



WSPu3a Newsletter

August/September
2025



Jubilee Park Cricket Ground

Photo by Rosemary Brown

The Committee's Briefs

Contact the Committee

You can use this link to send a message to any of our Committee:
[Woodhall Spa u3a Committee and Contacts Web Page](#)

Co-Chair's Corner

From Rosemary

As summer starts to draw to a close it felt like perfect timing to hold our annual Walking Cricket match against Horncastle u3a, this year playing at Jubilee Park cricket ground. The weather was kind to us and it was nice to have plenty of members turning up to support the teams. Following two successful years for Woodhall it was Horncastle's turn to win the trophy and we are already talking about a rematch. I heard many comments about other walking sports so if there is something you'd like to be involved with it is worth suggesting it as a new interest group.

With Autumn around the corner I am so very grateful to be part of the u3a movement with everything it has to offer. My calendar never looks empty! Please take a look at all that is on offer to you both locally and nationally – I enjoy being in several online groups, recently taxing my brain in the [Cryptic Crossword group](#).

I hope to see you at our next monthly meeting on 4th September where we will be hearing all about the adventures/misadventures of a driving instructor.

Rosemary Brown – Co-Chairperson

Groups News

Another quiet month has nearly come to a close. Autumn is on the horizon!

However, September sees several groups resuming after their Summer break.

Looking at waiting lists it appears that new groups for [Coffee and Chat](#), [Book club](#) and [Scrabble](#) could be created, especially with a few more interested members.

Please let me know so we can increase the numbers of people enjoying time together.

News that is not happy.....Heather Maslen, who has successfully led the [Home Computing](#)

group for many years, has decided that the time has come to step down.

If anyone feels that they can lead this group, which has a lot of members (and a waiting list) PLEASE contact me.

After all Heather's hard work it would be a great shame to see this group fold.

(See [A Special Word](#) - Ed)

"Growing old can be the most exquisite chapter - if you let yourself bloom again." - Patricia Routledge

Joan Willard - Groups Coordinator

Groups List

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

[Woodhall Spa u3a Groups and Activities Web Page](#)

Obituary

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

Lynn Duggins

Lynn joined Woodhall Spa u3a when it was in its infancy and took an active role in the Committee as Treasurer, and in many of the groups over the years. In fact she excelled when performing in the annual pantomime arranged by the Play Reading Group, especially in their last performance when she was Goldilocks with a magnificent ginger wig.

Our condolences go to Tony and her family at this very sad time. She will be sorely missed.

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

Coming Soon

Upcoming Events list

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

[Woodhall Spa u3a Events Web Page](#)

Monthly Meetings

September 4th

2:30pm to 4pm
Coronation Hall

October 2nd

2:30pm to 4pm
Coronation Hall

L on Wheels

Speaker: Steven Brown.

A Dairy Farmer's Wife

Jane Barnes on the travails of dairy farming

Group Noticeboard

Outings

Our next outing is to *Crich Tramway Village in Derbyshire on 7th October*. Unfortunately this trip is fully booked but our final outing of the year has now been organised. You can find out all about this outing and book your place at the monthly meeting on September 4th.

The Outings Group committee always aim to organise six trips each year. A theatre trip to Nottingham to see a top West End production has already been booked for March 2026. Details will be given at the September monthly meeting and bookings will be taken then.

An e mail will be sent to all members about the above two new outings after the September monthly meeting

Some suggestions for where we can visit next year have already been received from members and Tolethorpe and Stamford tops the list so far. Other suggestions include The Norfolk Broads and Hull Maritime Museum . Please let the committee have more of your suggestions.

[Sue Pollitt – Group Co-Leader](#)

Find out more:


You can use this link to find more details on upcoming trips:

[Woodhall Spa u3a Outings Web Page](#)

Online u3a

Find out more:

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

<p>Our own WSPu3a website</p>	<p>Woodhall Spa u3a website</p>
<p>u3a – Online Learning Events</p>	<p>u3a Online Learning</p>
<p>u3a – Interest Groups Online <i>Interest Groups Online offers a variety of peer led, online learning opportunities for its subscribers.</i> <i>As part of the u3a movement, members generously volunteer their time and share their knowledge, skills and experience with the members in their groups. Some groups are more interactive than others, with an expectation that all members take it in turns to present their knowledge.</i> <i>If in doubt, give it a go.</i></p>	<p>Interest Groups Online</p>
<p>u3a Radio Pocast <i>US road trip, Buckingham Palace maid, Quantum Physics</i></p>	<p>u3a Radio August</p> 

Walking Cricket WSPu3a vs Horncastle u3a

Congratulations Horncastle u3a – Trophy Winners 2025



The deciding delivery – the infamous underarm, top-spin, googlie with sprinkles....



Well played Horncastle – better luck next year, Woodhall.



A hush falls over the excited crowd....

Photos by Rosemary Brown

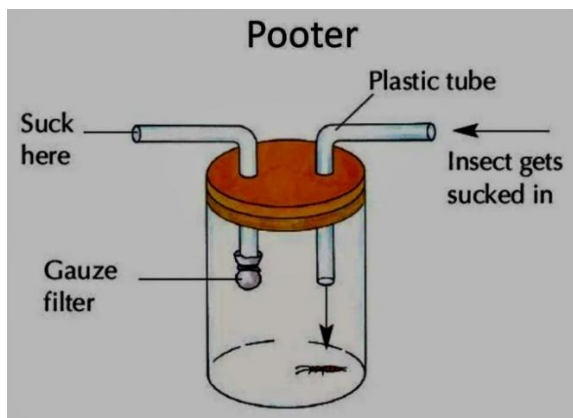
Around the Groups in 30 days

5 Mile Walking

Spilsby Area



Fourteen members of the Five Mile Walking Group set off from Toynton All Saints for a walk around the Spilsby area. It was a hot, sunny day, but luckily not quite as hot as it had been earlier in the week. It was interesting to see that most of the wheat fields through which we walked had already been harvested. We walked across the fields to East Keal and paused in the churchyard to admire the view. Crossing the busy A16, we made our way through the Keal Carr Nature Reserve which gave us a bit of welcome shade. This is one of the finest surviving examples of alder carrs, growing in a small valley created by streams cutting through Spilsby sandstone. In the spring, there are many bluebells, red campion and marsh marigolds but at the time of our visit, the most recognisable plants were giant horsetail and meadowsweet.



We met an entomologist who, complete with pooter and a white sheet, was surveying small insects among the plants. For those among you who are not entomologists, a pooter is a simple way of catching insects to study them without harming them..... or sucking them into your mouth!

Continued

Spilsby - Continued

Our route then took us past the Linkage College, which caters for young adults with learning disabilities, and back through the village of Toynton. We had all enjoyed the views of the Wolds' landscape, and even had a glimpse of the sea in the distance.

Maureen Moscrop

Find out more:

[5 Mile Walking Group Webpage](#)



Visiting Churches

Caistor Methodist Church and the Church of St Peter and St Paul

Methodist Church

August's outing was to Caistor to visit both the Methodist Church and the ancient Church of St Peter and St Paul, and it turned out to be an enjoyable, memorable occasion.

Following a tasty lunch for several of us at Caistor Tea Rooms, where you have a wonderful view over the Wolds, all of the group members were welcomed at the entrance to the Methodist Church by Mr Rogers.



The building was once a primary school and the enclosed outdoor area still feels like a children's playground. Along with hosting services, it was pleasing to hear the interiors are used for bands to practice and various groups to meet, along with food storing—and-supplying, for those that need it.

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We were shown round the spacious interior with its impressive balcony, where seating is divided into multiple doored pews. These can no longer be used he told us, because of current 'safety rules', which observe the unlikely possibility of someone jumping over the banister.

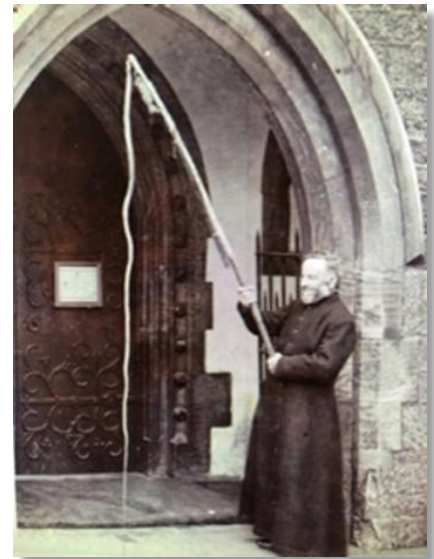


Caistor Churches – Continued

The Church of St Peter and St Paul



The Church of St Peter and St Paul, dating from the early Norman era, was just a short walk away and there we were met by Church Warden Val Wadington and Vicar Catherine Wylie, who instantly made us feel very welcome. We were handed out informative magazines about the church: its history, memorial tombs, windows, bells and the intriguingly famous 'Gad Whip', all of which she pointed out.



The Gad Whip certainly is an unusual item to be found in a church, certainly one that has a six-foot long stock and a seven-foot lash with a leather purse attached to it, which would have contained 30 silver coins, reminiscent of Judas's 30 pieces of silver. Until 1846 it was used each Palm Sunday as part of a ritual, when rent was paid for land to the Mayor of Hundon. A man would crack the whip several times at the Church gate and the street would be full of rowdy onlookers. The whole strange procedure was stopped after a petition went to the House of Lords.



The visit ended with tasty scones, cakes, biscuits and tea, all beautifully presented and served by Val, which we enjoyed as we sat admiring the artful range of hassocks displayed in lines along the pews. These had all been sewn by congregation members in remembrance of someone, often showing aspects of that character's life.

Marion Ashton

Find out more:

[Visiting Churches Group Webpage](#)

Dog Walking

Kirkby Lane

Maxine and Duncan were our leaders this month. We had a new member, Rachel, who brought her Newfoundland.



The walk took us through the woods off Kirkby Lane. Locally, it is known as the Mustard Gas Walk because gas canisters, left over from the 2nd World War, were found there. It incorporated a little stream where the dogs enjoyed paddling, lots of sticks to collect on the way and plenty of new and different sniffs.



We passed the back of the Bainland lodges and circled back past the Scout's campsite and cycle track made by local children to ride their BMXs up and down hills. Afterwards we went to The Petwood for coffee – a perfect end to a lovely walk.

Judy Binks – Group Leader

Find Out More:

[Dog Walking Group Webpage](#)

Sew and Sew

We have had a very dry and sunny Summer, which has encouraged many of us to open our windows and doors. I am sure Lorna isn't alone in being plagued by flies not content with the vast open spaces available to them, but stray indoors and then cannot find a way out. Lorna decided to purchase some voiles, but of course, one can never find the drop you need. As the bottom of the voiles was weighted, this meant removing the top to preserve the heading tape, adjusting the curtain to the correct length, and reattaching the top. As you can see from the photo, the area covered by the voiles was extensive, but the result was a complete success.



Katherine has finished the cross stitch kit of *Conker Window* by Lizzie Spikes. She admitted that it felt like a chore towards the end, but as she is a completist, she was determined to finish it before starting her next project. Although there are at least another two in the 'Window' series, she has no current plans to tackle them in case her eyes start to 'glaze' over.



Our embroidery aficionada Joan had collected embroidered tablecloths from antique fairs and charity shops. These items have often been set aside because they have stains or tears, but Joan wanted to keep people's talented embroidery work and make a feature of it.

So, with judicious cutting and an excellent choice of complementary quilting fabric, Joan has made a patchwork tablecloth to showcase the embroidery. On the reverse, a 'scrappy' border frames her mother's damask tablecloth.



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Sew and Sew – Continued

I have been busy making some presents. The quilted bag is from a pattern by Georgina Murdoch who is the owner of Spindle Cottage Workshop which is our nearest source for quilting fabric. The fabric selection was from there too. I like the pockets on the front, but felt it needed an internal pocket too. This was my first attempt at hand-quilting. I hope the recipient enjoys it.



The sliding pouch uses robust interfacing to allow the pouch to stand erect. The zip at the top can be opened and the top half of the pouch can be pulled down, so the contents eg pencils, pens can be accessed. This was a free internet pattern. I normally like to credit the original maker but I will save their embarrassment, as the top didn't fit the pouch and some rework was required.

This has taught me two things: there is a reason why things are free on the internet; and check the mathematics first to make sure their measurements are correct.

Carmel Sefton

Find out more:

[Sew and Sew Group Webpage](#)

Outings

Murder, Mystery – A Memorable Day Out

The u3a Outings Group recently enjoyed a delightful trip to the picturesque town of Stamford, followed by a thrilling performance of *The Mirror Crack'd* at the enchanting Tolethorpe Hall.

The journey itself was a pleasure, with scenic views of oak and beech trees lining gentle curves—had we left earlier, we might have seen mist rising over the fields. Instead, we were treated to a fine day with light cloud cover.

After an hour and a half, the stunning spires of St. Martin's Church and Stamford's iconic honey-stone buildings came into view as we descended into town. There was plenty of time to explore, whether stopping for lunch, enjoying a coffee break, or visiting a local attraction.

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Murder Mystery – Continued

Forty-five minutes before the show started, we reboarded the coach for the short trip to Tolethorpe Hall, where we had just enough time for a quick snack before the performance began.

The *Mirror Crack'd*, adapted from Agatha Christie's novel by Rachel Wagstaff, delivered a classic murder-mystery experience. The play follows the sharp-witted Miss Marple as she investigates a poisoning at a glamorous Hollywood party hosted by actress Marina Gregg in a quiet English village.



The production perfectly balanced suspense and humour, staying true to Christie's signature style. The open-air setting of Tolethorpe Hall added to the magic, drawing the audience into the unfolding drama. Standout performances—especially from the lead playing Miss Marple—kept everyone guessing as secrets and red herrings emerged. Christie fans and lovers of traditional whodunits would not be disappointed—it was the perfect summer evening's entertainment!

As we journeyed home, we were amused to find ourselves following a car with the number plate HRH 2—a touch of royal prestige to end the day! Our outing concluded outside Sainsbury's, marking yet another successful trip for the u3a Outings Group.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make this day so enjoyable. We look forward to more adventures together soon!

Paul Membrey

Bird Watching and Wildlife

RSPB Frampton Marsh 22nd August

Five members met at Frampton to be faced with an unfamiliar sight of parched mud interspersed with a few stagnant pools. The wet meadow had dried out and the area overlooked by the 360 degree hide contained not a drop of water. There were few wetland birds, the majority having presumably left for the shore or water bodies such as reservoirs or former gravel workings. However, the day was overcast but pleasantly warm with good light and visibility and we had an enjoyable walk round the reedbed area adjacent to the visitor centre. The birds attracting most interest were a small flock of little stints and a wood sandpiper which was providing an exceptionally close view. A flock of about forty black-tailed godwits contrasted with the many hundreds normally at Frampton at this time of year.

We had lunch at the visitor cafe at mid-day in line with our usual practice of making our outings social occasions as well.

Below is the bird species tally in alphabetical order:

<i>Black-headed gull</i>	<i>Black-tailed godwit</i>	<i>Chiffchaff</i>
<i>Collared dove</i>	<i>Dunlin</i>	<i>Gadwall</i>
<i>Goldfinch</i>	<i>Lapwing</i>	<i>Linnet</i>
<i>Little stint</i>	<i>Little-ringed plover</i>	<i>Magpie</i>
<i>Mallard</i>	<i>Meadow pipit</i>	<i>Moorhen</i>
<i>Pheasant</i>	<i>Pied wagtail</i>	<i>Redshank</i>
<i>Ringed plover</i>	<i>Ruff</i>	<i>Shelduck</i>
<i>Snipe</i>	<i>Swallow</i>	<i>Teal</i>
<i>Wood sandpiper</i>	<i>Woodpigeon</i>	<i>Yellow wagtail</i>

John Watt

Find out more:

[Bird Watching and Wildlife Group Webpage](#)

Wild Flowers

Banovallum House, Horncastle

The effects of the dry, hot weather were very evident when the Wild Flower Group visited Banovallum House in Horncastle on August 21st. Many of the flowers we would expect to see in August had already died off.

However, we did spot some plants which were still in flower. *Hemp Agrimony*, a tall plant with frothy pink flowers which is sometimes used as a medicinal herb, was in evidence along the river bank.



Hemp Agrimony

In the same area was a patch of *Himalayan Balsam*, a pretty but invasive plant. After flowering, the plant produces seed pods which explode when disturbed, scattering thousands of seeds and thus distributing the plant effectively along waterways. In some communities in England 'Balsam Bashing' groups are organised to try and stop the spread of the plant.



Himalayan Balsam

© Canal & River Trust

In the grounds of the house, the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust has planted two raised beds showing typical Lincolnshire landmarks. One shows Lowland Heathland of the kind found in Ostler's Plantation. Seventy-five per cent of European Lowland Heath is in England and the area around Woodhall provides a good example of such a habitat. The other raised bed shows Limestone Grassland plants such as those found on the chalk wolds in the county.

The walk around the grounds of Banovallum House is a pleasant way of passing a peaceful half hour in Horncastle. The car park is usually open during office hours. If you do go, it would be courteous to call in to inform the staff of your visit.

Maureen Moscrop

Find out more:

[Wild Flowers Group Webpage](#)

Woodhall Wanderers

South Ormsby

10 walkers met in South Ormsby at the parking area called sheep dip paddock in the middle of the village for the August walk. Tea, coffee and a loo were kindly available for a small donation. This was a reduced number due to the walking cricket match and a croquet match being held on the same day.



Although rain was expected later in the day the sun shone and we set off up the road towards the local church of St Leonard built in the 12th century. For some time now it has been shrouded in scaffolding although there is no suggestion work is being undertaken.

Apparently the stained glass dates to the late 15th to 17th centuries and includes pieces of German, Dutch and French origin. It is believed that some of the glass was collected from Notre Dame at the time of the French Revolution.

The estate close by was owned by the Massingberd family and in the South chapel a white marble plaque is dedicated to William Burrell Massingberd who died in 1802 along with other members of his family.

The walk continued across a well demarcated, wide path giving fantastic views across gently sloping pasture, Big Park, to South Ormsby Hall in the distance.

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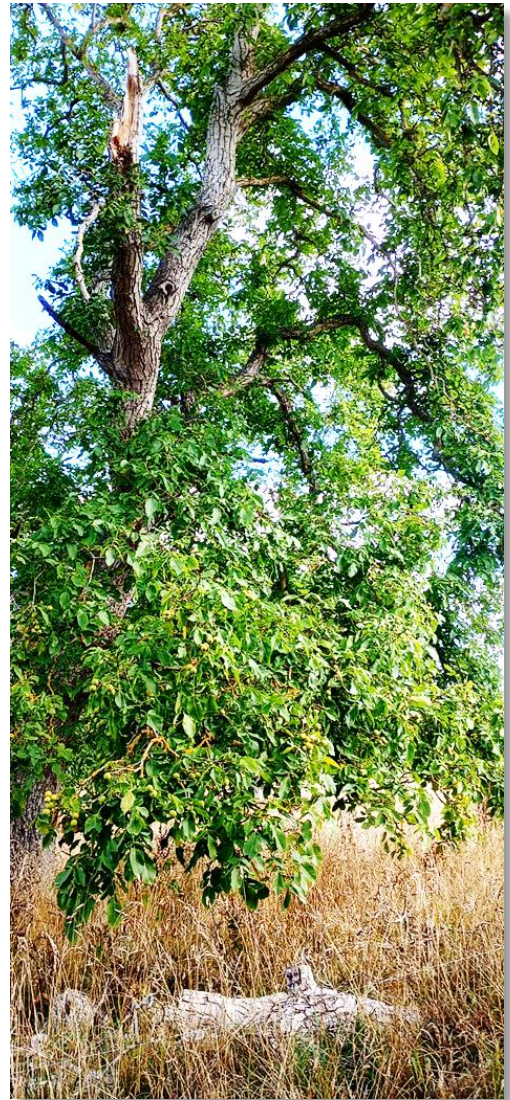
South Ormsby - Continued

Midway there was a huge tree heavily laden with fruit, walnuts, unfortunately not ripe yet.

The estate was sold in 2016 to Jon and Jan Thornes, who became the first non Massingberd-Mundy owners in nearly 400 years. The new owners are undertaking extensive work to the Hall itself and the grounds. Clearly a major project.



Joining a minor road we gradually descended looking out on either side to extensive views of the hills and the wolds in the distance. We are so lucky to have this wonderful scenery close by to us all. Taking a right turn off the road joining a bridle path, evidence of our long hot summer was very evident by the chalk dust on our boots and the clouds being kicked up by the farmer sowing a field.



We stopped for welcome refreshment and continued up a gentle hill descending through more pasture with the Massingberd Arms looming into view. Sadly our thirst was not to be quenched there because the pub has limited opening hours. Another time maybe. We returned to our cars for the journey home.

Steve Parry
Photos by Les Wylde

Find out more:
[Woodhall Wanderers Webpage](#)

The Final Word

Feedback

You can use [this link](#) to view past issues of the Newsletter, or to send a note to the Editor:

[Newsletter Web Page](#)

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

The Newsletter wouldn't exist without the contributors, so I'm grateful to all those that made time to write an article for us all to read.

A Special Word

During my whole tenure as Editor I have been fortunate to be able to rely on select individuals to contribute regularly to this Newsletter. Heather Maslen has consistently provided us with quality text and information to help us all come to terms with the computers and mobile phones that make up such a major part of our lives nowadays.

As her tenure as Group Leader for the Home Computing for Fun Group comes to an end, I know I can, on behalf of all of us, thank Heather for all the energy and time she put into the articles that proved to be so popular and helpful for everyone that read them.

Many thanks.

Tom Sefton – Editor

