

JULY 2025

## CHAIR'S REPORT

On 16 July, I had my second volunteering trip on Canalability with lovely weather. It is a great relief to not have the high temperatures we had last week; I hope you are all managing to stay safe with plenty of drinks in the heat. In this week's Committee Meeting we discussed the weather in relation to our groups. If a group is in an air-conditioned environment that's great, but otherwise it would be good if groups discussed how they would proceed, in future, if there is inclement weather - be it high temperatures, snow or heavy rain. It can be helpful if you have a WhatsApp group, as this can reach members quickly, but members do need to give permission to be included in such a group.

John and I went to a u3a talk on A I ( Artificial Intelligence) on 4July, which was advertised in the regional newsletter. I would recommend reading it to see what is on.

"Try Something New" week is coming up in September, it would be good if you find something you would like to try. See pages 8-9. We will have a display in the library **Tuesday 23 September** so pop in and see us if you are in town, they have a good little café. We will also be representing the u3a at a Community Event at Harlow Museum on **Saturday 16 August** 12-4pm; come and see us.

I hear the Isle of Wight holiday went well, as you will see from the report and photos on pages 3-5. Well, keep cool and I hope to see you at the next meeting on **Monday 28 July at The Link**.

**Jane Winterbotham**

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

**TECHNICAL ERRORS: CONTACTING FACILITATORS**

Regrettably, we are experiencing problems with the links between the newsletter and our website, so if you have tried to use them to contact Ann Flint or Jane Winterbotham for information, or to book places, for u3a Week 2025 "Try Something New", you may not have been able to do so. Similarly, the links in the newsletter to group facilitators may have failed.

To overcome this problem, rather than include links to event organisers and facilitators, which may not work at the moment, we suggest that you follow this link:

<https://harlow.u3asite.uk/group-facilitators-email-contact/>

This will take you to a list of the groups and their facilitators; by clicking on the facilitator you wish to message you will open a Contact page to complete.

**For u3a Week 2025 :**      to contact **Ann Flint** use the link to **Arts In and Around Harlow**  
   to contact **Jane Winterbotham** use the link to **Play Reading**

## ELEMENTARY MY DEAR WATSON!

Guest speaker at the June General Meeting, Tony Harris, AKA Sherlock Holmes, gave a most informative and engaging presentation.

“Sherlock” took us back to Victorian London, setting the scene where nine million people lived in the capital, (similar to nowadays) the majority of whom were living in grave poverty and crammed into confined spaces. We learnt of the employment opportunities for the workers, with a docker earning two shillings for a week’s work and a seamstress only one penny for sewing one hundred buttons on shirt fronts. Desperate conditions led a number of women into prostitution, in an effort to feed their families, and it was seven of these streetworkers who were the victims of the notorious Jack the Ripper, beginning in 1888. The first two were seen to be “practice murders” before the serial killer refined the MO which gave him his title.



Members of the audience were invited to assist “Sherlock” with his investigations as he took them through every case (sometimes in graphic detail) explaining what happened and how evidence was collected – and destroyed. The would-be-sleuths who got the clues right could wear the much-prized bowler hat and were given the title of Dr Watson, Sherlock’s sidekick! One of the clues suggested that the Ripper was left-handed and member, Paula, became a visual aid for Sherlock to demonstrate how this evidence was determined. Brave woman!



The hour-long presentation provided a fascinating build up to the theory that the serial killer was, in fact, the grandson of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, Duke of Clarence, abetted by his doctor William Gull. (However, there was never secure evidence to support the theory which was dismissed.)

Such was the positive response from members when chatting afterwards, it is hoped that Tony Harris will be invited back next year in the guise of another well-known personality. **Imelda Gunn**

## FUTURE GUEST SPEAKERS

<b>28 July</b>	Consumer Competitions: How to enter and win!	Ian Davison	The Link
<b>18 August</b>	Summer Social: Quiz		The Link
<b>22 Sept.</b>	A Beginning, Middle and End. Where do novelists get their ideas?	Bobbie Derbyshire	The Link
<b>27 Oct.</b>	Road Safety for Seniors	Liam & Tanya	The Link
<b>24 Nov.</b>	The Inn At The Top: Neil talks about his life as landlord of the most remote country pub in the Yorkshire Dales; an entertaining ramble around the inn, the Dales countryside and a remarkable array of local characters.	Neil Hanson	The Link

COMING SOON!

At the General Meeting on Monday 28 July, the V&O Team is offering a day out in the [Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park](#) on [Wednesday 9 September](#) for £13.pp.



Trying to book a tour, and knowing how many carts would be needed for those less able to walk, became a task too many for the team so we decided you can have a “do it yourself” tour. This will enable members to book any mobility aids they require themselves (see below) and for individuals to visit the parts that interest them most. This also means, if you wish to visit any of the surrounding area you can do; your only responsibility is to be back for the agreed coach leaving time.

There is a lot to see and do in the park. Why not take a stroll through the picturesque [London Blossom Garden](#), or bring a picnic to the Park Meadows, a series of lawns near the Olympic rings, or explore the [River Lea paths](#), and follow the waterways that wind through the park. The park, also, is teeming with cultural activity. Why not explore the [Art on the Park trail](#) and take in the 28 different artworks all around the park? And when you're hungry, there's plenty of eateries to choose from. Click this link for a guide on how to spend a day at the Olympic Park: [OLYMPIC PARK GUIDE](#)



For members with mobility and/or visual impairments, full details of what is available at the Park to meet your needs can be found via this link to Park Mobility: [PARK MOBILITY](#) You are strongly encouraged to book aids, if required, in advance, once your place on the trip has been confirmed.

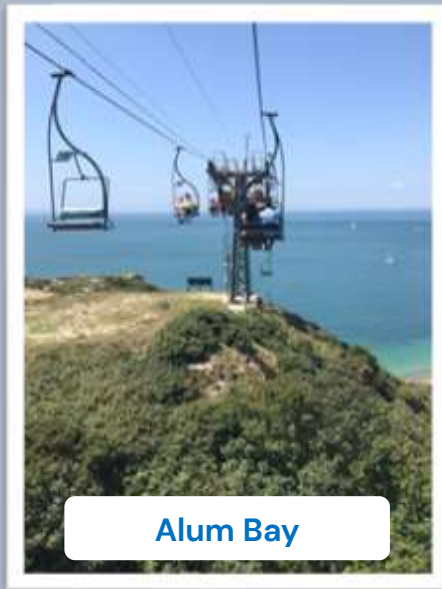
**HARLOW u3a TRIP TO THE BEAUTIFUL ISLE OF WIGHT JUNE 2025**

**Monday 16 June and we were off to the beautiful Isle of Wight where a very “Happy Holiday” was enjoyed by all!**

**After a breezy, short sail across the Solent to Fishbourne, we soon arrived at Warners Hotel, Bembridge Coast. It is such a pleasant location - literally there on the seafront. We found great staff, good accommodation, delicious food. (I ate lots and lots and lots) and lovely gardens to stroll around. It was beautiful. We experienced happy, sunny days out, including excursions to Carisbrooke Castle, Godshill, Alum Bay, Shanklin, Cowes and more. Some guests stayed at the hotel for a day and joined in with the fun activities that took place there, some took a boat trip, but all enjoyed themselves and much laughter was heard.**

**Overall, a fantastic holiday was shared ( as you can see from the photos ) : coloured sands enjoyed, ice-creams licked, feet paddled, cups of tea drunk and so much more! Our coach driver, John, was great, ferrying us safely there and safely home. (Thank You, John!)**

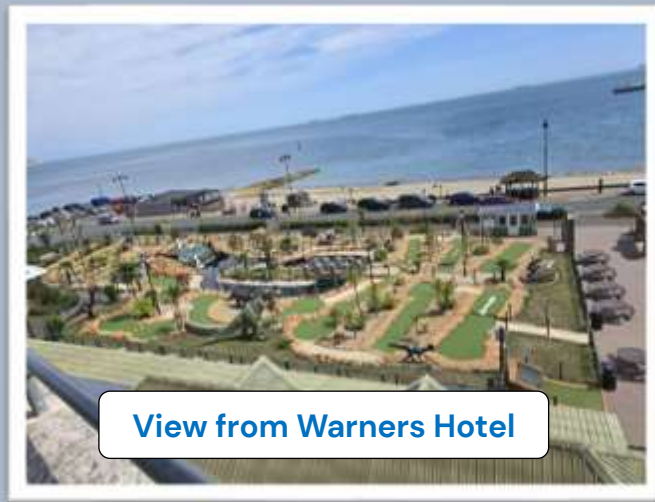
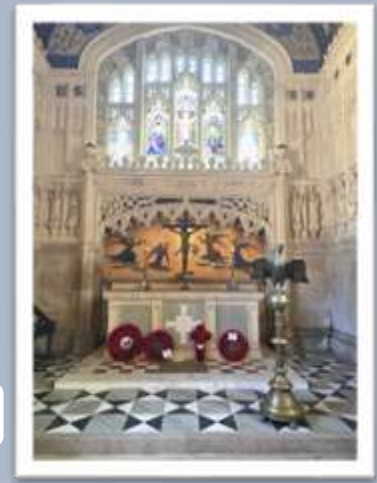
**Thank you to absolutely everyone involved from those who organised the holiday and everyone who joined in and made it a superb week! I am already looking forward to our next day out. Love to all and a big THANK YOU! Paula Howells**



Alum Bay



Views of Carisbrooke Castle

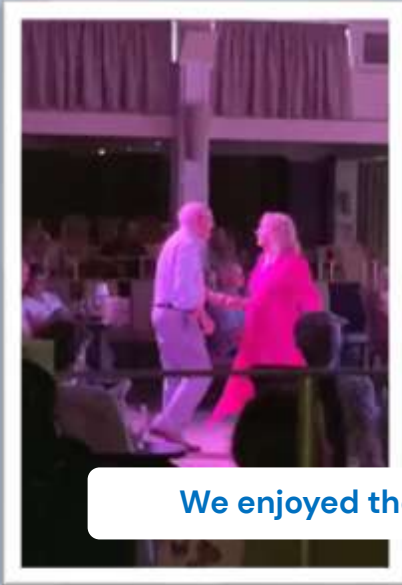


View from Warners Hotel





Sunshine in Shanklin



We enjoyed the entertainment



Sailing on the Solent



### STROLLERS 2



The Strollers 2 group met on Thursday 3 July when the weather was nice and warm. Eleven members walked along the New River, across some wheatfields and along shaded paths to St John the Baptist Church in Amwell.

**Vipin Patel**



### u3a GARDEN GROUP TRIP 24 JUNE 2025

June's garden visit was slightly different in as much as we visited a trade nursery near Hertford. Rochford's Nursery is a centre for international rose breeders wanting to have their new varieties of roses trialled by independent nurseries prior to being released for sale to the public. This site is the only independent site in the UK that does this, without cost to the rose breeder, as we learnt from the very informative talk given to us by Kerry Austen, the coordinator for these rose trials. Kerry then invited us all to tour the rose fields acting as judges for the new roses.

There were hundreds of beautiful roses: all colours and sizes, scented and non-scented. We were to mark them according to their health, number of flowers, overall appearance and scent - giving marks out of a hundred. Over the three years they are grown at the site, the marks are collated and the very best roses will be those that you eventually see in your garden centre. The process can take up to twelve years for the breeders to go from seed sown all the way to sale to the public: truly a labour of love!



One of Maria's favourite roses

Rose breeders are invited, through Roses UK, to enter what they consider to be the best of their up and coming varieties into the Rose of the Year competition; generally up to twenty varieties are submitted annually. This year's winner is "You're My Everything".

We had our lunch in the marquee and were able to ask Kerry many rose (and other garden related) questions. She is also currently working with the RHS to try and simplify the current classification of roses. The weather stayed warm and sunny so overall a very successful visit. **Maria Miola**



## HARLOW u3a CHOIR SUMMER CONCERT

## AN ODE TO HARLOW u3a CHOIR BY MEMBER PAULA HOWELLS



Despite the intense heat Saturday 12 July, Harlow u3a Choir was lively and entertaining as the singers performed a range of songs at their Summer Concert at Moot House, under the leadership of Musical Director Roisin Quinn. Songs from musicals, TV themes, pop songs and the folk catalogue were sung by the choir and soloists, interspersed with poetry and a monologue penned by members. There was also opportunity for the audience to join in and they were in fine voice.



Monday afternoon arrives and it's time to sing again -  
This is my favourite afternoon of the week -  
I love it so much, I can honestly say!  
Here we all gather in the room as one,  
Like ringing church bells our singing has begun!  
We are spread into groups: one, two, three & four,  
An array of different melodies come in through the door:  
Sopranos, tenors, basses and altos  
Each of us equal, none worth more than more.  
A warm-up to start, a stretch and a bend,  
Silent screams, screwed up faces allow us to sing to the very end.  
The practising of songs is what we're enjoying now  
Preparing for our concerts to be,  
For when we will sing out loud: one concert here, another there,  
Enjoyment all round, love and joy to share.  
"Singing is great," they say, "and good for the brain."  
It helps keep us happy AND keeps us sane!  
I love a good sing-song, and you fellow chumps  
Help keep a smile on my face and keep me out of the dumps!  
Sing all here and sing out loud, exercise those vocal chords;  
Let us sing to the crowd with smiles on our faces and joy in our hearts,  
May we all laugh to the finish from the start.  
The weeks come and go and time trundles on  
But, isn't everything better with love and a song?  
So let's continue forth, singing a song with Warmth in our hearts, that's where we belong.  
To our wonderful choir, the u3a, I thank you all,  
And that's what I want to say.

If Paula's exuberant tribute to singing with the u3a choir has inspired you to sing, why not book a place on the **free, Fun Sing-along afternoon** during u3a Week 2025 on **Monday 22 September 1-3pm at Harlow Rugby Club**. Book a place using the Groups Page link and click on Choir.

## COFFEE-TIME QUIZ

### SUMMER FLOWERS QUIZ ( Answers on last page)

Can you name the summer flowers pictured below? The generic name will suffice.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



**u3a WEEK MONDAY 22 – FRIDAY 26 SEPTEMBER**

**TRY SOMETHING NEW!**



Contact our Events Co-ordinator, **Chrissy Williams**, if you want to know more about how groups can get involved in u3a Week 2025. On offer so far from groups:

**MONDAY 22 SEPT.** : Harlow u3a CHOIR is offering a free, Singing For Fun Sing-a-long session, **1-3pm** at Harlow Rugby Club, Latton Park, Howard Way, Harlow, Essex CM20 3FD. This would be open to any Harlow u3a members who would like to come along for a couple of hours of fun, and sing well-known popular songs, with which most people will be familiar, led by the choir's Musical Director, Roisin Quinn. To book a place contact Choir on the Groups page. Or speak to Mel Gunn.

**FRIDAY 26 SEPT.** : **Play reading.** Join with others for the afternoon to read a play. Channel your inner thespian and share the fun. Contact Jane Winterbotham for information and to book a place.

**GROUP FACILITATORS WHO WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO THIS OFFER BY OPENING UP THEIR GROUPS DURING THIS WEEK, DO CONTACT CHRISSE WILLIAMS.**

**TRY SOMETHING NEW!**

Here's more of what's planned so far for National u3a Week. Are you ready to **TRY SOMETHING NEW?**

**MONDAY 22 SEPT. : Members' Monthly General Meeting 10am-12pm at The Link**

**MONDAY 22 SEPT. : Harlow Town Park** is much larger than you may think so why not enjoy a short, guided walk, **meeting at the café at 2pm**, to explore some of the areas. This will include the sensory garden, the walled garden, Miyawaki forest and information about the new mural in the paddling pool. If you have never been to the park, this will be your chance to hear about the many activities that are carried out. If you feel energetic, we might get as far as the River Stort. Park in the car park by the Greyhound Pub. Book your place with Ann Flint.

**TUESDAY 23 SEPT. : Do you have the spirit of Adventure? How about Canoeing at Essex Outdoors Harlow** with qualified instructors and NO ROLLS? It will begin at 11am. All equipment plus hard hats provided. £18.00 for 90 minutes. Book with Ann Flint. **Burnt Mill Lane, Harlow, Essex CM20 2QS**

**TUESDAY 23 SEPT. : 10am-3pm . Harlow u3a** will be represented in the **main library in the town centre**. Members are invited to stop by and say hello if they're in the vicinity.

**WEDNESDAY 24 SEPT. : Never been to the Gibberd Garden?** Enjoy a **guided tour** followed by tea and cake. Starts 1.15pm £16 per person. It's a hidden gem, recently featured on the Michael Portillo train journeys television programme & in an article in the Guardian. Book with Ann Flint. **Marsh Lane CM17 0NA**

**THURSDAY 25 SEPT. : Do you live in Harlow but have never been to Harlow Museum?** Why not stroll around, taking a cup of tea with you? It's free entry and there is an excellent exhibition explaining the development of Harlow, as well as a lovely walled garden. You might like to try your hand at sketching whilst you're there; all you need is a pencil and some plain paper. 9.30am – 3pm. **Muskham Rd, CM20 2LF**

**THURSDAY 25 SEPT. : If you like peace and quiet and watching the wild life, why not enjoy a trip on Canalability** on the River Stort 11am-3pm. Bring, and share, lunch. **Burnt Mill Lane, Harlow, CM20 2QS**

**Harlow Tye Rotary Club** sponsorship has allowed us to offer 22 places. Canalability's boats are adapted for use of wheelchair users and those with mobility difficulties; they have ramps and a lift on each boat and a disabled toilet. The Rotary Club suggests the preferred guests to be those with walking difficulties and their partners. Because of their kind subsidy we can offer this experience for £8 per person. **THIS TRIP IS NOW FULLY BOOKED BUT CONTACT JANE WINTERBOTHAM TO BE PLACED ON THE WAITING LIST.**

**FRIDAY 26 SEPT. : Visit to Our Lady of Fatima Church at 2pm.** This church has the most wonderful windows which may look blank and dreary on the outside BUT they are huge and brilliant inside and they never fail to amaze. The guided talk lasts an hour and we make a donation at the end. **Howard Way, Harlow CM20 2NS** Book your place with Ann Flint.

To contact Ann, Jane or any of the group facilitators for u3a Week 2025, go to this page:

<https://harlow.u3asite.uk/group-facilitators-email-contact/>

or talk to them at the **General Meeting at The Link.**

Please tell all your u3a friends about this special week and, if you attend the events, take photos to send to the u3a Editor for a super edition of the Newsletter!

## 'UNFOLDING: THE QUEST' (UNFOLDING A MAGICAL GARDEN)

I was in this Magical Garden in Harlow recently – the Gibberd Garden of course. If you have not yet visited, I can only recommend it to you, you will not be disappointed. Sir Frederick Gibberd was the architect and town planner for Harlow; he created a master plan including neighbourhoods with housing, green spaces, schools and shops. More of the garden and what makes it special later.

I want to introduce you to Razed Roof (RR), an '...inclusive performing arts and theatre company. Young people with, and without, disability working together to develop their skills and promote inclusion.' Razed Roof, developed from the Harlow Community Arts Group, was founded in Sept. 2004 and honoured with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Services in October 2017 - an award often described as the MBE for volunteers.

Razed Roof's mission is to improve opportunities for everyone through performing arts, working together with special schools and with the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Together they create the plays: the director of RR, members of the group and BA students at RCSSD.

In the play, 'Unfolding: The Quest' thirty three people took part. Each time I watch one of their performances I am struck by the consideration, even tenderness, the actors show to each other. The plays are written around the physical and emotional needs and abilities of the performers. The scenes are short and there are plenty of helpers who are trained to deal with tears and fears, with overflowing emotions. This play was no exception. Inclusivity comes foremost; the wheelchair user was as much involved as the two young girls who represented Lucinda. Lucinda is the sculpture by Gerda Rubinstein said to have been made from memory of her daughter, after 'skinny-dippin'.

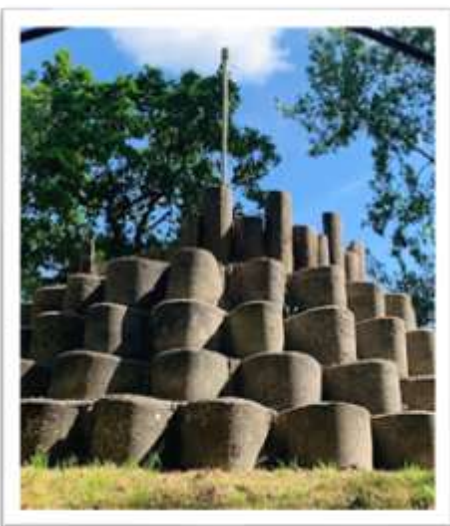
The young actors re-created some of the sculptures in the garden. Lucinda was one of them. She is the care-free young woman totally at ease with herself. "We are on a QUEST," the players sang.

"We are on a Quest." They warned us of the dangerous Hog Weed that can kill if you touch it. The Coutts Bank columns also found a worthy mention as did the mother swan with the cygnets on her back. Children have always played an important role in the garden. There was a scene where the children find a huge basket full of toys. The boys run to it, pull out all the swords and have a wonderful time being boys – fighting with their plastic weapons. Gibberd designed the castle and moat for his grandchildren. In the play Sir Freddie, as he was lovingly called, was given The Castle surrounded by a moat for his house.

In the early days when the Gibberd family lived in the house in Marsh Lane, the garden was open to the public only once a year. Frederick Gibberd would mingle and explain his thinking behind the garden. He had created a series of 'rooms' with something of interest throughout the seasons. "A weed," he used to say, "is a plant growing in the wrong place."

'Unfolding: The Quest' has been written to celebrate the Gibberd Garden. It encourages the viewers to explore the garden for themselves, discover its magic and watch it thriving and unfolding throughout the seasons. **Margarete Briggs**

**WHY NOT TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT THIS "MAGICAL GARDEN" YOURSELF AND JOIN THE GUIDED TOUR ON WEDNESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER DURING u3a WEEK . BOOK YOUR PLACE WITH ANN FLINT.**



## TRIP ON THE SOUTHERN COMFORT RIVER BOAT ON 10 JULY 2025

This was a visit to Horning on the Norfolk Broads, for a cruise on the Mississippi-style boat *Southern Comfort*: a few miles downstream from the Swan Inn, Horning - on the River Bure - to Ranworth Nature Reserve and back.

The boat has two decks, a licensed bar, café and small souvenir shop. It is controlled by the guide in the wheelhouse, who gave us a very entertaining and informative commentary. He reminded us that the Broads were manmade (peat diggings before the time of coal mining) though the rivers are



natural, providing 130miles of navigable waterways (with the Suffolk Broads). We heard tales of the many eminent and eccentric individuals who had created characterful properties beside the river, ranging from Arthur Ransome (*Swallows and Amazons* author ), a London football ground owner, various inventors and entrepreneurs, to a well-heeled local vicar who also had property overseas. The prominent Ferry Inn was frequented by RAF airmen in WW2 and suffered a direct hit from the Luftwaffe. We saw lush green reed beds and marshes stretching to the horizon. Our guide emphasised the focus on wildlife in

the area: Marsh Harriers are increasing and this year a pair of ospreys has nested on the Broads.

For those of us who are not regular inland sailors, the Broads cruise gave us a real sense of encountering the natural world. With brilliant sunshine, an occasional cool breeze, this was a great escape from Heatwave Harlow! We are grateful to our regular driver Pat and our V &O organisers for a memorable day out. **Jim Mindham**

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

<b>28 July</b>	General Meeting	The Link CM19 4RT	10am-12pm
<b>6 August</b>	Trip to Whitstable (1)		
<b>8 August</b>	<b>Deadline for August's Newsletter</b>		
<b>11 August</b>	Committee Meeting	St James's Church	10am-12pm
<b>15 August</b>	Trip to Polesden Lacey		
<b>16 August</b>	Community Event Harlow Museum & Walled Garden		
<b>18 August</b>	General Meeting: Summer Social	The Link CM19 4RT!	10am-12pm
<b>26 August</b>	Trip to Whitstable (2)		
<b>9 Sept</b>	Trip to Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park		

### GET IN TOUCH

You can contact **Committee Members and Facilitators** by email through links on the website. [harlow.u3a@site.uk](mailto:harlow.u3a@site.uk) . Using this method keeps personal information out of the public domain. The **Harlow U3A Newsletter** is published by Harlow U3A, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), Registered Charity Number 1197680. The registered office of the CIO is in England, at 2 Wych Elm, Harlow, Essex, CM20 1QP. **Contact the Editor** with comments and contributions at: [harlowu3anewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:harlowu3anewsletter@gmail.com)

### COFFEE TIME QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Rose 2. Dahlia 3. Echinacea ( Coneflower) 4. Sunflower  
5. Delphinium 6. Lily 7. Sweet Pea 8. Verbena Bonariensis