

## Letter from the Chair

I thought that these few lines written by A. A. Milne in 1926 give a comforting thought to those who are feeling the strain as we continue to struggle with the present situation.

“Today was a Difficult Day,” said Pooh. There was a pause.

“Do you want to talk about it?” asked Piglet.

“No,” said Pooh after a bit. “No, I don’t think I do.”

“That’s okay,” said Piglet, and he came and sat beside his friend.

“What are you doing?” asked Pooh.

“Nothing, really,” said Piglet. “Only, I know what Difficult Days are like. I quite often don’t feel like talking about it on my Difficult Days either.”

“But goodness,” continued Piglet, “Difficult Days are so much easier when you know you’ve got someone there for you. And I’ll always be here for you, Pooh.”

And as Pooh sat there, working through in his head his Difficult Day, while the solid, reliable Piglet sat next to him . . . he thought that his best friend had never been more right.

Sending thoughts to those having a Difficult Day today and hope you have your own Piglet to sit beside you.

*Christine Plant*

## Committee Messages

Following Pam McGregor’s retirement as Director of Studies, the job has been divided into:

1. Courses Development (Ursula Steiger).
2. Courses Planning (Pam McGregor and Jane Dennett).

These tasks will be more clearly set out during the next few months.

Due to continued Covid-19 restrictions we are continuing to plan for short periods of four months only, being aware that, even during those short periods, things could change. We will therefore offer a courses programme entirely based on videoconferencing for the autumn term and hope to offer more open ones, with restrictions, from January onwards. An electronic courses programme will be circulated shortly and paper copies will be sent to members without internet access.

## We Zoom

Thanks to the many dedicated members of our U3A, the Zoom meetings are proving a real success and gathering pace. The first Science Forum was held on 5 August, a question and answer session with Mira Petrovic and Clive Askew on ‘What is a Healthy Diet?’ See below for details of the second Science Forum. Our first monthly talk since the lockdown was ‘Century of Deception’ and given by Ian Keable. Many members also enjoyed two lectures given by David Reekie and Malcolm Andrews on ‘Edith Swan Neck’ and ‘British Tourists in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries’ respectively. Rona Hodges has been continuing with her research, and the Recorders Group carries on. Chris Plant continues to offer her chat sessions three times a week and welcomes members who wish to join.

**Two upcoming Zoom meetings:** The next Science Forum will take place on 2 September with Dermot Stewart and Bob Newport on ‘Astronomy’.

The monthly meeting on 9 September is by Jenny Mallin, entitled ‘Great Aunt Constance’s Trek out of Burma’.

## Canterbury Festival, 17–31 October 2020

Tina Austen, speaking on behalf of the Festival organisers, said that unless Government guidelines change, Canterbury Festival 2020 will be going ahead. It will be smaller than usual but there will be a great line-up of both live and on-line events. Rosie Turner and the team are still working on the programme which, with social distancing considerations, is proving challenging for the live events, but the plans include: classical concerts by the wonderful choir Tenebrae, and Joanna McGregor playing Beethoven's 32 Sonatas; some fabulous talks; family entertainment; comedy and music. Headlining on-line events will be the Bursary Final, and a short introduction to the Krakow Choir, which, it is hoped, will be appearing next year.

Keep an eye on the Festival website for details of these and also for the ongoing fundraisers. Brochures and tickets are now available and don't forget, Festival Friends get priority booking for tickets. The Festival has never needed your support more. Please consider making a small donation via the website—it would be greatly appreciated.

## Chuckles

\* Husband and I went grocery shopping with masks, got home, took off masks, brought home wrong husband! Stay alert people.

\* Maybe if we start telling people that the brain is an app they'll start using it.

*From Janet Scott*

\* Another Saturday night, and I've just realised even the trash goes out more than I do.

*From Jocelyn Thomson*

## Getting Forgetful?

French Professor, Bruno Dubois, Director of the Institute of Memory and Alzheimer's Disease (IMMA) at La Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, addresses the subject rather reassuringly:

"If anyone is aware of their memory problems, they do not have Alzheimer's."

It often happens in people 60 years and older that they complain of lack of memory. The information is always in the brain and is not a disease, but a characteristic due to the passage of years.

This is merely temporary forgetfulness.

Half of people 60 and older have some symptoms that are due to age rather than disease.

Most commonly:

- \* Forgetting the name of a person
- \* Going to a room in the house and not remembering why we were going there
- \* A blank memory for a movie title or actor/actress
- \* Wasting time searching where we left our glasses or keys.

Those who suffer from a memory illness or from Alzheimer's are not aware of what is happening.

The more we complain about memory loss, the less likely we are to suffer from memory illness.

## **Puns for Educated Minds**

1. The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
2. I thought I saw an eye-doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.
3. She was only a whisky-maker, but he loved her still.
4. A rubber-band pistol was confiscated from an algebra class, because it was a weapon of math disruption.
5. No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.
6. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
7. A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
8. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
9. A hole has been found in the nudist camp wall. The police are looking into it.
10. Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
11. Atheism is a non-prophet organisation.
12. A sign on the lawn at a drug rehab centre said: 'Keep off the Grass.'

## **Book Reviews**

Members who suffer from diabetes would find the following books extremely helpful. The first, *Diabetes from the Ebers Papyrus to Stem Cell Technology* is a complete history of diabetes from the first mention of symptoms in 1536 BC through to today. The second book, *Living Well with Diabetes*, is very user friendly and invaluable as a reference book for the questions we all ask. The author of both books is Dr Val Wilson, an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Greenwich, who has also written books and published widely in medical journals. I recommend these books with confidence.

*Christine Plant*

## **Maybe I was Wrong**

\* There is not the slightest indication that nuclear energy would ever be obtainable. It would mean that the atom would have to be shattered at will.

*Albert Einstein, 1932*

\* I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.

*Thomas Watson, Chairman of IBM, 1943*

\* There is no reason for any individual to have a computer in his home.

*Ken Olsen, President, Chairman and Founder of Digital Equipment Corporation, in a talk given to a 1997 World Future Society meeting in Boston*

\* X-rays will prove to be a hoax.

*Lord Kelvin, President of the Royal Society, 1883*

\* Everyone acquainted with the subject will recognise it as a conspicuous failure.  
*Henry Morton, President of the Stevens Institute of Technology, on Edison's light bulb, 1880*

\* Television won't last because people will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.

*Darryl Zanuck, film producer, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1946*

\* The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a novelty, a fad.

*The President of the Michigan Savings Bank, advising Henry Ford's lawyer not to invest in the Ford Motor Corporation, 1903*

\* No, it will make war impossible.

*Hiram Maxim, inventor of the machine gun, in response to the question 'Will the gun make war more terrible?' from Havelock Ellis, an English scientist, 1893*

## What we do in Lock-down

Playing, singing and recording music, plus Zoom and Italian classes, has kept me sane in lock-down.

*Chris Cayley*

