

June 2024 – Pip Wright – “Exploring East Anglia by Bus Pass”

Ardleigh and District Horticultural Society's final talk of the season was given by Pip Wright on the subject of "Exploring East Anglia by Bus Pass". Pip is a well known local author of more than 20 books on subjects ranging from his ancestors, who lived in a Suffolk village, to an almanac drawing on everyday newspaper articles from previous years. He writes, produces and prints his own work, all of which can be found on-line. He also gives many different talks on social history, as well as singing songs and playing his guitar. A wonderful, all-round entertainer.

Although it might have seemed that the evening's subject might be limited to those who had a Bus Pass, in fact the well attended meeting learnt that bus travel can be liberating and relaxing for anyone prepared to leave the car behind at home or in the car park. The inspiration for the evening's talk came from Pip's own experience of reaching a certain age and receiving birthday cards telling him not to forget to apply for a Bus Pass! He dutifully did this and hasn't stopped his bus travelling since. He began his bus adventures by firstly going from Stowmarket to Bury St Edmunds. He said that, although it took him a long while, he travelled through villages he didn't know and he really enjoyed the experience of sitting back and enjoying the countryside around him. He then became a regular bus traveller, exploring further and further around East Anglia and beyond. He told the group that bus travel can be anything you want it to be: from getting to town centres to exploring the countryside. He remembered the time that county bus passes only allowed one journey in and out of a county at a time. He learnt how to go in and out of Suffolk and Norfolk by catching different buses in one day. In 2008, this all changed to an 'All England Bus Pass' enabling travellers to go anywhere in England. Pip's bus travel has inspired him to write two books on his experiences, which include the best tea rooms to visit by bus, an essential part of an enjoyable day out! These days bus travel only costs £2 per journey for everyone, so it is an affordable means of getting about. There have been many changes to routes and timetables but all of these can be accessed on-line, which Pip recommended before setting out on a journey. He also recommended taking a bus as part of a holiday adventure, with the bonus of being able to take ones dog along too.

To conclude the evening Pip entertained the group by playing his guitar and singing a song about the places he has visited by bus. A great way to round off his talk, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the group.

Ardleigh and District Horticultural Society will be holding the Ardleigh Annual Flower and Produce Show on Saturday, 17th August, 2024, at Ardleigh Village Hall, opening at 2 pm. The Show Schedule is available from The Ardleigh Convenience Store and Craft Nurseries. This is a great opportunity to show off your skills in a wide range of gardening, baking, wine making and handicraft skills, or just come along to the Village Hall and admire the wide range of entries. Children are encouraged to get involved as well.

Annual membership of Ardleigh Horticultural Society is just £5. If you join at the Annual Show in August, your membership will include free admission to all the monthly meetings on the programme up to June 2025, plus admission to the 2025 Annual Flower and Produce Show.