Ware u3a Newsletter November 2026

Dear All,

I hope you are not being bombarded too much with the Christmas adverts, they seem to be starting earlier and earlier in the year.

You may know that Ware museum was lucky in 2012 to have the Great Bed of Ware in the museum on loan from the V&A museum until April 2013. The museum is undergoing its fortieth anniversary, and a model of the Great Bed has been made by Ware's Men's Shed. The Great Bed of Ware is thought to have been built around 1590, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. It was most likely made as a tourist attraction for the inns of Ware, which was a day's journey from London and a convenient overnight stop for travellers going to Cambridge University or further north. The Bed is first documented in 1596 by a visitor to the town who encountered it in the White Hart Inn, and over the course of the next three centuries it moved to four further Ware inns before travelling to Rye House in Hoddesdon in 1870.



It is well worth going in the museum for a look at the new displays and maybe give a small donation.



We're looking for volunteers to join our team!

There are lots of ways to get involved:

- **welcoming visitors as a Museum steward**
- **supporting learning activities**
- **helping with looking after our collections.**

Chat to one of the stewards to find out more about being a volunteer, or visit waremuseum.org.uk.

Heritage Fund

ACCREDITED MUSEUM

WARE MUSEUM

Ware Museum at 40

People and Place 1986-2006 (Part 2)

October 2026 - January 2027



Special Exhibition

The second of our double exhibitions celebrating Ware Museum's 40th anniversary.

Part 2 of Ware Museum's 40th Anniversary Exhibition highlights some of the unusual, quirky and everyday items from its collection of 24,000+ objects

Come along and help us celebrate what Ware Museum means to YOU!

Opera Appreciation Group

The Opera Appreciation resumed activities after the summer with planned visits to see Cosi Fan Tutte and Macbeth in October at Cineworld in Harlow. They are discussing the possibility of a trip to Glyndebourne in November, and the membership has risen from 6 to 18 since the group started 3 years ago. New members are welcome

Walking 2

We are so lucky to live in beautiful Hertfordshire! The County does nudge up against London, and it is bisected by many of the busiest roads in the country, yet right on our doorsteps is a wonderful world, all for free! There are hundreds of miles of well-maintained public footpaths on offer! On our Tuesday walks we rarely encounter vehicles and usually only meet a few other people. What we are aware of and enjoy immensely are the rolling hills and neat valleys, the leafy lanes and open skies, the farming year and the wildlife, the birdsong and the changing seasons and of course, the fresh air. The other thing we enjoy so much is being part of a very friendly bunch of people, whether they are new faces or old friends. A good chat is the order of the day!

Our activities have a simple format: meet twice a month around 09.45 for a 'circular' walk of about 5 miles; the duration is around two hours, so a steady pace taking account of the terrain; mostly the starting point is a pub car park, with the idea that some of our number will linger for a main course and a drink at lunchtime; volunteers with some experience take it in turns to come up with a route for us, starting within 10 miles of Ware/Hertford; there are 33 in the group but our usual roll-call on the day is about half of that thanks to the busy lives folk have; the intention is to go out every month of the year but forecast temperatures over 25C or of heavy rain do cause a postponement; obviously appropriate clothing and footwear are sensible!
The photo shows a smallish group at Braughing old station who turned out one rather warm morning back in August.
If you are interested, please just contact Kevin via the website





Creative Writing

This group has a vacancy. They meet in the afternoon of the third Monday of the month at member's homes. For more information contact Zara Kimber at zarakimber093@gmail.com

Making a Green Impact

Making A Green Impact group watched "How To Live on Earth", with Benedict Cumberbatch and here is a brief review of it:

How to Live on Earth

Director Fredi Devas worked with David Attenborough on seasons two and three of *Planet Earth*, capturing nature's beauty while highlighting what our economic policies are destroying, but without offering realistic alternatives. In *How to…*, Devas takes the next step, exploring three questions: How to value nature? How to feed the future? And how to feel human?

Narrator Benedict Cumberbatch introduces the film from London's Natural History Museum, reflecting on humanity's responsibility to move Earth from a third chapter, in which intelligent life threatens the planet, to a fourth, in which it becomes a positive force. But are we wise enough?

The film illustrates the unintended consequences of supposedly clever solutions. In China, pesticides killed the bees needed to pollinate pear trees, prompting farmers to consider drones instead. Yet 75 per cent of crops require bee pollination, making this a worrying substitute.

Meanwhile, Amazon rainforest is being cleared for cattle farming. Humanity's appetite for meat has left livestock and pets accounting for 90 per cent of all mammals, while wild animals make up just five per cent. Yet these creatures are essential to healthy ecosystems. Biologist Dan O'Neill demonstrates how losing one species affects the entire web of life, including humanity.

Economist Ralph Chami argues that nature is dying because markets value **dead** nature, such as timber, rather than living ecosystems. Douglas Eger estimates that nature provides $100 trillion worth of goods and services annually, including clean water, pollination and fertile soil. He is pioneering ways to value ecosystems financially, making conservation potentially profitable. As Cumberbatch declares, "Green is the new gold."

The film also explores nature's importance to human wellbeing. With 70 per cent of people forecast to live in cities by 2050, access to green spaces is vital. South Korea funds woodland programmes to help stressed young people, while Singapore demonstrates how greenery can be integrated into urban life.

Uplifting and thought-provoking, *How to…* presents practical alternatives to environmental destruction. Cumberbatch concludes that humanity must become "global gardeners" and "planetary stewards". The challenge is whether we are wise enough to fulfil that responsibility.

You can watch this amazing film for free on YouTube: https://youtu.be/h3mRsvFmWi0?si=zObLFIQqOMHWSLeL

Ware Art Trail.

Huge congratulations to local artist Donna Reeves on the launch of the new Ware Art Trail.
Funded by Ware Town Council the project brought together schools and community groups to help design artwork for eight utility cabinets across the town, many featuring local wildlife and nature.



Historical Milestones for Ware

- **King Alfred's Weirs (895 AD):** King Alfred the Great built weirs across the River Lea here to trap Danish Viking ships.

- **The Ware Mutiny (1647):** A pivotal event during the English Civil War where Oliver Cromwell suppressed the Leveller faction of the New Model Army.

- **England's First Turnpike (17th Century):** The road from Wadesmill to Ware became England's first turnpike toll road, famously immortalized in William Cowper's comic poem *The Journey of John Gilpin*.

- **Premier Malting Hub (18th–19th Century):** Ware grew into London's main supplier of malt for porter beer, boasting over 140 malthouses along the River Lea at its peak.

- **The Great Bed of Ware:** A massive 16th-century carved oak bed (now housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum) became famous in literature, referenced by William Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night*) and Charles Dickens.

October Monthly Meeting

Due to unforeseen circumstances the talk at the October monthly meeting had to be changed at the last moment. Thanks to John, Ann Mizen and Penny Warner we had an excellent talk about the Globe Theatre on the South Bank. Michael Thomas is a guide there and does a lot more as well.

The Modern Reconstruction (1997–Present)

- **Revival:** American actor and director Sam Wanamaker founded the Shakespeare Globe Trust in 1970 to resurrect the historic venue.
- **Shakespeare's Globe:** The modern reconstruction opened in 1997 approximately 200 meters from the original site on the bank of the Thames, operating as a faithful open-air Elizabethan playhouse and cultural centre.



Forthcoming events

11th November 2026
Monthly Meeting
Gilbert & Sullivan with Bernard Lockett
9th December 2026
Monthly Meeting
Inside the Grotto with Colin Oakes

Yours,

Keith