

BOURNE U3A

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2020

NEW WEBSITE : - <https://www.bourneu3a.org.uk>
OLD WEBSITE : - <https://u3asites.org.uk/bourne/home>
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1100094

Chairman's Chat

Chairman's Chat – October 2020

Firstly, a big thank you to all those that attended our online AGM on the 21st September. Seventy members attended and we were comfortably over the required quorum.

I know some of you are nervous about trying Zoom but, following Government announcements over the last few weeks, it seems to be the only way that many of us can meet for at least the next six months. Just email me or any member of the Committee if you want help getting started. It might not be the same as a real meeting, but it is the next best thing. If you need any encouragement, October's General Meeting looks a cracker with a talk by David Templeman on "Mary Queen of Scots, from Sheffield to Fotheringhay".

I have been having trouble with our internet connection and have been offline a couple of times in the last month. While irritating, each time only lasted a couple of hours, and it has made me think about the 50 or so U3A members who do not have the internet. Gill Stoneman, Paul Smith, and their team of deliverers have worked hard to deliver the Viral Times and Newsletters to them, but they are missing out on Zoom meetings, emails etc that the rest of us can benefit from. The Committee are trying to think of things to involve members without the internet and would welcome any ideas you might have. Meanwhile, if you know of any members without the internet who might be feeling a bit isolated or left out, please think about giving them a ring to let them know what is going on.

On a lighter note, we spent the last weekend in September visiting Lesley's 86 year old aunt in the Forest of Dean. She has hardly left her house since March and welcomed the company. We heard much about her childhood and being evacuated from the East End of London to Ruardean in the Forest, and one story, in particular, intrigued me. In 1942 Ruardean held a Carnival which involved lots of races and competitions. One of them was the 'Singing with a Pig' competition. She had to hold a piglet in her arms and sing to it. I'm not sure how the competition was judged but Aunt Connie won, and received half a crown for her troubles.

I have never heard of a 'Singing with a Pig' competition and could find no reference to it on Google so I wonder if any of our members have come across it or something similar. I might suggest to the Committee that it would be a good way to liven up future AGMs!

Stay Safe

Malcolm

Committee Page

Computer Training by Martin Adkins our Website Guru

With most of the population having spent many months in isolation and with winter approaching I thought it might be time to suggest some possible Computer training courses that are available on the internet, mostly free.

Computer Training Courses - click on the links below to see for yourselves. Unfortunately many are made by Americans but we won't hold that against them!

If you want to know how to write documents but want a free alternative to Microsoft Office 365 then turn to LibreOffice, it's completely free and has similar sections to Office 365.

<https://www.libreoffice.org/>

Example:

Office 365	LibreOffice
Word	Writer
Excel	Calc
Powerpoint	Impress

The courses below have their own websites and some can be found on YouTube

Learn Computers www.gcflearnfree.org/computers

Internet Safety - <http://www.gcflearnfree.org/internetsafety>

Libre Office – this is a free alternative to Microsoft Office 365

<https://www.udemy.com/topic/libreoffice/> (Paid courses)

Libre Office Writer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-p32JnguE2o>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIBWOjeiptA>

Ipad basics <http://www.gcflearnfree.org/ipadbasics>

Iphone basics <http://www.gcflearnfree.org/iphonebasics>

www.homeandlearn.co.uk (All Free)

Photography Challenge



The challenge was to take photos on the subject of “Reflections”. Selected as the best were those above from Dave Pask, Alan Douglas and Diane Hinchliffe. Other photos were sent in by Paul smith, Sandy Love, Eric Cooper and Judith (?).

The new challenge is " Transport " (entries by 09-11-20)

The next challenge is " Autumn " (entries by 07-12-20)

Entries to :- vasmroberts@gmail.com

Group News

Lawn Green Bowls Group

Castle Sports Complex every Wednesday and Thursday. Between 12 and 16 members currently enjoy 2 hours of bowling at each session. Up to 24 members could be accommodated ensuring all members are safely bowling and following guideline of the government and the national bowls and sports organisations.

It is very satisfying to see members getting some physical and social interaction even in these circumstances.

Aviation History

It's been a crazy year so far with us having to cancel all our programmed visits for the year. I am of course hoping to start up again as soon as possible and I will be planning a summer visit program for next year. In the meantime I hope everybody is watching “Inside the Spitfire Factory” series, showing on More4 on Monday evenings. Should be available on Catchup as well.

Natural History Group

Being an environmentally friendly group we did not want to travel too far for our October meeting (first Friday of the month) so our starting point was Bourne War Memorial! Although in the middle of the town we entertained hopes of spotting a kingfisher and seeing Horsetails. The wildlife performed well with mallard, moorhen, black headed gulls and a mandarin duck sharing our rendezvous area. On our walk (in two groups of 5 persons in line with the guidelines) not only did we see the afore mentioned Horsetails which looked like a tasty treat for dinosaurs but we also saw donkey tails! We heard a large flock of goldfinch- a “charm” in a dense hedge, the individuals popping out periodically to show us their splendid patterns. A grey wagtail showed us his bright yellow colours- I think that the name of this bird does not really do them justice as only part of them is grey. They appeared to be great characters constantly bobbing their tails, along with the pied wagtails which rushed about on the Abbey Lawn. After a pleasant couple of hours we completed our circuit of the green heart of the town, touring the old water cress beds and shrubland near Elsea Park. As we neared the end of our walk some of the members enjoyed a glimpse of the kingfisher so target achieved! We are wondering which jewels of nature we can find and appreciate at next months meeting.

WINE APPRCIATION GROUP 3.

We have continued to meet in spite of the various Covid restrictions. Initially, we jumped on the Zoom bandwagon and held a virtual meeting at which group members waved a bottle of wine in front of the screen and commented on its content.

However, for the past three months, we have met in one another’s gardens, conservatories etc, never more than six in number, and changing group membership each time.

The opportunity this latter arrangement presents to enjoy one another’s company is ample compensation for having to share a bottle of wine with five others!

John Boss Group Leader

Drawing and Painting Group

The arrival of the Corona virus was a massive shock to us all, then we came to realise that as the lockdown took hold it would have a massive effect on our everyday life. One of these effects was that it stopped all social events cutting us off from friends and family.

To try and maintain some sort of contact with friends the Drawing and Art Group decided to keep in touch with fellow members by inputting into a weekly newsletter. Our tutor would set projects and in turn comment and advise through this newsletter. In turn our members would send emails and photographs of their work that in turn would be published in the newsletter.

Seeing photographs of pieces of art is ok but cannot replace seeing it in real life so when the Corona Virus restrictions started to ease we started having group gatherings on the Wellhead (max of six of course). This allowed us to actually see paintings and talk to real people.

As the summer started to turn to autumn we realized that outdoor gatherings were no longer possible. We then started to look for suitable indoor venues. There are lots of suitable venues in Bourne but many of them were remaining closed whilst others just did not suit our needs as artists and the Corona Virus regulations.

After looking at many venues we decided that the Methodist Church Hall at Thurlby suited our needs. It had lots of light, ventilation, and space. The Halls committee had raised a comprehensive risk assessment and all that remained was for us to carry out our own risk assessment. This assessment had to satisfy the Hall risk assessor, the Covid Government regulations, the U3A and



probably most importantly had to allow us to have enjoyable meetings yet remaining safe. On completion of our assessment it was scrutinized by the Hall assessor and the U3A chairman. The Hall assessor was satisfied with our document and after some changes the U3A chairman agreed that we had done everything possible to have safe meetings.

On Tuesday 6th October we dusted down our brushes and easels and had our first meeting under these new rules. We had to wear masks, keep socially distanced but despite this the meeting was enjoyed by all. Seeing and talking to real people again and seeing actual pieces of art was fantastic. We will continue to have these meetings for as long as regulations and personal safety allow.

If any other groups want to chat about our risk assessment I will be happy to chat and let you have a copy.

Peter Gillatt Group Leader

Intermediate French Group

We are a group that has been meeting every week for a good number of years now so when 'lockdown' was announced it was a bit of a shock and a disappointment that we would no longer be able to meet. We managed to maintain contact and continue our studies of this delightful language by email. Articles of interest, grammar exercises, useful information and tips to learn for conversation etc were sent out every week for those who wished to maintain their knowledge and continue to make progress. When the weather was nice small groups met up for coffee and chat in various gardens but unfortunately our annual garden party had to be cancelled because of the limit on numbers meeting even in gardens.

When lockdown restrictions were lifted we were able to re-start our weekly meetings at Wake House using the Baxter Room where there is plenty of room for safe distancing and we still managed coffee and biscuits, an essential part of our meetings, at 11 o'clock, with some people bringing their own flasks etc.

Unfortunately when the 'rule of six' came in we were uncertain of our position, despite the Trustees assuring us that we came under the 'exemption rule' as we were an education group. A phone call to our local MP's office for clarification was suggested and within a week we received a letter from Gareth Davies confirming that we were exempt from the limit of six people on two counts; one

being an educational group and one providing voluntary services. We still have to comply with the Government guidelines on social distancing and hygiene of course.

So, we are now back on track, meeting on a Tuesday morning and determined to enjoy learning French, drinking coffee/tea, supporting each other for as long as we can. The restrictions could change at any moment, curtailing our activities once again but for the time being we will make the most of meeting our friends in a relatively safe environment.

Pauline O'Brien (Group Leader)

Sunday Lunch Group Three.

We have met in Members gardens for the last few months on a fine Sunday to share a picnic & catch up with over the summer months as we can't eat up in our usual pub venues during the Covid 19 Crisis.

Here is a photo of us enjoying our lunch at Janet Dowse's garden in August.

Christine Cooke (Group Leader)



The Railway Group.

Zoom is a boon!!

We are just finalizing arrangements for having talks on railway matters on Zoom over the next few months. One speaker definitely "tied-up" is from the Mid-Norfolk Railway. He sounds a super catch as he gives talks most weeks and is his own "host" with extended time slots and expertise in showing images and Power-Point presentations. (It is worth noting that U3A has this extended time slot, but currently under the control of one U3A member, only – the free slots only last 40 minutes).

With our usual meetings taboo at the moment, as are our usual monthly trips and visits, we are having to scrabble around to keep our group together and motivated. To this end, two of our members have hosted small groups at their model railway layouts. These have been enjoyed and we are looking at more such ventures.

If you would like to take part, or just watch, any of these Zoom events, just let me know as I have to submit your e-mail address to the host (such that he can send you a formal invitation to the event which gives you your personal link into the event).

If you are not familiar with Zoom, and would like to try it, I would be happy to assist by setting-up a trial Zoom meeting with you.

And finally, a slither of humour. An officer is addressing a line of soldiers under training. “Smithers – I did not see you at camouflage training this morning”. “Thank you very much Sir!”

Tony Burke. Joint Leader

Science and Technology Group

We were joined by Deepings’ Science Group on Tuesday 6th October for a fascinating talk by Keith Townsend on Zoom about the Rosetta Mission - the European Space Agency’s ambitious mission to land a space craft on a comet. Keith gave us a brief history of comets and the impact they have



had on civilisation before detailing the mission itself. Britain made a huge contribution to the science behind this project that delivered so much data that it is still being analysed. The challenge of intercepting a comet, just a few kilometres wide, millions of miles into space, was enormous.

However, ESA achieved the almost impossible – not only did it catch up with the comet, it landed a satellite to analyse the surface. Comets are poorly understood, and this project has revealed so much – not just about comets themselves, but also about the origins of life on earth. If you want to be invited to future Science and Technology talks, email Malcolm Scriven (mpscriven@hotmail.com) to be put on the mailing list.

Malcolm Scriven Group Leader

Poetry Group

The Poetry Group managed to resume meeting in September, but with just three of our six regulars. Our other members were either in isolation for one reason or another, or in someone else's 'bubble'. We congregated in Janet Dowse's back garden to ‘talk poetry’ and enjoyed ourselves despite the less-than balmy weather, and the cacophony of the 'bin lorry' going about its business!

Quite a lot of time was spent revisiting Thomas Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard' - one of the best-loved poems in the English language and the source of so many wonderful lines that have worked their way into our lives. For example:

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
the dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
and waste its sweetness on the desert air.

The whole poem can easily be found on The Poetry Foundation's website (just Google 'Thomas Gray Elegy Written' and click on the first entry listed. Go on, give yourselves a lockdown treat!.

We hope our restricted September meeting will be the harbinger of better times to come. In October we are planning to have another go - this time indoors.

Philip Dunkerley - Group Leader.

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I welcome reports of Group activities with photographs, if applicable.

**The copy date for the November issue is
9am on Saturday, 7 November 2020**

Please e-mail your copy and pictures to newsletter@u3abourne.org.uk
or post to *Paul Smith, 21 Northfields, Bourne, PE10 9DB*

I reserve the right to either bring this date forward or retard it if my personal circumstances dictate.

Local Charity Events

These events are neither organised by the U3A nor are they for commercial gain. Any member may suggest a suitable entry for this page on similar lines but publication will be at the discretion of the Editor. There will be just one page per month.