

## HASLEMERE MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

### FEBRUARY 2024

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Dear All,

Winter moves on. We have experienced cold and storms, but the days are lengthening. A bit early yet perhaps for some of our u3a outdoor activities but there is plenty to keep us occupied.

February's speaker will follow January's on a nautical theme and this will be continued with our first excursion of the year which is going to Greenwich Maritime Museum. There should be news of further outings shortly. There is also notice of our next quiz later in this Newsletter.

***Yours ever, Jock***

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#### **U3A FEBRUARY 2024 SPEAKER – MONDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2.00pm** **@ HASLEMERE HALL – BRIAN LAVERY: LIFE IN NELSON'S NAVY**



The Royal Navy in Lord Nelson's day was by far the most effective force of its kind in the world, but the public image is of brutal officers, flogging, and men dragged on board by the press gang. This talk will look at the reality, at the skills and daily life of those on board, and how they performed in the battles they fought. Mainly based on diaries, letters, and official documents, the talk will show a typical ship's life from a point of view of both officers and men, and occasionally women!

Brian Lavery studied at Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities. He began to write books in the 1970s and worked at Chatham Historic Dockyard and the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, where he is currently a Curator Emeritus. He has experience in sailing yachts and traditional ships and though he is best known for his work on sailing ships of the seventeenth to nineteenth century, he has also published several books on nineteenth and twentieth century ships and navies. He was consultant regarding the ship *Susan Constant* of 1607 which founded Virginia, the film *Master and Commander* and the TV series *Empire of the Seas*.

## ENJOY A TRIP TO GREENWICH!

The new Excursions Secretary, David Lee, has organised a u3a visit to the Maritime Museum and Royal Naval College in Greenwich on **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March**.

“The museum does guided tours for groups of 25 at a maximum, so I will be taking 50 people on this excursion,” said David. “The tour will visit the Museum in the morning with free time for lunch and we will go to the Royal Naval College in the afternoon.

We will be leaving at 8.30am with pick-ups at Hindhead and Haslemere and returning at approximately 6pm. The cost of the visit, including transport costs, will be £50 per head excluding meals, drinks etc. This excursion is for Haslemere U3A members only.”

“Send your applications directly to me via Excursions Secretary on the U3a Website - please do not send any payment until I have confirmed that I have you on my list! I will then make arrangements with you for payments, etc. If there are more applicants than spaces available, I may arrange a second trip to the museum and Naval College at a future date, numbers permitting.

Also, for the past years we have thoroughly enjoyed a visit to the Albert Hall in December for the Rutter Christmas Concert and I am delighted to say that I have now acquired 60 tickets already for our excursion in December 2024. More details to follow.”

## SPOTLIGHT ON GROUPS

### LOCAL HISTORY SESSION



Although deviating from its usual brief, the U3A local history group had a real treat for their January meeting. Moving temporarily to a new venue at the Grayswood Club, they welcomed a local speaker and saw at first hand the incredible artistic talents of Ian Stewart. U3A member, Mary Stewart, accompanied her husband who has had a distinguished career in design and gained an international reputation as a designer in such places as South Africa and Canada, as well as in Britain. He studied at the Glasgow School of Art and his first job was designing packaging for whisky in his native Scotland.

With his fame in later years being designing medals and coins, he showed us the very heavy steel which has the design engraved on them and we saw the exquisite pen and ink drawings created after much research into the history of the medal concerned. Using a very fine nib these were incredibly detailed and, for the parts which would be raised on the final etched design, he used pointillism with small black dots. Ian produced loads of examples of the medals themselves which were quite superb. Among these were those representing the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary, which were actually made in gold, silver and bronze. Another celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Armada of 1588. The Captain of one of the ships involved lived in West Wittering, whose local councillors commissioned a special medallion for the occasion.

Another important design commemorates the first UK fleet sailing out to Australia in 1787 with approximately 1500 personnel on board, including a few women. Two hundred years later a plaque in Portsmouth, unveiled by HM The Queen, depicted Ian's design of the obverse of the medallion. Others celebrated the 40th anniversary of the proclamation of the State of Israel (1948-1988) and events in Macau, Hongkong and there was even a medal to honour widows of the Royal Irish Regiment.

As well as the medals and some coins, there was an album which contained other wonderful examples of Ian's craft – some beautifully carved honours boards, specially commissioned furniture with a theme of the sea, carved lecterns – the list is endless. Three major works are Memorial sculptures at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, near Lichfield - one in green granite to honour National Servicemen, one in black granite for the Queen Alexandra Nursing Corps and the most recent, dedicated in 2014 for the Normandy Campaign. Ian also worked with Grayshott Pottery to produce the tiled illustration of the Normandy Beaches which is part of the memorial.

As well as talking and showing the drawings and medals, Ian identified some of the medals that Members had brought along to the meeting. His family publishes a regular magazine dealing with medals and coins and copies were handed out to those who wanted them. Everyone was amazed that a local man could produce such extraordinary depictions of events which were of national importance and it truly was an honour to hear and see Ian's presentation, with Mary adding greatly to her husband's story.

## **POETRY CORNER**

Poetry Corner is a friendly group with a common enthusiasm for poetry. The group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month in central Haslemere from 2.30-4.30pm. The Group began 7 years ago and have enjoyed learning about a huge range of poets of many nationalities, going way back in time to the Tang Dynasty and the Anglo-Saxon poem Beowulf right up to the present day Twitter (or should we now say X!) poet Brian Bilston.

In between, they've looked at old favourites like Ted Hughes, Oscar Wilde and Philip Larkin and discovered some amazing poets previously unknown to them such as Vicki Feaver, Helen Dunmore and Fleur Adcock. The tea and biscuits





break has always an important part of their meetings, giving everyone a chance to catch up with the news and to get to know new members better.

At the moment, the Group is full. If you would like to go on the waiting list, please contact the Group via the organiser on the Poetry Corner u3a webpage. You don't need to know a lot about poetry, just being a poetry fan is quite enough!

## **AMBLING IN NORTHCHAPEL**



Recently, Yvonne Coonan led twelve members of the Ambling Group on a lovely walk at the Frith, Northchapel. Although it was rather wet and muddy almost everywhere, Members were lucky with the weather and enjoyed the morning sunshine. This was a lovely walk of about 3 miles with beautiful views of the countryside - but unfortunately a little early for the snowdrops this year! An excellent lunch was enjoyed afterwards at The Mulberry in Chiddingfold.



## **DANCING FOR FUN & FITNESS**

Over 20 u3a Members enjoyed a lively Friday morning in the Haslemere Hall annexe recently, dancing around with both choreographed and freestyle moves with Colin Sherlock, the u3a's renowned Quiz Master. Dancing for Fun & Fitness is suitable for all levels and embraces both disco and popular music every other Friday. The next session is on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February from 11.00am to midday - so come and join the Group and let's get moving to music!

## **GENTLE JIVERS GROUP**



The first Gentle Jivers session saw 17 u3a Members enjoying 90 minutes of dancing guided by enthusiastic helpers, teachers and demonstrators! Basic jive steps were taught, making up a routine and then Members practised their moves to fabulous, uplifting music. The emphasis of this new course is fun and enjoyment and total beginners are most welcome. There is no need to bring a partner, but you can, of course, if you want to!

The Group have now organised for a number of experienced dancers to be available to dance with and help Members who are new/newish to jiving! The Gentle Jivers will meet every Wednesday at the Haslemere Hall Annexe from 1.00pm – 2.30pm and the entry cost is just £2pp. If you cannot get in through the front door of Haslemere Hall, then turn right and go around the corner where you can enter the annexe from the side.

### **NEW MEMBERS! A very warm u3a welcome to:**

Morgan Reid, Wendy Holliday, Hilke Searle, Joanna Tones, Hugh Olson, Rachel Windibank, Helen Hudgell, Timothy Chapman, Amanda Hodson, Edward Crofton, Anne Edmonds, Charles Duckworth, Sue Bastiani, Derek Bastiani, Margaret Williamson, Philip Miller, Sally Frederick

## **LET'S GET QUIZZICAL!**



The next u3a General Knowledge Quiz will be on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March and held at Our Lady of Lourdes Church Hall, on the corner of Derby Road and Weydown Road in the heart of Haslemere. This popular quiz evening will be again run by legendary Quizmaster, Colin Sherlock and there will be prizes for the winning team.

Doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start and the entry fee is £5.00pp – cash or card accepted. Teams are up to six and non-

Members are very welcome to join you for this fun and friendly Quiz Night. Please book your place(s) via the u3a website – [www.u3asites.org.uk/haslemere](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/haslemere) - under 'contact Chairman' so that we can know the numbers expected.

There will not be a bar available, so please bring your own drinks and snacks. Parking is available for 25 cars at the back of the Church and on Weydown Road and Derby Road. A highly enjoyable evening awaits, so come and exercise your little grey cells and Let's Get Quizzical!!

## **DATE FOR YOUR DIARY – MARCH SPEAKER: ANITA EBDON**



Anita Ebdon specialises in falconry experiences with hawk walks and talks with her various birds of prey and will be our u3a March Speaker on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March at 2.00pm at Haslemere Hall.

Anita has had a life-long interest in birds and, in addition to her team of Harris Hawks, she also has a barn owl, a kestrel and a buzzard. Over the course of her talk, she will cover many fascinating insights into the Hawks, such as their place in the environment, what and how they hunt, their eyesight, natural behaviour and pack dynamics.

Harris Hawks are a New World raptor species and one of the only known birds of prey that continually live, hunt and breed within a family unit, similar to the dynamics of a wolf pack. These hawks possess a calm and even temperament and, once trained, will happily free fly and interact safely with members of the public.

**PLEASE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT IF YOU HAVE A FEATHER ALLERGY OR ARE BIRD-PHOBIC, IT IS ADVISED THAT YOU SHOULD NOT ATTEND THIS MEETING.**

**SOCIAL CLIP BADGES FOR MEMBERS** - Some Members will have seen or received a small social clip badge at various Group meetings or events. They are for any Member who wants one and wearing one is, of course, *completely optional!* The idea is for Members to wear them at Group meetings where they might not know everyone, as well as events such as the AGM, Speakers Meetings, Quizzes, Enrolment Day, the Christmas Prosecco Party etc.

They are very effective icebreakers, making it easier to recognise and welcome other Members, Diana Serman, the Accommodation Secretary, has a file with badges already made up and she will bring them to all such meetings. She hopes Members will tell her, ideally by email via the website, if they would like a badge for themselves and it should be ready for them to collect at the next u3a event they attend.

**SHARE YOUR NEWS AND GROUP PHOTOS!** We are always very interested to hear Members news. If you would like to share your news, please email [publicity@haslemereu3a.co.uk](mailto:publicity@haslemereu3a.co.uk) We also need Group photos for our Facebook page and indeed for the monthly Newsletter! Please email these to Judith, our Social Media Co-ordinator via our website page – Thank you!

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