



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION TO THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

I was elected to the position of the Chairman of Harpenden u3a some six weeks ago and my goodness the time has flown by, with so much to learn and to do with my time.

Since the beginning of November, one of the most pleasant tasks I have had to do is to welcome 8 new members to the u3a, a very significant and welcome increase.

Their names are:

Daphne Fisher, Alan and Lesly Tree, Jenny Mottram, Richard Knights, Anne Cripps, Helen Veitch and Richard Bowser

.... and so a very warm welcome to them all. I have appreciated the opportunity to speak to all of these new members. I have had the opportunity to welcome them to the Harpenden u3a and to talk with them about what our u3a Groups and Meetings can offer.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

On the **14th December**, we are holding our Annual Christmas Party, and am looking forward to a very enjoyable and lively event.

On the **4th January**, we have a talk by **Chris Marsden**, the Group Leader of the 'Hot Issues' Group. His presentation will be on the subject of '*The History and Future of Journalism*', a very topical subject!

On the **18th January**, our guest speaker will be **Paul Barwick**, with the subject being the '*White Mouse, Nancy Wake*', who joined the French Resistance, and became secret agent with the Special Operations Executive.

The talks as usual begin at **2.15 p.m.**

I look forward to meeting you again at the above events, and I also wish to extend Christmas Greetings to you all.

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BEWARE – DON'T GET SCAMMED!

This is a warning to take very seriously. We have heard of three of our members being scammed out of considerable amounts of money. Luckily, they have got their money back after a very stressful time.

What was common to all three was how cross they were with themselves for falling for the scammers. However, in each case, whether it was a phone call or an email the circumstances seemed so plausible that they shouldn't blame themselves.

So, **please do not ever give any details** via email or over the phone even if you think the phone call is from your bank; it won't be. And **please do not transfer money** to someone you know who has asked for you to help out in an emergency – it won't be from your friend.

These scammers are getting very clever.

Please be very careful, especially now in the lead-up to Christmas. Don't forget to delete or check if something appears unusual or doesn't seem quite right.

U3a ONLINE EVENTS

Click here to see what's on! - [Link to u3a online events](#)

You'll be surprised at what you may find!

NEW GROUPS - COULD THIS BE YOU?



There is a growing interest in forming a **German Conversation** group.

If you did German at school, would you like to speak it again? Would you like to share your thoughts in a different language? Do you want to extend your interest in other languages?

To add your name to the list of group members contact **Brian Ball** on ballbrian193@gmail.com.



There is, also, a growing interest in forming a second **Creative Writing** group. If you've always had an urge to write short stories, poems or even a novel, this group is ideal for you.

To add your name to the list of group members contact **Brian Ball** on ballbrian193@gmail.com.

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NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Many thanks to all the group leaders who have supplied copy for this Newsletter.

For more information about Harpenden u3a Groups and Group Leaders click [here](#)

BOOK GROUP 2 - STEVE GLEDHILL (07785 381912)



Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month from 12 noon. We have now reached our maximum membership of twelve. If you would like to help with forming a new group please contact **Steve Gledhill** who set up the current group and can give advice. Contact by email on steve.gledhill@outlook.com or 07785 381912.

SCIENCE AND TECH GROUP - DAVID COLLINS (07775 571756)



The Science and Tech Group were delighted and dazzled by Steve Gledhill's presentation on the satellites designed and built in the United Kingdom.

We learnt about the astonishing range of data sensed and transmitted by satellites, from wind profiles and ocean wave heights to atmospheric smoke pollution, and their deployment in planetary exploration and many other areas of critical science.

Steve's presentation included several fascinating videos produced by the European Space Agency and others. The debate which followed included discussions on GPS, Climate Change and global weather forecasting.

SPANISH CONVERSATION – AN UPDATE



The Spanish group continues to flourish, and we have had to close our membership as we have 12 regular participants. Our sessions include presentations delivered by members, in Spanish, on a wide range of topics such as Bullfighting, Politics in Uruguay in the 70's, The Environment and many more.

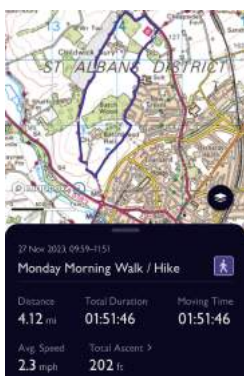
These presentations lead to lively discussions on these topics and beyond.

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Are you a Spanish speaker? If so, consider starting a second u3a Spanish group as we know of several others who have expressed interest in joining. Our current group members would be happy to offer any guidance on setting up a second group. The arrangements can be as you wish re frequency and length of meetings, location, etc. **Give me, Rosemary, a call on 07443 425826** to find out more.

We use email but also have a WhatsApp group which we find most useful for short communications between group members. We don't always check emails regularly (well, I don't) but somehow we all pick up WhatsApp messages quickly. It's an excellent tool for groups such as ours.

WALKING GROUP - HUGH FRICKER (07506 260579)



The group has now had its final walk of 2023 (see map), and we look forward to starting again on **8th January**.

New members will be very welcome.

LATIN GROUP - SHONA SHARYAR (07740 777695)



The recently formed Latin group got off to a good start this Autumn. Meeting on the First Wednesday of the month, we are enjoying reviving our Latin language skills, using the Minimus course by Barbara Bell. Less 'amo, amas, amat, more' Oh, I remember that!

POETRY GROUP - STEVE FRENCH (07713 252958)



We have now had three meetings and have looked at poems by *John Clare*, *Billy Collins* and *Seamus Heaney*. Much fun was had by all! We meet on the last Friday of the month - our next meeting is on **Friday 26th January** when we will be looking at the poems of *Thomas Hardy*.

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CURRENT AFFAIRS GROUP



When you look out at this wonderful world with its beautiful people and crazy wars, do you know what's going on? Or is it all rather confusing?

Either way, whether you can benefit us with your knowledge, or want to try to develop your understanding, you're welcome to join us, as we investigate the stories that make up "The News".

Our next meeting is on the **19th December** (as usual the 3rd Tuesday of the month) in the Randall Room at the Harpenden Trust Hall in Southdown. Doors open at 2.15 pm for setting up. We start the meeting at 2.30 and end by 4.00.

Further info from Mick Nolan at micknolangalway@btinternet.com.

HISTORY GROUP- ROGER THOMPSON (01582 620811)



Very recently, History Group members were circulated with details of the first 4 presentations in 2024.

I now circulate the information to all members about these talks, so that those interested in a particular topic could join a meeting if they so wished. They would be very welcome.

On **January 9th**, there will be a talk by **Derek Morris**: '*Challenging Stereotypes of 18th century London*'.

On **February 13th**, the talk by **Terry Turner** will be: '*In the Shadow of the Workhouse*'.

On **March 12th**, a talk by **Malcolm Rainbow** on '*The Crimean War*'

On **April 9th**, a talk by **Steve French** on '*The Spanish Civil War*'.

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Next newsletter - **Thursday 4th January 2024**

ROGER THOMPSON

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE

SEASONAL GREETINGS TO ONE AND ALL!

