

NEWSLETTER

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Thoughts from the Chair

With winter approaching and the temperatures dropping, it's been lovely to see the changing colours of the trees in the scenic surroundings of Haddenham.

The first national U3A day will be held on 3rd June 2020. If the creative thinkers in our U3A have any ideas of how we might engage with the public or join with neighbouring U3As to mark the occasion, please let any member of the Committee know what you come up with.

Remembrance Day has passed, but we should not forget our debt to those who gave their lives to defend the oppressed and preserve our liberty. On behalf of our members, I laid a wreath at the Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church.

Christmas will soon be upon us and the U3A tree will be at the Christmas Tree Festival in St Mary's Church 6-8th December. Also, don't forget to tune up for this year's carol singing with the Waddesdon Manor Choir at our Christmas Extravaganza on 9th December in the Village Hall.

I hope to see you all there, and I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Sally

Art, medicine and war

At our General Meeting in September, Serena Quartermaine's *20 Desert Island Pictures* took us on a tour of world galleries, with art from the 14th to the 20th century. Her two favourites were Turner's *Norham Castle* in Tate Britain and Simone Martini's eloquent *Christ Discovered in the Temple* in Liverpool's Walker Gallery.



In October, Geoffrey Farrar Brown, gave a very informed talk entitled *Can dogs detect cancer?* Geoffrey is a volunteer and ambassador for the charity Medical Detection Dogs, which



conducts pioneering research and trains dogs that are able to use the amazing power of their noses for the early detection of human diseases such as cancer. It seems each disease gives off minute traces of unique odours, as low as

one part per trillion. Together with ground-breaking work on Parkinson's Disease, this will potentially lead to much earlier diagnosis and treatment. The charity also trains Medical Alert Assistance Dogs that can alert vulnerable people, such as those with a brittle form of diabetes, who can collapse almost without warning if blood sugar or insulin levels reach abnormal limits.

Ken Satterthwaite's talk in November took a fresh look at *The American Civil War* from a naval perspective. The 'Battle of the Ironclads' provided no winner, with Confederates and Unionists both "retiring hurt" but the history of warship development was changed forever.



Details of future meetings are on page 2.

Interest Groups

The Wine Tasting Group is well worth joining, offering monthly visits and wine tasting sessions. Our 11th December meeting is the annual Christmas tasting event at Saint Mary's Centre. For details, contact Richard Moore on 01844 290972 richard.p.moore@btinternet.com

Out with Friends is a group for members who are on their own for whatever reason. It meets regularly and offers excursions and visits to restaurants, theatres and cinemas (see features on pages 4 and 5). Please contact Pam Harding on 01844 291872 or harding212@btinternet.com

The Table Tennis Group meets fortnightly and is always looking to welcome new members, especially men. Three tables, basic coaching, coffee and laughter are on offer. Contact Steph Everitt on 01844 299579 or everwade@aol.com

The Yoga Group is eager to expand both its scope and the number of members. If you'd like to join its Gentle Hatha Yoga class or are interested in a chair-based Gentle Years' Yoga, contact Jan Baker on 07969 779222 or at janbakeryoga@gmail.com

Discussion Group 2 is under way, and would welcome three or four more new members to join them. Contact David Gregory at davidygregory@aol.com

We welcome Linda Page, who has taken over from Theresa Smith on the U3A Committee as Interest Groups Coordinator (see page 6). She can be contacted at pinnypage@gmail.com

Dates for your diary...

As usual there will be only one pre-Christmas General Meeting on **9th December** at 2.00 for 2.15pm in the Village Hall, where the Waddesdon Manor Choir will once again entertain us with songs and carols – joining in will be encouraged with the latter! Delicious seasonal refreshments will be provided together with a chance to win a prize in our traditional raffle.

On **13th & 16th January** John Tyler will look at *The Changing Wildlife of the Chilterns* which he has scrutinised with close-up photography. We'll follow the story of the Chiltern landscape and its wildlife over a hundred million years, from warm seas to Ice Ages, tundra and forest to its familiar farmland and beech woods.

Waste Not Want Not is the title of a talk on **10th & 20th February** by Jez Elkin of FCC Environment to raise awareness of the importance of how our society handles its waste. If you would like to know exactly what happens to the contents of your bins, including generating electricity, come along and find out.

Theatre trip

Thursday 6th February (matinee)

One Million Tiny Plays About Britain – Watermill Theatre.

Includes pre-theatre meal and coach, which will leave from Haddenham Village Hall at 11.45am. Cost £57. Contact Margaret Ackroyd on 01844 292393 or theatre@haddenhamu3a.co.uk



Film Club (open to all U3A members)

Monday 2nd December 2.00pm – HYCC

Notting Hill – The life of a simple bookshop owner changes when he meets the most famous film star in the world. With Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts.



Monday 6th January 2.00pm – HYCC

Woman in Gold – An octogenarian Jewish refugee, Maria Altmann, takes on the Austrian government to recover artwork she believes rightfully belongs to her family. With Helen Mirren, Ryan Reynolds and Daniel Bruhl.

Monday 3rd February 2.00pm – HYCC

Little Voice – A shy reclusive lady is convinced by an invisible entity to sing. Jane Horrocks, Michael Caine, Brenda Blethyn.

Suggestions for future films are invited – RARickard@aol.com

Local History Group (open to all U3A members)Wednesday 27th November - Haddenham Methodist Church - 2.30pm**The D-Day Landings**

In this 75th Anniversary year, U3A member Mike Phillips' illustrated talk is the second in a well-received series he has given at village events during 2019. The talk will be followed by tea and biscuits. Contact Mary Paterson on 01844 291919 or marypaterson208@gmail.com



BBC/Getty Images

U3A Thames Valley NetworkTuesday 3rd December - 2.00pm - St James Church, Sussex Gardens, Paddington, London W2 3UD**Christmas Concert by the Brandenburg Singers**

This is the last chance to book a place for this concert of carols, Christmas music, audience participation and seasonal readings. The Brandenburg Choir is a rich and experienced group of musicians, drawn from choral societies, gospel choirs, *a cappella* ensembles and chamber singers. Tickets are £19.50, to include mulled wine and mince pies in the interval. Full details can be found at haddenhamu3a.co.uk/local-events

**Genealogy Group**Thursday 5th December - 10.30am - Walter Rose Room, Village Hall, Haddenham**Overcoming brick walls**

Dr Joan Reid, who has a Masters degree in genealogy research, will talk to the group about how to overcome 'brick walls', when lack of information hinders progress. The Genealogy Group will welcome new members with fresh ideas and connections to help themselves and others research their family tree. About half the members are complete novices and the rest have varying degrees of experience. The group usually meets on the first Thursday of each month at 10.30am in Haddenham Community Library, where members have free access to Ancestry.com.

Contact Sue Michell at susan.michell501@gmail.com

**Earth Matters** (open to all U3A members)Wednesday 8th January - Guide HQ, Southern Road, Thame - 2.30pm

museums.wellington.org.nz

Dr Mary Miller will talk about the effects of climate change on growing conditions for the world's major crops. As well as temperatures and rainfall, the length of growing seasons and the availability of pollinating insects will also have an impact on where and when crops can be grown. And will the world's major crop producers, including India and China, still be able to provide for their populations' needs?

Members wishing to attend can contact Sue Oswell on 01844 290568 or sue.oswell@bopenworld.com



Out and about

The Chiltern Way

Our Long Distance Walking Group set out to conquer The Chiltern Way in July 2017. This August, 22 walks and 220 miles later, the challenge was completed when 15 of the group arrived back at the start of a loop from Goring-on-Thames in the south-west to parts of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire in the north-east. They will walk The Oxfordshire Way next, which they will complete in seven more ten-mile hikes.



Music appreciation – live!



Member Hugh Stradling hosted a combined meeting in September for both Music Appreciation groups, accompanying tenor Chris Smith on piano. Member Barry Wood also played compositions by Debussy and others. A highlight was a duet by Barry and Hugh on the latter’s two beautifully restored grand pianos. The following month Jim Robins played and performed trombone music – so there is plenty for everyone to appreciate, and the group would welcome new members.

Cycling around Oxford

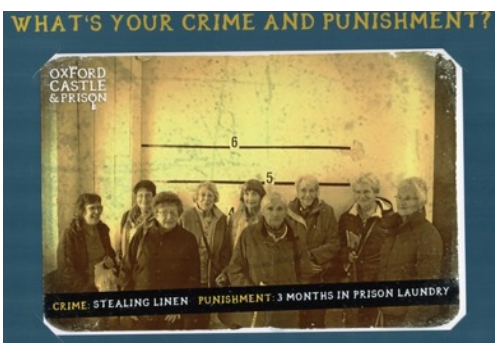
The Cycling Group enjoyed an October ride along back streets and paths from Port Meadow. Guided by Peter Appleby, they paused to view buildings associated with the writer and lay theologian C S Lewis. Premises included his lodgings, The Eagle and Child pub, where he frequently met his literary friends, and the register office (now a dentist’s) on St Giles’ where he married Joy Gresham. The group then cycled through Cowley and on to Headington Quarry to see *The Kilns* where Lewis lived from 1930. Then it was on to Holy Trinity Church, Headington where the author worshipped and is buried. The ride concluded back at Port Meadow with lunch at The Plough.



At Holy Trinity Church, Headington

Out with Friends in Oxford...

Out With Friends (OWF) interest group recently visited Oxford Castle and Prison, where a costumed character guide gave an interesting account of the history of the castle. Originally built in the 11th century, it



was used primarily as a jail from the 14th century. Children were also imprisoned – the youngest being a seven-year-old girl sentenced to seven days of hard labour in 1870 for stealing a pram. In 1888 the jail was renamed HM Prison Oxford and it remained open until as recently as 1996. The OWF group (left) were “found guilty of stealing linen”, but fortunately their sentence of three months in the prison laundry was revoked on appeal and they were allowed to leave the prison the same day!

...and Chinnor

Also stepping back in time, the group recently took a steam train journey on the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway through the beautiful Chiltern countryside, while enjoying a delicious cream tea. These and other visits, together with regular meetings, are a feature of the relatively new Out With Friends interest group which can help members who, for whatever reason, are on their own. If you would like more information about the OWF group, please look on the Haddenham U3A website or contact either Pam Harding on 01844 291872, harding212@btinternet.com or Pat Woodward on 01844 290460, pat.woodward041@btinternet.com



What a (Haddenham) Feast!

The Local History Group held its September meeting during Haddenham Feast Festival where Alan Rose explained its origins – it started as a Feast and definitely **not** a fair! The first record he has found is from 1712, showing that it was a celebration of the Feast of the Virgin Mary. Even then it was an ancient tradition, with its roots lost in time, and the involvement of a funfair is relatively recent. Alan illustrated his talk with some interesting photographs, the earliest of which was from circa 1904 -1912, showing the fair occupied just the eastern half of the Green. Ken Perry's model (above) represented a beautiful imagination of a feast (and fair) in 1869 when most of the stalls, and the roundabout, were still run by villagers. Only the swing-boat was commercial. After the talk, members were treated to classic Feast fare. Elizabeth Oliver had made a typical delicious pie of pears cooked in red wine, which everyone tried. Alan Rose also provided a selection of chestnuts, hazel nuts and dried fruits. All in all, a really festive treat!



Writers Group

The group performed a selection of their work as part of the Haddenham Feast. The programme included poetry, prose and a short satirical play. We were very grateful to the Feast Committee and the staff of the Community Library for helping us with the show, which attracted an audience of around 25 to 30.

Walking Holiday 2020



Carol Mason has taken on the organisation of our annual HF Holiday for 2020. Single and double rooms have been provisionally reserved at Newfield Hall, Malham in the Yorkshire Dales for 1st to 5th June. Gentle guided walking, discovery tours and self-guided walking are available. Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. For further details or to reserve a place please contact Carol Mason at mason.carol16@gmail.com or call her on 01844 292236.

Please note: The copy deadline for the next issue of the Newsletter is 1st February 2020.

Committee news

Interest Groups Coordinator

We are delighted that Linda Page (right) has agreed to join the Committee, after attending our coffee morning for new members in October. She will step into Theresa Smith's shoes as Interest Groups Coordinator. Linda, who grew up in Haddenham, trained at the Royal Ballet School and lived and worked in Amsterdam before returning to the UK and teacher training, specialising in dance and drama. She lives in Stoke Mandeville and still works part-time as a teacher. Linda is looking to move back to Haddenham "to give something back to the village which gave her such a joyful childhood". She clearly brings a breadth of experience to the Committee!



Membership Secretary



Chris Collins is stepping down as Membership Secretary in December and we are sure you'll agree that he has earned a rest. He has been an amazing ambassador for our U3A, frequently recruiting new members, even when out walking the dog! His wife, Catherine has always provided invaluable technical support and we thank them both for their many years of service. Former Committee Chair Elaine Parkes (left) has kindly offered to take on the role of Membership Secretary on a temporary basis. She and husband Geoff are fully conversant with the database and regularly prepare the renewal forms. Elaine will see us through the important renewal period and into the new membership year in April. Welcome back, Elaine!

We will still be looking for someone to take on this role more permanently so, as always, please think about what you could contribute to our thriving U3A. Simply contact any Committee member.

Christmas Tree Festival

As usual, we will be displaying a tree at the Christmas Tree Festival at St Mary's Church – this year from 6th to 8th December – decorating it with contributions from all our Interest Groups. Sally would like to remind Group Leaders to provide new or updated decorations by **3rd December** if possible – so get those creative juices flowing! We hope as many of you as possible come along to take a look at it, as well as the many beautiful trees from other local organisations.



Cons at Christmas

Sadly, one of our normally careful members recently had her PIN and card stolen while using a local supermarket. Thieves followed her through the check-out after observing her keying in her PIN. One then stopped her outside, claiming to have seen someone accidentally scrape the back of her parked car. While they examined the back of the car his accomplice made off with her purse and card from the front. The subsequent fraudulent use of her card was extensive. ***You have been warned!***