



Getting back to normal  
Memories of Christmas  
AGM advance information



Front cover and above: The Singing for Pleasure Group was astounded at the support they received at their Christmas Concert in the Albert Ellis room at the Amersham Free Church.

Right: One could be forgiven for thinking we were seeing Benjamin Disraeli in the flesh at the History Group's December meeting. It was, in fact, Jeff Rozelaar with an astonishing performance of his one-man show of the statesman's life.

Below: Knitters have got off to a good start in the new year. These are destined for South Africa, and a charity that provides garments for babies.

Below right: The Digital Imaging Group have been recently working on enhancing their photographs and learning how to manipulate images creatively. Evidently they make good pupils!



# Speakers for General Meetings

All meetings start at 2pm

Broadway Baptist Church

76 The Broadway

Chesham, Bucks HP5 1EG



**Colin Pawson**

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March**

## ***Coaches and Coach-horns***

Colin is also known as 'The Tootler', and has been driving ponies and horses for over 30 years. He is an expert in four-in-hand coaching, as well as blowing the coach-horn! Colin also works with the driving section of the Riding for the Disabled Association, and has many adventures to relate as a guard on the coaches that are still on the road today.

**Jim Mitchell**

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April**

## ***Magic of the Musicals***

Jim has always been a singer, from head choirboy at school via being the youngest member of the BBC West of England Singers and subsequently has appeared in many operas, his most unusual performance being a dumb eunuch in an odd production of Mozart's *Il Seraglio*. Later, he became passionately interested in musical theatre and he has appeared in *South Pacific*, *Oklahoma*, and *The Merry Widow*. Jim's talk is a magical and romantic journey through the world of the musical.

**Denise Beddows**

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May**

## ***Buckinghamshire Spies and Subversives***

Denise is an author who also writes as D.J. Kelly and has had several of her espionage and suspense thrillers get on Amazon's Top 5. From religious martyrs and gunpowder plotters to Cold War traitors, and ideological domestic terrorists, this county has seen it all, including a surprising number of women spies and the first use of surveillance photography against local women!

**David Callaghan**

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June**

## ***Cometh the Day, Cometh the Jewel***

David joined the West End firm of jewellers, Hancocks, as an apprentice in 1955 and retired in 1997 as their Senior Director. He is a past president of the Society of Jewellery Historians and is a liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths. David's talk presents some of the extraordinary tales behind notable pieces of jewellery.

**Note that this talk was postponed from January, due to our need to go back to Zoom that month.**



**The Broadway Baptist Church is accessible to wheelchairs and is equipped with a hearing loop.**



# Notes from the Chair

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2022.

## Return to live meetings; and thank you Zoom.

Since the government has removed the remaining COVID-19 restrictions, I guess that most Groups will now return to live meetings. Zoom has been invaluable in keeping us going for the last two years but it doesn't compare with face-to-face meetings. We have decided to keep one of our Zoom accounts active as a fallback but the other one has been downgraded to the free version, where meetings of more than two are limited to 40 minutes.

We are now back to live General Meetings and thanks to Jenny Beirne, Gill Biddle, Sue Naylor, Camilla Plummer, Peter Windsor and Linda Wainscoat, we are again able to offer refreshments afterwards.

## Annual General Meeting, 9<sup>th</sup> June

In the middle of this newsletter is information about our AGM, which will precede our monthly General Meeting on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June. As Colin O'Rourke points out in the Notice of Meeting, even assuming that the retiring Committee Members are re-elected, we do have two vacancies on the Committee. We can always do with an injection of fresh blood and new ideas, so please do put yourself forward. If you want to find out more about how our Committee works, you're welcome to attend one of our meetings as a 'taster'; please contact me or Colin O'Rourke (contact details on page 5) if you are interested.

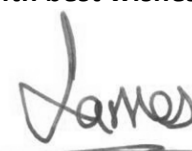
## Striders raise money for children in Belarus

In the report of the Striders Groups (page 21), mention is made of their fund-raising for the Belarus Children's Hospice Charity. In total, they managed to raise £808, so many congratulations to them.

## Thanks for the photos

Often, we scratch around for photos to use on our cover pages but, this time, we have received a bumper crop of great pictures from many Groups. Thanks very much and keep 'em coming! If we can't find room in the newsletter, they may well end up in the Gallery on our website.

*With best wishes*



**James Cadle**  
chair@cvu3a.uk

## New Members

We offer a warm welcome to our newest members:

Louise Bell	<i>Hemel Hempstead</i>	Dave Morris	<i>Amersham</i>
Annette Cathcart	<i>Chesham</i>	Margaret Oakes	<i>Tring</i>
James Cathcart	<i>Chesham</i>	Alan Parker	<i>Chesham</i>
Cherie Ellis	<i>Chesham</i>	Jill Pye	<i>Little Kingshill</i>
Linda English	<i>Chesham Bois</i>	Mary Upward	<i>Amersham</i>
Gina Houston	<i>Chalfont St Giles</i>	Janet Wyman	<i>Chesham</i>

If you know anyone you think might be interested in joining, please ask them to get in touch with the Membership Secretary; contact details on page 5.

**Copy date for the next newsletter is 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**

## From the Groups Coordinator

I am very pleased to say that our first post-lockdown Group Convenors' meeting is to take place at Chesham Town Hall on Tuesday 29th March, starting at 11am and including lunch. We have some new Convenors since we last met and it is always good to meet up with others. If you are a Convenor we look forward to seeing you then.

Our new Folk Music Group is up and running and two members have offered to set up an Archery Group. As yet however we have only two interested parties come forward, so do let me know if you are interested.

Whilst we have talk of new Groups, sadly both Eclectic Music and Jazz Appreciation will close shortly unless a new Convenor or Convenors come forward. Do contact either me or the existing Convenors if you are interested.

**Helen Barnard**  
**Groups Coordinator**  
groups@cvu3a.uk

## News from the Events Team

After our enforced two-year hiatus, the Events Team has begun to organise visits again. We are starting by visiting **The Museum of Brands in Notting Hill on 23<sup>rd</sup> March**, travelling there by public transport.

On the morning of **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May**, we will be visiting the **Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Military Cemetery at Brookwood** followed by a visit to the **Savill Garden** in the afternoon. We are finalising the details (costs and so-forth, now) but please contact the Events Team to register your interest, so we can ascertain numbers.

We have also arranged a visit to the **Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**, to see the exhibition, **Japan: Courts and Culture**. People will make their way there by public transport and the £25 admission includes a talk prior to viewing the exhibition and also tea and coffee. At the moment, all places were booked quickly in response to our email on 20<sup>th</sup> February but there is a waiting list in case anyone drops out. Please contact the Events Team.

**The Events Team**  
events@cvu3a.uk

## Chess Valley u3a Committee

Chair	James Cadle	chair@cvu3a.uk	01494 716992
Vice-Chair	Helen Barnard	vicechair@cvu3a.uk	01494 715588
Treasurer	Geoff Naylor	treasurer@cvu3a.uk	01494 434918
Business Secretary	Colin O'Rourke	secretary@cvu3a.uk	01494 728897
Membership Secretary	Jim Wilkie	membership@cvu3a.uk	01494 782081
Groups Coordinator	Helen Barnard	groups@cvu3a.uk	01494 715588
Webmaster	Valerie Garrood	webmaster@cvu3a.uk	01494 433585
Newsletter Editors	John Bunyan	newsletter@cvu3a.uk	01494 778858
	James Cadle		01494 716992
Speaker Organiser	Michael Cohn*	speakers@cvu3a.uk	01494 763542
Events Coordinator	Jackie Cobb	eventscoord@cvu3a.uk	01494 773718

\* indicates a non-voting member

# Chess Valley u3a Convenors

(All phone numbers are prefixed by 01494 unless otherwise indicated)

Group	Convenor/s	u3a e-mail
<b>Art</b>	Mo Barnes	art@cvu3a.uk
	Angela Spittle	
<b>Art Discussion 1</b>	Angela Bishop	artdiscuss@cvu3a.uk
<b>Art Discussion 2</b>	Caroline Jenks	artdiscuss2@cvu3a.uk
<b>Art Discussion 3</b> (currently dormant)	Helen Barnard	artdiscuss3@cvu3a.uk
<b>Book Group 1</b>	Gillian Eastmond and	bookgroup1@cvu3a.uk
	Mavis Earnshaw	
<b>Book Group 2</b>	Liz Howlett	bookgroup2@cvu3a.uk
	Christine Ross	
<b>Book Group 3</b>	Eileen Overton	bookgroup3@cvu3a.uk
<b>Book Group 4</b>	Jackie Cobb	bookgroup4@cvu3a.uk
<b>Bowls (Green), Outdoors (Chiltern)</b>	Margaret Stickland	bowls@cvu3a.uk
<b>Bowls (Short Mat), Indoors (Chiltern)</b>	Sue Spalton	shortbowls@cvu3a.uk
	Peter Williams	
<b>Bridge</b>	John Curtis	bridge@cvu3a.uk
	Patrick Clarke	
<b>Bus Pass Adventures</b>	Anne Muir	buspass@cvu3a.uk
<b>Canasta</b>	Linda Hepworth	canasta@cvu3a.uk
	Sue Hawksley	
<b>Chess</b>	Peter Schweiger	chess@cvu3a.uk
<b>City of London Churches</b>	Jackie Cobb	londonchurches@cvu3a.uk
<b>Current Affairs</b>	Eileen Overton	currentaffs@cvu3a.uk
<b>Digital Imaging</b>	Pippa Greensmith	digimaging@cvu3a.uk
	David Hurd	
<b>Dinghy Sailing</b>	Wendy Barnes	sailing@cvu3a.uk
	Judith Young	
<b>Eclectic Music</b>	Danny Robins	music@cvu3a.uk
	Rod Stevens	
<b>Family History</b>	Sue Broad	familyhist@cvu3a.uk
<b>Folk Music</b>	Richard Skepper	folkmusic@cvu3a.uk
<b>French Conversation</b>	Morag Robertson	frenchcons@cvu3a.uk
<b>French Intermediate</b>	Hilary Alleston	french@cvu3a.uk
<b>Gardening</b>	Stephanie Rothwell	garden@cvu3a.uk
	Camilla Plummer	
<b>German</b>	Jenny Lee	german@cvu3a.uk
<b>History</b>	Claire Paterson	history@cvu3a.uk
	Ian Hutt	
<b>Italian</b> (currently dormant)	Joanna Hughes	newitalian@cvu3a.uk

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# Chess Valley u3a Convenors (continued)

(All phone numbers are prefixed by 01494 unless otherwise indicated)

Group	Convenor/s	u3a e-mail
<b>Jazz Appreciation</b>	Danny Robins	jazzmusic@cvu3a.uk
<b>Keep Fit for 60+</b> (currently dormant)	Vacancy	keepfit60@cvu3a.uk
<b>Knitting and Other Crafts</b>	Sue Rawbone	knit@cvu3a.uk
<b>Line Dancing (Chiltern)</b>	Lynne Benes	u3alinedance@chiltern-u3a.org.uk
	Linda English	
<b>Mah Jong</b>	Ed Perrott	mahjong@cvu3a.uk
<b>MOTO</b>	Mo Barnes	moto@cvu3a.uk
<b>MOTO 2</b> (currently dormant)	Peter Page	moto2@cvu3a.uk
<b>Patchwork &amp; Quilting</b>	Angela Bratton	patchquilt@cvu3a.uk
	Janet Moore	
<b>Photography</b>	David Hurd	photography@cvu3a.uk
<b>Pilates (1, 2 and 3)</b>	Christine Ross	pilates@cvu3a.uk
	Liz Howlett	
<b>Play Reading</b>	Claire Paterson	playread@cvu3a.uk
	Linda Hepworth	
<b>Poetry</b>	Christine Ogborne	poetry@cvu3a.uk
<b>Railways</b>	Graham Yellowley	railways@cvu3a.uk
	James Cadle	
<b>Science &amp; Technology</b>	Mike Christianson	sciencetech@cvu3a.uk
	Peter Twist	
<b>Scrabble for Fun</b>	Tony Muir	scrabble@cvu3a.uk
<b>Singing for Pleasure</b>	Angela Bratton	singing@cvu3a.uk
	Stephanie Rothwell	
<b>Spanish Conv (Inter)</b>	Hilary Alleston	spanishconv@cvu3a.uk
<b>Stamps</b>	Brian Feakes	stamps@cvu3a.uk
<b>Tai Chi</b>	Sue Broad	taichi@cvu3a.uk
<b>Theatre</b>	This Group is run by a small sub-committee	theatre@cvu3a.uk
<b>Ukulele</b>	Jeff Naman	ukulele@cvu3a.uk
	Heather Sprake	
<b>Amblers</b>	Susan Osborne	amblers@cvu3a.uk
<b>Walkers 1</b>	Stuart Stanley	walkers1@cvu3a.uk
<b>Walkers 2</b>	Sue Rawbone	walkers2@cvu3a.uk
<b>Walkers 3</b>	Jane Towers	walkers3@cvu3a.uk
<b>Striders 1</b>	Andrew Brown	striders@cvu3a.uk
<b>Striders 2</b>	Ian Lee	striders21@cvu3a.uk
	Peter Schweiger	

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# Chess Valley u3a Convenors (continued)

(All phone numbers are prefixed by 01494 unless otherwise indicated)

Group	Convenor/s	u3a e-mail
<b>Walks into History: Country</b>	Tony Biddle	walkshist@cvu3a.uk
<b>Walks into History: London</b>	Angela Shipley	walkslondon@cvu3a.uk
<b>Wildlife</b>	Harry Howlett	wildlife@cvu3a.uk
	Keith Sonley	
<b>Wine Appreciation 1</b>	Pauline & Tom Hohenberg	wine@cvu3a.uk
<b>Wine Appreciation 2</b>	Muriel Gray (acting)	wine2@cvu3a.uk
<b>Writers</b>	John & Helene Bunyan	writers@cvu3a.uk

## Do we have your up-to-date contact details?

If you have moved, changed your phone number or have a new email address, please make sure you update your information via the Chess Valley u3a website ([www.cvu3a.uk](http://www.cvu3a.uk)). Click on 'Membership Login' on the homepage and then use your ID which is your membership number (from your membership card) prefixed by the first two letters of your first name (for example 'Jo9999'). If you don't have internet access, please let the Membership Secretary know (contact details above). We'd hate for you not to be kept up-to-date with the happenings in your u3a or miss out on events and visits.

## A question of perspective

I've always been surprised that the 'discovery' of visual perspective didn't occur until the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. It's the art world's equivalent of the offside rule; obvious to those who know or care and a mystery to those who don't. And I would have thought that it came along much earlier, with the whole gamut of things that the Romans did for us. So that after concrete, surgery, aqueducts, coin money and numerals, it would have been an absolute given. I mean surely, to any Roman looking at the horizon at the end of one of their many and iconic (sorry) very straight roads, it would have been pretty obvious, or the road would have narrowed physically to a point.

But no! It took another one and a half millennia before Mr Brunelleschi spotted it, along with the vanishing point (not to be confused with the Institute of Advanced Motorists' version, which involves braking) and probably would have shouted 'Eureka' if that term wasn't under copyright to a certain Mr Archimedes.

Probably its most memorable explanation is that given by the blessed Dermot Morgan as Father Ted to a bewildered Father Dougal, when, with toy cows as props, he explains that they are 'small' and that the real cows in a distant field are 'far away'.

Entirely randomly, I notice that the BBC has now armed itself with the impregnable shield that is the word 'Our' as in 'Our NHS'. I wonder how long it will take for other organisations, brands and agencies to adopt the magic adjective. 'Our Inland Revenue' doesn't quite have the same homely feel. 'Our Duchy of Cornwall' is simply not true; it's his. Maybe 'Our Palace of Westminster'? Or is that a tad too revolutionary?

A reminder perhaps that perspective is not merely visual in nature, but a relationship between significant and insignificant matters.

*'Timewaster'*



# News From The Groups

## GROUP MEETINGS

Groups are gradually returning to normal activities when they feel it's safe to do so. On-line conferencing capability is being retained and is sometimes proving useful. All Groups are open to enquiries from new members and, if full, will hold a waiting list. Groups that are inactive do not have an entry in the newsletter.

***In public buildings it is important that the Convenor knows who is at the meeting in case of fire. Please, always sign in and out of the building. Also, make sure you know where the fire exits are. Please adhere to the pandemic hygiene rules set for the premises.***

## Art

Mo Barnes & Angela Spittle



Our successfully reassembled Kandinsky poster was finally mounted on a backboard (with thanks to a member's husband!) and is ready to grace a wall in the art room at the White Hill Centre. Our latest *art for fun* themes included creating a composition using a single colour from the spectrum, a representation of a fairy story character and a portrait from a photo or magazine, in any medium. We also spent some time in a session learning and practising how to draw horses. This proved to be quite challenging and produced some interesting results! As usual, coffee and biscuit breaks provided pleasurable intervals! The Group is currently full.

## Art Discussion 1

Angela Bishop



Our Group chose Zoom for our December meeting. The subject was Transport. Images ranged from circa 600 BC, a fragment of the stone-carved Assyrian chariot, to the 1958 Constellation aeroplane. One member used water as a means of transport, with images of Venetian and Dutch boats navigating rivers and seas. We looked at Eric Ravilious's image of the view from inside a 1930s train and compared it to that of his wife, who produced a markedly similar earlier image called *The Train Journey*.

In January the subject was Water. It features in many works of art and reminds us of the importance of this vital resource in our lives. As well as the seascapes by the master J M W Turner, we were particularly interested in the way in which water is depicted in other art works. Examples included rain in the woodcuts of Hokusai, the Thames in James Whistler's 1871 *Nocturne, Blue and Silver – Chelsea*, and Monet's unique impressionism, with his multiple views of the Seine.

In February the subject was British Sculpture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two of us chose Antony Gormley, with his *Angel of the North* and *Another Place*, his installation on Crosby Beach. Several of us chose Anish Kapoor, with his enormous polished works, which feature across the globe. Jacob Epstein featured, with his provocative and challenging works from the early part of the century. One member introduced us to the largest ceramic sculpture in the world, at the Eden Project. Sculpted by Alexander Groves and called *Blue/Infinity Blue*, it billows a scented mist into the surroundings, mimicking bacteria producing oxygen: A fascinating collection of British art.

Future subjects include Cartoons and Friedensreich Hundertwasser. Thank you to James Cadle who sets up our Zoom meetings and to Chris who patiently collates our images. We hope to meet in person soon.

**"DID YOU KNOW?"** *Wearing a tiny portrait of your lover's eye on your jewellery was a secretive romantic gesture in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. When the Prince of Wales fell in love with a Catholic widow and proposed by sending her a locket with a painting of his eye inside, it started a popular trend to wear 'Lover's Eye' jewellery on your wrist or near your heart to symbolise the love you have for another."* (didyouknowfacts.com)



Someone thought it would be a good idea to recreate famous paintings for our December meeting, either portraits of ourselves or family members in photographic form. It was a good idea and we came up with some rather spectacular results and had great fun guessing the picture: *Whistler's Mother*, *Monarch of the Glen*, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, *Woman with a Squirrel* and *American Gothic* were among our very individual interpretations – not all serious, of course. We had all been very creative. We also brought in a variety of books which had a special meaning for us. We particularly appreciated a beautiful book of Japanese landscapes and an art book ideal for a novice art history student. We planned our programme for 2022 and finished the afternoon with mince pies.

We didn't meet in January but in February the theme for our meeting was Sports and Games in painting or sculpture. We had examples of chess through history, croquet, cards and horseracing in 19<sup>th</sup> century France, L S Lowry's football match from the 1930s, cycling, swimming and memorably, Pieter Brueghel the Elder's *Children's Games*, painted in 1560, with 80 games to identify, some of which can still be seen in a modern playground. We finished this enjoyable afternoon with a sport-related art quiz.

### Book 1

Gillian Eastmond & Mavis Earnshaw



This smaller friendly Book Group meets on a Friday morning. Normally this is every six weeks but we can vary that interval if necessary to be one week more or one week less. For the time being we meet on Zoom. However, we hope that soon we will revert to meeting, in turn, in one of three members' homes. We bring with us a book, fiction or non-fiction, that we have found interesting. After a very brief description of the book's content, we say why we thought it worth reading. Often other people have also read the book and can give their comments, or we just ask further questions about it. We might sometimes progress to have a brief lively discussion about the theme of the book, or we add other worthwhile books on the theme that we have read. In normal times the owner often can lend the book to anyone who wants it.

We have found our discussions are better with up to nine people at most, so you would be put on a waiting list if you want to join the Group. Numbers can always change.

### Book 2

Liz Howlett & Christine Ross



Book Group 2 meets in Chesham Library on the first Wednesday of the month at 11.45am. Sadly we had to cancel our usual Christmas meeting because of illness and people being away, so lost the chance of discussing our December read *The Other Hand* by Chris Cleave. However there was plenty of discussion at both our January and February meetings following our reading of *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali and *The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox* by Maggie O'Farrell. The former novel is not about Brick Lane but about the Bangladeshi community that now dominates the area. The main theme is the role of fate in shaping our destiny. *The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox* was a bit of a Marmite book: some loved it, others decided it definitely wasn't for them. But the unexpected ending and the way the book was written gave much food for thought and discussion, whatever viewpoint one held.

### Book 3

Eileen Overton



Meetings are held in members' homes at 2pm on the third Tuesday of each month. Availability is governed by the ten books we get each month from Chesham library. However, due to members moving away, two vacancies have occurred. Please contact the Convenor if you are interested in joining us. We are currently reading *The Blue Book* by A L Kennedy, with *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman waiting for us to read in March. These books should give us material for good discussions.



Members of Book 4 are meeting now in each other's homes and reading the books chosen by individuals. The book for February is *Secret Scriptures* by Sebastian Barry and in March we will read *Saving Missy* by Beth Morrey.

### Bowls (Green Outdoors)

Margaret Stickland (Chiltern u3a)

CVu3a members are able to join Chiltern members for the forthcoming season of weekly outdoor bowling which will start, weather permitting, from Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April at Amersham Bowls Club, Hervines Park, from 10.30 to 12.30. The cost will be £50 for the season. Please contact Margaret to check on the availability of places on [bowls@cvu3a.uk](mailto:bowls@cvu3a.uk).

### Bowls (Short Mat)

Sue Spalton & Peter Williams (Chiltern u3a)



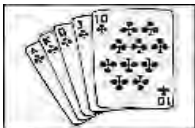
Chiltern u3a extends an invitation to our members to join them in playing Short Mat Bowls. Meetings are now starting up after the pandemic on Friday afternoons at the White Hill Centre, from 13.15 to 15.30. Outdoor summer sessions will change to Monday afternoons at Holmer Green Sports Association and start half an hour later.

If you wish to 'try your hand', tuition is given. Bowls are available. The cost is £3 per session.

Interested members should contact the Convenors using: [shortbowls@cvu3a.uk](mailto:shortbowls@cvu3a.uk).

### Bridge

John Curtis & Patrick Clarke



The Bridge Group has been meeting on Wednesday afternoons at Chartridge Park Golf Club since September. Attendances have been increasing and there are regularly seven tables, which is approaching the maximum number that can be accommodated and hence there is still a waiting list to join the Group. It is just wonderful to be able to play bridge face to

face, rather than on a computer!

### Bus Pass Adventures

Anne Muir



At last the days are getting longer and we can look forward to more adventures. Due to holidays, I am unable to organise an outing for Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March but Bob O'Dell has kindly offered to step into the breach and is busy planning for an interesting walk around Thame.

Please note the change of date for this outing from Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> March to Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> March. I'm looking forward to meeting up with old friends again on future visits. It's been a long haul for everyone but there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

The trip to Thame is now fully subscribed but we hope to have many forthcoming adventures.

### Canasta

Linda Hepworth & Sue Hawksley



The newly formed Canasta Group has now met twice at members' houses. At present we have six members meeting on the third Monday of each month. New members would be welcome. So, if you are interested, please contact us on: [canasta@cvu3a.uk](mailto:canasta@cvu3a.uk)

### Chess

Peter Schweiger



The Chess Group has been inactive during the pandemic and is now looking to start up again. It is in great need of new members so, if you want to play chess in a friendly atmosphere, please contact Peter at [chess@cvu3a.uk](mailto:chess@cvu3a.uk). The Group meets in the afternoon on the last Friday of the month at the Convenor's home.



Meetings are held in members' homes at 2pm on the first Thursday of each month. We discuss all sorts of topics in the news, and we listen to everyone's point of view. Come along and join us for a fun discussion when we all learn so much from others. If you are interested, please contact the Convenor for the next meeting details.

## Digital Imaging

Pippa Greensmith &amp; David Hurd



Digital Imaging is the Key!

In the next few months we will be working on a combination of enhancing our photographs and being creative by manipulating images. The featured topic in January was Sharpening Images and Correcting Perspective. In February we will be investigating Levels, Histograms and Curves. Each month an optional task is handed out and then discussed at the following

meeting.

We would welcome any new members into this friendly Group, from beginners to the more experienced. We tend to use PhotoShop, PhotoShop Elements, Affinity and Lightroom, but are open to all suggestions.

## Dinghy Sailing

Wendy Barnes &amp; Judith Young



We are getting ready to recommence our sailing programme, which will start on Wednesday 27th April. Our usual sailing afternoons are the second Tuesday of the month (except for June when we will meet on the 7th June, in order to keep two weeks between meetings) and the fourth Wednesday of the month. The last sailing session of the season will be on Wednesday 26th October. We sail at Troy Lake, between Maple Cross and Denham, where Rickmansworth Sailing Club has a clubhouse with changing facilities, a kitchen and bar. The gates to the club will be open from about 1pm on our allocated sailing days, and we normally finish about 5pm. Anyone who is a member of a u3a, wherever they are based, is welcome to join us and currently we have members from eight u3as in the Chilterns and South Herts area. Please contact either of the Convenors for more information.

## Eclectic Music

Danny Robins &amp; Rod Stevens



A CALL FOR HELP! Can you take on or share the role of Convenor for the Eclectic Music Group? You may not have attended any of our meetings recently, but it is not too late and our programme over the next few months is detailed below.

'Eclectic' does sound rather grand, but it does describe the broad and diverse range of music that we have seen and heard over the years. Members have presented their personal favourites and prior to COVID we have had live performances from two concert pianists, and an accomplished piano accordionist. One of our members invited us into his front room, which is filled to overcrowding with pianolas, all lovingly restored, and we heard many performances, including original recordings by the legendary Jazz musician, Jelly Roll Morton.

Our programme is as follows:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 8 March  | <i>Youthful Memories</i> presented by Juliet Crussell                    |
| 12 April | <i>Blueberry Hill to the Mull of Kintyre</i> presented by Heather Sprake |
| 10 May   | <i>Light Music Revisited</i> presented by Rod Stevens                    |
| 14 June  | Convenors' Final Choice, presented by Rod Stevens and Danny Robins       |

Unless a member comes forward to convene the Group, sadly the June meeting will be the last one. If this is something you would be interested in supporting, please contact us.

With many thanks,

Rod and Danny



“Suddenly all my ancestors are behind me  
Be still they say, watch and listen  
You are the result of the love of thousands.”

### **WW1 Family History Research**

What can you find out about fathers, grandfathers and great uncles who served in the First World War? It does vary, but over the last four years many more records have been digitised, meaning that it has never been easier to research the Great War experiences of our families.

A good place to start to find deceased relatives is the Commonwealth Graves Commission, which will give details of burial place, unit and place and date of death. The Lives of the First World War database lists all those who served, including those that survived.

Medal rolls are an excellent resource. All those who served overseas gained the British War and Victory medals. If they'd been sent overseas prior to the end of 1915 they also received a Star medal. The medal cards cataloguing who received which medal are digitised on Ancestry. The unit and regimental units are also recorded. You can view these for a fee online or free at The National Archives where they comprise the WO 372 series. There is useful information on what the abbreviations on the cards mean on the TNA (The National Archives) website.

Our Family History sessions have had to adapt to the changing lifestyles of our members. For our February meeting we had a poll on-line of who wanted a meeting and who wanted Zoom. We have set up a hybrid meeting in the past (broadcasting the talks to members in the hall and at home simultaneous on Zoom) but this takes up quite a lot of the Convenor's time and wasn't considered an option this time.

The members opting for a meeting won out slightly over Zoom but we had to cancel our speaker as we did not have enough members to cover his charge. However, always optimistic, we have rebooked Graham Harrison to come to speak to us on 1<sup>st</sup> March to give his talk entitled *A Poor Existence; A Story of Victorian Life*.

We meet in Chesham Town Hall, on the first Tuesday of the month. Meetings start at 2.15pm and talks begin at 2.30pm. Any members of CVu3a are welcome to come along and join us. There is a small charge to cover talks and teas/coffee. Details of April's meeting have yet to be confirmed.

### **Folk Music**

**Richard Skepper**



The Group met for the first time on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb after a two-week delay due to the Convenor's Covid. We shall continue to meet at the White Hill Centre on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month, in the afternoons.

A good time was had by the eight attendees. The other five members of the Group sent apologies and three of these expect to attend next time. We are feeling our way in terms of repertoire, using material supplied by the Convenor to start with.

I have set the Group maximum at the current 13 as the size of the meeting, with different instruments, is as much as is manageable. There is no one on the waiting list at present.

### **French Conversation**

**Morag Robertson**



The French Group has continued to meet in person, taking turns in each other's houses. We continue to chat in French about various current issues, trying to steer clear of politics! We do have room for more participants if anyone is keen to practise their French.

### **French Intermediate**

**Hilary Alleston**

We are still enjoying our regular meetings, talking about recent events and looking forward to getting out more in spring. We are still open to new members, so do give us a try.



Our 2022 programme is now available on the CVu3a web page and we hope that you agree with us when we say that it looks like being an interesting year.

We had to resort to Zoom again in January, at our speaker's request. David Marsh, however, gave us a fascinating talk entitled *The Elephant in the Garden*. We were all a little bemused about the title, but he soon enlightened us on the history of how elephants arrived on our shores: David's theme for the talk was inspired by pictures of elephants on some coasters he saw on café tables at one of the local grand houses. Intrigued, he began to research into the history of captive elephants in diverse locations around England. It is thought that, as early as 1255, elephants graced the gardens of the landed gentry.

David also showed us film of life-size mechanical elephants giving rides to children around the 1950s. We even saw a younger-looking Jeremy Clarkson riding on a mechanical elephant that featured in an early edition of the programme: *Top Gear*.

We returned to live meetings again in February as we welcomed Claire Primett, who is Senior Gardener at Hughenden Manor Gardens. Our March speaker is Amy Moffatt, Head Gardener at Horatio's Garden, which is situated in the grounds of Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Amy will talk about the history and impact of the Horatio's Garden Charity.

## German

Jenny Lee



As Albert Einstein said: "The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination."

So how easy is the German language to learn? For example: Pardon: Bitte? please: Bitte, go ahead: Bitte, here you are: Bitte, you're welcome: Bitte, not at all: Bitte, what? Bitte? What do you think? Why not join us?

We meet twice a month in each other's houses and have fun.

## History

Claire Paterson &amp; Ian Hutt



We had a bit of a treat for our December meeting, not just mulled wine and nibbles but the reincarnation of an iconic figure from Victorian past. His name: Benjamin Disraeli. He was in the room with us, telling us of his life and particularly his relationship with his monarch, Queen Victoria.

This was a one-man show given by Jeff Rozelaar. It was a quite outstanding and fascinating performance with Jeff completely taking on the persona of the man. We were all totally with him and it was an absorbing afternoon: Such a clever portrayal.

A new year and numbers a little down, but we had a visit from Graham Laurie MVO, who spoke on the Australian Flying Doctor Service. Many of us remembered the exciting radio series about 100 years ago about the Flying Doctor in Australia: A fascinating concept to those of us whose doctor would arrive in his black car with his black bag, or alternatively we would walk to see him, if he lived nearby.

Graham's talk opened our eyes to the vast barren parts of Australia where the few homesteads, in the so-called Outback, are miles and miles away from any hospital or medical help. Graham included a short film with his talk, which gave a real life view of the medical care the flying doctors and nurses are able to give to remote communities.

The service began in a small way in 1928, named the Aerial Medical Service. In 1934 it became the Australian Medical Service. It was again re-named the Flying Doctor Service in 1942 and in 1955 it became the Royal Flying Doctor Service. It now covers 80% of the country with state of the art medical technology. Funded jointly by national and state governments and charities, it is a service Australians are extremely proud of.

For our February meeting, Ramji Abinashi, a Chiltern u3a member, gave the first part of his presentation on *The Partition of India*. In this, we were introduced to the main players in the long saga leading up to India's independence from Britain in 1947 and the dividing of the country into the two self-governing independent dominions of India and Pakistan.

(cont.)

28<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Notice that the 14<sup>th</sup> **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** of **Chess Valley u3a** will be held on **Thursday 09 June 2022 at 2.00 pm in the Broadway Baptist Church, Chesham.**

The purpose of this advance notification is to enable you to:

- Make nominations of candidates for election to the committee at the AGM. There are currently **two vacancies** for new committee members.
- Notify the Secretary of any motions you wish to be dealt with at the meeting.

You may wish to nominate someone, including yourself, to become a member of the Committee. To assist you in making a nomination, enclosed is a form, which you should complete and return to the Business Secretary by 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

If you wish to propose any other matters for discussion these must be put in writing, proposed and seconded, and forwarded to the Business Secretary (via email at [secretary@cvu3a.uk](mailto:secretary@cvu3a.uk) or via post to the below address) by 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

The AGM will be followed by our usual Monthly General Meeting, which features David Callaghan and his talk *Cometh the Day, Cometh the Jewel*.

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM.

**Colin O'Rourke**  
Business Secretary  
39 Weedon Lane  
Amersham  
Buckinghamshire  
HP6 5QX

# The Fourteenth Annual General Meeting of the Chess Valley U3A

Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 2pm

## AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence**
- 2 Minutes of the 13th AGM**
- 3 Reports from (a) The Chairman**  
**(b) The Treasurer**
- 4 Appointment of an Examiner for the Accounts**
- 5 Election of Officers and Committee Members (all Trustees); see notes below**
- 6 Any other Business.**

### Notes

The Committee comprises up to ten members. The present incumbents are

#### Officers

James Cadle	(1)(3)	Chair
Helen Barnard	(1)(3)	Vice-Chair
Geoff Naylor	(2)	Treasurer
Colin O'Rourke	(1)	Business Secretary

#### Committee Members

John Bunyan	(2)	Newsletter Editor
Jackie Cobb	(1)	Events Organiser
Valerie Garrod	(1)	Webmaster
Jim Wilkie	(2)	Membership Secretary
Vacancy	(4)	
Vacancy	(4)	

**1:** James Cadle (Chair), Helen Barnard (Vice-Chair), Colin O'Rourke (Business Secretary), Jackie Cobb (Events Organiser), and Valerie Garrod (Webmaster), having been appointed for two-year terms at the 13<sup>th</sup> AGM in 2021, are willing to continue to serve in their current positions.

**2:** Geoff Naylor, John Bunyan, and Jim Wilkie, having been appointed for two-year terms at the 12<sup>th</sup> AGM in 2020, have offered themselves for re-election in their current positions.

**3:** James Cadle (additional role as Joint Newsletter Editor), and Helen Barnard (additional role as Groups Co-ordinator), are willing to continue to serve in these current positions for a further year.

**4: Vacancies:** Nominations for new committee members to fill the vacant positions, or to contest any of the roles available for re-election at this meeting, will be welcome.





**Committee Elections June 2022**

**Nomination Form for Officers and Committee Members**

Two Committee positions are vacant, one Officer and three Committee roles are available for election.

Position applied for (tick one or more boxes)

Vacancy 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacancy 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Treasurer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Membership Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newsletter Editor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Groups Co-Ordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Nominee’s full name** (in capitals).....

**CVu3a** membership number (if known).....

**Nominee Declaration**

If elected, I am willing to accept the position for a two-year term on the Chess Valley u3a Committee.

**Signature**.....**Date**.....

**Proposer and Seconder**

Proposer’s name (in capitals) .....

Signature .....

Seconder’s name (in capitals) .....

Signature .....

**Please send your nominations, by post or email, no later than May 9<sup>th</sup> 2022 to**

Colin O’Rourke secretary@cvu3a.uk  
39 Weedon Lane  
Amersham  
HP6 5QX

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(History cont.)

They were Lord Linlithgow (Viceroy), Muhammad Ali Jinnah (leader of the Muslim League), Mahatma Gandhi (leader of the Indian National Congress), Jawaharlal Nehru (principal leader of the Indian Nationalist Movement) and Lord Louis Mountbatten (who was appointed as India's last Viceroy).

It was such a complicated story of beliefs, religions and wishes, culminating in Direct Action Day in 1946, and the demand for a Muslim homeland in British India. We will hear all about that in part two of Ramji's presentation. He's a most engaging speaker who told the story without being at all partisan. There were many questions from members and the second part in April is much looked forward to.

Our speaker for March is one of our very own members, Colin O'Rourke. His talk is entitled *It's About Time*.

### Jazz Appreciation

Danny Robins



We meet on the last Tuesday of the month at 2pm in the Owen Room, Amersham Free Church, Woodside Road, Amersham, Buckinghamshire, HP6 6AJ.

Our Meetings for the second quarter of 2022:

March 29: *Swinging with Change* plus *Dedicated to Chaos* (Part three of a film by Ken Burns).

April 26: Hoagy Carmichael: *The Man and his Music*. Presented by Rod Stevens.

May 31: Wynton Marsalis: *Classical Music, Composition and Jazz*. Presented by Chris Elam.

June 28: Convenor's Choice: A reminder of some of the American jazz personalities it has been my pleasure to see and hear over many years; from Dizzy to Duke, from Adelaide to Blossom.

I look forward to seeing you.

Danny

### Keep Fit for 60+



The Keep Fit Group is suspended and in need of new Convenors. If you are able to help, please come forward: it's not complicated and help can be given to volunteers. We are also currently without an instructor, so please contact the Groups Coordinator, Helen Barnard, if you know of anyone. Email: [groups@cvu3a.uk](mailto:groups@cvu3a.uk)

### Knitting & Other Crafts

Sue Rawbone



The New Year has brought us back on track with meetings in members' houses, although two of our members have ended up with arms in plaster, which has restricted their ability to sew or knit! Several of us have started new projects and we hope to include photographs of completed works in future entries in the Newsletters. However we do have one photograph to show which appears on the colour pages: One of our Group has been knitting for a charity which sends garments for babies, to South Africa.

As we meet in members' houses we are restricted in numbers, but if anyone is interested in joining, please contact the Convenor.

### Line Dancing

Chiltern u3a



The Line Dancing Group is run by Chiltern u3a, but we also welcome members from Chess Valley u3a. We normally meet in the Methodist Church, Bellingdon Road, Chesham, HP5 2HA on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 10am. Meetings last one hour and we pay our teacher each time we attend a class. No experience is necessary and the emphasis is on enjoying ourselves, exercising body and mind and having fun. There is parking available at the venue.

We currently have a waiting list. Please contact the Convenors if you want to come along or would like more information.

The Group's Convenors are Lynne Bennett tel. 01494 721622 and Linda English tel. 01494 721366.

Email: [u3alinedance@chiltern-u3a.org.uk](mailto:u3alinedance@chiltern-u3a.org.uk)

## Mah Jong

Edward Perrott



Mah Jong is a game played with tiles, which originated in China. It's a very sociable and fun game played by two, three or four people. There is no competition involved as each person plays their own game and any mistakes are easily hidden! Don't worry if you haven't played before: If you have ever played the simplest of card games, you will quickly pick up the basics of Mah Jong. This is a friendly group of people who enjoy each other's company for an afternoon playing, chatting with a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit. Anyone is welcome from beginners to more experienced players. We meet on the second and fourth Mondays (except Bank Holidays) at 2pm in the Free Church, Amersham. The Group currently has a couple of vacancies. If you would like to join us, please contact the Convenor.

## MOTO (Members On Their Own)

Mo Barnes

The MOTOs have continued to meet over convivial fortnightly Sunday lunches at local hostelries and restaurants, which include the 'Boot and Slipper', the 'White Hart', the 'Black Horse Inn', 'Jasmine Thai' and 'Zara'. Some members have also enjoyed visits to the Elgiva Theatre for stage productions and films. Our first planned day trip is to the Thriplow Daffodil Festival and Country Fair held in March, the beginning of spring, when the weather should be better. Monthly planning meetings are held during a coffee morning at the Convenor's home. The Group is currently full.

## MOTO 2

Peter Page

Peter is suffering from the aftermath of a severe car accident and is currently unable to keep MOTO 2 active. He hopes to return to health and continue as Convenor of the Group, which is, of necessity, suspended for the time being. Our sympathies remain with him.

## Patchwork & Quilting

Angela Bratton & Janet Moore



Members of our Group are still coming to terms with the sudden loss of two of our founder members. Both ladies were talented patchwork/quilters whose work was regularly featured in this Newsletter. We will greatly miss their company.

Janet Moore has volunteered to assist Angela as Co-Convenor and we warmly welcome her to the role.

Christmas celebrations were low key this year and instead of a usual meal to celebrate the end of the year we enjoyed delicious homemade mince pies provided by Jacky.

We are a friendly Group who work on individual projects and get inspiration from each other as well as sharing advice when it's needed. The Group meets in the village hall at Hyde Heath once a month, which gives us plenty of space to work on large projects. New members are always welcome.

## Photography

David Hurd



The Photography Group had its first meeting of 2022 on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January when we looked at photographs the members had taken with the theme of Winter. Not all followed the theme, but we were treated to a wide variety of photographs ranging from snowy scenes in the Chilterns, through canal shots, photographs of robins, sunsets, beaches, stately homes and finally, Christmas light shows. Twelve members were present and after refreshments, the Group discussed the forthcoming year and what we should concentrate on. Although no firm decisions were made, it was clear that the Group should:

Continue with projects creating photographs for discussion at following meetings.

Concentrate more on what creates good photographs rather than the technical aspects of cameras.

Consider mounting an exhibition later in the year.

Continue with field trips once Covid has further retreated and the warmer weather has arrived.

(cont.)

We agreed that an exhibition should showcase our best photographs but importantly, all members should be represented. Decisions on the theme, how photographs should be shown and where and when the exhibition would be held, will be discussed at future meetings.

Presentations on photo composition took place at our February meeting.: Members submitted up to four images which showed elements of classical composition techniques; e.g. The rule of thirds, leading lines, etc.

March and April look like this:

Mar. 16<sup>th</sup>: Progress on HS2: Keith Hoffmeister will talk about photographing work on HS2.

April 20<sup>th</sup>: Phoneography (sic); Taking better photographs on your smartphone: Jeanette Lendon

New members are always welcome and it would be good to have a co-convenor to share the burden. There is nothing too onerous in the role.

## Pilates

Liz Howlett & Christine Ross



Pilates Groups 1,2 and 3 continue to meet at the Jubilee Hall, Amersham on Mondays at 10.45, 12.00 and 13.15 respectively.

We had a very enjoyable (and legal!) Christmas lunch party mid-December, which gave members from the three Groups an opportunity to meet and mingle.

Our Groups are currently full, but please contact the Convenors, should you wish to have your name added to the waiting list.

## Play Reading

Claire Paterson & Linda Hepworth



We had to delay our November meeting until early December when we read *The House on the Cliff* by George Batson. The house is a rambling old structure overlooking the English Channel. The story revolves around a young heiress, Ellen, who is confined to a wheelchair, paralysed after the death of her father in a car crash. There is a beautiful stepmother, an austere housekeeper, a Doctor Lane (who disappears), and a substitute who believes Ellen can walk again. A cheerful nurse arrives to look after the invalid who is intent on putting things in order and there is a body on the beach. It is all very convoluted, but after the great shock of a violent murder, surprise surprise: Ellen rises from her wheelchair perfectly able to walk again. Not the best ever.

We were unable to meet in January but got together again in February and welcomed a new member: Joan Barton. We read *Murder Mistaken*, a thriller by Janet Green. I'm not sure it was a thriller as such, but it was a good play with a really unsavoury, manipulative and evil main character, Edward Bare. He is a young estate agent's clerk, who has married for money and murders for money, having started at a young age by murdering a friend for sixpence and then his auntie for £70. After a higher reward, he plies his ageing and affectionate wife with whiskey, causing her supposedly accidental death by gas poisoning. To his dismay, her will is not in his favour, but in that of her sister, who is way out of reach of his schemes, abroad. He has to find a second wife, a wealthy widow, but she is a tough cookie and has the measure of him, keeping a tight hold on her purse strings. Charlotte, another rich woman, appears on the scene and Edward feels she is easier game, so goes about cementing their relationship. However, his murderous plans are scuppered when Charlotte reveals herself as Dora, the sister of his first wife and her inheritor. She has come to investigate her sister's death, as she is suspicious. In a show of bravado, Edward admits all his murderous plans, not realising that there are witnesses to his confession. His only solution is to take the car he had sabotaged for Charlotte's demise, using it to cause his own: A successful solution, which is the climactic end to the play.

Our next play is called *DNA* by Dennis Kelly, in which we all have to play teenagers; that should be an interesting exercise.

*On Keeping Fit: "What hurts today makes you stronger tomorrow."*

(Jay Cutler)

*"The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary"*

(Vidal Sassoon)

Our Group meets on the fourth Thursday of each month when we read a few poems each on a theme or poet chosen beforehand, and we have a couple of places available for new members: Please contact the Convenor for details.

In December we enjoyed a festive get-together and had fun reciting a poem we had learned; some were even from schooldays! January saw us gathering to read and discuss the poetry of Ted Hughes; opinions differed in the lively debate about the poet as a person, but were complimentary about his works. In February we chose Shakespeare, and as well as several of his beautiful sonnets, we heard a poem written about his life and legacy by our former Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy.

Future meetings will be on poems about sleep and dreams (in March) and in April we will share an epic work by Inglesby, and discuss this lengthy poem.

## Railways

Graham Yellowley &amp; James Cadle



Our recent meetings have been as follows:

December 17<sup>th</sup>: James Cadle: Dockland Light Railway (DLR):

We moved to Chesham Town Hall for this meeting and heard all about the east end of London, the development of the area and the DLR in particular. James gave yet another of his very interesting talks and we intend to repeat this at the end of 2022 as it was so good.

January 21<sup>st</sup>: Railway Roundabout DVD:

We are getting towards the end of the Railway Roundabout series now with two DVDs remaining: A great way to see Locomotives and Trains in motion and remember the familiar sights and sounds.

February 18<sup>th</sup>: Keith Hoffmeister: HS2 and its Impact in Buckinghamshire. Unfortunately we had to cancel this meeting due to being in an area of Red warning for Storm Eunice, which arrived on the very day. This was disappointing as we are all keen to see Keith's update. We will reschedule and announce the revised date.

The Programme for the next few months of 2022 looks like this:

March 18 <sup>th</sup>	Nigel Lowey:	St Pancras Station
April 27 <sup>th</sup>		Pendon Model Railway
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Christian Wolmar:	Crossrail

Please contact the Convenors if you wish to join the Group. You will be very welcome.

## Science &amp; Technology

Mike Christianson &amp; Peter Twist



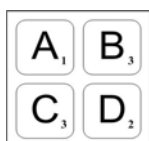
Here is the schedule for the Group's next three months' meetings:

21 March:	Derek Pedley: <i>Intellectual Property and Innovation</i>
18 April:	This is Easter Monday so the meeting is cancelled.
16 May:	Anthony Jenks: <i>Tides: Beaches, Bores and Barriers</i>

We are still meeting on Zoom for the present and any change will be sent out with the meeting reminder notice.

## Scrabble for Fun

Tony Muir



Our last meeting was somewhat poorly attended and I felt that people were still concerned about meeting in a confined area. Now that 90% of all restrictions have been lifted and the threat of the new Omicron variant has started to decline, I am hoping for a bumper attendance at our next meeting.



Our Group has expanded with several new members joining us: So much so that we have had to relocate to the larger Albert Ellis room at Amersham Free Church. This move also allows us to sing more safely in light of the current virus situation.

Our first performance for two years was an end of term Christmas Concert on 13<sup>th</sup> December. We were astounded to see so many guests arriving to listen to us, including our Chair, James Cadle! We had lots of very positive feedback, which was greatly appreciated.

The next highlight in our schedule is to perform a few numbers with Vintage Brass on 30<sup>th</sup> June to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the National Trust. One of the pieces we shall be singing is *Hymn to the Fallen*, the theme tune from the film *Saving Private Ryan*. This is quite a challenging piece as it is in four-part harmony and there are no words to link with the rhythm of the music. However, our innovative choir teacher, Ali, has devised a very effective method of helping us to keep together and, more importantly, for us all to end on the same note at the same time! Hopefully, the brass band will camouflage any errors we make.

We still have spaces for more members; especially now that we meet in a larger venue, so if you enjoy singing then please contact one of the Convenors. Details of the Group can be found on the CVu3a website.

### Spanish Conversation (Intermediate)

Hilary Alleston



We are happily settled back into our normal routine, and never run out of things to chat about. We enjoyed some tapas before Christmas, and look forward to sharing anecdotes of holidays as we start to travel a bit more. The Group is still full, however.

### Stamps

Brian Feakes



Unfortunately the Stamp Group meeting scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> January had to be cancelled. As the Group meets every other month, the next meeting will now take place on the 28<sup>th</sup> March. The arrangements for this meeting have yet to be finalised.

### Tai Chi

Sue Broad



Our members are continuing to practise under our instructor's very strict guidance and are being tested weekly on the names of the movements, which are eventually getting through to us, well some of us. After a break in our sessions at half term on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, the class continues until the end of term on 5<sup>th</sup> April.

We have a full class of 17 at present.

### Theatre



Now run by a committee, the Theatre Group is thankfully up and running again. We are planning our first two post-pandemic trips to see *Drifters Girls*, a musical and *Busman's Holiday*, a whodunnit at Sonning, which is always a favourite with the Group. We are able to accept new members. Enquiries to: [theatre@cvu3a.uk](mailto:theatre@cvu3a.uk)

### Ukulele

Jeff Naman & Heather Sprake



The Ukulele Group has returned to some sort of normality as the Covid restrictions have eased and members feel more confident about meeting up. Fortunately, our venue is large enough to allow us to self-distance, so we can sing and play along together.

I am pleased to announce that Heather Sprake has become our Co-convenor and we are getting good input from other members of the Group, so we can expand our repertoire.

If anyone is interested in learning to play the Ukulele or would like to join us at our fortnightly meetings on a Tuesday, please contact me for a chat.

Jeff

## Walking Groups

Walking Groups are now active and working within the government guidelines concerning social distancing and risk assessment. Individuals from the Groups are also walking individually to scout new routes.

## Amblers (3 - 4 miles)

Sue Osborne

### *The Rye, High Wycombe*

On a dry February morning some Amblers met in the car park of 'The Rye' in High Wycombe. We left The Rye to look at the old workhouse, past Funges Meadow Nature Reserve and walked a short distance along the old Brunel railway line that went to Windsor. We did a circuit of the open space. There are lots of information boards and our leader is currently researching the area for the Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust. Many people are unaware of the dyke built by Lancelot (Capability) Brown, created when Wycombe Abbey was updated by James Wyatt. One walker said the highlight was the garden next to Pann Mill on the site of Hayward's Cottage. It was a carpet of yellow aconites with crocuses, snowdrops and hellebores. We also worked out how the millstream, the Wye, is diverted twice a year to grind corn. It was leisurely and slightly different to our usual ambles.

Liza Wormell

## Walkers (5 - 7 miles)

### Walkers 1

Stuart Stanley

The Group meets at various locations on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 10:00. Walks are usually between four and five and a half miles long and are led by members. We usually meet for a picnic or pub lunch (optional) after the walk. Walks are planned with individual leaders and published every three months. Members advise the walk leader if they wish to participate.

For the first quarter of 2022, we have held, or will hold walks in Little Missenden, Wilstone, Sarratt, Wiggington, Croxley Green and Chesham.

New members are welcome and members of other Walking Groups can also join us.

### Walkers 2

Sue Rawbone

Our walks continue on the fourth Thursday of the month and so far we have been lucky not to get too muddy, as our leaders have managed to find areas where the ground conditions are reasonable.

Although the Group only walks once a month, we do have the opportunity to walk with Walkers 3 on the first Wednesday of the month. During the COVID restrictions over the past two years, Walkers 2 and 3 combined their walks and several Walkers 2 members have become used to walking on the first Wednesday and have now joined both Groups.

If anyone would like to join either Walkers 2 or 3, you will be very welcome but please contact the relevant Convenor first.

### Walkers 3

Jane Towers

Walkers 3 is, once again, a separate Walking Group from Walkers 2, having been more than ably looked after by Sue Rawbone for at least a year. The Group walks on the first Wednesday of the month although the January walk was cancelled at the last minute; too much mud and too close to the Christmas holiday.

Our first walk therefore, was on February 2nd, starting at 'The Boot' at Sarratt. A beautiful morning, beautiful countryside, hardly any mud and great company made for an enjoyable five(ish) mile walk (now I'm Convenor, I really MUST take note of where I'm walking rather than immerse myself in conversation). There are spaces for anyone to join the Group, new members are very welcome, just contact the Convenor. Walk information is circulated to members about two weeks before each walk.





The last few months have been very successful for Striders, with nearly all walks full, often within 24 hours of the walk details being sent out. Both Groups have welcomed new members which, after the last two years, has been excellent news. When we restarted regular Group walks back in May, we suggested to Striders that we should try, cumulatively, to total enough miles on our walks to have reached a virtual North Pole by Christmas (2,648 miles from Amersham, according to Google). In fact, by the time two Groups of Striders met up in Bellingdon halfway around a pre-Christmas joint walk, we had about 3,400 miles on our clock, almost equivalent to reaching the Equator in Africa. As one of our number remarked, that was a much more attractive target!

The Christmas walk in December could not, due to the arrival of the Omicron mutation and consequent restrictions on indoor meetings, be accompanied by our usual Christmas meal together. That in turn restricted how much Striders could raise for the Friends of the Belarus Children's Hospice charity. But we compromised by holding a raffle organised by Jeremy Wyman in Andrew and Marjorie Brown's garden halfway around the joint walk. With tickets bought online and prizes donated by Striders in advance, we enjoyed a glass of mulled wine and some excellent mince pies made for us by Janet Wyman. Elsewhere in this Newsletter details will appear of how much we managed to raise for the children of the hospice.

We are also pleased to tell you that, as a result of resuming Group walks and voluntary £1 contributions by walkers to a Gate Fund, Striders have been able to donate £500 to the Thames Valley Air Ambulance organisation, for which we received a striking certificate. Our next donation from the Gate Fund will be to the Donate-a-Gate organisation (which replaces stiles with gates), run by Buckinghamshire Council and the Chiltern Society.

As we enter 2022, our attention has turned to forthcoming walks. We have volunteer leaders for the whole of the first six months of the year, and are organising a joint summer walk from Seaford to Eastbourne along the Seven Sisters Coastal Path in July. John Bratton has already established that a sufficient number of Striders have expressed interest in doing the walk to justify booking a coach from Chesham and Amersham and is in the process of firming-up that interest. There is also a group of about 30 of us who will be tackling the Brecon Beacons over a weekend in early May. Onwards and upwards? In addition, Jill Smith is already diarising a programme of longer summer walks (March to October this year) open to all Striders.

The Convenors of Striders 1 (Andrew Brown) and Striders 2 (Ian Lee) will welcome any new members from the Chess Valley u3a membership. Striders 2 walk on the first and third Tuesdays of each month; Striders 1 walk on the second and fourth Tuesdays. Jill Smith's longer walks with a picnic lunch en route will be on any 5th Tuesdays in the months ahead and a few other days besides. Please contact Andrew or Ian if you would like to join one of the Striders Groups or for further information.

### Walks into History: Country

Tony Biddle & Peter Schweiger



On January 19<sup>th</sup>, our Walk into History was around Hyde Heath. The village is remarkable in having been bypassed by everything, including HS2, and so is unspoilt. It is as old as anywhere on earth, but has no prime ministers buried there, as does Hughenden, our previous walk. To make up for that we started at 'The Plough' for coffees and returned for excellent lunches after a pleasant circular and level walk around the village, stopping to chat to people we met. It reminded me of William Henry Davies: "What is this life, if full of care, We have no time to stand and stare". Well the Group did just that and enjoyed looking at homes and gardens. The Old Post Office is now a private dwelling, but retains the stamp of approval of the Group.

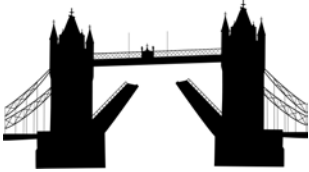
Our next walk on March 9th will be around Beaconsfield: a much busier place. Keep walking.

Peter

#### *On Walking:*

*"There is no habit you will value so much as walking without fatigue." (Thomas Jefferson)*

*"Walking is how the body measures itself against the earth." (Rebecca Solnit)*



***Diamond Studded London:  
A Walk around Hatton Garden and Holborn in December***

There were two themes running through this walk: Charles Dickens and Jewellery, sometimes direct and obvious, sometimes more tenuous! The walk started at Chancery Lane Underground Station where the Inns of Court are situated on the boundary between the Cities of London and Westminster. Crossing the road and looking back reveals a view of the oldest Elizabethan timber frame building to survive, whilst ahead is the magnificent red brick former Prudential building, now offices for lawyers. A small bust of Charles Dickens reminds us that when first married, he lived in a building on this site and wrote his first novel *Pickwick Papers* as well as starting his second, *Oliver Twist*, this being inspired by the slum area stretching up Saffron Hill.

Stepping out of the side of the Prudential, you arrive in Hatton Garden where all the shop windows glitter with precious gemstones and most especially, diamonds. The largest diamond was found in South Africa and after cutting, is now part of the Crown Jewels, including the spectacular 300+ carat diamond in the crown used by Queen Elizabeth for the State Opening of Parliament.

Walking along Grenville Street brings us to the oldest Catholic Church in London: St. Audrey's. She was made a saint for miraculously curing growths on the neck occasioned, it was thought, by the custom of wearing heavy jewellery. Then a quick visit along narrow alleyways to the 'Olde Mitre' dated 1564, before a short walk to Holborn Viaduct, passing the Old Bailey where Fagin was tried and executed.

Holborn Viaduct spans what was the river Fleet just adjacent to St. Andrew's church, where over 4000 plague victims were discovered during excavations a few years ago. Standing on Holborn Viaduct provides a good view of the steep-sided Fleet valley and, with some imagination, you can see ships bringing Portland stone all the way up the Fleet for the construction of St. Pauls.

And finally, a close up view of St. Bride's Church: Wren's inspiration for the multi-tiered wedding cake spire that dominates many London views!

John Shipley

A walk around Old Westminster is scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> April

**Wildlife**

**Harry Howlett & Keith Sonley**



A programme of inside meetings and field visits is coming together nicely for the first half of 2022. A really well-attended meeting on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February, with around 40 members present, was treated to some outstanding photography of domestic and exotic animals by Drew Burnett, a professional photographer from Old Amersham.

The conservation of owls and kestrels will be covered by Norman Shepherd from the Bucks Owl and Raptor Group (BORG) on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. This is to be held at Amersham Common Village Hall at 2pm, when we will learn more about the day-to-day activities of this organisation with activities across 12 farms and 42 nest boxes in our region. Yes, details will be given for recording and monitoring these birds together with the educational work and practical advice that BORG offers.

Our first field visit is scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup> with a visit to the Horse Trust at Speen. We will be invited to meet some of the 142 horses and three donkeys in retirement or rescued by the RSPCA. Ever wondered what happens to Police horses, which gave service at the 2012 London Olympics or keep order at football games? Here is your chance to find out. Other activities are lined up for May through to August but details will be given later as some of you appear to have trouble in pencilling in the meeting dates of the Wildlife Group! So please make a note of Thursday March 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday April 7<sup>th</sup> (first Thursday of the month). We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible.

*"The ground we walk on, the plants and creatures, the clouds above constantly dissolving into new formations - each gift of nature possessing its own radiant energy, bound together by cosmic harmony."*

*(Ruth Bernhard)*



In December we had a Pot Luck Supper, where every couple brought a different course and an appropriate wine to go with it. We started with Lidl's excellent *Comte de Senneval* Champagne, which at £13.99 a bottle puts many well-known brands to shame. The first course was salmon mousse accompanied by an excellent Chablis Premier Cru, *Cote de Lechet* from M&S and a *Macon Villages* Burgundy Chardonnay from Tesco.

Coq au Vin was paired with a *Chateauneuf du Pape 2019*, which comes from a village built in 1317 for Pope John 22nd in Provence. The AOC permit 13 different varieties of grape but this one is predominantly Grenache. At 14.5% it was warm and spicy with dark fruit flavours. We also consumed a *St Emilion Grand Cru 2015* from Lidl, which is a blend of Merlot and Cabernet Franc.

With the Tarte Tatin, we had a mature *Muscat de Beaumes de Venise 2002* at 15% from the Vaucluse, made with 100% Muscat grapes, and with the chocolate mousse we had Lanson Rose Champagne, which is a blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Finally, with the cheese, we had a *Definition Sauternes* from Majestic, a blend of Semillon, Muscatel and Sauvignon; all in all, a spectacular start to Christmas.

In January our Scottish couple, the Howletts, treated us to a Burns Night and a quiz. Starting with a *Cremant de Bourgogne Blanc de Blancs*, made from Chardonnay grapes from Macon and sold by Waitrose: an excellent alternative to Prosecco or even Champagne. More Chardonnay followed in the form of a *Macon Villages* from Tesco and, to go with the Haggis, a *Haut Medoc 2015* 13.5% from Aveyrs, which was a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot, grown in the region's gravel soil, which gives excellent drainage while retaining heat in Bordeaux's wettest region. We finished with a *Chateauneuf du Pape 2018* at 14.5% from Chateau de Beaux Castel in the Rhone Valley. We were also treated to a selection of very drinkable whiskeys and we learnt an awful lot about the Scottish Bard.

## Wine Appreciation 2

Muriel Gray



With Graham unavailable as Convenor due to ill-health, Muriel continues to stand in on a temporary basis to enable the Group to continue to meet. It is so nice to be able to meet face to face again in the Small Barn at Amersham Community Centre.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December, Jan Weir hosted an evening with the theme *Perfect 10s*. She chose six wines, which had scored 10/10 in Ned Halley's book *The Best Wines in the Supermarkets 2022*. We had a good turnout of members that evening, but not one of the wines was awarded a perfect 10 from the Group. Tasting three white and three red wines as usual, the winning supermarket was Sainsburys with top scoring wines in both categories. They were *Vouvray La Couronne des Plantagenets* (2019 Chenin Blanc from the Loire) and *Pic St. Loup Reserve* (Taste the Difference 2018 Syrah/Grenache from the Languedoc).

With no meeting in January, we were happy to get together on 2<sup>nd</sup> February when Andrew Clarke hosted a meeting at which we tasted six of Laithwaites' favourites. We welcomed two new members, Michael and Tina, who have already offered to host a meeting later this year. Our favourite wine-growing nation that evening turned out to be Italy, for both the whites and the reds. A Pinot Grigio, *Alessandro Gallici* from the Venice area was the winner for the whites and *Il Papavero* (a Primitivo) from Puglia was the winner for the reds.

The Group is full at the moment, but with no waiting list. We meet monthly on the first Wednesday evening of the month. If anyone is interested in joining the waiting list, please contact the Convenor.

*"If time, so fleeting, must like humans die, let it be filled with good food and good talk, and then embalmed in the perfumes of conviviality."* (M F K Fisher)

*"What are the odds, so long as the fire of the soul is kindled at the taper of conviviality, and the wing of friendship never moults a feather."* (Charles Dickens)



With what we hope is a temporary rise in Covid infections, we reluctantly returned to Zoom meetings over the new year. 'Festivals' was the timely topic of our December meeting, followed by 'The Present', in January. This was widely interpreted by the Group. 'Target' was the topic of our most recent meeting in February, which was something that indeed was missed by some of our members for domestic reasons. We continue to present our writings on agreed monthly topics and aim to return to our regular venue, the Quaker Meeting House in Amersham, when possible.

We are a friendly Group, but small, and would very much like to increase our membership. So a warm welcome awaits if you wish to join us. Please get in touch on [writers@cvu3a.uk](mailto:writers@cvu3a.uk). And don't forget to check out some of our stories on our CVu3a Writers web page.

### ***Song: Spring***

*When daisies pied and violets blue  
And lady-smocks all silver-white  
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue  
Do paint the meadows with delight,  
The cuckoo then, on every tree,  
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,  
Cuckoo;  
Cuckoo, cuckoo: Oh word of fear,  
Unpleasing to a married ear!*

*When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,  
And merry larks are plowmen's clocks,  
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,  
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,  
The cuckoo then, on every tree,  
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,  
Cuckoo;  
Cuckoo, cuckoo: Oh word of fear,  
Unpleasing to a married ear!*

*(from Love's Labours Lost:  
William Shakespeare)*

## **FUNGUS IDENTIFICATION**

I am grateful to Steve Epps who was able to identify the two pictures of fungus featured in the last issue of the Newsletter.

The left is Sulfur Tuft; a honey fungus, and the rightmost is probably Oak Bracket (ed.)



Our two Striders Groups donated £500 from their Gate Fund to the Thames Valley Air Ambulance and received this rather nice certificate in acknowledgement.

Alongside the donation to the Belarus Childrens' Hospice mentioned on page 4, this means that they have raised over £1,300 for charity in the last year.

So, well done the Striders!

*(Please note that the certificate included with the February 2022 e-bulletin actually related to the Striders' last donation in 2020. Our apologies for that but it shows how impressive have been their contributions over the past two years.)*



## Chess Valley u3a equipment

We have various items of equipment purchased by Chess Valley u3a. These are held by the groups that requested and mainly use them but are available for use by other groups. If you would like to borrow any of this equipment, please contact the relevant custodian.

Equipment	Custodian	Contact details
Data projector 1	James Cadle	<b>James Cadle</b> 01494 716992 chair@cvu3a.uk
Data projector 2	Ian Hutt	
Laptop computer (Windows 10, Office 2016)	James Cadle	<b>Ian Hutt</b> 01494 583955 history@cvu3a.uk
Companion speakers for laptop		
PAT-tested extension cable/surge adapter		
Projection screen 1 (5 ft)	Ian Hutt	
Projection screen 2 (6 ft)		
Pinboards x 3	Keith Hoffmeister	<b>Keith Hoffmeister</b> 01494 766990 photography@cvu3a.uk
Easels x 3		
Portable PA systems x 3		
PAT-tested 6-gang 2-metre extension leads (x 2)	David Hurd	<b>David Hurd</b> digimaging@cvu3a.uk
PAT-tested 4-gang 5-metre extension lead		
PAT-tested 4-gang 8-metre extension lead		
Rubber mats to protect extension leads (x 2)		

# Chess Valley u3a Groups Schedule

FIRST in month				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Art Discussion 2 (pm)	Walkers 1	Walkers 2/3 (occasional)	Wildlife	Bowls (Short Mat) (pm)
Pilates Classes 1,2 and 3 (am/pm)	Striders 2	Patchwork and Quilting (am)	Current Affairs (pm)	
Knitting & Other Crafts (pm)	Tai Chi (am)	Spanish Conversation (Intermediate) (am)	Keep Fit (pm)	
Singing for Pleasure (eve)	Family History (pm)	German (am)		
<i>Monday Groups' schedules are sometimes interrupted by public holidays; contact the Convenors for more information</i>	Ukulele (pm)	Book 2 (am)	<i>Book 1 meets at irregular intervals throughout the year Jazz Appreciation meets on the last Tuesday of each month (pm) Tai Chi meets in school term-times only</i>	
		Bridge (pm)		
		Wine 2 (eve) (pm)		

SECOND in month				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
History (pm)	Amblers	Walks into History <b>OR</b> Walks into London (alternate months)	Art Discussion 1 (am)	Bowls (Short Mat) (pm)
Mah Jong (pm)	Striders 1	Line Dancing (am)	Keep Fit (pm)	
Pilates Classes 1, 2 and 3 (pm)	Art (am)	French Conversation (am)	<b>General Meeting</b> (pm)	
Singing for Pleasure (eve)	Tai Chi (am)	Bowls (Green) (am)		<i>The Chess Valley u3a Committee meets on the first or second Tuesday of each month, two days before the General Meeting</i>
	Dinghy Sailing (pm)	Bridge (pm)		
	Eclectic Music (pm)	Folk Music (pm)		
	Writers (pm)			

THIRD in month				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Science and Technology (pm)	Walkers 1	Patchwork and Quilting (all day)	Book 4 (am)	Railways (am)
Pilates Classes 1, 2 and 3 (pm)	Striders 2	German (am)	Art Discussion 3 (pm)#	Bowls (Short Mat) (pm)
Canasta (pm)	Tai Chi (am)	Spanish Conversation (Intermediate) (am)	Keep Fit (pm)	
Knitting & Other Crafts (pm)	Book 3 (pm)	Photography (pm)		<i>#Art Discussion 3 is temporarily suspended MOTO (Members On Their Own) have an 'anchor meeting' on the first Saturday morning of each month</i>
Singing for Pleasure (eve)	Ukulele (pm)	Play Reading (pm)		
	Scrabble for Fun (pm)	Bridge (pm)		

FOURTH in month				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Digital Imaging (am)	Striders 1	French Conversation (am)	Bus Pass Adventures	Chess (pm)
Mah Jong (pm)	Art (am)	French Intermediate (am)	Walkers 2/3	Bowls (Short Mat) (pm)
Pilates Classes 1, 2 and 3 (pm)	Tai Chi (am)	Line Dancing (am)	Poetry (pm)	
Singing for Pleasure (eve)		Dinghy Sailing (pm)	Keep Fit (pm)	
Stamps (odd months only)		Gardening (pm)	Wine 1 (eve)	
		Bridge (pm)		
		Folk Music (pm)		



Top left: With Janice retiring as Convenor of the Gardening Group, members made a presentation to her in her own garden. This box contains three sculptures of lily flowers that she can plant in the borders.

Above: Introducing our new Folk Music Group: At their first meeting in February they began working on a repertoire provided by Richard, their Convenor.

Left: Two years in the making: Patchwork and Quilting Group member Jill presents this magnificent quilt featuring 36 individually crafted stars.

Below: Bright sunlight and not too much mud: Ideal walking conditions, as it turned out, for Striders on their January walk around Ashridge.





Above: Mulled wine featured quite heavily at the Art Group Christmas gathering.

Left: Is this David's *The Death of Marat*? No, but a recreation of it by a member of Art Discussion 2. The Group had great fun recreating famous paintings for their December meeting. They will be featuring on our website gallery.

Below: This wonderful Kandinsky poster was created by the Art Group and will go on display at the White Hill Centre.

