

Newsletter Late 2025



Christmas at the Weald and Downland Museum came early, courtesy of the BBC and the Repair Shop.

Photo: Mike Polgreen

Chairman's Introduction – November 2025

Dear Members,

So there I was staring at a blank screen wondering what I could say for the Chairman's Introduction this time. Then I had inspiration born of desperation – I would get AI (Artificial Intelligence) to write it for me! We had been experimenting with AI in the Science Engineering and Technology (SET) Group. For this piece, I told the AI programme what I wanted and here it is with some tweaks and additions from me... I think that it looks pretty good and we do need to keep up with the times:

Welcome to the November edition of the Emsworth and District u3a Newsletter. I hope this finds you all well and enjoying the autumn season.

As always, our u3a thrives on the enthusiasm and involvement of its members. With our AGM approaching in February 2026, we are still seeking volunteers to join the committee. In particular, we need a new Chairman, a Groups Coordinator, and an Events Organiser. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in helping to shape the future of our u3a, please do get in touch. Your support is vital to keeping our community vibrant and active.

Whilst talking committee matters, I have to say a huge thank you to your current committee. They are an enthusiastic and efficient band and mostly do a good job of keeping me under control.

Of course another key to our success is our very healthy set of groups and I am enormously grateful to Group Leaders and all who put so much effort into them. There will be more information on some of our group activities to be found in this newsletter.

We have continued our monthly meetings with their specialist talks. Unfortunately we have had no centrally organised visits since the last Newsletter, which is a committee task of Events Coordinator. Ideas have been suggested for how to do such events but unless there is some really clever wheeze of which we have not yet thought these things do not organise themselves. So no Events Coordinator, no events – it really is that simple.

More cheerfully, I was very pleased with our participation in the Emsworth Show on the August Bank Holiday which was a fantastic way to showcase what we do. The committee, volunteers and the Shanty Group all contributed to a successful event.

Looking ahead, we have the Christmas Lunch to look forward to—a highlight in our social calendar and a chance to celebrate together. Fortunately David and Sue Bittles have stepped forward to organise this event, taking on the task in the footsteps of the redoubtable Maureen and Bridget. We will also be having our annual “thank you” lunch for our various volunteers in the New Year.

Thank you all for your continued support and involvement. Let’s keep making Emsworth and District u3a a welcoming and inspiring place for everyone. But a few volunteers for the committee would be great! And no, under Charity Commission rules, AI cannot (yet) be elected to committee roles...

Look after yourselves and each other

With best wishes,

Adrian Wakeford

Chairman

Emsworth and District u3a



Our chairman in Mud Walking Shoes—the equivalent of snowshoes, to be used when getting stuck kayaks off the mud in the middle of the harbour.

Referring to the need for Committee members—I came across this little story and thought it fitted the bill.

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it. But Nobody realised that Everybody would not do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody, when Nobody did what Everybody could have done.

Groups Coordinator

Our groups are the life blood of our u3a and I know how much you all enjoy being part of a group and we all benefit from the social and mental stimulation they provide. Most of our groups meet in members' homes which has the benefit of keeping costs down but does mean that group numbers are limited. Many of our groups have waiting lists and we have welcomed many new members this year who often find it difficult to join the group(s) of their choice. It would be great to have more people step forward as potential group leaders. Remember we can of course have more than one group covering the same topic. If you are interested in starting a group, please get in touch.

This year we hired a larger space at the Emsworth Show which worked well. It provided our fantastic Shanty singers with a relaxation space, allowed us more room for our display materials and made it easier to talk to people about our u3a. Big thanks to all those who helped on the day.

At our AGM in February, I will have been in post as Groups Coordinator for 3 years. My plan was always to



undertake the role for 3 years and so I will be stepping down. It has been a great experience, and I have loved getting to know so many of you and supporting the groups, but it is now time for someone with new ideas to come



forward. I had only been a member for a few months when I took on the role and was a little apprehensive. I needn't have worried; everyone was so welcoming and helpful. I also quickly learnt that there was no prescriptive way to undertake the role so I could bring my own ideas and style to it. If you are interested in this role and would like to find out more, please get in touch. This role could also

be undertaken by say 2 friends/ husband and wife team working together. I look forward to hearing from you.

On Wednesday 28Th January we will be holding our annual thank you lunch for our fantastic Group Leaders and the other volunteers that support us. Invites to be sent shortly.

Jackie Treacher

Groups Co-ordinator

07764 777588

Tech Aid is back

Emsworth Community Centre.

Any small job required for your technical devices can be sorted by our wonderful tech team. Come and find us in the Galley Café between 11-12 every Wednesday morning.



Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) News Summer 2025

Summer proper kicked off in July with an absolutely fascinating talk by Brian Thomas about Memory and why we forget; this hit somewhat close to home - I would love to tell you more if only I could remember the details! Traditionally we don't hold a meeting in August, instead we had an impromptu summer garden party, chez me. Fortunately the weather, which was decidedly variable that morning, played ball and enabled us to enjoy nibbles, natter and a noggin or two in the warm sunshine.



In September we were given a highly enlightening talk on Lifeboat Design by Robert Hornby from Hayling Island U3a; this was greatly appreciated and we hope to persuade Robert to give us another of his talks in the not too distant future.

We changed the format for October to run a highly successful interactive hands on session exploring the use of Chat Gpt, ably led by David Gane. I think I can say on behalf of all present not only did we learn a lot about its awesome power and potential but came away feeling far more comfortable about using it. Many thanks to David for all the hard work he put in organising it. This format is one we shall return to in coming months.

November is fast approaching and with it a talk on Large Scale Digital mapping by John Cowling. While we have no formal meeting in December a Christmas lunchtime gathering in the Coal Exchange has been arranged for the 9th.

Christopher Hannah

Theatre Group

Our group meets on the third Wednesday of every month at 2 o' clock. Each member takes a turn at hosting - providing tea, coffee, biscuits or cake - good fuel for our chat. We are, at present, happy to welcome new members.

At our meetings we discuss what we have seen, what is coming up that we want to see and make arrangements for booking and transport. Between us, our interests include theatre, concerts, cinema and anything else in between.

Up until the covid lockdown we travelled to London and Salisbury to see productions. Sadly, public transport to these venues is becoming too erratic to rely on and driving and parking are increasing issues. Salisbury, Wiltshire Creative, is an excellent theatre with interesting productions but we have found recently that travel time exceeds the time spent at the theatre .

The Yvonne Arnaud at Guildford has finished its renovations, so we hope to be able to visit again once the Christmas Specials for families are over.

We're now looking forward to our December meeting, where we all bring nibbles and the coffee and tea are augmented by mulled wine.

Happy Christmas to you all !

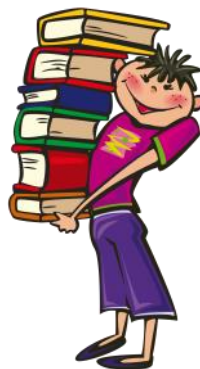
Jenny Watton



Report from Book Group 2

Our group meets on the first Wednesday of the month and at the moment our book sets come from the Hampshire Library service. This means that often choice is limited and a book is selected by what is available each month. This has led to us reading a variety of books by a range of less well known authors but it all makes for interesting discussion. Our choices have come from fiction and non-fiction covering countries including America, Africa, Switzerland, Italy, Germany and the U.K. Themes have included war, growing up in different times and countries, love, loss and life in general.

Lynne Rand



Couch grass, mares tail
Blackfly, slug, snail
Sow, then prick out
Pot, then pot on
Water water
Every day



Gardeners delight by Gill Polgreen

Seedlings peep up
Berries turn red
Fat pigeons strut
Happy and fed.
Water water
Every day

Dandelion, nettle
Duck weed, bramble
Dig out the weed
Give roses a feed
Water water
Every day



Blackcurrant pie
Gooseberry jam
Buy more sugar
We need more time
Water water
Every day

Make more chutney
Cook up more jam
Fill the freezer
Wash up the pans
Water water
Every day



Look, the corn's tall
See the husks form
Fat niblets, sweet
Ready to eat
Water water
Every day

Short days have come
Rain, wet autumn
Harvest complete
Larder replete.
The plot's been dug
We're in the pub.



Kim akin to Dell Boy

“Lovely jubbly.”

Off to Kim's party for a glass of bubbly!
He's bound to have a great day
as he's loaded with PMA.

Always the best
when put to the test.



Kim is the Crème de La Menthe at Emsworth U3A,
singing along and having his say.

Kim is nothing but a top notch poet
who aspires to Champagne Moet.

He certainly is no Plonker or Dipstick,
a man full of wit with words that click.

He is no fool sipping iced Baileys by the pool.
A man who likes to play it cool, nice and cool.

In his open topped sports car
he'll go far.

Kim has plenty of Fromage Frais
creating shanties and ditties every day.

More than a family man extraordinaire!

When he sells his wares this time next year Kim
will be a millionaire!

Poem using quotes from Del Boy, written by Chrissie Dixon 10/08/25
for Kim Shelley's 70th birthday.

Third time Lucky

By
Lyn Cartner

You know we're going to smash this, you know it will be fun.
I sat so quiet, I had my doubts, was I the only one?
The corks all popped, the bubbles fizzed, the weekend underway.
Well it was Sophie's third time hen, I didn't have a say.
At least with age comes common sense, or so I hoped at least.
Her first husband philandered, the second was a beast.

Tradition states we take the reins and arrange it for the bride,
But we were all so different, the choice was just too wide.
Her baby sister got the honour, and took the task to heart.
I volunteered to book our digs, keen to play my part.
The train pulled into Waterloo, I tidied up our carriage,
Sophie glowed, our future bride, so keen to start her marriage.

The bottomless brunch was bearable, the food just bordered edible,
I thought the drag show tiresome; while Sophie said "incredible".
Our rooms were fine, my bed looked comfy, so tempting to lay down.
But no, we were on the move again, it was time to hit the town.
We wandered round some shops then made our way to eat.
A games night at our flat to come, now that felt like a treat.

Then sister Amber produced a game that frankly made me blush,
The plastic parts were tacky, the fastenings hardly plush.
But I put on my game face, I didn't want to spoil the fun,
In fairness we were teenagers when Amber was just one.
The night went well, we all joined in, the wine flowed on and on.
And well we all became best friends due to alcohol and fun.

Well Sunday morning came and went,
We all felt rough, good humour spent.
We tidied, packed our bags departed,
Hen parties aren't for the faint hearted
Dear Sophie, let him be the one,
I can't face any more hen fun.

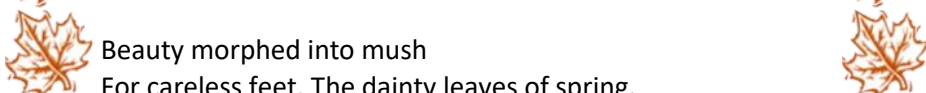
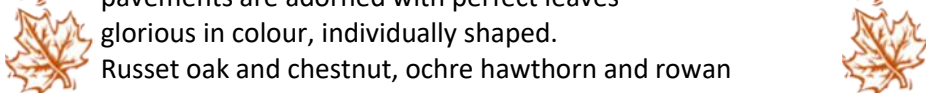
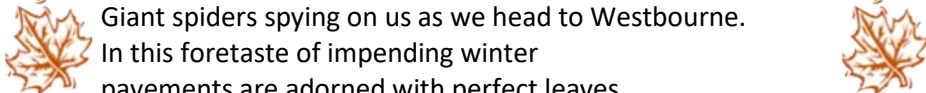
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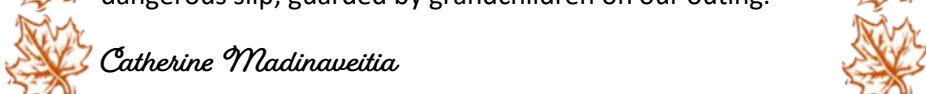
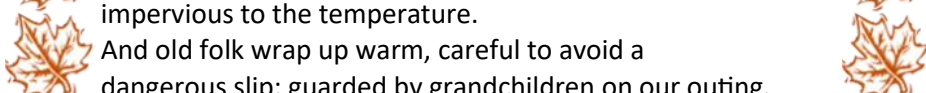
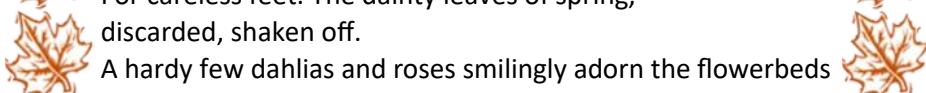
On the road to Westbourne



Stark skeleton branches loom along hedges eerily,
Giant spiders spying on us as we head to Westbourne.
In this foretaste of impending winter
pavements are adorned with perfect leaves
glorious in colour, individually shaped.
Russet oak and chestnut, ochre hawthorn and rowan



Beauty morphed into mush
For careless feet. The dainty leaves of spring,
discarded, shaken off.
A hardy few dahlias and roses smilingly adorn the flowerbeds
impervious to the temperature.
And old folk wrap up warm, careful to avoid a
dangerous slip; guarded by grandchildren on our outing.



Catherine Madinaveitia



The Art Discovery Group visit to Charleston House.

Charleston House is situated in the village of Firle a few miles outside Lewes. It was the home of Vanessa Bell and her family, and studio for her and Duncan Grant from before the First World War until her death in 1961. It was there members of the Bloomsbury group met and created for many



years. In September some members of the Art Discovery Group took a mini bus and visited this amazing house. This was the culmination of our research and investigations into the Bloomsbury Group.

Charleston House is full of art from Vanessa Bell and her friends and family who lived and met together there for many years, without electricity or water in the beginning. There was art work not only hanging on the walls but painted on the walls, doors, window frames and pieces of furniture and fabrics. Every room was an art gallery filled with colour, decoration and

signs of their quirky living. The garden was beautifully laid out with sculptures and tiles designed and made by them. It was a haven of peace in their busy lives. Lunch was taken in the new restaurant on site and then we returned to the bus for a short trip to St Michael and All Angels Church in the





nearby village of Berwick. This beautiful church had been decorated by some members of the Bloomsbury Group and showed a completely different style of painting from the house. Here the art work depicted religious themes, and pictures from the community and country life. If you

haven't already visited this very individual and special house I thoroughly recommend it; and don't miss the church, a real gem.

Lynn Rand



Kayaking in Emsworth Harbour

We are so lucky to live in this area: The historic towns of Portsmouth and Chichester within easy reach by car or public transport and for those that care to, a visit to London is a short rail ride away. Then on our doorstep are the South Downs to our north and the sea to the south. A few of us enjoy Emsworth Harbour from the sea in our kayaks.

Adrian Wakeford



Emsworth from the sea



Emsworth from Fowley Island on a choppy day!



Slipper millstream near The Lord Raglan



Rafted up, resting and drifting



Watching the big yachts being lifted out for the winter



Gordon the swanherd tending his flock



Langstone bridge from the water



Safe on shore again



A mournful evening sea and sky



A placid summer paddle

Dates for next years Preamble Group.

As usual, we will meet at Emsworth Square at 10 am on the following Mondays for a local, social walk of approximately 1 hour followed by refreshments.

- 26 January
- 23 February
- 23 March
- 20 April
- 18 May
- 15 June
- 13 July
- 10 August
- 7 September
- 5 October
- 2 November
- 30 November



New members are always welcome.

Contact details for the group can be found on the U3A website.

Kim and Jan Shelley

Monthly meeting talks for 2026

16th January	<p>Poisonous Plots - a talk by Sheila Wills</p> <p>A fascinating insight into devious and deadly plots. Did those past detectives and our beloved fictional ones come to the right conclusion?</p>
20th February	<p>Emsworth u3a AGM, followed by a talk on Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management by Sam Box and James Spragg from Coastal Partners, who are a team of engineers, surveyors, project managers, environment and research experts who manage coastal flood and erosion risk across 246km of coastline in five Local Authorities</p>
20th March	<p>Captain Robert FitzRoy, Charles Darwin and the Voyage of HMS Beagle - a talk by Dr James Taylor, former curator of pictures at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, and author of 'The Voyage of the Beagle'</p>
17th April	<p>Andrew Negus returns to give Part 3 of his History of Portsmouth talks.</p>

<p>Adrian Wakeford Chairman adrian.wakeford@gmail.com 07860 189099</p>	<p>Gail Wynne-Jones Secretary gailwj@gmail.com 07791 548475</p>
<p>Veronica Eccleston Speakers Secretary veronicaeccleston@yahoo.co.uk 07714 575428</p>	<p>Jackie Treacher Groups Co-ordinator jackietreach127@gmail.com 07764777588</p>
<p>Hazel Irwin Membership Secretary Sunnyside, 6 Jeppson Walk, Nutbourne, PO18 8FZ hazel.i@btinternet.com 01243 940310</p>	<p>Ken Laing Webmaster & Technical Co-ordinator klaing@ntlworld.com David Gane Meeting Technical Support</p>
<p>Pamela Eardley Treasurer pmeardley@gmail.com 07786 656790</p>	<p>Events and Outings organiser. VACANT</p>

COFFEE ROTA

Shown below is the rota for serving the tea, coffee and biscuits at the monthly meetings.

Depending on the size of Group there may be two Groups for any one month - will Group Leaders please liaise and ensure that at least three people 'volunteer' for this duty.

If insufficient people turn up to provide the service then no refreshments will be served at that meeting

January	Garden Visits
February	Birdwatching
March	Amble and Pub lunch
April	French Discussion / Rhythm & Rock
May	Sea Shanties / Creative Writing
June	Scrabble Groups 1 & 2
July	Book Groups 1 & 2
August	<i>No meeting</i>
September	Discussion 2 / Family History
October	Preambles / Craft
November	Walking Group
December	<i>No meeting</i>

Any queries please contact
Bridget Watts, bridget.watts@btinternet.com or
Maureen Nicholas, maureennicholas7@gmail.com

Remember to look at our website – lots of
useful information on there.
www.emsworthu3a.org.uk

Route 66 October 2025

Thirty-nine years ago, four friends embarked on a remarkable journey to explore the world for five years. I began in the USA, and after just four months, two friends set their sights on Australia. After nine months, I found myself in Alaska and chose to return home, while one friend continued to the wonders of Japan. I pledged to come back someday, eager to discover the areas I missed and reconnect with my favourites.

Last year, I embraced the beauty of New England in the fall for a week, then ventured into Canada for another week, where I soared over Niagara Falls in a helicopter—two experiences that inspired me and checked off my bucket list!

This year, I returned to the US to witness the magic of the International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta in Albuquerque in October and revisited the awe-inspiring Grand Canyon, where I had previously spent a night beneath the stars. This journey unfolded into my Route 66 holiday, weaving together cherished destinations and unexpected adventures. I joined an international group of 33 kindred spirits for a 17-day coach tour led by the dedicated Dennis and Brian.

We discovered that Route 66 was designated on April 30, 1926, and opened its path on November 11, the same year. Initially, only 800 miles were paved, and it took 11 years for this legendary highway to become fully paved. Spanning 2,448 miles from Chicago to Los Angeles, it stood as a beacon for those seeking new beginnings in the West. John Steinbeck immortalised Route 66 as "The Mother Road" in his novel **The Grapes of Wrath**, while Cyrus Avery, the visionary known as the "Father of Route 66," championed its establishment and coined the phrase "The Main Street of America."

By 1956, the evolution of highways saw parts of Route 66 transformed into safer superhighways, culminating in its decommissioning on June 27, 1985. Yet today, only fragments of the original route remain, embodying the spirit of exploration. Many segments have been preserved as "Historic Route 66," inviting travellers to journey across eight states: Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. It is estimated that up to 85% of the original route can still be explored by car, but reduced with the challenges faced when traveling by coach. More than 250 remarkable sites along Route 66 are celebrated on the National Register of Historic Places. Reflecting on my journey, I proudly recorded visiting 139 of them, each one a testament to adventure and discovery!

Highlights from my Route 66 Trip

I started my adventure in **Illinois**, where Chicago's stunning skyscrapers and the iconic Willis Tower, standing at 1,730 ft, marked the beginning of Route

66. In Springfield, I enjoyed the 22nd Annual Route 66 Mother Road Festival, surrounded by classic cars, including a 'Starsky & Hutch' red Ford Gran Torino. Next, I visited



Pontiac's Route 66 Hall of Fame and travelled on 1.4 miles of restored hand-laid brick road in Auburn, a remnant from 1931.

In **Missouri**, I admired St. Louis's Gateway Arch and visited the Chuck Berry statue in the Delmar Loop, where I dined at the Blueberry Hill Restaurant. In Cuba, known as the "Mural City," we viewed large murals depicting history, and in Joplin, we paid our respects at the Tornado Commemorative Park, honouring the 2011 tornado that caused devastation.



Crossing into **Kansas**, we saw Galena's connection to the movie "Cars." In **Oklahoma**, I explored Cyrus Avery Park in Tulsa, featuring the 'East Meets West' sculpture and the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum dedicated to the 1995 bombing that claimed 168 lives, many of whom were children.

The Oklahoma Centennial Land Run Monument was another highlight, displaying 45 historical figures rushing for land in 1889.

In **Texas**, I enjoyed the U-Drop Inn Café in Shamrock, sprayed graffiti at the Cadillac Ranch, singing the song (both versions) as we arrived in Amarillo, and indulged in a delicious Texan steak. The town of Adrian marked the Midway Point of Route 66.



I travelled through **New Mexico**, stopping at Gallup, having reached its highest elevation of over 7,200 feet, before experiencing the International Balloon Fiesta in Albuquerque at dawn with over 500 Hot Air Balloons inflating — my first bucket list moment!

In **Arizona**, I visited the Wigwam Motel and stood on the corner in Winslow, famously referenced in the Eagles song Take it Easy.





At the Grand Canyon, I took a helicopter ride and was amazed by its vastness, completing my 2nd bucket list moment.

A brief detour to Las Vegas led me to Fremont Street, filled with lights and vibrant characters.

The trip concluded in **California** with visits to the Route 66 Museum and a final meal at Santa Monica Pier, marking the end of Route 66 and my journey.

Throughout the trip, I encountered a blend of landscapes—from derelict towns and quirky attractions to scenic highways. It was a delightful experience with great companions and a fantastic tour manager. Although 2026 marks the 100th



anniversary of Route 66 celebrations, I might just return to celebrate and relive the adventure!

During long stretches in Arizona, we watched the animated movie "Cars,"

which reflects the spirit of Route 66 through its characters and settings inspired by real-life locations along the route, reminding us

‘those were the days we travelled to have a great time, not to make great time’.

Bridget Watts

New singing group warms up in Emsworth

by Jenny Bardwell

"This is going to be too high for me" someone from the back cries out. "Well, I'll transpose it down a couple of semitones" says Ros Wilson. Ros runs a new U3A singing group from her Emsworth home on the second Wednesday of the month, from 2 – 4 p.m.

Seven regulars (all women at the moment) sit in Ros's living room and, for two hours, we sing some wonderfully familiar, melodic and jazzy songs. Most of us have been in choirs but wanted something easier. I asked Ros why she agreed to start the group "I wanted to show off" came the candid reply. Ros has been playing the piano since the age of 9. At the start of her long career as a primary school teacher, she says she once foolishly admitted she could tinkle the ivories and, from that moment, was in constant demand – whether playing at assemblies or in school productions.

For a vocal warm-up, Ros gets us to la-la.....la-la...(etc!) to the Last Post, originally a bugle call. "It starts with an interval called a perfect fifth you see" she says.

Ros loves to share her musical knowledge with the group. "I had no idea what an octave was until I came here" admits one member.

The choice of music includes numbers from the Great American Songbook but Ros is determined to stick to copyright laws and so the composer and lyricist must have died at least 70 years ago, before we can perform their songs. Unfortunately, we still have quite a wait for George Gershwin, Rodgers and Hammerstein and Cole Porter. However, Ros has allowed us to sing *As Time Goes By*, *Yes Sir*, *That's my Baby* and *Love Me or Leave Me*.

She clearly relishes bashing out the chords to accompany us and it doesn't matter if there's the occasional squeak, growl or wrong note, it's all about having a go. Music lifts the spirits without a doubt and this kind of music is a delight.

We can sing *It Had to be You* by Isham Jones and Gus Khan in 2026.

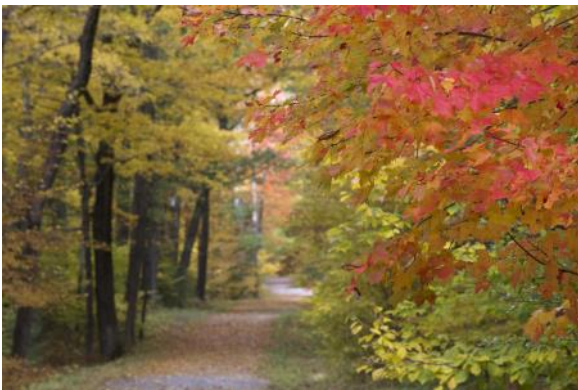
That's next year - only a few weeks away!

If you would like to sing, email Ros
roswilson22@gmail.com



Autumn

Autumn is my favourite season, a clear transition between summer's energy and winter's calm. The air cools, days shorten, and the landscape transforms as leaves shift to red, orange, and gold a kaleidoscope of beautiful colours. Walking through parks or wooded paths, the crunch of fallen leaves underfoot is simple but deeply satisfying, a reminder of nature's steady cycles. Halloween brings a welcome dose of fun. I enjoy the creativity of costumes, children and adults alike turning into witches, superheroes, or classic monsters for a night. The sound of laughter and "trick or treat!" calls through the neighbourhood giving a sense of community that's rare at other times of the year. I love the smell of bonfires but am not a fan of Firework Night as I worry about the animals being frightened. There's a practical side to autumn that I appreciate too. Clearing the garden, raking leaves, and putting away outdoor furniture are satisfying jobs that mark the year's turning. They're part of preparing for winter, creating a sense of order and readiness before the colder months set in. The darker evenings invite a slower rhythm. I like watching the TV whilst cosying up to the fire or under a blanket with a hot drink. It's a time for rest and reflection, when home feels especially warm and welcoming. As autumn moves on, the anticipation of Christmas begins to build. I start writing cards, planning gifts, and making lists. Shops fill with lights and music, and even the chill in the air feels part of the



excitement. For me, autumn isn't just a change in weather, it's a season of balance. It mixes activity with rest, community with solitude, and nostalgia with anticipation for what's to come.

by Veronica Heberton

Serpent Trail by Pamela Eardly

Having completed the South Downs Way the adventurers (David and Sue Bittles & Geoff and Pamela Eardley) went searching for another adventure. They decided on The Serpent Trail:- a 65 mile walk from Haslemere to Petersfield. It isn't 65 miles from Haslemere to Petersfield I hear you say. It is if you go via Petworth!

It explores the heathland of the South Downs Park, the outstanding landscape of the greensand hills and the golden valleys of the Wealden heaths. The name of the trail reflects the serpentine route. Starting at the serpent's head and tongue in Haslemere and Black Down before the body turns south west to Liss, east to Petworth and then finally west again to Petersfield Pond . The first 3 stages were accessed by using trains but we then had to resort to 2 cars as public transport didn't match up to the route. Having completed 4 sections once again life got in the way. Two new knees for one of our group and recovery from Morton's Neuroma for another meant a 15 month gap before we restarted the route.

It is on the whole a very well signposted route and we discovered villages we had never heard of, parking spots in the middle of nowhere and we walked miles without meeting anyone else. All walks finished with a pub lunch, of course, and we found some really nice venues.

In 2020 as part of the Heathland Reunited project the South Downs National Park launched a sculpture trail to tell the stories behind some of the heathland sites. 5 of the 7 sculptures can be seen on the Serpent Trail.



A Tennyson quote on Black Down that mentions the wonderful view from that point.



The Dragonflies Rest on Stedham Common to represent the home of all 5 species of dragonflies found in the South

The sheep pig on Graffham Common inspired by a map drawn in 1629 showing the common being used for grazing.



Resting snakes on Woolbeding common to represent all 12 of the British species found within the South Downs.

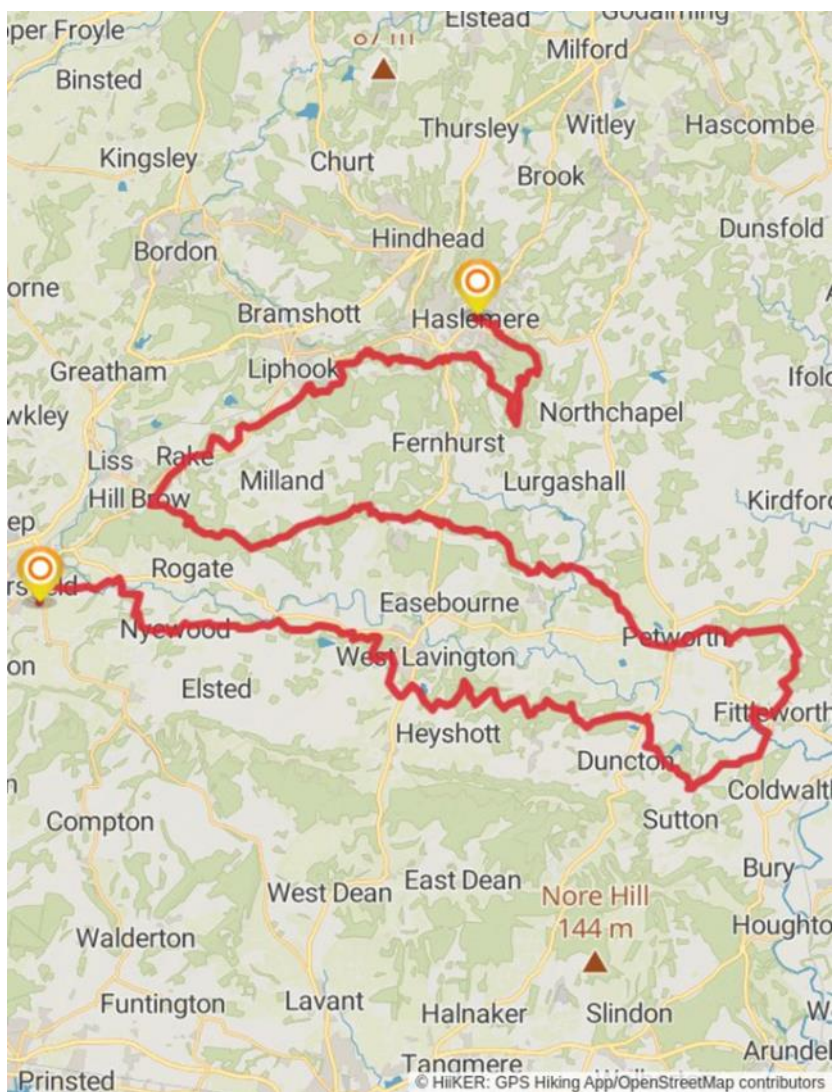


The Lavington Lizard on Lavington common to represent the 3 lizard species that rely on the heathland



Where do we go next?

The route of the Serpent Trail as walked by David and Sue Bittles & Geoff and Pamela Eardley



My thanks to all those who replied to my pleas and helped to fill this issue with so much interesting news.

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