



June 2026 Bulletin

The most important things in a lot of people's minds at the moment are their forthcoming holidays. Of course, in our retirement we all have the ubiquitous bucket list of destinations that we should visit (I'm gradually working my way through mine) and we also have a yearning to visit places that have memories of holidays of long ago. So, if you are off on an adventure or just staying closer to home, don't forget u3a doesn't have holidays. Groups still go on, Thursday afternoon speakers still arrive and remember the annual Summer Party at the Plough and Harrow in August. To borrow a cliché, we never close!

Enjoy wherever you journey to or if you stay at home. And me? I'm just off to the Isle of Wight; I wonder if they still play cricket on the beach.....

Judith Moseley Acting Chairman

Members' News

There have been six new members this month:

Jeanette & Peter Kemp, Susan Howard, Martin Swanne, Jane & Richard Woodman, you are all most welcome!

Thursday Afternoon Talks

These take place on the first and third Thursday of the month at 2.15pm in the Abbeyfield Hall, above the Co-op in Southdown. Parking is in the Co-op car park but, **WARNING**, this is getting very full these days so we suggest you arrive in good time to find a space. The Co-op has introduced number plate recognition into the car park which allows up to three hours free parking. We're hoping this will discourage all-day parking, which has crept in over the past year or so, and make it easier to park. Recently, we have heard of members being unable to access the Trust Hall building as they do not have the code with them. **The code to enter is 0809.** This only works for the Thursday Afternoon Talks. Other meetings have their own codes. Please keep a note of this code either in your diary or on your phone.

The next two meetings are:

Thursday 18th June

Alison Bourke – "Tunnel Vision – Stepping through time"

Alison is a database researcher with nearly 30 years experience working with primary care patient data resources in the UK. She is a pharmacist with a Masters degree in computing. She instigated, created and oversaw the painting of the new mural in the pedestrian tunnel by the railway station, paid for by Herts C.C.

Thursday 2nd July

Andy Smith – "Poetic Presentation"

Andy is a motivational speaker, performance poet and entertainer, author and former business communicator who has two artificial limbs, a wonderful wife, three fine children, a whippet called Tamba and a tabby called Toby!!

Group News

Please note, for further information, contact the relevant group leaders by following this link to the Groups page on our website: <https://harpenden.u3asite.uk/groups/>

The Committee would like to thank **Steve Gledhill** for all the hard work that he has done in the last three years as group leader of the **Science and Technology group**. It has been a highly successful group. The Committee would also like to thank **Paul Spinks** for volunteering to take over from Steve as group leader.

Please note that the next meeting of the **Science & Technology group** is on Wednesday, 10th June (not 17th June)! This is a change to the previously advised date. The venue is the Plough and Harrow, 88 Southdown Road, Harpenden, AL5 1PR. The entrance to the meeting room is via the French doors from the rear garden. There is plenty of parking in the pub car park. Attendees are invited to stay for a pub lunch from 12 noon. There is a small charge for room hire.

In a change to the previously published list of talks, the speaker on Wednesday 10th June will be group member, Mike Rose. The title of his talk is "**Lighthouse technology throughout the ages.**" Mike has been fascinated by lighthouses since he was a boy. He is now a regional representative of the Association of Lighthouse Keepers, which, despite the title, is a forum for all like-minded pharologists. The first lighthouse was probably a fire lit on a headland to guide ships home.

Of course, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World was the Pharos of Alexandria. The golden age of lighthouse technology was undoubtedly the Victorian era. Mike will discuss scientific advancements made during this period and right up until the present day, with lighthouses now being completely automated and unmanned.

A list of forthcoming talks is given below (an asterisk denotes a meeting which is NOT on the third Wednesday of the month):

- *10th June – **Lighthouse technology throughout the ages** – Mike Rose
- 15th July – **Thameslink upgrade including the new low level St Pancras Station** – Peter Wharton
- 19th August – **The Theory and Practice of (Home) Brewing** – Andy Phillips
- *9th September – **The Modernisation and expansion of St Pancras Station for Eurostar** – Peter Wharton
- 21st October – **The Butterflies of Harpenden** (including local recording & habitat management) – Malcolm Hull
- 18th November – **The Vesuvius Challenge: Using modern technology to read ancient scrolls** – Paul Spinks
- *9th December – Xmas Lunch (no talk)

All Harpenden u3a members are welcome to attend the **Science & Technology group** monthly meetings.

The new **Walking Group 2** had a successful and enjoyable first outing last month. Our next walk will be on Monday, 15th June. If you would like to join us or would like more information, please contact the group leader via the [website](#).



Stroller's birthday treat – Saturday

Strollers member Roy Birchall celebrated his 90th Birthday in May – an excuse to make our weekly stroll-accompanying pub lunch a bit more of an occasion. At the end of our delightful walk, taking in the Batford Springs boardwalk, we duly congregated at the nearby Gibraltar Castle hostelry for a not-too-rowdy birthday party for Roy.

Because it was a special occasion, the pub's caterers added a further item to the regular menu's list of available desserts to accommodate one of Roy's gustatory favourites, viz a fulsome Knickerbocker Glory!

The new **Scrabble Group 2** met for the first time in May. The group is open to new members. For further information, contact the group leader via the [website](#).

The **French Conversation Group** held its third session at the beginning of June, kindly hosted by a group member. The session was very well attended and, as always, everyone joined in and we found a lot to chat about.

The topic "where am I?" had us visiting locations in Asia, North Africa and much closer to home. A short lively video with transcripts in English and French provided an insight into the month of May in France. Despite biscuits and tea we became rather hungry when each member described their favourite recipe from a French speaking country. Bon appetit à tous!

All Harpenden u3a members are welcome to the **History Group** meetings, should the subject interest you. The June meeting will be on Tuesday, 9th June in the Randall Room at the Harpenden Trust Halls, opposite the Plough and Harrow at 2.30pm where Malcolm Rainbow is giving a presentation entitled "**The Jacobite Rebellion 1688 to 1746**". There will be a £1 donation towards the cost of the room.

Since the last Bulletin, we have been contacted by several members who are interested in joining an **Art Group** (painting, sketching, drawing, collage, or even simple colouring). We have now arranged a meeting for all members who are interested in forming the new group at 10.30a.m. on 15th June. We would welcome your contributions to this meeting.

For further details, please contact Brian Ball, Group coordinator via the [website](#).

List of talks arranged for 2026

Date	Speaker	Topic
June 18 th	Alison Bourke	"Tunnel Vision; Stepping Through Time"
July 2 nd	Andy Smith	Poetic Presentation
July 16 th	Ron Koorm	"Fake news or Deceiving the Enemy"
August 20 th		Summer Party at Plough and Harrow
September 3 rd	Clare Jenner	"Ageing Well"
September 17 th	Philip McKinder	"An unexpected change in the Weather"
October 1 st	Sharon Torres	"Venice H ₂ O"
October 15 th		AGM
November 5 th	Geoff Cunnington	"A day at the British Empire Exhibition 1924"
November 19 th	Bernard Lockett	"Gilbert and Sullivan"
December 3 rd		Christmas Miscellany
December 17 th		Christmas Party

All the above to be held in the Abbeyfield Hall commencing at 2.15 unless otherwise indicated.