

HASLEMERE MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHAIRMAN – JOCK GARDNER



I am writing to you all for the first time as Chairman and would like to introduce myself to you.

I moved to Haslemere some twenty years ago, when I was then working as a civil servant in Portsmouth, having previously enjoyed a thirty-year career in the Royal Navy. After leaving the civil service, I gave a talk to Haslemere u3a and upon joining

the organisation as a Member, I founded a new book group where we studied non-fiction books. Over two years on, it is a lively forum where we learn a great deal but, just as importantly, we thoroughly enjoy the subjects and consequent discussions. We do laugh a lot too!

I also became a founder member of the Railway Study Group, where we visit sites of both historical and contemporary interest, ranging from Queen Victoria's private branch line in Gosport to the new Elizabeth line in London. The Wine Appreciation Group, to which I also belong, has produced some of the biggest turnouts, approaching ten per cent of the membership. In addition to u3a I am also a volunteer at the Coultershaw Beam Pump south of Petworth and conduct Marine Mammal Surveys in the English Channel.

I must now note the sterling work of my predecessor, Allen Chubb, in navigating Haslemere u3a through the difficult waters of the Covid pandemic, from almost complete shutdown to guiding Members through Zoom meetings – both monthly speakers and some groups – and back to near normality. That Haslemere u3a is now of the same size as two years ago speaks volumes and I happen to know that not all branches have been so fortunate. Thank you, Allen.

Turning now to look ahead, it would be good to see Haslemere u3a a few years ahead being as healthy and vibrant as it is now. This can come about in two ways: membership growth and activity enlargement. On the membership front it is necessary to recruit purely to stand still. Inevitably for various reasons, some existing members will leave, but it would be good to think that growth will happen.

Illustratively, one of the classic American golfers once sank a very long putt. "That was lucky," a spectator noted. The golfer responded, "The more I practice, the luckier I get!" Similarly with growth, it won't just happen by itself. You, as a satisfied enthusiastic member are by far the best recommendation for joining Haslemere u3a. On activity enlargement, for now, just give some thought as to which of your current or potential interests might lead you to form a new group or enlarge an existing one.

Having been through – we hope – the pandemic and embarking on a period of recession and austerity for the immediate future, it would be only too easy to adopt a desire to withdraw from external pursuits. On the contrary, it is suggested, now is the very time to pursue existing interests and perhaps initiate new ones. Good for Haslemere u3a and, more importantly, good for you.

Lastly, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and hope to meet you at our Christmas Party on Monday, December 12th at 1.30pm!

Best wishes, Jock



MEET YOUR NEW COMMITTEE!

Back row (left to right); Elizabeth Nuttall (Treasurer), Lorna Wright (Groups Co-ordinator), Diana Serman (Accommodation Secretary), Kim Bergamasco (Vice Chairman), Judith Forde (Membership Secretary). Front row: Mandy Blanks (Secretary), Jock Gardner (Chairman) and Debbie Bowyer (Publicity Secretary).

FABULOUS TURNOUT FOR THE AGM AND NOVEMBER SPEAKER!



Over 150 members attended the Annual General Meeting of Haslemere u3a and enjoyed a fascinating talk from Haslemere Resident, Captain Andrew Canale MVO, RN who, apart from a successful career in the Royal Navy, served as equerry to Her Majesty the Queen and marched alongside her coffin at the State Funeral. Members generously donated to the RNRMC charity and raised £200 – thank you!

BASIC LIFE SUPPORT TRAINING



Seventeen Members attended this very worthwhile two-hour course and learnt about Adult basic life support training and instruction in the management of choking, anaphylaxis and haemorrhage.

David Lee, the instructor, demonstrated the recovery position – with the help of his willing assistant! – together with cardiac massage and assisted breathing with a compliant

dummy. Members had a chance to practice on each other and on the dummies - with suitable masks provided of course!

Factoid: Within 30 seconds to one minute of total lack of oxygen your brain will stop working and you will become unconscious. Within five minutes, the cells of the cerebral cortex will start to die and never recover and within 20 minutes, the brain will be so severely damaged, that you will never breathe again.....

On a more cheerful note!.... Members got to see how defibrillators work and had instructions on how to use an Epi-pen in the event of someone having an anaphylactic attack. Everyone got a certificate of attendance at the end of the afternoon. The next course is planned for Wednesday 18th January in the Wesley Room at the Methodist Church on Weyhill from 2-4pm. For more details or to sign up, please go to the u3a website and click on the First Aid Group where you will find contact details for the Group Leader.

JANUARY SPEAKER – “WE MADE A MUSEUM!” with TONY FURSE
Monday, 9th January, 2.00pm at Haslemere Hall.

Early in 2002, a group of St. Albans residents decided that the signal box at the end of their road had been left to decay for 25 years too many. It could surely be put to better use than a pigeon nesting box (they got through the cracks in the boards). So, they looked at possibilities resulting in a determination to save the Grade 2 listed signal box as the only other alternative was to let it disintegrate. It was also discovered that the box had a rare 1906 Midland Railway “tumbler” interlocking lever frame.

In order to accomplish this goal, a Building Preservation Trust was formed. As a registered charity, it has been awarded grants which have enabled the lease of the signal box from Network Rail and its restoration.

This talk, given by Tony Furse, who has been active in the project for many years, will give the history of the line, the place of the St. Albans South signal box in it and the effort of converting it into a working educational museum.

SHORT MAT BOWLS GROUP ARE RECRUITING!



Good news! The Short Mat Bowls Group no longer has a waiting list for members and would love to recruit a few more group members for regular play and enjoyable games at the Edge Leisure Centre, Woolmer Hill on Saturday mornings between 10am and Noon. The group have quite a few bowls sets, so members do not need to

have their own bowls - all that's required are suitable flat soled shoes and bags of enthusiasm!

Don't worry if you have never played before, Group leaders Brian and Leo are there to help with the finer aspects of the game. You are likely to be playing triples, which is two teams of 3 and you take turns to bowl down a 40ft mat and the team with the maximum number of bowls near the yellow jack wins.

More information is provided in the u3a Haslemere website under Groups/Short Mat Bowls. If you are interested to join, please do contact the Group Leader.

TRAIN TRIP TO SWINDON!

The Rail Research Group recently enjoyed a trip to the Swindon Steam Museum where they learnt a lot about the development of the Great



Western Railway and steam engines in particular. The journey there and back by train enabled them to experience three very different trains, ranging from the most up to date to units nearing the end of their lives, so to speak.

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS!!

Memories are unique to each individual and rightly treasured. Here are Diana Serman, our Accommodation Secretary's memories and recollections of the 1966 World Cup Final Day.....

"In 1966 I was 23 and working at Hopcroft's Holt Hotel, an inn halfway between Oxford and Banbury. The restaurant staff were mainly Italian with one or two from Spain and one local English lad. The foreign workers 'lived in', upstairs in tiny bedrooms; some had their wives with them and they were employed as chambermaids. They had the use of a communal sitting room next to the kitchen. It was furnished with ageing brown sofas, a large worn square of carpet and, in a corner, a black and white television which was always on.



There was loud vociferous discussion on the morning of the World Cup Final – then lunchtime came. The farming community regulars were ready for lunch as usual in the dining room which was on the other side of the kitchen, but the staff could not be extracted from their over-crowded

smoke-filled sitting room watching the match on TV. No-one could be heard anyway above the shouts, cheers and jeers, so neither threats nor pleas from the manager, nor others less interested in the outcome and more concerned about their jobs, had any noticeable impact. The fact that the chef was German and manfully continued alone with kitchen tasks, added to the general mayhem. He was taller than everyone else, so could rush to stand in the smoky doorway to get the score from time to time. It was a truly enlightening few hours for me - unexpectedly introduced to the beautiful game and caught up in a multi-lingual explosion of emotion!"

If you have a memory of a special event you would like to share with Haslemere u3a, please email Debbie Bowyer, our Publicity Secretary – publicity@haslemereu3a.co.uk



CHRISTMAS CHARITIES FAIR

Jock Gardner, our new Chairman, met the Haslemere Mayor, Jacquie Keen and her Mayoral Consort, John Robini, at November's annual Charities Fair at Haslemere Hall, which was very well attended. The u3a had a prominent recruitment stall and enjoyed talking to several people about the society and

its various activity groups which caused much interest and new members being signed up!

WEBSITE UPDATE.....

The u3a website has been largely restored since its crash, but there are a number of things that still need sorting out. Please bear with us and it will be 100% fixed very soon.

PLEASE SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!



We always welcome your photos for our Facebook page and, of course, the Newsletter to promote Members having fun and enjoying the wide range of u3a activities. Please email your photos to Judith, our Social Media Co-ordinator, via our website contact page. Thank you.

