

Newsletter

Inaugural Meeting of Using New Technology group

It was heart warming and indeed almost heart stopping to see so many members interested to hear Tony Heaney telling us about opportunities available in the modern world of technology. From Tablets to Smartphones; Smart TV or I-pod?

We are aiming to cater for all interests and abilities. If interested in joining the group please contact Tony Heaney.

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Spring Greetings from your Chairman: Clive Smee

A good antidote to a wet and grey winter is to look forward. Members of Horsley U3A can look to both celebrations and new experiences. This April marks Horsley U3A's fifth birthday. In less than five years membership has risen from 170 to some 520. Our rapid growth owes much to the concentration of talented people, compact geographical size, availability of meeting rooms and willingness of members to allow use of their homes.

More important than birthdays and membership numbers are the experiences that U3A can now offer. We currently have around 50 activity groups. New groups attract new members and new members set up new groups. Two of the newest groups to be established - Using New Technology and Travel – are particularly good illustrations of the mutual support that lies at the heart of U3A. The Travel Group promises natural synergies; most of us have travelled somewhere, but none of us has travelled everywhere, even in Horsley! New experiences are not only generated by new groups. As groups mature (and friendships and confidences grow) ambitions increase: this May the Cycling Group is planning a ride from Horsley Towers to the Eiffel Tower; later in the year the Wine Appreciation group is planning its second visit to France; and the Transport and Industrial Archaeology Group is looking to extend its coverage from the South of England to the Midlands and the North.

Looking to the future your Committee has two particular priorities. First, is to tap into the energy and ideas of people leaving full time work. From them we have already learnt that we need to improve our web site. Work on this is underway and we plan to unveil a modernised site in May. Second is to make Horsley an even friendlier place by connecting new residents and people on their own to other members of the community with the same enthusiasms. Here the Welcome Team are making an invaluable contribution: at the monthly meetings; through hosting the regular EHVH Coffee Mornings open to all members; and by seeking to arrange support for those not on the internet or without transport. To continue to offer these new experiences and to support existing activities and interests your association needs more of you to volunteer as Helpers or Committee members. Currently we are particularly looking for a Newsletter Editor and Hospitality Assistant.

Please speak to me or e-mail me if you would be willing to help in these areas - or indeed in any other area.

PLEASE LOOK CAREFULLY AT ALL ITEMS IN THIS MAILING. ESPECIALLY YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM AND THE BULLETIN!

Horsley Towers to Eiffel Tower

Members of the *Horsley U3A Cycling Group* (which normally meets on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday each month) are undertaking a 4-day cycling trip to Paris this Spring. 7 cyclists will depart from Horsley on May 9th and arrive at the Eiffel Tower on May 11th. The group will be stopping overnight at Newhaven, Forges les Eaux, and Villennes sur Seine, with a further stay in Paris upon arrival. The trip would not be possible without the good offices of Denise Smee and Desmond Finnan who have volunteered to escort the riders in their cars, to provide support and backup transport in the event of injury, tiredness, or bad weather. The cars will also provide a lift back after the ride is finished, as none of us would relish cycling all the way back again!

Total cycling distance covered will be about 180 miles, comprising a 53 mile stage from Horsley to Newhaven and stages of 34, 69 and 24 miles in France. The route follows the Avenue Verte cycle path from Dieppe and thereafter traces minor roads and surfaced forest tracks, avoiding major roads and heavy traffic, through rural France and all the way into the centre of Paris, with a detour on the way through the gardens of Versailles Palace. The route is relatively flat, at least on the French side, and in fact the highest point and steepest climb of the route are to be found immediately after the departure from Horsley Towers with the ascent of the North Downs.

The ferries are paid for, the hotels booked, and all that remains now is for the riders to improve their fitness and stamina so we can enjoy the trip without incident and celebrate our arrival in Paris appropriately!

Chatley Heath, the Semaphore Tower, Stumps Grove and Wisley Airfield

At 10am on a bright chilly January morning *The Walking Group* (which aims for a walk of 4 or 5 miles each month) set out for a four-mile walk in the Surrey countryside. We walked across Chatley Heath to the Semaphore Tower along footpaths, which look entirely different when covered in snow! In the woods, where this photo was taken, three deer rushed across our path and made a spectacular leap over a fence. We walked along roads and tracks (which were a little icy but not dangerous) arriving at Stumps Grove where we admired the old buildings and the conversion work. We walked on through mixed woodland where the

trees looked particularly attractive with their covering of snow.



Left to right – Ruth Hodgson (Group Leader), Judith Allen, Gill Roscornes, Gareth and Pauling Beeching and Audrey Capper with Ann Cook (author) behind “the camera”

Unfortunately we had to clamber over 3 stiles, two more than anticipated as there were sheep in the fields and the gates were closed. The stiles were not the best, but all was well and the sheep looked at us curiously from a safe distance. We walked back passing a very interested flock of geese and onto Wisley Airfield – a very spectacular scene under a blanket of snow. A very lovely walk was much enjoyed!

South Africa to Ranmore and beyond!

After more than four successful and well supported years, Fred Onslow & Dick Malthouse have transferred the Group Leader's baton of the *Wine Appreciation Group* to Peter Bennett-Davies and Chris Thorpe. The very popular meeting format pioneered by Fred & Dick continues. One small change for 2013 is that Tasting Meetings will generally be held on the second Tuesday of each month. A South African Selection by Tony Heaney and Philip Berridge will be tasted in February and Lits Philippou from Ranmore Wines will tutor the Group on Wines of Languedoc on 12th March.

April's meeting will be held on Monday 8th, the one exception to the second Tuesday rule. Looking ahead Alan Piggott has kindly volunteered to organize another day trip to northern France and a visit to a vineyard in southern England is being researched for a date in September or early October.

From Spitfires to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry

At the last meeting of the *Transport and Industrial Archaeology group* in January, Tony Samson our new Group Leader listed the very full and impressive list of visits and outings due in the coming months.



Type Mark IX in case you were wondering!!

John Leader then talked in a most interesting way about his experiences as a young man seeing spitfires being built in a factory in

Castle Bromwich where his father was Machine Shop Superintendent in charge of over 2000 craftsmen and women. More detail is available on the T&IA webpage (including the visit to Whitechapel) and if this talk is an example of what is to follow the group is in for a very interesting year ahead.

Murderers, bigamists, love stories and kings

All part of the rich tapestry of our ancestors discovered by the members of the *Genealogy Group* (Meetings are held in the East Horsley Village Hall on the last Thursday of each month between 10.am to noon) as we grapple with the pleasurable task of tracing our family trees. Although a small group, typically twelve to fourteen meeting each time, we have an enthusiastic leader in Roland Masset and with his encouragement many of us have now found family forbearers back to around 1800, a few to 1700 and one before 1066! {We hope to feature articles on some of these in future Newsletters. Ed.}

Subjects of each meeting vary, sometimes it is an outside speaker giving advice on sources of information or how to organise the masses of document that can be accumulated during a search;



Four generations of Spackmans. Which one is Bob?

other times Roland has spoken of his searches in France where many of his ancestors have been traced back 600 years or other group members give a short talk on an interesting person in their family. Some members are new to the realms of genealogy whilst others have been chipping away at their

ancestors lives for decades. This is one of the enjoyable aspects of the group, everyone is happy to share their experiences and offer advice to those who have hit 'a wall' in their search. The group has a small library of magazines, which are a rich resource of ideas and facts and which can be borrowed for a month and returned at the following meeting.

Informal discussion takes place over coffee & biscuits at the end of each meeting. If you are interested in joining do contact Roland (282165) and in the mean time assemble the information you have about your family and talk to your older relations. Test their memories!

Snippets of news from Individual Groups

Thanks to the generosity of Mike Brown, the *Astronomy Group* has the use of an Astronomical Telescope. Contact Peter Tribe (222826) for more details of the group.

The *Photography Group* have an exciting programme of talks, discussions and location visits underway and have formed a number of sub-groups that meet in members' homes to understand and make better use of compact cameras.



The *Music Appreciation Group* (now lead by Peter Collett) is encouraging all of us to attend local concerts. See their web-page for details.

Make Music is keen to recruit new players. Contact Marion Hartland (280072) for details.

Patricia McDonald would be happy to host a resurrected *Italian Conversation Group* if there is sufficient interest. Contact Ian Eversden if interested.

The *French conversation Group* continues to grow in popularity. With increasing numbers a waiting list is being contemplated. Maybe a second group is merited.

The afternoon *Bridge Group 1* is an 'Improvers Group'. That is we are not beginners or very experienced players. We have thirteen members and meet on the first, third and fifth Wednesday afternoon of each month. We meet in various homes. We have a small waiting list and would look forward to receiving more enquiries. Contact Esther Ruscoe (282985).

GROUPS' NEWS - continued

NEW GROUP LEADERS EMERGE. Some are mentioned already in the Newsletter. In addition Roy Proctor now runs the *Explore London group that meets on Tuesdays*, while Bill Hewlett, with June Wisden and Hazel Jones now run the *Explore London (Thursday) group*. Joan Harris will be the *Outdoor Bowling Group Leader*. Our sincere thanks go to those who have lead groups in the past and best wishes to those who have dared to take on new responsibilities!

A DEVELOPMENT THAT MANY GROUPS ARE FINDING HELPFUL is to share the tasks of their Group Leader. Do consider if it would help your Group. Our thanks also go to Daphne Padfield and Mandy Newman (*Open Minds*), Ian Symes (*Astronomy*), Jean Green, Mary McGrath, Anita Marshall, & Gill Millership (*Photography*), Martin & Pauline Hulse (*Local History*), Sylvia Lillywhite (*Art Appreciation*) and John Burge (*Birdwatching*).

The *second Table Tennis Group* is now up and running well, with many people delighted to come off the waiting list. This group plays on a Wednesday from 3 - 5 pm, whilst the Friday group still plays on Fridays from 2 - 4 pm. Everyone is very enthusiastic and seldom misses a week, unless really essential. We have had two hip replacements and two new knees amongst us and just waiting for the last new hip to come back into play.

Pat Homewood is very pleased to say that the *Poetry Group* is thriving. We are still using the same format of the group choosing a poet or a subject and then all doing our homework! Everyone feels able to share their findings, and read aloud. It has been very interesting to note how poetry has become more noticeable in daily newspapers, quite often the subject we are discussing. We would like to say a huge thank you to our Library for providing new Poetry books and helping with our requests.

Orchids Group. You don't have to have a greenhouse to grow these exotic plants. Many are very easy. If you enjoy growing plants you can grow orchids. The more people take an interest the more there is to learn and enjoy, guest speakers, talks by growers, visits to shows etc. Please contact Jean Green (284467). Plenty more to see and read on the Orchid webpage.

The History - National and International Group discusses subjects with both flavours. This year the group will be debating Adolf's self sacrifice, the history of London below ground, the Black Death, Common Law, and William Shakespeare; a

fascinating range of subjects that will surely interest many U3A members. You are more than welcome to join them on the 3rd Wednesday of each month between 2pm and 4pm at East Horsley Village Hall. Contact Ken Foy (283546).



Memories of a first timer trying out the Birdwatching and Natural History Group in January. Not sure what caught the experts' attention and wondered if it was sometimes more a question of being watched than watching! I was the first to spot a Buzzard!

Viv Markley runs our *Improving Fitness* group meeting Wednesday afternoons between 2.30 to 3.30pm during the Summer As the Spring approaches, Viv has invited us all to gently encourage our general fitness by signing up to join this group. For details see webpage.

Instead of playing their monthly evening game the *Rummikub Group* enjoyed a pre-Christmas dinner at The Plough at Effingham. The *Scrabble Group* had a post-Christmas lunch prior to their January monthly game. Treats including homemade parsnip & ginger and leek & potato soups bread; and pate, with a glass of wine ensured the afternoon's games followed with much jollity.

PLEASE DO NOT OVERLOOK OUR COFFEE MORNINGS EVERYONE IS WELCOME. Every month when we have lectures, (not July, August and December) between 10.00 and 12.00, Members can gather in the Youth Club room at East Horsley Village Hall to meet each other and learn more about Horsley U3A, our groups and other activities.

WE ARE ALSO DELIGHTED TO HAVE THE WORK OF MEMBERS AND OTHER LOCAL ARTISTS DISPLAYED ON THE WALLS AT MONTHLY LECTURE MEETINGS. Those recently included Connie Barnes, Jill Richardson-Jones, and Jane Lynes. In the coming months we hope to display work by Christine Scott, and Viv Markley.