



## June Newsletter

### A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Dear All,

Another month, another delay. I had hoped that I would not be writing to you this month; instead we would have been able to meet in person.

But, alas! No. I did wonder about rebranding Ashby u3a as a crowd of football supporters or pop festival goers, in which case we would have been perfectly acceptable. Sadly, we of Ashby u3a are infinitely more risky and have to remain on the banned list! I can only hope that some logic reasserts itself in Government (anyone remember the last time that happened?) and we will be able to return to the Congregational Church next month.

July is the month for our AGM. Whilst we would like to hold it as usual, there is still the possibility that we will be unable to meet together and will have to hold a virtual meeting via Zoom as we did last time. To allow for the possibility that we cannot meet at the Church, we feel it is prudent to request members to vote by post or email again and to return their voting ballots in advance and so there will be no vote on the day. It is important that as many vote as possible so that the course taken by Ashby u3a reflects the views of the membership and I would much appreciate it if you could do so. Please note: Only paid up members are entitled to vote. If you have not yet re-joined, Iain would be delighted to hear from you.

As always, we are seeking new members to join the Committee. Meetings are held monthly and there need be no further commitment, although offers of assistance are rarely declined. My experience is that it is a friendly group and has welcomed newcomers. Please give it some thought and perhaps talk to one of the existing members. It is only by attracting people willing to assist that the Group is able to maintain its activities and grow. Assistance is particularly needed this year as we recover from the effects of lockdown and resume growth.

As always, I hope that you all remain well and are coping with the continuing restrictions. At least we are now able to meet in limited numbers and travel in the UK. I do hope that we are now approaching the end of all restrictions, although foreign travel is likely to remain problematical for some time, and that your lives will get back to normal. That will, of course, include our u3a activities and I really hope that, this time, we will be able to meet next month.

Best wishes to you all,

Colin Ellis,  
Chairman

## FROM THE EDITOR

### **Monthly Meetings**

As Colin says above, were hoping this month, June, to be able to hold our first monthly meeting for over a year, but again Covid has defeated us. If as hoped, the Government eases lockdown on July 19<sup>th</sup>, we may be able to meet on July 27<sup>th</sup> and we have a speaker lined up if we can go ahead. Again as Colin said above, it is also supposed to be our AGM that day as well but here things get a bit more complicated.

### **AGM 27<sup>th</sup> July**

If we find out from the Government on the 12<sup>th</sup> July that we cannot meet in person for our AGM on the 27<sup>th</sup>, it will be too late to arrange something else, so the Committee have taken the decision to hold a postal/email ballot as we did last year regardless of whether the AGM goes ahead in the church or with limited numbers via Zoom. Ballot papers along with instructions and all necessary paperwork will be shortly emailed/posted out to all current members and those whose membership has not recently been renewed.

### **New Membership Forms**

As you may have read in the email sent out a while back, we purposely withheld chasing membership renewals until July until we would know what program of events we could put on. Well we still don't know due to the Government delay! However we would encourage you to renew now as we should be restarting activities soon, and we do ask that if you are actively taking part in any of the groups which have restarted, or are about to restart, like Walking or the groups meeting online, that you please renew before taking part. Also only paid-up members will be able to vote at the AGM.

The 'new member' and 'membership renewal' forms are now on the website. The new forms allow you to complete them online without having to print them out and fill them in by hand, although that option is still possible. If the forms are downloaded to Acrobat Reader they can be emailed direct to [members@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:members@ashbyu3a.co.uk) after filling them in.

Unfortunately, this may not work if you are using Apple products. I'm working on that.

### **Ashby u3a Website**

Things are changing and groups are starting to re-open. Keep an eye on our website as I shall try to keep it up to date with new developments.

### **A NEW SOCIAL EVENT – Bowling - 6<sup>th</sup> August**

Ashby Bowling Club have invited us to come along on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> August at 6pm for a social evening and to try out Bowls. A bar and refreshments will be available. Put the date in your diary. Further details to follow shortly.

### **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](mailto:webmaster@ashbyu3a.co.uk) or 01530 469152.

### **Covid cases**

Covid cases seem to be sharply rising again in the NW Leics area so be extra careful out there. You may have seen on the BBC recently that Andrew Marr caught Covid, possibly at the G7 conference, despite the fact that he had had both jabs. Apparently it wasn't pleasant but fortunately he recovered and was back on TV a fortnight later. However it does show that even with two jabs we are not immune. The good news is that once vaccinated the chance of hospitalisation or serious illness is extremely rare.

## 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 Welfare Officer, Estelle Sandles 01530 459858, 07919 986456 or email [welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk).

Our Chairman, Colin Ellis 01530 272592

Colin Woodland 01530 413867

Anne Donegan 01283 760348

Tony Smith 01530 831822

Estelle can also offer support and welfare information. Any chats will of course be confidential.

### **NHS Covid-19 Test and Trace**

If you have a smartphone, we would encourage you to download the NHS Covid App. It tracks whether you have been in close proximity to someone who subsequently tests positive for Covid-19 and allows Test and Trace to contact you and ask you to isolate for a number of days. Remember this app only works if you carry your phone with you when you go out! It can also be used to check-in to pubs, restaurants and other premises for Test and Trace to save having to give your details at the door.

### **ZOE 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 4.5 million people are already signed up and contributing.

### **AgeUK**

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://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.

## A QUICK QUIZ

(These questions are courtesy of Radio Times)

1. Continental United States has 4 time zones, can you name them?
2. What was the Turkish city of Istanbul called before 1930?
3. Name the Coffee shop in US sitcom Friends
4. How many human players are there on each side in a polo match?
5. In what year did Tony Blair become British Prime Minister?
6. How many times has England won the men's football World Cup?
7. What is the capital of New Zealand?
8. Street artist Banksy is originally associated with which British city?
9. From what grain is the Japanese spirit Sake made?
10. In which part of your body would you find the cruciate ligament?
11. What is the name of the main antagonist in the Shakespeare play Othello?
12. What element is denoted by the chemical symbol Sn in the periodic table?
13. What is the name of the 1976 film about the Watergate scandal, starring Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman?
14. How many of Henry VIII's wives were called Catherine?
15. What was the most popular girls name in the UK in 2019?
16. In what US State is the city Nashville?
17. What is the currency of Denmark?
18. Which Tennis Grand Slam is played on a clay surface?
19. In which European country would you find the Rijksmuseum?
20. How many films have Al Pacino and Robert De Niro appeared in together?
21. What was the old name for a Snickers bar before it changed in 1990?
22. Who was the head of state in Japan during the second world war?
23. What is the smallest planet in our solar system?
24. Who wrote the novels Gone Girl and Sharp Objects?
25. Which legendary surrealist artist is famous for painting melting clocks?
26. Which football club plays its home games at Loftus Road

**Answers on the last page**

## **GROUP REPORTS**

### **GROUPS ACTUALLY MEETING IN PERSON**

#### **Walking**

It seems that many members may have been taking holiday breaks in June as all three walking groups had fewer numbers than expected this month (except for the main group outing on 1<sup>st</sup> June when 18 turned out)

#### **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June. Willesley Woods and Hicks Lodge**

Eighteen of us gathered at Oakthorpe Colliery Picnic Site car park for the start for our second walk of 2021. The sun shone as we set off out of the rear of the car park towards Willesley Woods. After visiting the Royal British Legion memorial grove, we completed a circuit around Thortit Lake and emerged onto a lane. We continued along a footpath to Willesley church and scout camp site where we stopped for our drink break, sheltering from the heat of the sun! After crossing the golf course we followed a path and crossed the road into Hicks Lodge. Here we shared the uphill route with cycles on the Wood Farm and the Family Forest trails. On arrival at the cafe/cycle centre we had a brief comfort break before continuing along the cycle trail skirting the lake. The final part of our walk took us back to the entrance to the car park where eleven of us had lunch on picnic tables in the shade of the trees of Willesley wood.

#### **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June. Barton Marina and Needwood**

For our third walk of 2021 8 walkers turned up for this walk in very warm and sunny conditions, all male members rather unfortunately.

The walk started from Barton Marina, which was opened in 2001. We headed off through the village of Barton-under-Needwood, the largest in Staffordshire, passing St. James Church, founded by Dr John Taylor, a local villager and chaplain to Henry VIII. The walk progressed through the Needwood Forest (-under-Needwood being added to Barton in 1327 by Royal Charter). Walking through lovely undulating countryside, we enjoyed views of Dunstall Church before arriving at the delightful village of Tatenhill. Here we had a liquid refreshment break, before setting off on a grassy, tree lined, path to join the National Forest Way. The path then followed sand extraction works and a created lake, eventually leading to the Trent & Mersey Canal, along which we walked until reaching Bridge 36, leading back to Barton Marina, a total distance of 7.8 miles.

This walk is known as the Silver Circuit and was created in 2016 to commemorate 25 years of the first planting of the National Forest..

#### **Medium walks**

#### **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June. Dimminsdale and Calke**

Three of us met for the first medium walk since February 2019. We parked at the Dimminsdale car park and walked up the steps and into Staunton Harold estate. Then down the drive and joined the Tramway trail and walked through the two bridges and onto Calke Explore, stopping there for drink break. Then continuing on the trail and crossing the road into Dimminsdale Woods and back to our cars. A total of 5.75 miles walked, in warm sunshine and a gentle breeze, just right for walking. A great walk, and nice to be back to some form of normality. Looking forward to our next walk which is being led by Mary from Packington Playing fields car park on Monday July 12th.

#### **Short Walks**

#### **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June.**

It was a miserable day and although John Howlett waited until the start time, no-one else turned up so he went home!

## **Recorder Group**

The recorder group has had occasional, weather-dependent meetings outside in members' gardens when regulations allowed but now they have managed to get a regular slot at St Matthew's Community Centre in Overseal where they met on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> this month.

## **Drawing and painting**

As Chris was on holiday, the other group members, led by John H, took a tour of the Ashby Outdoor Art Gallery. No painting was done.

# **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](mailto: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. Subject to the social distancing regulations in force at the time, we may even be able to do house calls.

We have had only one request for assistance this month, a member wanted PC Clinic's number as she thought that her laptop's security needed sorting out. Hopefully everyone else's computers are working just fine!!

## **Family History**

### **9th June**

Two brave souls turned up in person, and two contributed remotely, and we had a good session. Two presented their apologies, which is always helpful.

Sylvia Contributed by email. She seemed to feel she had little to contribute but in fact has had some good luck with her DNA test. She has identified living relatives with it, and it has confirmed her Irish origins pretty accurately. Even if the information was already to hand, to have it confirmed is always good news.

Ana attended by remote using WhatsApp. As before she is trying to locate the grave of her grandfather. She has contacted the local authority, who are taking their time, so I suggested a visit. This often turns up results. It seems her GF died in a pit accident, and had some compensation, which looks small, but for the time may have been a useful sum.

Carolyn Attended in person, although had not much new information. We were going to discuss gedcoms and backing up but did not get round to it. Maybe next time.

Shirley also attended in person and is still mapping the life of her great, great grandfather. She had no further information at present, but we had an interesting discussion.

John D Reported on a fascinating search he has been engaged on for a great niece. She and her partner, in doing up a turn of the century Victorian terraced house in Horsham, have found a late 19th century Martini-Henry rifle under the floor. This has gone to the police for clearance, but it is hoped the identification marks might reveal which regiment, and even which soldier was issued with it. Meanwhile John and Chris have been working on the changing street plans and censuses to see if it is possible to identify the occupants at the probable time the rifle was deposited. Watch this space for more news.

As a first try at a hybrid meeting it went very well. Hopefully, next time we can have more present.

## Literature Group

The group appear to be continuing with their WhatsApp group so that they can read at home and then discuss the books they are reading.

## Science & Technology

Monday 14th June. Talk by Paul McKay on 'Einstein the Man and his Special Theory of Relativity'

Surprisingly, twenty people from the Ashby and the Burton science groups logged into Zoom to hear my talk on this fascinating, and intellectually challenging talk. I have given this talk before to the Burton group so perhaps they were so baffled the first time, they needed some revision, I certainly found it hard to recall and even more difficult to explain... 'fools rush in..'

I started gently, explaining that Albert Einstein as a child was quite slow and even as a physicist, he struggled with mathematics, enlisting the help of colleagues to express his complex concepts mathematically. In later years, he deliberately exaggerated his idiosyncrasies to depict himself to the media and the public as the absent-minded professor, odd but harmless. He was a loner and radical thinker so struggled with the student/ tutor relationship, the lecturers interpreting his behaviour as arrogant and rude. He failed to understand that to secure employment as a scientist depended on positive references from these tutors, even for a lowly position of Patent Examiner 3rd Class, which he secured only through the influence of a friend.

Working well within his mental capacity proved a blessing in disguise for Einstein, it gave him time to ponder the fundamental problems of physics; the nature of light, molecular structure and the space-time dimension. His boss even allowed him time to write four brilliant scientific papers in a single year. Recognition of his work by prominent physicist of the time, Max Planck, was the signal that the conservative physicists of the day needed for them to endorse Einstein's ground-breaking work. His General Theory of Relativity followed 10 years later in 1915 to world acclaim and eventually he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics for explaining the Photoelectric Effect, not for Relativity, which the bearded conventional physicists on the panel considered too 'theoretical' and 'unproven'. He re-located to the United States to escape repression of the Jews in Germany, and although a lifelong pacifist, he eventually supported the development of a weapon based on his famous equation,  $E=mc^2$ , believing that the Axis Powers were also working on it.

Finally, the application of Special and General Theories of Relativity to Global Positioning Systems was explained, an application even Einstein could not have foreseen.

## Music Appreciation

We have 3 contributors again today and the themes this month seem to be singer songwriters and summertime. And we've all avoided Gershwin's "Summertime"

If anyone else wishes to listen to our choices, the playlist is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdjMqEt4gpeoTkWWVRiqhgSkDI25DSAAb>

Neil says:

Bob Dylan turned 80 recently. Amongst his many contributions to music, I think he should take the credit for paving the way for singer/songwriters to perform their own songs, even if their voices weren't pleasing on the ear to many people. Here is a good example, and what's more, it is a hate song, when everybody else was writing love songs. It is "Positively 4<sup>th</sup> Street"

There are several artists that I admire who may not have got the chance to record their songs if it hadn't been for Bob. Here are a couple of songs by one of them, Randy Newman.

Many of his songs were made famous by others, like this one, but I want to play his version of "Simon Smith and his amazing dancing bear"

Next is one that is unlikely to be covered by others. It is a lament to his ex wife. "I miss you"

Leonard Cohen certainly fits the bill, and like Randy, many of his songs are easier on the ear when performed by others. But to me the lyrics mean more when sung by Lenny C.

In his later years he also had fine musicians accompanying him. Here is a good example – “I’m your man”

Finally, Neil Young. One of my favourite artists, but his voice is not always easy on the ear.

This is one he wrote after passing a pretty girl on the pavement - “Cinnamon Girl”. He says it was hard to explain this to his wife.

#### Nev says:

The dramatic change in the weather has prompted me to select songs about sunshine.

My first choice is a song by the Beatles written by George Harrison. It is “Here Comes The Sun” which Harrison wrote in 1969 and was on the Abbey Road Album.

My second choice is “Walking on Sunshine” written by Kimberly Rue for Katrina and the Waves in 1983.

A Stevie Wonder song is my third choice. It is “You Are the Sunshine of My Life” written by Wonder in 1973. The first two lines of the song are sung by Jim Gilstrap and the next two lines by Lani Groves. Gilstrap and Groves together with Gloria Barley provide backing vocals.

My final selection is one of my favourite Kinks tracks. It is “Sunny Afternoon” written by Ray Davies in 1966.

#### Mike says:

Like Nev I was prompted to chose some summery songs but I’ve chosen some tracks to go with a warm summer evening.

Firstly I came across this lovely cover of Joan Armatrading’s “Woncha come on home” by Madison Cunningham. I think that’s the group name or maybe just the lead singer but not sure.

Secondly a cover of Van Morrison’s “Tupelo honey” by Cassandra Wilson

Next, Gerry Mulligan and Chet Baker playing “Making Whoopee”

Another Chet Baker track; “Over the rainbow” which shows it was covered before Eva Cassidy famously did her version.

Lastly a cover of Jimi Hendrix’s “Castles in the sand” and “Little wing” by a couple called Tuck and Patti. Tuck plays the guitar equally as well as Hendrix but very differently.

All but the first of these tracks are from one CD called Dinner Jazz which has 16 great classic tracks in similar vein. An excellent album.

## **GROUPS PLANNING TO RESTART SOON**

Assuming that the government allows, the following groups have said that they are planning to restart meeting together this month or next. Watch the website for news of any other groups restarting.

### **Computer Group**

Wed 7<sup>th</sup> July at 16 Winchester Way

### **Digital Photography**

Thu 1<sup>st</sup> July at 16 Winchester Way

## OTHER THINGS TO DO IF YOU ARE STILL STUCK INSIDE

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!

**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.

### IF YOU WANT TO GET IN TOUCH, OUR CURRENT COMMITTEE ARE:

Colin Ellis	Chairman	chairman@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 272592
Anne Donegan	Business Secretary	secretary@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01283 760348
Val Reed	Treasurer	treasurer@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 564279
Iain Banns	Membership Secretary	members@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 416697
Colin Woodland	Groups Co-ordinator	interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 413867
Peter Clement	Minutes Secretary	minutes@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 560894
Estelle Sandles	Welfare	welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 459858
Bill Wilson	Speaker seeker	speakers@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 413182
Mike Stow	Communications	webmaster@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 469152
Avril Wilson	Social Secretary	socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 413182
Tony Smith	Member	tony@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 831822

## Quiz Answers

1. Pacific, Mountain, Central, Eastern
2. Constantinople
3. Central Perk
4. Four
5. 1997
6. Once (1966)
7. Wellington
8. Bristol
9. Rice
10. Knee
11. Iago
12. Tin
13. All the President's Men
14. 3
15. Olivia
16. Tennessee
17. Krone
18. The French Open (Roland Garros)
19. Netherlands
20. Four (The Godfather Part 2, Heat, Righteous Kill, The Irishman)
21. Marathon
22. Emperor Hirohito
23. Mercury
24. Gillian Flynn
25. Salvador Dali
26. Queen's Park Rangers