

## Chairman's Bulletin – 7 October 2023

This is my 21<sup>st</sup> Chairman's Bulletin – and my last, as I will be handing over to the next Chairman at the AGM later this month. We started the bulletin in early 2021 during lockdown to keep in touch with our members while nothing much else seemed to be going on (it was; under the surface, the Committee were paddling like mad). That seems such a while ago now but the bulletin has been a real success and no one can get away now with saying they don't know what's going on at Harpenden u3a!

Our membership has increased substantially during the past year and so has the number of our Interest Groups. We are always willing to start new groups – the more the merrier, so if you have any ideas for another group, please let me know and I will pass these on to the new committee. We still have a Play Reading group and an Astronomy group on the back burner but haven't enough members to start them up yet. And we are still hoping that someone will be prepared to organise our Theatre Group again although with the high seat prices, rising rail fares and ongoing train strikes, this might not be viable any more. Even the cost of tickets at the out-of-London theatres has risen considerably unless you sit so far away you can't see!

Despite the hard work and trying to keep things going during the pandemic, I have enjoyed being your Chairman and I wish the next Chairman and Committee well. There will be some new blood on the Committee which can only be a good thing. I shall be pleased to be able to meet and chat with you – without any responsibility – in future!

All the best to you all.

Viv

### **Members' News**

This month we welcome eight new members – **Kay Bateson, Gordon Chambers, Mary Coakley, Josephine Klein, Melanie Leigh, Anne Pyke, Eric Peters and Tina Scott.** I hope you enjoy your membership.

## **Dates for Your Diary**

Below is the programme of General Meetings until the end of February. Unless otherwise stated, they will all take place in the **Trust Hall**, opposite the Plough and Harrow, at **2.15** on the dates shown. The Speaker Meetings have a talk by a visiting speaker, while the Members' Afternoons have a shorter talk by one of our own members, with time afterwards for a cup of tea/coffee, a biscuit and a chat.

<b>19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>'Harpenden Village' by David Keen</b> from the <b>Harpenden Local History Society</b> followed by our <b>Annual General Meeting</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> November</b>	<b>Members' Afternoon, Derek Morris</b> on <b>'The Early Life of Captain Cook'</b>
<b>16<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>Speaker Meeting – 'MI9 – Secret Escape Lines Across Europe in WW2'</b> – welcome return visit by <b>Helen Fry</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>Christmas Social</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Members' Afternoon, Chris Marsden</b> on <b>'The History and Future of Journalism'</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Speaker Meeting – "The White Mouse: Nancy Wake"</b> by <b>Paul Barwick</b> . This is the story of WW2 spy Nancy Wake, a remarkable woman who lived with the daily threat of death for almost 5 years to help shorten the war for the Allies. Her incredible courage and strength of purpose is an awe-inspiring tale of resolve and bravery. Paul spent 34 years in the Police in many different areas, including counter-terrorism. He retired in 2018.
<b>1<sup>st</sup> February</b>	<b>Members' Afternoon, Tony Owen</b> with <b>'A Journey through Cambodia and Laos'</b> .
<b>15<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<b>Speaker Meeting – 'Sheep over the Bridge'</b> by <b>Murray Craig</b> , former Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court, City of London. A talk about the Freedom of the City of London.
<b>7<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Members' Afternoon, Barbara Cordina</b> will talk about her three years as <b>u3a East of England Trustee</b>

## **Subscription Reminder**

There are still some members who have not yet renewed their membership for 2023–24. This was due on 1<sup>st</sup> August so we would be grateful to receive it as soon as possible. If you don't wish to renew, please let Alan Thomas, our Membership Secretary know so that you won't be hassled for payment.

Please don't forget to return your membership form to Alan when you renew your membership. This is needed as we must check we have all the correct and up-to-date details for each member – a GDPR requirement. Secondly, it gives us a contact name and telephone number in case of any emergency. Finally, by signing the form each year it ensures that each member complies with and accepts the conditions of membership of the u3a.

## **New Groups**

Our two new groups, the **Poetry Group** and the **Latin Group** have now both held their first meetings which have gone really well. And the second **Needlecraft Group** is about to have its first get-together over a cup of coffee.

At their inaugural meeting, the **Poetry Group** discussed three poems by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century rural poet, John Clare. Their next meeting will be on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> October at 2pm. The subject this time will be the American poet, Billy Collins. Further details from **Steve French** on 07713 252958.

The **Latin Group** is using a textbook about Minimus, a little mouse who lives at Hadrian's Wall. The book is geared towards 7–11-year-olds – just perfect to get our little grey cells working again from distant memories of 'O' levels 50 or 60 years ago. Interested? Please contact **Shona Shahryar** on 07740 777695.

**Needlecraft 2** will be meeting for the first time on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> October. Please contact **Judith Moseley** on 07593 579415 for further details.

## **Group News**

**History Group** – The next History Group Presentation will be on the 10th October at 2.30, in the Randall Room at the Harpenden Trust Hall. The subject will be 'James II and William of Orange' and the presenter will be Malcolm Rainbow. As usual, there will be a levy of £1 to cover the cost of the room hire. Contact – **Roger Thompson** on 01582 620811

**Gardening Group** – We are thinking of starting up a second Gardening Group. If you are interested in discussing gardening with like-minded people including occasional visits to garden centres or gardens open to the public, please contact me, **Viv Chandler** at [viv.vchandler@gmail.com](mailto:viv.vchandler@gmail.com). We'll take it from there.

## **u3a Main Website – Online Learning Events**

Below is the list of the Third Age Trust's FREE online learning events for the month of October and early November. These are open to all our members. Please visit [www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events](http://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events) if you see anything that interests you. The talks planned for October include: Into the Mind of an Artist – Van Gogh; Laughter Yoga; Maths – Two Number Patterns; Live Cookery Demonstration on Autumn Recipes; Exploring World Faiths – Faith and Slavery; Meditation and Mindfulness; Family History – Why the Whole Family Matters; The Story of Britain told through Coins; Future Lives – Tips and Tricks to Keeping our Minds Healthy; An Introduction to Astronomy; Science Network – Forensic DNA and The Apollo Programme; Fashions Dumping Ground; the rags to riches story of Sir Thomas Lipton.

## **Third Age Matters Magazine**

Although, at present, TAM magazine is only sent to Committee members and Group Leaders, it may be possible for members to pay extra on top of their sub if they would like to receive a copy. There are five issues a year. If you are interested, please contact **Viv**.