

## The Questionable History of the TV Quiz Show

As an enthusiastic quizzier, Jeff Evans has form. Not only has he made regular appearances on TV quiz shows, he is currently on the *Mastermind* team writing sets of specialist subject questions.



At our March General Meeting Jeff took a most informed look at the evolution of broadcast quiz shows, from pre-war radio's *Spelling Bee* to TV-based versions of *Twenty Questions*. Many of the early programmes were simply televised in the radio studio, which meant that shows such as *Transatlantic Quiz*, hosted by Lionel Hale in London and Alistair Cooke in New York, showed UK viewers only the London end.

*Puzzle Corner*, originally on the radio, was one of the first quizzes to recruit contestants from the general public outside London, although they competed via telephone.

Readers will perhaps remember Gilbert Harding's *What's My Line?* as involving celebrity panellists trying to guess the obscure, and often unique, occupations of ordinary folk.

*What Do You Know?* in 1955 also started as a televised radio programme, and evolved into *Brain of Britain* and *Ask the Family*, both chaired by the inimitable Robert Robinson.

And the memorable Franklyn Engelman chaired *Ask Me Another* (similar to *Eggheads*) accompanied by farmer turned radio personality, Ted Mould. The 1950s also saw the launch of ITV and the rise of the quiz show as everyday entertainment, rather than the BBC's broader remit of informing and educating, as well as entertaining. Michael Miles adapted *Take Your Pick* from Radio Luxembourg, alternating weekly with Hughie Green's *Double Your Money* – both immensely popular here and as overseas versions.

Actors Amanda Barrie and Dame Maggie Smith were 'glamorous assistants' to Hughie Green, preceding ex-contestant Monica Rose, whose bubbly personality took her on to



Hughie Green's *The Sky's The Limit*. ITV focused on audience building, and prizes varied from modest to occasional grand slams. However, the principles of many shows were taken from the USA's *The \$64,000 Question*. Jerry Desmonde's UK version was known simply as *The 64,000 Question*, offering a maximum prize of that number of sixpences (£1600 – still a reasonable sum at the time).

The demise of Rediffusion's TV franchise and the Pilkington Report on the future of broadcasting led to more serious programming by ITV. The scandal of systematic coaching and spoon-feeding of questions in US shows wound up in the courts and the capping of prizes ended a seemingly golden age of TV quizzing. However, in 1962 ITV adapted *University Challenge* from America's *College Bowl*, and the rest really is history. The fun and kudos of smaller and non-existent prizes culminated in the nonsense of *Blanketty Blank* and the mock-interrogation format of *Mastermind*.

Catchphrases of the past abound: "Your starter for ten"; "Now that money's safe" – and some shows such as *Question of Sport* (1970) seem to go on forever. From the glitzy staging of *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* (1998) to the ruthless *The Weakest Link*, the big money has returned, and the celebrities never really went away. Do these hit the Bullseye, or are they just *Pointless*?

## Inside this issue...

Memory not what it was?



Remember to look on the next page to find out why.

## A bridge too far?



Not for the intrepid Ox & Bucks Light Infantry in 1944.

Walks like a duck, sounds like a duck



The history of our very own Aylesbury ducks – and why Haddenham's ponds were thatched!

See your survey results on page 8.

## The brain

### How we remember and why we forget

At our April meeting, a talk by Jim Ellis helped us understand our brains and how they work. His simple model described a sensory area feeding into the short term memory, which may in turn supply the long term memory. On the way much peripheral information is unused and quickly lost – why store it if it is irrelevant?



The capacity of short term memory can be improved by careful focus and rehearsal, and experiments show that we can recall between five and nine items, with memory naturally fading quickly unless reinforced. To illustrate, 'volunteer' Neil Dury recalled seven out of ten objects projected briefly on the screen. His recall was then further challenged by having simultaneously to count out loud backwards in threes! While his counting was excellent, his recall was terrible – scoring just four out of ten: total cognitive overload!

Our long term memory is more organised, and sequences that we learn can help us, such as the alphabet or familiar telephone numbers. Jim challenged a second volunteer, Elaine Parkes, to state all the twelve months in alphabetic order. Try it! It's not the way our brains store these everyday names.

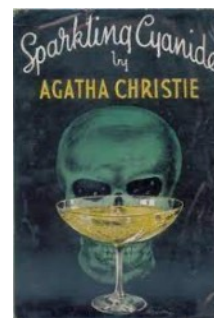
And why do we forget? The sheer volume of memory is subject to fading unless reinforced, but is rarely completely lost, with recall sometimes being a matter of minutes and sometimes decades. The trigger can be retracing our steps literally or in our heads, looking at a photograph or meeting an old friend or relative after many years. But where the heck are the car keys?

## A is for Arsenic

At our May AGM, we welcomed back a truly excellent speaker, Dr Kathryn Harkup, who took a forensic look at the perils and pitfalls of poisons, as accurately described in Agatha Christie's novels. The author killed hundreds of victims in her stories, employing more than 30 poisons. As a nurse during the First World War, she came into close contact with toxic chemicals when working in the dispensary, making up medicines to order. In her spare time she decided to write crime

novels, ignoring the advice of her author sister. Strychnine featured in her first, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, and Kathryn provided all the gory details of the inevitable painful death. However, a combination of other toxins was required to finish off the victim that ensured a potentially innocuous medicinal 'tonic' was primed to deliver a final lethal dose of precipitated strychnine.

Agatha Christie killed nine of her characters with cyanide, a simple compound that is found in many fruit seeds and nuts, and which typically smells of almonds. Much larger doses are needed to kill than would normally be eaten, except in the food staple cassava, which must be carefully soaked and left to dry, to evaporate off cyanide as a gas. In *Sparkling Cyanide*, Christie made a rare error in describing the victim's fingers turning blue from cyanosis – which is a lack of oxygen – when in fact cyanide poisoning victims flush red because of a surplus of unmetabolised oxygen.



AGATHA CHRISTIE  
Murder is Easy



Arsenic was the poison of choice in *Murder is Easy*, and was once easily available in this country for vermin control. It was a byproduct of metal smelting, sold for profit during the industrial revolution, but an excess of production resulted in a price crash, so it was mixed with other chemicals to feed the Victorian

fashion for red, green and yellow dyes. Infamously, green wallpaper of the period emitted arsine gas when damp – and doctors even prescribed Fowler's Solution containing arsenic as a patent medicine.

Given that Christie's murderers were always found out, a member asked whether there are any truly undetectable poisons. According to Kathryn, an analyst today who knew what they were looking for would almost always be able to identify the cause of poisoning.

**Full details and dates for the next three talks can be seen on page 3, and subsequent topics for 2022 are:**

- 13th September:** Speak up and mind the furniture – An actor's life for me by Jeff Rozelaar
- 11th October:** Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies by Martin Lloyd
- 8th November:** The Thankful Villages of the Great War by Graham Horn
- 13th December:** Christmas Extravaganza

## Diary Dates

### General Meetings

All at 2.15 for 2.30pm in the Village Hall

Tuesday 14th June

#### Platinum Jubilee Celebration

In *Sounds of the Sixties* Adrian Broadway will take us back to that glorious time as he performs hits in his own style using ten different instruments. The show



works through the decade with a song for each year, recalling *The Beatles*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *The Seekers* and others you will recognise. Songs will

include *A Hard Day's Night*, *Blue Moon*, *Moon River*, *Sunny Afternoon* and *I'll Never Find Another You*.

The musical performance will be followed by a celebratory tea, where photos of Adrian performing in the 1960s may be seen.

Tuesday 12th July

#### Secrets, sex, scandals and salacious gossip...

...of the Royal Court 1660 to 1830.

Sarah Slater is a Guide Lecturer at Hampton Court Palace; she will wear one of her beautiful costumes and talk about all the naughty bits of history you would probably not have learnt about at school. With tales of royal mistresses,



prostitution, sexual diseases of the time, and methods used to prevent STDs and unwanted pregnancies, this talk is not for the prude – it is fun, but rude!

Tuesday 9th August

#### Paul Nash and the Wittenham Clumps

The Wittenham Clumps were a major source of inspiration for Paul Nash (1889–1946), one of the finest British artists of the 20th century.

Christopher Baines's talk explores Nash's unique and enduring connection with this landscape, showing his Wittenham Clumps



work alongside his war art, surrealism, illustration, photography and design.

## A word from the chair

**New Interest Groups** are on the horizon! As well as the Strollers Group getting off the ground, so to speak, a short course of Mindfulness sessions is planned and the Bowling Group is hoping to restart.

**Our survey** on the future of the Newsletter has delivered an enthusiastic response, so thank you to those who have completed our short questionnaire. You can see the results and some of your comments on the last page.

**Our June General Meeting** will be a celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with the hall decorated – plus cake and prosecco! And a competition for the 'Best Celebratory Hat' will be judged by our special guest. So get your creative juices flowing and you could be the lucky winner of tea for two at Haddenham Garden Centre.

**Your Committee** does a wonderful job of running our u3a and many have served for a number of years. Neil Dury, who is responsible for publicity and communication and is part of our Newsletter editorial team is standing down. On behalf of all of us I would like to thank Neil for his hard work and commitment over the years.

We are happy to welcome Janet Mills (see page 8) onto the Committee. It's always good to have new blood. However, we still have a long-standing vacancy for a Deputy Chair. Also, I have already served four years as Chairman and, while happy to serve another year, it really is time for a change.

#### To quote u3a co-founder Eric Midwinter:

*"There is a danger of u3a becoming a service to third-agers rather than a self-help organisation... [with] the few doing everything and the majority doing nothing. The duty of a member is quite clear in the constitution, that they should play their part as active members...and involve themselves fully in the sustenance of the u3a. I do feel that that is not always being done."*

Therefore, if you want our u3a to continue to thrive, we must have new members on the Committee, otherwise we will reach a point where we are unable to function. So please, while you are all enjoying the things that your u3a does for you, give some thought to what you can do for your u3a – just talk to any Committee member about what joining the team involves.

My very best wishes to you all.

*Sally*



## Interest Group News

### Technical Group

In early May, the Technical Group was shown around the Trenchard Museum at RAF Halton by its knowledgeable curator, Francis Hanford, who was in the RAF for 30 years. He brought the fascinating history of Halton to life, starting in 1913, when the then owner of the Halton estate, Alfred de Rothschild, invited the Royal Flying Corps to conduct manoeuvres on his land and made Halton House available, ultimately to become the Officers' Mess.

Following a gentlemen's agreement between Rothschild and Lord Kitchener, the estate was used by the British Army throughout the First World War.

Extensive infrastructure was built, including a small power station and a branch line from Wendover station to keep it supplied with coal. In 1916 the Royal Flying Corps moved its air mechanics school to Halton.

After the war,

Rothschild's nephew inherited the estate and, preferring the potential soil of the Exbury estate in Hampshire for growing rhododendrons, sold the 3,500 acres of Halton to the government for £112,000. During the Second World War, RAF Halton continued its training role and the Royal Canadian Air Force were based at Halton for part of the war. When the School of Technical Training was moved to RAF Cosford, the facility became home for the RAF School of Recruit Training in 1993, and today trains over 20,000 new recruits and NCOs every year.

Halton remains one of the largest RAF stations in the UK. Although only the lighter aircraft used during the world wars were able to use its grass airstrip, both a Comet airliner and a Vulcan bomber have landed there – but only to be dismantled for spares and as part of training.

After looking around the historical artefacts in the museum and chatting to the delightful volunteer guides, the group was escorted to the James McCudden Heritage Flight Centre which houses various training simulators made by Link of Aylesbury as well as a modern De Havilland Chipmunk simulator (see above).



Member Jacquie Harland successfully 'lands' an RAF Chipmunk at Halton on the flight simulator.

### Film Club

Fourth Tuesdays at 2.00pm.  
Walter Rose Room.

**Film showings are open to all u3a members.** A donation of £4 is requested.

**Tuesday 24th May**

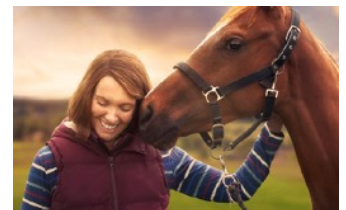
*A Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood* is based on a true friendship between American TV personality, Fred



Rogers, and a jaded journalist: Tom Junod learns about empathy, kindness and decency from America's most beloved neighbour, 'Mr Rogers'. Starring Tom Hanks and Matthew Rhys.

**Tuesday 28th June**

*Dream Horse* is the inspiring true story of an unlikely race horse bred by small-town Welsh bartender Jan Vokes. With very little money or experience, Jan convinces her neighbours to chip in their meagre earnings to help raise Dream Alliance to compete with the racing elites at the Welsh Grand National. Stars Toni Collette, Owen Teale, Damian Lewis.



**Tuesday 26th July**

*The Rescue* is an enthralling documentary which chronicles the against-all-odds story that transfixed



the world in 2018: the daring rescue of twelve boys and their coach from deep inside a flooded

cave in Northern Thailand by a British team of cavers.

**Tuesday 23rd August**

*Spencer*, directed by Pablo Larraín, tells how the marriage between Princess Diana and Prince Charles has long since grown cold. Though rumours of affairs and a divorce abound, peace is ordained for the Christmas festivities at the Queen's estate. There's eating and drinking, shooting and hunting. Diana knows the game, but this year, things will be profoundly different. Starring Kristen Stewart, Jack Farthing and Timothy Spall.



## History Group

### D-Day Landings

In March Mike Phillips treated the History Group to his third presentation on the 1944 landings. Allied air superiority limited German aerial surveillance, so the invasion, which the Germans thought would be around Calais, attacked a relatively lightly defended stretch of Normandy coast which had no harbours.

He focused on Gold, Juno and Sword beaches, where the British and Canadians deployed the concrete Mulberry Harbours to land 2,500,000 men, 500,000 vehicles and 4 million tonnes of supplies. Some troops even cycled ashore using flat-packed bikes that were hastily commissioned, not always with pedals that were matched to their direction of rotation!

Arriving at low tide, they avoided Rommel's anti-landing craft defences, based on another false assumption that landings would be made at high tide to minimise exposure on the beach. However, once ashore the troops faced devastating cross fire and suffered heavy casualties.

Bulldozers were transported to quickly build a ring road around Bayeux, thus avoiding an impassable pinch point and connecting to the wider original Roman road that ran from Paris to Cherbourg.

It was crucial to establish control of key crossing points like Pegasus Bridge on the Canal de Caen. These were largely manned by non-German conscripts who were not enthusiastic defenders, particularly when their German commanders were 'removed'. Troops flew in via six wooden Horsa gliders (actually made by MFI),

three of which landed within yards of Pegasus Bridge. Each carried up to 30 men of the Ox & Bucks Light Infantry, who quickly captured the bridges to limit a

German counter-attack and allow our men to move quickly inland from Sword Beach.

Mike created a vivid image of some of the other targets taken and also shared some special moments he experienced escorting tourists around the war cemeteries. One related to a teenager agreeing to play a saxophone requiem to her grandfather from the balcony of the memorial building, unknowingly on the anniversary of the death of her grandfather's best friend, whose headstone was within five yards of where she was playing.



michelmehay@avuedoiseau.com

### British ingenuity

In addition to the brilliance of the Mulberry Harbours, British experimentation and a 'make do and mend' approach contrasted with American armaments that were limited to specific roles. This led to some novel adaptations of tanks, known as 'Hobart's Funnies', after the military engineer Major General Sir Percy Hobart. Conversions included an amphibious model with a canvas flotation housing, a bridge deployer, a flail tank for clearing mines and a flame-thrower. The dropping of dummy parachutists, known as 'Rupert's', packed with fireworks, further confounded the enemy.

### Women of the Aylesbury Duck Industry 1820 to 1920

*Cynthia Floud writes:* We all think we know something about the Aylesbury Duck Industry, but Linda Henderson, a doctoral student at Exeter University, removed our misconceptions and replaced them with fascinating factual detail. She made the firm distinction between Stock Duck Breeders, usually men, and Duckling Rearers known as 'Duckers' – always women working as a sideline from December until June.

Stock ducks required outdoor space and access to water; the aim was to keep the birds laying throughout the



season. Eggs were sold to the Duckers for incubation in ovens or grandmothers' beds. Next came fattening for 8 to 10 weeks until they weighed between 5 and 7 lbs. The Duckers needed no outdoor space or access to ponds, as the ducklings didn't move anywhere, saving energy for fattening. They lived inside the cottages for warmth, stacked up the walls, given a little water and fed frequently on anything cheap. Some were given grain – Brian Burch's grandmother obtained hers from Scotsgrove Mill.

Finally, the Duckers washed the ducklings' feathers clean, as they were valuable too, before killing and plucking them. The birds were sent to London by road, rail or canal, to be sold as the supreme luxury meat for the gentry. The skilled work of these women was not usually recorded by census takers. 'Ducking' was more important to Haddenham than it appears from the records. Finally, there was reason behind the practice of thatching over the village's ponds: it prevented the ducks from being so frightened by storms that they stopped laying.

## Music Appreciation Group 2

The group is now enjoying monthly meetings in the new Committee Room at the Village Hall. The first post-Covid meeting led by Barry Wood was a fascinating study of the influences of jazz, typically improvised, on the work of the 'more serious' conventional composers. They were thus able to hear, for example, the work of Scott Joplin and Gershwin alongside pieces by Ravel and Stravinsky. Perhaps we should no longer pigeon-hole music? At the following meeting group leader Bernard Warner presented a wide variety of items from the vast catalogue of J S Bach.

The group would be delighted to welcome more members. A varied programme of music is promised from classical and opera to pop. You could present your favourites, or just listen and enjoy. If you are interested, please contact Bernard on 01844 296188 or [bernard.warner@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bernard.warner@hotmail.co.uk)



## Discussion Group 1

We are sorry that Tricia Hirst has decided to step down as leader of this group, which, until Covid intervened, was grateful for her unfailingly generous home hospitality and leadership. The good news is that we have an interim group leader in former u3a chairman, Peter Wenham, who says: "At last the group is able to reconvene in its new home in the Rosary Room of the Church of the Good Shepherd. We hope to continue with our monthly meetings on a regular basis, and would welcome one or two new members." For further information contact Peter at [apdwenham@gmail.com](mailto:apdwenham@gmail.com) or 01844 291932.



## Proposed Mindfulness Group

Jan Baker, who teaches yoga in the village, has a new proposition for members. At a cost to cover room hire, she is willing to offer members a short 'taster course' comprising three one-hour sessions over consecutive weeks. Jan tells us: "The Introduction to Mindfulness course gives a brief taste of both the practice and theory, in a format intended to be accessible to anyone new to mindfulness and keen to explore how it might support them personally in everyday life. The course is based on the [Oxford Mindfulness Centre](#) where you can find out more. Numbers will be limited, and there will be further sessions over the next few months if there is sufficient interest". To enrol for Jan's course, please contact her on 07969 779222 or email [janbakermindfulness@gmail.com](mailto:janbakermindfulness@gmail.com)

## Luncheon Groups

Annette Marsden writes: Do you enjoy having a meal you haven't had to prepare? Why not come along to one or both of the lunch groups and enjoy a couple of hours of pleasant company, interesting conversation and delicious food at one of our local establishments? The Friday Lunch Group meets on the third Friday of alternate months, and The Sunday Group meets on the fourth Sunday of the other months. Recent venues include *The Clifden Arms*, *The Three Crowns* and *The Black Horse*. We are looking forward to our next meals at *The Bottle and Glass*, *The Peacock* and *Villa Bianca*, Princes Risborough. More details from [annette.marsden@yahoo.com](mailto:annette.marsden@yahoo.com) or call 0796 422296.

## Gardening Group

After many successful years of running the Gardening Group, Doreen Barker has decided to stand down. Many thanks to Doreen for her dedication to this group, which has always been very popular. It would be a great shame if it didn't continue. It could be run by a small team of 2 or 3 people, and Doreen would be more than happy to show people the ropes. If you would like to know more, please call 01844 290377 or email Doreen at [twobarkers@btinternet.com](mailto:twobarkers@btinternet.com)

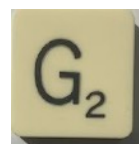
## Bowling Group

Michael Walden has kindly researched the possibility of resuming bowling if there is sufficient interest. The Aylesbury alley opens from 12 noon and a standard game is £9.45, with a significant discount of £4 each for quiet times in the early afternoon. The preferred days would be Tuesday or Wednesday.

If you are interested in bowling with the group, contact Michael at [mrwalden08@gmail.com](mailto:mrwalden08@gmail.com) or 01844 291617.

## Card & Board Games Group

Peter Gillespy took over as leader two months ago and has led the action with classics like *Solo* and *Scrabble* alongside the race game, *Hare and Tortoise* and the popular new railway building game, *Ticket to Ride*. Peter is serious about his games, and says: "I have always been a keen board games player. I have over fifty, old and new, just waiting to be tried out by the group! It would be great if new members could come along and join in. It doesn't matter if you don't know any of the games, as most are pretty easy to pick up". Meetings are on the fourth Thursday of each month. If you are interested, you can contact Peter at [peter@gillespy.plus.com](mailto:peter@gillespy.plus.com) or call him on 07914 006623.





## Out and about

### Strollers Group – sign up now

A few members decided recently that there were enough of them to start a new short distance walking group. Walks of approximately 3 miles will be on the first Friday morning of each month, with the option to stay for coffee or lunch afterwards. However, the first two diary dates are 20th May and 17th June. *Leader Jacquie Harland writes:* "Our first walk is circular and will start at Waterperry Gardens at 10.15 on Friday 20th May. If any other u3a members are interested in joining us for a stroll, we would love to hear from you to help establish this new group." Contact Jacquie Harland on 01844 291769 or [harlands@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:harlands@hotmail.co.uk)

### Walking Group 1

On a beautiful day in mid-March, Tony Barker and John Hawkins led a 5-mile walk from *The Three Locks* pub at Stoke Hammond on the Grand Union Canal.



Photo: Jerry Michell

After a gentle climb and some rather soggy patches the flat, dry woodland paths of Rushmere Park were an attractive sight, as was possibly the largest dragonfly in Buckinghamshire (see left).

Another gentle rise led to the village of Great Brickhill, with its

tiny triangular Three Trees village green. The Parliamentary Earl of Essex camped in the village for a month during the English Civil War, and billeted men in the timber-framed Cromwell's Cottages. The walk back down to the canal was rewarded with a view of the extensive renovation of the temporarily drained lock system, followed by a good meal at the pub.

### Long Distance Walking Group – new project

After a last minute cancellation due to atrocious weather in March, the group finally launched into its new project to walk the 86-mile Ridgeway. The plan developed by Edgar Skipsey is to walk from west to east in nine monthly stages. Seen opposite in April in front of Silbury Hill in Wiltshire, the group made a leisurely start, allowing them time to visit the 16th-century Avebury Manor and the 'henge' earthworks and stones, which date from around 2600 BC. Brian Bowman was able to provide archeological and historical knowledge, including that the land and manor were owned by the Keiller family of marmalade fame. Silbury Hill is the largest manmade prehistoric mound in Europe, comparable in size to some of the Egyptian pyramids. Nobody – not even Brian – really knows what its purpose was!



Photo: Neil Dury

Contact Neil Dury at [neil.dury@btinternet.com](mailto:neil.dury@btinternet.com) or on 07940 576088 if you are interested in joining this group. Transport logistics often limit our numbers but names can be put on stand-by on a waiting list.

### Our birthday trees and the Jubilee

Haddenham u3a was 20 years old last year. To mark the occasion the Committee decided to donate three black poplar trees to Snakemoor Nature Reserve. They have also been registered as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative to mark her Jubilee year. If you do visit the reserve, you will see the trees close to the stream – two not far from the giant willow and one further towards the station. The Snakemoor Volunteers have expressed their gratitude for our kind donation. Thank you also to the Parish Council for enabling the planting to be professionally supported by Aspire Community Works.



A commemorative sign is planned in due course. Above you can see several of the Committee in action, wielding spades rather in the manner of our own dear Queen!

### Is he crazy?

*Neil Dury writes:* In a mad, wild moment in the depths of winter, I decided to sign up to cycle 100 miles for charity, celebrating (eh?) my 75th birthday. The event is the London–Essex 100 on 29th May and as the day approaches I am in some trepidation. Most of my cycling this year has been around half that distance so I will be hoping the closed roads, the crowds and the other 25,000 cyclists will spur me on. But, wait for it, u3a members can also help me! I am once more raising sponsorship money for Target Ovarian Cancer. They work to improve early diagnosis, fund life-saving research and provide much-needed support to everyone impacted by ovarian cancer. If you would like to support this, do please visit [justgiving.com/Neil-Dury22](https://justgiving.com/Neil-Dury22)



## Points of order

### Committee news

We are delighted to welcome Janet Mills to the u3a Committee.

A 'Yorkshire lass', Janet moved from North East Derbyshire to Haddenham just a week before lockdown to be closer to family. Having joined both the History and Genealogy Groups, she says:

"Everyone has been so welcoming, and my husband and I now feel we are part of the village at last". The Committee will be reviewing roles and would like to remind you all that there are still vacancies for more members. If you would like to help shape the Haddenham u3a, contact Sally Lajalati or Elaine Parkes (contact details on our website).



### Opportunity to help a local charity

'Carrie', the Haddenham Community Vehicle, operates with a small team of trained volunteer drivers. From time to time it helps our members and is available to all with mobility issues. As demand increases, the committee is looking for more drivers to provide a safe and comfortable



door-to-door personal service for clients with mobility issues. This important work can be very fulfilling, with just a small investment of your time. The vehicle is an adapted VW Caddy automatic and training will be given in the transport and care of wheelchair passengers. If you would like to join the team, contact David Hammond on 07403 806171 [haddenhamcv@gmail.com](mailto:haddenhamcv@gmail.com)

### Subscriptions 2022-2023

Subscription renewals for 2022-23 were due on 1st April. Please renew your subscription by 31st May at the latest or your subscription will lapse. If you have any questions, contact Elaine Parkes at [membership@haddenhamu3a.co.uk](mailto:membership@haddenhamu3a.co.uk)

## Newsletter Survey results

Do you read the Newsletter?

Always 85%

Usually 10%

Not often 5%

Never 0%

What are you interested in? (number of responses)

Diary dates 127

General meetings 88

Out and about 67

Own interest group 62

How much of it do you read?

All or most 67%

Quick scan 20%

About half 8%

About a quarter 5%

What length would you prefer?

About right now 73%

Briefer 10%

Dates & Notices only 8%

Fewer articles 6%

What is your preferred frequency?

Quarterly 57%

Don't mind 28%

2 per year 10%

3 per year 5%

How often do you look at our website?

Monthly 33%

Quarterly 33%

Never 23%

Weekly 6%

Thank you to all those readers who completed the e-survey in April. We were staggered by the phenomenal response from a third of our total membership. We think it's fair to assume that this represents a fair sample of our newsletter readers.

***"The Newsletter is excellent and much appreciated. It has the right mix of facts and anecdotes – and cartoons. I actually look forward to receiving it."***

There were many kind comments, and a few whimsical, but the overwhelming majority (85%) said they always read it. Two thirds said they read most of it, with 87% interested in diary dates and 60% in the GM talks. Interest Groups news and the Out and about sections were also welcomed, in both cases by almost half of you.

***"It keeps me updated about things I have missed, forthcoming events and news about groups I might consider joining."***

***"I find the resumés of talks that I have missed interesting."***

73% were happy with the current length and around 85% were either happy with quarterly publication or didn't mind. We are grateful for this supportive feedback.

***"Would like more on interest groups if you can persuade leaders to provide the copy, and articles by members or a letters page."***

***"The website can be useful for checking information but no substitute for the newsletter for news and views"***

You can expect our next Newsletter in August. As ever, all contributions will be gratefully received, particularly from individuals or from Interest Group leaders with something to say that might appeal to our general readership.

**Editorial Team** Neil Dury | Jerry Michell | Elaine Parkes