

The logo for u3a, consisting of the letters 'u3a' in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

High Wycombe
& District

Spring Newsletter

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dear members,

Spring is in the air - we can hear the birds singing and flowers poking through the dead leaves on our flower beds (or is that just mine?).

On the Committee we have been attending Zoom training for our Beacon database. The Group Convenors met together at Naphill and were able to discuss the Siteworks website and how Beacon can help them to communicate with members of their group.

In the Autumn I dropped into the Writing for Pleasure group and was made very welcome. It was so interesting to listen to the stories they had written including an ongoing saga.

I joined the Walking group on a walk to the Canadian Airmens' war memorial in Lane End on a sunny Monday in January. They are a friendly chatty group, and I walked further than I would have on my own.

It is great to know that our u3a membership is increasing. At the end of March there is an opportunity for our new members to meet the Convenors and the Committee in a relaxed atmosphere. It will be great to hear how they 'found' u3a and we hope they will share their enjoyment with friends.

For your information at High Wycombe u3a visitors are entitled to attend one general meeting and one interest group before they pay their subscription to join us. We have a policy that 'carers/companions' do not need to pay a subscription if the member would be unable to attend without their support.

Wishing you a Happy Easter, which falls late this year.

Best wishes
Rosemary

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SECRETARY

The Spring brings some new brooms. Organisational changes continue for the Third Age Trust (our head office). The 4 newly elected Board Trustees have been announced. Also, our Trust Council member for the South East Region wants to build a team of volunteers to improve communications with local u3as, with the public and with members. If you are interested in joining her team let me know and I will pass on her details. You may not be aware that every year u3a members have the chance to attend local universities for regional summer schools. For example, this year the South East Summer School is at the University of Chichester in August. Find out more on the Trust website u3a.org.uk.

Our local Thames Valley Network of u3as (u3atvnetwork.org.uk) continues to provide talks (some on Zoom) and events you are entitled to join. There is a free monthly quiz, and scheduled talks include *AI* (on 30 April), *Photography* (on 14 May) and *Petra, the Rose City* (on 3 June, Jill Evers).

A reminder that our own Annual General Meeting will be in May; the notice is in this newsletter. As always, we are hoping for some new brooms ourselves to bring in fresh ideas and help keep things running smoothly. If committee work does not appeal, all our Committee members and Convenors would appreciate a deputy, so please don't hesitate.

Enjoy the sunshine – when available.

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PUBLICITY & EVENTS



We attended our final public event of 2024 at the **High Wycombe Christmas Lights Switch-on** in November. Thanks to the generous support from members with donations, and 6 volunteer helpers on the day, not to mention good weather, it was a great success. The tombola and sales made £248 which was put towards the purchase of a large speaker and microphones for improving the sound in halls. While our publicity was good, recruitment of members was disappointing, so we will not be repeating the tombola stall in 2025. Our focus this year will be on attracting new members.

Advertising continues with articles in local village magazines, and with new Facebook links added to local village pages following a suggestion at the Convenors' meeting. Our display upstairs in the Wycombe Library is reduced to one cabinet only now following considerable interest over the past year. The top glass cabinet is being refreshed periodically by the team.

New for this year: we intend to visit some retirement homes to advertise our u3a. In addition, we will again be at the *Hughenden Church Flower Festival* on the August Bank Holiday weekend. This time we want to show-case individual members' crafts and enter a flower display. If you can contribute, especially if you are a keen flower arranger, your team needs you. Do let us know.

At Christmas we plan to take part in the *Christmas Tree Festival* in Wycombe Parish Church. More of that after the summer. Talking of summer, we hope to repeat our popular informal *picnic* in the Wycombe Museum grounds in June or July. Another chance to see how our anniversary tree is doing.

Many members are taking up the offer from Eden Centre of the **Silver Series** free events. On one Monday each month up to November they are providing a coffee, cinema or crafts session. Contact Eden customer services [01494 768068] for details of locations and timings and to book your place(s).

ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES

What a wet, gloomy winter we have had - just the time to do some fire-side antiques! U3A member Marion Brown kindly donated some books to our group, 'Millers Antiques Guide', 'The Care and Repair of Antiques' and 'The Antique Dealers Pocketbook', all lovely books to dip into.

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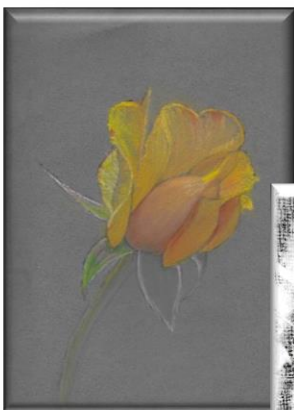
When you read this, we should just have returned from our trip to West Street, Dorking, where there is a plethora of antique shops to



browse. Our next meeting on the 22nd April will stretch our memories back to identify 'What is it?', followed on the 27th May by Jeff Rozelaar telling us about his lifetime of collecting. By then we will have reached mid-summer, and a trip to National Trust property 'Basildon Park' on the 24th June - providing there is no filming taking place at the time!

Enjoy the Spring and if you are interested in joining our group, please let me know, you would be very welcome.

ART GROUP



We will all very much miss our recently deceased friend. He was a quiet but enthusiastic member of our group and he enjoyed both the tasks and the company. A couple of his recent artworks are included here.

Although there was no meeting in December, the subjects we have covered since the last newsletter were colourful beasts and perspective. I provide references but members are encouraged to find their own. We then discuss possible themes that we would like to explore in the future so ideas spring from the group as well as from the convenor.

BIRD WATCHING

Our meetings, held on the second Monday of the month and starting at 10am, usually last about 2 hours and are followed by an optional pub lunch. We are always very keen to welcome new members to our group and would stress that no prior expertise is required. We are always happy to share our knowledge and to help novices get the best out of joining.

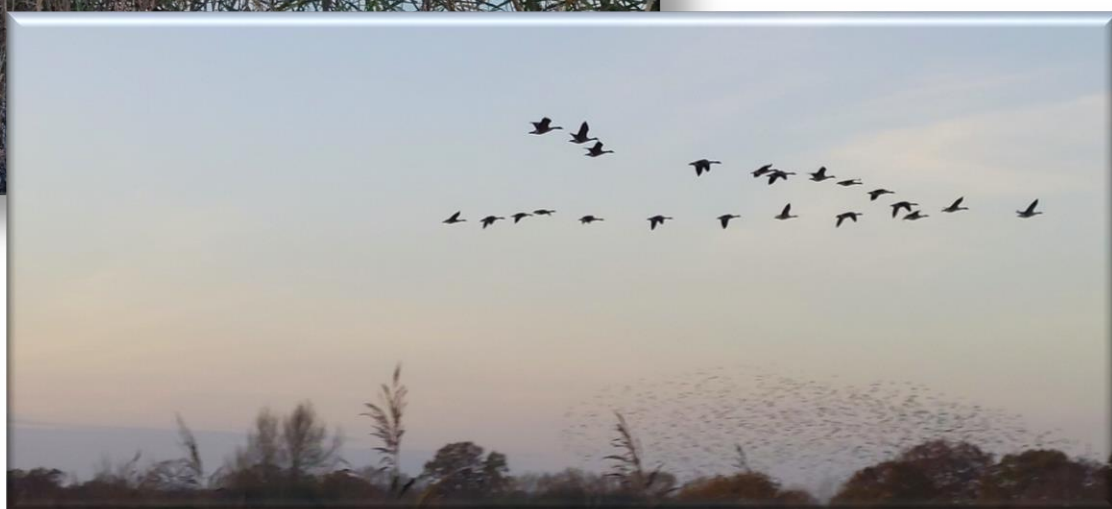
We have around eight regular birdwatching sites which are within 45 minutes 'drive of High Wycombe and occasionally make longer trips that are further afield.



Some highlights since the last newsletter:

In November ten of us met at RSPB Otmoor for a very enjoyable and successful visit to watch the starling murmurations at dusk. Despite the rapidly failing light we were able to see and hear 21 different types of bird, which happily included about half a million starlings!! (It felt like that many anyway!)

In January it was good to



have a group of 15 members at Denham Country Park and what a great way to start the year, with temperatures above zero on a bright sunny morning.

Our upcoming programme is as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| April 14 th | Stockers Lake, Rickmansworth |
| May 12 th | RSPB Otmoor, Oxfordshire |
| June 9 th | Lodge Hill, Bledlow |
| June 25 th | College Lake, nr.Tring (an extra visit as the reserve is closed on Mondays) |
| July 14 th | Marlow gravel pits, Little Marlow |
| August 11 th | Jubilee River, Dorney |

We are excited to be planning a whole day outing to Pagham Harbour in early October!

For more information and updates check out our group page on the HWu3a website at:

<https://highwycombe.u3asite.uk>

COMPUTER GROUP



After our January winter break, we focused on mobile phones in February with an emphasis on the iPhone. Thanks to our new projector, which allows a mobile phone to connect and be projected onto a screen, our computer group member, Steve S, gave us a live tour of the iPhone. Steve provided plenty of explanations, hints, and tips, stimulating much feedback from the audience.

Much like the classic debate - *were you a Beatles or Rolling Stones fan?* the choice between iPhone and Android can divide opinions. Users of each system tend to be fiercely loyal to their preferred phone or tablet. However, Steve kept both camps engaged with his clear explanations of iOS and his

demonstration of its many features.

After our break Mike continued the mobile phone theme with two videos. The first explored the technology behind making a phone call while the second featured an interactive graph comparing mobile phone sales from 1979 to 2014. The meeting took on the excitement of a horse race as different mobile phones vied for the top spot.

At the time of writing, for our March meeting, Mike is planning a similar presentation this time focusing on Android-based mobile phones.

As we move into spring, I hope to explore the history of computing, operating systems and perhaps more biographies of notable people in the history of computing.

If you're interested in joining the Computer group for a free taster session, you're very welcome to visit Naphill Village Hall at 10 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month.

For further details, please visit our webpage on the High Wycombe u3a website (Google "High Wycombe u3a")

CROQUET

The new 2025 season starts on the 2nd April and will end 29th Oct.

The lawns are booked for our normal playing times 10.30 am until 12.30 pm every Wednesday. The aim of the game is to win. But that is not the be all... We play for pleasure, to have fun and conversation with like-minded people. We do observe the rules of croquet but don't rigidly enforce them all the time. This leeway allows us to have a more relaxed and less contentious game!

At the time of writing there are no places available for this year, as I will, probably, have a full complement continuing from 2024.

However, if you are interested in trying out this really enjoyable game (opportunities do arise week by week) or joining the waiting list, please get in touch.



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DISCOVERING ART



In November we visited the National Portrait Gallery; the coach dropped us just opposite, so convenient! Most people spent a very enjoyable time there, but a few, myself included, walked round the corner to visit the National Gallery, and visit their most popular exhibition ever, titled Van Gogh: Poets and Lovers.

For our December meeting we had an excellent presentation by Christa Webba on Emil Nolde, the German-Danish painter and printmaker. He was one of the first Expressionists, and was one of the first oil painting and watercolour painters of the early 20th century to explore colour. His vibrant, beautiful compositions really lifted the spirits in those dull days.



January followed with what has become our annual quiz set by one of our members, quizmaster, David Brown. The categories were Portraits, Landscapes and Galleries. If there was some trepidation by some members when we first set this up a few years ago, that has since disappeared and people look forward to it, knowing that they will be in for a really enjoyable time, participating in small groups. I also contributed in a smaller way by seeing if people could recognise a painting from a small detail, all of which I had photographed in the National Gallery.

As it was London's National Gallery's 200th anniversary last year I showed a video titled *My National Gallery* in which a number of people whose lives have been touched by this place – from a security guard (who I actually met last year!) to the director, everyday visitors and some celebrities including Michael Palin and Terry Gilliam, all of whom let us into their deeply personal connection with this great gallery. There was also quite a bit about the history of this gallery.

For our next meeting, March 13th, we will be having the ever-entertaining and informative Carole Willat on the subject of an intriguingly titled presentation: *Black Models in paintings: What is their role in art?*

If you have any interest in art from its beginnings to the present day, and would like to find out more, you would be made very welcome at our regular venue, Naphill Village Hall, starting at 10.00 am on the second Thursday of the month. Parking is available just outside the hall. **Discovering Art** is what it is all about.

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DISCOVERING SCIENCE

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The science group is for all those that are curious about science and how it affects our lives. We meet on the first Friday in the month at Hazlemere Memorial Hall (in Hazlemere Recreation Ground).

The group is interested in all aspects of science and technology, including the people and the issues affecting them. We try to show that science is fun as well as being relevant to our daily lives.

Our recent talks have covered such diverse topics as the Galapagos Islands from Jane Sellwood of Reading u3a, Herbal Medicine and Iridology, cartography, and psychometric testing. We encourage participation

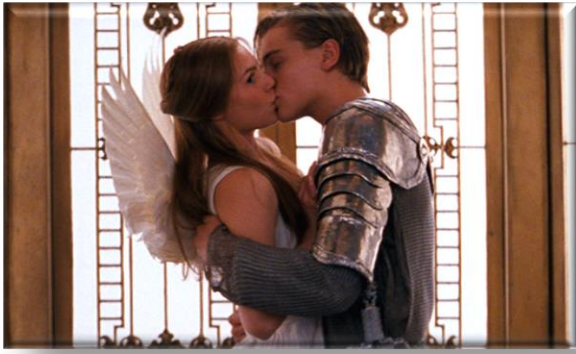
Our programme (which is subject to change) over the coming months includes:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| April | Galapagos Islands |
| May | Squatters in a bacteriological world |
| June | Ultrasound |
| Tbc | Satellites |

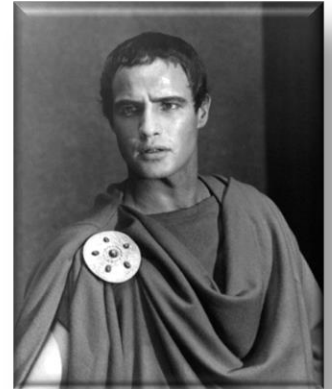
Every member of our u3a is welcome to attend. If you think this wide-ranging light touch look at science is for you, please contact us through the website or via email.

ENJOYING SHAKESPEARE

The group is still going strong and we started this year with a version of Hamlet featuring Maxime Peake as Hamlet. Well-acted but not our favourite version. In February we went back to Cineworld for an excellent production of Macbeth (with one lone schoolboy in attendance, clearly studying it for his GCSE syllabus!) and then we moved on to watching the Baz Lurhmann production of Romeo and Juliet – an old favourite starring Leonardo de Caprio and Clare Danes.

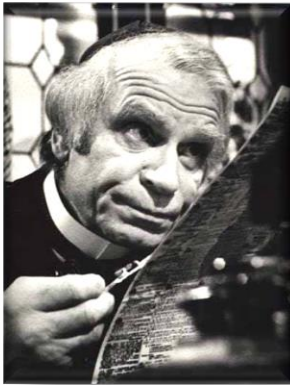


March will see us watching Julius Caesar for the first time and are interested to see what we think of Marlon Brando who may seem an unlikely Caesar! *[Editor's correction: Marlon Brando plays*



Mark Antony – Ceasar is played by Louis Calhern]

In April we will go back in time to a very early version of The Merchant of Venice with Lawrence Olivier – the first time we will have watched any of his acting.



May's treat will be another favourite – Kenneth Brannagh's production of Much Ado About Nothing.



Chiltern Shakespeare and Fourways will be performing The Merry Wives of Windsor at Hall Barn on June 14 so we shall be packing up picnics to enjoy before that.

Only a week or two later it will be time for our Summer Buffet as we watch All is True – the fictional account of when Shakespeare returned to his grieving family in Stratford Upon Avon following the death of his son Hamnet.

There will be no meeting in July but in August we shall hopefully return to Lawrence Olivier with his archetypal performance as Henry V.

A lot to look forward to and new members are always welcome as long as they can fit into our living room. No limit on those who come to the cinema or to live performances of course!

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FRENCH CONVERSATION



The French group meets every 3rd Monday of the month and is very popular. It is open to anyone who can speak French and who wants to improve by listening and participating with others.

Last term we talked about Michel Polnareff, Fires in LA, Sharon Stone, Healing Plants, le Stress around Christmas, Nepal, Uzbekistan etc.

Please feel free to join us if you want to have a go!



GENEALOGY

The group meets on the 2nd Monday of the month, between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm, at Hazlemere Library, 312 Amersham Road, Hazlemere HP15 7PY where we use the library's free edition of Ancestry, and other genealogical websites, to research family history.

We have access to three of the library computers but it is better if you are able to bring a laptop. New members are always welcome.

GEOLOGY



The Geology group continues to attract lots of loyal members for which Phil & I are very grateful.

Following our talk on mineral identification and classification back in Oct 24 a group of us visited the



Natural History Museum in London on 16th January.

We were amazed by the thousands of minerals on display, their variety & beauty and learnt about their many & varied uses.

We also admired some well-preserved fossils of large marine reptiles discovered by early geologists like Mary Anning, William Buckland & William Conybeare, about whom we had previously heard during our Famous Geologist talks.

In March we followed this theme with a very interesting talk from Alan about fossils in general, how they are formed, what they can tell us about the environments in which they lived and the evolution of life over time. Our newest



member also brought along some beautiful specimens.

In February Martin introduced us to "Big History", a free online resource that covers the formation & evolution of planet Earth, from the Big Bang 13.8 billion years ago right up to the present day. It's amazing to think that the chemical elements which form the Earth's rocks & minerals, as well as all living things on Earth including ourselves, were formed inside dying stars & supernovas!

In future sessions we hope to cover topics such as the Ice Ages, Mountain Building, Structural Geology, Geological Mapping, Geohazards & Climate Change. In fact Phil has recently sent out a survey to gather feedback and suggestions for future topics.

Don't forget we have our own YouTube channel, where video versions of our presentations can be found. It's free and open to anyone. Check it out [here](#):

So we hope to see many of you over the coming months and are always happy to welcome new members.



GERMAN CONVERSATION

With the Christmas and New Year break behind us, we have entered 2025 with renewed enthusiasm, with plenty of topics to talk about. Our modus operandi has not changed though, reflecting the varied language skills of our members. We prepare a short piece in German on a topic of our own choosing which we then read out to the group, thereby giving everyone the opportunity to contribute to the meeting. In this way we can share our thoughts and observations on the topic.

When the “business” is completed, we make time to chat in German and/or English whilst enjoying a rewarding cup of tea /coffee and cake! We are a small, friendly group which meets on the second Tuesday afternoon of each month (except for December) in the home of one of the members. We are not a teaching group but assistance is available from one of our native German speakers if needed.

So, if you have a reasonable grasp of the language, you should be able to fit in.

We currently have vacancies for new members, so if you're interested in joining us, get in touch with me directly or via the HW u3a website. Bis dahin, tschuss!

GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR

On 29th January we held our Annual Convenors' Day. I had chosen as a theme these words from Socrates, as summarised by Agnes Callard in her work 'Open Socrates.' "How you think about things that you couldn't think about if it was not for the presence of other people."

We confirmed that, whilst we had achieved our overall objectives for groups in 2024, there was much to be done in 2025 with respect to supporting Convenors, in terms of collecting and disseminating information through our various technology and publicity initiatives.

Whilst I thanked the leaders of the various teams involved with Beacon, our Website, Facebook, and Publicity, we all began to appreciate how important it was to consider how best our membership, existing and new members, could benefit from enhanced information. Keeping our individual and group activity information up-to-date was key. We heard from our Membership Secretary how important it has been since Covid to retain as well as gain new members. Whilst improved use of technologies was important for everyone, we all know that 'word of mouth' is still the most important way of recruiting new members.

We will continue to look closely into opportunities for new groups, recognising that we should focus on subjects/activities that could attract new members. New groups such as Geology and Psychology



“Whilst improved use of technologies was important for everyone, we all know that ‘word of mouth’ is still the most important way of recruiting new members.”

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“... continue to enjoy what we do and for everyone to help us do it all even better

demonstrated in 2024 that we could attract new members. Please continue to send in your ideas but, as ever, there is always a need for new Convenors to set up and run any new groups.

I know and recognise that in 2024 several initiatives were introduced including exchanges of speakers with other local u3a groups, more individual members contributing to monthly meetings, as well as making everyone more aware of u3a-run activities such as TVN, u3a HQ online groups and subject leaders.

Overall, I remain optimistic for 2025, remembering that one of my personal objectives is to address community issues such as loneliness. My thanks to Convenors, the Committee but, above all, members for their help and support. My message from our annual meeting was to continue to enjoy what we do and for everyone to help us do it all even better.

HISTORY



Our group continues to meet on the second Thursday of each month in members' homes at 2pm where we enjoy interesting items from podcasts, videos and members of our own group. During the afternoon we also enjoy a social chat over tea and biscuits.



We have recently studied a wide range of topics including the PQ17 Convoy, The Taj Mahal, Vlad the Impaler, a film about the Polish 303 Squadron, Peterloo Massacre and the Silk Road.



A pretty varied agenda I think you will agree.

In the forthcoming months we will be learning about the history of the Romanovs and more from the RAF and who knows what else - we wait and see!

ITALIAN CONVERSATION

Our group is a small group so the opportunity to give your point of view occurs naturally as we all chat together. A degree of fluency is required to be able to take part but we do all help each other when we get stuck for a word.

We have visited Norden Farm in Maidenhead to watch an Italian film and hope to do so again when the opportunity arises.

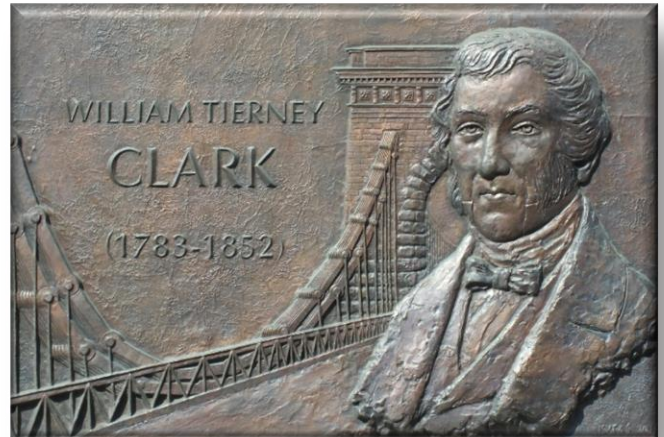
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LOCAL HISTORY

The overall objective for 2025 is to enable members to share their knowledge and memories of the area by giving talks on their own experiences as well as continuing to visit local attractions. Understanding more about the local archaeology has been something that has interested many of us. I am pleased to confirm we have a guest speaker talking about the local archaeology on 13th May with a second visit to the 'dig' in Cookham on August 5th.

We are planning other visits to local museums following on to visits made previously to Haddenham Museum, Lacey Green Windmill and Milton Cottage, to name just three.

In 2024 we successfully trialled inputs from our members on subjects as diverse as 'The railways of Princes



Risborough', 'The architect behind Marlow Bridge' and the range of 'High Wycombe tokens' used when cash was in short supply - a familiar theme.

We are continuing this programme for at least the first quarter of 2025. I welcome contributions which can be about family, why you came to High Wycombe (the area), work experience (local businesses), street or village names -even the history of your house including former owners.

Please note contributions are normally from 5 to 15 minutes and I am always available to help with any slides, for example.

We have welcomed speakers from The High Wycombe Society and offered talks to them by members of our group, something we are trying to expand to other local groups.

We always have some enlightening discussions, comments and humour. I look forward to the next meeting. Please remember to bring a cup or mug.



MUSIC

Our members appreciate that hosting this group in a member's house provides the best and, importantly, the most comfortable opportunity to listen to high quality reproduction of their chosen music. However, the downside is that we are limited to a maximum of 10 members attending any one meeting. The popularity of this group has been increasing as word spreads not only about the knowledge of our members but also the recognition that monthly topics reflect all genres of music. The option we are considering is to start a second group in a home, but we would need another Convenor.



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["Scheherezade: Movement 1 - The Sea and Sinbad's Ship"](#)

In January one of our members presented the life and work of Rimsky-Korsakov. The remarkable thing about the topics covered in this group is that our opinions about the music we thought was not to our taste changed as we found out more about the composer or the realities of the times in which they lived or live.

Examples have included opera in 2024 (we will expand our coverage on this in 2025) and for February - jazz. I suspect this is another Marmite moment – a genre we 'love or hate.' Even an extraordinary musical instrument one of our members had made from a stick with nails attached resulted in almost uncontrollable laughter.

What we do know is that music brings back memories from our past as teenagers or coping with young children or grandchildren.

For those of us attending the funeral of Terry Boreham his final choice of music and advice was to 'always look on the bright side of life.' Music can help us do just that. Our group may not be like other music groups you may have been considering but my judgement is that from the experience of recently joined new members we are delivering enjoyment, learning and serve the best cakes.

["Always Look on the Bright Side of Life"](#)

(Click on the buttons above to hear the music)


PHOTOGRAPHY

This group, known to its members as the 'PhotoGroup', is thriving and there is plenty of room for more members.

Check out the photography page of the Website (https://highwycombe.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/photography/) to see some of our images. Critiquing images we will be referring to some of the many basic photo editing techniques available with modern software.

The agenda for each month is set by the members and every effort is made to provide meaningful meetings which, in the coming months, will include - macro photography, church architecture and influential photographers. We will also be looking at members' photographs of 'Shadows' and others yet to be advised.

Why not come along and find out what we are all about. Learn not just how to take a picture but how to 'make' a photograph. We meet at Hazlemere Memorial Hall, 10am, second Friday of each month.

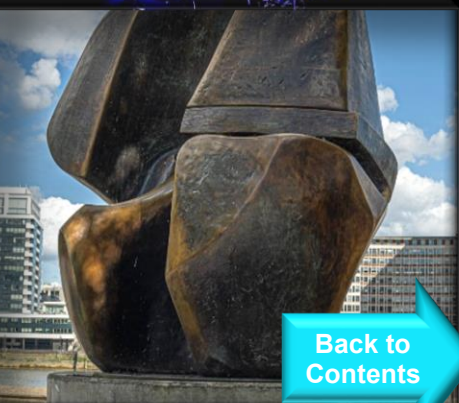
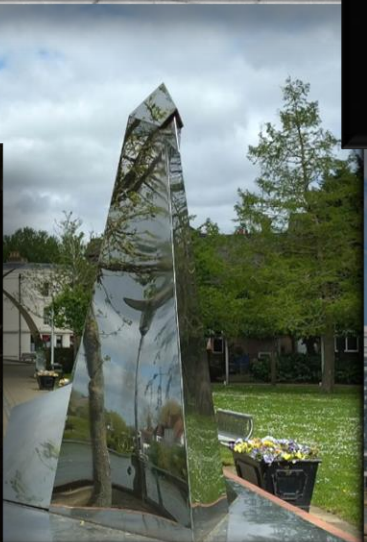


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SOME OF THE PHOTOGROUP MEMBERS' IMAGES



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3Ps (PLAYS, POETRY & PROSE)



"A Hend Beg???" - Penelope Kieth as Lady Bracknell in 'The Importance of Being Earnest'

'Magical' prose was the subject for February before we became actors for Oscar Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest' in March.

'It's a Mad World' in poetry will challenge us and who knows what else later in the season. We continue this wonderful variety all through the year forcing us to do some enlightening research and learning more each time



PSYCHOLOGY

Our session on Feb 14th was about "Living with Dementia"- very interesting and insightful. Our speaker spoke with utmost sincerity about caring for her husband and his needs for 10 years.

Forthcoming programme.

Fri. March 14th. Cultures, Beliefs, Cults and Communes.

Fri. April 11th. Who is your role model and why? Which 5 guests (historical and modern) would you invite to a dinner party and why?

Fri. May 9th. Piaget and Perception. What do you notice first?

Fri. Aug. 8th . Phobias.

PUB LUNCHESES

Our Lunch group, which usually meets in a pub, but occasionally elsewhere, gets together on the 4th Friday of each month. We are a very friendly group with a diverse range of appetites and tastes, which is reflected in the venues we visit.

Currently, the list of members stands at 28 and such a large group means that a few of our smaller pubs can no longer accommodate us.

If you would like to try us out in the future, please do contact me so that we can discuss the possibility of you joining a 'Wait List' (as in flight bookings with BA etc)

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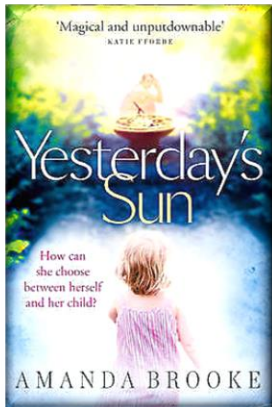
QUIZ GROUP



The Quiz group continue to meet on the first Thursday of each month at Naphill Village Hall starting at 2.00

We are a friendly group of around twenty people of varying skill levels who are formed into teams of four randomly to try to ensure all the best players do not get into the same team. It is a fun afternoon and usually you can expect to learn something. If you think you would like to join us contact us or just turn up on the first Thursday of the month and we will be pleased to see you.

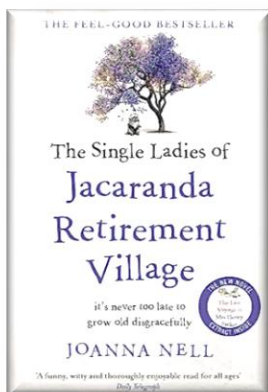
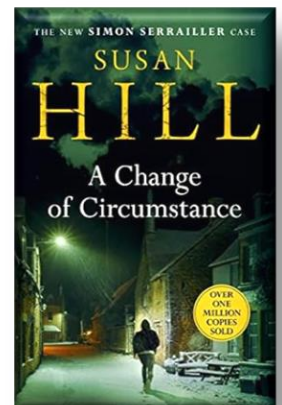
READING FOR PLEASURE



On the strength of “Yesterday’s Sun” none of us would seek out another novel by Amanda Brooke. It is the story of Holly and Tom (mostly Holly) who, while renovating their new home, discover a mysterious moon-dial which can reveal the future. With knowledge comes the responsibility for life-changing (life-ending) choices - which I won’t disclose, just in case. This book was apparently born out of Brooke’s real-life grief and loss, so we felt rather guilty for our cool response. Some of us had more patience with the story than others, engaging with the dilemma Holly faces, having sympathy with the characters and respect for a well-constructed plot. The rest of us found the book formulaic and somewhat trite. We were happy enough with the supernatural aspect but impatient with the clunky, clockwork mechanism through which it operated. It was not a favourite.

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We liked “A Change of Circumstance” by Susan Hill much better – a thoroughly readable, page-turning detective story, part of a series but perfectly strong on its own. We believed in the characters (Vince was a particular treasure!), we enjoyed the narrative lightness of touch and we cared about the outcome. Those of us who had read more of this series found the subject matter here untypically dark but we agreed that it was handled sympathetically and thoughtfully. We saw the weak and vulnerable sucked into the world of drug running and trapped there. We were dismayed - but heartened by the Vinces of this world, in their somewhat tarnished armour, who will make a stand.



“The Single Ladies of Jacaranda Retirement Village” by Joanna Nell reminded us happily of Alexander McCall Smith: we used the words “comfortable”, “gentle” and “amusing” in our response. It is the tale of Peggy and her group of ageing friends, into whose lives sweeps the formidable Angie, raging most colourfully against the dying of the light. Nell’s sympathetic, wry treatment of her elderly characters struck a chord with us (an ideal audience, really!) Peggy’s many malapropisms, the inter-generational battle played out through birthday cake and the various “set piece” scenes all made us smile. Particularly delightful was the village visit to the IT store to investigate a karaoke machine. (We, too, have dealt with that tech-savvy teenager.) One of us put in an indignant word in support of the technological abilities of our generation but, for the most part, we felt celebrated and understood rather than maligned.

RUMMIKUB

Rummikub is a very good game that helps to get the grey matter working: it really does help to bring people together. The Group began in late 2023 and was well received when approximately 12 people came along.

We all have a great time meeting new acquaintances with lots of laughter and this has ensured that the group has continued with good attendances.

You do not need to know how to play and the group welcomes all on the first Monday of the month at 2.00 pm in the back of the Bon Ami coffee shop behind Naphill village hall where there is good parking.

Come along and enjoy a fun afternoon.

SINGING FOR FUN

It is a fact that singing is good for our health and well-being and we at the singing group can lay testament to that. It is a fact that singing is good for our health and well-being and we at the singing group can lay testament to that.

We are not a choir, just a group of members who love to sing from any genre (well maybe not operatic arias). After our meeting we all leave feeling uplifted and with smiles on our faces.

You can request any song you fancy and, if it's a YouTube karaoke tune, we can sing along. Often, we think we know the tune but really only know the chorus!

It is a friendly relaxed group who welcome all newcomers.

We meet at **Lane End Village Hall on the fourth Monday of the month from 10 to 11:50 am**. Our group had three new people last month two of whom were potentially new members.

TEN-PIN BOWLING

The group is flourishing with round about 20 members and 10 to 16 members attending regularly. It is a lot of fun and good exercise. You don't have to be an expert or even played before.

We meet at 1315 for a 1330 start on the first and third Tuesdays of the month - but not during school holidays.

We use the bowling lanes in the Eden Shopping Complex High Wycombe. The cost is £6.80 for 2 games and £3.40 for one game. This includes the use of a house ball and bowling shoes (but your own flat shoes are recommended at present).

There is no restriction on the number of bowlers so why not give it a try - "the more the merrier". All are welcome. Just let the Convenor know if you wish to attend as lanes have to be booked.



UKULELE

The ukulele group is going strong and we have some new members who joined us last month. In December the group did a gig at the Downley Heights care home and as one of our group remarked “we hit the heights”. However, I was pleased to say we did ourselves proud and in fact we have been asked to return.



We welcome any new members and I offer a one-to-one lesson in my home to get newbies up and strumming. The fourth Thursday of the month at Downley Community Centre is our venue from 10am to 12 noon.

Don't be shy - come and have a go.

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WALKING

Just before Christmas we met for a lunch at the Dashwood Roadhouse pub, after our monthly short walk around the Piddington area. It was very enjoyable and good to see that everybody had made an effort with hats and jumpers to celebrate the season! We had excellent service, the food was delicious, and a great time was had by all.

The shorter walk for January started from the Wycombe Judo centre in Booker, through Spring Coppice to Lane End and we ended up back there for coffee and their lovely selection of cakes afterwards. Along the way we saw a memorial to a Canadian plane that sadly crashed near Wycombe Airfield during the Second World War with the loss of all on board.

For the first time in quite a while we sadly had to cancel, at the last moment, our January longer walk because of bad weather – strong winds and heavy rain. This walk to Wendover Woods and back along the Grand Union Canal has been re-scheduled to the 24th of March.

In February we had a short walk around Stokenchurch and Spriggs Alley and the longer walk was from Stokenchurch through the Wormsley Estate to Ibstone and back through Penley Woods.

Here is a link to our March Short Walk - <https://strava.app.link/ZY1vhdbZCRb>

We always keep the information on our [U3A website](#) up-to-date, as well as some photos of previous walks. So, anybody who would like to join us for a walk should check there.



UPCOMING WALKS

(CLICK ON THE LINK FOR MORE DETAILS)

24th March 2025

10:00 am

[March Longer Walk](#)

Wendover Woods & Grand Union Canal - led by Martin Oetiker.

14th April 2025

10:00 am

[April Shorter Walk](#)

Little Kingshill & Great Missenden - led by Martin Oetiker.

28th April 2025

10:00 am

[April Longer Walk](#)

Middle Assendon & Oxford Way - led by Mike Clarke.

12th May 2025

10:00 am

[May Shorter Walk](#)

Mill End - led by Jenny Fray.

24th May 2025

10:00 am

[May Longer Walk](#)

Captain's Wood, Chesham - led by Eleanor Ferguson.

9th June 2025

10:00 am

[June Shorter Walk](#)

Downley - Led by Tony Huntley.

23rd June 2025

10:00 am

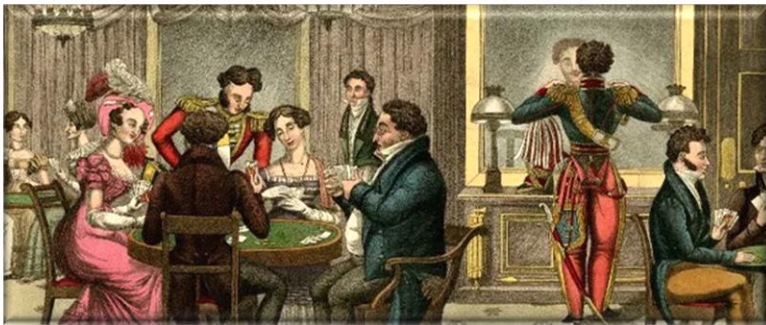
[June Longer Walk](#)

Basildon Park (NT) - led by Mike Clarke.

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WHIST

We continue with steady numbers at our whist meetings but, naturally, it would be better for all if we could attract more. If you wish to spend a fun afternoon on the third Thursday of each month, do come along. You do not need to have played whist before our members will be only too pleased to show you.



years. We hope we will see them regularly again.

At our meeting on 21st November 2024, we welcomed two new players Mic W. and Mark S. Marjorie H. won the ladies, Mark S. the men's and Joy S the booby prize.

At our meeting on 19th December 2024 fifteen members attended. Mic W. won the men's, Linda A. the ladies and Robert P. the booby prize.

At our meeting on 16th January 2025 Linda A. won the ladies, Robert R. and yours truly the men's and Christopher M. the booby prize.

At our meeting on 20th February 2025, we had a record of 21 players, including the six new members. It is hoped we met their expectations and they return, it certainly was a most enjoyable afternoon. Brenda P. and Pat S. both won the ladies, Richard L. the men's and Heather A. the booby prize.

We continue to be a friendly, welcoming group and would love to meet anyone who is keen to play the game of whist. As mentioned above we meet on the third Thursday of every month at 2 o'clock in Naphill Village Hall and if you are interested or wish to discuss the game of whist, I would welcome a call

It was a lovely surprise though that at our last meeting six new players turned up, some of whom had never played before. It was indeed a pleasure to welcome them to the game of whist. We have sufficient funds now to include a booby prize, as well as prizes for both ladies and gentlemen.

We welcomed back Kathie P. who had been ill for some time and Marjorie H. who hadn't been playing for a couple of

WOODCARVING

Woodcarving can be traced back to prehistoric times being one of the oldest art forms that mankind has developed from the use of the natural availability of wood throughout our environment. With decorative woodcarving now being more of a specialist art much of our woodcarving these days is for leisure and hobby interest covering three main elements:-RELIEF/CHIP CARVING, WHITTILING & CARVINGS IN THE ROUND

Very little machinery is used in our group apart from limited use of hand-held multi-tool units containing micro sanding barrels and small power carving tools.

Currently we have a steady mixed membership of 12 who meet on the 4th Thursday of each month between 9.30am & midday at North Dean Village Hall.

With each meeting you will learn techniques on how to use wood carving chisels, gouges, knives along with other tools to help create your project.

Tools are available to use allowing familiarisation with each one so that existing and new members can hone their methods and technique before committing to the expense of purchasing tools should new members feel woodcarving is not for them.

There is a variety of woodcarving magazines and instruction books available at each group meeting which complement the useful tips, help and guidance from all the carvers in the group

Pre-cut blanks, some including birds, fish, mice, elephants and dolphins are available for new members who may not know what they want to carve. These provide the basic shape and form for which further carving will be necessary to create the finished item but will also serve as practical experience in developing your carving skill.



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THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

In January, our presentation was on the reasons for building runways for the RAF in India to bomb the Japanese in WW2. Of course, as is normal, we went far beyond what might have been expected. We learnt so much about the geology of India and the Himalayas, and how awareness and tactics to fly around and across the 'Himalya Hump' were so important to the success of the allies (including China) to the war effort in Asia. Strangely perhaps our journey started at the **Maiwand Lion**, a sculpture and war memorial in the Forbury Gardens, Reading.



In February we continued our journey along the Silk Road where we ended up in 2024. It is a journey of discovery from Dunhuang in the north of China to Gaza, Palestine. Look up possible routes in an atlas! We follow a route through Asia and the Middle East to civilisations of the past, visiting some of the most beautiful and challenging places in the world for this adventure. Again, what we thought was just going to be the geology of the area will be exposed by our expert. We plan to excite and entertain as we experience the many cultures. But we will not shy away

from the legacy left as a result of WW2.

In previous years we have explored subjects that have helped determine the demand for new groups. I plan to introduce from March completely new topics for us to study in The World We Live In. Contributions from our members are encouraged and I hope to bring you more input from international speakers. I have some in mind. Those who know me will not be surprised at this. Do join us.

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WRITING FOR PLEASURE



While the strictly literary qualities of our monthly output may sometimes be in question, the pleasure we get from meeting, reading, listening and often laughing at the rich variety of output is often inescapable.

One of our most recent recruits has managed to render feline pleasure one month and then a brief but gripping spy drama the next. Elsewhere, we have seen the evidence that most people actually get happier the older they live – with the happiest age group being those at 82. Whoopee!

We meet on these cold days in front of a warming fire but are still looking forward to trading stories in the garden in summer. Why not join us? We would be glad to see you and hear from you.

DITLOIDS

A “ditloid” is a type of word puzzle in which a book or film title, quote or well known saying must be deduced from a set of numbers and letters in a clue. An example might be :

3= C in a F [Three Coins in a Fountain.]

Give these a try!

2 = W on a B
3 = T a L
4 = H of the A
4 = A in a P of C
5 = T on a F
5 = L in a L
5 = R on the OF
7 = H of R
7 = C of the R
7 = S on a FPP

8 = N in an O
12 = M of a J
15 = M on a DMC
18 = H on a GC
64 = S on a CB
1024 = KB in a MB
118 = E in the PT
180 = MS at D
360 = D in a C
1000 = Y in a M

[click here for answers](#)

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SPEAKERS' CORNER

General Meetings are held at Lacey Green Village Hall on the fourth Wednesday of each month unless otherwise stated



Our Christmas meeting, attended by nearly 90 members at Naphill, was a potpourri of items. As we got our refreshments Paul had made a slide show illustrating our many groups. There was a chance to hear the newly formed Handbells group and to sing along with the Ukulele players. Mary had written one of her infamous pantomimes which was performed by the 3Ps group. Penny

challenged us with a Shakespeare quiz and there was spirited singing of the 12 days of Christmas (with actions!) We were also given a free raffle, and Val had chosen some splendid prizes.

Members enjoyed January's speaker, Hayley Scott, who spoke about A Day in the Life of a Metropolitan Police Crime Investigator.



Councillor Paul Turner spoke to us about the role of the High Wycombe Mayor in February. Paul was the Mayor 2023-4 and took a great interest in the history of the post.



In **March**, British Science author, illustrator and fine artist, Katrina Van Grouw will be giving her talk Art, Science and the Unfeathered Bird. She has spoken at the Hay Festival and the National History Museum.

Our **April** meeting will be a dip into Indian Culture with Ramji Abinashi. Ramji convenes a group, Aspects of India, for the Chilterns u3a.

The Monthly Meeting in **May** will begin at 2 pm with our AGM. Details will be sent to you by the Secretary. We will follow this with a presentation from the Royal Navy.

In **June** there will be 2 speakers. Tracy Mould, a paramedic, will explain the role of a First Responder. She coordinates the team in Bucks. This will be followed by Anna Ditta from the

Community Safety Team from the Fire Service, who will tell us about the free service to install smoke alarms in our houses.

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July will be a special meeting when Pauline Mines will bring her guide dog and talk about the work of the Guide Dogs for the Blind.

If you have heard a talk which you think would be of general interest to our members please let a member of the Committee know.

| 2025 SPEAKER SCHEDULE | |
|--|---|
| 26 th March 2025 Art, Science and the Unfeathered Bird Speaker: Katarina VanGouw | 25 th June 2025 The Role of Community First Responders in Bucks Speaker: Tracy Mould |
| 23 rd April 2025 Indian Culture – including arranged marriages Speaker: Ramji Abiashi | 23 rd July 2025 Invitation into Guide Dogs for the Blind Speaker: Pauline Mines |
| 28 th May 2025 Our Modern Navy Speaker: Royal Navy Presentation Team | 27 th August 2025 Places I Have Catered Speaker: Ann Tennant |
| Note: AGM starts at 2.00 pm | |

Times and dates subject to change

DINGBATS

A word, phrase or saying is hidden on each Dingbat. See how many you can get: [Click here for answers](#)

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ALL EARTH | CCCCCCCCCCCC | PPPPPP BU | EACK | Eton 1-1 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| greed pride anger gluttony sloth envy greed pride anger gluttony sloth envy | CLAPHAM ☪ ☪ ☪ | LA V WN I P E R | A BU A V-1 LL FROSTY | SURBMWANCE |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| ON A4 04 | £ 3 . 5 0 | → Colt ← M16 Kalashnikov Luger | H E HENRY R Y | BISHOP |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |



DITLOIDS SOLUTIONS

2 = 2 Wheels on a Bicycle
3 = 3 Times a Lady
4 = 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse
4 = 4 Aces in a Pack of Cards
5 = 5 Toes on a Foot
5 = 5 Lines in a Limerick
5 = 5 Rings on the Olympic Flag
7 = 7 Hills of Rome
7 = 7 Colours of the Rainbow
7 = 7 Sides on a Fifty Pence Piece

8 = 8 Notes in an Octave
12 = 12 Members of a Jury
15 = 15 Men on a Dead Man's Chest
18 = Holes on a Golf Course
64 = 64 Squares on a Chess Board
1024 = 1024 Kilobytes in a Megabyte
118 = 118 Elements in the Periodic Table
180 = 180 Maximum Score at Darts
360 = Degrees in a Circle
1000 = Years in a Millenium



DINGBATS SOLUTIONS

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ALL EARTH | CCCCCCCCCCCC | PPPPPPP BU | EACK | Eton 1-1 |
| All over the World | High Seas | Peace be with you | Cake Mix | Old School Tie |
| greed pride anger gluttony sloth envy greed pride anger gluttony sloth envy | CLAPHAM ☪ ☪ ☪ | LA V I P E R WN | A BU A V-1 LL FROSTY | SURBMWANCE |
| Multitude of Sins | Common Sense | Snake in the Grass | Abominable Snowman | Car Insurance |
| ON A4 04 | £ 3 . 5 0 | → Colt ← M16 Kalashnikov Luger | H E HENRY R Y | BISHOP |
| On the Open Road | The Price is Right | Top Gun | Kings Cross | Archbishop |



GROUPS TIMETABLE

| WEEK OF MONTH | DAY | GROUP ACTIVITY | TIME | VENUES |
|---------------|-----------|---|-------------------------|--|
| First | Monday | Geology Rummikub | 10.00 14.00 | HMH NVH (Bon Ami) |
| | Tuesday | Plays, Poetry and Prose Ten-pin Bowling | 10.00 13.30 | H(s) Eden Centre |
| | Wednesday | Art Reading for Pleasure Croquet (April -October) | 09.30 10.15 10.30 | NVH HWL HW Croquet Club Hazlemere Rec Ground |
| | Thursday | Computer Quiz | 10.00 14.00 | NVH NVH |
| | Friday | Discovering Science | 14.00 | HMH |
| Second | Monday | Bird Watching incl. Walks Shorter Walk Genealogy | 10.00 10.00 14.00 | Newsletter Normally from NVH HZN Library |
| | Tuesday | Local History German Conversation | 10.00 14.00 | HMH H |
| | Wednesday | Croquet (April -October) Handbell Ringing | 10.30 14.00 | HW Croquet Club Hazlemere Rec Ground St. James Church Hall |
| | Thursday | Discovering Art History | 10.00 14.00 | NVH H |
| | Friday | Photography Psychology | 10.00 14.00 | HMH HMH |
| Third | Monday | French Conversation | 14.00 | NDVH |
| | Tuesday | Writing for Pleasure 10-pin Bowling Italian Conversation | 10.00 13.30 14.30 | H Eden Centre H |
| | Wednesday | Croquet (April -October) | 10.30 | HW Croquet Club Hazlemere Rec Ground |
| | Thursday | Whist | 14.00 | NVH |
| | Friday | The World We Live In | 14.00 | HMH |
| Fourth | Monday | Longer Walk (ramble) Singing for Fun Enjoying Shakespeare | 10.00 10.00 13.45 | Email Convenor LEVH H |
| | Tuesday | Antiques & Collectibles | 14.00 | HCC |
| | Wednesday | Croquet (April -October) General Meeting | 10.30 14.00 | HW Croquet Club Hazlemere Rec Ground LG & LR VH |
| | Thursday | Wood Carving Ukelele Group Discovering Music | 09.45 10.00 14.00 | NDVH DCC H |
| | Friday | Pub Lunches | 12.30 | Email convenor |

DCC (Downley Community Centre), H (Private Homes) HMH (Hazlemere Memorial Hall), LG & LR (Lacey Green and Loosley Row VH), HWL (High Wycombe Library), HZN (Hazlemere Library), HCC (Hughenden Community Centre), LEVH (Lane End Village Hall), NVH (Naphill Village Hall), NDVH (North Dean Village Hall), St. James Church Hall, Downley

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