



## Bicester U3A Newsletter #84 FEBRUARY 2022

### From our new Chairman.

New year, new chairman, new committee, new prospects, let's make the most of them.

We can meet, travel, go to night clubs (!) and other entertainment, I hope we can get back to some kind of normality. Groups are beginning to meet face to face, let's get them moving, do you want to join a new group, start a new group, what are you waiting for?



Several committee members have retired or changed roles, we have thanked them, but I must thank them again for all the hard work they have put in going through the most difficult years of U3A, with data protection, new constitution and coping with covid restrictions, looking around the country several U3As have failed to make it.

As well as new groups I look forward to exciting trips and outings, we already have the trip to Ireland booked for the autumn. Any suggestions from members will be welcome, who doesn't want another trip to TOAD (The Oxford Artisan Distillery).

Make the most of the opportunities - you only live once.

Thanks for voting me in as Chairman (!) I will do my best.

Dave Jones

[www.u3asites.org.uk/bicester](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/bicester)  
Registered Charity Number 1094759

## Executive Committee

**Chairman:** David (dj) Jones,

**Vice Chairman:** Vacant Post,

**Membership Secretary:** Mary Herbert,

**Treasurer:** Audrey Luff,

**Beacon and GDPR:** George Edmundson,

**Business Secretary:** Margaret Herbert,

**Group Coordinator:** Janice Laker,

**Newsletter Editor:** David Thornton,

**Programme Secretary:** Mike Luff,

**Website:** Tomy Duby,

**Welcomer Liaison:** Carolyn Jones.

## New Members/Welcomer Liaison

The work of the welcomer team is still on hold until monthly meetings can begin again at the Clifton Centre. Carolyn Jones is our new Welcomer Liaison. Her helpers are currently:

Janet Baldry

Alex Sharpe

Pauline Smith

Jo Warren

Joy Saville

Gill Barber

Jackie Bennett

Richard Herbert

This issue, we welcome the following new members to our U3A.

Margaret Jordan

Peter Lloyd

Jennifer Sapsford

Nigel Walton

Brian Coombs

Elaine Whittaker

**I was admitted to hospital with the Peek-A-Boo virus. They transferred me to ICU.**

## Monthly Meetings (4th Thursday)

**24th February**, Alan Brewer, From Chef at the BBC to Chef de Cabin, BOAC

**24th March**, Jeff Rozelaar, Winston Churchill History and Humour (Part 1)

**28th April**, Andrew Bustin, My Life as a TV and Film Extra

**26th May**, Roy Smart, The Last Naval Hero

**23rd June**, Peter Hague, A Taste of Yorkshire in Food and Tradition

**28th July**, Alan Jones, It's Not What You Say

**25th August**, Pam Newall, Zermatt and the Mighty Matterhorn

**22nd September**, Roger Edwards, People's Palaces - the Golden Age of Cinema  
Architecture

**27th October**, Jan Warner, Survival of the Fittest (A Brief History of Child  
Rearing)

**24th November**, Launton Bell Ringers, Recital of Christmas Rings

**8th December**, Christmas Lunch

## Face to Face Meetings

Monthly meetings will be restarting as face to face meetings beginning on 24th February.

We will be meeting in accordance with current government guidelines.

[Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/coronavirus/coronavirus-safety-and-guidance-guidance-for-covid-19)

Please read before attending.

Editor

# Photo Competition 2021

## SUBJECT: PEOPLE IN ACTION.

*The response for this year's "VIRTUAL" competition was encouraging, with 46 photo entries. The entries were varied and interesting. Voting was also on line, with members choosing their three favourites. 179 votes were received. Grateful thanks to George Edmundson for administering the Pollunit.*

In the absence of an expert judge this year, we decided to award a small prize to the lady and the gentleman whose photographs received the most votes.

## MEMBERS CHOICE. (In reverse order)



**3rd place:** "Let's dance" by Christine Underwood.

**Police are looking for a thief with honey, walnuts and filo pastry smeared on his face. A witness said the man was wearing a baklava.**

**2nd place:** “Sri Lankan Drummer” by Richard Herbert. - Top Gentleman



**1st place: and outright overall winner.** “The Leap of Faith” - by Pauline Sutton - Top Lady.

Mike

## **2022 RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION - £15.00**

Please note. Your **Subscription is now due.**

If you do not renew by 31<sup>st</sup> March, your subscription will lapse and you will no longer receive your copy of Third Age Matters (TAM) or our Bicester U3A newsletters.

All members with email addresses were sent an email with a link to an online renewal form. There was also an attachment to a paper form as an alternative method of renewal. The form is two sided and requires a **signature** please. Be sure to **tick the boxes** to indicate your information preferences.

You can pay by BACS (Bank transfer) to our **Subscription account** quoting your membership number, or by cheque. (The detail is important as we have more than one bank account)

If you have any questions or require assistance with your renewal, please contact Mary, our Membership Secretary or myself.

A Big Thank You to all of you who have already renewed. 2022 membership and information cards will shortly be printed and made available to you.

We hope that you will renew your membership but, if you decide not to, please let us know so that we do not send you unwanted reminders.

Audrey

## **Residential Holiday to Ireland**

**26<sup>th</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October**

Thirty five members have booked to go on this trip. We travel by coach and ferry and will be based mainly in Belfast. Our Itinerary includes a Belfast city tour, with a stop at Crumlin Road Gaol. Then on to the Titanic Museum.

The Giant's Causeway, Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge and Mount Stewart, a National Trust estate with a fascinating history, are among other attractions we intend to visit.

Deposits have been paid and booking is now closed as we have reached our allocation of rooms.

The coach is not full so it may be possible to take more people, but I cannot guarantee the price.

Please do contact me if you are interested and I will enquire on your behalf.

Audrey



## Topic for 2022 Photographic Competition:

### *Wild Flora and Fauna of the British Isles*

All being well this year, **2022**, the competition will follow the format of Pre Covid years.

Dates:

Submissions For Entries by **Sept 22nd**/Monthly Meeting

1st Viewing at meeting of **27th Oct**, 2nd Viewing and Voting at meeting of **24th Nov**

Presentations and Results at Christmas Lunch, **8th Dec** - Venue and Timings to be confirmed

Additional Information:

Number of Entries:- 3, Entries to be 7" x 5" or 6" x 4"

Name and Membership No. on back of each entry

Contact Details - see your membership/programme card

Mike

# Bicester Foodbank

Many people in the area are still desperately in need of help, anyone who can give please use one of the following:

- 1 Tesco collecting box near exit.
2. Sainsbury's collecting box near exit.
3. Bring food to Foodbank at The Beacon, Wesley Lane, Bicester, Oxon, OX26 6JU, which is open Monday to Friday 10am to 12 Noon.
4. Make a monetary donation to our bank account which can be found on our website. Thank you for the help we have previously received from U3A and look forward to receiving again in the future.

Bicester Foodbank has seen a large increase in our clients since the virus started and therefore need more donations. **We are particularly looking for juice & squash, tinned tomatoes, and long life milk.**

Many thanks, Bicester Foodbank Team

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## News from Bicester Foodbank

We'd like to say a BIG thank you to the Foodbank volunteers and the local community for their ongoing support during 2021, be it individuals, local organisations and groups and many more. We couldn't help local people in need without you!

We've had a very busy December with a variety of projects in place:

A Christmas Toy Shop - organised by Jane. Foodbank supported by referring people and the project helped approximately 300 children and 200 adults!

Salvation Army Christmas Meal – Foodbank and Tesco provided food, Heyford School provided the hampers and a Christmas Meal and hamper was provided to approximately 20 members of the local community.

Tesco 100 Christmas Meal Hampers – Tesco collected Christmas puddings, Mince pies, Gravy, Stuffing, vegetables & a sweet treat from customers at Lakeview Drive store. Foodbank supported by providing £10 vouchers for each parcel, and Del & Doug were superstars in issuing the hampers to approximately 80 households, meaning no-one went without a Christmas Dinner! Cooper School made approximately 90 Christmas cards which were included in the hampers.



# Bicester U3A Interest Groups

POST COVID GROUP MEETING TIMETABLE 2022 (see our Information Card for phone numbers)

	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING
<b>MON</b>	Fortnightly - Current Affairs 2nd & 4th - German	1st & 3rd - Arts & Crafts 2nd & 4th - Drawing & Painting 1st & 3rd - Mah-Jong 4th - Any Type of Good Music	
<b>TUE</b>	2nd - Short Walks Weekly - Qi Gong	2nd & 4th - Square Dancing	
<b>WED</b>	1st & 3rd - French Conversation 4th - Bus Pass Adventures	1st & 3rd - Camera Club 1 2nd & 4th - Ukulele Group Weekly - Canasta 4th - Murder Mystery Book Club 2nd - Garden Visits	
<b>THU</b>	1st & 3rd - Exploring Classical Music Weekly - Table Tennis 1st & 3rd - Camera Club 2	4th - Monthly Meeting 1st & 3rd - Scrabble 2nd - Art Appreciation	4th - Wine Appreciation 1st & 3rd - Bridge
<b>FRI</b>	2nd - Book Club 2nd & 4th - Wider Horizons	2nd - More Than Just Blues Music	1st & 3rd - Friday Night at the Zoom Inn
<b>SAT</b>			
<b>SUN</b>	1st - Sunday Lunch		

## Notice to members

Our U3A is providing services to our community thanks to a hard-working Committee and enthusiastic Group Leaders. In order to continue, we need more people who would be willing to lead our Groups. This may be due to Groups becoming full and a supplementary group being required; it may be due to an existing Group Leader stepping down; it may be that an idea for an entirely new Group that can be added to our portfolio. If you would like to contribute, please contact the Executive Committee who will provide any assistance required.

Our members will be advised of any new Groups starting up. Look out for information on the Bicester U3A web site and at our monthly meetings.

# Groups Co-Ordinator

The pandemic continues to affect our U3A but as many of us have received our booster jabs and our flu jabs, we will be protected against the worst that covid and seasonal flu can throw at us.

A few of our groups are not running at present. But, in the main, our Group Leaders are doing a wonderful job in keeping our U3A going. We have a number of groups meeting face-to-face, some continuing with Zoom and others mixing and matching between the two.

## **The groups continuing to Zoom are: -**

Any Type of Good Music, Book Club, Camera Club (1), Camera Club (2), Exploring Classical Music, French Conversation, Friday Night at the Zoom Inn, German, More Than Just Blues, Wine Appreciation.

Although, Any Type of Good Music and More Than Just Blues are considering meeting face-to-face. The Camera groups combine Zoom with face-to-face meetings.

## **Face-to-face groups are as follows: -**

Art Appreciation, Arts and Crafts, Bridge, Canasta, Current Affairs, Drawing and Painting, Mah Jong, Murder Mystery Book Club, Qi Gong, Scrabble, Short Walks, Square Dancing, Sunday Lunch, Table Tennis, Ukulele.

All are operating to the covid safeguards set by the respective group leader and all are operating within Government, Community and Third Age Trust guidelines.

## **Other groups will be on the move by the time this Newsletter is published: -**

Bus Pass Adventures, Garden Visits, Wider Horizons.

## **The groups not running at the moment are: -**

Bridge Beginners (Insufficient demand)  
Bridge Improvers (Joining in with the Bridge group)

## **And those in need of a Group Leader: -**

Chess, Cribbage, French Advanced, French Improvers, Jazz Appreciation, Singing for Pleasure, Solo Whist

That's it for the groups at present. Thanks again to all for keeping our U3A going during these difficult times.

Dave Thornton (out-going)

# News from the Groups.

## Art Appreciation

For November we had the delayed talk by Colin Cockshaw on “An Artist’s Village” and it was well worth waiting for. This was all about GF Watts, who was the most celebrated artist in Victorian times, but now hardly known about, although the recent restoration of the Gallery that bears his name at Compton near Guildford is drawing more attention to him. He was born in 1817 and died in 1904. As a ten year old he was apprenticed to a sculptor by his father who was keen to encourage his art and entered the Royal Academy as a student when 18, exhibiting there for the first time in 1837. He began his career as a portraitist, but developed other styles throughout his life. In 1843 he won a competition to design murals for the new Houses of Parliament and used his prize money to travel to Italy which sparked his interest in frescos.

When he was 47 he met Ellen Terry, the actress who was only 17 and after painting her, decided to marry her. It lasted a year before she ran off with someone else! He was luckier at 69 when he married Mary Tytler, 36, a Scottish designer and potter, and they bought a house at Compton, where Mary continued to work as a potter and also later designed and built Watts Mortuary Chapel, which Watts paid for. She devoted her life to him and together they built the Watts Gallery, which is the only purpose built gallery in Britain devoted to a single artist which was opened in 1904, just before he died. It’s Grade 2\* listed now and shows his pictures (some loaned from the Tate Gallery, where he donated many of his symbolist paintings, and sculptures), having been restored in 2006 and then receiving a Heritage Lottery Grant to re-open in 2011. Watts and his wife wanted to make art accessible to all and engaged many locals to work on their projects and make use of all of their facilities.

For our Xmas meeting, we had another collaborative effort, with members choosing a picture to show and talk about on Zoom on the theme of “Winter”. This proved to be very interesting as pictures ranged from Breugel in 1565 to the C20th, with great variations in the C19th when different artists were trying out new ideas while some carried on with the styles of the times. It was a pity not to be able to meet in person, but it was a fun afternoon with a lively discussion afterwards. Thanks again to Steve Procopiou for bailing me out with any technical difficulties of my own making!

Our new year started with another talk, again on Zoom. I had seen a painting at Ickworth, the National Trust house where we stopped for lunch on the way back from the u3a holiday in October and it made a big impression on me, and I found that I had never heard of the artist, Elisabeth Louise Vigee Le Brun.

I decided to find out all about her and make her the subject of my talk 'A Revolutionary Female Artist'. Living through some of the most difficult times in France from 1755 to 1842, she had an extraordinary career, painting professionally from her teens to her



death aged 86. Her style was mainly Rococo, later becoming more Neo-Classical. Having success painting the aristocracy, she was asked to paint Marie Antionette in 1778. She painted her many times and as they were the same age, there was a rapport between them, but when the royal family were arrested, she realised she would have to flee from France with her young daughter, while her husband, an art dealer stayed behind and later divorced her. She was away for 13 years, visiting and continuing to paint in Italy, Austria, Russia and Germany, her fame having preceded her, but when she eventually returned, she didn't like living in the new regime and left again for England, and Germany, finally returning to France in 1810 and continuing to exhibit in the yearly salons and hosting gatherings at her house. She

produced 2 volumes of memoirs and continued painting until her death, aged 86.

Like many artists, despite being the most celebrated of all French portrait painters with an amazing body of work, she went out of fashion in the decades after her death and was largely ignored until the C20th. There have been 2 exhibitions of her work in USA, but none yet in Britain, although the National Gallery has 2 of her pictures and there is one in Wallace Collection. The photo shows the self-portrait in the National Gallery from 1782 when she was 28.

We are to return to meeting at Bucknell Village Hall in March on the 2nd Thursday of the month and will continue to welcome anyone interested in joining us. After the meeting, we will be able to enjoy tea and biscuits again. Being able to use Zoom for the last 2 years has at least kept the group going, but I hope that our members who didn't participate will also be delighted to return to normal.

Christine

## Arts and Crafts

We started the year with our customary 'Late Christmas Lunch' at the Copper Kitchen but now we are back to 'normal' for our meetings at Bucknell Village Hall.

We will be trying out new 'crafts' no doubt during the year ahead - got to keep the old grey matter working! and revisiting some old favourites.

New ideas for us to try always welcome.

We have a couple of places so if any new members would like to join us please get in touch.

Joy

## ATGM (Any Type of Good Music)

Our November session was cancelled due to other commitments.

No session was held in December due to Christmas.

Thus, our January session was the first for a number of months, I played a selection of my favourite tracks where I could find a Youtube video to show so we didn't have to look at each other for 2 hours. My selection ranged from a Ukulele group, folk music, punk/rock, 60s hits and the 3 tenors, Plus much much more.

It was decided that the day/date of the 4th Tuesday for each month clashed with the Square Dancing so the routine Day/date is proposed to move to the 4th Monday in the month.

We will still carry on with the sessions being held on Zoom until we all feel comfortable going back to a face-face meeting.

We have space for new members, so, if you like **Any Type of Good Music** please get in touch with the groups coordinator or myself.

Richard Herbert

**Faulty jump leads? Don't get me started!**

# Book Group Report

## November 2021.

“A Time of Gifts” by Patrick Leigh Fermour. At the age of eighteen, the author set out to walk from Rotterdam to Istanbul. Thirty years later, he wrote a book about his travels. This is the first of a trilogy.

Most of the group struggled to read it. We found it was very drawn out, containing a great deal of detail about different architectural designs. The text contained snatches of Latin, German and French with no translation which was tedious. It was interesting to read about parts of Europe before the damage during World War 2.

The author met some fascinating people and was afforded a great deal of hospitality along his route. However, we decided that we would not be reading the next two books.

## December 2021

“An American Marriage” by Tayari Jones. Newlyweds, Celestial and Roy, are ripped apart by circumstances neither of them could have imagined. Roy is arrested and sentenced to 12 years for a crime Celestial knows he did not commit. Devastated Celestial takes comfort in Andre, their closest friend.

The story is told through the perspective of the three main characters, explaining their backgrounds and the struggles faced by black Americans in a modern world. Although basically a love story, the book is much more than that. The characters are well drawn and we learn a great deal about the racism which still exists in parts of America today. We all enjoyed the book and found much to discuss.

## January 2022

“Educated” by Tara Westover. This is the author’s own story, based on her journals and personal recollections. The youngest of seven children, Tara was brought up in a Mormon family in Idaho with an extremely fanatical father. She had no birth certificate, did not attend school and had no medical history, being treated at home for any ailments by her mother.

The family stockpiled weapons, food and fuel as the father believed that the end of the world was nigh.

Eventually, Tara contrived to turn her life around and became a scholar, attending Brigham Young University, Cambridge and Harvard. Despite suffering emotional and physical abuse, she returned regularly to see her family, but eventually the visits stop as she feared for her life.

This story is of a remarkable young woman and the group would recommend it as a very thought provoking read.

The Group is still meeting on Zoom and most members attend regularly. We may return to face to face meeting later in the year.

Audrey.

## **Bus Pass Adventures**

It is hoped to restart the Bus Pass Group in March with a visit to Oxford to visit the Museum of Oxford which has tripled in size after a £2.8 million refurbishment.

We will catch the bus either from the bus stop in Manorsfield Road at 9.40 am or from the Park and Ride at 9.48 am.

Please let me know if you would like to come. Details on your membership card.

Rennie Buxton

## **Bridge**

The Bridge Group have continued to play using Bridge Base Online and Zoom throughout the winter. We are intending to resume face to face bridge at the Methodist Church Hall from 17th February when we will be playing duplicate bridge. We are looking forward to welcoming back the members of our group who have not joined in with the online sessions and some new members. If anyone is interested in joining us, please let me know.

Denise

## **Camera Club I**

A slow start to our New Year but we did get together recently for a short Zoom session. dj was showing off some photos of a pre-Christmas trip to Oxford, George followed with a few gargoyles astride narrowboats and I chipped in with photos from an afternoon stroll around Otmoor Nature Reserve. Mike and Adrian Joined us for a natter.

We're going to join the Garden Visits Group for a wander around Evenley Wood Gardens on 10th February and are organising a trip to Otmoor for the starling murmurations.

Dave T

**A tailor accused of fraud has been arrested for lining his own pockets.**

## Camera Club 2

We had our first face to face meeting on the 2nd of November at the Emmanuel Church Cafe at Bure Park. I had reservations about the acoustics but it was OK. The cafe is large and well spaced out and Thursday mornings is their quietest time so they let us use a corner free of charge so long as we buy coffee. Some of us are also tempted by the cake. For our second meeting in November we went to Stoke Wood and had an enjoyable morning photographing the trees and fungi. I set a challenge of taking a picture using intentional camera movement (ICM) which can create a variety of effects. My example was of a zoom burst.



In December we had our second face to face meeting in the church cafe and reviewed our Stoke Wood shots. We planned to have a workshop for our next meeting until Omicron came along and we reverted to zoom. I set a 30 minute challenge to shoot 3 images of something Christmassy but only allowed one shutter click per picture. This forces the photographer to think and plan his shot before pressing the shutter. Something we did in the olden days before digital allowed us to click away and take as



many images as we like. It took some people out of their comfort zone but they all enjoyed it.

I set a theme of Christmas over the holiday period and we reviewed the results via zoom at the beginning of the year.

After some discussion we decided that we wanted to get together properly again. We chose for our next meeting to meet at Annie's Tea Room Thrupp and walk along the canal. We had a very cold but sunny morning and enjoyed being out and about and sharing each other's company.

It was decided that it would be OK to meet at the church cafe for our next meeting, as we are all sensible. So we will be returning to face to face going forward and keep our fingers crossed that covid does not throw us another curve ball.



George Edmundson

## Canasta & Mah-jong

I have resumed both of my groups but not yet as U3A groups, just as friends groups, but I hope to turn them into U3A groups again when all the restrictions come off.

Regards,

Doreen

## Current Affairs

The Current Affairs Group are meeting up at present. The frequency of meetings and the numbers involved in each meeting are dependent on prevailing covid-19 concerns. Hopefully, we will be going back to full meetings on a fortnightly basis at the end of the month.

We are always happy to welcome new members.

Pam Wakeling

## Deutsche Gruppe

The German group continues to meet twice a month on Zoom. With the help of Brenda we went “national” by allowing members from other U3A organizations to join us. The group has now eight regular members. One of them is a German lady which is very good as she corrects almost all my errors...

Unfortunately, last year Nick Morse passed away. He will be remembered that he tried very hard to keep up with the rest of the group. Everybody knows that German is not an easy language. But...

In our meetings we typically do two things: we read a German *Krimi*, a well written crime story of *Kommissar* Paul Specht and his attractive assistant Eva Hansen. We are approaching the end of the book and it is now pretty *spannend*, that is gripping. And then everybody is asked to prepare and tell a few sentences in German that we can discuss in the group.

Tomy Duby

## Exploring Classical Music

This Newsletter report is different.

I am not writing about music we explored in the last quarter of 2021. Today I am writing about members who passed away last year.

Gwyneth Learner and Ian White.

Both were members a long time before I joined in the summer of 2018. We stopped seeing Gwyneth when we started to meet on-line: "This is not for me. Call me when you meet in person." Unfortunately that did not happen – we are still on Zoom for some good reasons.

Ian's disease eventually overpowered him though he was in a good care. We hope that his wife Julia will soon re-join our meetings.

Nobby Hill.

Nobby was with us only for two meetings. His friend Jill Peck did everything to enable him to see and hear us in a meeting. All three of them will be missed and we will find a way to remember them.

But we go and we have our twice a month meetings and listen to music worth exploring. We even hope to increase our numbers, more about that in the next Newsletter.

Tomy Duby

## French Conversation

As a small group meeting via Zoom works quite well. There are advantages as we all get a chance to speak – well, we have to!!! . There are times when we forget words or we use the wrong tense but we help each other in those 'senior moments'!!! Conversation topics vary and one topic leads to another very easily.

Should there be anyone who would like to join us, please get in touch.

Julie Evans

## Friday Evening at the Zoom Inn

FEATZI is over a year old! Our first meeting took place in October 2020, bringing people together at a time when we couldn't get out to see each other. Although the pandemic has eased off a bit now, we're still getting together twice a month in our virtual pub to put the world to rights over a drink.

There's usually about 12 people on each occasion and we're very relaxed. You can join in the conversation if you wish or just sit and nurse your drink, just like in a real pub.

We often have a loose theme to the evening, and sometimes a bit of a pub quiz. Over the last three months, we've drunk to Guy Fawkes, celebrated Children in Need, marked Christmas Jumper Day and remembered(?) Saturday Night Fever topping the UK charts in 1978.

We meet on the first and third Friday of each month, from 7:30pm until the landlord calls "time". If you'd like to join us, get in touch via the Group Coordinator and I'll add you to the group. Details on your membership card.

Cheers, Steve

## Garden Visits

Exciting month, by the time you read this I hope we will have made our first visit for years!

We are going to Evenley Wood to see the snowdrops, so I should have some photos for the next newsletter and so will many others as the Camera club 1 are coming with us.

You will be pleased to hear that I have just got my new minibus licence (well most of you will be pleased!), it lasts for 3 years and it will probably be my last.

Carole is going to Kew to see the Orchid Festival, I am jealous, maybe we should all go next year.

Dave Jones

**What happens if you put a stick in a non-stick pan?**

# Memory Recall

As a result of the continuing Covid pandemic, I was advised by a member of the Health Authority, it would be preferable to delay our November meeting which expanded into the same conditions for December, so I was left with the decision whether or not to meet in January. I 'erred' on the side of caution, so February was the next meeting for us to get together.

However, during this time I decided to withdraw as a member of U3A and consulted the group via email as to whether or not they wished to attend our final meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> February. Unfortunately, not all of the group appeared to have received this notification from me which resulted in few people responding which ultimately led me to cancel. I have since been contacted by most of the group who are most disappointed by my decision and expressed their views about the content of the meetings and their respective enjoyment and informative content that I presented.

I should like to sincerely thank the members of the group for showing interest in the wide-range of topics that I selected about which I can honestly state that on some occasions I questioned my judgement about the topic! I was somewhat relieved to know that the topics were enthusiastically received and commented upon so again thank you.

Originally I had planned a six month programme which up to the Covid situation had extended to two and half years so I feel I must have "done something right" or should I say "I hadn't offended anyone by any of the topics!!

I have resigned from U3A for personal reasons but thankfully not because of health reasons and I should like, indeed hope to, remain in contact with my former group. And 'dare' I say it, anyone who would also like to contact me though heaven only knows why they should???

Finally, it is difficult to find alternative words for sincere and appreciation so 'my sincere thanks and appreciation' to all of those people who attended the group meetings. As already mentioned I was very surprised to receive such superb feedback, I confess I 'shed a tear or two' but maybe that's because of age as opposed to.....

Thank you all very much indeed.

Sincerely

Sadie

**Just failed my driving test. Apparently 'When I'm abroad' is not the answer to where it's OK to overtake on the left.**

**Now, I've been diagnosed with a rare type of amnesia where people deny the existence of 80's bands. There is no Cure.**

## Murder Mystery Book Group.

Our November book was "Holding" by Graham Norton.

The discovery of human remains in a small Irish town sends unease rippling through the community in this darkly comic and brilliantly observed debut.

As the frustrated Sergeant P J Collins struggles to solve a genuine case for the first time in his life, he unearths a community's worth of anger and resentments, secrets and regret.

We didn't have a meeting in December.

January book was "Naked in Death" by J D Robb

Naked in Death is the first in the Death series by writer Nora Roberts, writing under the pseudonym J D Robb. This novel is set in 2058 New York. Eve Dallas investigates the murder of Sharon DeBlass the daughter of a US Senator. Eve, who was named by the social worker who found her, at a young age, roaming New York city streets, has become a Police Detective who lives for her job. In over ten years on the force, she's seen it all and knows her survival depends on her instincts.

Mary Herbert

## Qi Gong

After a few weeks break over the Christmas and New Year Period we are now in full swing again meeting at Chesterton. We are all very pleased that Tania has recovered and is now able to join us. Although we are continuing to use the same format, where we take it in turns to lead the individual exercises, it makes such a difference to have someone who can gently point out the bad habits we have acquired and show us the right way to do things. It is also very beneficial for our new members to learn the correct way to do the exercises. We are a very friendly group and everyone enjoys our weekly sessions.

Denise

**DOCTOR: 'What seems to be the problem?' PATIENT: 'I've got a wee cough'.**

**DOCTOR: 'Are you going anywhere nice?'**

## Short Walks

Our November walk started from historic Deddington. The name is derived from the old English for "place of the people of Daeda" Daeda was an early lord of Mercia. After the Norman conquest of England, William the Conqueror's brother Odo held the manor of Deddington. He built Deddington Castle which was demolished in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The walk opened out with panoramic views of the Cherwell Valley and then took us to Paper Mill Cottages. A mill existed here as long ago as 1086 when it is recorded in the Domesday Book, which mentions that in the parish of Dadintone (Deddington) there were three flour mills. However, the 1983 edition of the Victoria History of Oxfordshire records that in 1660 Christopher Doyley of Adderbury asked leave of John Cartwright to convert the Old Mill into a paper mill.



In December, a group of us walked from Fringford to Hethe across the fields by a brook. The return route took us through the Shelswell Estate. Fringford is an ancient site and seems to have been inhabited for most of the past 2000 years. The name is thought to mean "ford of the people of Fera", a Saxon tribe or family group, who were here well before the Norman Conquest.

The first records of Shelswell date from the 8th century. It is also mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Today no buildings remain of the medieval village which overlooked the lake.

**I saw a book entitled 'How to Solve 50% of your Problems'. I bought two of them.**

**And, to the person who stole my anti-depressants. I hope you're happy now.**



January's walk was an urban walk around Bicester. The town of Bicester dates back to early Saxon times. It is an historic market town. Close by is the site of the Roman Town of Alchester. The present town was founded as a Mercian frontier fort on the border between Mercia and Wessex. In the 19th century, the area became famous for

local horseracing and as good foxhunting country and a hundred years later it was better known for its military establishments and its designer shopping village.

The walk started from the Community Centre on the Kingsmere Estate and took us past Bicester Village down to Langford Village. We paused for a drink at Jubilee Lake where there was a good sighting of a heron. We wandered back through Langford Village green area and St Edburgs Churchyard to Kingsmere.



Mary Gough

**There will never be an edible version of Scrabble. But if there is, I'll eat my words.**

**Autocorrect socks!**



## Sunday Lunch

Please come and join us for a delicious Sunday Lunch and good conversation with fellow U3A members 12.30 pm for 1 pm.

We visit various hotels and pubs within Bicester and Surrounding Villages

6<sup>th</sup> March The Cartwright Arms, Croughton Road, Aynho 01869 811885

3<sup>rd</sup> April Kirtlington Golf Club, Kirtlington OX5 3JY 01869 351133

Just email me or give me a call to book a place, details on your membership card. If for any reason you need to cancel, please let me know.

Best Regards

**Sandie**

## Table Tennis

We continue to play on 4 tables, and with some restrictions easing, things are improving. I mentioned in last newsletter that we would like to use 5 tables, as we often have more than 16 players and operate a sitting-out-in-rotation system. However, when we tried it, we found that it wasn't leaving enough room for us to play safely. We have all improved and play a much more vigorous and active game now and it's just not possible to squeeze in extra tables and chairs, allowing for sitting-out chairs too.

We haven't frozen over the winter, as I feared, as the hall is always warm on arrival, before I open all the windows. The rate of play ensures that we stay warm!

We've managed to clear all the names on the waiting list, but still I want to hear from anyone keen to play, as things can change.

Christine

**You wouldn't think a documentary about drinking milk from a saucer would be very interesting but people are lapping it up.**

## Wider Horizons

We have been having our meetings at The Lamb pub at the top of Sheep Street and will carry on meeting there.

The coffee is good and those that had breakfast said it was tasty and good value.

We welcomed old members of the group and some new ones and it was so nice to see so many turning up.

We would like to arrange little 'outings' in the coming year so any ideas would be welcome.

If you would like to join us, we meet the 2nd and 4th Fridays and you would be most welcome.

We start at 10am and finish about 12ish but you can come and go at any time.

Joy

## Wine Appreciation

The Wine Appreciation group continues to meet over Zoom with our monthly theme being a continuation of moving through the letters of the alphabet.

This month we reached the letter Q which proved to be a bit of a struggle but most members found a wine that met the theme, Ranging from a couple of Quartz Range (one red and one white) a French Rose called Quintessance and one enterprising member who couldn't find a wine but as Quinine starts with a Q and is in Tonic water, she had a G&T (with Scottish Gin!!).

Unsurprisingly, our February session will have the themes of "The Letter R" which should be easier to find.

Richard

**My doctor said I was colour blind. I said 'Can I have that in black and white?'**

# U3A Thames Valley Network (TVN)

<http://www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk/>

TVN is a network of u3a groups that organise study days and representatives meetings. They also provide any other relevant information about the network.

Full details of the events listed below are posted on their website and circulated to u3a's. Mary regularly sends out notifications of events. The lead-in time will vary as TVN try to cope with Covid 19 restrictions and still bring you an entertaining and educational calendar. Meanwhile please make a note of the dates in your diary if you are interested in attending.

The events are regularly attracting over 200 participants. To ease the load on organisers, Ticket Source is being used for bookings. See TVN website for more details.

There is normally a small fee for each event.

## Schedule

**Friday 4th March** – Spring Quiz, set by Avis.

**Monday 14th March** – How does your Garden Grow, a talk by David Marsh

**Thursday 28th April** – Pictures on a page, a talk by Keith Appleby

**Monday 9th May** – The origins and development of Anaesthesia

**Tuesday 14th June** – Roses, another interesting talk from Kathrine Kear

**Wednesday 31st August** – Visit to Kelmscott Manor

**Wednesday 7th September** – The Wonderful World of Law, a talk by David Allen

**Wednesday 21st September** – Botanical Art

Editor

**My poor knowledge of Greek mythology has always been my Achilles elbow.**

**If you lose an audio book, you'll never hear the end of it.**

# Make sure you're ready for Pancake Day by finding everything you need below

P	E	U	O	A	S	Y	R	U	P	N	K	S	A
R	E	T	A	L	P	T	K	F	L	P	T	P	L
G	A	S	M	C	U	R	N	L	H	A	E	S	U
N	H	L	I	S	E	A	E	O	O	E	C	Y	T
O	A	P	L	U	O	P	N	U	B	A	O	N	A
M	M	C	K	G	R	R	R	R	O	S	O	U	P
E	A	C	C	A	E	P	A	A	W	H	K	T	S
L	T	R	O	R	A	P	N	N	L	H	E	E	T
A	T	E	O	E	S	A	U	C	G	L	R	L	E
T	S	P	E	N	N	S	E	H	E	E	N	L	Y
O	A	E	S	A	E	O	G	E	M	S	O	A	P
A	U	S	B	N	T	L	G	E	A	S	O	S	S
B	A	T	T	E	R	L	S	S	P	O	P	E	L
C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	B	T	S	T	O

CREPES  
 BOWL  
 ORANGE  
 CHEESE  
 SPATULA  
 BATTER  
 MILK  
 HAM  
 BANANA  
 SPOON  
 FLOUR  
 SUGAR  
 COOKER  
 NUTELLA  
 SYRUP  
 LEMON  
 PLATE  
 CHOCOLATE  
 TOSS  
 EGGS

1st March  
2022

**Press Date: Any items for inclusion in the May newsletter must reach the Newsletter Editor, by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022. N.B. this is an absolute deadline please. You can contact the Editor via the Website Contacts page or from the details on your information card.**

**And finally, if there's anyone called Philip out there. I've got your screwdriver.**

**Editor**