



Ashby U3A

August Newsletter



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Dear All,

Another month has passed and we are still very tightly restricted in our social activities - so much so, that I'm afraid that virtually all our U3A gatherings are impossible. Nevertheless, I hope that you all remain well, are able to cope with the various restrictions and are enjoying such activities as you can. As always, we would welcome any comments, questions or requests for assistance - we are willing to do whatever we can.

This month should have been our 10th Anniversary celebration. I am told that the first meeting took place on 29th June but we decided to arrange our event in August to replace the traditional cream tea.

Unfortunately our planning came to an abrupt end in March and has been unable to resume. Because of the uncertainties, we took the decision to postpone some time ago and, sadly, it has proved to be correct.

Our intention was to have a morning exhibition in Trinity Church Hall to showcase our activities, not only to our own membership but also to the wider public and perhaps generate some additional members. With some 20 groups, most of whom had already indicated their willingness to participate, we envisaged numerous displays of our individual activities around the sides of the hall with the front centre occupied by our Ashby Group display. This would have featured our monthly meetings with their wide ranging speakers, our outings to places like Berkeley Castle, Hampton Court and the train to Cornwall as well as our visits to theatres and concerts. Naturally, the Group displays would also feature activities arranged by the history, industrial heritage and walking groups, who also promote trips from Ashby.

Painting, calligraphy and arts & crafts had all indicated their participation and I anticipated colourful displays. Bridge and the quiz group were thinking of visitor participation and recorder to provide some live music towards the stage, where tea, coffee and biscuits would be provided. My apologies to anyone I have failed to mention, but planning was still at an early stage when we had to cease.

We were arranging a distribution of leaflets in the town centre as well as media coverage to try to attract casual visitors. I am certain that they would have been very impressed with the range and quality of our activities and this would have enhanced our membership.

In the afternoon, we planned to move to the Congregational Church with entertainment from the Gresley Choir with refreshments including sparkling wine and our 10th Anniversary Cake.

Alas! The best laid plans..... None of this happened and I do not foresee us being able to re-arrange this year. However, as Scarlett O'Hara said, "Tomorrow is another day" and there is always next year.

It may be a little different but we will arrange something as soon as we can. After all, some time ago, I did promise cake!

To return to the present, I would like to think that as many of you as possible are participating in activities remotely or, possibly, meeting outside in small groups. Should anyone require assistance or introduction, please get in touch.

Of course, we are all eagerly awaiting the time when we can resume our normal activities. We may have to wait for a vaccine, but the time will come. In the meantime, stay well and active.

With best wishes,

Colin Ellis

INTENTION TO HOLD AN AGM IN OCTOBER

You may well have realised that we did not hold an AGM in July for the obvious reason of not being able to gather in large groups due to Covid-19. We are allowed by our constitution to postpone it for 6 months but then we are required to at least attempt to hold one.

It is hoped that the Annual General Meeting will take place at the Congregational Church in Ashby on the afternoon of Tuesday 20th October. Once all necessary arrangements have been made, a formal notice and supporting documents will be issued.

To comply with distancing requirements, there will only be a very limited number of places available to members, so we intend this to be a mainly postal/email ballot. Once the formal notice is issued, those members wishing to attend in person will be allocated places in the order of applications received.

Nevertheless, we very much hope that as many of you as possible will participate by means of a postal, email or proxy vote on the various resolutions and full details will be sent with the notice. Remember however that only paid-up members are entitled to vote.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Approx 120 of you have very kindly paid their membership fees for this year (April 2020 to March 2021) and at the start of Lockdown, the committee agreed that anyone who was a member last year, but who hadn't paid this year, would continue to receive the Newsletter to keep you in touch.

Only paid-up members are entitled to participate at Annual General Meetings and in U3A activities. As we are about to hold an AGM, and walking groups may resume shortly along with some other groups, it is now necessary for us to set a subscription for the current year ending 31st March, 2021 to allow you to take part, if you wish.

The fees were previously set for this year at £16.50 or £13.00 for a second member in the same house.

In view of the absence of activities, it would be unreasonable to charge the full amount. Unfortunately, we are required to pay to U3A nationally £3.50 per member and £3.10 for the magazine. In addition, we still have some expenses to meet locally. The Committee has therefore decided on £8.00 per individual and £5.00 for a second person at the same household.

The amount for next year will be set closer to March 2021 when the future may be a little clearer. With the uncertainty regarding the extent of our future activities, we are concerned as to the proportion of the membership who will renew and the costs we may incur.

If you have not yet joined this year, it would be much appreciated if you could complete a renewal form (available on the website) and send it with your payment to the Membership Secretary as soon as possible.

Those of you who have already paid higher amounts will be entitled to a refund. Alternatively, it would much relieve the administrative burden if you felt able to carry that amount forward against next year's subscription or even, should you feel sufficiently generous towards Ashby U3A, to regard it as a donation, given the future uncertainties facing the Group. Could you please advise the Membership Secretary, preferably by e-mail, of your wishes?

RESTARTING SOME GROUPS

U3A National Office have recently offered some advice and conditions for restarting Groups. The Committee has discussed this and have come to the following conclusions:

Limited activity can take place as part of Ashby U3A and with prior approval by the Committee provided they meet certain guidelines.

Groups which meet in houses or undertake visits on a car-sharing basis appear to be forbidden by Government Regulations unless no more than six people meet, socially distanced and, indoors, they are from no more than two households. The Recorder Group are meeting outdoors, weather permitting. If you feel that legal requirements can be met for your Group to resume, please contact the Chairman to discuss.

Conducting activities without physically meeting are obviously OK. The Literature Group and Family History are meeting via WhatsApp, Science & Technology is holding talks via Zoom, Music Appreciation are sharing playlists to listen to on YouTube and Drawing & Painting are doing so at home before posting their work to the website.

Larger gatherings are permitted in Covid Secure Locations, which include both the Packington Village Hall (where gardening and history meet) and the Congregational Church (for our monthly meetings).

Unfortunately, the restrictions and requirements are so onerous that we do not feel able to guarantee compliance and so, for the moment, none of these will resume.

There is rather better news regarding our walking groups, as activity in the open raises fewer problems and makes it more practicable to comply with the requirements. Guidelines have been produced and sent to the leaders. We be able to resume walking shortly and will advertise these on the website and in the newsletter.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

The committee are doing our utmost to keep in contact with as many members we can during this time of enforced isolation. Can we ask everyone, but particularly Group Leaders, to keep in touch with their group's members to see how they are coping.

If any Group Leader wants phone numbers for their members, Membership Sec Iain at members@ashbyu3a.co.uk or Mike at webmaster@ashbyu3a.co.uk will be able to provide them.

HELP & WELFARE

If you know of any member who is unwell or shielding or has a family member who is unwell, please contact Estelle or any other committee member and we can see if there is anything we can do to help, whether it is collecting shopping or prescriptions, having a chat or just sending a card.

If at any time you would like or need someone to talk to, the following people are always ready to chat:

Our Chairman, Colin Ellis 01530 272592

Colin Woodland 01530 413867

Ann Donegan 01283 760348

Tony Smith 01530 831822

Our Welfare Officer, Estelle Sandles 07919 986456 or email welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk.

Estelle can also offer support and welfare information.

AgeUK - www.ageuk.org.uk has lots of information and advice on all matters regarding coronavirus including matters financial or health.

The U3A National Office has an email Newsletter which you can sign up for at <https://u3a.org.uk/email> It has the latest advice on the virus and also lots of information and advice on how to keep safe and occupied.

COVID-19 Symptom Tracker

If you wish to help Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals to track the spread of Covid-19 across the country and find out what type of person is getting infected, you can sign up to the Covid-19 Symptom Tracker here at <https://covid/joinzoe.com> You need a smartphone to which an app is installed.

It asks you for some personal details of age, height, weight etc. and general health and medication. This can all be anonymous if you wish.

You can then report each day how you feel even if you are well, it takes seconds. You can see how Covid 19 is spreading or retreating and you will be helping research into how and why it spreads, and who is most vulnerable. Over 4 million people are already signed up and contributing. There are 18 active cases in NW Leics at the moment.

INFORMATION FOR THE NEWSLETTERS

If you have anything that you would like to see in these newsletters, whether it is a report of something you or a Group have managed to organise despite all the difficulties or you have some information on safety, health, scams or anything similar please contact me, Mike Stow at webmaster@ashbyu3a.co.uk or 01530 469152.

OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY

As you will have read in the Chairman's letter at the start of this newsletter we should have been celebrating Ashby U3A's 10th anniversary this month. Colin has talked about the present and future, so I thought I would investigate our past and our origins and I've been talking to some of our founding members.

Carole Harriman told me how it all started:

"Back in 2010 I was paid to retire early. This left me having to try and find new things to do. My boss had told me that her mother was in U3A, and she was never in, always doing different activities. I had not heard of U3A, so I Googled it, and thought it sounded interesting. I contacted a few people who were in Loughborough U3A, and asked them about the organisation. They told me that their U3A would not be for me, as it was a very large group with mostly academic groups. At that time, I saw a poster on the notice board near the Post Office, stating that U3A wanted to form a group in Ashby, and asked for people to meet up to discuss this.

I went along to the meeting, and only myself and Malcolm Bird turned up. We met the then Trustee for the East Midlands and we talked about how U3As are run, and Malcolm and I took away posters to put up around the local area. The trustee had booked Holy Trinity Church for the first meeting in July 2010 and had asked several different U3As to come and talk about their groups.

The day came and we wondered how many people would turn up. I don't really remember how many came, but think it was about 50. We listened to the talks, and the trustee explained all about U3A, and asked for volunteers to form a committee. Both Malcolm and I volunteered along with about 6 others.

We had our first committee meeting, and we all took on a position, it was all very basic at the start, but things started to develop and now we have a thriving U3A. We put up lists at the back of the church with interest groups, and people signed them, if they were interested. If there was enough to form a group, the group was created, and a leader volunteered to run it.

From the start we had about 10 groups, and it has grown to what we have today. Our groups tend to be more 'social', fitting the needs of our members. However, as we developed, a wide variety of groups have been formed.

We soon realised that Holy Trinity was too big for our needs, and with Margaret Howlett's help we moved to the Congregational Church, our present meeting place. This suited the needs of the U3A better.

I was the second Chairperson. We met once a month for committee meetings, in a member's home. I used to attend the Networking meetings in Leicester which were held quarterly, with another member of the committee. From these meetings, we absorbed information both from the meeting and talking to other Chairmen. During my leadership we started the Meet and Greet and Newcomers coffee mornings. I was on the committee for 5 years, and really enjoyed how we grew a new U3A from scratch. After 5 years, it was time to let new members run the U3A."

The original Committee grew to a dozen, of whom all but two are still participating in Ashby U3A; Anne Donegan was one of the founders and is still on the Committee to this day as our Business Secretary. Jane Barnett was also on the original committee and became our third Chairman in 2013. She told me:

"They were interesting days, not the least wondering whether we could get enough members to sustain things. Somehow we managed it and celebrated our 100th member by giving some flowers and a bottle of wine to the surprised couple. I know that Malcolm Bird was excellent as a Treasurer and kept our finances in good order, whilst I tried my hardest to keep our membership records up to date.

I think one of the best aspects of the move to the Congregational Church was the fact that we had a separate room for tea and coffee afterwards rather than having refreshments in the church. I Have always thought the buzz of conversation in that room following the general meeting was a very good indication of what a friendly U3A we have.

I think my abiding memory will be the good friends I have made over the last ten years and I certainly feel being a member has enriched my life. I have learnt much, enjoyed numerous visits, talks, walks, concerts and meals out."

According to Bob Baxendale, the Walking Group was the first group up and running (or walking at least!) on the 10th Aug 2010. 11 people set off from Staunton Harold. On 4th Feb 2020, the last walk before lockdown they completed their 222nd walk. Only once has a walk been cancelled and that was due to pouring rain at the start. Bob has been in charge of the group from the very beginning, but he is now stepping down and Kevin Green will take charge.

So Ashby U3A grew from its original 100 members and 10 groups to over 300 members and 23 groups by last year, and then along came Covid-19! We are struggling to keep 10 groups going and just over a hundred members have joined this year. Back to square one!

However as you may have seen elsewhere we are looking at getting the walking and some other groups restarted, indoors and out, and we encourage you to take advantage of our discounted membership rate so that when we have suitable facilities, you will be welcome to come along. Certainly if you are taking part in any of our groups, you should be a paid up member.

GROUPS MEETING REMOTELY OR VIRTUALLY

Computer Group

The Computer Group is still able to help people with their computer, tablet or smartphone problems. Obviously we can't do repairs, but if you have software problems or other difficulties email help.computer@ashbyu3a.co.uk or phone John Howlett on 01530 461774 and someone will have a look at your problem and get back to you.

We've been answering queries from members about anti-virus software, Windows updates, online banking and choosing a new PC amongst others.

Just to remind you that although the very popular PC Clinic in the town closed down a few weeks ago the owner, Phil, is now offering a mobile service that can come to your house for service and repairs. Go to the PC Clinic website for details.

Drawing and painting – Aug 19th

The Group worked from home this month on a couple of themes, "The best of the Forties" or "Summer lockdown" but their big achievement was to complete their board for the Ashby Art Festival on the theme of VJ Day. Theirs was given prominence above Boots shop in Market Street and also featured in an article in the online newspaper Ashby Nub News.

Literature Group

The group have formed a WhatsApp group so that they can carry on reading at home and then discuss the books they are reading.

Luncheon Club

The Luncheon Club had the month off and didn't go anywhere, not even in their imaginations.

Music Appreciation – Aug 5th

Another fine selection of music to amuse, cheer and enlighten us.

Neil said that as we are tending to use You Tube to play our selections at the moment, he thought it would be good to choose music that has been used in films and to watch the film clips whilst listening.

His first choice was used in The Shawshank Redemption. Andy Dufresne has been incarcerated in Shawshank Prison for a murder that he did not commit. He wins the trust of the Governor and is put in charge of the Library, which has a record collection. He plays the "Sull'aria" duet from The Marriage of Figaro over the prison loudspeaker system, much to the fascination of the inmates and annoyance of the Governor.

His second choice was the dance scene from Pulp Fiction. The song "You Never Can Tell" by Chuck Berry.

Nev gave us The Kinks "The Village Green Preservation Society". A live performance from 1973. Village fetes and the like have been missing this year and this song reminds us of how things used to be.

Then the Travelling Wilburys "Runaway" This is the old Del Shannon hit revamped. Nev said "I feel we all wish we could run away from Covid!"

Ella Fitzgerald – "Get out of Town" A lovely version of the Cole Porter song. And a sentiment the residents of Leicester can identify with.



Estelle brought us something different with Steve 'n' Seagulls' "Thunderstruck". This Finnish country band play bluegrass versions of well-known Hard Rock and metal songs. Very good musicians, and great fun.

That was followed by Mark Knopfler's "Sultans of swing" A very nice live instrumental version

And then a video to ELO's "Don't bring me down" with amazing shuffle dancing (not by Jeff Lynne!).

Mike finished off with wonderful duet of B B King and Eric Clapton playing "Rock me baby" at a concert in 1993 which included a jam session where they are joined on stage by Buddy Guy, Albert Collins and Jeff Beck! An amazing line-up.

The final piece was the wonderful Louis Armstrong playing and singing "Mack the knife" in 1965.

Recorder Group – August

Joan reports that there was a shortage of bodies at the beginning of the month and then poor weather later, so they couldn't gather outside to play this month.

Supper Club – Aug 13th

The driver of the Robert's Coaches Thought Transporter is really getting the hang of things now. He very expertly navigated us to Mount Everest base camp with absolute precision. Namgyal Wangdi was looking good considering he had been dead for 34 years. Oh, sorry, you probably know him better as



Sherpa Tenzing Norgay, trusty guide who accompanied Edmund Hillary on 29 May 1953 as they conquered the peak of Mount Everest. Together we (Tenzing Norgay, Sharon and I) trudged the normally crowded path to the summit. Now deserted due to the Covid-19 crisis. Once at the top we enjoyed a Snowball as our pre-lunch drink. I asked Sherpa Tenzing "Who actually set foot on the peak first, You or Edmund?" but he coyly looked away and said, "these snowballs are nice, can I have another?".

Sherpa Tenzing Norgay and Mount Everest

Suddenly, out of nowhere, amidst a strange grinding, whirring sound, a police telephone box appeared there on the summit with us. Out of the door emerged a fairly scruffy individual who announced that he was "The Doctor". I politely asked, "Doctor Who?" to which he replied, "Got it in one!". Sharon and I were unceremoniously bundled into the box and we were off for our starter. There was that grinding, whirring sound again and an unnerving jolt just before the door reopened. The sun blazed in and I could just make out the silhouette of a very shapely young lady in the doorway. "أهلاً بكم في أعالي النيل", she said, and the doctor helpfully translated, "Welcome to the upper reaches of the Nile". As Sharon and I stepped out of the Tardis, under a canopy of goatskins was an array of sweetmeats for our delectation. I chose just two as I did not want to spoil my appetite for the big event. First, I thought I would give the Sheep's eye in aspic a go. Interesting to say the least! I popped it into my mouth whole because that



Queen of Sheba

was the way others around me did it. It was a bit squishy but, as I bit down on it, it seemed to resist my bite until, quite suddenly, it burst, and liquid filled every corner of my mouth. I didn't sense much flavour and let its juice trickle down my throat. Next, I had a go at a sautéed strip of crocodile meat, coated in loads of herbs and spices. That was much more flavoursome and, as I had heard, tasted much like chicken. I had wrongly thought that the shapely young lady was Queen Cleopatra but, in fact, she was the Queen of Sheba. So, I asked her what she really thought of King Solomon when she met him. "He was clever." She said, "But what a womaniser!!".

Just as I was about to ask Agame (that's the Queen's real name) if Solomon tried it on with her, I heard someone shout, "Beam them up Scottie". Sharon and I were broken down into our atomic parts, transported instantaneously by the Star Ship Enterprise's Matter Transporter, and reassembled into our bodily forms on a little beach in the grounds of Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, where we found Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and her husband Prince Philip paddling in the shallows of the Solent.



HM Queen Elizabeth II & Prince Philip

I had earlier asked them if they would be so kind as to arrange an intimate little barbeque on the site where Her Majesty's Great, Great Grand Mother was purported to have bathed. The Queen's personal chef, Mark Flanagan, and his team had prepared the barbeque of barbeques. Though there were dishes beyond counting, the centrepiece was a beautifully charcoal roasted haunch of venison.



Mark Flanagan and team

Somehow the house staff managed to transform the little beach into an outdoor dining room with a magnificent table set for the four of us. As we approached the table, Her Majesty reminded me that I should say grace before the meal. So, I bowed my head along with Sharon and our royal hosts.

"O bounteous Father from above,
 thank you for your gifts of love.
 How our grateful hearts rejoice
 As from this feast we make our choice.
 We pray for those with little to eat
 And ask that all their needs you'll meet.
 As we quench our appetite
 keep us mindful of others' plight.

As we have been so blessed today
 Bless others too both near and away.
 Help us to share our relative wealth
 To the benefit of other's in poorer health.
 God bless our Queen and all her house.
 Long may she live with her spouse.
 Long may she reign in liberty
 And help to ease world poverty. Amen."

The venison was so tender, juicy and delicious it must have been quite "deer" (did I hear some groans?). At 5pm I was just taking my lead from Prince Philip and wiping up the gravy on my plate with a piece of home cooked bread when, amidst a woosh and spinning vortex, Colin Ellis's Time Machine materialised on the beach and it was time to bid our wonderful hosts goodbye and travel to London Zoo, arriving at 4pm.

Sure enough, as predicted by Bill and Ann Devitt, a young child, Albert, had wandered into the cage of Wallace the Lion; wearing, of all things, his Sunday best clothes.

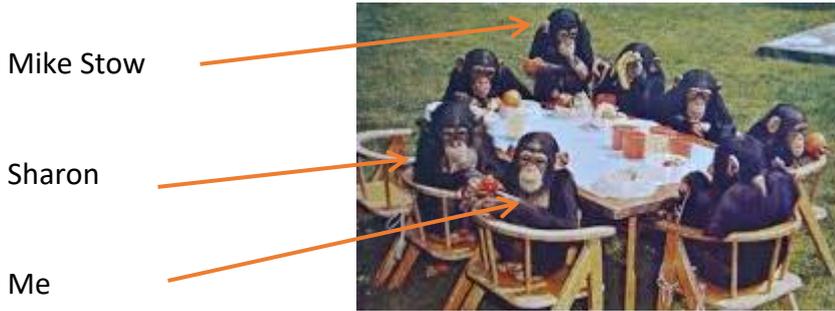
Swiftly, I despatched Colin's Time Machine to collect two good men and true and one Bad'n. Almost instantly the machine was back and out stepped the prophet Daniel, King David and Samson, complete with long hair. All three were experienced with lions: Samson and King David having killed



Wallace the Lion

at least one each with their bare hands and Daniel having survived a whole night in a den of the beasts without as much as a hair of his head touched. I offered them the only weapon I had to hand: a broomstick with a carved horse's head fixed to it. They all declined my offer and into the cage they went. David and Samson were all for despatching the lion, but Daniel talked them out of it and, while Daniel calmed Wallace with a gentle stroke, David and Samson helped Albert over the cage wire to safety. I apologised to our three heroes because I had not offered them any Dutch courage before they entered the cage, but they reminded me that they were Israelites and didn't need stimulants to make them brave. There was no last meal because they were too "Fast"!!

All's well that ends well! So we all finally enjoyed our tea with the Chimps before heading home; weary but fulfilled.



All the best until next time,
Colin and Sharon Woodland

Mike Stow, the only other participant that we know of (I guess everyone else was socially distancing), wrote:

Well if we are having pre-lunch drinks, it would have to be at one of the famous bars of the world. Whilst you will probably be having Singapore Slings in Raffles, I would start with a Bellini in Harry's Bar in Venice oft frequented by Ernest Hemingway (where didn't he have a drink?) so he would be a good choice as guest. My word of advice to him would be "Take it easy"!

Hmm, starters. I'd probably head to San Sebastian for some tapas, or pintxos as they are called in Basque, with maybe some Basque cidre. Food writer, chef and bon viveur Anthony Bourdain would be a great companion, but I fear he might make me late for the Queen and that will never do. As we would be wandering from tapas bar to tapas bar, music would be difficult unless I can arrange a wandering minstrel.

On to Buck House, where else, for Her Majesty to entertain us. (She too must have a time machine as Her Majesty had arrived from Osbourne House after entertaining Colin and Sharon) Her favourite meal is Dover Sole, so that would be fine with me. She also has a glass of Krug or Bollinger champagne with lunch and dinner every day. I'll settle for Krug. As an infidel I don't say grace, so I'll leave that to others.

No dessert! But off to London Zoo to rescue Albert from Wallace the lion. Who to nominate to go in and rescue the lad, armed only with a stick? It depends on whether you want them to get out alive!! I can think of many people, mostly politicians, who I would happily send into the lion's den with just a stick. Most can talk the hind legs off a donkey, but how many can do that to a lion? Whilst they are distracting Wallace, I would smuggle Albert out and shut the gate! Think of it as a form of Brexit. I would allow them as much alcohol as they require to have the courage to enter the cage, but a last meal? ...you wouldn't want to fight lions on a full stomach!

Regards

Mike

Family History – Aug 12th

Another good turnout for our fifth Virtual Meeting, with five attendees and four apologies.

Dora reported on her advances, with 14 children showing up for her father's great, great grandmother. This will keep her busy tracking down the various descendants! Sadly, deaths occurred to limit the options, but still plenty to go on.

John Howlett joined the WhatsApp group. He has an ongoing problem arising from the fact that his great grandmother is registered in the 1901 census with an incorrect name. He is sure she is the right person, though, and in the 1911 Census is registered with two relatives of his whom he knows to be correct. So the evidence is solid that he has the right person. Perhaps a DNA test would settle things, but he needs a matching test from a cousin.

Sylvia has done a great deal of work on her cousins, especially of her maternal grandfather's offspring, finding that several of them were on the stage, one even involved with Ivy Benson's All Girls Band! Her great grandfather was in the Music Hall. There is a lot of music in her family, it seems. An approach to the Performing Arts Archives might produce some more information. She has good contacts with a cousin in Australia and they are working together on this.

Libby is working on her many grandmother's siblings, all of whom started life in a small village. Hopefully that will help to keep track of them.

John D has been trying to trace his step father's family. Not easy with a name like Hilton, from Leigh in Lancashire, but he is making progress.

We meet again on Wed 9th Sept, virtually as before but increasingly hopefully in person.

Quiz

Pat Ford sent this message:

"Hallo everyone,

I do hope you are all still well and usefully using and enjoying your time! It seems such a long time since we met, and certainly my brain is now addled, so I trust you've been doing lots of puzzles to keep your brains active. It is sad not to mark our Wednesday in my diary any more..... I had obviously been keeping the biscuits for our session, but think after so long, I'd better start eating them! Well, it's an excuse.....

Luckily for me tennis restarted some time ago, and I am now back in the pub playing Rummikub in Ashby with my pals, with the box, bag, tiles etc. all sanitised after each session..... Bridge has to be played online, which means no chatting between hands.

All our gardens are obviously immaculate.....

If anyone has ideas about starting up again, please do say.

Regards, Pat"

Science & Technology- Aug 3rd

The S & T group are the first to have officially embraced the new technology (quite rightly) and held a talk by Paul McKay over Zoom. 10 other members tuned in to hear and see Paul's talk on Submarines.

The talk combined basic science, submarine technology and work experience. Inspiration for Paul's lifelong interest in diving and underwater technology stemmed from an ITV programme 'Sea Hunt,' aired in the late 1950's, starring Lloyd Bridges as an intrepid diver (Mike Nelson). Later, training with submarine builder's Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness balanced the fiction with the harsh reality of shipyard submarine construction. The relevance Archimedes Principle and Boyle's Law to submarine diving operations were explained and demonstrated by diagrams and a video of a military submarine venting ballast tanks. The structure and operation of commercial mini- submersibles in support of oil and gas production and torpedo recovery was covered. Then, the role and design of Royal Navy nuclear submarines was outlined. The principle of harnessing steam for propulsive power was conceived 2000 years ago, only now nuclear energy has replaced fossil fuel as the heat source. Finally, details of where you can explore complete de-commissioned submarines or ride in a tourist submarine we given.

Next month on Monday 14th Sept, Tanya will be giving a Zoom talk on "Sex and the single Panda"

Walking

All the walking Groups should be active by September. Government Guidelines allow up to 30 people on a walk, but Walk Leaders are likely to reduce this to something more manageable. There are many restrictions including record keeping of names and contact details for Track & Trace, social distancing, sanitising and limits on coffee stops etc. Walk leaders will brief participants before walking.

Longer Walks

The big news from the Longer Walking Group, as you may have read above, is that Bob Baxendale is standing down as Leader, although he will continue to walk. He has lead the group from the very beginning and has done an excellent job of finding 2 walks and people to lead them every month.

Thank you Bob for all your time and effort. Kevin Green is taking on the job and will literally have big boots to fill!

Subject to the new guidelines being in place, the Group hopes to restart on Sept 15th

Medium Walks

Without a leader, the group is struggling to organise future walks. If anyone or maybe two or three people wish to help organise this group it would be very useful.

Short Walks

John Howlett has been organising some short walks again, although they were limited to just 6 people because of current restrictions but should be back to “new normal” in September.

OTHER THINGS TO DO

Visit the **U3A National website** at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>

There is information about COVID-19, but also lots of more interesting stuff such as what other U3As are doing around the country, bird migration tracking for the British Trust of Ornithology, photography challenges, ideas to keep learning and there are quizzes and maths puzzles to occupy a few minutes or hours!

The National Theatre is screening plays on YouTube every Thursday night at 7pm. Search for “National Theatre at home” for details

Royal Opera House are on www.youtube.com/royaloperahouse with a number of operas and ballets available to watch at any time. Currently the Sleeping Beauty is showing amongst others.

Google Arts & Culture – <https://artsandculture.google.com> has high resolution photos of many of the world’s great paintings and other artworks from 2000 museums round the world, plus you can explore the most famous places in the world such as Eiffel Tower, Angkor Wat, Sydney Opera House plus loads more. Somewhere to get lost for a few hours.