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laugh,
live

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HWu3a

Magazine of the
Harborough Welland u3a

Issue No. 52

The Joys of Spring

April 2026



AGM
April 13th
Have you voted yet?



Welcome to the April edition (No. 52) of the HWu3a magazine. This month's theme is The **Joys of Spring**. Only 12 pages in the printed version. Thank you to all contributors who responded to our last minute request. The original theme was felt to be inappropriate due to unforeseen Geopolitics. There are four contributions about the original theme in the online version.

David Martin, Ced Bufton and Jack Horton, Publishing team.

Cover photo credits - Clockwise from top left—Angela Deane, Helen Salisbury, Jack Horton, Linda Reed, Bruce White, Colin Rolls.

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News from the Committee - March 2026

New Committee Members: Pending election results at the April 13th AGM, we will be welcoming two new Committee members. Halina Pasiiecznik will be taking up a new joint role as Community Outreach Facilitator/New Members Liaison. As a community orientated person who is passionate about local issues, I'm sure she will help to raise the profile of HWu3a and establish links with other organisations in Market Harborough - community@hwu3a.org.uk

Ced Bufton * has been easing into his roles as Marketing Officer and Magazine Co-Editor by shadowing Jack Horton - marketing@hwu3a.org.uk Thanks go to Jack and also to Dave Martin who will continue to work alongside Ced on the Magazine. The dream team lives on.....

Technical Support: Jim Tyson, who has worked with Jack behind the tech desk at monthly meetings, will now take over the main responsibility for technical operations tech@hwu3a.org.uk Ced will also assist in this area, but we really need more support with using the Audio Visual equipment at meetings. At the moment, a small number of people are doing a large number of tasks and this is not sustainable! Please get in touch with Jim to see how you could help.

AGM on Monday 13th April at 10.30am: All voting papers and associated documents have now been emailed or posted to the membership. It's not too late to cast your vote if you haven't already done so. Either vote online or come to the AGM and vote in person.

New Members Coffee Afternoon: All new members who joined between 1st January 2025 till end of February 2026 were invited to HWu3a's first New Members Meeting on Tuesday 17th March. This was well attended by over 50 new members, 17 Group Coordinators, Committee members and Support Teams. The main purpose of the event was to look at the benefits of being an active member of HWu3a and to share their experiences of our organisation so far. It was a great success, with lots of positive feedback, and is sure to be an annual event! Thank you to all the HWu3a volunteers who gave up their time and helped to make the afternoon so worthwhile.

Membership: The current membership is 1324. Prospective new members should wait to join until 1st April when payments will be taken for 2026/27 membership. Members renewing should do so from 1st April to 31st May 2026. Reminders will be sent out.

VERY IMPORTANT. Please contact the relevant Group Coordinator if you wish to join a group. Do not simply turn up hoping to be allowed to join that day. *Peter Saunders*

Other News

March Speaker Meeting: Dave Pinion's talk on 'My Amazing Journey to Antarctica' detailed his trip of 2023 when he joined an expedition ship for over thirty days to explore different islands in and around the South Pole. The audience was taken on an adventure with storms at sea, rescue missions, explorers' huts, incredible wildlife - orcas, minke whales, albatross, skuas, petrels and many more - the highlight being the penguins! Dave's enthusiasm for this part of the world really shone through and, as he had just returned from a second visit, there's no doubt another talk is in the making. A great turnout of 120 members thoroughly enjoyed hearing about this fascinating part of the world.

Movie Group: As part of a current project, some members of the group videoed the Canal basin to Foxton Locks on Tuesday 10th March while sailing along the canal on a narrowboat.

East Midlands u3a Workshop, 11th March: Ced Bufton and I attended this large gathering of u3as from Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. Topics included 'Looking and Adapting to the Future' and 'Helping your u3a to Grow'. There were opportunities to share ideas and make connections with neighbouring u3as.

Louise Elsome, Chair, Harborough Welland U3A chair@hwu3a.org.uk

By the members, for the members



Bea Martin



Bridget Hankers

Our two new Speaker secretaries :

*Find out more about Ced Bufton on page 4

What made you want to join the u3a?

We moved to Harborough in autumn 2024 to be closer to our daughters and grandchildren. Nothing unusual there then! We'd been members of the u3a in my home town of Bath and were keen to meet new people, make new friends and get involved with the local community. We were very pleased to find such an active u3a here with a great range of groups.



We're now happily settled in Harborough. I had an aunt in Kibworth and visited when I was younger, later spending summers with older cousins in Weston-by-Welland. I was really grateful when I was introduced to electronics in George's TV shop in Church Street which led to an interest in computers, a career that's been very good to me.

Why did you put yourself forward for the roles of Trustee and Marketing Officer?

Since retiring I've always been keen to 'give something back' and I think volunteering is one way of doing this. I saw the request for committee members and while discussing his move with Jack (at the drone group) he suggested I take over some of his roles. As well as u3a I'm also involved in the local Police Independent Advisory Group. I hope that my background and experience can help in some way.

What gives you the most satisfaction in your life?

Neat and tidy! As a retired Systems Designer I can't stop optimising processes, lining things up and making sure everything's in its place. Ask about my SockDock!

How do you spend your time when away from the u3a?

I do like making things and, as well as my plastic modelling (yes, Airfix is still around) I look out for u3a 'making' activities. I recently had a great time at the glass workshop and was really happy with the 'yacht'.

You have lived a very full life. What is the stand out event for you during this time?

Family aside, I wanted to fly since I was eight and got my pilot's licence just before our children arrived. After that, family commitments took precedence so the flying dropped to second place, but I did buy myself a Spitfire flight when I retired and later got to fly a Harvard ('Wacky Wabbit'). Amazing!



Interview with Dave Martin

Groups Noticeboard

VERY IMPORTANT. Please contact the relevant Group Coordinator if you wish to join a group. Do not simply turn up hoping to be allowed to join that day.

The Mah Jong group have moved back to the Baptist Church now that the maintenance works there have been completed. Group members will have been notified.

The Backgammon group is wondering if anyone or if you know of anyone, who may have a spare backgammon set sitting in a cupboard or box that is no longer needed, the group could do with more spare sets. More than happy to reimburse a token amount for it.

We are aware that there are quite a few of you on waiting lists to join various groups. It isn't a situation we like to have.

We are also seeking a replacement Coordinator (or two) to take over the **Evening Walks group**. This has always been held April –October, usually 3-4 miles, no longer than 90mins and a pub stop at the end. David Martin who ran the group before can give plenty of advice and support. He can be contacted on walking2.evening@hwu3a.org.uk

I do want to assure anyone who might be willing to volunteer to start a second group that we and the current Coordinator of a group would give 100% support and guidance. Contact Peter Saunders on groups@hwu3a.org.uk If you want to start a completely new group then contact Adriana White on newgroups@hwu3a.org.uk

At the last Get-together coffee morning, we held a 25 question general knowledge quiz which I believe went down well. Two tables tied for top place and the photos of the participants are below.

Have a happy Easter and no gorging on the Easter Eggs!

Peter Saunders – Groups Facilitator



Harborough Welland u3a - Group Activities

MONDAY

ART HISTORY	Angela Deane	01858 431111	Congregation Ch	1 st Monday	10.00 am
BOOK TALK	Andrew & Nita West	00001858 461517	Lounge Room, Meth Church	1 st Monday	2 pm
BACKGAMMON	Peter Saunders	07341 528450		1st and 3rd Monday	11 am 1pm
CRAFTING FOR CHARITIES	Helen Salisbury	07837 410575	Louisa's Place	3 rd Monday	2.30 pm
CRAFTING FOR CHARITIES 2	Judith Sampson	07724 807482	Louisa's Place	4 th Monday	2-4 pm
FRENCH REFRESHERS	Rosemary Holden	001858 682623	Please call	Weekly	11.00 am
FRENCH IMPROVERS	Julie Jarosz	01536 712119	Please call	Weekly	pm
HANDBELLS	Helen Green	07840 543379	Various	Weekly	2-3 pm
OPEN BOOK	Judy Rowley	open.books@hwu3a.org.uk	Baptist Church, Coventry	2 nd Monday	2 - 3.30pm
PETANQUE	Kevin Millard	01858 468015	Welland Park, nr Café.	1 st & 3 rd Mon	10 am to 1 pm
QUILTY PLEASURES	Diane Miles	01858 468357	Gt Bowden Village Hall	1 st & 3 rd Mon	2-4 pm
SEW 'N' SEW	Helen Salisbury	07837 410575	Louisa's Place	1st Monday	2-3.30 pm
SONGS OF LEONARD COHEN	Phil Aldridge	ptaldridge@aol.com	Community Church	4 th Monday	2 pm
TABLE TENNIS 1	Keith Keeble	07795 434076	Please call	Weekly	Morning
UKULELES BEGINNERS	David Evans	01858 463045	Community Church	1 st & 3 rd Mon	
UKULELES	David Evans	01858 463045	Community Church	Alternate Mondays	2-4 pm
WALKING FOOTBALL	Peter Prickett	07751 362857	Leisure Centre	Mondays	Afternoon
WINE EXPLORERS	Louise Elsome	07740 572956	Please call	2 nd Monday	7.30 pm

TUESDAY

ARCHITECTURE	Colin Cohen	07973 348817	Methodist Ch	4 th Tuesday	Afternoon
ART APPRECIATION	Hilary Bufton		Congregational Ch Ash-ley Room	4 th Tuesday	2.30 - 4.30pm
GERMAN CONVERSATION	Liam Lomasley	07772 325594	Louisa's Place	Every Tuesday	2-3.30 pm
BOOKWORMS	Louise Elsome	07740 572956	Home-Start, 121 Coventry Rd.	2 nd Tuesday	2.30 pm
BRIDGE – SOCIAL	Don Collins	01858 462409	Bowls Club, Little Bowden	Weekly	2 pm
COUNTRY DANCING	Sharon Webb	07886 855931	Congregation Ch	4 th Tuesday	2-4 pm
FRENCH – LES BAVARDS	Sheridan New	07795 872496	Enigma Cafe	Weekly	10.30 am
Jamming Workshop	Bob Morris	07939 988595	Various	Fortnightly	10.30 to 12.30
LOCAL HISTORY	Linda Swallow		Congregational Church	1st Tuesday	2-4 pm
MUSIC, EXPLORING	Kate Helm	07817 735784	Community Church	1 st Tuesday	10 am
PHOTOGRAPHY - TUESDAY	Angela Lloyd		Community Church	3 rd Tuesday	2.30 pm
CHOIR - LADIES CHOIR	Liz Brett	07907 631529	Cong Church	2 nd and 4 th Tuesday	10.30 am
THE READERS	Susan Trevorrow	07999 082657	Various	1 st Tuesday	2.30-4.30
Tuesday Chat & Craft	Yvonne Starkey	tarskey2015@gmail.com	Louisa's Café	Every Other Tuesday	10-11.30 am
WALKING HALF DAY 2	Diana Baxter	01162 792947	Outside	1 st Tuesday	Various

WEDNESDAY

BADMINTON	Stuart Irons	07969 833342	Meadowdale School	Weekly	5.45-7 pm
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BELLEPLATES	Pru Normand belleplates@hwu3a.org.uk	Community Ch	Weekly	2-4 pm
BIRDING WEDNESDAY	Pam Duffin Linda Lawton birding.wednesday@hwu3a.org.uk		2 nd Wed	am
CANASTA	David Parsons 07796 816650	Little Bowden Bowls Club	Wednesday	2-4 pm
NEW AGE KURLING	Ian Webb beacon@hwu3a.org.uk	Congregation Ch	1 st Wed	2 pm
NEW AGE KURLING 2	Pat Middleton 07703 399432 Julia Granger 07909 330715	Congregation Ch	3 RD WED	2-3 PM
MOVIE GROUP	Dick Van Aken, Jim Tyson moviegroup@hwu3a.org.uk	Community Ch	1 st Wed	10 am
On The Edge - Biographies	James Hobson ontheedge@hwu3a.org.uk	The Activity Room, Methodist Church	4 th Wed	2-4 pm
QUILTING	Heather Watts 01858 434272	Community Ch	3rd Wed	10 am
RAILWAY EXPLORATION	Dudley Brown 07775 900243	Bowls Club, Little Bowden	3 rd Wed	10 am
SCRABBLE FOR FUN	Toni Parsons 01858 431944	Community Ch	2 nd & 4 th Wed	10 am – 12 pm
TABLE TENNIS 3	Jenny Acaster 07530999850	MH Leisure Centre	Weekly	9 am
TRANSPORT GROUP	Michael Milsom 01858 419874	Bowls Club, Little Bowden	1 st Wed	10 am
WALKING HALF DAY 1	Bruce White 07919 935496 walking1.wednesday@hwu3a.org.uk	Outside	2 nd Wed	Morning
WALKING WED STROLLERS	Linda Reed 07986 460319 Les Dodd 01858 462244	Various	2 nd Wed	10.15 am
WEDNESDAY BOOK CLUB	Jacqui Crowe wednesday.book@hwu3a.org.uk	Members homes on a rota basis	2 nd Wed	1.30-3pm
Wednesday Chat & Craft	Adriana White newgroups@hwu3a.org.uk	Louisa's Café	Every other Wednesday	10-11.30am
THURSDAY				
BIRDING THURSDAY	Bruce White 07919 935496 birding.thursday@hwu3a.org.uk	Outside	3 rd Thursday	Morning
Cribbage	Colin Smith cribbage@hwu3a.org.uk	Little Bowden Bowls Club	Every Thursday	10am – 12noon
DRAWING & PAINTING	Elaine Scarlett 01858 432 029	Oxendon Village Hall	1 st and 3 rd Thursday	pm
FAMILY HISTORY	Rob Green familyhistory@hwu3a.org.uk	Community Ch	3 rd Thursday	10 am – 12 pm
FRENCH CONVERSATION GARDEN GROUP	Hilary Pollak 07854 120605	Please call	Weekly	2.30 pm
HISTORY, ASPECTS OF	Stella Freeman 01536 760124 Ernie Parsons 01536 760141	Meth Church (winter) Desborough FC	3 rd Thurs 4 th Thurs	2 pm Pm
INTERMEDIATE GERMAN	Frances Parsons 07910 029273	E-mail for venue	2 nd and 4 th	10-11.30
LISTENING TO JAZZ	Mike Goldsmith 01536 770122	Please call	Last Thursday	2.15-4.15
MAH JONG	Pamela Costall 07803 204464 Carole Winfield 07966 442583	BAPTIST CHURCH, Coventry Road	2 nd and 4 th Thurs	9.45 am
PLAY READING 1	Alan Gurr 07967 566970	Methodist Ch	2nd Thursday	10 - 12
PLAY READING 2	Alan Gurr 07967 566970	Community Ch	2nd Thursday	2-4
SPANISH BEGINNERS	Don Collins 01858 462409	Community Ch	Weekly	2 pm
SPANISH IMPROVERS	Don Collins 01858 462409	Community Ch	Weekly	10 am
TABLE TENNIS 2	Sheridan New sheridan.new1@gmail.com	MH Leisure Centre	Weekly	Midday
TENNIS	Neil & Mags 01858 431 665	Gt Bowden Tennis Courts	Weekly	10 am
Thursday Ramblers	Helen Salisbury walking1.allday@hwu3a.org.uk	Outside, various	Last Thursday	10 am

Urban Thursday Walks	Gina and Graham Handsley urban.walks@hwu3a.org.uk		MH	1st Thursday	11 am
WALKING HALF DAY 4	Alan and Linda Reed walking4.thursday@hwu3a.org.uk		Outside, various	4 th Thursday	
WILDLIFE	Diana Baxter	0116 279 2947	Outside, various	2 nd Thursday	
WINE TASTING	Jonathan/Naomi Shaw	01858 682133	Please call	3 rd Thursday	Various
FRIDAY					
CREATIVE WRITING	Ann Eato/Nita West	01858 461517	MH Library	2 nd Friday	2.15 pm
CYCLING	Kevin Millard	01858 468015	Outside	1 st & 3 rd Fri- days	10.30 am
HEALTH & WELLBEING	Rob & Kathy Davison	07983 948392 07881 816909	Methodist Church	2 nd Friday	10.30am
PHOTOGRAPHY FRIDAY	Phil Aldridge	07734903737	Welland Place	3 RD FRIDAY	pm
PAPERCRAFT & MORE	Jan Collins	01858 462409	Please call	1 st & 3 rd Friday	am
PAPERCRAFT – BEGINNERS	Jan Collins	01858 462409	Please call	2 nd & 4 th Fri- days	
DISCOVERING POETRY	Jill Hart	01858 469663	Meth Church, Upper Room	1 st Friday	10 am
SEQUENCE DANCE	Christine Morris and Julie Holmes sequence.dance@hwu3a.org.uk		Little Bowden Bowls Club	1 st & 3 rd Fri- days	2pm – 4pm
SINGING FOR FUN	George Cashell	01858 467616	Methodist Church	2 nd and 4 th Fridays	Pm
SOCIETY TODAY	Martin Gossage society.today@hwu3a.org.uk		Methodist Church, Ac- tivity Room	3 RD FRIDAY	2-4 PM
VEGETARIAN & VEGAN	Chris Hobson	01858 289784	Various	3 RD FRIDAY	12-2pm
WALKING, FRI STROLLERS	Carol Harvey Michael Parsons	07855 738706 07940185429	Outside	2 nd Friday	10.15 am
SUNDAY					
SINGLES SUNDAY LUNCH	Vivienne Murphy	01536 771410	Various	1 st , 3 rd & 4 th Sundays	Various
OTHER					
DO IT AGAIN GROUP	doitagaingroup@hwu3a.org.uk		Various	Various	Various
DRONES & PHOTOGRAPHY	Terry Eato	07943 732841	Outside	Various	Various
Evening Activities	Yvonne Starkey evening.activities@hwu3a.org.uk		Various	Various	Various
Holiday Group	Maryan Richardson trips1@hwu3a.org.uk		Advertised to group	Normally 5 days	various
NEW EXPERIENCES	Kevin Millard	01858 468015	Various	Various	Various
TRIPS	Maryan Richardson trips1@hwu3a.org.uk		See Events List	As advertised for each trip	
WALKING – EVENING	David Martin	01858 440530	Outside, summer	Various	Various

Poets Corner

SPRING, SPRANG, SPRUNG.

*Spring, sprang, sprung,
Spring has come.
Spring, Sprang, Leap,
Lambs leap, lovely and white
Inhaling the freshness
Sighing as one.
Spring, sprang, sprung,*



*Spring, sprang, sprung,
Spring has come.
Spring, sprang, bound.
Bulbs abound in park borders,
Dazzling daffodils,
Divas in the sun.
Spring, sprang, sprung.*

*Spring, sprang, sprung,
Spring has come.
Spring, sprang, jump.
Time jumps forward an hour
Clocks reset to extend
Evenings' fun.
Spring, sprang, sprung.*



Dave Martin

I wrote this originally in March 1997 for a much younger audience. (They were in Year 8 in a Middle School in Doncaster) Recent calculations suggest that they are now 41 years old! D.M

HENLEY-ON-THAMES

THURSDAY 14 MAY 2026

Henley-on-Thames is a historic market town in Oxfordshire renowned for hosting the annual Henley Regatta, a premier rowing event, and has been voted the best place to live in the country.

There are walks along the River Thames including the Henley Trail and numerous traditional pubs and an array of diverse shops.

The coach will leave outside the Market Hall at 8.30am

Cost of trip £ 17

To book contact Maryan email - trips1@hwu3a.org.uk or

Tel - 01858 462573 Maryan Richardson

The Joys of Spring

What could be more pleasant than walking in the countryside with a group of friends, on a beautiful Spring day? —even better if they are HWu3a members.



Scenes viewed today during the Thursday Ramblers walk around Draycote Water, Thurlaston and the village of Draycote. Lovely spring sunshine. *Helen Salisbury*

Thursday Ramblers walk out on the last Thursday of the month. Please contact Helen Salisbury
walking1.allday@hwu3a.org.uk



Walking Half Day 4



14 of us met on a glorious spring day, under a clear blue sky, for a 4.5 mile walk starting from Great Bowden. We set off on a lovely route around the village followed by traversing a footpath across a recently ploughed field to the canal. We utilised the canal towpath for a short stretch before re-entering the village and climbing up via another footpath towards Ridgeway School in Market Harborough. We wound our way back utilising multiple footpaths, enjoying the sight of the many spring flowers starting to bloom. We then adjourned to the Shoulder of Mutton for a very pleasant lunch. *Linda Reed*

The Joys of Spring

Art History When asked to select a painting on the theme of 'The Joys of Spring', I found it very difficult to choose. This was a popular subject for the Impressionists who liked to paint 'en plein air' (in the open air) which was made possible by the invention of pre-mixed paint in tin tubes and portable easels.

Here is a selection of some of my favourites to put a spring in your step! *Angela Deane*



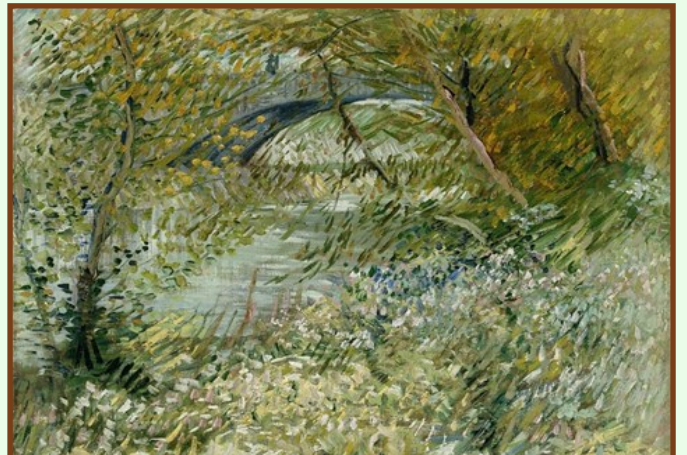
Spring by the Seine by Claude Monet, 1875



Spring, Morning, Éragny by Camille Pissarro, 1900



Along the Woods in Spring by Alfred Sisley, 1889



River Bank in Springtime by Vincent Van Gogh, 1887

Thanks again Angela for coming to our rescue. Next month's theme is **Vive La France**—more of the same maybe? D.M

Coming up

UPCOMING EVENTS 2026

April 13th AGM followed by Colin Cohen – “Reasons to be Cheerful—Part2”

April 27th Get Together

May 11th SAT Navs and how does GPS work—Roger Cooper

May 25th **NO GET TOGETHER—Bank Holiday**

April 13th AGM. If you have not yet voted online or by post, you will be able to vote in person. The election of the future trustees is extremely important. Colin Cohen will then appraise us of many architectural reasons why we should be feeling cheerful.

Theme for May edition : *Vive La France!* We would like to hear about anywhere in France or anything French which has given you pleasure over the years. Minor gripes will be accepted but only if they are balanced by positive comments. *Amusez-vous bien!*

Please send your contribution to newsletter@hwu3a.org.uk, not marketing as this only goes to Ced Bufton and he has to forward them to me. Dave M

You can read many more articles and see more photos in the online edition. Go to hwu3a.org.uk then click on ‘What’s on’ and ‘Newsletters’. We would welcome your comments and your contributions for this online version. *Jack Horton & David Martin.*

Copy Deadline for May edition - Wednesday 29th of April.

HWu3a Executive Committee — Committee contact details

Louise Elsome, Chair

chair@hwu3a.org.uk 07740 572956

Ced Bufton, Marketing, (elect)

marketing@hwu3a.org.uk

Pamela Costall, Vice Chair and Secretary

secretary@hwu3a.org.uk 01858 682512

Clare Heaton, Treasurer.

treasurer@hwu3a.org.uk

Linda Reed, Membership Secretary

membership@hwu3a.org.uk 07986 460319

Peter Saunders, Group Facilitator

groups@hwu3a.org.uk 07341 528450

Robert Davison, Premises Coordinator

premises@hwu3a.org.uk Tel: 07983 948392

Halina Pasiiecznik,

Community and New Members (elect)

community@hwu3a.org.uk

Key Support Roles

Helen Salisbury, Publicity Officer 07837 410575 publicity@hwu3a.org.uk

Stephen Joy, Website Editor, 07982 428397 website@hwu3a.org.uk

Ian Webb, Beacon Administrator beacon@hwu3a.org.uk

Anne Wilson, STARs Coordinator stars@hwu3a.org.uk

Adriana White, New Groups Facilitator newgroups@hwu3a.org.uk

Harborough Welland Facebook Page; <https://www.facebook.com/groups/202921518684959/>

WELCOME TO THE ONLINE VERSION of the April 2026 Issue of the Magazine.

Thanks again to all members who have contributed to this edition. There are some very colourful pages, informative pages and also some of the contributions about America that we received before our decision to change the theme to The Joys of Spring. We thank all of our members who contributed to this edition.

You will find no mention of AI! *Dave Martin, Jack Horton, Ced Bufton.* Co-editors.

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P. 30 STOP PRESS, Anyone for Croquet?

Saturday 6 June 2026, 2 to 4 pm **The Jordan Jammers** will be busking in Market Harborough on Carnival Day, under the Old Grammar School in the High Street.

The Jammers are a local band who enjoy playing pop and rock covers from the 1960s to the present. The JJs evolved from a Jamming Workshop in Market Harborough into a performing band who love playing at local community events and charity gigs. *Helen Salisbury*



Photography Tuesday group

The group took the topic of **RED**. *John Hammond*



Fiona Barnaby



Steph Goodway



Alastair Willis



Angela Lloyd



John Dyson



Colin Rolls



After a temporary move to Little Bowden Bowling Club we are delighted to be returning to our regular haunt of the New Horizons Room in the Baptist Church, entrance in Manor Walk. We would like to send a huge and heartfelt thank you to the Cribbage Group for allowing us to share their venue and making us so welcome. Our group has currently about 30 members but the New Horizons Room is a large venue so we do have more space.

We are fortunate that several of our group are keen to help new members, so if you've ever fancied playing Mahjong (it's totally different to the on-line game) .

Please contact either Carole Winfield 07966 442583 or Pamela Costall 07803 204464 to arrange a taster session.

We meet 10-12 on 2nd & 4th Thursday of the month.

Pamela Costall

Friday Strollers

On Friday May 8th we will meet at 10.15, Hazel and Roger Halle will lead our stroll in and around the village of Medbourne, LE16 8EE.

Names please by May 5th to Hazel and Roger. (Maximum 20 strollers please)
hazelhalle5@iCloud.com Tel: 07793 486567. *Best wishes Carol and Mike.*

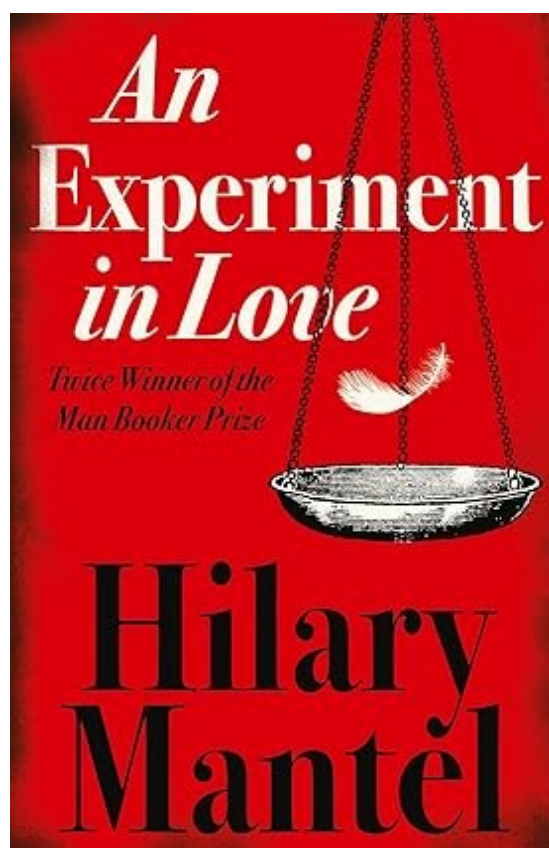
Weds Strollers Report The March meeting was attended by 11 members. We met at The Swan in Lamport free of rain with clear views to the north and west of rural Northants. The stroll took us safely across the A508 into the village, very much dominated by the adjacent hall. The grounds were resplendent with daffodils; earlier when planning, it had been croci.

We strolled up to the three way junction at the village outskirts and then set off along the undulating minor lane towards the Anglers Lake. On the Draughton road there were clear views of the A14 and A508 and some interesting birds near the lake's trees. We returned on the same route but divided into "Faithfuls " and" fatigues "; the former who explored down the Old road (or road to Old) and some who returned through the village . Eventually we all met up for a pleasant if delayed lunch/ snack due to staff issues.

Thanks to Paulene and Les for setting this up *Les Dodd*

Bookworms Report In February the Bookworms group moved to a new venue at 'Homestart South Leicestershire' where we immediately felt at home. Our two most recent books were of contrasting styles starting with an early Hilary Mantel novel, 'An Experiment in Love'. The story centres around Carmel McBain and her school friend, Karina, who were both brought up in a small, run down northern town. Carmel has aspirations to succeed in life, even possibly becoming Prime Minister, and when both girls pass the exams for Holy Redeemer, a prestigious convent school, they find themselves mixing with girls from very different backgrounds. One of them, Julianne, a doctor's daughter, becomes good friends with Carmel, but refers to Karina as "the peasant". All three girls move to London in 1970 to study at university and live in student accommodation at Tonbridge Hall. Here, Carmel distances herself from Karina, hoping for a new start. However, their desire to become independent young women is fraught with relationship issues, eating disorders and finally, tragedy. Hilary Mantel's description of the girls entering womanhood is sharp, observant and often witty. She captures the late 1960s and early 70s perfectly with cultural references, prevalent attitudes and spiky dialogue. The fans of Mantel's 'Wolf Hall' series were more critical of this book, while the few who had found her books about Thomas Cromwell a difficult read, preferred her writing style in 'An Experiment in Love'. As always, we enjoy hearing a variety of viewpoints!

Louise Elsome 'Bookworms' Group Coordinator

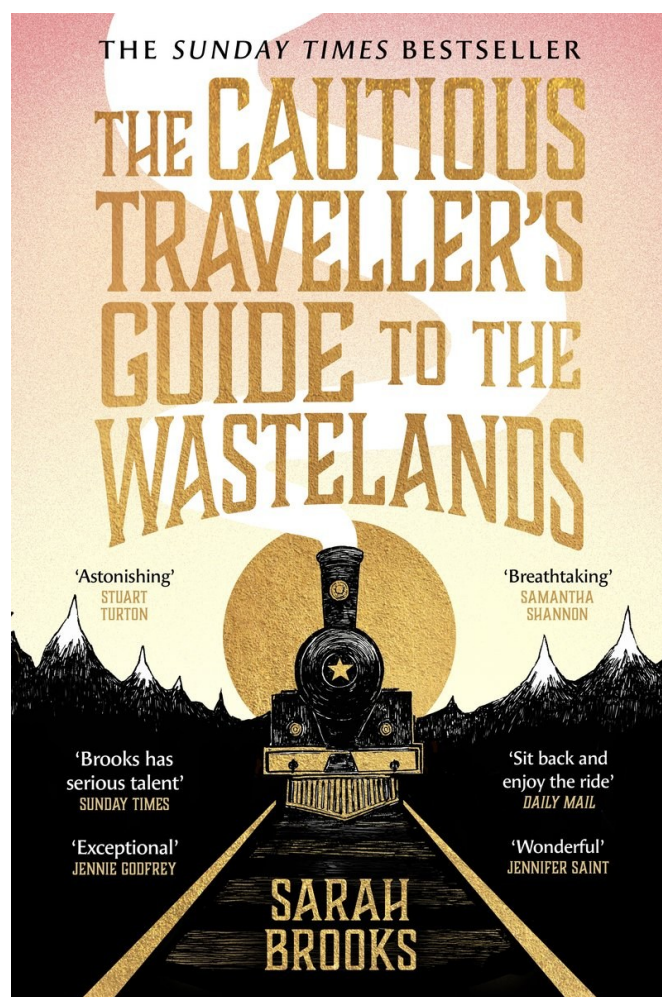


Bookworms Report, March.

By contrast to last month's book, 'The Cautious Traveller's Guide to the Wastelands' by Sarah Brooks took us back to 1899 on board the Great Trans-Siberian Express on its journey from Beijing to Moscow, traversing the menacing yet intriguing Wastelands.

We are given the layout of the great luxury train in diagrammatic form, an effective tool helping to immerse the reader into the story. On embarkment, we meet the main characters - Marya Petrova Markova, dressed in mourning and using a false name, whose father had been blamed for events on the previous fateful journey; Zhang Weiwei, born and brought up on the train and now 16 years old; Dr Henry Gray, an expert on the natural world with a plan to explore the Wastelands to collect specimens.

All the female characters are strong and resourceful, including the Captain who had to pretend to be male to work her way up to her elevated position in charge. In the background is the strong arm of the Trans-Siberian train company represented by Li Huangjin and Leonid Petrov, known as 'The Crows', ever watchful and controlling.



From the very beginning an air of mystery shrouds the train and its travellers, many of whom harbour deep secrets. Weiwei discovers a surprise stowaway on board - the ghost-like Elena with whom she shares a sisterly friendship. The Wastelands is painted as a terrain of terrible miracles, not safe for mankind and, throughout the trip, one unanswered question hangs in the air - what happened on the last journey?

The reader constantly feels as if they are on the train, like a fly on the wall, listening to the conversations between characters. There are sub-plots and drama, together with tension and intrigue. Themes abound - corporate greed v science, wonder and horror v nature, adventure and freedom v control. It all culminates with the slightly unexpected and satisfying ending of the Great Exhibition and continued travel for those who wish to stay on the ride. Many of the group members thoroughly enjoyed this exhilarating journey with its pacy writing and imaginative settings. A few of us found the mixture of fantasy, fiction and horror a combination that didn't quite gel; excitement was sometimes built up, but

didn't always live up to expectations. However, for a first novel, this 'steampunk mystery' highlighted Sarah Brooks' ability to tell a fascinating story and draw the reader into another world. *Louise Elsome 'Bookworms' Group Coordinator*

The Joys of Spring – Bird song

There can be few more joyful sounds than those made by British birds at this time of the year, sometimes infuriatingly early in the morning.

Click on the photos to hear their songs.

Can you name the birds? Answers at the bottom of the page .

Thanks to Bruce White for the photos and Stephen Joy making it possible to hear the birds.



Answers **a** Wren **b** Song thrush **c** Dunnock **d** Blackbird **e** Great Tit **f** Robin

Movie Group - canal project.

Tuesday 10th March. Some of the Movie Group took to the water with their cameras and microphones, also drones for some scenes. The intention was to film on their boat trip, from Market Harborough to Foxton Locks.

It started in the Marina with an interesting meeting with Brian Oakley, who was the original model for the Human Sundial installation, also known as Frank the Plank. They then set sail skippered appropriately by Dick van Eyke.

Near the Peter Callis Bridge, they stopped to film an interview with a volunteer working party (The Canal Towpath Adoption Group).

Further on filming covered various bridges, the old Great Bowden wharf which is now residential housing and eventually the Foxton swing bridge and the hump bridge next to the Black Horse pub. On the return trip, more filming was completed with the group now facing the mammoth task of editing and adding a soundtrack to complete a worthy record of the day out. *Jack Horton*



*March winds,
April Showers.
Bring forth
May flowers.*

The winds in question were on Tuesday and Wednesday 24th and 25th March and resulted in three trees being blown down and blocking the MH Branch of the canal.



This tree is less than 100m from the Basin and caused the Canal & Rivers Trust to close the section. There was still a closure due to large cut branches from the tree causing an underwater threat to canal boats, finally cleared 02/04.



Sadly, the second tree was the once magnificent willow, to be found close to Logan Crescent footpath.

This was removed first, with contractors having to access the site via the garden on The Woodlands.

The debris will be removed eventually and it is to be hoped that the remaining branches on the tree will grow again and decorate the canal again in all its former glory.

Dave Martin



American Good Vibes – Anne Appleyard

The following items were received prior to the decision to change the title from God Bless America. I think they are totally in the spirit of how it was intended to be but now there is so much uncertainty in the world, we felt obliged to drop this phrase. But there was a time ... In the words of Mike Goldsmith, 'Nobody, whether they are 5 or 95, can say that America has not influenced their daily life in some way or other, be it in the food they eat, the TV they watch, books they read, the car they drive.' [Dave M](#)



★ **Brian Wilson** was the force behind the music of the Beach Boys. He wrote or co-wrote the biggest majority of their songs, but it was he alone who painstakingly worked on the production and recording of their music. He knew instinctively how he wanted to represent the west coast surfing scene, from their early hits to the ground breaking Good Vibrations single and the Pet Sounds album. This album vied over the years with Sergeant Pepper for the title of greatest album of all time.



★ It was not long before Brian succumbed to mental illness due, among other causes, to the demanding schedule of the record company and the culture of the pop world, plus the effects of alcohol and drug addiction. He fell into a deep downward spiral and it would be decades before he was able to begin to regain any control of his life.



★ Surrounding himself with musicians and singers who could recreate his unique style and sounds, he played to sell-out audiences. Fans of all ages and from all over the world flocked to appreciate and support the man whose genius spark still resonated.

★ The Beach Boys first hit single in the UK was 'I Get Around' released in 1964. Two minutes of pure California sunshine – wonderful.

★ *Anne Appleyard*





I have visited the USA many times on holidays as well as working in Boston and Phoenix for a few months. Our most memorable trip was a “Music Tour” from Chicago to New Orleans. Blues bars in Chicago, Rock and Roll at RCA Studio B in Nashville, SUN Records Studio in Memphis, then Graceland. We finished our tour in New Orleans on the Steamer Natchez listening to “Hello Doctor Jazz “.

My only complaint is that in the American revolution the slogan used was “No taxation without representation”, on every visit I have paid Sales tax, State tax, City tax, Room tax, but I have never been offered a vote.

The USA is full of stunning scenery, magnificent museums and friendly people with whom we *almost* share a language. *Michael Milsom*



A Man Who Walked Quietly into Every Storm A Life and Legacy of Joseph Elder (1930–2025)

There are Americans, and then there are *Americans*. The first kind arrive with loud shirts, louder opinions, and a pamphlet about democracy. The second kind arrive quietly, listen carefully, and somehow manage to stop a war before lunch. Joseph Elder was emphatically the second kind.

I met him in Seoul, South Korea, in the 1980s, and even now, decades on, the encounter stays with me with unusual clarity. He was not an enormously tall man, nor a particularly imposing one. He did not fill a room the way politicians do, with noise and performance. He filled it differently, with a kind of focused stillness that made you instinctively lower your voice and think more carefully about what you were about to say. In a city then crackling with Cold War tension, on a peninsula that was technically still at war, here was a Wisconsin sociology professor who seemed, against all reasonable odds, to be *helping*.

That, in essence, was Joseph Elder.

He was born on July 25, 1930, in Kermanshah, Iran, where his parents were Presbyterian missionaries, which is, one

must admit, quite the original story. Most of us begin life in a maternity ward in the Midlands. Joe began his in Persia, son of a man of God, in a country that would later become one of America's great geopolitical headaches. He must have developed his talent for navigating impossible situations early.

He attended the mission's Community School in Tehran before completing high school in Massachusetts, and then, crucially, he went to Oberlin College in Ohio, that wonderfully idealistic institution where, he met Joann Finley, whom he married in 1951, received his B.A., and set the course of the rest of his life. He and Jo would remain together for 71 years. In a world of impermanence, that alone deserves a round of applause.

His PhD dissertation for Harvard was based on data gathered while living with his wife and two small children in a tent in a mango grove adjoining a north Indian village from 1956 to 1958. This is not the biography of a man who did things by halves. Most academics gather their research from comfortable libraries. Joe Elder gathered his from a tent. In a mango grove. In India. With toddlers.





**A Man Who Walked Quietly into Every Storm *A Life and Legacy of Joseph Elder*
(1930–2025)**

He joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1961, with joint appointments in Sociology and South Asian Studies, and remained there for fifty-three years. Fifty-three years. At a single institution. In an age when loyalty of that kind has become almost quaint, there is something deeply admirable about a man who found his place and stayed, not out of inertia, but because the work kept mattering. And what work it was. Elder became a lifelong Quaker peace activist with experience mediating conflicts in Kashmir, Vietnam, Korea and Sri Lanka, a CV that reads less like an academic's and more like a retired spy's, except that spies, on the whole, make things worse. He travelled the world with quiet, off-the-record messages, working for peace from Vietnam to Sri Lanka, inspiring thousands of students to broaden their horizons. "Quiet" and "off-the-record", those two words alone tell you everything about the man's method. In a media age that rewards volume, Joe Elder operated in whispers and trusted that whispers, in the right ear, could do more than megaphones. It was that quality I sensed in Seoul. He seemed constitutionally incapable of reducing any human situation, however fraught, however politically charged, to a simple narrative of goodies and baddies. It was, frankly, disconcerting. And rather wonderful. In the 1990s, Elder helped found Madison Quakers, Inc., which built a peace park and a school in My Lai, the scene of the infamous massacre during the Vietnam War. The audacity of returning goodwill to the very place of one of America's greatest shames, quietly, practically, without fanfare, that is a particular kind of moral courage. Neighbourhood children near Vilas Park fondly remembered him playing a nightly summer game of "dragon," where he would play tag as the dragon, and somehow always lose in the end, so the children could pile on top of him. A man who brokered peace between warring nations and always let the children win. There is a sermon in there somewhere. In 2009 he received a Lifetime Achievement Award for Peace-making from the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice. One imagines he was quietly embarrassed by the fuss. So, what made America great, for me, in the context of this magazine's theme? Not the spectacle. Not the swagger. Not the Hollywood exports or the fast food or the Presidents who fill every room they enter with the thunder of their own importance. What made America great was a soft-spoken sociologist from Wisconsin who was born in a tent, metaphorically speaking, grew up between cultures, and spent his entire adult life trying to get human beings to stop killing each other, one quiet conversation at a time.

God bless America. And God bless Joe Elder. *Steven Kim*

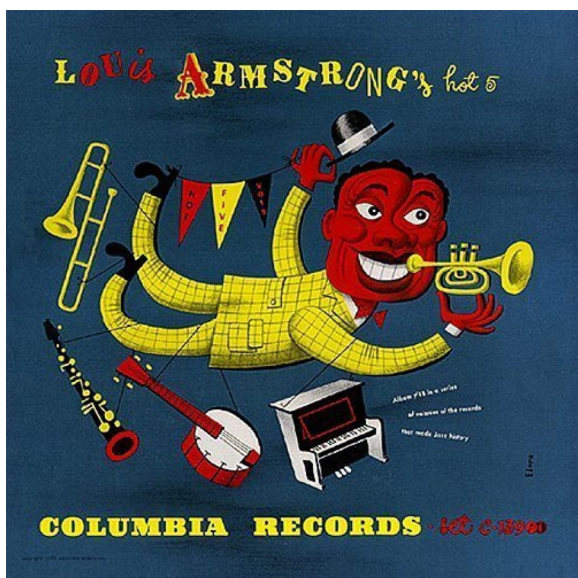


Nobody, whether they are 5 or 95, can say that America has not influenced their daily life in some way or other, be it in the food they eat, the TV they watch, books they read, the car they drive – or whatever! In my case things American have had a big impact on me in four different ways. First, professionally; second, through the American music we call jazz; third, as a result of spending time in the USA, and fourth through its culture and history.

My working life was spent teaching and researching politics, especially urban and city politics. When I started out in the early 1960s, the teaching of politics in the UK was called political studies: in America it was called political science – and for much of the period between 1960 and 1980 the subject was heavily influenced by subject developments in the US, both generally and specifically in my own field. Absorbing these developments and ways of thinking, adapting them to the European and UK situation took time. By the time I had retired it was much more possible to talk about both a British and European political science, or even a general political science, than it was forty years earlier. So much of my working life was spent working with American scholars, visiting the US for conferences and meetings and being able to compare and contrast our experience of city life with that of people in US cities.

Jazz and especially American jazz has had an even bigger impact on my life. Not a day goes by without me listening to some of that great music, most of its produced by Americans. After about 8 or 9 years of piano lessons, passing the appropriate grades as and when, I got to hear not only great classical pianists, but two jazz masters – Art Tatum and Oscar Peterson – just at the time when I was falling

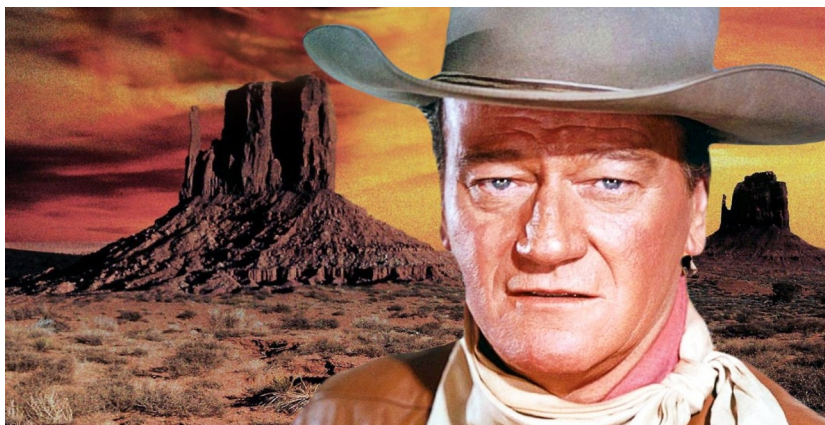
in love with the music. Recognising that I could never play like those two players I promptly stopped music lessons and have not touched the piano seriously ever since – and not regretted it one bit. Some impact of jazz! Jazz, live and on record, has been a constant companion ever since and I cannot imagine a day of living without it. With over 3000 jazz cds, I am still trying (and failing) to cure my ‘collectors disease’, whilst the *Listening to Jazz* group has allowed me to share my love of jazz in all its forms with others.



American history and its culture as had its impact on me as well, be it through its literature (Fitzgerald, Steinbeck and its many crime authors); its music – not just jazz but classical, country, rock, blues and pop,) as well as its art, whether it be the Pop Art of Warhol and others, the paintings of Georgia O'Keefe or Edward Hopper's *Nighthawk's* painting of a bar at night.



Its films have also had an influence, whether it's Westerns of the 60s through to the 80s, which were often a comment on the state of American politics at the time, or its classics such as Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*, one of the greatest films of all time. The history of the development of the country and its politics, especially the years after World War 2 and of JFK and LDJ, through the Vietnam war and the



Reagan/Bush years up to more recently Obama and its current president, have all had an impact on the way I view things today.

So, I look on America as a huge beautiful country with some excellent social science, great jazz and art, spoilt only by some of

its history and the actions of its leaders, but a place which influences us all, if only through its fast food and faster music! *Mike Goldsmith*

The group took the topic of GROWTH, *Phil Aldridge*



Jim Tyson



Kenny Darling



Alastair Willis



Alisoun McDermid



Angela Deane



Don West



Phil Aldridge



Rosemary Tyson



Steph Goodway



Yvonne Darling

HWu3a Croquet Event – Thursday 14th May



- The HWu3a in association with Leicester Croquet Club, are planning another series of opportunities for our members to play croquet in Welland Park on Thursday 14th May.
- We hope to use the **former bowling greens** with a back up plan of playing on the grass tennis quarter area, like last year. There will be 16 players per session.
- All equipment and tuition will be provided by members of the LCC. After a brief introduction, two pairs will 'do battle' and there will be plenty of people around to help.
- There will be four, one-hour sessions starting at 11.00, 12.00, 14,00 or 15.00. The cost is £4 per person. We are asking that you choose morning or afternoon as the payments will need to be paid accordingly, to the AM or PM group.
- If you are interested, please contact me, stating morning or afternoon preference.
- croquet2026@hwu3a.org.uk
- PLEASE DO NOT PAY ANY MONEY UNTIL I HAVE CONTACTED YOU TO CONFIRM YOUR PLACE.
- Please add reference CROQUET AM or CROQUET PM according to when you want to play. I will confirm via email that your place is confirmed in my Beacon list.

Dave Martin