

Report from the Chair

By Janet Mills

How time flies! It seems just two minutes ago we were compiling the summer newsletter.

Since then we have welcomed Dennis Atkinson (leader of the Pickleball and Table Tennis Groups) to the committee and more recently, Sue Heath. We have acknowledged the years of work of Kevin Nash who retired as leader of the Technical Interest Group and welcomed Mike Darnell and Peter Gillespie as the new leaders. Also retiring as a leader is Linda Axford from the Friday Lunch Group which will close altogether after the Christmas lunch as no one has volunteered to continue this popular activity. Sadly the Tuesday Walking Group lost Malcolm White who, with his wife Mary, ran the group for years. Our condolences and thanks go to Mary and we hope she will continue to enjoy the friendship of the walks. Tony Barker and Mike Darnell are the new leaders of the group. Marie Woodrow is retiring as leader of the Cycling Group, which she ran with the late Malcolm White. Jonathan Hawkins will be taking it on. Long may the group carry on cycling! We have had some lovely descriptions of their cycling holidays and adventures in the newsletters. Another long-standing leader, Paul Dickinson, is giving up leadership of the German Conversation Group but Mike Ridout will be taking over. Also retiring after five years as leader of the Writers' Group is Kevin Cheeseman but the group is continuing under a new leader, Paul Haworth. The new Bridge for Beginners Group is well established under the leadership of Vicki Ingram. We thank the retiring leaders for their hard work and wish the new leaders every success in their endeavours.

The General Meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of the month continue to be well attended, with visitors becoming members, and now the membership stands at 439. The members have got used to the new Village Hall parking arrangements, logging in their car registrations on the machine in the hall.

The speakers have been excellent again, covering a wide range of topics: how an elusive and relatively unknown British spy, Thomas Joseph Hendrick, confused the Nazis in WW2; an excellent explanation of how realistically hydrogen can and cannot be used to achieve zero carbon emissions; a colourful presentation of Canal History and Architecture that had the audience smiling at scenes on canals they knew well; and, in November, Amazing Frauds and Swindles. Imagine trying to sell the Eiffel Tower! We have learned how Christmas was celebrated in the past and have celebrated this year's with prosecco and cake to cheer us through the dark days, and soon it will be the New Year, 2026.

Did you see the display in the window at the library in September celebrating the National u3a Week? As usual, Haddenham u3a has supported the British Legion appeal and laid a wreath at the memorial and we dressed a tree for St Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival.

Fingers crossed the winter weather will not hinder any of our activities as we continue to

Learn, laugh, live with the u3a!



September Cycling Trip to Holland

By Marie Woodrow

Oh, the joys of cycling in Holland, the traffic free cycle paths, the pretty towns, the history, the art and the friendly Dutch people!

There were a few drawbacks of course, not least the forceful cold north wind which raced across the polders and seemed to be constantly against us, and the quaint cobbled streets which shook up every bone in our bodies. Keeping the group together through the busy streets of Rotterdam was a challenge, especially when the school day finished and the cycle paths were busy with extremely confident youngsters weaving their way home amongst us. But there was hot chocolate to be found in cosy cafes, only a little rain on the first day, and every afternoon we returned to our boat for a convivial evening and an excellent dinner.

We explored Dordrecht, Gorinchem, Utrecht, Gouda and Delft and some of us cycled to The Hague. There were so many different highlights. Some loved the varied architecture of the houses best, and some the 19 windmills at Kinderdijk.



Windmills at Kinderdijk

The vibrant market along the canal at Gouda was popular and the amazing engineering involved in building the dijks and draining the land fascinated us. Everyone loved Delft, of course with the Vermeer Centre and the Royal Delft factory being of particular interest, together with the two beautiful historic churches.

The Floating Farm in Rotterdam Harbour where happy cows produce milk and cheese was a fascinating experiment in alternative food production. I can also happily report that Noreen is not a witch as she bravely submitted to being weighed in Gouda and has a certificate to prove it!



Noreen on the Witches' Scale

We had thought that this foreign trip might be our last as we have now cycled all the major European rivers where we can do a boat and bike holiday, but we all had such a good time we immediately set about deciding what to do next.

Haddenham u3a want to give special thanks to Marie for her twenty years of leadership of the Cycling Group, with her co-leader, the late Malcolm White, and all the hard work that that entails.

Many people have enjoyed participating in the numerous holidays she has organised in this country and Europe.

Technical Interest Group Visit to Oxford Printers

By Jerry Michell

Holywell Press was founded at the end of the 19th century, where the great grandfather of the current managing director started a printing business in what is now one of Hertford College's buildings on Holywell Street. The company is still run by two generations of the Burrows family from a modern industrial unit near Osney Mead, which the Technical Interest Group visited on one of the first really wet days in October.

Holywell produces high quality print items, from flyers and brochures to hardback books and other bound products, some of which we were able to handle, as well as looking at examples of early printing technology. On the production floor, we watched as 8 tonnes of Heidelberg offset litho press modules successively transferred colour-separated artwork from lithographic aluminium plates wrapped around pressure rollers on to cut-paper sheets, and through the 4-colour process in one pass. The finished sheets were collated, folded, stapled and edge-trimmed by a linked series of automated machines, with finished booklets stacking neatly at the end – all carefully overseen by a machine-minder who gave a very detailed explanation of the process.



Ben Burrows with the Group in Front of the Press

Finally, in the design studio, we saw where original artwork is produced, although in these days of CTP (computer-to-plate) many customers provide print-ready artwork as computer files, usually tightly specified PDFs from high-end desktop publishing. However, all artwork has to be rigorously checked pre-production in the studio, where the one-time use plates are made. An impressive Xerox machine, considerably bigger than an office copier, is also used for rapid digital printing of shorter run jobs – state-of-the-art technology that is certainly worlds away from the wood-block letterpress and copper plates of the past.

Out with Friends

By Sally Lajalati



Brighton on a Summer's Day!

In true British fashion, the Out with Friends Group went on a summer seaside trip to Brighton. Nineteen of us boarded a coach at Fort End and off we went. Our first thought when we arrived was for some refreshments. Although fortunately it wasn't raining, it was blowing a gale and we had to hold on to our hats as we walked along the pier in search of a warming hot chocolate.

While some of us then opted for a visit to the Pavilion, some went for a stroll and shopping round The Lanes. And of course we made time for another British tradition, fish and chips. We finished our day sitting on the pier with an ice cream, the wind melting it quicker than we could mop up the drips!

A good day out thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Local History Group

By Janet Mills

Our meetings continue to be well attended and highlight just how much knowledge and expertise there is amongst our members who are happy to present talks on topics of interest, both local and more generally.

The summer walk from Hartwell to Cuddington along the River Thames explored the different features of the landscape, from evidence of earlier ridge and furrow farming practices to manmade follies such as the Summer House at the edge of the Waddesdon parkland and the Egyptian Well built over a natural spring and decorated with hieroglyphics at Hartwell.

This was followed by a talk on Anglo-Saxon churches in Buckinghamshire and beyond and a talk on the history of Haddenham Horticultural Society was illustrated by the transformation of black and white pictures into colour by the use of Artificial Intelligence.

The last talk for the year was about the development of grand gardens as we know them today, using emerging technology from the late 1600s onwards such as canal building, the steam engine and the use of steel and glass frameworks that gave us lakes and dams and the huge heated and ventilated glass houses of the nineteenth century, culminating in the Crystal Palace of 1851.

We look forward to another series of talks and visits in the New Year.

Movers Group

By Linda Page

Every Friday morning at 10am, in the Walter Rose room of the Village Hall, the Movers class swings into action to the dulcet tones of Frank Sinatra and Tom Jones, or jazz and even classical music as Linda Page whips the class into shape for a perfectly postured Christmas. No more grunting or groaning for us as we stand up for a toast to the King... we rise gracefully to our feet and... yes... fully controlled, back down again, with a smile on our faces!!



Aren't they a Lovely Lot!

Our keeping fit is peppered with laughs and fun. We use the chair for support for two thirds of the session, and work on strengthening muscles using weights of individual choice (or not), isolating body parts to increase flexibility, working on balance and improving posture.

I occasionally ask them to jog around the outside green space to warm up, but they have refused. I can't believe it... that wasn't the way I was brought up!

Seriously though, you are always welcome to join us for a trial session; we have a couple of male members and we would like some more!

German Conversation Group

Paul Dickinson is stepping down as leader of the German Conversation Group after twelve years. At one time Paul ran two groups!

Paul has been an exemplary leader, looking after the group with great care and boosting the numbers when necessary.

He will be sadly missed as leader but we are extremely grateful for all his hard work.

Haddenham Village Hall Parking

Please respect the Village Hall parking policy. It was brought in to address the problem of parking frequently not being available to genuine users of the Village Hall because of cars parked for reasons other than attendance at events in the hall or visitors to the Dental Surgery or FitLife. The policy has been strictly enforced to and there have been fines for noncompliance. There are many different groups using the hall every day and evenings in the week. There are no concessions.

Parking is allowed free for two hours for attendance at the hall. If more than two hours is needed, the car must be registered on the screen in the hall and not at FitLife. No re-admittance for parking is allowed within an hour of leaving.

We do not want to have to start paying for parking!

Diary Dates 2026

Tuesday 13th January – Two Men in a Boat Rowing Two Rivers by Martin Andrew.
A true life tale of jaunts down the rivers Severn and Loire.

Tuesday 10th February – Art, Science and the Unfeathered Bird by Katrina Van Grouw.
The link between Darwin's Theory of Evolution and selective breeding of domesticated animals.

Tuesday 10th March – The Saxophone and my Life as an Army Musician by Jon Woodhouse.
Jon had a varied musical career in Her Majesty's Lifeguard Band for twenty-five years.

Tuesday 14th April – Modernism in Metroland by Alison Bailey.
Metroland 1920's architecture was mainly "Tudorbethan" with exceptions such as a "modernist" house in Amersham

🌿 We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Healthy New Year 🌿



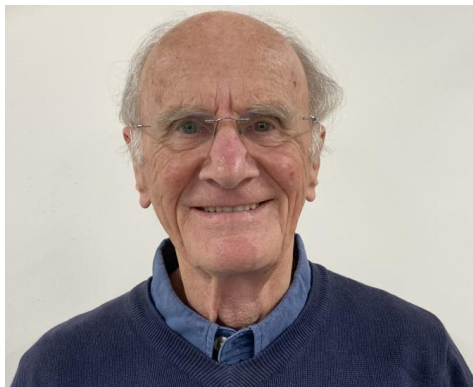
Christmas Tree Festival



Christmas Celebrations in the Village Hall



Co-opted Committee Members Sue Heath and Dennis Atkinson



Grateful thanks to all our contributors
and to:

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responsible for uploading to the website.

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newsletter out.

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Editorial Team

Janet Mills (Chairman of Haddenham u3a)
Annette Marsden (Publicity and
Newsletter Officer)

A New Year's Resolution for you!

To volunteer to help in the group activities you enjoy doing, for the chairs, catering and technical teams at General Meetings and, most of all, join the committee, for without the committee the activities cannot operate.