

December 2020



## ASHBOURNE & DISTRICT U3A

Registered charity no. 119048

It may become necessary to update some of the information that follows. Please check the Ashbourne & District section of the [u3asites.org.uk](http://u3asites.org.uk) website to check whether changes have been made to dates, times and meeting places.

### Monthly Meetings - now via Zoom

Details of how to join these events will be sent out, by our secretary, to those who have registered an interest, a few days before they are due to take place.

#### December 4th via Zoom at 2.30pm



Kevin Little will recount some of the antics of the animals on his smallholding, some of the amusing incidents while travelling around the world and stories of eccentric customers.

He has been a fishmonger for 54 years at *The Smelly Alley Fish Company* (now closed) in Reading, Berkshire and has been making people laugh with anecdotal comedy for many years.

He lives in Somerset, where he has a smallholding on which he keeps 21 rescued cats, a dog, 3 ponies, a mule, 2 goats, 27 ducks and 2 geese.

#### January 8th via Zoom at 2.30pm

Max and Christine Maughan – *Wildlife and Scenery of the Peak District*

Max & Christine have had a passionate interest in wildlife for many years, initially in birds, but this has developed to incorporate all forms of wildlife, including butterflies, dragonflies, bees, mammals and plants. They have travelled to many destinations abroad, studying the wildlife of those areas, and giving talks based on these.

Max is an ex-teacher, and is currently Group Leader of the Derby RSPB Group, and both serve on various local committees including Derbyshire Wildlife Trust West Derby Group and East Midlands Butterfly Conservation. Christine is a keen photographer, and all their talks are illustrated by her photographs.

Their presentation on the Peak District begins with an introduction to the geology of the area and its effect on the landscape. It then looks at the different habitats that exist, and the wildlife that inhabits them.



*The Salt Cellar, Derwent Edge*

## Members' News

### ASHBOURNE U3A GARDENERS LEAP INTO ACTION IN THE MEMORIAL GARDENS

Enthusiastic Ashbourne & District u3a gardeners, in co-operation with the Derbyshire Dales District Council park maintenance team created and planted a completely new flower bed in the Ashbourne Memorial Park and Gardens last week.

When our Chairman Sheila Allen suggested that the garden group should investigate if there were opportunities for members to participate in some local planting activity, we contacted Derbyshire Dales District Council, who responded quickly that they were considering creating more flower beds in Ashbourne Memorial Park and Gardens in response to public feedback requesting more colourful displays. A plan to create a new flower bed opposite the Memorial Gate was formed and u3a members were asked for donations of plants, shrubs or bulbs for the new u3a- sponsored project.

Original plans to complete this task, following the Armistice Day Remembrance Sunday, were shelved due to the sudden decision for an imminent lockdown. In view of the possible worsening weather and limited planting period before severe frosts, it was decided to try and complete the project in record time before the lockdown deadline.

Amazingly, with minimal notice, the Derbyshire Dales team created a completely new flower bed in original parkland and prepared the bed for planting. U3a members were asked if they could accelerate their donations and many dug up their treasured plants to assist in this project. Finally, six intrepid and very dedicated u3a gardeners completed the planting in record time.

I want to thank all those who offered help and plants – even if we couldn't take them (Derbyshire Dales Council put a height limit on any shrubs and plants). You were very generous with both your donations and time.

Please do visit the Memorial Gardens and feed back any suggestions or comments – we will be updating and improving the planting for each season. Please feel free to weed or deadhead if required or let us know so that Sue or I can take some action.

Unfortunately, lockdown still affects our Garden Group visits although I am receiving lots of information on proposed opening times and dates for some great new locations for next year. I hope to plan some wonderful trips to make up for our lost Summer 2020.

If you are a new member and would like to keep updated on the activities of the Garden Group please contact Patti Green 07720 812278 sidewaysw@aol.com or Sue Dandy 01335 345157.

Patti Green




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## Message from our Chairman

A moment in history! Following on from ideas on how to publicise the u3a, our garden was developed in double quick time thanks to Patti Green our Garden Group Leader and a very energetic team of members willing to come along to the Ashbourne Park complete with plants,

spades, forks and boundless energy to get the job done. We all look forward to the seasonal changes of our garden in the park which we hope will be there for many years to come. It is fitting that in this horrible year of coronavirus restrictions we are able to look forward but also add to our history.

This has now set me thinking of other ways we may be able to identify ourselves in 2020. I wonder if you have any ideas on how we can mark this year which has had such a great impact on our lives. Would the Craft Group be interested in making a wall hanging depicting the various issues or Family History recording events of this year? There is no pressure to do anything but I thought I would share my thoughts with you.

Do please get in touch if you have any ideas. We need to show that u3a members are a bright talented group of people enjoying their lives no matter what obstacles get in the way. We may be mature but definitely not past our sell by date. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sheila Allen

### FACEBOOK

We now have a new Facebook page. It can be found by searching Facebook for *Ashbourne & District U3A*. The page is primarily aimed at raising awareness in the wider community, especially amongst people who don't read the local paper. If those of us who are active on Facebook visit the site and 'like' or 'follow it', our friends who see our activity may see we have visited it ... and that's how news of us and what we do gets around.

Here's what it looks like:




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## Group News

### ART APPRECIATION

As restrictions on meetings continue I have begun to send a weekly quiz on art and artists to members of the group. No pressure and no prizes; just for fun.

Contact John Barnett: [j.r.barnett@reading.ac.uk](mailto:j.r.barnett@reading.ac.uk). 07503152610

John Barnett

### BRIDGE 2

Lockdown 2 does not mean an end to playing Bridge. There are a number of ways in which u3a members can play online. Signing on to the Bridge Base Online site (BBO) is one of these. It is free to join and offers the options of watching a game, of playing with a robot, of playing in a group of 4 friends or even arranging a match between two tables.

Bridge players who are interested might first like to log onto [blog.bridgebase.com](http://blog.bridgebase.com) to see how easy it is to do so.

Manfred Lund

### CRAFT

Our next meeting will be via Zoom on **Friday December 18<sup>th</sup> at 2pm**. We will show some of the work that we have been doing during Lockdown - things that we have managed to finish off. Marian will show us how to construct a decorative bow.

Bring your own seasonal refreshments and wear something festive.

In January and February we will continue with our Zodiac animals. We have reached the dragon and the snake. Make sure that you let me know the colours that you would like. Email me via the blue envelope on the Craft page of our website [u3asites.org.uk](http://u3asites.org.uk) or tel: 01335 418659.

Jill Smith

### FAMILY HISTORY

We are having Zoom meetings once a month, with more than a dozen members taking part. I am so sorry that the other half of the group hasn't adopted modern technology and isn't joining in. It's never too late to start and Sheila and/or I can help you get set up.

At our November meeting Chris, who has only joined us recently, showed us how he does his "medieval" researching!

Our December meeting will be on **Thursday 10th December at 2.30pm** and we will have a presentation on searching in the Isle of Man, and something on World War II military research.

Sheila is also happy to run some DNA workshops on Zoom. She can show you how to make use of your DNA results to link up with living distant relations or to discover who some of your ancestors were. But she is well placed to know that the results may be very surprising!

Anyone wishing to join the group should contact me : email to [tiano121@btinternet.com](mailto:tiano121@btinternet.com) or leave a voice message on 079 9981 7759.

Vivien Tiano

### FRENCH

We are continuing with our Zoom meetings, both with the improvers and the advanced group, meeting as usual at **2.30pm on the 1st and 3rd Mondays** of the month for the Improvers and the **2nd and 4th Mondays** of the month for the Advanced Group. Most members have now got used to using Zoom.

Our meetings usually consist of a topic of conversation and a little grammar, and the Advanced Group is reading a book, *L'Héritier des Beaulieu* by Françoise Giroud, which most members seem to be enjoying.

There is room in both groups for new members so anyone wishing to join us should contact me : email to [tiano121@btinternet.com](mailto:tiano121@btinternet.com) or leave a voice message on 079 9981 7759.

In December the Improvers will meet on **7th December** and the advanced group on the **14th**. These will be special "Christmas" meetings! Then we will have a short break until January.

Vivien Tiano

### GERMAN GROUP

Two of the German groups have amalgamated to form one Zoom group. We meet **fortnightly** on a **Tuesday morning from 11am until 12.30** when we do vocabulary and grammar exercises, followed by reading or listening comprehensions. Coffee and chat are obviously also included and we are reading a short story entitled *Die Dritte Hand*. The next meeting is on **Tuesday November 24th**.

More information is available from Rhona Hunt via the blue envelope on the German page of our [u3asites.org.uk](http://u3asites.org.uk) website.

### U3A HIKING

Our walk scheduled for December 1st has been postponed until **Tuesday December 8th** when hopefully we will no longer be locked down. Places on this walk must be reserved by **Saturday 5th December** so groups can be allocated and leaders organised. More details to follow. For any further information please contact Judy via the website.

Judy Harrison

### LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE GROUP

On **Friday December 18th at 10:15am**, there will be a Zoom talk with Tony Waldron , *Ho Ho Who? – The Search for the Real Father Christmas*. This talk looks at the myth of Father Christmas

across the ages from its pre-Christian pagan roots to the Coca Cola inspired imagery of today's Santa Claus.

To pay for the speaker, members will need to pay a subscription to join this meeting. If you are interested in taking part and have not yet paid, please contact me for further information. Email [pamela@boura.org](mailto:pamela@boura.org)

Pamela Boura

### **ONLINE DANCING**

2020 has been my year of dancing in the kitchen, with some members of the u3a group joining by **Zoom on a Monday evening**. You're welcome to come and join us. We're dancing beginners' dances, some old, some new, to a wide selection of music. You can dance along, making up your own steps if you feel like it, and take a seat if you need a rest and no one will know. Email to [sue@axgb.com](mailto:sue@axgb.com) if you'd like to give it a try.

Sue Edmonds

### **PÉTANQUE**

Pétanque is suspended as I write this in mid-November due to the current Covid restrictions.

We will restart just as soon as the pub that hosts our games reopens and the regulations allow. As before, we will play in pre-organised groups of no more than 6, with strict social distancing between different households, and people only touching their own equipment.

Sheila Crawley

### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

November's meeting was again held via Zoom, the theme was *Into the Sun*. A good variety of photographs were shown from the participating members and one photograph from each member can now be seen on the website.

Next month's meeting will be held via **Zoom on Thursday 3rd December at 10:00** when the theme will be *Trees*

As this should have been our Christmas Lunch meeting perhaps members would like to have a mince pie and a glass of something handy.

As a reminder there is a Facebook group for photography members and if you wish to join please contact Helen Bluff for details.

A reminder will be e-mailed before the next meeting. John and I hope you will join us for another fun-packed meeting. New members are always welcome.

John Green ([john.green122@outlook.com](mailto:john.green122@outlook.com))

Helen Bluff ([helenbluff@hotmail.com](mailto:helenbluff@hotmail.com))

### **SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING GROUP**

We held our first meeting on the 29th of October with twenty-five people joining via Zoom. As you can see it was agreed that we should change our name slightly to include the word 'Science'. Everybody gave a short resume of their careers and interests. I can see a lot of interesting future discussions covering all aspects of Science and Engineering from our group.

We have a programme set up for the coming months:

**Thursday 26th November at 09.30 via Zoom** Phil Ruffles will give a presentation: *The History of the Rolls Royce RB 211 Turbofan Engine*

Thursday 31st December NO MEETING

**Thursday 28th January at 09.30 via Zoom** John Barnett will give a presentation: *The Wonder of Wood*.

**Thursday 25th February** Hopefully, a face to face meeting (watch this space) Peter Marston will give a presentation: *Sand to Silicon*.

All u3a members are welcome to join us, for more information please contact me via the blue envelope in the [u3asites.org.uk](http://u3asites.org.uk) website under the Science & Engineering Group.

Tony Walden

### SCRABBLE

Please would individual members of this group get in touch with me via the *Contacts* page of the [u3asites.org.uk](http://u3asites.org.uk) website and let me know what the current situation is with the Scrabble Group. I would like to update your page on the website. I look forward to hearing from you. Many thanks  
Mavis Lund

### STROLLERS

On the Monday afternoon before the second lockdown Strollers managed their afternoon walk.

There were so many of us we needed 4 groups setting off at 15 minute intervals.

Our lovely walk started at the Shrovetide plinth, then across The Park, through fields on to Mill Lane to Sturston Mill and past the Shrovetide Goal. The four groups returned through woodland back to Ashbourne. The terrain was far more challenging than our usual walks. There were unfriendly stiles and unbelievable mud at farm gates.

Somehow everyone got through and enjoyed the walk and the opportunity to meet up with friends.



If we are allowed out after 2nd December our next walk will start a little further afield from Carsington Visitors Centre.

Check the website for details depending on the news.

Karen Tallant

### TABLE TENNIS

For a few weeks we were able to play table tennis again, with some restrictions but nevertheless it was good to be back.

The new table tennis table arrived and three good men from the group assembled it, which saved us £70 if it had been done by the company. They spent one afternoon surrounded by bits and pieces and a chart of instructions. It looked very complicated but they finished by the evening and we have happily been using it since. It is only to be used by our group and we have a special lock which Brian acquired for it with a code known only to us.

Now, sadly the Leisure Centre is closed until further notice after December 2nd. We live in hope!!

Wendy Goddard. Tel 01335342532

### WALKING GROUP

Plans are provisionally in place to arrange a walk from Thorpe on 9 December which complies with whatever Government Covid-19 regulations then apply, but obviously these plans will need to be kept under review. If a walk does become feasible, details will be announced on our website & in an email to all members who have notified me of their interest in walking.

A Walkers' group **Christmas Quiz on Zoom** will be organised by Brian Stockwell at **3.30pm on 25 November**. There will be small prizes for the winner & also for the wearer of the walking hat most epitomising the Christmas spirit, there being no right to challenge the judge's decision. Please have a glass full so that we can optimistically raise it to wish each other happy walking together in 2021. Please email Brian at [brianstockwell44@gmail.com](mailto:brianstockwell44@gmail.com) as soon as possible if you wish to participate in this event.

Peter Worboys

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Please send contributions for the January Newsletter to Mavis Lund by **December 18<sup>th</sup>**