

AYLESBURY VALE U3A



Issue No. 96

Summer 2020

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Hello Everyone,

How are you all getting on? This lockdown seems to be going on forever but I am quite happy for it to continue if it gets rid of the virus. It is frustrating I know but what is the alternative? We only have one life - it is not a rehearsal - so I am hanging onto mine.

Our dog, a West Highland Terrier, looks like an unshorn sheep. She can hardly see out of her eyes because the fur has grown so much. I am much the same with my hair except it is not in my eyes but it is growing so fast and now is various shades of blonde, white and iron grey coming through but while I am at home nobody sees it, I wear a hat when walking the dog!

Shopping online is a nightmare to me. Who has got all the flour? My daughter managed to get some bread flour at a farm shop. When we have completed the shopping list and go into delivery that's another story, two weeks we had to wait, so I doubled up on several items, anybody want a toilet roll!

Well enough of the moaning at least some of you are able to contact by skype and zoom, I belong to the Craft group and Heather gets us together although we cannot see everyone at least we can talk to each other. Thanks to Derek Ayshford, our Web Master, there is quite a lot on the Web to see like films and quizzes so do look.

Today it is raining which we need for the garden but haven't we had some lovely weather? When I walk the dog I love to look at all the gardens which are all coming into colour, some of the lilacs are fantastic and our cherry tree was absolutely laden with blossom this year. The laburnum will be in bloom soon so it's not all doom and gloom.

Take care of yourselves.
Sheila Satterthwaite



YOUR AYLESBURY VALE U3A COMMITTEE 2019—2020

Chairman:	Sheila Satterthwaite
Vice Chairman:	Chris Lowe
Secretary:	Maureen Clark
Treasurer:	Mike Park
Group Co-ordinator:	Jane Trow
Membership Secretary:	Ken Roberson
Social Activities:	Mary Singleton
Speakers Secretary:	Sheila Page
Outings Co-ordinator:	Dan McGregor
Hall Manager:	James Cartwright
<u>Non-Committee Activities</u>	
Newsletter Editor	Sheena Hudson
Assistant Newsletter Editor	Mary Singleton
Assistant Newsletter Editor	Richard Clark

'The Bear family were ready to go out for their Easter picnic in Wendover Woods but, alas, government restrictions meant they had to stay at home.'



"It's just that I find that having two glasses of wine at once stops me touching my face..."

SUMMER ROCK 'N ROLL PARTY

BAD NEWS with the uncertainties of the ongoing situation the Party has been cancelled. If you bought your tickets with a cheque, the cheque has not been cashed and will be destroyed. If you paid cash please bring your ticket along to the next meeting, whenever that is held, and you will receive a full refund.

Some better news to look forward to, there will be the Rock'n'Roll Christmas Party on 10th December at the Aylesbury Tennis Club—surely it must be all over by then and we will need a party!

APRIL 2020 - A MONTH THAT HAS CHANGED EVERYONE

'Lockdown' and 'ramping up' are just two recent daily phrases we hear whilst the Global Pandemic carries on showing who is in command reducing some leaders to make stupid comments.

Our daily habits changed and luckily for those in England the weather has been kind especially when we undertook our recommended hourly exercise each day. It was during this exercise total strangers attending their gardens would acknowledge us for a few seconds and include us in their social world.

For some, food delivery frequencies are a talking point especially at 8.00 pm every Thursday after the clapping had stopped for the NHS. This is a neighbour opportunity to compare notes. Meeting in a small close is a good chance to meet people, at a distance of course! People say who's getting a delivery next and ask if anyone wants anything before the final order goes in. Nothing too much but essentials like wine!!

Without official freedom to travel, shop, attend religious functions, play sport, visit friends, pubs and restaurants many of us have used technology to communicate socially or play games and do quizzes with family. The U3A Spanish group led the way with Sheila Page using Zoom, the German group has followed, and it's to be hoped that the Sounds of the 50s and 60s groups will also follow. The U3A website has an excellent section called '**Confined to Quarters**' maintained with great vigour by Derek Ayshford. All items on this section are member supplied and include singalongs, quizzes, jokes, YouTube, photos, writings and much more. All is recommended.

Technology has been ideal for social gatherings and several tools for computer and smartphones exist. For meetings Zoom is ideal, quizzes can be played with Google Duo, and WhatsApp is fine for smallish families to use. Skype and Facetime are familiar family chat talks as well. Several other tools such as Houseparty are popular and we still have text and email for basic communications. Many games such as crib, solitaire and poker can be played online. Bridge, for example, is running as a virtual club; Bridge Base Online enables people to play their favourite game with friends just a network line away. There is also a lot of information and things to do including a weekly quiz on the main U3A website <https://www.u3a.org.uk>

Richard Clark



Paraprosookians are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected and is frequently humorous. (Winston Churchill loved them.)

1. Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
2. The last thing I want to do is hurt you.... but it's still on my list.
3. Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
4. If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
5. We never really grow up.... we only learn how to act in public.
6. War does not determine who is right, only who is left.
7. Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
8. To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.
9. I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
10. In filling out an application, where it says, "In case of emergency, notify...." I answered, "a doctor."
11. Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy.
12. You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.
13. I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not so sure.
14. To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.
15. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian; any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
16. You're never too old to learn something stupid

SUPERMARKET SWANSONG

She met him by the trolley park,
They both arrived together.
He passed a trolley out to her
Remarking on the weather.

They pushed their trolleys side by side,
Though not a word was said.
He made his way towards the fish,
She shot off to the bread.

She knew that they would meet again
On some exotic aisle.....
It happened at the sweetest spot,
Just by the Tate and Lyle!

And then again up different aisles,
Their trolleys almost bumping,
She thought he'd hear her 'giveaway'
By the way her heart was thumping.

Towards the checkout, side by side,
They looked at one another,
Had she at last lassoed a chap,
To take to show her mother ?

She gathered close to hear his words,
Sweet words to change her life ;.....
"Where did you get your sweater from?
I'd like one for my wife!"

Mrs E Robinson, Brighouse, West
Yorkshire. Daily Mail
Submitted by Jeanette Walker

HOW TO RUIN A BEAUTIFULLY PLANNED YEAR

In January 2020, Marg and I had planned a year full of events, both exciting and just plain relaxing. I suspect like most people when you plan something often a shoe will drop and a hasty re-think is called for, but this year a whole floor of Freeman Hardy and Willis landed on our heads.

In March the U3A bowls section had planned their annual trip to Torquay for an indoor bowls contest against some local teams. To be honest, as I'm pretty useless at indoor bowls, I wasn't too disappointed when the trip had to be cancelled, but a week by the seaside is always welcome. At least I was spared the humiliation of playing the locals with their monogrammed shirts and their life membership of "Potters", but the food was always good and we usually had a good laugh.

By the end of March we were in full lockdown, but we could still look forward to some good trips. Last year, for my 75th birthday, Marg had treated me to a helicopter flight over Oxford complete with a glass of champagne. As the date in April drew nearer we realised that the company involved were not going to risk taking off and then crashing in the middle of a "Lewis" production! Never mind, we thought, we've still got our cottage in Devon booked at the end of May, so that Marg and I and her pooch could spend a week away from it all. As the supply crisis began to hit home we realised that we were safer at home where we knew the local shops, than stuck in the middle of nowhere with cut up squares of newspaper and only a herd of cows to self-distance from.

But perhaps June would be better. After all, we had planned a week in Scotland riding on steam locomotives with a couple of friends. What could possibly go wrong with that? A few weeks ago there was a documentary about one of the journeys we had booked. Most of the passengers seemed to be from the Far East so we decided that, even if it still operated, it would have to be without us.

But I think the biggest blow was also in June when I had booked tickets to see Lionel Richie at Blenheim Palace. I had spent ages online watching a countdown clock as to when the tickets would go on sale. I couldn't believe the price of the seats but, as Lionel is one of my all-time favourites, I bit the bullet and purchased two near the front. I was so shocked by what I had just spent I naively thought that maybe Lionel would take us out for a meal after the show!

The only other event planned will be the U3A trip to Berlin which now looks highly unlikely. I'm sure all of you will have had similar disappointments and, I have to say, this whole crisis does put things into perspective. It makes you realise that you can manage on a lot less, but that not being able to be close to family and friends is the biggest loss. I hope my ramblings find you still healthy and let's look forward to when we can all meet again.

Stay safe,

John & Marg Harwood

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

WRITE AND RAMBLE

As a former European tour guide, I thought about doing local tours in and around to Aston Clinton when I moved here. The idea would be to take in interesting local places with afternoon tea at a suitable "Tea Shop". 'Write and ramble' provides an interesting place to visit, a suitable refreshment stop and like-minded company. I hope this gives a flavour of the intention of this small band of strollers. Starting a new group generally presents challenges and, to start a walking group just as everyone is in "Lockdown", is novel! I hope more people will join when we are free to wander - not lonely, but looking at the clouds and surroundings.

As our first walk cannot be undertaken as a group at the moment due to "Lockdown", information on only two of the twelve points of interest are detailed here. Further information will be given when the walk can be undertaken as a group.

The first three points of interest are Gliders, Chiltern Hills and The Bell.

Before leaving the Bell note the traffic lights. These were installed after it was pointed out that, with the construction of the A41 Berkhamsted bypass linking to the M25, it is possible for people travelling from the continent to get this far inland before seeing a 30mph traffic sign. The campaign to give pedestrians safe road crossing was started after someone was knocked down while trying to cross from the Anthony Hall, where young parents took their children from a play group, to the school opposite. The school incidentally was a gift, possibly 21st birthday present, to one of the Rothschild daughters. The crossing was installed as a result of there being more footfall of dog walkers to the park.

We will then pass the Rising Sun Pub, the Shellac record factory and Green Park Centre.

The Wendover Arm of Grand Union Canal goes from Birmingham to London. Going over the humpback bridge note the reason for it. At the time it was built it served the Wendover Mills. Leaking structure and burrowing rabbits let the water level fall and it ceased operation.

Finally the walk takes us to Icknield Way or, landing stage for a flatter walk. We will view Prince Charles carbuncle, Halton House, St Georges Church, Halton and Halton Museum (by arrangement).

Phillip Rance

READERS CIRCLE GROUP 2

"I have been keeping Readers' Circle 2 Group going by e-mail and also people can Skype me as well if they're in need of a chat.

We have an emoji books quiz doing the rounds and this is taking quite a bit of brain power to work out, especially as some of the books are American. We also had a previous one asking for answers to Shakespeare's plays which was easier! One of our Group also started a round robin of Quarantine Cooking – consisting of easily obtained ingredients or 'back of the cupboard' forgotten tins and packets.

A lot of our time is actually spent laughing at various MP4s and videos, not all pc! These have been regularly sent round and I feel they have been great for keeping people's morale up, especially those isolated on their own.

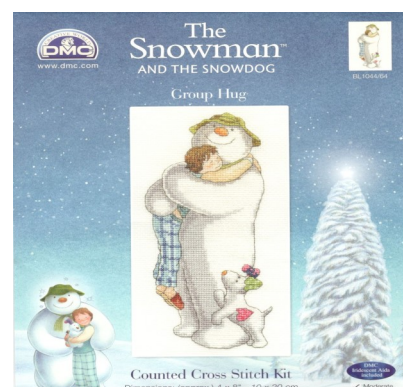
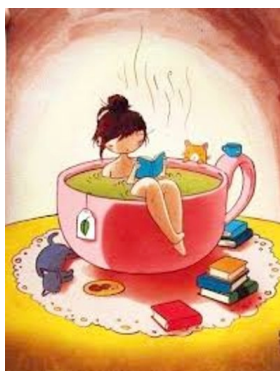
A lot more x-stitching is going on (one of our Group is x-stitching 'The Snowman – Group Hug' which seems quite appropriate at the moment) together with other crafts including quilting, dress-making, knitting plus cake baking (if you can get the flour and baking powder). Bird watching and gardening are very popular and pictures of our gardens and various blooms have been very uplifting for everyone. Good job it is Spring with Summer to come and not the middle of winter.

We have a new Programme from this month up to and including September with a good variety of books chosen and we have 'virtual dates' for our monthly meetings. On the appointed day or nearby everyone sends me their opinions on the book for that month. I then amalgamate these onto one or two pages and these get sent round as well. So, everyone still knows the opinion of everyone else on the book for that month, except it is visual and not with us sitting together in a lounge and voicing our opinions, in turn with our Talking Bear (whilst you have him it's your turn to talk) interruptions occasionally allowed!

Motivation to do housework has gone a bit AWOL, but the basics are being maintained under protest by a few of us. One of our logos is the lady reading in the teacup which is about how it is now for the time being! Hoping that everyone keeps safe and well and we get our 'get out of jail' cards soon.

Brenda Daniel – Leader: Readers' Circle 2;

Deputy Leader: Libby Rose



SPANISH CONVERSATION GROUP

In mid-March I came back from a ski holiday to find the UK in turmoil. I couldn't make any sense of what was happening, so I cancelled our scheduled fortnightly Spanish session, just to be safe, and to give me time to work it all out.

Then I spent ten days with "flu-like symptoms", so I felt rather glad that I'd cancelled. By the end of the month I felt better and set up a Zoom meeting for the Spanish group. It worked, sort of, and we decided to do it on a weekly basis.

It was so nice to see everyone's smiling faces, and hear what was happening in their neck of the lockdown. So I now find myself spending quite a lot of time preparing the sessions. And enjoying it.

As we are meeting every week, we have pushed up the standard a bit, and are now doing A level work. I attach a screen shot of one of our meetings.

Keep safe! Mantengan-se a salvo!

Sheila Page



PS I had arranged a long weekend in San Sebastian (now known as Donostia) in the Basque country—thirteen of us (some members of the group were bringing their husbands) were due to be bound for Bilbao on easyJet from Stansted on 1st May. Obviously our flight was cancelled so we decided to postpone our visit until 2021

AVU3A STRUMMERS

While we have been unable to meet up with our Strummers, Sandra and I have been recording songs and sending them to our members so that they can play and sing along with them. If anyone else in the group wishes to sing along with them, they can be found under Aylesbury U3A - Singalong. We have turned our dining room into a temporary recording studio (see pictures). Singing is a good way to beat the 'Lock-down Blues' and help to put a smile on your face. Looking forward to a time when we are all back together and can sing in harmony!??

Andy Carter



N H S Thank you

(Written for the Ukelele Group and put to the tune of Imagine)

Thanks to all the nurses,
With their caring compassionate hands.

Thanks to all the doctors
Right across the land.
Thanks to the NHS for helping us today.

Thanks to paramedics,
It's demanding doing what you do,
Putting patients before family,
We really are grateful to you
Thanks to the NHS for giving us some peace.

This seems like we're dreaming,
Only I'm not the only one.
Hope soon we'll be outside,
All together in the sun.

Let's remember how this is,
Wonder if you can,
No need for greed or hunger,
A brotherhood of man.
Imagine all the people enjoying all the World

You may say I'm a dreamer,
But I'm not the only one.
I hope someday we'll rejoin one another,
And the World will be as one.

Phill Rance

A new **QUIZ GROUP** has been formed and is recruiting members interested in meeting socially to answer a few quiz questions. In the present situation quizzes are available to everyone on our website under "Confined to Quarters" plus if you are a member of the group there are additional quizzes to help alleviate the cabin fever we are all currently suffering.

If you are interested in joining the group or have ideas you would like to contribute

Please contact **Mike McCabe** who is leading the group on **07770 597029** or **afc1.mike@gmail.com**.

Video calling in lock down (Thank goodness for the internet)

Both the Craft Group and Reading Circle 3 are carrying on their meetings via video link. This is an amazing way to keep in touch with group members.

The readers were discussing the book "Educated" by Tara Westover and, of course, how we were all coping with staying at home. Those involved today were, clockwise from top left, Jennifer Mann, Joy Neave, Ann Kibble, Linda Chapple & Heather Edwards. Heather Ellis was also on the link but did not appear in the screen shot.

We have regular coffee time video chats with friends and relatives. I have also been playing online games with my grandchildren. We have the game on one device and a video chat on another. We also screen share to help our 5 yr old grandson with his homework, maths and reading. We try to keep him focused while mummy works from home. On Mother's Day the whole family were online playing a hosted online Escape Room. We managed to escape with 1.5 minutes to spare!

As they say - keep talking.

Heather Edwards



Let's Talk French

The AVU3A French Group came into being when the first chairman, Eric Dorrance, asked my husband, Bill Skeggs, if he would start a French Group. Bill said he would give it a go if there was sufficient interest. Well, so many people wanted to join that we decided that we would split the group into those who had no knowledge of French and those who knew some. I took the beginners and Bill took those who had some knowledge. Bill gave up some time ago and we now are a group of between ten and twelve members.

Some grammar is covered but I usually provide a relevant subject so that something can be prepared in advance to talk about. Appropriate films are viewed and much enjoyed with or without sub-titles. We also have a quiz from time to time on all things French.

During "lockdown" I am keeping in touch with my members by 'phone - it is nice to have a good natter. If you are interested in joining us please contact me at pmsk@icloud.com. When we resume meetings it will be fortnightly on a Friday at 2.15pm. Considering the group has been running since the U3A started, something must be going right!

Pat Skeggs

CRAFT GROUP 3

Scrubs Bags for NHS

Members of the Craft Group have been sewing scrubs bags for Stoke Mandeville Hospital. These drawstring bags are around 75 x 50 cm and will hold a set of dirty scrubs. The idea is that staff put their dirty scrubs into the bag to take home. The bag and contents go into the washing machine at 60 degrees. This keeps the scrubs away from everything else in the home until they are clean.

Old cotton/poly cotton sheets are closely woven so are perfect for “recycling”.



TRUSTED TRADERS is a service provided by our U3A members, to other members, aimed at passing on the names of tradespeople who have given a good service and who they are happy to recommend to others.

I am the person to contact when you may need, for example, a plumber, electrician, gardener or handyman. Neither I nor the U3A give a guarantee of good work so feedback to me, good or bad, is important so that I can keep the list up to date as change may occur over time.

New recommendations are always welcome. Gardeners and joiners are currently in short supply!

I can be contacted by email at junethomson@sky.com

BUS PASSES

If you need to renew your bus pass see the following contact information:

TN: 01296 674747

Email: buspasses@buckscc.gov.uk



Donations to the U3A:

Riviera Travel will make a donation to the U3A equivalent to 10% of the cost of your trip if you mention that you are a U3A member when booking with them. The donation is made upon arrival back in the country following your trip. However the donation will be sent to U3A Headquarters, who then take a fee before sending AVU3A

Spot the Cliche (Can you count them?)

Peter Ashton provided this for your Entertainment/Education?

Ramping Up The Cliches (I Usually Avoid Them Like The Plague)

At the end of the day, we are all in it together, trying to navigate the uncharted territory towards an uncertain future. The light at the end of the tunnel is not even on the horizon so we'll just have to take on board that we are in it for the long haul and take each day as it comes. This crisis came out of left field but I'm sure we'll all do whatever it takes to remain as fit as a fiddle as we pass through the calm before the storm, but every cloud has a silver lining and we'll be over the moon when we hear the final whistle. Some say the writing's on the wall but, right now, staying in is the new going out so, by complying with the rules, our salvation could well be in our hands.

The powers that be seem to have been taking part in a different ballgame at the advent of the crisis, didn't heed the wake-up call and failed to step up to the plate. Some blue sky thinking might lead to solutions which, without further dither and delay, could enable those in the front line to continue to make a difference. At the moment, they're not getting it done!

PUZZLES (answers in next issue)

A. Where in the UK is this famous bridge?

B. When the Smiths got married 18 years ago, he was 3 times the age of his wife. Now he is just twice her current age. How old was Mrs Smith on her wedding day?



ANSWERS to last puzzle

1. Nether Winchendon

2. 42

Last date for copy for the Autumn 2020 Newsletter will be 14th August 2020 so please send any items you may like to share with us to newsletter@avu3a.org.uk. Thanks as always to all of you who contribute to our newsletter. Please continue to send in news of your activities within the U3A and for any other items which you feel might interest our readers. Our very productive photographers are reminded that under the new Privacy Laws, members featuring in the very welcome photographs submitted for publication should have given permission for their image to be so used. If you do not want your photo reproduced please make that clear! Our thanks go to Derek Ayshford for his ongoing support! Don't forget to look at our website **avu3a.org.uk** where you will find up-to-date news and details of all our activities.