

AYLESBURY VALE U3A



Issue No. 97

Autumn 2020

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Hello Folks,

I hope you are all fit and well and enjoying the decent weather although, I must say when it was in the 90s, I found it hard to cope with as I expect you did. It seems everyone is complaining about something be it about wearing masks for shopping, people not distancing, having holidays cancelled or no work. And I am one of them but, boy, am I glad to be alive! We are fortunate to be in an area which has a low infection rate – well, it is at the moment! Still, we must make sure that we follow the guidance ie: washing hands regularly, not touching the face, and keeping away from others.

Well the garden looks good, the decorating is done (not that we did any but you have to keep moving furniture, etc). My son said the tyres on my car are perishing because I am not using it enough - it is just sitting on the drive until I go shopping once a week. It's a thought though so I suggest you have a look at your tyres, not the one round your middle, but the car! Well some people have put on a lot of weight while under lockdown.

I was very sad to hear of the passing of both Roland Scroggs and Tom Day and they will be very much missed by us all. Both had committed a lot of their time to the running of our U3A and were popular members. You can read more about them in this newsletter.

I would also like to commend our Group Leaders who are working so hard to keep their groups running either virtually or by telephone or by getting together ensuring social distancing is observed.

I am pleased to tell you that we did not have to pay £350 for the copyright photograph after all After consulting the photographer he agreed to close the case and not charge us as we are a charity.

As usual we are closed for August, yes I know we have been closed since March, so let's hope there might be some light at the end of the tunnel in September. I should say that your Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis using Zoom.

I have been told that the newsletter team have received lots of articles for this issue which is marvellous. Thank you all very much for your contributions. I am really looking forward to seeing what everyone has been up to.

Take care of yourselves and I hope to see you all soon.

Sheila Satterthwaite

(Sheffield Park in the Autumn taken by Richard Clark)

MEMBERSHIP

I am pleased to announce that at the time of going to press well over 400 of our current members have renewed their membership for the forthcoming financial year. Many of you renewed using bank transfer for the first time and discovered how easy it can be and many chose to complete the form and return it online. The process was mainly completed over two months which allowed me to spread the load. Thanks for that.

This emphasises the commitment to Aylesbury Vale U3A of the vast majority of members even though we are unable to promise a return to the social activities that we were accustomed to in the past. As you will know some groups have devised ways to keep in touch with their members through virtual media such as Zoom, or through posting music presentations online. It just goes to show that we have not lost those innovative skills we used to get paid for.

We welcome two new members: ***Yvonne Gibson and Teri Davis.***

Well done all of you. Keep safe and I look forward to the resumption of all our groups and, of course, the monthly meeting.

Ken Roberson

A CAUTIONARY TALE

Recently our Chairman received a letter filled with legal threats demanding hundreds of pounds because we had accidentally used a photograph on the website that was copyright. The whole issue of copyright is a very complex one, but concentrating on photographs, a photograph is automatically the copyright of the photographer for his/her life plus 70 years unless he/she gives up their copyright and places it in the public domain. So we all own the copyright to any pictures we have taken, but it is unlikely that we are going to chase after anyone who might use them. On the other hand professional photographers use companies that scour the internet, printed publications etc looking for their work being used without their consent/fee. It was one such company that found the photograph in question and demanded the fee for the photographer (half of which they would keep!). Fortunately, an appeal to the photographer led to the fee being waived but it was a worrying time.

So how does it affect you? Many of you have social media accounts and may from time to time see a picture on the web in one of the many photo sharing websites like Google Pictures, Flickr etc and think that would liven up my post but beware, unless it specifically states it is in the public domain, you may well be infringing somebody's copyright and it is just possible it will be picked up by one of the 'bounty hunting' companies.

This is a very much simplified picture because there are slightly different rules for photographs of different ages and Public Domain is complicated by 'Creative Commons' or CC ratings.

The moral of this story is that to stay safe only use photographs you have taken yourself unless you get specific permission from the photographer. Thank you to all of you who have allowed us to share your photos on our website.

The whole issue of copyright in music is another can of worms – perhaps more of that next time?

Derek Ayshford

U3A ROCK'N'ROLL CHRISTMAS PARTY 2020



The September newsletter is usually when I announce and advertise the Christmas Rock'n'Roll Party. I have spoken with our U3A committee and looked at current government guidelines for social distancing, and have decided not to hold the Christmas party this year. The situation is so unstable at the moment with things not returning to normal as quickly as we would have expected.

The decision is taken partly on the ability to sell tickets to members in time if it were to go ahead, and the expectation that not everyone would be happy to attend in the present climate.

Just to remind you that anyone who purchased tickets for the Mid-Summer party in June, should keep hold of the tickets, I can either exchange them for summer 2021 tickets; or give you a full cash refund when I'm next able to see you all.

Meanwhile I hope you are staying safe. I look forward to meeting up with you in the near future.

Kind regards
John Wilford
sound@avu3a.org.uk

"For those of my generation who do not, and, cannot comprehend why Facebook exists.

I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles. Therefore every day I walk down the street and tell passers-by what I have eaten, how I feel at the moment, what I have done the night before, what I will do later and with whom. I give them pictures of my family, my dog and me gardening, taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having lunch, and doing what anybody does every day.

I also listen to their conversations, give them a "thumbs-up" and tell them I "like" them.

And it works just like Facebook. I already have 4 people following me, a police officer, a mental care worker, a private investigator and a psychiatrist."

From Derek Ayshford

VE DAY

Celebrations were planned for 8th May to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe, some of which would have been military events, but they had to be cancelled due to Covid-19. As a member and current standard bearer of the Royal Naval Association (RNA) Aylesbury No1 Branch I thought, as we were in isolation, it would be fitting to parade the standard outside my bungalow in Broughton at the 11th hour on VE day. I therefore sought the permission of the Branch Chairman and also advised those living in my neighbourhood. I also informed the RNA Association HQ in Portsmouth who thought what I was doing was such a good idea, that they wrote to all Branch Secretaries informing them that I invited all other Standard Bearers in the RNA and other veterans organisations to join me in a “virtual parade”. (Copy of the letter can be seen on AVU3A website “Confined to Quarters”).

So that is what happened. On 8th May 2020 at 11.00 am I paraded the standard on my front lawn while Sheila read out the words of remembrance, and the two minutes’ silence was observed. Many residents turned out (keeping to social distancing of course) and I offered them a small libation of naval rum to toast the Queen. I believe I achieved what I set out to do – not only to honour those heroes of WWII but also to remember those who have succumbed to Coronavirus.

Ken Satterthwaite



VE DAY cont

This is how we decorated our window

Bronwen and Brian Saunders



These scarecrows were made by the people of Ludgershall to be placed where everyone could see them on VE Day. They even included Capt Tom (now Sir) and Winston Churchill.
Chris Rosentall



Linden End Residents celebrating VE Day

Photo taken by Richard Clark



At the last U3A meeting in February, there was talk about some new regulations concerning the renewal of bus passes. As mine was due to expire in a month's time, on returning home and mentioning to my wife, she kindly rang this number 0845 521 2521 on my behalf, and I received the new pass within 10 days. I have not used the pass since because of the virus,

Heshmat Georgy

It Was Meant To Be – (A true story)

In December 1968, due to my Dad's enforced job relocation, after living since 1940 in Ashby, a tiny village in Lincolnshire, my Mum and Dad moved up to Totley Rise, a pretty suburb on the outskirts of Sheffield. This was a huge life change for my Mum especially, as all her friends lived in and around the village. She was broken hearted to leave her beloved village. However, her new neighbours in Totley Rise were extremely welcoming, friendly Yorkshire folk and she and my Dad gradually adapted to their new way of life. Mum's new friends included the lady in the house directly opposite her – a lady by the name of Brenda Hague who had two children, Jill and Rodney. Mum and Brenda remained firm friends for many years until Brenda eventually moved away.

Fast forward 40 years to 2008. I retired that year and looked around for ways to fill my new leisure time. I contacted Age UK and enquired about becoming a Befriender. This entailed being introduced to a local senior citizen and visiting them at home for a cuppa and a chat. After being vetted and cleared as a volunteer, I was invited to go with a representative from Age UK to meet a Yorkshire lady named Marjorie Davis who, like me, now lived on Bedgrove, to see how/if we would get on with each other – a really important aspect of the Befriending Scheme. I duly reported for duty at Marjorie's house and we knocked on the door. We were introduced to each other – "Marjorie's" first words stating firmly that was her name but she liked to be known as "Eileen".

Within minutes, we'd "clicked" and found a mutual love of chat!! The Age UK lady departed, feeling rather left out I think, having satisfied herself that we would be quite OK with each other. I asked Eileen where she'd come from originally before settling in Aylesbury and she told me that she'd moved around England in the early days after marrying her beloved husband, Denis. She had two daughters Hazel and Beryl. I mentioned that I'd lived briefly in Yorkshire too - Sheffield - with my Mum and Dad in 1969 whilst my husband was serving in the Persian Gulf for a year. Imagine our disbelief when I said it was Totley Rise and Eileen said she too had lived in Totley Rise. She reminisced about being a young mum in the 1950s and going down to the local chapel hall where mums took their children to be weighed in those days. She said she went with her friend Brenda and Brenda's two children Jill and Rodney. "Not Brenda Hague?" I asked her – "yes" she said – "it was!". We could hardly believe it when we realised that her friend in the 1950s was the same Brenda as my mum knew in the late 1960s. Eileen had moved away from Totley Rise by that time.

I continued to go and visit Eileen regularly and the coincidences just kept coming – she had a lot of family photographs displayed on her dresser. I looked at the picture of her grandchildren and said "but that's Malcolm Burgess" – Malcolm was a lad who used to be best friends with my son Mark when they were teenagers. "Yes", said Eileen – "Malcolm is my grandson - Hazel's son". It soon clicked – "Hazel" was in fact Hazel Burgess – a friend of mine now and who, as a lot of people reading this will know, is a member of our U3A – we belonged to the same Creative Writing and Wine groups. Eileen and I talked in depth about our U3A and I discovered that she was in fact a founder member of AVU3A – some of our older members may still remember her – and a founder of the Poetry Group of which I am now a leader. I mentioned that my grandson Luke went to Bedgrove Infant and Eileen said her great grandson Jacob went there too and guess what? – we discovered that the two boys were in the same class.

Cont overleaf.....

Eileen has now departed this life and I miss her very much. We would regularly put the world to rights – she was a very lively, typical Yorkshire woman – with very high standards and she most certainly didn't suffer fools gladly. Hazel kindly invited me to Eileen's funeral and we both enjoyed some black humour when the official said that Eileen had been a Lancashire woman – we could imagine Eileen putting him right in no uncertain terms! Ever her Mum's daughter, Hazel announced in a loud voice – she was born in YORKSHIRE. Eileen, looking down, would have been very proud of her! Happy Days and definitely meant to be.

Jenny Corton

I recently received an email from Sheila Page, a member of our Creative Writing Group, passing on some information from Peter Ashton. On one of his London walks Peter had noticed details of a short story competition on Canary Wharf. The competition was seeking stories about Life in Lockdown to include in their short story dispensers on Canary Wharf. The top ten stories would be made available for printing later in the year.

I had been doing quite a lot of writing to while away all those extra free hours we have, so I decided to have a go. Having looked at the website I found the quality of other stories, and the calibre of the authors, rather daunting but it was free to enter, and I had a story, so I felt I had nothing to lose.

My story was duly emailed and I hoped I hadn't let myself down. Entries were to be judged by Time Out.

Shortly after the closing date I received an email to tell me that I was in the top 10. So, my story will be in print if passers-by choose to print it off! At this stage, the exact timing is unknown as the machines have been 'quarantined' until they can find a contactless way to print the stories. Once reinstalled, there will be a launch week when only these ten winning stories will be available. Now I see a trip to London coming up (complete with mask). If you are passing during that week you may decide to have a read!

It was so nice to have positive news during these stressful times. Thank you to fellow AVU3A members for drawing my attention to this opportunity.

Hazel Burgess

The winning stories are now online and can be accessed at <https://canarywharf.short-edition.com/>

We were all **HOME SCHOOLED'** whether we realised it at the time or not most of us over 65 were Home Schooled in many ways...

My mother taught me TO APPRECIATE A JOB WELL DONE. "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I've just finished cleaning."

My mother taught me RELIGION. "You better pray that will come out of the carpet."

My father taught me about TIME TRAVEL "If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!"

My father taught me LOGIC "Because I said so, that's why"

My mother taught me MORE LOGIC "If you fall out of that swing and break your neck, you're not going to the shops with me."

My mother taught me FORESIGHT "Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."

My father taught me IRONY "Keep crying and I'll give you something to cry about."

My mother taught me about the science of OSMOSIS "Shut your mouth and eat your supper."

My mother taught me about CONTORTIONISM "Just you look at that dirt on the back of your neck!"

My mother taught me about STAMINA "You'll sit there until all that spinach is gone."

My mother taught me about WEATHER "This room of yours looks as if a tornado went through it."

My mother taught me about HYPOCRISY "If I told you once, I've told you a million times, don't exaggerate!"

My father taught me the CIRCLE OF LIFE "I brought you into this world, and I can take you out."

My mother taught me about BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION "Stop acting like your father!"

My mother taught me about ENVY "There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like you do."

My mother taught me about ANTICIPATION "Just wait until we get home."

My mother taught me about RECEIVING "You are going to get it from your father when he gets home!"

My mother taught me MEDICAL SCIENCE "If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they are going to get stuck that way."

My mother taught me ESP "Put your sweater on; don't you think I know when you are cold?"

My father taught me HUMOUR "When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me."

My mother taught me HOW TO BECOME AN ADULT "If you don't eat your vegetables, you'll never grow up."

My mother taught me GENETICS "You're just like your father."

My mother taught me about my ROOTS "Shut that door behind you. Do you think you were born in a barn?"

My mother taught me WISDOM "When you get to be my age, you'll understand."

My father taught me about JUSTICE "One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you!"

This should be sent only to the "over-60" crowd because the younger ones would not believe we truly were told these "EXACT" words by our parents.

Pat Baker

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

CRAFT GROUP

Jackie Rickard from the Craft Group has knitted all these hats for premature babies. They are currently at the Neo Natal Ward at Coventry Hospital where they are being purchased for a voluntary donation.



My lockdown became a busy hub of activity, apart from early morning walks (which I confess never did beforehand), our Sound of the Fifties70s group was kept very much alive. Thanks to contributors we managed to deliver and still maintain a monthly dose of presentations for our membership. To enable this all presentations needed to be uploaded onto YouTube and apart from being long winded there is always the frustrating disadvantage of copyright issues over music rights which requires a lot of additional work to find alternative songs, and then have to reload all over again! I have also managed to publish a weekly newsletter with little known facts on artists and music. All of the above would have been unachievable without aid and assistance from Derek Ayshford, John Wilford, Richard Clark and Brian Little who I thank.

On a personal level, anyone who knows me is aware of my love for music, so upon retirement I decided to design and make a top quality Hi Fi turntable and pick-up arm. Being an ex-engineer did help somewhat in accomplishing my whim. One of the first things I purchased after retirement was a small engineering workshop which I installed in my garage. I had already spent the winter designing the concept, something a bit more unusual than most people's idea of a "record player". The weather was glorious I had nowhere to go so I just got stuck in with some days fulfilling a full working day. Towards the end of lockdown my project was almost complete apart from final surface finishing to the manufactured parts. See below pictures of the finished results.

Phil Davies
Group Leader for Fifties70s



AVU3A CAMPING TRIP JULY 2020

The forecast was hot and sunny so with great trepidation and excitement we headed off for the village of Moreton in Dorset. We consisted of five members, two campervans, one mini caravan and one tent. Three girls and two boys made up our number and what a jolly bunch we were! The new experience of towing our Go-Pod caravan created some tension which dissolved on reaching our spotless well-planned campsite, and we all relaxed into the week, and started to plan our activities.

Our first visit to the tiny village revealed wonderful walled gardens which were a tribute to Lawrence of Arabia who had ended his days there, living under an alias. We enjoyed the magnificent trees and fountains amidst the meandering pathways leading to ponds, flowerbeds and statues which were all maintained by a charity which helps people get work experience and employment. It was so calming and beautiful I could have stayed there all week, especially when we found the cafe open for cream teas, and a sun terrace on which to relax. The local church adjoining the gardens had a memorial to Lawrence of Arabia whose funeral took place there. The windows were etched by the artist Whistler with modern designs in memory of his life.

Our visit to Durlston Country Park the following day reminded us of a trip there in our earlier camping days, with Ron and Rosemary Meadowcroft, when we had photos taken of the huge concrete globe. Sheila Page was convinced that the castle there was in the Portuguese style but couldn't find anyone to confirm why that would be. We enjoyed a prolonged coffee break in the cafe terrace overlooking Bournemouth and the Isle of Wight gazing at a becalmed sea in the sunshine. A visit to a local plant nursery surprisingly revealed a hidden Clock Museum and Jose Fontoura was very excited by all the mechanisms. Every man to their own!

The campsite itself was just behind a railway crossing, so every half an hour we would hear the train toot and then the beep beep of the traffic lights, warning of the oncoming train... fortunately stopping at 10 pm!

During the evening we would enjoy a chat and drinks, and the occasional ukulele jam, while some preferred sharing a quiz or crossword. One cloudy afternoon we all headed over a firing range to Kimmeridge Bay, famous for slippery rock pools and fossils. So determined were we to get our toes in the sea that nothing would stop us now, neither treacherous rocks nor slimy seaweed!

On our last day Greig and I drove to Sherborne Castle to meet up with our dear old U3A friend Clare Hawes. How I miss her, and how lovely to spend a few happy hours wandering the grounds and catching up after lockdown. The castle and grounds were of course beautiful and we imagined Sir Walter Raleigh planning his travels while smoking his first cigarette on the parapet! However, the time we spent with Clare and the rest of the group was the icing on the cake of a very interesting and restorative few days away from home.

Lynne Dawson



Greg happy to arrive at Moreton site



Jo with his tent poles



Great for social distance!
Sheila Page, Lynne, Penny Young
(Haddenham U3A and member of the Ukelele Group)

LOCAL WALKS

The first local walk after Covid lock down was led by Heather and Steve Edwards, which took place on Tuesday 30th June . A request to U3A head office to resume local walks was approved, provided strict Covid -19 rules were adhered to and risk assessments by the walk leaders and participants undertaken. A maximum of six people in any one group was one of the conditions. Nine walkers attended. We therefore split into two groups of five ladies and four men. One group walking the route clockwise and the other anti-clockwise. The walk was through the Ashridge Estate, taking in Little Gaddesden, Hudnall Common and Happy Valley. We all enjoyed pleasant views and each others company, the weather was kind too. As pubs are closed we were unable to enjoy our normal post walk pub lunch. However, we drove to Ivinghoe Beacon and had a well deserved picnic lunch, enjoying the views and each others company after being locked away for such a long time.

Roger Fox



LOCAL WALKS

Ten members of the Local Walks group met at Wiggington playing fields. We split into 2 groups of five and took different routes into Tring Park. It was a beautiful morning and we had a very good view across Aylesbury Vale. We could see the houses at both Mentmore and Waddesden. We enjoyed a picnic on the field before heading home.

Heather Edwards



Picture shows: Diana Lewis, Roger Fox, Roger Walker and Jennifer Mann.



Photo taken by Mary Singleton showing Judy Eeles, Steve Edwards, Sandra Walker, Jill Gigg

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP 2

Lockdown seems to have improved our creativity. This may be because we have more time to savour each other's work and to consider our critique. We still have a common theme each month and discipline ourselves to submit our work on the Monday morning when we would have met. Initially I was disappointed that we did not manage to set up 'Zoom' meetings but this may have served only to keep an old format going. Now we send our work by email to all members in the group and individuals are free to comment at their leisure. We have realised it is a great advantage to be able to read the stories more than once and it inspires more insightful and constructive comments.

It has been such a pleasure to receive half a dozen imaginative scripts at the start of every month and to get feedback on my own work too.

When we get together again, one day soon I sincerely hope, it has been suggested that we send our pieces in advance of the meeting. This will give us the opportunity to absorb the writing in advance and we will also have the added delight of listening to each other read aloud. This is the part I miss the most along with the social interaction that the face to face meetings afford.

I hope that members have read some of our group's work in "Confined to Quarters" on the website. We have had a piece of extremely exciting news this week too. Hazel Burgess, one of our writers from Creative Writing Group One, had her short story, "The Last Resort" which was written in lockdown, chosen for the Canary Wharf short story stations. Her work was selected along with nine others as winners in this recent competition. As Hazel mentions in her article the stations are closed at the moment but eventually the stories will be available to download and read if you are in the area.

Congratulations, Hazel. We are so proud of you.

Long may our group continue!

Bobby Cadwallader

FEAR

*It is said that before entering the sea
A river trembles with fear.
She looks back at the path she has
travelled*

*From the peaks of the mountains,
The long winding road crossing forests
and villages.*

*And in front of her she sees an ocean so
vast
That to enter there seems nothing more
than to disappear forever.*

*But there is no other way.
The river cannot go back, to go back is
impossible in existence,*

*The river needs to take the risk of entering
the ocean
Because only then will fear disappear
Because that's when the river will know
It's not about disappearing into the ocean*

But of becoming the ocean.

Khalil Gibran

I CAN'T MOVE THE CAT

I can't move the cat.

He's asleep on my bed
Spread out like a rug
And when you say 'off'
He just gives a shrug
And curls himself into
A decadent pose
Ignores me completely
And twitches his nose.

Will you move the cat?

I'll move the cat
No trouble at all
Oh! Look at him now
Curled up in a ball.
He's sleeping so deeply
Fur shines in the sun
I can't move the cat
What is to be done?

Will Mark move the cat?

I'll move the cat
He shouldn't be there
The sheets on the bed
Will be covered in hair.
But.....

His eyes so appealing
Face resting on paws
He's taken possession
We haven't a cause.
So.....

We can't move the cat
And that's that!

Judy Lund

SOUNDS OF THE SIXTIES

Members of the Sounds of the Sixties have enjoyed some good presentations which have been put together mainly with the technical help of John Wilford. Many members contributed to a SOTS Top Ten.

On a personal note I have found the technical aspects too much of a challenge. In view of this I have decided to stand down as Group Leader. Phil Davies has kindly taken on the role.

Phillip Rance

THE POETRY GROUP DID THE POETRY GROUP INFLUENCE THE ROYAL WEDDING?

Members of our Poetry Group 2 were interested to read that one of the readings at the wedding of Princess Beatrice was a poem by E E Cummings. Several of his poems have been read at group meetings and, for at least one of the members, he is one of her favourite poets. E E (Edward Estlin) Cummings is associated with modernist free-form poetry. He didn't give his poems titles.

Much of his work has idiosyncratic syntax and uses lower case spellings. (Apologies to the editor but we are writing it as he wrote it and at the same time fighting a battle with the computer which wants it done grammatically). In other words, lines can be of different lengths and words don't always appear in the order in which we expect them. I think he is a poet whose work you just have to read aloud without worrying about the meaning, and it all makes perfect sense! He is often controversial. The one chosen for that wedding is one of the simpler ones.

*I carry your heart with me (I carry it in
my heart) I am never without it (anywhere
I go you go, my dear; and whatever is done
by only me is your doing. my darling)*

*I fear
no fate (for you are my fate, my sweet) I want
no world (for beautiful you are my world, my true)
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant
and whatever a sun will always sing is you*

*here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life: which grows
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart*

I carry your heart (I carry it in my heart)

Shirley Stokes

BUCKS DIALECT

This is how we used to talk around here. I come from Whitchurch and still talk like this at home.

Clar holt = grab. "Clar 'olt o' this."

Clarin' abayt = rushing around.

"You sin 'im? Yeah, 'e were clarin' abayt 'ere th'other day."

Aggled = to be annoyed or harassed or frustrated.

"Gord, she did aggle me." "I worn't 'alf aggled."

Waunt = want or was not. "Ah, she dint waunt that." "No, 'e waunt like that."

Daunt = doesn't want. "'e daunt waunt it."

Coont and woont = couldn't and wouldn't.

Gin = gave. "'e gin us a cup o' tea."

Hern = hers. "No, it waunt mine. It were hern."

Yourn = yours. Theirn = theirs.

Maunt or Mahn't = mustn't. "You mahn't do that."

Us = we. "Yeah, us'll do that for yer."

Dropped W. "Ah, that I 'ould!" "Ah, that I 'ull (will)"

"I shull say as the gal said when she 'ad 'er chap raynd to tea fer the fust toim,"

Chap or no chap, saucer me tea i ull, fer burn me chops I oont."

On = of. "'e were the same as the rest on 'em."

Backurds = backwards. Forruds = forwards.

Daynuds = downwards. Uppards = upwards.

Cayncil 'ayse = Council house.

Cay = cow.

Ron Adams

JAMAICAN MUSIC

Back in the mid-60's I heard a record titled OO7 (Shanty Town) by Desmond Dekker and from then on I have been hooked on Jamaican music. I started up a Jamaican music society and ran it until the mid-70's as an independent society funded mostly out of my own pocket. Due to rising costs I had to close the society and currently am involved in Jamaican music doing reviews for a UK record company which I really enjoy and hopefully will continue doing for years to come.

Eric Denham

LOCKDOWN 2020

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

What have we all been doing sat at home reliant on others to do our shopping? Although we could take exercise for one hour each day albeit alone and keeping a safe distance from any chance encounters!

One must look for the positives. How lucky we are nowadays with modern technology, warm homes and enough to eat. The weekly clap in support of our key workers became the highlight of my week and a chance to get to know my neighbours better. The wonderful weather helped and we had a VE street party with each of us taking our own cake but sharing the bottles that also came out. Spotify provided non-stop music of the wartime songs making us the focus of our road with folk coming by to chat awhile. I have learnt to Zoom and weekly meetings with children and grandchildren all taking part quickly became another big event. Lots of phone calls with friends and other relatives when we all had time to talk took up a great deal of time. When we had a little time left drawers were tidied and the piles for charity shops and recycling grew and grew.

Now as rules begin to ease we can take pleasure and appreciate what really matters. Yes, we have had holidays cancelled, not been able to attend our usual activities but now we can meet our families in small groups and visit friends individually in the garden where possible. Most importantly we have hope - things are getting better, we will be able to meet again and resume our normal lives, plan ahead and, yes, we will appreciate them even more. I hope we all come out of this pandemic changed for the better, live our lives at a slower pace with more time for others, the people we know and love and those less fortunate but also realising that material things are far less important than we had somehow thought in the past.

Mary Rogers



Photos provided by Richard Clark

WORDSWORTH IN LOCKDOWN

I wandered lonely as a cloud,
Two metres from the madding crowd,
When all at once my name was called
To enter Waitrose hallowed hall.

This was the pensioner's special hour
I'd gone to get a bag of flour,
But I forgot, when through the door,
What I had gone to Waitrose for.

The Waitrose staff are extra kind
I told them it had slipped my mind,
They ask what else I had forgot
They clearly thought I'd lost the plot.

I phoned my wife again to ask
She reminded me of this special task
"I need some flour to bake a cake
With all that cream you made me take!"

"Ah yes, I recall" I had to lie,
I dared not ask what flower to buy,
But then I saw them at the tills
A bunch of golden daffodils.

(Sent in by Shirley Stokes)

ADVENTURES IN LOCKDOWN UKRAINE

I flew to Ukraine in January 2020. I had visited many times before, usually staying a month or two while I worked at a charity or for the local language school but this year I was here during lockdown. I had a busy life in Ukraine and I knew an increasing number of people in the city of Dnipro (formerly Dnepropetrovsk), a mainly Russian speaking city of a million people.

In Ukraine a partial lockdown began in late March. Shops, restaurants and businesses closed; only a few shops remained opened including chemists, 'phone shops and, of course, food shops. Almost all urban public transport stopped. My street, usually busy with many people buying their products and essentials for living from the many little shops, kiosks and street traders, was almost empty. Gone too were the lines of buses and marshrutkas (mini-buses) waiting to take people to every part of the city. It was almost like a post-nuclear holocaust had swept across Dnipro and the rest of the world. People stayed at home fearful of this deadly new disease.

This situation continued throughout April and early May after which some restrictions were lifted although I was dependent upon friends updating me and I wasn't always aware of what was happening. Soon after, a few buses appeared but initially, until early June, you needed a special pass to enable you to travel on them.

In July I was invited to a barbecue in a town nearly 200 miles from Dnipro. I had done some online work for a language school there and they had kindly invited me to their end of term summer barbecue. It's a long way to go for a barbecue - the equivalent of London to Torquay - but having spent almost three months confined to the few streets around my neighbourhood, I didn't need asking twice.

Everyone on the long bus journey had masks but no one actually wore them, including the driver. Every time the bus approached a police checkpoint the driver would turn his head and shout at the passengers: "Masks on!" Having driven sedately past the checkpoint the driver would immediately discard his mask as would the passengers.

Returning to my Soviet-built apartment block after the weekend, another little adventure awaited me. I stepped inside the tiny, decrepit lift and pressed the button. The doors closed and the light went out. Darkness. Silence. The lift had stopped working. I used my phone for light and started pressing the lift buttons. Nothing happened. On the wall of the lift there is a red button next to a speaker. I had always naively thought that if I pressed it someone would speak to me and help would be on its way. Maybe this was the case in Soviet times but not now. I phoned a friend who lived nearby. No reply. I didn't panic. I knew these things happened in Ukraine and I had already mentally prepared myself - I knew if I stayed long enough in Ukraine sooner or later I would get stuck in a lift. Fortunately I wasn't there for long. I heard footsteps on the concrete steps outside and I banged on the doors and shouted. A lady pressed a button on the outside, the light flickered into life and the doors miraculously opened. I gratefully stepped out and walked up the 130 steps to my 7th floor flat.

Some restrictions continue in Ukraine especially in western Ukraine where there are more cases of Coronavirus but Ukraine has not stopped living or travelling, it has merely paused for breath, assessed the risks and said, let's do it anyway.

Alan Taylor



SURVIVING LOCKDOWN

It's time again! On goes the computer to search for the elusive shopping slot.

Little did I know how I would have to persevere to maintain my lifestyle during lockdown. Every day I wonder how I would have managed without access to the internet. My stamina has been challenged by the fear of venturing out to queue, a shortage of my kitchen staples and the closure of favourite haunts, including the library and hairdressers.

So what have I discovered?

Did I really need two large cauliflowers, an extra-large pot of cream, a very small tub of margarine, frozen spinach when the freezer was bursting at the seams? No, I was clicking too enthusiastically or just looking at the pictures without assimilating the size or type. I was not checking. It was so much easier looking at a real life shelf and shopping online is very time consuming with no exercise. Why did I receive just one carefully wrapped and labelled carrot? I had forgotten to choose weight instead of number! Why did the pickers always choose giant size produce? Hoping for several small parsnips I would just receive one ginormous vegetable more suited to the show table at a village fete. That was the week everything picked was very large – huge strawberries, mushrooms, when just one did a meal for two. Of course, sometimes vegetables were very small – an aubergine, intended for a moussaka, arrived the size of a small pear!

So I have learnt to click carefully, and use the notes box to be more explicit about size. Also be very selective about agreeing to substitutes, although sometimes you get a luxury bargain at no additional cost. Stick at it – supermarket slots materialise eventually.

Shop locally and buy British.

Creative farm shops buy very large sacks of flour and bag them up into normal sizes for domestic use. Pubs have branched out to offer fresh vegetables, meat and baking ingredients. The quality is superb and some will deliver.

There are independent flour mills across the UK. At first it was sheer perseverance which achieved a slot but the whole grain flour arrived promptly and made delicious bread. Shopping online for flour is now back to normal and I will continue to do so. For smaller quantities a few like-minded souls could band together and share an order.

I prefer a 'proper book' as I spend so much time staring at a screen. The library now does Click and Collect, and they choose books for you in your preferred genre. The librarian who gave me a thumbs up through the glass door had done a good job and I had only read one before. I smiled at him from behind my mask and hope it extended to my eyes.

The friendly DPD delivery man knows me by name and asks how my garden is growing! He brought boxes and boxes of bedding plants in various deliveries as the nursery just could not get it right. I had plenty of time to wait in the telephone queue and stuck at it. Now I have plants better than ever, and a refund too! I wouldn't buy plants online again though.

Most of all I learnt that we all appreciate a smile, a friendly face, a thank you and a 'take care, keep safe'. I hope we don't forget that. On Zoom you can see the smiles too, even your own. That's another story

Hazel Burgess

THE PLEASURE OF WORKING AN ALLOTMENT

Gardening has a positive impact on mental health. So how about considering having an allotment? It can be a lot of hard work but the benefits include keeping fit and healthy - a lot cheaper than going to the gym. Your reward is lots of fresh vegetables and fruit at a fraction of the cost you pay in supermarkets, pleasant companionship with fellow plot holders and plenty of fresh air. It is also very peaceful and a place where you can “switch off”.

It seems that having an allotment has become more popular since the arrival of “lockdown”. Many younger people have sought to have one, some with families with their children helping to maintain the plot. Some people have two plots and some have smaller sized plots. When taking over a plot that has not been maintained for a while, it will need to be dug over and some people rotivate although this method can turn up roots of nettles, dock, sorrel, etc which are more easily removed when digging. Teasels are also a nuisance which need to be taken out. Lots of people put in raised beds that are filled with soil and compost. Sometimes pallets are used. Various items can be made out of wood such as a bird house. Many people paint their sheds in a variety of colours and make patios and BBQ areas.

A huge variety of vegetables can be grown from potatoes, leeks, beans, onions, broccoli to different coloured beetroot and carrots, and different types of courgette. The list is endless. The same goes for fruit and some people grow flowers too. Homegrown tomatoes and asparagus cannot be beaten for taste!

Or you may prefer to make your allotment into an orchard with fruit trees eg: apple, damson, and bushes such as blackcurrant, red currant, gooseberry; the upkeep involves mowing the grass around the trees and pruning.

Some allotments get chippings supplied which are used to keep down weeds between the rows of produce. If you are lucky enough to have a stables nearby you may be able to get manure delivered.

As we all know, vegetables and fruit ripen at the same time but these can be frozen for use later on. Fruit can be juiced or made into jams and jellies, liqueurs, chutneys etc.

Look at the National Allotment Society website (www.nsalg.org.uk) to learn more about how to go about planning and starting an allotment. You can also learn about how your plot can attract a host of wildlife which benefits us all at www.naturalengland.org.

Sheena Hudson



Seedlings started on a windowsill in March



From this to



this in 6 weeks

TOM DAY: A MAN TO BE REMEMBERED

You may remember Tom as the reliable volunteer who always helped to set up the U3A meeting. But there was much more to his ability and personality than many people may realise. I first got to know Tom on a 'Local Walk' when we realised that we both liked maps. He was able to advise me on where to find old maps of the Aylesbury area. Tom took some time to explain to me the techniques required to find out about discovering a family history too, methods learnt by attending the 'Family History' group. As a result, we spent several hours in the Centre for Bucks Studies researching my ancestors and my wife's family too, so that in the end Tom knew more about our family history than I did!

Tom soon became my right-hand man for the 'Exploring London Walks' group. We developed a system to use various books and maps to plan our walks but Tom was always flexible enough to deviate from the planned route if we thought there was something interesting to be discovered. We worked well together, in each other's company and completed about thirty-four unique walks for the group to experience. This was in addition to the reces we undertook together by way of preparation. He was also the faithful 'backstop' on the London walks and the group knew they could always rely on him in any capacity. We never lost anyone with him to care for us.

Tom was a quiet and unassuming person but he was also friendly, empathetic, talented in various ways and completely reliable. As the group got to know him, they recognised that he was also talented artistically. His various watercolour paintings were a joy to see. Tom's artistic eye showed clearly in his appreciation of the architecture of some of London's buildings, sculptures, statues and stained-glass windows we discovered during our many walks.

This Spring Tom and I had planned to visit the Roman temple of Mithras in the City of London. We were to walk by the temple site on one of our planned 'Exploring London Walks' because we had become interested in things Roman. Tom had joined me in exploring the local countryside, looking for a particular Roman Road, that intrigued me. Tom was that sort of a guy - happy to help and a pleasure to be with.

I and the group appreciated Tom in every way. I don't think I shall ever meet someone quite like him again.

Peter Harding

Captions for photos:

Tom enjoying an ice cream in Battersea Park

Tom holding up a rock in Hyde Park



ROLAND SCROGGS RIP

Roland finally succumbed to the cancer that had beset him for the past 3 years. He and his wife Denise and family had done their best to fight this awful illness but it won.

Roland joined the U3A in 2016 and I first met Roland at the Sounds of the 60s music group which has a large membership compared to other U3A groups. We talked music and had many similar likes and dislikes and over time developed presentations for the group. He loved Eric Clapton, Cream and Fleetwood Mac but surprised us all by playing Mike Bloomfield blues album called Super Session as his favourite album.



When I was treasurer on the U3A committee we needed a House Manager for the Meadowcroft Centre and I asked Roland and he took the role on. Using his engineering background, he created some new policies as well as a Health and Safety manual. Roland's illness meant he had to leave and concentrate on family, cricket, National Trust and of course music. Because of his love of music, he worked with Phil Davies to create another group-the Sounds of 50/70s which is still flourishing

Roland was a well-liked person who was totally reliable and will be greatly missed. A sad loss of talent at such a young age.

Richard Clark

PUZZLES (answers in next issue)

1. Where in the UK is this famous postbox?
2. What can you see once in a minute, twice in a moment but never in a decade



ANSWERS to last puzzle

1. Knaresborough
2. 18, Husband 54

Last date for copy for the Christmas 2020 Newsletter will be 1st November 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.

If you do not use internet/email then please send your contribution, either typed or handwritten, by post to Mary Singleton, 6 Redwing, Aylesbury HP19 0WB.