

Report from the Chair

By Janet Mills

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter.

Despite the inclement weather since Christmas, the group activities and General Meetings have continued to be well attended and there have been new members joining despite having just three months to go on this year's subscription, which by the way remains at £16 for the year 2026-27.

Unfortunately we have lost some members, including Garry May who was the leader of the Square Dancing Group and a regular contributor to the newsletter over the years.

The Theatre Group, led by Joy Dyson, will close after the last visit in May. If you want more theatre trips, you could volunteer to organise one. The committee is there to help.

The new Bridge For Beginners Group is very popular and the proposed Whisky Tasting Group is going ahead with a trip to a distillery, whilst still looking for additional members. See the details of these groups on the website: <http://haddenhamu3a.co.uk>

We have co-opted another member to the committee, Chris Foote, who will be elected formally at the AGM in May.

As always the speakers at the General Meetings have been entertaining and inspiring. In January there was the rowing jaunt down the rivers Severn and the Loire made by Martin Andrew and friend, a journey taking in historic towns, chateaux, impressive bridges, a wealth of wildlife and a few incidents, following the escapades of the fictional hero Horatio Hornblower.

In February we were inspired by the enthusiasm, determination and hard work of Katrina van Grouw to produce an illustrated natural science book 'The Unfeathered Bird' after many years of studying the muscles and bone structures of birds to understand their behaviours.

In March, Jon Woodhouse entertained the audience with his recollections of his 25 year career in Her Majesty's Lifeguards Band as a clarinetist and saxophonist playing at high profile functions, often on horseback! The audience hummed and tapped along to his renditions of favourite songs and some members were even persuaded to provide the percussion effects.

Best wishes

Janet Mills



Co-opted Committee Member Chris Foote

Haddenham u3a 25th Anniversary

Did you know that Haddenham u3a is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year? I didn't but then I have only lived in the village for 5 years. But I know there are many members who are natives of the village or who have lived here many years so of course you know when Haddenham u3a was founded, what it was like at the 10th, 15th and 20th anniversaries. For the incomers I have been doing some research and, thanks to Peter Wenham who did a summary in 2015 and Tony Barker who wrote an article in the November 2021 newsletter and perusing earlier newsletters stored on the website, I am able to give you a potted history of Haddenham u3a.

Haddenham u3a was formally established in 2001 by Rosemary Cashmore after an article she placed in the Bucks Herald brought responses from interested people who became the committee! Peter Wenham was one of the first and Mary Paterson's mum, Win Carslake, was another.

The first meeting was in July 2001 in the Walter Rose Room with about 25 attending. The subscription was £12.50 and the constitution based on the Third Age Trust model was adopted. Membership grew and by 2003 it stood at 115 and the interest groups included Gardening, Art, Music, Painting, Play Reading, Travel, Walking, Antiques and Bowling.

Peter writes "Haddenham u3a had been firmly established in two years and the main reason for this success was the determination and energy of our founder and first secretary, Rosemary Cashmore. The concept of each committee member having a specific role as well as overall responsibility for the organisation was firmly established. The assistance from Third Age Trust, the parent body was helpful and the realisation that we were part of a larger whole was at times reassuring."

Membership continued to grow steadily, peaking at 460 in 2019. Pressure of numbers prompted a move to the Youth & Community Centre (attached to the Junior School) for general meetings in 2005.

With the continued growth in membership and the limited size of the hall, two meetings each month became necessary by December 2012. The subscription was raised to £16 in April 2015 AND THERE IT HAS REMAINED TO THE PRESENT DAY! For operational reasons, in 2019 the committee decided to have one general meeting a month at the Village Hall. But then came COVID and the move was put on hold.

I moved to the village just at the beginning of the lockdown and was unaware of u3a and its meetings and interest groups until 2021 but I have looked back at the newsletters that were still produced by Neil Drury, Elaine Parkes and Jerry Michell and found that despite the lockdown people kept in touch and had successful meetings online.

Following the easing of the COVID restrictions, the first actual General Meeting took place in the Village Hall in August 2021. Shortly after this, my husband and I discovered Haddenham u3a through attending the September General Meeting. Having spent the lockdown weeks unable to say no more than 'Good Morning' to other residents on our daily walk in the village, my husband and I were able at last to get to know people and make friends by joining activities we enjoyed.

Since 2021 the interest groups have continued successfully and new ones have been started, including Pickleball and Bridge for Beginners. Table Tennis, Movers and Out with Friends are flourishing, trips have been organised to gardens and museums, and holidays have happened including to the D-Day Normandy Beaches and Cycling adventures to parts of the UK and Europe. Photos of many of these events are on the website.

Membership has steadily gone up to pre-COVID levels and the General Meetings are well attended.

Thank you Haddenham u3a for being there and congratulations for reaching your 25th Anniversary.

Some Memories since our 20th Anniversary



Walking at Hadrian's Wall 2021



Walking The Thames 2021



Technical Group Visit to the Postal Museum 2021



Past and Present Chairmen, 20th Anniversary 2021



Planting of 3 Black Poplar Trees at Snakemoor to commemorate our 20th Anniversary in 2021 and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022



Technical Group Visit to Waterside Theatre 2023



Winning Cake Coronation Celebration 2023



Coronation Tea 2023



Visit to D-Day Beaches, Normandy 2023



Places Visited in Normandy 2023



Ellesborough Silver Band, Christmas 2023



Christ Church Carol Concert & Dinner 2023



Christmas Tree Decorations from Interest Groups 2024



Cyclists in Netherlands 2025

Groups News

Sarah Darnell writes - Last October the Gardening Group were given a talk by a local lady about the history of an Arts and Crafts House and Garden and the area around it in Great Missenden. To my great surprise, this turned out to be the speaker's own home although I think a few of us might have guessed this.



Following the talk, she invited the group to visit her garden in February 2026 to look at her snowdrop display.

We went for the Snowdrop Walk on 18th February which, although a bit of a grey morning, there was no rain which made a change. Katharine, the owner of the house and garden, gave us a talk with images on a screen in the garden room of her lovely home prior to showing us around the garden. As a lot of you will know, snowdrop collectors are called Galanthophiles and Katharine was certainly one of these people as she has a large collection of specimen snowdrops and they were all clearly labelled. I won't pretend to be able to remember all of the names but the collection was displayed beautifully. Some of the groups of snowdrops were in the large rockery near the house and others were in a natural

looking woodland walk area at the back of the garden. Katharine was, of course, very knowledgeable on the subject and fielded all our questions very well. As well as the specimen collections, the driveway to the house had a grass border full of 'ordinary' snowdrops and she showed us the boxes of over a thousand more bulbs which were ready to plant to make the display in 2027 look even better. The garden is only open during the snowdrop season but I believe she opens the garden for a period every February under the NGS charitable openings.

The group were able to look around the rest of the garden although, it being February, there was not a lot to see. There were a few interesting plants in the greenhouse and then we went back into the house for coffee and cake or 'fika' and I gave Katharine our thanks for being such a wonderful and interesting host.

THE HADDENHAM HERALD

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With Thanks to Jenny Flaxton

Third Age Trust and Thames Valley Network Updates

Members of the u3a have access to a wide range of often free online talks, workshops and courses. Please check their websites for up to date information.

Coming up soon, for example:

www.u3a.org.uk/events

Richard Nixon – a truly complex man.

Thursday 16th April, 2:00pm on Zoom

"The Spruce Goose". Tuesday 5th May, 10:00am on Zoom

www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk

Pandemics! Monday 13th April, 10:30am. A ticketed talk on Zoom

Women in Intelligence. Tuesday 5th May, 2:00pm on Zoom

Subscription Renewal 2026 - 27

You will be pleased to know that the membership fee will remain unchanged at **£16** per person. We would be very grateful if you could renew your subscription as promptly as possible.

You can renew your subscription in the following ways

- Standing Order to **CAF Bank, Account Name: Haddenham U3A, Sort Code: 40-52-40, Account Number: 00021010**, the first payment to be made immediately and thereafter every year on 6th April. Please use your membership number as a reference and if making a joint payment please include both membership numbers.
- BACS Transfers should be made to **Account Name: Haddenham U3A, Sort Code: 40-52-40, Account Number: 00021010**, please include your Membership Number and surname as a reference. If you are making a joint payment, please include both membership numbers.
- Cheques should be made payable to **'Haddenham U3A', please write your membership number(s) on the back of the cheque.**
- Cheques should be sent to the Treasurer, Sally Logan, 12 Marriotts Lane, Haddenham, HP17 8BN.
- **We regret that we can no longer accept cash.**

If you still pay income tax, could you please consider gift aiding your subscription. This allows us to reclaim 25p for every pound of your subscription from HMRC. This helps to keep subscriptions at a low level. The Gift Aid Declaration is a very simple form and only requires you to fill in your name and address. You do not have to give any details of your tax affairs. Forms are available on our website or from the Membership Secretary.

If you have any questions please contact Elaine Parkes, the Membership Secretary, (membership@haddenhamu3a.co.uk).

Please let Elaine know if there are any changes in your personal details. It would also be very helpful if you could let Elaine know if you do not intend to renew your membership.

Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 14th April – **“Modernism in Metroland”** (Speaker Alison Bailey)

Tuesday 12th May – AGM followed by **“A Day in the Life of a Metropolitan Crime Scene Investigator”** (Speaker Hayley Scott)

Tuesday 9th June – **“Good News, Bad News”** (Speaker Bill Hamilton). Followed by celebrations for Haddenham u3a 25th Anniversary

Tuesday 14th July – **“Don’t Get Tricked! How to avoid Frauds & Scams and Safeguard your Home and Car”** (Speaker Ian Davidson)

Tuesday 11th August – **“Mysteries and Conundrums”** (Speaker Andy Smith)

Grateful thanks to all our contributors and to:

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From the newsletter team