St Guthlac, who in 699 AD came from Repton onto an island in the Fens to set up a hermitage. He lived a very plain and simple life before dying in 714. He lived alone in a cell and after his death was brought to the site of the present church. There have been four abbeys on the site. In 1720 the roof of the fourth abbey collapsed and left half of the abbey as the parish church together with the remains of the roofless south aisle.

After David's talk we explored the abbey and had the chance to visit the Parvise, a room above the porch. This once housed the rector and is now being converted to an Orthodox Chapel and contains the skull of St Theodore. There is a lot to see in the Abbey, where we had our cup of tea and cake.

Report and Group Leader: Henry Roberts

MONDAY WALKING GROUP

April report



On a fine sunny day ,12 of us met at The Crab & Winkle, Werrington. We pre-ordered our lunch before our walk, and took advantage of the offer for two mains for £14.00. We followed the cycle path until we got to Coverdale Walk which skirted a large open space which ran parallel to Davids Lane all the way through green and wooded areas to Paston Parkway. Here we had the tricky part crossing Davids Lane and then the Werrington Roundabout to cross to Carr Dyke. Some kind motorists stopped for us, so all was safe.

We walked along Carr Dyke all the way towards Gunthorpe.

Fortunately, it hadn't rained for a while so no mud, but the tractor wheel ruts were hard and could have been ankle breakers if care was not taken.

At the Gunthorpe end of the Parkway we had to cross back over the dual carriageways, needless to say vehicles were flying down towards the roundabout.

Footpaths along Elter Walk took us towards Fulbridge Road underpass where there were numerous paintings of nature which were very good. Continuing on to a lake at Cuckoo Hollow, we had a mini break until we took further footpaths which brought us out near the pub.

As usual there were discrepancies in the distance walked, but it was between 5.6 and 6.0 miles. A good lunch was had by all and a big thanks to The Famous Five for the walk.

The May walk will be from The Paper Mills, Wansford details to follow.



Report by Steve Hanson

May report



Fifteen of us set off from The Paper Mills in the picturesque village of Wansford on a rather cool, dull, rain threatening morning.

We crossed the old narrow bridge over the Nene which carried the A1 (Great North Road) until the Bypass opened in 1929. We set off up the road towards Yarwell and did a slight diversion to see a large posh house that for many years stood partially built but has now been finished. Then off through Old Sulehay Forest which is all that remains of the huge Rockingham forest in which Henry VIII

used to hunt.

We turned off into an old quarry before reaching Old Sulehay Lodge, a hunting lodge which had been part of the King's wedding gift to Catherine Howard. The weather had brightened a bit and we avoided any rain. We then walked south to Old Sulehay Nature Reserve and then across the fields down to Yarwell Village. In Yarwell we proceeded to Wansford Lock and then back to Wansford for lunch at The Paper Mills.

Report by David Perkins
Group Leader: Steve Hanson

SCIENCE GROUP

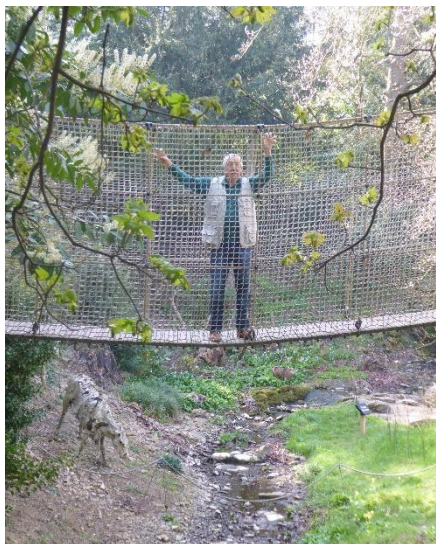
The February meeting was a quiz on all things scientific. It was a closely fought contest which required not one, but two tie-break questions to find the winners.

The March meeting was a very interesting talk by Alastair which covered the history of photography and his time working as a commercial photographer.

The last meeting was a talk by David on The Deep Ocean. This covered everything from the weird looking fish that live in the depths, submersibles and what they have discovered and the possibility of mining on the ocean floor. Next month's meeting on May 19th will be a surprise as Garth hasn't decided what it will be about yet!

Report by Gill Godden
Group Leader: Garth Perry

WEDNESDAY GARDENING GROUP



This month our group visited the Burghley House gardens. We were so lucky as the weather was perfect, making a stroll around the gardens very enjoyable indeed. On a sunny day gardens always look their best and this was certainly the case.

At this point all of the gardens were available to visit: the Sculpture Garden, the Garden of Surprises and the South Gardens which are only open for a limited time. Spring was certainly in evidence with the daffodils, tulips and lovely blossom on the trees.

Many of the areas are well established but others have been more recently developed and show promise of what is to come. The various sculptures around the Sculpture Garden are not always to everyone's taste but are certainly good conversation starters.

We finished off the morning with coffee and cake in the Orangery which was well received by us all.

The photo shows John Best 'having a go' on the Adventure Playground. He rose to the challenge of having your photo taken on the Adventure Playground equipment. Well done, John!

**Report. Julie Fitzjohn
Group Leaders. Jean Foster Julie Fitzjohn**

CRAFT GROUP



We met on a different day this month thanks to the council resurfacing Maureen's road and not allowing cars!

However, we had fun painting the Christmas tree clay decorations that Maureen had housed for a month while they dried.

Many thanks to her for hosting the session again and teaching us a new skill.

Next month we hope Anita will be back and she has a project for us to tackle. See you on Monday 18th May at Pam's house.

**Report Liz Noble
Group Leader Pam Read**

POETRY GROUP

Our happy group met with a lovely collection of poems with the topic "seasons".

We began with *Two Seasons* a poem by Valerie Bloom, *Childs Song in Spring* by Edith Nesbit who was the author of *The Railway Children* was next.

Followed by *Four Seasons* by Cecil Frances Alexander, and *The Trees* by Philip Larkin. We continued with *Bed in Summer* by Robert Louis Stevenson and *Seed* by Paula Meehan.

Two poems by one of our favourites, local poet John Clare, *The Cuckoo* and *Summer*.

Another Spring by Christina Rossetti was next then Robert Frost, *Stopping By Woods On A Snowing Evening*, *Digging* by Edward Thomas and lastly *Woods* by Gwyneth Lewis.

Another enjoyable afternoon kindly hosted by Angie (thanks for the lovely cake).

Haiku

A perfect white wine
is sharp, sweet and cold as this:
birdsong in winter.
Wendy Cope.

Report by Susanne Hoadley Group Leader.

NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



We do like to see information boards at the nature reserves we visit. There was one at Kings Dyke, Whittlesey, showing the bittern (a thick set heron). The board was near a reedbed, a typical habitat for a bittern. We didn't expect to see one because they are quite rare, elusive birds with great camouflage. But, lo and behold!, one flew across the reedbed in front of the bird-hide we were in. Those of us who missed it soon got over our disappointment when a cuckoo landed in a tree near us and began its very familiar call. Our photo shows some of us looking for warblers in the trees and others gazing into the pond. Oh, and some are saying, "Did you see the bittern?"

Report and Group Leader: Beverley Tegala

STROLLERS



Just a short trip to Thurlby, where our April walk started with 13 Strollers taking part, including Mike joining us for the first time.

A pleasant Spring morning saw as Stuart led us from the Horseshoe car park, leaving the main road and approaching the church. We then ventured north alongside the Car Dyke, which was cut by the Romans to link the River Witham with the Nene.

Returning to the A15, we crossed it and entered Northorpe, with a gentle climb towards Thurlby. At the junction we left the road behind and walked behind the village street and past the former playing field, where the photograph was taken alongside what could be the old

cricket pavilion.

Entering the primary school field and children's play area, we returned to the residential area, before walking through a field back to the main road.

After a few minutes we were back at the Horseshoe for a hearty lunch.

The walk this month will be change to the programme, with Geoff leading us from the Willow Brook Farm at Helpston Heath on Friday 22 May. Details will be forwarded to group members in due course.

Report by Group Leader: Bob Deller

JAZZ, SWING AND BIG BAND GROUP

April's Jazz, Swing & Big Band meeting was held at Phil Jones's house with Geoff Whittle presenting. Geoff achieved the difficult task of giving the Group music from many of Jazz's eras, while maintaining the accessibility and interest throughout – whatever one's preferences.

Perhaps the oldest in origin was the famous dirge from New Orleans's funerals *A closer walk with thee*. The morning started with the Gerry Mulligan Quartet playing *I got Rhythm*. Next, we heard the first of six numbers spread through the presentation by the immortal Bix Beiderbecke. The first *Goose Pimples* and the second, the timeless jazz standard *Mississippi Mud* with the Frankie Trumbauer Orchestra. The saxophone was well represented throughout the session, our first encounter being with Sidney Bechet (with Andre Revelotty's Orchestra). Sidney's vibrant, almost nasal tone on the soprano sax instantly recognisable in *Brave Margot* and *Jacqueline*.

Howlin' Wolf came next with *Poor Boy*. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential musicians ever – not the least for leading the transformation of acoustic Delta blues into electric Chicago Blues. He was followed by the similarly improbably named Little Walter with *I got to go*. His revolutionary approach to the harmonica had a strong impact on succeeding generations.

We came back to the saxophone – the alto this time – with Johnny Hodges' *Not so Dukish* – marking him leaving Duke Ellington's band after so many successful years for both of them. Bix returned with *Three Blind Mice* and *Crazy Kat*, the warmth of his tone on the cornet reminding us why he favoured this instrument over the more strident sound of the trumpet favoured by most of his contemporaries.

We heard two numbers by Illinois Jacquet, the tenor saxophonist, equally famed for his playing of the bassoon as a jazz instrument – a remarkable feat of embouchure adaptation!

Frank Frost (with the Night Hawks), more Bix, the Dukes of Dixieland, and two numbers by Benny Goodman, one with Lionel Hampton on vibes, brought a memorable jazz session to a conclusion.

Our next meeting will be at the home of Linda Witherington on 27 May 2026.

**Report by Phil Jones Colin Wall
Group Leaders: Phil Jones, Anne Jones**

ART APPRECIATION GROUP



Our speaker this month was Allan Brooke who never fails to bring a topic of interest. This month it was a multi-talented artist named Tirzah Garwood. Tirzah was a nick name derived from Tertia which means third child.

Born in 1908 in Gillingham Kent to Ella and Fredrick Scot Garwood who was in the Royal Engineers she attended West Hill School in Eastbourne from 1920 to 1924 and then Eastbourne School of Art from 1925 to 1928. This is where she met her husband, Eric Ravilious. She married Eric in 1930 and collaborated with him on various projects such as the Midland Hotel in Morecambe.

She was multi-talented and was known for her work with wood engraving, painting, paper marbling and writing. Her work is recognised for its humour and eccentricity. She had three children with Eric but he died in 1942 in a plane



crash. Not long after this tragedy she was diagnosed with breast cancer but maintained a normal life until her death in a nursing home in 1951 aged 42.

It was a very interesting talk

Next month we will be welcoming Yvonne's sister back to tell us about her latest project centred on the life of John Clare.

Thank you to everyone who supported us today and to David for his expertise. Allan actually wore his microphone!

Report by Group Leader: Sandra Jones

GOOD FOOD GROUP

The Foodies April meeting focussed on the recipes of Delia Smith from her "How to Cook Series", "Frugal Food" and "Book of Cakes".

Following the customary nibbles, we then sat down to enjoy:

- Carrot & Leek soup
- Porc au Chou
- Spiced Lamb Koftas in a tomato sauce
- Peach Pudding Pie
- Caramelised Apple Flan

It was good to sit down, relax and enjoy good company. Next meeting will be in June, with a selection of Picnic Food. Let's hope the weather will be kind to us!

**Report by Anne Gaskell
Group Leaders Sheila McGurk and Hilary Akam**

HISTORY GROUP

The Haunted Underground

By Allan Brooke.

Allan stepped in at a few days' notice and treated us to a thought-provoking talk about the supernatural, relating to the London Underground which is one of the city's most haunted locations. Many stations on the underground network are now closed and in some cases the line itself is obsolete. However, there are some strange goings on down there! Numerous reports have been made of spectral apparitions either on the lines or in the tunnels. Eerie noises have been reported too. It isn't surprising as the stations were often constructed on land that was once a cemetery or a plague pit. Reverend Dr John Cummings warned that digging deep into the ground would release the wrath of the Devil!

Here are a few of the infamous stories and the apparitions linked to them:

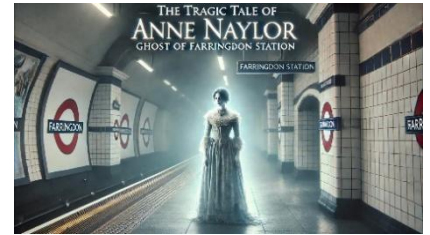


Bank where the Bank Nun was the name given to a girl dressed in black who kept asking where her brother had disappeared to. (He had been executed in the early 1800s)

Farringdon Anne Naylor (brutally murdered by her female employer)

Bethnal Green where 173 people died in a crush

Elephant and Castle a woman seen boarding Northern-bound trains only to disappear, along with mysterious footsteps



Covent Garden a tall man in a hat and cloak frequently seen in tunnels Staff have frequently asked for a transfer from this station

Marble Arch a creepy and menacing man is often seen particularly in tunnels.

The two photographs depict The Bank Nun whose name was Sarah Whitehead and Anne Naylor.

Mind The Gap!!

May's speaker is Stuart Orme and the topic is Old Scarlet.

Thank you to everyone who helped and attended today.

Next time you travel on London's Underground look out for strange images they might not be real!

Report by Sandra Jones
Group Leader: Sandra Jones

**COMMITTEE
MEMBERS 2025/26**

Chair	Margaret Beardshaw
Secretary	Mary Martin
reasurer	Stuart Wilson
Membership Secretary	David Perkins
Group Co-ordinator	Tom Baldwin
Gift Aid Secretary	Anne Burton
Committee Member(s)	Phil Jones

**Non-
Committee/Supporting
roles**

Speaker Arrangers	Gill Godden Lynn Ayres
Newsletter Editors	Sandra Jones Ruth Griffiths
Newsletter Distribution	David Scott
Newsletter Distribution Coordinator	Liz Noble
Webmaster	David Perkins
Media Equipment Co- ordinator/Asst.	David Scott
Webmaster	

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