

Chairman's Report

It is now six months since I took over from Tony Dinkin as chairman of Horsley u3a. The organisation was in a good state then and I believe remains so now. Membership numbers remain constant and even slightly improved and the various activities offered remain varied and wide ranging.

You will see in the next few months a national advertising campaign launched on behalf of u3a. The message will be that ours is an organisation that is open to all ages, provided the applicant is not in full time work. The idea is to try and raise the membership to at least half a million countrywide and thus obtain an influx of new blood. If this campaign takes off, we will want to run a parallel campaign for our own u3a.

The problem we are all facing is that none of us is getting any younger! As far as our day-to-day activities are concerned this is of no immediate worry. We adapt our activities to accommodate members of all ages. As our u3a evolves, new members will bring fresh ideas, fresh skills, and fresh ways of doing things whilst sticking to the maxim, Learn Laugh and Live.

Groups should be keen to attract new members and certainly our committee would welcome some new blood. Posts that currently require additional help are those that involve technical know-how. We need help at our monthly meetings. We need help with publicity, the maintenance of our website, help with the issue of regular notices to members, and with our Newsletter.

Please help if you can. The usual response is "I'm too busy". Are you really too busy to spare what probably averages out at an hour a week on something that will help bring a lot of pleasure to so many? I ask all members, and particularly the younger ones, to consider whether they could spare that hour and join the committee or, at the very least be "friends of the committee", willing and able to help as occasions may require.

Whether you can help or not I hope you all continue to enjoy your membership to the full and I look forward to meeting many of you in the future.

Paul Dodgson

chair@horsleyu3a.org.uk



Books

We have continued to meet and discuss our choices every second Tuesday of the month in members' houses with the host choosing the book.

Recent books that we have read:

"Lessons in Chemistry" by Bonnie Garmus, "The Beekeeper's Promise" by Fiona Valpy, "The Joy and Light Bus Company" by Alexander McCall Smith, "The Garden of Evening Mists" by Tan Twan Eng, "The Light Keeper's Daughters" by Jean Pendziwol & "Emma" by Jane Austen.

Only 8 of us meet nowadays some of whom have been members since 2008. At the beginning I believe there were 10 or 12. I joined 10 years ago. We have discussed looking for new members but with time several people have "downsized" and would find it extremely difficult to have more members meeting in their homes.

Choosing books does not seem to be a problem. I have a list of the 180 or so books that have been read so far and we just need to check that if necessary!

Sally Gilbert

books@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Chess

We continue to meet monthly in members' homes for competitive but friendly chess. Membership is stable but we could accommodate a few new members of any level of ability.

Visit our Horsley u3a webpage for more information.

David Harrison

chess@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Posters

If your group needs a poster, or indeed if your existing poster just needs updating, please contact Meryl & Kelvin Hayes.

Meryl can design a poster to your specifications or she is very happy to design it for you!

Just forward the details of your group (or special event) and they will do the rest.

Posters are displayed on the noticeboard outside Sainsburys and in the Village Hall, both on the noticeboards and at monthly meetings.

Meryl & Kelvin Hayes

publicity@horsleyu3a.org.uk

This newsletter was edited by Ian Eversden with graphics by Meryl Hayes. Thank you to all those who contributed, and with special thanks to Christine Hewson who checked the copy so accurately!

Wine Appreciation

I have recently taken over the running of the Wine Appreciation Group. Tony and Valerie Thompson, ran the group for almost five years including over Covid. We are very grateful for their dedication. The group meets on the second Thursday every month in the village hall to taste wines. Every meeting has a theme, which may be a country or region or a type of wine. For the last two meetings we tasted malbec, the last meeting Argentinian Malbec. Anyone who is interested in being included on the mailing list can send me an email

Rodney Turner

wine-appreciation@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Table Tennis Monday

What better way to start off the week than two hours of fun table tennis. Our friendly, mixed group meets every Monday morning from 10am-12pm in East Horsley Village Hall. We have two excellent tables where we play doubles. All experience levels are welcome and you can have a free trial session - just contact me at our webpage address.

Linda Brockey

table-tennis-mondayam@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Table Tennis Table

A new table tennis table has been purchased for the Table Tennis Groups. It replaces an old table that was originally used by the Horsley Youth Club that used to meet in the Hall. The problem of storing the tables has been eased by changes made to the space behind the stage.

The table purchased was not the first choice of the groups but is proving to be a most welcome improvement in the facilities. All four groups continue to meet regularly on Mondays, morning and afternoon and Wednesday, and Friday afternoons.



Wednesday Group playing on our new table (in the foreground)

Autobiography

How often have you heard someone say, "I wish I had spoken to . . . about . . . but it's too late now." A new short course that might help put your life with its many and varied experiences into some sort of interesting narrative is now up and running. People often think that their life isn't interesting, but it is to a future generation. Your life is their history and the background to their life. "Did you know what Grandpa/Granny did/met/learned to do etc". The problems that the course looks at are: what experiences do you put in/leave out, how do you make them interesting etc? All of these questions and more we talk about and explore in the 5 weeks or so that the course lasts. We already have a group of 6 members that meet on the first Thursday each month. Enquiries about joining such a course are welcomed.

Michael Grinter

autobiography@horselyu3a.org.uk

Dinghy Sailing

It has been a mixed season with the weather forcing cancellation of around half the planned sailing days. However, Chichester Harbour continues to offer a superb expanse of suitable water. From our base at Cobnor Point we explored up to Birdham pool, and north into the Emsworth Channel. On a couple of occasions, when the conditions were good, we ventured a short distance into the Solent before returning for lunch on either Hayling Island or East Head. In June we hired the 125 year old restored Emsworth Oyster boat and enjoyed a wonderful morning in the graceful old vessel.

Bob Spackman

sailing@horselyu3a.org.uk



Boules



This year the group started playing again in May, every Monday at 2.15 at the Horsley Sports Club weather permitting. The club provides boules and markers for play and a divider so that we can play two games side by side if necessary. Our numbers vary between 3 and 9 players, but everyone enjoys friendly competitive play. In August we had a guest player from USA who plays at an international standard and found it very useful to have an update on the rules and some tips for play and equipment. The picture shows that day – maximum concentration all round! As a result we have acquired some strong magnets on strings to pick up the boules, and some scoring devices which do away with the need for pen and paper.

Wendy Sampson

boules@horselyu3a.org.uk

Travel

The Travel Group has been very active since the Spring Newsletter.

In May our visiting speaker was Paul Whittle, well known in U3A circles, and his talk this time was on 'Train to the Arctic Circle.'

This was followed in July by another familiar speaker, Jan Parsons, whose presentation was entitled 'From the North Cape to the Med.'

Our September Meeting, was of great interest. Bill Purves talked on his recent trip to Malta and cruise along the Dalmation Coast. This was followed by Tony Millership and Bob Spackman reporting on the Horsley U3A Cycling Club Adventure in Puglia. Lovely photographs!



On 1 September an intrepid band of 'Horsleyites' set off with 'Riviera Travel' to Austria, via Heathrow and Munich. Unfortunately Malcolm Bond (Travel Group Treasurer), who had organized and was to lead the trip, was taken ill and ended up in Innsbruck Hospital, unable to enjoy the fruits of his labours! Our grateful thanks go to him and his wife Mary, along with our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Austria is very beautiful, scenic and fresh. Our hotel was a typical, family run, Tyrolean Chalet in Seefeld - location for the Winter Olympics in the past. We went by coach to a number of other lovely villages with flowers everywhere, saw lots of mountains and went up a few on chair-lifts etc, visited wonderful lakes, interesting museums and sadly, depleted glaciers.

The weather was hot and largely cloudless, much better than the forecast and having packed all the wrong clothes, several people had to go shopping for lighter T-shirts etc!

Some of the highlights of the trip were meeting 'Ötzi the Iceman' in Bolzano, South Tyrol, Italy, and discovering some of the details of his life and death 5,300 years ago.

We also visited the stunning 'Royal Castle of Neuschwanstein', the brainchild of King Ludwig II, that was to become the model for all future 'Fairyland Castles.'



That involved a lot of steep walking and steps - quite a challenge, but the dramatic frescoes and rich interior of the rooms had to be seen to be believed! We were also able to spend some time beside the picturesque 'Achensee Lake' and of course we enjoyed the famous Austrian strudels and gateaux!

At our November meeting, Clare Hewlett and Denise Smee will give everyone more details about this Austrian holiday and we will celebrate together at the close of another successful Travel Group Year! Hope to see you there - all Horsley U3A members are welcome to attend our evenings, with a small charge on the door to cover costs. Look out for an email invitation.

Jenny Peachey

travel@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Films

We have been pleased to welcome several new people recently to our monthly film nights. In addition, some people who have been regulars since we started ten years ago. We continue to meet on the first Friday of each month, in the Millenium Room at East Horsley Village Hall, at 7.00 for refreshments, 7.30 for the film. At a charge which is currently £2.

We started our new programme in October with 'Saturday Night and Sunday Morning'. This will be followed by 'A Touch of Class' on 3rd November, 'Hello Bookstore' on 2nd December, 'Last Chance Harvey' on 5th January, 'North by North-West' on 2nd February, and 'On the Waterfront' on 2nd March.

Do get in touch if you would like to be included on my distribution list. I currently send out information to over 100 people, although monthly attendance is usually between 30 and 40.

Margaret Faulkner

films@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Knitting for charity

We have had another very busy season knitting for a variety of charities including Knit for Nowt. As you will see from the photo, we are sending off three monsters and 8 whole families (Granny, Grandpa, Mum, Dad, Son and Daughter) of hand puppets to assist therapists treat traumatised children.

Another major project for us was knitting a Noah's Ark. There are some absolutely adorable animals as well as an enormous ark with a zip in it so the animals can be packed safely away when the child has finished play.

Do look at the picture to see the amazing knitting we can produce if asked.



Alongside these two mammoth tasks, we have been producing hats – loads and loads of them – to be used to decorate a Christmas Tree and then donated to charity after Christmas. We are now starting on a new project so watch this space for what we are up to next time. Unfortunately, we do not have any room in our group for new members but please do talk to Wendy Samson if you would like to start up a new group – I am very happy to give advice on starting up.

Margaret Grinter

knit-for-charity@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Explore London Thursday

Our group continues to flourish with walks every month except December, and January when we have our annual lunch at the Onslow Arms, Clandon. Our last six walks included Kensington, a section of the Regents Canal, Hammersmith to Chiswick, Lincolns Inn/Law Courts, Dulwich, and Earls Court.

The final three walks of the year will cover Camden and another section of the Regents Canal, Pimlico and a venue to be decided.

Any enquiries about joining the Explore London groups are forwarded to the Groups' Support team.



Group members beside Regent's Canal

David Harrison

explore-london-thurs-1@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Creative Writing

It is a pleasure to report that our membership is slowly growing. We now have 8 members who regularly submit their stories, and sometimes a poem.

We select a different theme each month, the decision being taken by those who manage to attend our monthly meetings.

Recent subjects have included 'A Children's Story', 'Dinner', 'The Crowd', 'Homophone', 'Writing to Market', 'A Lost Cause', and most recently 'Reason'

It is perhaps not surprising that each of our stories is extraordinarily different. Although we aim for about 1000 - 1500 words, some stories may be as short as 500 words, while others are longer.

It has been a little disappointing that so few Horsley u3a members have downloaded a copy of our recently compiled anthology, but maybe this report will stimulate more interest. All that is needed is an email to our contact address with your request.

Ian Eversden

creative-writing@horsleyu3a.org.uk

PS Homophones are words that sound the same but are spelt differently. Our scripts on this subject were not only creative, but also amusing. For instance, 'a pair of pears lying together in a fruit bowl', or deciding on 'which child a witch might cast a spell.' You never know when something new is going to flow from a person's inventive mind. Perhaps a toad being towed through the undergrowth. No laughing allowed and certainly not aloud.

Bird Watching & Natural History

Starting in September '22 we met at Ripley Green for a walk round Papercourt Lake but most of the winter ducks were yet to arrive.

The next month to Guildford Riverside Nature Reserve where we walked along the bank of the River Wey from Burpham. The riverside scrub and muddy banks were as always good for grey wagtails, wrens, stonechats and other residents.

The November walk was cancelled because of the wet weather but by December at Bookham Common it was dry but very cold with ice on the ponds (and frozen fingers).

Into 2023, January's walk to Mallard Mere was abandoned (very muddy) so we opted for the "November" walk at Boldermere. Lots of duck of all types (wigeon, gadwall, tufted, pochard, shoveller etc) feed on the mere despite traffic noise from the A3 just a few yards away (and getting worse!) before we headed up onto Wisley Airfield for loads of skylarks plus buzzards, red kites and the usual corvids.

The February walk was changed from Dick Focks Common (none of the hoped-for hawfinches and other winter specials had been reported) so we strolled around part of Norbury Park and down to the River Mole as the sun began to warm through. Birdlife was sparse and there was no sign of the expected redpolls or siskins.

A change of parking arrangements in March meant that we started along the river at Leatherhead and finished at the pond on the edge of Fetcham. The pond was the highlight this time with black-headed and common gulls competing for space with coots, moorhens, mute swans, mallards and a couple of little grebes.

The April walk was a new one focused on the pathways around West Horsley Place.



In May, we were back to parking at Ripley Green for a walk along the River Wey starting at Walsham Lock. Some years ago the bridge to cross back over the river was washed away but the owners of Wisley Golf Club kindly allow us to "trespass" over their bridge which means we continue to enjoy a circular walk returning via Ockham Mill.

Both June and July walks were on the North Downs, June on Ranmore at the Denbies end, and July at Sheepleas. We keep an eye out for birds but the main focus is always on wild flowers and butterflies, the former too numerous to mention. Butterflies, various blues and fritillaries (a purple emperor was seen by one of us) mingled with whites, speckled woods, meadow browns and gatekeepers.

August is holiday month. Back to September again and we returned to Papercourt. Too early for the winter ducks but a pochard or two kept company with tufties, great crested grebes, swans, coots and some Egyptian geese. On our way there and back we checked over the paddocks beside the road to Pyrford and picked up crows, jackdaws, rooks and magpies. The smaller birds kept a safe distance.

Our October walk was at Polesden Lacey and then it's Bookham Common in November. We continue to seek out new and interesting locations within a reasonable distance of Horsley - one possibility is a nature reserve at Langley Vale on the edge of Epsom Downs. We look forward to seeing new and older faces on our walks as we move into autumn.

John Burge

birdwatching@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Indoor Climbing



We continue to meet monthly at Blue Spider, Guildford. Some of the group have advanced to lead climbing while others climb on a top rope, with a partner, or with the automatic rise and fall system. There is also a wall for those who do not like heights, great exercise, 6 inches off the ground. The group can give training and lend a harness if required. It's a full body workout and warmer in winter! For more information on prices, check out the Blue Spider website or contact me.

Peter West

indoor-climbing@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Grace Notes



Grace Notes continues to thrive and improve. We are now in our twelfth year with many of the original members still playing and happily some new ones. It all helps to increase our numbers and flexibility.

It was wonderful that we were able to resume our entertainment of residents in some of the local nursing homes and local community groups which we all enjoy and work towards. We hope to continue this year.

We had a very successful afternoon at West Horsley Place again this summer even though the weather was not very kind.

We meet most Thursdays in the Methodist Hall in West Horsley from 2.30 -4.30 with a break for tea and a chat.

Marion Hartland

grace-notes@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Croquet

We have had another good summer with some enjoyable games in a lovely setting at Polesden Lacey. Most of our members like to play Golf croquet with a few who prefer to play Association. Both games can be challenging. The weather has been kind to us and I think rain has only stopped play once.

In August, we held our mini tournament with 16 members taking part; this was followed by a bring your own picnic lunch. We welcome enquiries but you might have to be patient before we can offer you the chance to join us.

Sue Mills

croquet@horsleyu3a.org.uk



Open Minds

Our discussion group has now been running for over 14 years since the founder left the area and I took over doing the admin work for the group.

It can be quite a challenge to find subjects for discussion that we have not covered in the recent past but the art is to choose subjects that give scope for discussion for a couple of hours (less the tea break!).

The world is changing so rapidly that suitable subjects often present themselves. We try and choose lighter subjects among the more serious ones and keep all discussions in a non-confrontational way.

Recent subject matters have included Animal Liberation based on a HardTalk programme with Peter Singer (he has some very contentious ideas), 'Levelling Up', 'War and Peace', 'Woke', 'Happiness', 'The State of our Public Services', 'Adventure Tourism, and most recently 'Mental Welfare' .

We seldom (never!) claim to find a definitive answer to any of these challenging matters, but our discussions give us a chance to think around these subjects.

Our format does not change! We meet every 3rd Thursday of the month 2.30 - 4.30 in a member's house. We have a limit for each meeting set by the host, usually around 10 members.

We welcome enquiries from new members but numbers are limited by the capacity of our living rooms. If you would like to join us for a meeting to introduce a subject for discussion about which you have particular experience (a long talk is not required!) please let me know.

Mandy Newman

open-minds@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Pickleball

Pickleball is growing in popularity in East Horsley as well as across the country. Pickleball combines elements of tennis, badminton and table tennis and is played on a badminton sized court where the net has been lowered. Two or four players use solid paddles to hit a perforated plastic ball over the net. The smaller court reduces the amount of movement required which is why it appeals to older people. When people become more experienced at playing it can also be a challenging, fast paced, and competitive game. We have just, this term, accepted 5 new players of assorted ages who are really enjoying playing. Pickleball is fun – any age can play.

I am standing down as Team Leader in December and our new "Boss" will be Helen Austin who will make the perfect replacement for me.

Therefore, if anyone is interested in playing a new exciting sport please get in touch with either me or Helen through our email address.

We meet from 15.00 to 17.00 on Fridays.

Pam Campbell

pickleball-fri@horsleyu3a.org.uk



Poetry

The Poetry 1 group has now been meeting on the second Wednesday of each month since January - time flies! At the end of each meeting, we choose a poet or period or poetic subject for the next meeting and members choose and present their own selection of poems for discussion. Subjects have included Tennyson, Kipling, Browning, the First World War and poems by female poets. In October we will be looking at Percy Bysshe Shelley. At the moment we have just seven members though not everyone is able to come to every meeting. We could comfortably accommodate another two members if anyone is interested.

Colin Sandford

poetry-1@horsleyu3a.org.uk

During the summer, Poetry 2 enjoyed a season of Renaissance sonnets, including Tudor court poets, Shakespeare and religious sonnets by Donne, Herbert and other masters of the form. We then had a brief flirtation with comic poetry, and have resumed this autumn with focus on Blake, T.S Eliot & Yeats; we will be looking at other major 20th century poets over the winter.

We very much like reading the poetry aloud with each other, and our discussions are always illuminating, at times passionate!

Judith Warren

poetry-2@horsleyu3a.org.uk

At Home Wine Appreciation

We are a relaxed and informal small group (up to 15), meeting in members' homes, to drink and talk about interesting wines. We meet every month on the second Wednesday. Attendances have been very good with full turn outs most months.

Highlights have included the South African crémant (sparkling wine) served at the Obama inauguration. Our members were not swayed by its starry reputation and judged it purely on its merits. Other themes have included Pinot noir/gris, The Loire and Sicily.

We also have the ever popular "Wines of Summer".

We try to hold this al fresco but this year rain forced us indoors

We will be very happy to welcome new members who would like to join us. Cheers!



Stewart Smith

wine-apprec-at-home@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Monthly meetings

Monthly meetings have now essentially returned to the pre-covid situation, with the added optional benefit of zoom-attendance, albeit at the mercy of technology - which has so far been a success, thanks to our expert team.

On that point, we would welcome some more helpers. Sharing the tasks around makes the workload less onerous. Just have a word with the team at the front of the hall.

Over recent months our topics have ranged widely. All have been entertaining, although you can't please all of the people all of the time! Most have been well received by members; no snoring has been heard, although there have been a interruptions from mobile phones To pick out some highlights from 2023:

Ian Keable (a regular favourite) included some magic 'tricks' in his talk 'Charles Dickens, conjurer'

Chris Druran, ex MET Police (but one of the good guys) brought us up-to-date on 'Dabs and DNA',

Tom Way, wildlife photographer extraordinaire, gave us a visual feast about UK wildlife

Helen Naylor, a London Guide, took us through the history of Gin in London – sadly without samples!

You get the picture – nothing too serious and generally entertaining.

Although monthly meetings are built around our talks, there is plenty of time to catch up with old friends and make new ones - just sit next to someone you know or maybe someone you have never seen before, and enjoy a free cup of coffee or tea and a biscuit. Lots of information about u3a and our groups is pinned up around the hall. You can even meet the current Chairman of our u3a.

To accompany our 'special' pre-Christmas November meeting, Grace Notes will be playing a selection of seasonal tunes and we will hear from Pete Allen about 'A History of Pantomime. I think you can work out what that will be about – and it will entertain you as you await your wine and nibbles which are being prepared 'behind you' - oh yes they are!

Looking to the future, our 2024 programme is opened on 24 January with the return of Tom Way moving on to 'Exciting wildlife from around the world'. His talk in June was so well received that we had to have him back before a lion gets him... and we had to fit in with his extensive travels as he searches for (and finds) the perfect picture.

Alan Gilbertson

speakers@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Coming in 2024:

Scattered squalor – Downland homes

More tea vicar?

Chemistry in the Atmosphere and Climate Change

Victorian London

How Rainforests Work

Cycling

Our various cycling sub-groups are flourishing. They meet on different days of the week and at agreed locations. Enquiries about joining can be sent to Bob Spackman as our webpage suggests, or one of the following:

easyriders@horsleyu3a.org.uk intermediates@horsleyu3a.org.uk roadriders@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Easy Riders

The Easy Riders cycling group is aimed at people who have not cycled for a while and are nervous about starting again and/or uncertain of their fitness level. We have recently created a new 'Back to Bike' group that meets at 09.30 at Horsley station on Thursday mornings. We will get used to cycling on roads, learn the best way to deal with traffic, and explain our u3a cycling etiquette.

I hope that riders, if they want, will eventually be able to move into the Easy Riders and possibly to the Regular riders.

The Easy Riders ride on either e-bikes or regular bikes. We do not attempt big hills or long rides and we cycle at a more gentle pace. We are happy to stop to look at views, swans, the desecration of trees alongside the A3 and anything else of note. We enjoy a chat while we cycle and stop for a long coffee break, deciding towards the end whether the long or short way home is best.

We welcome men and women of all abilities, whether they are beginners or those who need or want to take it a bit easier.

Jan Dodgson

easyriders@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Bridge 1 & 2

Bridge group 1 has been running very smoothly. It's a very friendly group with all the members being involved in organising the sessions. Very good, friendly and challenging bridge being played. I have recently taken over from Sue Jewell, and new members are welcome.

Sue Martin

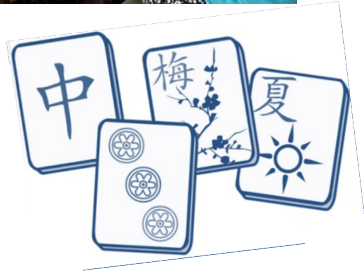
bridge-1@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Bridge group 2 continues to meet every week on a Monday afternoon at East Horsley Village Hall. We have recently moved into the more spacious Lovelace Room so we are now able to welcome new members. We aim to have a relaxed, social game of bridge and we use the Chicago scoring system. If you would like to find out more please contact me.

Helen Bayes

bridge-2@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Mah-jong



The Mah-jong Group currently has 12 regular players and we would welcome anyone who is keen to learn this fascinating game. We usually meet twice a month in members' homes on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoons of the month at 2pm (1.30pm in the winter). The sessions usually last for about 2½ hours, with tea and biscuits at a convenient interval. If you are interested in finding out more and would value a one-to-one taster session, please don't hesitate to contact me!

Vicky Rutherford

mah-jong@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Garden Visits

This year we have visited gardens monthly from February to September.

We have seen some stunning ones over the summer and have mostly been blessed with good weather, especially in February which was a glorious sunny day.

I arrange for private visits to the gardens and the numbers attending vary between 25 – 35. Those that wish to do so, go on to have a pub lunch.



Fittleworth House

After visiting Fittleworth in May, it was Colemore House in June, Bere Mill in July, Titsey Place in August and finally Old Cross Street Farm in September. We were 36 on the visit to Bere Mill and it was just such a beautiful place with very clear water running through the garden as it was working mill and the atmosphere was pure tranquillity.

Gayle Leader

garden-visits@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Music Appreciation

The Music Appreciation group meets in members' homes on the third Wednesday of each month at 3pm. Members take turns to present a programme of recordings on a particular theme.

In April, using Lucy Parham's "A Heart in Exile", Peter Collett gave an illustrated talk on the life and piano music of Sergei Rachmaninoff. As you may know October was the 150th anniversary of his birth.

Our May meeting had to be cancelled, but in June, Donald McLean completed his tour of the music of Johannes Brahms. We had a summer break in July but in August, I presented a programme of music by Baroque composers including Vivaldi, Bach and Handel.

In September, we enjoyed a review of music by Antonin Dvorak presented by David White. This served as an excellent introduction to a compilation of American music arranged by Ian Eversden. Recordings spanned from when negro spirituals were popular, Dvorak's 9th symphony 'From the New World', to 'A Ride in a Fast Machine' by minimalist composer John Adams.

Next month Roy and Shiela Proctor will be introducing us to a programme of jazz music

Our December meeting will feature members' own choices, and then in the new year we plan to have a number of live pianists to play for us. Please get in contact if you would like to join us.

Tom Stevenson

music-appreciation@horsleyu3a.org.uk

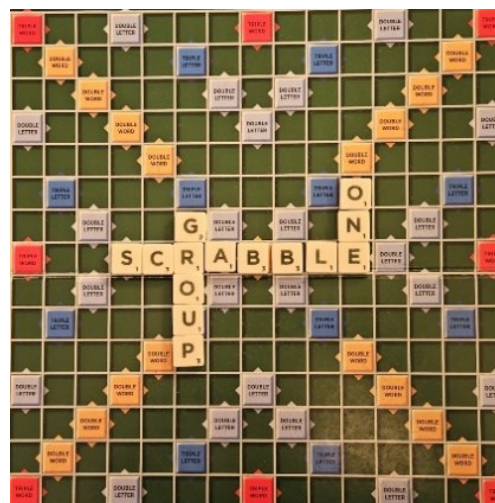
Scrabble

Scrabble is an interesting game of wit and words!

Group 1 continues to meet in the afternoon of the second Wednesday of each month, hosted in members' homes. Meetings are always well attended and, depending on numbers, we play in groups of two or three per board, moving round after each game to meet a different opponent. We usually manage three games during the afternoon and the short break for tea and biscuits and the opportunity for social chat is a further highlight of the afternoon.

Susan Lea

scrabble-1@horsleyu3a.org.uk



The Scrabble 2 group is equally fun but meets on Thursday afternoons. Both groups welcome enquiries from new members

Angela Watney

scrabble-2@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Group Support

A fresh title but one that better describes the role.

Although some groups have closed down as reported in the Spring Newsletter, all others have returned to full activity. Any group leader can be contacted by using the generic email address shown in the directory and on the website. I can be contacted on groups@horsleyu3a.org.uk and all groups have a similar format. This is to comply with GDPR.

A new group – Autobiography, has been started. You can email the group leader Michael Grinter on autobiography@horsleyu3a.org.uk for information.

There have been a number of changes to group leaders. The Photography group has been running under new leadership for several months, the Bridge-1 group has a new leader, as does the Wine Appreciation group. The Ukulele group is now run by a member of Bookham u3a, and changes are due in the leadership of the Pickleball group.

The committee is grateful to those ceasing to be leaders and those who have taken over. We are always interested in starting new groups so please get in contact if you have any ideas.

A party for group leaders and helpers has been arranged for 17th May 2024 from 7.30 - 9pm in the Village Hall.

I recently asked for interest in job sharing/shadowing my role and have two members interested in doing so. It is very important that we secure the future of our u3a. This is dependent on all members both participating in the activities and helping with the provision of them. A very good way to do this is to job share or shadow someone who is organising a group or central function.

If you are able to do this, please talk to your group leader or any committee member. You will not be committing to anything onerous, and it is a great way to get to know people if you have recently moved into the area. I did this and have made many friends and had a most enjoyable time on the committee and leading a group.

Wendy Sampson

groups@horsleyu3a.org.uk

French Conversation

Our group has continued to function, meeting once-a-month, usually in my home. I should mention however that its continuance is a bit in doubt at the moment.

Finding new members to replace the occasional leaver is difficult. We find they stay for two or three months then get bored or simply find the "chemistry" of the group and its modus operandus does not suit them. Anyway, we are a stalwart group and will continue for the time being.

Anyone thinking that it would be interesting to develop their skills of French Conversation is welcome to get in contact. They would receive a warm welcome.

David Foot

french-conversation@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Ukulele

In January 2019 on hearing that a u3a ukulele group existed, I decided to buy a tenor ukulele and give it a go.

Our leader then was Tony Renfrey, who in 2020 faced the challenges of lockdown. Tony was determined that the group should continue to meet, so set up a series of highly enjoyable zoom meetings. Later, when Covid allowed, we met together outdoors.

In June 2021 Tony unexpectedly announced that he was relocating to Stratford. I assumed that this signified the end of the group, but the group had other ideas and after a lot of persuasion I reluctantly took over the leadership of the group.

We are a group of twelve individuals, not especially musical and we always spend plenty of time drinking coffee, chatting and generally having fun.

However, we still do plenty of playing in our twice monthly meetings.

In December we will be performing our 5th e-singalong gig for the Effingham Connect group. We also led a St Andrew's Day Scottish singalong for "Golden Years" at Bookham Baptist Church

In August, Tony Renfrey spent a week in Horsley, so we took the opportunity to meet up with him together with another local ukulele group. We had such a great time that we decided that we would try and make it an annual event

David Snow, Bookham u3a
ukulele@horsleyu3a.org.uk



Coffee break with Tony, in Horsley



Two enthusiastic members, Mike Ellerker and Alan Goldup

Humour

Members of the on-line humour group are indebted to our leader Derry Dinkin who keeps us informed of the latest amusing anecdotes and cartoons found on the internet.

Do feel free to send the group your own contributions.

You never appreciate what you have till it's gone. Toilet paper is a good example.

Ian Eversden

humour@horsleyu3a.org.uk

History



Every picture tells a story, and these pictures give an idea of the variety we have enjoyed in our monthly talks. Most of these are researched and presented by our loyal members, and our sessions are always lively and social as well as informative.

Two talks have focused on old houses: Graham Davey on 'Highbank,' a Horsley house built in 1386, and June Davey on Clandon Park, dating from 1730-1733, highlighting plans for its rebirth.

Mark Blowers admirably fulfilled the challenge of 'Islam and the West,' and the memorable contribution of the Gurkhas to our history was brought to life by David Williams. On the home front, Denise Smee and Carolyn Palmer explored the Suffragette movement, highlighting the history and the colourful personalities of the women fighting bravely for their rights. Battles continued in May, when guest speaker Chris Leworthy shared the inspiring story of the 1940 Battle of Britain.



But talks were not the whole focus of the History Group in the first half of 2023. Ian Eversden suggested we might embark on a research project of WW2.

It has involved recording oral Interviews of u3a

members and friends who had memories of the war. Some wonderful stories of members' experiences emerged, and it was a special opportunity to spend time together recording these experiences.

One of our members, Tineke Robertson spent part of her childhood in a Japanese prison camp in Indonesia. This research will feature in our 2024 programme.

The rest of 2023 is already revealing more absorbing and colourful stories.

Peter Warburton has presented an international African theme with 'The Birth, Rise and Decline of the Matabele Nation.'

We return home for 'The Country House and its History,' with Robbi Robson, and in our last session of 2023, Bob Spackman is due to uncover 'The History of the Mediterranean Sea.'

I am indebted to my fellow committee members Mark Blowers, Graham Davey, and David Williams for their help and support. New members are always welcome.



June Davey

history@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Photography

Our group continues to meet every second Wednesday of the month at EHVH from 2.15 until 4.30pm.

We also arrange outings to areas of photographic interest. We welcome users of all types of equipment - DSLR, bridge cameras, compact cameras and 'phone cameras.

We are actively looking to welcome new members so if you are interested in joining our friendly group, please contact us.

At our monthly meetings we may have a presentation by a member on their chosen topic, or a friendly discussion of photos submitted by all group members on a previously chosen subject. The aim of the discussion is to provide a positive critique of the photos so we can all learn about ways of improving our photographic skills.

Since the Spring we have had an interesting presentation on 'Emotion' by Ian Eversden describing how a photo can either show an emotional subject or it can evoke emotion in the viewer.

We had a group visit to 'RHS Wisley' and followed this with a discussion on the photos taken there.



"Emotion" The Knife Angel, a sculpture by Alfie Bradley made from over 100,000 knives handed in during a knife amnesty

Photo: John Peachey

During October, 10 of our members turned up for our visit to Winkworth Arboretum. The conditions were dry but challenging as light levels were low with overcast skies and many trees had not yet changed to their autumn colours. This meant the group had to seek out other photographic opportunities such as fungi, berries, wildlife, landscapes etc. It will be interesting at our November meeting to see how members responded to the challenge and the nature of their photos.

At our previous regular meetings we have discussed 'Emotion', 'Wheels Rust and Construction' and the 'Horsley Area'. It is always interesting to see how our members' photos interpret the same subject in different ways. At our meeting on 13th December, we will have our Christmas quiz on the 'Horsley Area'

We received a big thank you from the Lovelace Arts Society for the selection of photographs we sent them for use on their website. Any they display will be attributed to Horsley u3a Photography Group.

John Peachey

photography@horsleyu3a.org.uk



"Horsley Area" The cattle trough on the main road in West Horsley. It was erected in 1909 according to the will of Mrs Laura Fisher who lived in West Horsley.

Photo: Jean Green

Walking 2

'Walking 2' walk 2gether on the first Tuesday of the month.

The walks are between 6 and 7 miles starting at 10am and ending, rather conveniently, in time for a pub lunch.

There are currently fifteen people in this group and about ten or twelve will walk on any particular month.

Each month a different member will lead. Often two members will plan the walk together. Leading a walk is optional. Similarly, most walkers stay for lunch but this is optional too.

We cover lots of different areas and terrain; in the Surrey Hills and rivers, through woods or into the open commons/countryside.

Over the last six months we have explored Chobham Common, Reigate Heath, Forest Green, Bookham Common, Ripley over to Papercourt and Chiddingfold.

In June we walked from Forest Green to the Rhododendron Woods near Leith Hill Place. The Woods were created in the late 1800s by Caroline Wedgwood – of the pottery family – who lived at nearby Leith Hill Place. A keen botanist, Caroline was also the eldest sister of Charles Darwin, who would visit Leith Hill and walk in the woods.

If you are looking for a Walking Group we have space for more walkers so if you'd like to join us please do email me.



Helen Austin

walking2@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Pilates

The Pilates class at West Horsley Village Hall is going well with new members. It is a popular way of keeping supple and fit, so if you are interested in joining us in the hall do not hesitate to get in contact. Numbers are limited but it might be possible to start another class.

Zoom classes each morning at 9.30 continue and anyone who has done Pilates beforehand is welcome to join.

Please check the details on our Horsley u3a webpage to see what each class involves.

Variety is what I'm offering and different levels of the same exercise, helps build confidence and mobility.

Margaret Newman

pilates@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Travel Group in Austria



Achensee Lake

We've been in Austria for a week and seen so many places
In Italy and Germany too and looked at many faces
Faces on the people here and on the many paintings
And even tho' it's been quite hot, there were not any faintings!
Florian, he was Good and Safe and Alexander too
He listened, talked and took the path to always get us through
The mountains, rivers, valleys, were spectacular to see
The air was fresh, the sky was clear, it made us full of glee!
I'm sure that at the end of such a week, you will remember
This holiday and all you've met, in this special September.

Margaret Newman

Walking 1

Walking Group 1 began the summer with a walk from the Pond Car Park at Ockham Common, led by Margaret Faulkner. Ten of us set out across the colourful heathland before climbing up to the Semaphore Tower, then moving to Wisley airfield and a circuit of the runway. The visibility was excellent that day and we could watch the rain showers approaching far over the North Downs before giving us all a short sharp drenching. Three times!

In August the weather was kinder once more and we had a splendid morning for an excursion along Denbies Hillside, following the National Trust's nature trail before climbing gradually back up the slopes to reach the North Downs Way once more. With the wheat fields in full colour and the hillside rich in orchids and butterflies, the group returned feeling duly re-invigorated.

It was not to last. September's walk around Abinger Hammer, due to be led by Gale Norman, was postponed due to the heavy rain forecast. We hoped for better for our walk around the Chantries later in October.

Robert Taylor

walking@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Crime Fiction

The cold case team continues to meet monthly - think "New Tricks" - to investigate the first crime in a successful detective fiction series. We often include US fiction and have strayed into Europe and as far as Australia - and Laos. We occasionally add a discussion of recent TV crime drama but strictly no spoilers! For details of our meetings see our webpage or get in contact

Peter West

crime-fiction@horsleyu3a.org.uk

News from Surrey u3a network

Cher Palmer of Horley u3a is about to retire from the chairmanship of the Network committee as she is moving to Wales. Temporarily, Caroline Sawers of Guildford u3a will chair the meetings. As members of the Surrey u3a Network, each u3a is invited to take part in Network meetings, to raise any concerns they have about their u3a, concerns they have about the support they get from the National Office, and ideas they have for sharing experiences and resources. Each u3a is invited to share a report on their welfare with all the other members of the Network.



Attendance at the Study Days is steadily returning to pre-pandemic numbers. Following the very successful study day on poetry which featured the well-known broadcaster Roger McGough, in April the subject was Polar Exploration and Climate Change. In June there was an excellent day on the Vikings and their influence on the World, led by Imogen Corrigan, and in September, a day on Keyboard Instruments and keyboard music. A few days ago, I was able to attend an enthralling day on Quarks, the Universe & Everything. The range of subjects presented at these study days is remarkable and I encourage as many people to attend.

The next Day is on Friday, 17th November when the subject will be Rembrandt - From Fame to Poverty, and final Accolade

Ian Eversden (Surrey u3a Network Representative) newsletter@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Genealogy

The group has explored some interesting subjects in the last few months:

- What did your ancestors die of?
- Grandfathers & uncles in World War 1
- Bibles, letters, postcards inscribed books
- Exploring tithe maps
- Staff histories at West Horsley Place
- Remembrance and genealogy - marking homes of victims of the Holocaust.

We are looking forward to Jenny Peachey's Christmas Quiz, followed by mince pies!

Bob Spackman

genealogy@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Rummikub

On 2nd Thursday each month, the 12 members of our group meet to enjoy games of Rummikub. Meetings are held in member's homes from 2.00 until 4.30 and cake or biscuits are provided by the member whose house we are visiting. No costs are incurred. We are a very happy group and I am very happy to continue running it.

Liz Onslow

Rummikub-1@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Rummikub 2 group meets on 3rd Tuesday each month. There are a number of places available in the group for those who would like to join.

Derry Dinkin

Rummikub-2@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Canasta



Members of the Canasta Group continue to meet up to see who can win this enjoyable game. We had a pleasant afternoon tea in a member's garden in June when it was so hot that we had to seek shade under the trees. During the winter months we have both afternoon and evening games, which are always held in members houses.

PippaDavis

canasta-1@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Supper Club

Members of our Supper club meet every 4 - 6 weeks, usually at 7 pm, and we visit local pubs and restaurants. After our meeting at the Jovial Sailor in March, our next visit was to Carlo's Trattoria at Newlands Corner on 15th June. It turned out to be one of the hottest days of the year, but 24 of us sat down in an air conditioned room and I believe enjoyed the food and the company.

Our next outing was supposed to be to the King William IV in West Horsley on 14 September. It had reopened in July under new management, and it was hoped that they could establish their kitchen in time. That proved not to be the case, so at rather short notice, I had to cancel and suggested the Meridiana instead knowing it, as do most of us, rather well. Of the original 16 participants, 12 duly came along as did, we discovered, a wedding party of about 35 people. Fortunately, we (and presumably they) had pre-ordered so there wasn't a waiting problem and all seemed to go well.

I am hoping to organise our next outing for early November and will be suggesting the Toby Cottage in Ripley. Another Supper Club member will by then have held quite a large family gathering at KWIV and depending on feed-back I propose to try them again.

Inflation has taken its toll on prices of food and drink but perhaps the worst is over. A service charge of 12.5% seems now to be standard. Suggestions as to future locations or indeed any other organisational improvement will be enthusiastically received.

Ian Sampson

supper-club@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Play Reading

The group continues to thrive and is full at the moment. This year we have read works from among others: Emlyn Williams, Noel Coward, Harold Pinter, Mike Leigh, George Bernard Shaw and John Osborne.

An eclectic mix containing drama and comedy. We currently have 12 members and usually 9 come to every meeting which is a good number. Really we could do with more men because finding a play with a preponderance of women is quite difficult. Most plays have more men than women, I'm afraid. I am not sure how we could make a recording of our performances but I am putting my mind to it.

Michael Grinter

play-reading@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Transport & Industrial Archaeology

A dozen Horsley U3a TIAG members visited the Surrey Hills Brewery on the Denbies Estate at Dorking in mid-April, where they were initiated into the mysteries of brewing by the most humorous and knowledgeable Operations Manager. Initiation 'rites' included sampling / quenching thirsts with each of the 5 ales being brewed that day, which included Shere Drop, Ranmore Ale, Greensand IPA and Gilt Complex. A 2024 brewery visit is under consideration.

At the end of May, a T&IAG party, including 4 from Fetcham IHG, enjoyed a full day visit to Didcot Railway Centre. The very knowledgeable tour guides, arranged by David Wilson, made the visit doubly interesting for all.



On a sunny day in early July 14 members visited the private Fawley Hill Railway and Museum on the late Sir William McAlpine's estate, just north of Henley.

Two train rides were enjoyed on the railway, hauled by a diesel loco, going down the 1 in 13 gradient to the deer park of the estate and later returning to 'Somersham Station' adjacent to the engine shed and Museum buildings. The Station was purchased, taken down and rebuilt at Fawley Hill in the early days of Sir William starting his amazing and extensive collection of railway memorabilia. Lunch was taken at a pub by the Thames at Henley after the visit.

A planned September visit to the Wey & Arun Canal Trust again had to be cancelled, due to low water levels. However, 2024's programme will include a visit to the Kings Cross Canal Museum and canal boat trip through a ¾ mile long tunnel on the Regents Canal.

To finish 2023, October's meeting visit's the Weald & Downland Museum, near Singleton and in November, John Franklin gives an illustrated talk about his work and involvement with the installation of Shell's Eider Field 18,000Mt platform located in the North Sea.

Historic transport films will be shown at the December meeting, prior to members taking Christmas lunch at a local pub.

The Transport & Industrial Archaeology Group warmly welcomes both new members and speakers. Group meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday morning each month in the Meeting Room of West Horsley Methodist Church. Coffee and tea are available from 9.30am, with some 30 minutes or so to meet and chat with other members prior to the start of a talk. T&IAG's meetings programme may be viewed on the u3a Horsley website.

Peter Bennett-Davies
transport@horsleyu3a.org.uk

u3a Chairs' Forum

Paul Dodgson attended his first u3a Chairs' Forum meeting on 18 September 2023. There were 119 u3as in attendance.

The subjects covered during the proceedings were those that many u3as regularly discuss at their committee meetings. 'How best to recruit and support committee members, and retaining and recruiting interest group leaders'.

Notes were taken of all the suggestions made by those contributing and are available to those who are interested. Around one-third of u3as currently have vacancies on their committee. Direct personal approach was identified as the most effective method of recruitment. It relies on knowing members and making personal contact. Creating a file of volunteers and the jobs they do can provide insight into potential committee members.

Group leaders are recognised as an essential part of u3a and are central to its success. The issue of retaining and recruiting group leaders (and establishing new groups) shares similarities with the issue of recruiting members to the Committee. Where appropriate, role sharing is good way of sharing the workload.

Ian Eversden

newsletter@horsleyu3a.org.uk

Drawing and Painting

We meet every second Monday of each month in East Clandon Village Hall from 2-4pm. We are a friendly, fun, group.

We draw and paint in all mediums and we range from beginners to more proficient art lovers. Come and join us as we love to help each other.

Gill Culmer

drawing-painting@horsleyu3a.org.uk

