

u3a

High Wycombe
& District

Winter Newsletter 2025



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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

ROSEMARY



Membership News

Our membership has now grown to over 300, with most members rejoining in September. We're also delighted to welcome 23 new members since the last newsletter! Please do encourage friends and neighbours to find out more about your u3a experience — there truly is something for everyone.

Whether you prefer to be active with the Walking Group or the Birdwatchers, or to flex your learning muscles by revisiting a foreign language, there's plenty to enjoy.

In recent months, two new groups have started: Chess, which caters for all levels — from experienced players to those who've always wanted to learn (and now can, with Mic's support) — and Simple Handicrafts, a new venture for those who enjoy relaxed, one-off creative activities shared with u3a friends.

The Genealogy group is thriving and have benefitted from volunteers Betty and Brian, who kindly share their time and expertise with our genealogists.

In recent months some groups have ventured further afield to the Jurassic coast, Stately homes that are full of interesting antiques, Dorchester Abbey and a memorable guided talk from u3a member, Susan, about St Michael and All Angels Church at Hughenden followed by delicious cakes. Those who attended were also treated to an organ recital at Dorchester and Hughenden.

I understand our Handbell group are performing at different venues close by which helps to spread the word of the u3a.

All our other groups continue to thrive, whether meeting in halls or in members' homes. If you'd like to try something new, visit our website for Convenors' contact details: highwycombe.u3asite.uk.

I hope you feel you get your money's worth from High Wycombe u3a and my thanks to the Committee, the Convenors and the many members who help set up our halls, allow their houses to be used as a venue, run tech and serve refreshments. Many hands..... as they say.

Merry Christmas and a Joyful New Year!

Stop Press! Did you spot Penny on page 78 of the u3a Matters magazine telling the general u3a membership about our displays at the Hughenden Church flower festival in August?

SECRETARY



Seasons Greetings Members

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The Third Age Trust (head office) Annual General Meeting in October appointed a new national Vice Chair and set out the intention “to unite the u3a movement and develop a seamless digital service”. Further information is not yet available.

The u3a Festival will be 1st - 3rd July 2026, again in York. Details will be on their website.

A reminder that you can enjoy free interesting talks on Zoom from the Third Age Trust.. The programme currently includes: a 6 week Mindfulness and Meditation series; Artificial Intelligence; The Geology of Britain; Flight Inspiration Aviation.

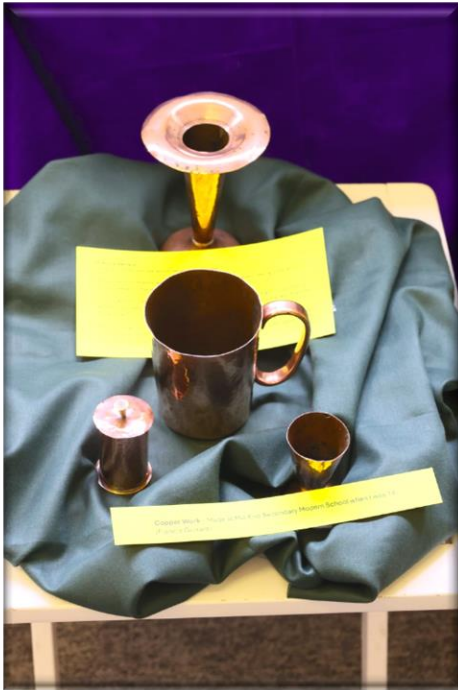
Details are on the national u3a website (www.u3a.org).

Likewise, our Thames Valley Network of u3as (u3atvnetwork.org.uk) offers informative talks and a Quiz you can join via Zoom in the warmth of your own home. Booking is on-line and many are free. Talks next quarter are on rt on the London Underground, Pop go the Classics and Sutton Hoo.

I hope to see many of you at the Christmas Coffee Morning with its unique entertainment from our very own, exceptionally talented artistes

PUBLICITY TEAM





Our arts and crafts display in the North Hall at Hughenden Church Flower Festival on the August Bank Holiday weekend received many visitors and resulted in some new members joining us. Items from our talented members were much admired and included paintings, intricate embroideries, photography and quilts as well as the



paper flower collage shown in the last Newsletter. Dawn contributed 2 wonderful floral designs, one in a huge floor-standing champagne bowl and the other a Provence inspired display by the pulpit.

Our final excursion this year will be at the High Wycombe All Saints Church Christmas Tree Festival in December (18th – 22nd) where our tree will be decorated with the words that our members wrote to accompany their craft items at Hughenden to describe what they enjoy about u3a. As always, Penny has done a wonderful job of designing and delivering our entry. Do go along to the church for the Christmas spirit.

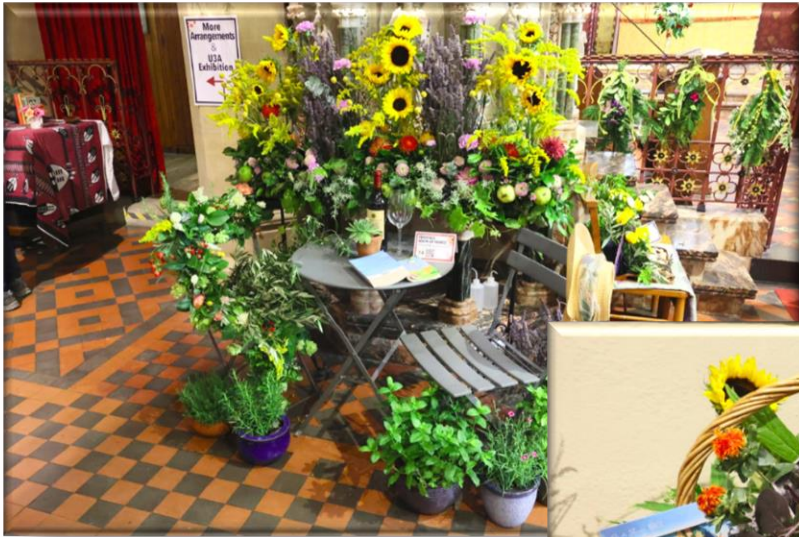


You may have noticed that we have updated our advertising leaflet for 2026. This includes the General Meeting Speakers' programme and current list of Groups and venues. This and your small electronic Membership Card have replaced the old Membership Card. This change has helped us keep costs for printing and postage down and saved on administration time for our Committee.

The programme for Publicity for 2026 has not yet been discussed. The team need some new ideas and are happy to welcome anyone who would like to join us. We thank all those members who contributed so willingly this year. If you have suggestions for publicity, please let



us know.



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to this Winter Newsletter!

I'm Phil and I've just taken over as the Newsletter Editor. I just wanted to thank John for all his hard work over the last year and to let you know of some changes that have been made for this and future editions.

You're probably already aware that we won't be producing the black and white paper editions any longer – the cost, preparation time and distribution difficulties made this unsustainable. However we will still be producing a printed single page news sheet which will feature key information in addition to this electronic version, and this will be posted to the very few members who do not have email, with some copies retained for the use of the Publicity team.

We have settled on 3 editions per year – Spring (April), Summer (August) and December (Winter). These will be distributed via email the night before that month's General Meeting.

One of the problems that we still face, though, is getting some of the Conveners to submit their reports in a timely manner – it's like herding cats! In order to alleviate this, from now on Groups which are activity-based, such as Ukulele, Singing, Handbells, Ten Pin Bowling, Quizzes etc need only report on any special events, such as performances, visits etc. In the absence of these, a generic description of the group will appear. Of course, the Conveners of such groups are still welcome to submit reports and/or pictures if they wish!

However groups which introduce new topics, visits or presentations each month, such as Enjoying Shakespeare, Birdwatching, Computers, Science, Geology, Local history etc will still be presenting reports on their activities.

I'll be writing the Conveners and contributors directly to let them know what's expected.

Please remember, this is YOUR Newsletter – if you have any comments or suggestions or would like to submit a favourite poem, anecdote, story or joke (clean one, please!) feel free to write to me.

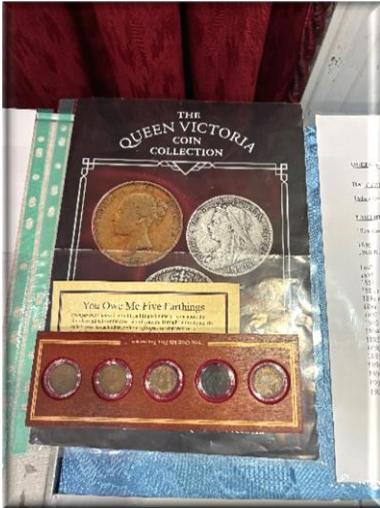
Finally, there is now an archive of our newsletters on our website. Since this will be visible to the general public, all names and contact details have been removed from the archived versions, as well as some other administrative matters. You can find it here: <https://highwycombe.u3asite.uk/electronic-newsletters>

OK – that's all from me - have a great Christmas and New Year!



We have been pleased to welcome 2 new members to our group, taking our total membership to 38. We meet in Hughenden Valley Village Hall, 2.00pm, on the 4th Tuesday in the month. If you are interested please contact Juliet - details above.

At our September meeting we completed the program for 2025-2026 and had our annual quiz, which went well. The winning table were presented with Blue Riband biscuit bars.



In October Ian gave a very interesting talk on Coins of the Victorian Era. Several members brought along their coin collections as well, which proved popular viewing at tea time.

Everyone enjoys our November meeting which always has a Christmassy theme. This year, some of us will be performing. For the first time, our offering for the u3a Christmas Coffee Morning on the 10th December!!! Juliet will also be showing her collection of vintage Christmas plates and several members will be reading Christmas poems - guaranteed to raise a few smiles. And of course, the obligatory mince pies will be served at tea time.

Then before we know it we will be in 2026. At our January meeting we will learn about "Life before the Zip" and in February we will welcome back our friend Richard to quiz us on various vintage items and what they were used for. Last time we were all stuck on a brass box with a small slit - it turned out to be a box off a toilet door where you put your penny in the slot. If he had held it upright I think we might have guessed it!

All very interesting.

In March we will be on an outing to Wallingford Antiques Arcade.

We would like to wish all our u3a friends the warmest of Seasons Greetings.

ART GROUP

Every year the Art Group has a session outside; in August we met on West Wycombe Hill and sketched/painted whatever took our fancy.

The following month we were back inside. I supplied some van Gogh black and white drawings and the task was to reimagine the images in colour (copying was not encouraged).



The October meeting we spent finishing off previous projects we had not completed, of which we all had several.

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 to 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:

We have had some very enjoyable visits this year to our usual haunts and also some new!

We listened for cuckoos at Otmoor in May (sadly heard but not spotted!) but were luckier with a variety of warblers, a whitethroat, several reed buntings, marsh harrier and a redshank.

We had a lovely bright, sunny day for our trip to RSPB Pagham harbour reserve (a new venue), where we enjoyed several hours of bird watching in a very different environment from our local Bucks sites. We were lucky enough to be shown around by two RSPB volunteers who helped us to spot and identify a good range of birds. Some highlights included curlews, snipe, redshank, stonechats, big flock of



Birdwatching group at RSPB Otmoor in Oxfordshire

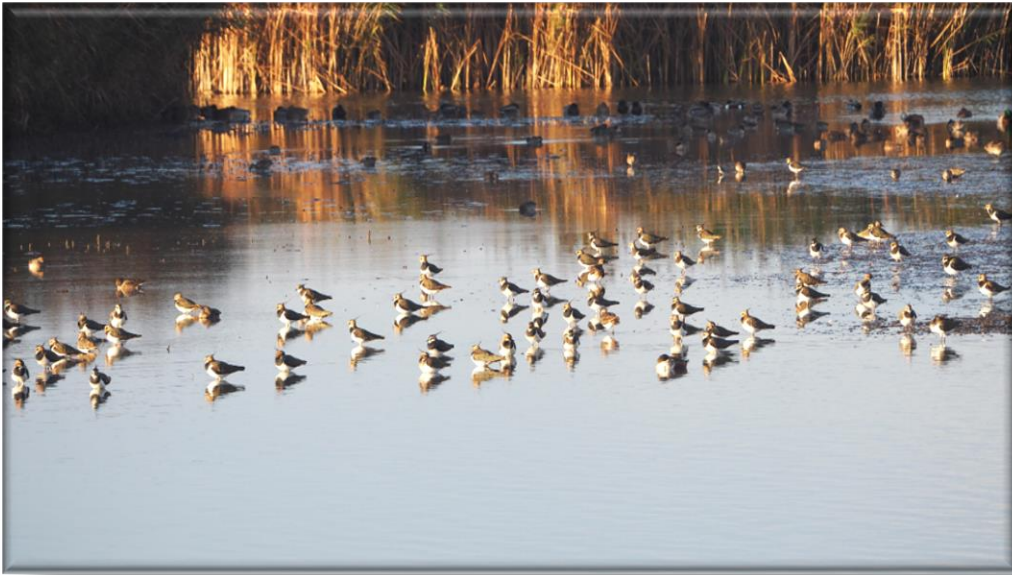


Curlew at Pagham Harbour



Goldfinch at Otmoor

lapwing, skylark, chiffchaffs, meadow pipit and grey wagtail.



It was a great day out and well worth the journey.

Our annual visit to Otmoor for the starling murmurations was a successful event in November and we were very lucky to avoid the heavy rain showers!

Lapwings at Otmoor

Our upcoming programme is as follows:

December 8th - The Grand Union Canal at Marsworth

January 12th 2026 - Jubilee River

February 9th - meeting at member's home

March 9th - Wiltstone Reservoir

March 30th - (EXTRA MEETING) - Dawn chorus at Marlow low ground with breakfast afterwards!

April 13th - Stockers Lake

For more information and updates check out our group page on the HWu3a website at: <https://highwycombe.u3asite.uk/>

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CHESSE

The Chess Group is now up and running. We are meeting at the convenor's house on the third Tuesday of every month at 2 pm.

There is a variety of abilities, from those who have never played before to those who are quite experienced. Some say that they have not played since they left school and are keen to get back to playing. It is interesting that two of the group have led chess

clubs in local schools in the past so are used to coaching players of all standards.



Our aim not to be playing top level serious chess, but to simply enjoy the game. We spend some time each meeting talking about various aspects of chess, such as how to checkmate or how to use your pawns effectively. With such a wide variety of experience in the group there is plenty of opportunity to contribute, discuss and learn.

We also make sure that there is time to play a game and hopefully put into practice what we have

learned. The stereotype of chess played in total silence with great seriousness does not apply. We encourage discussion during or after the game and to help each other to improve.

For those who would like to play more often than once a month, there is also the chance to arrange to play each other, and games have also taken place at different times in each other's homes. One advantage of chess is all you need is two people, a chess set and somewhere to play. And that can easily be arranged!

It's still early days and the group is still developing. We normally have 8 or 9 attending but we can manage more. If the Chess Group does interest you, whatever your ability, you would be welcome to join us. And even if you can't manage the third Tuesdays of the month but would like an occasional game, please link up with us.

COMPUTER GROUP

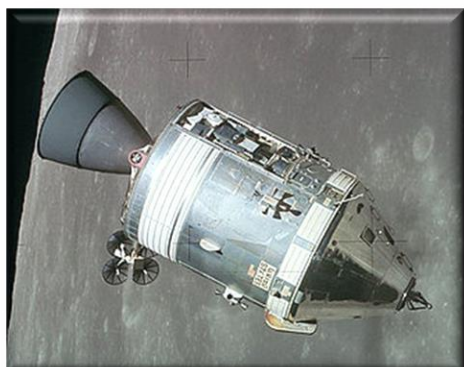


We've had a good number of attendees at our monthly meetings, including a visitor from South Bucks U3A who joined us recently to see how our group operates. Sarah was very impressed that we offer tea, coffee, and biscuits during our mid-meeting break — though I do hope she was impressed with more than just the refreshments!



At our September meeting, we enjoyed a fascinating video presentation from Professor Victoria Baines and Professor Robin May of Gresham College on "Why Computers Get Sick."

Professor May explained how the human body becomes infected and unwell, while Professor Baines drew parallels with how computers can also "catch viruses" and malfunction



They say nostalgia isn't what it used to be, but our October and November meetings took us back in time as we explored the role computers played in the American manned space programmes of the 1960s and 1970s, including the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo missions. Mike gave an engaging pair of presentations, interspersed with videos that brought the topic vividly to life.



At the time of writing, with Christmas looming, our December meetings tend to be more relaxed, and we like to inject a bit of fun, all within a computing theme of course ! We are all looking forward to once again sampling Angelika's homemade Stollen cake!

As always, if you're interested in joining the Computer Group, why not pop in and see us? You'll be very welcome! We meet at Naphill Village Hall at 10 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month.

For further details, please visit our webpage via the High Wycombe U3A website (just Google "High Wycombe U3A").

CROQUET



Croquet has now finished for the year following another fantastic Summer.

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We started the year with a full complement but as always life threw a few curved balls and we had spare capacity on several occasions.

So if you are interested in trying out this really enjoyable sport please contact me March time and lets see what can be organised for the 2026 season, which will start on Wednesday April 1st.

As you are on your feet for 2 hours a certain level of fitness and mobility is required. 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!

If you are interested in playing please give me a call in March 2026 and I can then give you a current update.

DISCOVERING ART

For our September meeting Mike gave a presentation on 'Bringing Some Women Artists out of the Shadows'. There were, in fact, a good number of women artists who had artistic merit quite equal to the men of their time but weren't recognised, or fell out of favour; they are finally becoming much more widely known though there is still a long way to go on that front. Their number includes the contemporary of Cavaggio, Artemisia Gentileschi, someone who, like many others, has a remarkable back story, and was a powerful personality;

another such painter is Elisabetta Sirani born in 1638 In order to refute charges that her father and others had helped with her work, invited her accusers to her studio to watch her paint a portrait in one sitting. Her speed seems to have been developed under pressure from her father who has been portrayed by several writers as an ill-tempered tyrant who took all her earnings and discouraged her from marrying. She died at 27, quite possibly from overwork and an ulcer.



Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting, Artemisia Lomi Gentileschi 1638-39



Virgin and Child, Elisabetta Sirani, 1663

Judith Leyster was sometimes mistaken for her contemporary, Frans Hals, not a unique experience.

Mike focused primarily on artists outside the 20th/21st century as they are relatively much better known during more recent times though no female artist has the high profile of the likes of Picasso and Matisse,



Hath a dog money? Ophelia Redpath 2004

not even Frida Kahlo who has become such an iconic artist in more recent years.

Mike ended with Ophelia Redpath, the winner of Sky Landscape Artist

of the Year who combines elements of fantasy with detailed and naturalistic painting. It was a reminder of just how much to celebrate there is in the world of women artists.



The Jolly Toper, Judith Leyster 1629

For our October meeting Jan, a new presenter for our group, gave a fascinating illustrated talk on Stained Glass: Painting with Light and Colour, a subject we have never covered before. She talked about the history of this art form, and the different types of glass and the colouring techniques and also what a very physically demanding one it is.

Through some beautiful slides, she covered a great range of styles including Chartres Cathedral, the Blue Mosque, Canterbury Cathedral, the beautiful window in All Saints, in Kent, the Metro Station in Montreal and the Victorian Quarter in Leeds. The second part was devoted to the arresting stained glass of Jozef Nuttgens, and his son, Joseph, who is actually Jan's uncle. A good number of the son's works are to be seen quite locally including St Teresa's Church



in Princes Risborough.

Some of these are quite contemporary in design, and we are now more fully aware of just how diverse and beautiful these works can be and how worthwhile it is to take a close look at them: a special, engaging and memorable presentation.

Our most recent session was by Christa Webber on 'How Textiles moved from Handicraft to High Art.'

For most of us this was a totally new area of art to discover, and Christa guided us through a wide range of stunning works, from the



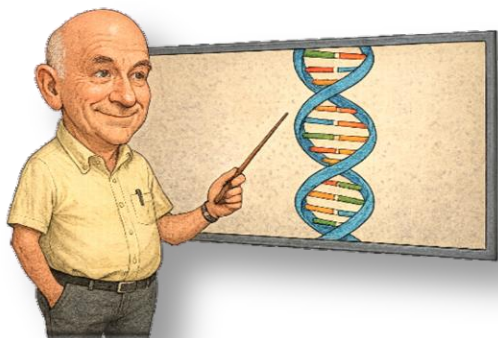
Scramble for Africa, Yinka Shonibare 2003

Bayeux tapestry to the gigantic installations by Abakanowicz of different fabrics including discarded ropes at

Battersea Turbine Hall. Some of the images she demonstrated were not just aesthetically pleasing or thought provoking, but carried powerful political and social messages, such as the mixed media installation by Yinka Shonibare of 13 headless figures dressed in Dutch wax cloth frockcoats and seated around a table with a map of Africa entitled 'Scramble for Africa'. The effect was quite chilling.

Christa explained how there is still doubt in some quarters about whether Art Installations made from textiles are really 'Art' and not just 'Craft' but she certainly made a very strong and totally convincing case for this lesser known but fascinating area of Art. We enjoyed it enormously.

DISCOVERING SCIENCE



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.

Recently we have heard about Satellites, their orbits and history.

We have discussed, heard about, and discussed the work of some less well known scientists. A most fascinating session saw Richard tell us about his experiences in having solar panels fitted. Both the highs and the lows.

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

Dec	A Christmas campfire: An informal session
Jan	No meeting Seasonal Holidays
Feb	Mouth Microbiom: Ibtisam Attar

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 hwu3ascience@gmail.com



ENJOYING SHAKESPEARE



The Group was completely taken aback at how excellent Lawrence Olivier's version of Henry V was. We were expecting a rather creaking black and white film but instead were blown away by the colour, great music, fascinating sets and most of all, amazing acting. Just shows that the old ones are the good ones!

As a complete contrast we revelled in a Midsummer Night's Dream with Caslista Flockhart and Michelle Pfeiffer.



Sadly building work here at Bridle Gate forced us to postpone watching Trevor Nunn's production of Twelfth Night in October, but that means we still have it to look forward to in January.

In the meantime, it's almost time for our annual Christmas Buffet and the pleasure of watching a couple of episodes of Upstart Crow at the end of November. At that get together we plan to think



about next year's programme but I am hoping that it will include The Tempest and King Lear as well as perhaps watching Toby Jones in the truly excellent film "Mr Burton" which tells Richard Burton's story in a really moving way – very much featuring his relationship with Shakespeare and particularly Henry V.

We shall also be keeping our eyes open for live streamings of Shakespeare plays at the cinema and outdoor live productions at Hall Barn and Wycombe Museum.

We usually have room for new members to join us, so do please contact me if you are interested.

FRENCH CONVERSATION



This last term, the French group has welcomed another 2 members which brings interesting and varied topics to our friendly meetings.

We talked about Robert Badinter et l'abolition de la peine de mort avec son entrée au Panthéon, L'incarcération de Nicolas Sarkozy le 21 octobre pour association de malfaiteurs pour le financement libyende sa campagne électorale en 2007, et surtout du 10eme anniversaire du massacre au Bataclan le 13 novembre 2015 which killed 132 and injured over 400 men and women of all ages covering the Stade de France and terrasses de cafes all over Paris, this changed France forever!

We also spoke about the importance of Voluntary work or Le Bénévolat which helps us to remain active and serves a useful purpose.

Some of us went to Puglia, Sorrento, Pompéi, Majorca and New York with its refreshed



new look since Trump's election and Le Puy du Fou; a unique Showpark packed with breathtaking stunts and special effects.

Others went to see the show Miss Saigon or the Cartier exhibition at V&A in South Kensington or The Shadow in the Mirror at the Mill in Sonning.

We also spoke about Giorgio Armani, the Italian fashion designer who died on the 4th of September and Picasso's paintings valued at £9m which vanished while in transit for an exhibition!

We finished with Les Misérables and the latest film called The Story of Jean Valjean released on the 19th of November. The film explores his life after his release from prison and his transformation after a pivotal encounter with a bishop.

As you can see we have covered a multitude of interesting subjects and we welcome anyone who wishes to join us and share some of their stories with us.

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.



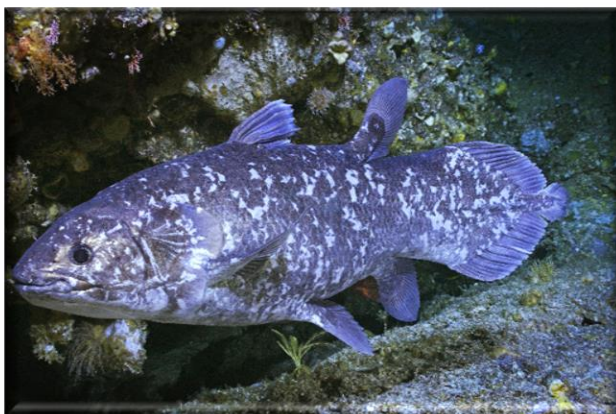
We have access to three of the library computers but it is better if you can bring a laptop. New members are always welcome.

GEOLOGY

In September Jenny gave us a fascinating talk on the Geology and Gastronomy of the Jurassic Coast in preparation for our boat trip later in the month (see separate article [here](#)). At the same meeting Jenny (a different one!) showed us photos she'd taken of geological features during her trip to Norway



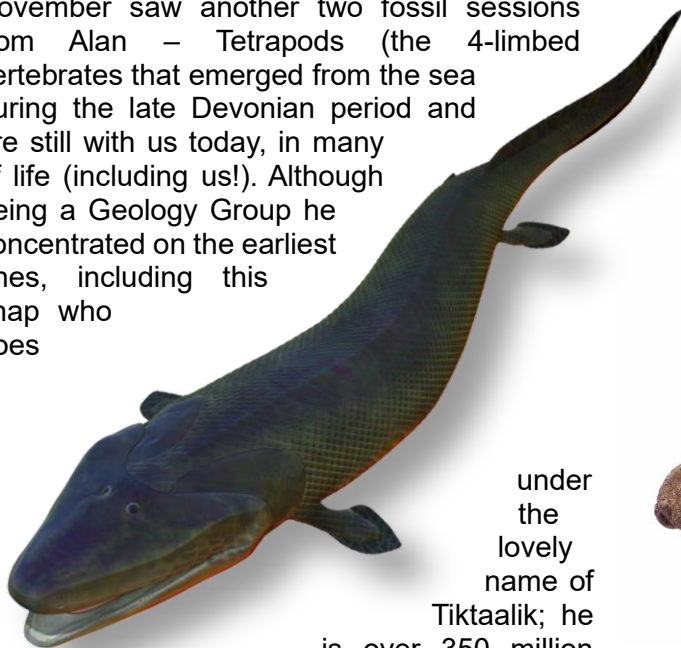
Alan continued his fossil series in October with an introduction to the first vertebrates, including a very interesting video about the Coelacanth – a lobe-finned fish whose earliest fossils date from around 410 million years ago, and was thought to have gone extinct along with the dinosaurs around 66 million years ago. That is, until a live one was fished up off the coast of Madagascar in 1938!



At the same session, Keith presented a brilliant session on the Geology and Landscape of the Central Valley of Mexico, which he very cleverly based on a painting of the area by José. Maria Velasco.



November saw another two fossil sessions from Alan – Tetrapods (the 4-limbed vertebrates that emerged from the sea during the late Devonian period and are still with us today, in many of life (including us!). Although being a Geology Group he concentrated on the earliest ones, including this chap who goes



under the lovely name of Tiktaalik; he is over 350 million years old and was discovered in the Canadian Arctic in 2004, and is considered the “missing link” between fish and land animals.

He followed with a second talk on “Cladistics” - a system of biological classification that groups organisms based on shared derived characteristics—traits inherited from a common ancestor that are unique to a particular lineage. By analysing these features, scientists construct evolutionary trees called cladograms, which illustrate patterns of descent rather than relying on overall similarity. This approach helps clarify how species are related and reveals the branching pathways of evolutionary history and is replacing the traditional Linnean system of classifying living things. Using Cladistics we can trace our own evolution right back to animals like Tiktaalik – who therefore becomes our several million times Great Grandad!

We finished the year in December with a prize quiz on the topics we had covered over the year – and drew some surprisingly high scores (which shows that most of the group must have been paying attention for the last 12 months – very satisfying for the Conveners and presenters!).

The quiz was followed by some festive fare – a tradition the Geology Group has maintained since it began.

Although there will be no meeting in January, we are working on a programme of topics for next suggested by our members, (some of which will be presented by them) including interactive sessions involving our geological microscope; another visit to the Oxford University Natural History Museum and a presentation by its Director of Earth Science, and another possible Jurassic Coast boat trip in May. We also have enough funds in our coffers now to be able to bring along a couple of Guest Speakers.

So – an exciting year behind us and another one ahead: if you’re interested in joining us please contact either Martin or Phil.

In the meantime have a splendid Christmas!



GERMAN CONVERSATION

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 each 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. In this way we can share our thoughts and observations on the topic.



We are not a teaching group but assistance is available if required!

Providing you have a reasonable grasp of German, you should be able to fit in. We currently have vacancies for new members.

If you're interested in joining us, please get in touch with me directly or via the HW u3a website.
Bis dahin, tschuss!

GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR

I am delighted that the latest figures for total active membership show a positive trend. This enables us to start more new Groups or 'refresh' existing Groups.

Examples in 2025 have included a new and remarkably successful Chess Group. We had an 'above expectation' start to Simple Handicrafts. Many new members are supporting our Genealogy Group. As many know, I am 'on the case' for new Groups in 2026.



It goes without saying that we are missing out on many interesting subjects! To do this, we need more members and Convenors. But I am fully aware of the conflict between overloading existing members and giving a wider choice of topics. However, we are one of the few u3a Groups not offering more than one Group for some topics. To do so we need more convenors, of course. Where there is a will, there is a way of course! Can you help? Could you be a Convenor? I am standing by to help.

One of the pleasing trends is the number of Groups who are encouraging the exchange of speakers with other local u3a Groups. This has been enthusiastically welcomed by members and fits well with the u3a's overall policy of being an organisation run by members for members. The talks just might stimulate a new Group! The various visits we have made in 2025 might also be the trigger albeit many who come on these visits say it is the company and tea they enjoy the most!

We have rechecked on the duties of my role as we move into 2026. Giving help to new and existing convenors in the setting up and running their Group is key, of course. This objective was very much in my mind when planning for the next annual Groups' Convenors Day (21st January). At this meeting we will also be majoring on explaining why and how recent 'technological' changes, especially communications to a wider audience, and how we can improve both the running and communications within our own u3a.

I do recognise that many Groups have their 'own' private communications methods including WhatsApp Groups and may not see why, for example, our u3a web site is relevant to them.

To help us and maximise your enjoyment at being a member of our u3a, please look at the web page for your Group and give us your thoughts. And yes, I realise we are all 'volunteers' and we all need help from time to time!

To see how your Group is presented click on this link.

[Groups - High Wycombe and District u3a](#)



Please bring forward any issues or queries about your Group initially to your Convenor. They will raise issues with the Committee, if necessary, to see how any issues can be resolved. At the Convenors Day on 21st January, we will be checking with them to see if we can help.



HANDBELL GROUP

This October marked the first anniversary of the Handbell Group. The Group has had great fun and has improved and every time we meet, and we have been proud to ring for the High Wycombe and District U3A at their Christmas gathering, and Summer picnic. The Group has been invited to ring for several other gatherings during the year and helped to raise several hundred pounds for charity.



The Group started as pure novices, and with their efforts have come along was and are now proficient in the range of music played.

Recently in November we were asked to visit the Vibe Church Movers and Shakers club in Downley where we gave a brief talk on the history of Church Bells and Handbell origins. This was followed by the group playing a wide range of Christmas carols for the attendees.

On December 18th the Group will join with the H/W Brass Band at the Lady de Spencer Arms carol charity night.

In the year ahead we will be back to a wider range of music and medleys and perhaps expanding our change ringing expertise with more complicated methods to amaze you all.



HISTORY



Our group meets on the second Thursday of each month at 2pm in members homes. We usually have two subjects per meeting separated by a short social time including tea and biscuits.

Our topics are wide ranging although we tend to use history TV programmes and podcasts. This way we get the most knowledgeable people on the chosen subjects who also have the knack of keeping the subject moving and interesting. Having said that our December, January and February's include wartime experiences, more in depth RAF history and Charles II all being done by group members.

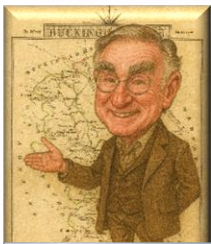
ITALIAN CONVERSATION



Our little group meet every third Tuesday of the month at 2.30pm. The aim of our group is to maintain/improve our fluency in speaking Italian in a relaxed atmosphere sharing stories about Italy during our times there whether on holiday or living there. We also chat informally about a wide range of subjects and help each other with forgotten vocabulary. We have listened to short news items or stories from RAI Uno which can be challenging at times owing to the speed with which they speak and sometimes their regional accents!

We have been to Norden Farm to watch an Italian film and intend to go again when one is available. If you would like to join us please contact Elaine Bird – we welcome all newcomers..

LOCAL HISTORY



Meets in Hazlemere Memorial Hall 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10am

In 2025 our Group has been undertaking research in and around High Wycombe and the Thames Valley. In addition to talks, we have enjoyed visiting individual houses, including Penn House, churches and museums.



Penn House



Cookham archaeological dig site



Stand out excursions were to Dorchester Abbey, formerly a Cathedral, as well as Hughenden Parish Church. The return visit to the archaeological dig in Cookham was met with enthusiasm. Wherever possible we had guided tours, listened to organ recitals and enjoyed afternoon tea and cakes.





Dorchester Abbey

We are starting our 2026 programme with a look at the lives and work of famous local people including Sir George Scott (architect of many local churches as well as the infamous Red Telephone Box and family firms in the High Wycombe furniture industry including Ercol and Gomme.

Future Programmes

December 9th, 2025 - A talk from the High Wycombe Society
Setting up the Royal Military College in High Wycombe

Tuesday 13th January 2026 10am - *Buckinghamshire People: An illustrated talk*
In the footsteps of Sir George Gilbert Scott, arguably, Buckinghamshire's' greatest architect.

Tuesday 10th February 2026 10am - *Family firms in the Furniture Industry*

We continue to focus on suggestions and contributions of our members. If you want to join us, please contact:
gilliamph@aol.com

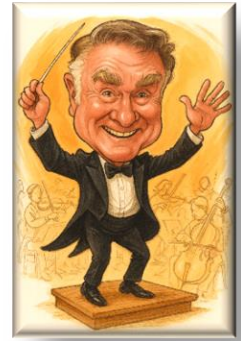




MUSIC

We meet in the home of a member on the 4th Thursday in the month from 2pm

Our objective is to widen our members' experience and enjoyment of all musical genres.



The Group focuses on a wide range variety of musical categories, including classical, opera,

jazz, film, and many others at monthly meetings.

We welcome contributions from members and use any appropriate audiovisual presentation materials to enhance our enjoyment. Presentations lead to group discussion and often recommendations for future meetings.

Our Group meets in a private home where we can play, listen and discuss music in comfort, disturbed only by the sound of our members enjoying 'almost legendary' cakes and refreshments!

Recent meetings in 2025

These have included a variety of presentations and music, including:



The life and work of composers such as Mozart and Schubert

The work of Gilbert and Sullivan with mentions of his life, a murder at his house in Bushey, Herts with members singing as best they could some of the more memorable songs

How the etiquette of 16th to 18th century audiences differed from today's audiences focussing on classical concerts in venues such as The Royal Albert Hall.



Demonstrations of equipment used to play music over the past 100 years, from cylinders, through discs and back to Vinyl.

We welcome members playing their own instruments even demonstrating a 'home -made' didgeridoo.

You are encouraged to bring your own music choices for others to hear and perhaps appreciate for the first time. Submissions can be on compact disc, usb, links to YouTube or Spotify. Even 78's and cassettes if you bring your own player!



Programme for Future meetings in 2026

We always include a popular session featuring the choice of our members. This leads to 'unexpected choices and great introductions to 'new composers and performers' we may otherwise have missed.

We've even converted members to a 'love of opera' and jazz through brilliantly researched contributions from members.

Plus, more controversially, after listening to choices from members, we ended 2025 with a session entitled, 'Who altered our favourite Christmas Carols and Why'?

We continue to focus on suggestions and contributions of our members. If you want to join us, please contact: gilliamph@aol.com

PHOTOGRAPHY



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

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Check out the Photography page of the u3a 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 – 'Lightroom Presets' and 'Basic Post Processing', '3D Photography', 'Camera settings' and

'Practical use of Flash.

We will also be looking at members photographs of 'Travel', 'Long Exposure', 'Black & White', 'Brick/Stone' 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. For more information about the group please contact Peter Davis: pj-davis@hotmail.co.uk

THE PHOTOGROUP GALLERY 2025



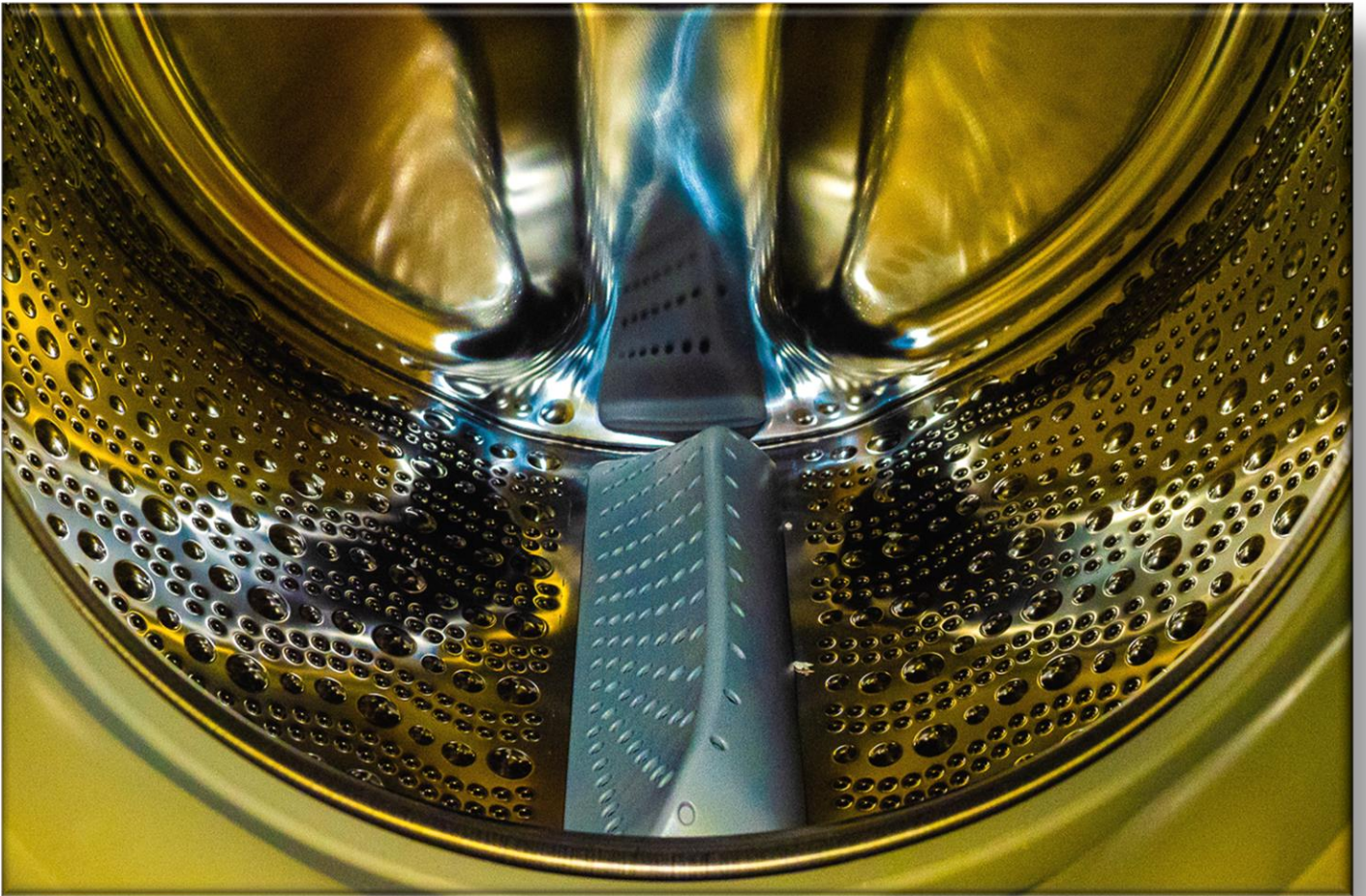
Puffin on the Edge - Teresa H



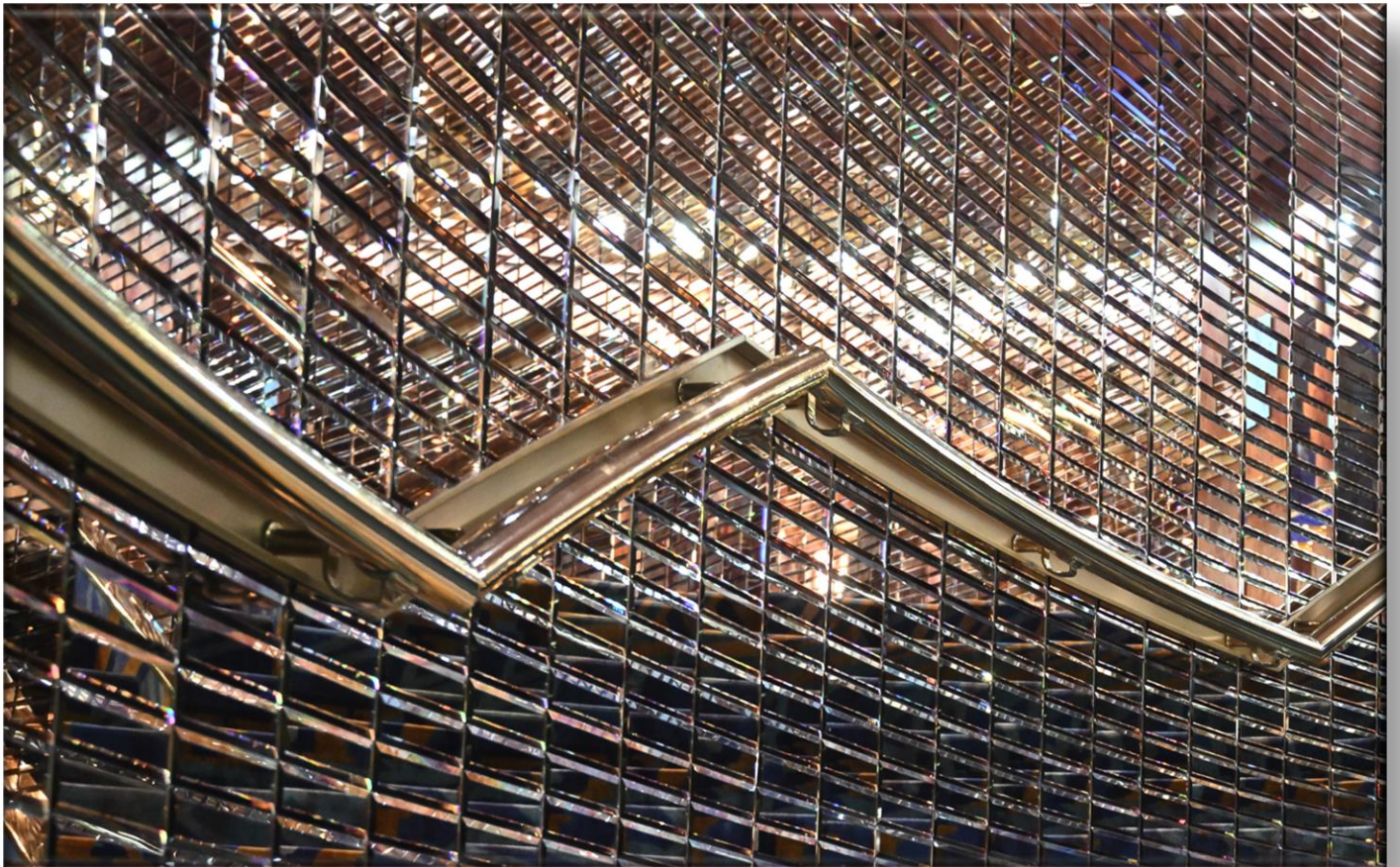
Hotpot – Ron S.



Mons Railway Station - Steve P.



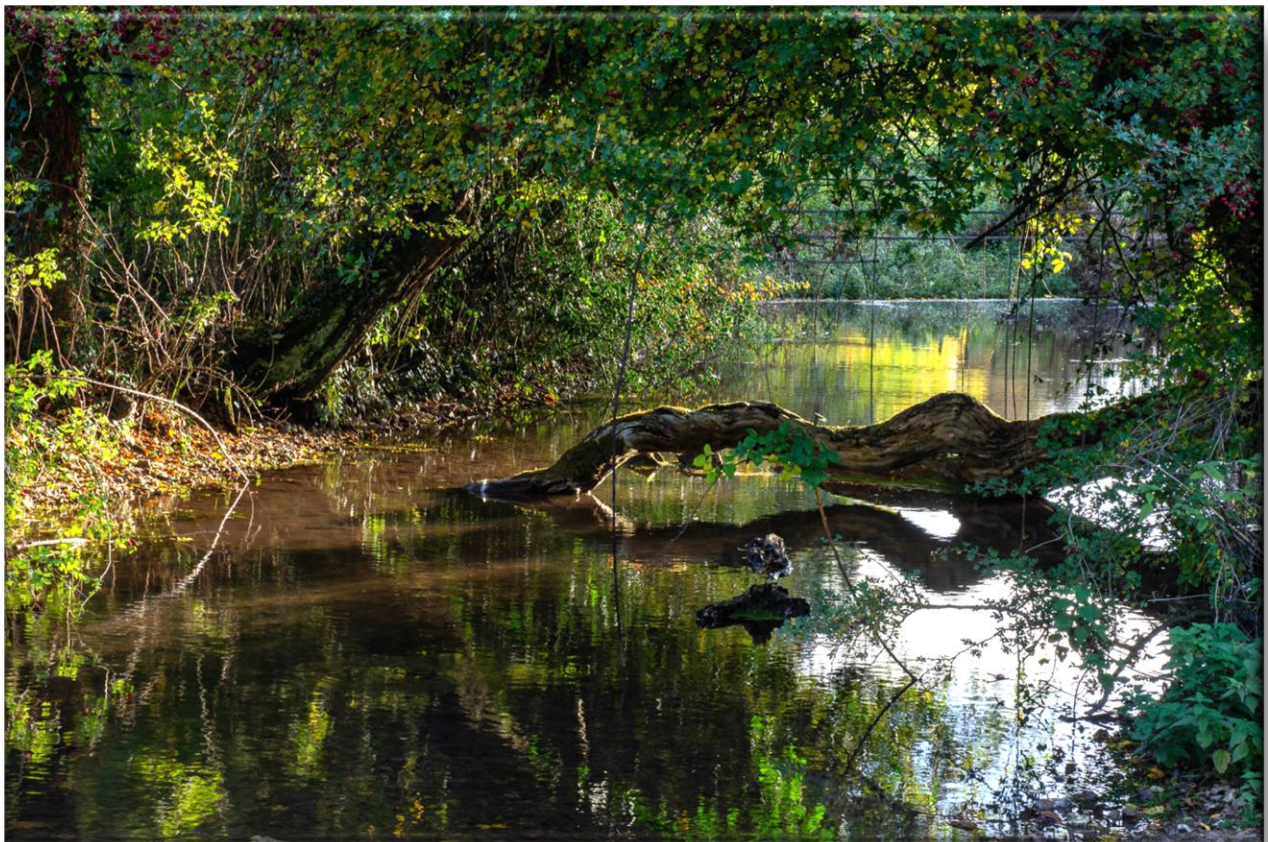
Washing Machine - Hilary P.



Stairway to Heaven - Chris G.



Low Tide in Northumberland - Hilary P.



River Reflections - Brenda S.



Fred and Daisy in the Red Lion for a lunchtime pint



Light on the Waves - Michael K.



St Pancras - Peter J.



Moonlit Landscape - Mike W.



Organ Pipes, St Mary's Church, Upton Grey - Peter D.



3Ps
(PLAYS POETRY & PROSE)

We said farewell to one of our most hardy members, Cheryl, who would travel from her houseboat in Warwick once a month to enthusiastically join us. In the end it was not sustainable. Her place has been taken by a new member, Peter, who began with us in November.

Blithe Spirit by Noel Coward was our most recent play, followed in October by weather and seasons poetry ranging from Flanders and Swann, Thomas Hardy to Shakespeare, Edward Thomas and Seamus Heaney.

November was prose about 'A Door' – who knew there was so much to be said about such an everyday thing? – Winnie the Pooh, Lewis Carroll and Dante were among the many writers we chose.

We look forward to giving you our latest panto offering at the Christmas coffee morning after which we can look forward to January and our next poetry outing.

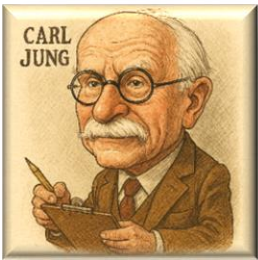
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*January brings the snow
 Makes your feet and fingers
 February's ice and sleet
 Freeze the toes right off your feet,
 Welcome March with wintry wind
 Would thou wert not so unkind!
 April brings the sweet Spring showers
 On and on for hours and hours.
 Farmers fear unkindly May
 Frost by night and hail by day.
 June just rains and never stops
 Thirty days and spoils the crops.
 In July the sun is hot
 Is it shining? No, it's not!
 August cold and dank and wet
 Brings more rain than any yet.
 Bleak September's mist and mud
 Is enough to chill the blood!
 Then October adds a gale
 Wind and slush and rain and hail.
 Dark November brings the fog
 Should not do it to a dog!
 Freezing wet December then
 Bloody January again!*

Flanders & Swan

PSYCHOLOGY

Nov 14th . Jon Rollit will talk about "Motivation and high Achievement"
Dec.12th . DVD of Panto characters, and Jung's archetypes. Which one can you be?
 Easy Christmas quiz with Mince Pies.
 Happy Christmas!



Jan.9th 2026. Transactional Analysis - find out more !
Feb.12th . St Valentine, Saint and Role Model.
 Plus Chinese New Year - which animal horoscope are you?

PUB LUNCHES

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)

QUIZ GROUP

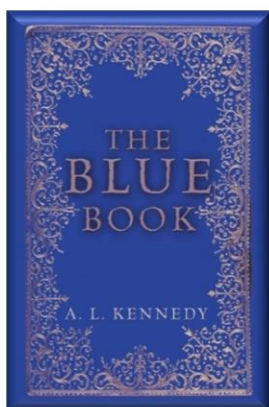
The Quiz group continue to meet on the first Thursday of each month at Naphill Village Hall starting at 2.00.

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.

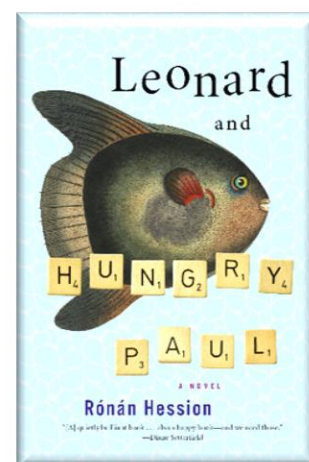


READING FOR PLEASURE

We do love Kate Atkinson (most of us!) but since this is the third time in recent years the group has encountered “One Good Turn” on the library list, we will not browbeat you with another review of it. (See back copies of the u3a newsletter.) Instead, we can offer you some of our reasons for admiring her writing: She handles narrative with superlative style; she’s witty and insightful; she creates characters we can love and she produces genuine and delightful narrative surprises. We will go on reading her with pleasure.



“The Blue Book” by A L Kennedy shot itself in the foot for us by its use of gratuitously unpleasant language and wilfully pretentious format. It was a book of much potential interest, exploring the relationship of Arthur (fake medium) and his erstwhile partner, Beth, who meet again on a cruise ship. (Long story.) The passages in which Arthur works a room full of gullible victims or manipulates a lone subject were fascinating – and the genuine good that he achieves by moving people on from their grief was astute and thought provoking. However, we were constantly enmired in gross language we could not justify and an artificial “book-speaks-to-reader” format that we could not engage. One of us who could not finish the book did, however, offer us an alternative recommendation that we share with you here. We are all going to try “Orbital” by Samantha Harvey to lift our spirits.



We all agreed that “Leonard and Hungry Paul” by Ronan Hession is the least flashy or tricky book we have read in a while. It did not attempt to shock, amaze or disturb us, nor to bedazzle us with narrative intricacies – and we loved it all the more for that. It is a gently humorous and delightful book that tells the simple story of two friends (no hidden agenda) dealing with life in their individual ways. Both live quietly at home and have some difficulties engaging with the fast-paced world around them. We were invited to accept, celebrate and enjoy these (and all) people as they are. Our inclination to fix, explain, judge or label was not encouraged here. We did not even find out why Hungry Paul was so named. And why should we?

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.

SIMPLE HANDICRAFTS

This is a brand new group and as the name suggests, we don't intend to create masterpieces - just small projects in craft. This might be items made from wool, paper, card or even plastic. A different member of the group will lead each session with an idea and suggested materials. Above all it will be a chance to chat as we create.

If you are interested in learning more about our group, or would like to join us, please contact Rosemary.

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.

Contact me or Rosemary Byrne for more details.

TEN-PIN BOWLING



The Group is flourishing with around 20 members, with 10-16 regular attendees at our bowling sessions. It's a lot of fun and no-one worries too much about the scores! And you have the benefit of getting some gentle exercise at the same time! You don't need to be an expert or even to have played before, everybody is welcome.

We meet at 1315 for a 1330 start on the first and third Tuesdays of each month - but not during school holidays. The venue is the Hollywood Bowl in the cinema complex opposite M&S in the Eden Shopping Centre. The current cost is £7.20 per person for 2 games or £3.60 for one game, which includes the use of a house ball and bowling shoes, although most of us wear our own flat shoes. Our sessions normally last about 1.5 to 2 hours.

There is no restriction on the number of bowlers at our sessions so why not join us and give it a go - "the more the merrier". Just let me know if you wish to attend as lanes have to be booked. I hope to see you there.



UKULELE

We have welcomed about six new members to our group with some beginners and some who are rediscovering the fun of ukulele playing.

The Star & Garter care home have requested we play for them before Christmas on Nov 11th so we are focusing on that and we will also be ready to play at the U3A coffee morning .

Do join us any level welcome also guitar players or percussion.
Happy holidays



WALKING



Each month we do 2 local walks, a shorter 4-5 mile walk (approx. 2hrs) and a longer 6-7 mile ramble (approx. 3hrs) on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month respectively. Where possible, we try to end our walks at a café or pub for refreshments.

Group members take it in turns to propose and lead their favourite walks.

So, if you fancy a lovely walk in the beautiful Chilterns, some healthy exercise or just a nice chat, then dig out your walking boots and come and join us - we are a friendly bunch and new members always welcome.

As you can see from the photos below, we're a friendly bunch who love to explore in all weathers and are always up for a laugh.

We wish you all a very Merry Xmas and a walk-filled New Year!



Review of recent rambles!

It's been another glorious late summer and autumn and we have managed to do some really wonderful walks. In September we did a short walk from Great Missenden up through woodland to the Little Kingshill and back through Missenden Abbey Park. The longer walk was from Sarratt to Chenies, along the beautiful Chess Valley with its crystal-clear chalk stream.



In October Judith led us from Naphill Village Hall down to West Wycombe and back, past Cookshall Farm, with great views across to the Dashwood Mausoleum and the Golden Ball. This was followed by another local walk from Bradenham through Park Wood, in all its autumn glory, to Smalldean Farm and back along open chalk meadows to Bradenham Manor.



In November Marion led us on another old favourite walk from Stockenchurch to Spriggs Alley and for the long walk Sue took us from Whiteleaf Hill to Buckmoorend and back past



Chequers, Grangelands Nature Reserve and Cadsden (past the pub where David Cameron took President Xi and accidentally left one of his children behind!).

Our final walk of the year in early December will be from Piddington up to Wheelers End and back down to the Dashwood Roadhouse pub, where we hope to have another excellent and merry Xmas lunch!

Planned Walks for the Spring

SHORTER WALKS - 2nd Monday. Meet at 9:45am for 10:00am start.

12th Jan – Chesham Bois and the Beech Hangers, led by **Eleanor** – 4 miles.

9th Feb – A Remote Chilterns Walk, led by **Martin** – 4.5 miles.

9th March – Tring Park Walk, led by – 4.1 miles.

13th April – Ley Hill, led by **Eleanor** - 3.8 miles.

LONGER WALKS - 4th Monday. Meet at 9:45am for 10:00am start.

26th January – The Hambleden Valley, led by **Jenny** – 4.8 miles.

23rd February – Great Missenden to the Lee, led by – 6.4 miles.

23rd March – Rotherfield Greys led by **Mike** – 7.2 mls

27th April – Nuffield Circular Walk, led by – 6.8 miles.

Full details of our planned walks and any **late changes** can be found on our U3A website at https://highwycombe.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/walking/

*All walks **start at 10am**, unless told otherwise. In case of bad weather and possible cancellation, please contact the specified walk leader **by 8:30am** on the day. We aim to send out an email reminder a few days before each walk.*

***Please let us know whether or not you will be joining us** (this helps if walks are changed or cancelled at the last minute).*

***If you are joining us on a walk for the first time**, then please contact Eleanor or the walk's leader to let us know you are coming - in case some details or information have been changed since originally planned!*

***Equipment** - Over the winter months the walks may be wet & muddy in places, so please wear good walking shoes & waterproof jackets, walking poles may also help. Sometimes sun hats useful too! **PLEASE** let the leader know of any health issues and bring any medication that you think YOU might need.*



WHIST

Our numbers have continued to grow steadily during this term which we are delighted about. Naturally we are making every effort to ensure they stay with us and would be wonderful if we could attract even more members!

We meet once a month on a Thursday afternoon. You do not need to have played before as our regular members are only too happy to show you.

I was on holiday for our meeting on Thursday 21st August 25 which was excellently covered by Judith E. and Joy S. My grateful thanks to them for their support. Judith K. won the ladies. Three winners for the men and again we had a play-off which was won by Mic W. and Christopher M. won the booby prize.

At our meeting on 18th September 2025 the ladies prize was won by Linda A. Brian O.C. the men's and Christopher M. the booby prize.

At our meeting on 16th October 2025 Fran T. won the ladies, Robert R. the men's and Judith K. the booby prizes.

At our meeting on 20th November 2025, which was again covered by Judith E. and Joy S. Joy S. won the ladies prize, Robert R. for the men and the booby by Judith K.

I would like to offer my grateful thanks to Joy and Judith for their continued support in my absence. This was a well subscribed meeting with eighteen members, including four new ones.

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.

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, WHITTLING & 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.

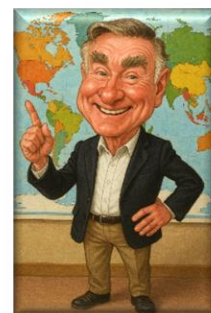
THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

Meets in Hazlemere Memorial Hall 3rd Friday of the month at 2pm

Our group is designed to be interactive and inclusive, allowing members to explore topics from different viewpoints and contribute to the conversation. We will continue to major on issues and subjects identified by our members.

Topics covered in 2025

Through talks and discussions, often with international speakers, we have understood more of the Geopolitics of the World. This included a very successful session (repeated) on the history of Palestine, and, by contrast, the political and economic implications and costs that might arise from the degradation of thousands of 'ship wrecks' in waters around the UK coastline.



Landi Khana, which is near Torkham at the western end of the Khyber Pass,, circa 1930.

More recently, we've journeyed along the Silk Roads, exploring cities, religions, geology and cultures of the countries we passed through from China to the Mediterranean and on to Europe.

Our convenor lives opposite the house of the engineer who built the Khyber Pass railway. He was able to share with us the history of both this house (Plumtree Cottage) and the railway itself.

The railway was opened in 1926 to facilitate the passage primarily of the military through Afghanistan into India. Some members might remember the garden of Plumtree Cottage being used

by the local school for games.

Continuing our theme of India, were fortunate to have links with a leading post-doctoral researcher from Oxford and Havard Universities who discussed the role of women in the Indian Coal Industry during the 2nd World War and the development of the Indian Tea Industry.



On 19th December 2025, we will be hearing why the Royal Military College was established in High Wycombe.

Topics planned for 2026

On January 13th, 2026, we will hear a Professor from SOAS (University of London) discussing issues around Taiwan and the aims of China.

On February 20th, we will be looking through the eyes of Toronto University describing the work being undertaken to understand, measure and control pollution in The Great Lakes. Their ongoing work is paying particular attention to the long - term consequences to the environment of 'forever chemicals'.

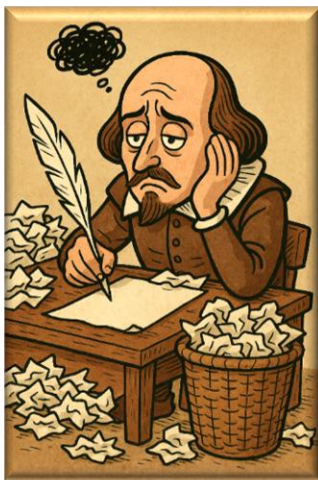
On March 20th we investigate the issue of 'Thirst. In search of Fresh Water'. Our talk centres on Sustainability and the Environment, centred on an exhibition at the Wellcome Centre into the sourcing of fresh water from pre-historic times to current exploration techniques.

We've many other talks being planned include, 'Economic Inequality and the widening gap between the rich and the poor globally'. (Including a look at the implications of the Autumn 2025 Budget).

Other subjects in 2026 will major on Health and Wellness, Social and Humanitarian issues as well as Technology and Economy following up on a talk on AI and Community Building.

We continue to focus on suggestions and contributions of our members.

WRITING FOR PLEASURE



Even the best can get stuck sometimes!

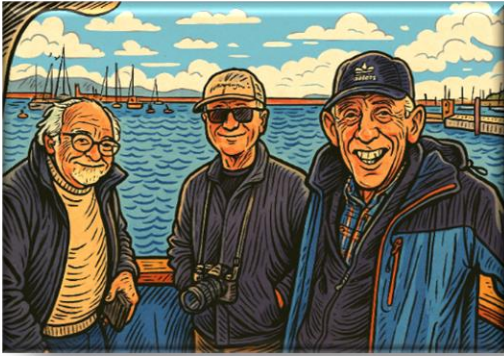
We continue to meet and engage, fascinate and sometimes astonish an expanding group of would-be but not quite really-be, writers. Our resident poet may have begun to inspire some competition and our long-term autobiographer continues to fascinate us with the details from a unique life experience.

For the rest of us, a regular insertion of a 'prompt' from a proper 'how to write' guide helps to produce some incredibly varied and often highly amusing responses.

Some recent recruits threaten to make the whole thing even better!



GEOLOGY GROUP BOAT TRIP



In September some of the Geology Group made their way to Exmouth for a Geological Boat trip.

Following a very convivial dinner the evening before, we boarded the “Pride of Exmouth” the following morning of what promised to be a lovely sunny day.



We were looking forward to a Geological cruise which was meant to travel along the Jurassic Coast – except that the sea state on the voyage from Exmouth to Lyme Regis was waves of about 1.5 metres. So instead the skipper of the boat took us on a much calmer journey westward with much less chance of most of us leaving our breakfasts on the bed of the English Channel. As the trip lasted 6½ hours it was a wise decision!

Therefore our Jurassic Coast voyage became one along the English Riviera from Exmouth to Brixham, which is a UNESCO Global Geopark. None of us knew much about the geology of this area so it was a great learning experience.

We had a resident geologist as a guide throughout the journey, which took us past Dawlish Warren, Dawlish, Teignmouth and Torquay, around Brixham harbour before turning round at Berry Head and straight back to Exmouth via a circuit of the Ore Stone.

We also travelled back in time: from Quaternary deposits that form the sand spit of Dawlish Warren (without which Exmouth would not have a harbour!). Jurassic and Triassic rocks (found in the Jurassic Coast east of Exmouth) are absent here, having been eroded away, so we



Parson & Clerk Rocks

were immediately into the Permian (299 to 252 million years ago) when the area was in the middle of a huge desert (not surprising really, as it was located at the same latitude as where the Sahara is now!). The rocks here are Teignmouth Breccia, composed of a mixture of angular



grains of sandstone, limestone, and porphyry cemented in a sandy matrix, stained red by the presence of iron, and have been carved into beautiful shapes such as the Parson and Clerk Rocks by the sea and are soft enough for Brunel to have tunnelled through them for his South Devon Railway in 1846.

Next we were into the Carboniferous (359 to 299 million years ago) where we saw large faults and folds caused by the collision of the continents of Laurussia and Gondwana to form Pangea, and gave rise to the Variscan Orogeny – which is when a mountain belt stretching from Portugal to Cornwall, Devon and Pembrokeshire was formed, as well as the granites which can be seen on Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor.

Dramatic evidence of this can be seen at “London Bridge”, where the sea has cut through Devonian limestone strata which



London Bridge, Torquay



Raised Beach at Hope's Nose

have been upended by almost 90 degrees by the vast mountain-building forces, and also at Hope's Nose, where heat and pressure had created mineral veins, some of which contain small traces of gold. There is also a Raised Beach here, a relic of when the sea levels fell during the Pleistocene Ice Age.



The Ore Stone



A particularly dramatic fold can be seen at the Ore Stone, a large rock offshore Torquay which we circled on our way back.



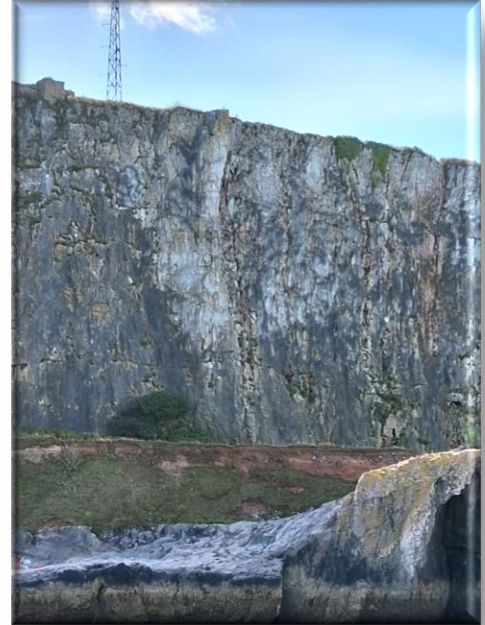
Brixham Harbour

The boat had a bar and a café on board and we had all pre-ordered pasties which were absolutely delicious! (and a crafty beer or glass of wine did not go amiss either!) After a quick aside into Brixham harbour, we saw the oldest rocks on our trip as we travelled back to the Devonian period (420 to 359 million years ago) at Berry Head, to the west of Brixham. These hard limestones were laid down when the area was south of the Equator, in seas similar to the Caribbean

today. This harder rock resisted erosion by the sea and consequently the cliffs here are higher than further north.

Finally we headed home (via the Ore Stone as mentioned earlier) after a brilliant and refreshing day.

We all agreed we should do it again next year – maybe we'll get to see the Jurassic Coast next time!



Cliffs at Berry Head



Homeward Bound



SPEAKERS' CORNER

AUGUST Pauline Mines: An Invitation to Guide Dogs for the Blind

Pauline came to our meeting with her current Guide Dog, Dove. She told us that it was in Germany where it was realised that dogs had the ability to support blind people. The dogs live with puppy walkers before attending training sessions to learn behaviours and routes they will need to support their new owners. It costs £77,000 to breed, raise and train a single Guide dog and after 10 years' service they retire. The talk prompted a lot of questions about dogs that fail the training and at what age could a person have a dog.

SEPTEMBER Angela Wall : A Floral tribute to Moorcroft

Angela enjoyed sharing her passion for Moorcroft William Moorcroft was son of artistic parents who showed his talent at a young age. He became Head designer at Macintyre's pottery and in 1913, with the support of Liberty's, he built his own factory producing high class ceramics. If a pot wasn't perfect, it was thrown away. The factory continues to be run as a family concern. Ian, one of our members, brought samples from his collection of Moorcroft pieces.

OCTOBER Chris Rattenbury : Wheelpower

Chris was born with Spina bifida but has not let this hold him back in his pursuit of sport. At the height of his career as a Power lifter he was 4th in the World. He told us how the Stoke Mandeville Games was started by Ludwig Guttmann in 1948 and has become a world-wide phenomenon for disabled athletes. Chris was very proud to be a Gamesmaker at London 2012.

NOVEMBER Jane Sellwood : Water : How we use it and Abuse it

Jane was a clinical biologist in her working life, searching out viruses . She has maintained her interest in water and her talk, which she regularly updates, began with a reminder about the Water table, which we learnt about at school. She tackled the issues with Thames Water who are heavily in debt and the need for 9 more reservoirs to be built across the UK to feed our need for water. Data processing centres require a great deal of water to keep their machines functioning and use 13% of our potable water. The average person uses 142 litres of water a day in England so think twice before you have a deep bath!



2026 SPEAKER SCHEDULE

28 th January	Little Orchard: Creating a Wildlife Garden	Jon Mason
25 th February	The Human Gut Microbiome	Steve Coles
25 th March	Chenies Manor and the Russells	Alison Wall
22 nd April	WPC Yvonne Fletcher – The Search for Justice	Paul Barfield
27 th May	Life and Times of a Film Extra (AGM from 2pm)	John Kinory
24 th June	Ruth Ellis: The Last Lady Hanged	Jeff Rozelaar
22 nd July	Castles around London	Rob Smith
26 th August	The Saxophone: My Life as an Army Musician (Part 2)	Jon Woodhouse
23 rd September	The Journey to Chalgrove Field (First English Civil War)	Mike Payne
28 th October	Ancestors in my Closet	Ian Brearley
25 th November	Places I have Catered	Ann Tennant
December	Christmas Coffee Morning	Naphill Village Hall



CHRITMAS DINGBATS

A word, phrase or saying about Christmas is hidden on each Dingbat. See how many you can get:

<p>PPPPPPPPPPPP</p> 	<p>NIGmassHT</p>	<p>XMAS</p>	<p>MEDITERRANEAN ADRIATIC BALTIC NORTH CARIBBEAN DEAD</p> <p>Hello Hello</p>	
<p>Y Y Y</p> 	<p>THEBINLEAK</p>	<p>Pyrus Perdix perdix communis</p>	<p>Spear Cottage Pepper Shepherd Polo Apple</p>	<p>Tafrankste</p>

DITLOIDS

A ditloid is a type of word puzzle in which a phrase, song, film or book title, quotation, date, or fact must be deduced from the numbers and abbreviated letters in the clue.

Eg "3BM" is Three Blind Mice

3Cs in a F
7Bs for 7Bs
T Ms for SS
10GBs
40 Ds in L
7Ps of W
1 H on a U
11 P P
7 of J is C D in R
7 H of R

118 Es in the PT
12 K of the RT
I W W 500 M
364 Gs in the T Ds of C
1666 the GF of L
20000 L u the S
D is the RN for 500
6 Zs in a M
220 Ys in a F
2 Ts on an A E






DITLOIDS SOLUTIONS

3Cs in a F
7Bs for 7Bs
T Ms for SS
10GBs
40 Ds in L
7Ps of W
1 H on a U
11 Ps P
7 of J is C D in R
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20000 L u the S
D is the RN for 500
6 Zs in a M
220 Ys in a F
2 Ts on an A E

3 Coins in a Fountain
7 Brides for 7 Brothers
2 Mules for Sister Sarah
10 Green Bottles
40 Days in Lent
7 Pillars of Wisdom
1 Horn on a Unicorn
11 Pipers Pipins
7th January is Christmas Day in Russia
7 Hills of Rome
118 Elements in the Periodic Table
12 Knights of the Round Table
I would Walk 500 Miles
364 Gifts in the Twelve Days of Christmas
1666 – The Great Fire of London
20,000 Leagues under the Sea
D is the Roman Numeral for 500
6 Zeroes in a Million
220 Yards in a Furlong
2 Tusks on an African Elephant



DINGBATS SOLUTIONS

<p>PPPPPPPPPPPP</p> 	<p>NIGmassHT</p>	<p>XMAS</p>	<p>MEDITERRANEAN ADRIATIC BALTIC NORTH CARIBBEAN DEAD</p> <p>Hello Hello</p>	
<p>Peace on Earth</p>	<p>Midnight Mass</p>	<p>White Christmas</p>	<p>Seasons Greetings</p>	<p>Snowball</p>
<p>Y Y Y</p> 	<p>THEBINLEAK</p>	<p>Pyrus Perdix perdix communis</p>	<p>Spear Cottage Pepper Shepherd Polo Apple</p>	<p>Tafrankste</p>
<p>3 Wise Men</p>	<p>In the Bleak Midwinter</p>	<p>Partridge in a pear tree</p>	<p>Mince Pies</p>	<p>Frankincense</p>



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	Chess Writing for Pleasure 10-pin Bowling Italian Conversation	14:00 10.00 13.30 14.30	H 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	Simple Handicrafts' Antiques & Collectibles	10:00 14.00	H 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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