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alarms. The Christmas lunch will be held on December 10 and places can be booked by phoning Keith on 01449 736598 or Janet on 01449 723717.

**LAVENHAM**

**Natural History Group:**

The November meeting of the Lavenham Natural History Group was held on Wednesday, November 4 in the Guildhall.

Robin Ford opened the meeting and welcomed everyone and then introduced the speakers, Tina and Roger Loose, who talked on "Spring in the Garrigue", a region of southern France. The Garrigue is mainly a limestone area with very poor soil and shrubby vegetation. Between these areas there are valleys which are more fertile, growing good arable crops and vineyards. The plants are subjected to very hot and arid conditions in the summer. To cope with this, the native plants have ways of preventing excess loss of moisture through their leaves. Some have a waxy covering whilst others are downy or are rolled up.

We were shown six specimens of different species of shrub oak, mostly evergreen.

One of their walks led to a Roman site which was full of wild irises and many orchids. Their fine pictures showed many different orchids, including a giant one which can grow to one metre and is related to our lizard orchid. Butterflies were plentiful,

including different species of swallowtail and the Granville fritillary. One of the sites they visited was a Roman aqueduct, a very impressive structure, which is a World Heritage site. Roger is to be congratulated on his excellent photography. This husband and wife combination produced a very interesting talk and had us all wanting to visit the area.

The next meeting on Wednesday, December 2 at 7.30pm in the Guildhall, will be a members evening, when some of the members will be giving short presentations on various wildlife subjects. Members are reminded to bring along a plate to contribute to the food table. For further information please phone 01787 248128.

**WOODBRIE**

**Flower club:** Our AGM took place on November 4. Everyone was welcomed by Lyn and then the yearly reports were read out. It was decided that our yearly subscription would stay the same at £20. Thanks were given to some members of the committee who were retiring and new committee members elected.

Special thanks were given to Lyn, our outgoing chairman. Our new chairman is Rosemary Digby and the new president is Peggy Albertini. Mary Lawn and Mavis Proctor were made honorary members. The competition awards were also given, with first prize going to Helen Kidwell.

After the formalities we all sat

down to enjoy a delicious meal. A quiz was also provided which kept everyone busy between courses.

Our after-dinner speaker was Melissa Sheldrake, who spoke of her "box of delights". Melissa is a great enthusiast of auctions and spoke of some of her purchases and their history. It was a very informative and interesting talk and she even included some working props.

Some of her best buys were Nanking pottery. Melissa told us the story of the shipwreck and as she spoke had a moving ship with waves to add to the drama.

After thanks were given and the raffle had taken place, we all departed after an extremely enjoyable afternoon.

**BRAINTREE**

**Riverside Club:** Members met in the Hall after lunch on Friday. The afternoon speaker was Tracey Mackness who talked about how she started up The Giggly Pig Company which has won awards for its sausages and bacon products; hand-made from rare breed Essex saddleback pigs.

Money was collected for the trip to Perrywoods on November 24. The speaker on Friday, November 13 will be Keith Lovell on History Through Essex Foods. For further information on the club ring Barry on 01376 321316. New members welcome.

**HESSETT**

**Service for renovated Hesselset memorial:** The First World War memorial in Hesselset was rededicated at a short service on Sunday, November 8 which included a muffled peal of church bells.

The cross, erected in 1920, has been renovated to mark the centenary of the war. The project was organised and funded by the Friends of Hesselset Church with other private donations.

The Rev Nick Cutler conducted the service and Michael Poulter, chairman of the Friends of Hesselset Church laid a wreath. Andrew Robinson gave a Bible reading and Rachel Chester played Last Post. More than 50 people attending



■ The First World War memorial rededication service in Hesselset.

the service were given a booklet with the stories of the 14 men from the village who died. The booklet has been researched and written by the Friends as a tribute to the 52 men from the village who enlisted to fight.

Half of the men who died belonged to the Suffolk Regiment and all but three are buried or remembered on memorials overseas.

Two of the men are buried in Hesselset churchyard. John Whiting died of his wounds in a military hospital in London after being shot at the Somme in 1916 and William Borley died from influenza three days after the Armistice.

Copies of the 36-page booklet are on sale in the church at £3.

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