



Chairman's Bulletin – 7 February 2023

For most people, February is a depressing month. However, I have always looked forward to it, mainly I suspect, because it is my birthday month. When I was younger the anticipation of presents towards the end of the month was the lure; now it is seeing the daffodils appear in gardens and along the roadsides. I can always tell whether it has been a mild winter or not – the daffs in my garden are the weathervane. Are they going to be out for my birthday or not? This year they are only beginning to poke their heads through the soil; we will need some Mediterranean weather for them to be out in two weeks' time and I doubt that is on the cards.

However, just seeing the daffs in the shops makes me smile and being of an optimistic nature, however, I feel I can say that Spring is round the corner.

We have started off this year with two excellent talks, one on Bletchley Park and the other one on 'The Way to Compostela.' Later this year we are going to try and organise a visit to Bletchley and Mike, who gave the talk, has offered to guide us round. I'm afraid we can't offer a visit to Compostela, much as we would like to! Let's hope we can keep up the standard of the first couple of talks. You will see we have a good variety of subjects on offer in the coming months.

As you will see from further on in this bulletin, we are in need of a new Treasurer from October. Plenty of time for you to think about it. If we can't find a Treasurer, we can't continue, so please seriously think about it.

Please don't forget that you can always find details of all our future events and 21 groups on our website <https://u3asites.org.uk/harpenden/home>.

All the best for February

Viv (01582 766147)

Members' News

This month we are delighted to welcome **Cheryl Leavold, David Evans, Anne Spencer** and **Sandra Addleman** as new members. We also welcome back **Linda Evans** whose move to the south coast has fallen through. I hope you all enjoy your membership and we look forward to meeting you.

Dates for Your Diary

Below is the programme of General Meetings up to the beginning of May. They will all take place in the Trust Hall, opposite the Plough and Harrow, at 2.15 on the dates shown. Whereas the Speaker Meetings have a talk by a visiting speaker, Members' Afternoons have a shorter talk by one of our own members, followed by time for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat.

16th February **Speaker Meeting – 'Welcome to my World',** a talk by **William French**, butler to the Royal Family and Stars

2nd March **Members Afternoon** – a short talk by our member, **Derek Morris**, on 'Diplomats at Work'

16th March **Speaker Meeting – 'William Morris and the Arts and Craft Movement'** This talk will be given by **Mark Lewis**. Mark is a freelance artist, designer, silversmith and semi-retired university lecturer.

30th March **New Members' Meeting** (by invitation only)

4th April **Harpenden Seniors' Fair** – 10.30–1.30 at the Eric Morecambe Centre

6th April **Members Afternoon** – Our Vice Chairman, **Roger Thompson**, will give a short presentation on '**The History of the BBC as it turns 100**'

20th April **Speaker Meeting – Bobbie Darbyshire** will give a light hearted, informative talk on '**Where do novelists get their ideas from?**' Bobbie is a prize-winning author of four novels. She has much life experience to draw upon having worked as a barmaid, mushroom picker, film extra, maths coach, cabinet minister's

private secretary, care assistant and volunteer adult-literacy teacher, as well as in social research and government policy.

4th May

Coronation Celebration

CAN YOU HELP? TREASURER NEEDED

At our next AGM in October, our Treasure has to retire. Graham has done a brilliant job over the past six years but our Constitution says that he must stand down after this period. Could you take over from him? If you think you may have the time and the skills necessary, could you please contact either Viv, Roger or Graham to discuss what is involved. Please think about this seriously as without a Treasurer we would be unable to continue and would have to close down.

GROUP NEWS

Reading Groups At the end of last year we started a second reading group but its success means that it is already full. It looks as if we will need to start up a **third** reading group before too long and if you would be interested in this please email me.

History Group Group Leader, Roger Thompson, says: 'The next meeting of the History Group will be held on Tuesday, 14th February at 2.30 and as usual will be held in the Randall Room at the Harpenden Trust Halls. All are welcome. A £1 contribution towards the cost of the room charge is requested.

'The subject of the presentation will be ' **The Exercise of American Power after World War 2**'. The presentation will be given by our member Mick Nolan and I am, in particular, very pleased to welcome Mick, as this will be his first talk to our Group.'

Walking Group Almost two years ago, Tessa Abberley started up our very successful Walking Group which has grown considerably from its original five members. Tessa has now moved a short distance away and although she continues as a member, she has handed over the organisation of the group to Hugh Fricker.

Many thanks to Tessa for being the lynchpin of this successful group and many thanks too to Hugh for taking it over. You can contact Hugh on 01582 767999.

Last Summer, the East of England Trustee, Barbara Cordina, contacted all the groups in her area asking them to take part in an exercise to commemorate 2022's **u3a week**. She asked for contributions from all the region's Walking groups and for them to send her details and photos of any walks they took part in last September. These contributions have been made into a booklet of walks in the East of England region. Our Walkers took part in this and you can see a copy of the booklet on the noticeboard table at meetings.

Prospective Science Group Since our General Science group failed to rise from the ashes of the pandemic, there have been occasional enquiries about a science group but not enough to get one started. We would need at least five people to show interest. Please let me know if you could be interested.

Of course, science is a very broad subject and the group may decide what to concentrate on – it will be up to you.

NATIONAL U3A ZOOM LEARNING EVENTS

As part of the programme provided by the u3a nationally, all members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership!

Most of these opportunities are presented by members themselves; sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement or from well-known speakers. You can find further details on <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>. If you are interested in any of the subjects, I suggest you book soon as these talks are very popular. Until the middle of March, the subjects include the following:

Mindfulness and Meditation; The Highway Code Changes, One Year On; Yiddish Theatre Abroad; The Neurological Condition Prosopagnosia; Climate Change – A Narrow Path Away from the Brink; An Introduction to Pilates; Brain, Pain and Anaesthetics; For The Love of a Woman by William Holman Hunt; The Climate Crisis – and Some Solutions; Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners (6 session course); Life on the Edge: the dawn of Quantum Biology.