

Chair: Michele Doran

Vice-Chair: Neal Goulborn

**Monthly General Meetings are held: via Zoom  
on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 2.30 pm**

## WELCOME TO YOUR DECEMBER NEWSLETTER.



2020 has been an 'interesting' year - but in ways we never imagined. The Covid 19 pandemic has re-shaped how we live our lives and how we do a lot of things. It will continue to do so after it has run its course.

Many of us lived through the last major event in our history that did this, and all of us have lived changes that it brought. We so-called Baby Boomers found ourselves in a world of opportunity – cheaper travel opening up the world to most people, a booming economy that made those holidays possible, major changes in working relationships and methods that brought careers to men and women that would not have been possible pre-war.

Yes, there were bumps along the way – industries lost, strikes and the rise of militant protest – but who would dispute that it led, by and large, to a fairer, more equal and comfortable society in the UK than any pre-1945 generation knew.

Winston Churchill said:

*'Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts.'*

It would be easy to feel that Covid has brought nothing but loss to our lives but who knows what the future will fashion for our children and grandchildren? Already we have seen huge strides in the role of technology, and truly heroic behaviour from people on behalf of others.

Christmas is a celebratory time. It reminds us of a promise that no-one is truly alone: that the past is just a memory and the future is an unknown so today is what we should cherish and focus our energies on. Christmas reminds us to look outside of our normal selves and routines - all around us are examples of love, caring and renewal, even if you have to wade through the weeds to see the new shoots!

At HVu3a we have missed each other during this difficult time and whilst meetings and groups have been limited, we have continued to look for ways to run and support as many activities as possible. As we move towards 2021 remember we are all stronger with the support of others – give it and take it and we will all emerge from this able to embrace life fully again.

We wish you all the happiest and healthiest Christmas you can have at this time and a brighter new year to look forward to.

**Michele and all the Committee**



## MEMBERS' SECTION



Calling all keen knitters. HoneyPot Children's Charity needs volunteers to make the bees they sell to raise funds. If you would like to help them, please let Michele Doran know and she will arrange for a copy of the pattern to be sent to you. (Actual size much smaller than in photo!)

There is also a crochet pattern available.

For those of you who missed the excellent talk by Viv Carter at the last general meeting, HoneyPot provides an opportunity for child carers to have time away from being carers - or, more importantly, an opportunity for child carers to just be children. They work with schools, parents and Social Services to give child carers something they cannot get any other way. And, like most charities this year, they are feeling the effects of the Covid pandemic on their normal fund-raising. So every one of the bees provided will be much appreciated.

### Membership Survey

Thank you to all the members who took part by completing our survey. Just over a third of the membership returned a completed survey, with about half of those coming through the online form. It is fully appreciated that it wasn't easy for some and to those that advised me of practical difficulties, I thank you for giving it a go, even if you were unable to complete.

It is also recognised that this sort of request is pretty rare within our later lives and that the breadth of IT knowledge/skill and compatible devices is unlikely to be spread uniformly across our wider membership. Some of you let me know they wouldn't take part, but there's absolutely no need to feel uncomfortable if this wasn't you, as we've achieved a good-sized sample, whose responses are representative of the whole of the Hamble Valley u3a.

Picking out just a couple of standout points from the results that, are as yet to be fully validated and analysed.

- Over two thirds of the responses were submitted by members who have been with the HVu3a for four, or more years.
- While before the March 2020 lockdown a good 20% of those who responded were part of four, or more interest groups with 60% of responders enjoying one, or two groups each. After the relaxation in June 2020 those still able to enjoy one, or two groups each rose to 80% and only 6% were still enjoying four, or more.
- I'm aware that Q 2 had a fundamental flaw in not having a "zero" response option, if we recast the responses by adding in those that couldn't answer this question, due to the flaw, 36% were probably reduced to having no active groups, 51% were in one, or two and only 3% continued to enjoy four, or more groups.
- As well as further group suggestions, we also have some good suggestions from you on how to improve our communications through the website and, possibly, Facebook that would point out the opportunities that exist for those wishing to do more in the present situation. Those media are already receiving attention and your views may colour what we do there. We're also grateful to those who've let us know that they're sitting tight at this difficult time, but will re-emerge when it's safe to do so.

We'll now look to complete the checking of the consolidated responses and make a report to the Committee, which we'll make available to the membership after its review.

## WEBSITE UPDATE

Our website is an important part of our communication with you, the members, particularly in these difficult times, but also acts as a shop window for potential members. It provides information about who and where we are, what we offer and how to contact us.

We are in the process of bringing the information held on the website up to date. The general meeting speaker programme has already been updated and we are wanting to bring other information up-to-date **AND WE NEED YOUR HELP.**

**Group Contacts** - please check the information held about your group(s) on the website and notify our Groups Coordinator, Alison Baker of any changes needed.

**All Members** - if you have pictures of any U3A activity that you are happy to share with the general public, we would like to receive them to update our gallery. If you do send in any images please include a title for each. For more information or to submit any images, please contact:-

Alex Ross  
or  
Neal Goulborn

### Monthly Group Meeting Talks

Tuesday, 8 December 2020

**Dr Bob France – The Butler’s Christmas**

Bob will talk to us in the character of John Dine, Petworth’s ancient butler. He will tell us how dramatically Christmas changed from his Georgian youth to late Victorian times.

Tuesday, 12 January 2021

**Captain Noel Becket – Ships and Shipping of the Solent**

Noel is a Master Mariner and a Southampton Pilot, authorized to pilot any ship that visits Southampton. He will talk about his life as a pilot and the hazards that can be encountered in the Solent.

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

**Kevin Little – A Fisherman’s Tale**

Kevin was been a fishmonger at The Smelly Alley Fish Company in Reading for 54 years and given his talk about the joys of fish in Schools, Colleges and at Eat Reading. Today he will give us an amusing illustrated talk about the trials and tribulations of a fishmonger in dealing with official bodies and the public

*Please note that all presentations will be via Zoom until further notice. If you have not done so already, please let Michele know that you want to participate and she will send you the link. She is also prepared to help with queries from people who have not yet had experience of Zoom. It is quite straightforward when you know how so please don't miss out on our excellent speakers!*

## News About Groups

Thank you to all the Group Contacts who have updated me on the current status of their groups. It is reassuring to hear that so many group members have been in touch with each other by some means and lots of you are finding ways of keeping your group active. Our Website is currently being updated and you'll find more detail there.

### Are you looking to join a new group?

Please let me know if you would like to join any existing group. *If a group is full, we will add you to a waiting list. In the meantime you may be able to join individual meetings (if current members are temporarily unavailable). If there is enough interest another group can be started.*

### Do you have an interest that isn't currently catered for?

Please let me know - we will advertise for others with similar interests and a new group can be formed.

### These groups are actively looking for new members:

- Photography (currently Zoom)
- Walk Group (hopefully will soon resume, socially distanced)
- Gentle Exercise (currently Zoom)
- Computers and Home Technology Online (Zoom)
- Quiz (Zoom)

### **Alison Baker**



The Golf group had really taken off just as Lockdown 2 began. We are now preparing to resume as from Dec 4<sup>th</sup>. We have 9 members and would be happy for more to join us. As we tee off in groups of 4 or less we will not be breaking any rules currently. If you are interested to know more, please contact Mike Bennett

**Have you or your group been doing something, gone somewhere, experienced anything, had some thoughts about anything that has happened to you, that would interest, or help and/or bring a smile to the faces of other members of HVU3A? If so, email the Editor**

**Contributions will appear in the Members' Section as emails. Some editing may be necessary but will be checked with the author before publication. Email addresses will be with-held in line with safe-guarding guidelines unless the author particularly requests publication of their email address in relation to the published email from them.**

