



Chairman's Bulletin

Welcome to the November Newsletter and my first one, having been elected Chairman of the Harpenden U3A only two weeks ago.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to be Chairman of such a flourishing organisation. I certainly wish to pay compliments to Viv Chandler, the retiring Chairman, for her hard work and commitment in helping to make this the case. I am determined to ensure that Harpenden u3a continues to be a forward-thinking and positive organisation, that current members continue to stay in and enjoy what the u3a offers, and that more people decide to join us. Also, we must ensure that our current number of groups is maintained and new groups develop.

In 2022 /23, our membership was about 190 and currently the total is about 220. A very pleasant increase for us to build on. This month we welcome some new members (see below) and I hope they enjoy their membership of the Harpenden U3A.

As usual, the Bulletin contains News from Groups and also 'Dates for your Diary'.

I must mention that we have received notification from the Harpenden Local History Society, that the Official Opening of the Harpenden Museum will take place on **Saturday 20 April 2024**, when the History Society will have the complete use of the Eric Morecombe Centre on that day. David Keen, the Chairman of the Local History Society was of course the guest speaker at our recent AGM, when he spoke of 'Harpenden as a Village'.

In my new Chairman's role, I am looking forward to meeting as many members as possible in the near future.

My good wishes to you all.

Roger Thompson

New Members

We would like to welcome our new members - **Judy Claridge, Nicky Wilcox, Martin Collins** and **Michael Clark**.

News from the Groups

Church and Pub Group - Roger Fox (07768695916)

There are suggestions for trips to be organised to Flamstead Church, Sandridge Church, and to St Albans Cathedral. We hope to be making visits in December, February, and April. These will need to be coordinated with the people identified as being able to act as guides, and identifying suitable locations for lunch afterwards.

Dates have yet to be fixed for these, and work on this is expected to start once the British Legion Poppy appeal is over (and funds counted).

Please would u3a members look out for Poppy sellers and support them with donations.

Harpenden U3A Current Affairs Group

Why has the world got to the state it's in now? And where are we headed?

If you've got views on these questions, perhaps you'd like to join us! We meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month in the Randall Room at the

Harpenden Trust Hall in Southdown. Doors open at 2.15 for setting up. We start the meeting at 2.30 and end by 4.00.

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

The u3a Scrabble Group

The u3a Scrabble Group meets fortnightly in each others' homes by mutual agreement. Membership currently totals 7 so we vary the location according to expected attendance. Some are experienced players, others not so, but the group is friendly and supportive with the aim of everyone enjoying themselves. Some players provide transport, others are willing scorers, and some host - so the responsibility is shared around. We all look forward to 'play-days' with a couple of games, a break for coffee and catch-up chat.

Joyce Bunting at joycebunting@btinternet.com

Reading Group 1 Jean Rapier at jean@beejay5.plus.com

I have written a brief summary of recent books we have read.

“Malibu Rising” is written by *Taylor Jenkins Reed* and set on the coast of sunny California (a welcome change from rainy old Britain). It tells the story of a family whose father becomes a Hollywood star, and leaves a trail of broken marriages behind him. We felt sympathy for his first wife, and all his children. The ending was wildly dramatic and we decided it would soon be made into a TV series.

We are currently reading ***“The Survivors”*** by *Jane Harper*. Set in Tasmania, we have a study of guilt and remorse versus the wish for vengeance. By chance, this is also by the sea, but the weather isn't as good, the ocean can be dangerous, and Antarctica lies to the South. Our next book will be set in Victorian England, and definitely inland.

Harpenden u3a second book group - Steve Gledhill

(steve.gledhill@outlook.com or 07785 381912)

Harpenden u3a second book group recently celebrated its first anniversary. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month in The Engineer in Southdown from 12 noon. Members discuss their reactions to the current book for an hour and optionally stay on and continue discussions and have a light lunch and a drink.

The November book is non-fiction '*Wilding*' by *Isabella Tree*. The December book will be '*The Gate of Angels*' by *Penelope Fitzgerald*. There will be a Christmas Lunch in The Engineer for all members.

Membership has grown throughout the year and is now twelve. This means that if anyone now applies to join they will sadly be turned away. If you would like to help with forming a third group please contact Steve Gledhill who set up the current group and can give advice.

The Science and Technology Group - David Collins (07775 571756)

The Science and Technology Group was entertained and engaged by David Evans' talk on "The Importance of the Public Perception of Science". A lively debate followed, because everyone had strong views on the subject, and many ideas were proposed for improving both the public's understanding of science and their support for it.

History Group - Roger Thompson (01582 620811)

The next History Group meeting is to be held on November 14th at 2.30pm in the Harpenden Trust Hall.

A presentation will be made by Geoff Cunnington and the title is "**Grand Fleet Lives: Royal Navy Sailors's Postcards in the First World War**"

As usual, there will be a £1 charge levied to pay for the hire of the room. All are welcome.

Could this be YOU?

There is a possibility of a new German Group (two interested so far) - are you interested or prepared to put your hand up to lead it?

Would you be happy to organise a new Play Reading Group (seven members are interested)?

Some members have been asking whether we are going to restart the Theatre Group that we ran before COVID-19. Sadly the gentleman who ran the group is no longer with us.

If any of these opportunities is of interest - please contact Brian Ball at ballbrian193@gmail.com or 07751667551.

Dates for your Diary

Thursday 16th November - "Secret Escape Lines Across Europe in World War Two" a welcome return visit by Helen Fry.

Please note this is a **2.00pm start**.

Thursday 30th November - Watch your emails!

U3a Learning Events - do YOU make the most of these?

u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership!

There is something for everyone! Click here for full information:

<https://mailchi.mp/u3a/em-november-23-national-events-newsletter-2234252?e=82977c3906>

Next bulletin - **Monday 4th December**