

CHEADLE AND GATLEY U3A

Registered Charity Number:1172853



FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER

Message from the Chair

Batsheva Samely

Dear Members,

It gives me much pleasure to present to you this splendid Newsletter. What a fabulous collection of reports, stories, poems and personal accounts! They make my heart sing with gratitude for our U3A family: a strong and supportive community that is there for each other even when we don't get to meet in person, encouraging and comforting.

The contribution on 1960s Manchester reminded me of our 60s Celebration Day, planning for which had just got under way when preparations were so abruptly interrupted. But it is only an interruption – we shall soon enough pick up where we left off!



On 10th February, on the second Wednesday when we usually have our Monthly Meetings, about 25 of us tuned in for a virtual Monthly Meeting. We were transported to Uganda in Africa. There, cooking is done on open fires using fire wood. Collecting the wood is mainly done by women, who need to spend up to five hours every day to find the required amount.

But not only is this task time-consuming, cooking on open fires in enclosed spaces is unhealthy and it is bad for the environment. We learned how traditional African stoves (pictures below), made from locally available clay are being re-introduced and are making a huge difference in terms of health and environmental benefits.

In case you would like to donate to this very worthwhile project, these are the details:

**Learning 4 Life, Lloyds Bank Abingdon,
Sort Code 30-67-53, a/c no 27215368**



Materials used in the building of the stoves:
clay, vegetation and dung



Financial Report

Allan Witton

Almost a year ago, as the pandemic was starting to get a grip, we all began to realise what a difficult time lay ahead for us as individuals, for communities and for nations. It came just as we were about to invite renewals for our U3A for 2020 - 2021. Without our regular meetings this was always going to pose problems, and the committee foresaw a difficult year for us financially.

As things stand at the moment, all our financial transactions for the current financial year to March 31st are now complete. In spite of the fact that we have made 'goodwill' payments to the URC and St James (with no meeting income to cover this) totalling £480, we have made just a very small net loss for this year, which I think is a very satisfactory outcome in the circumstances, and our finances remain strong.

I will submit a full financial statement for the AGM in June.

Membership Renewals

Brian Green

You will be aware Membership renewals are normally collected annually in March and April. Due to Covid we plan to amend our usual timetable, the main change being that renewals will now start from 1st April. The process will be as follows:

1. I will circulate an email/letter at the end of March inviting renewals for 2021 -2022. This email will include full details of how to renew membership by the various methods.
2. The renewal forms will be available to download on the website from 31st March. We are aware from last year that some members were unable to download the renewal forms so we are to arrange a facility whereby you can collect a printed form from a central Gatley location (address to be confirmed in my email at end of March).
3. There will be an option, for those who wish to take it, of a reduced fee of £6.
4. For those who use online banking there will also be the facility to pay by bank transfer.

Full details of the above will be in my communication at the end of March so please do NOT send in any queries at this stage.

Thanking you all.

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Self Isolation Choir

Keith Harris

I wonder what you have missed most during the last few very difficult months. I am sure that top of the list will be meeting up with family and friends, but what will be next? For me, as a member of the U3A Singing for Pleasure choir, it has to be the twice monthly get together under the leadership and direction of Barbara and Dorothy. I think that perhaps sometimes we fail to appreciate what we have until we lose it, whether it be singing in a choir, at church or some other group meeting. There are a number of emotional and physical benefits of choral singing, among them to strengthen a feeling of togetherness and reduce stress levels and depression.

2020 was the 20th anniversary of the first performance of Sir Karl Jenkins', *The Armed Man : A Mass for Peace* and was to have been a live event at The Royal Albert Hall, but because of the restrictions had to be cancelled. However in September Classic FM teamed up with the 'Stay at Home' choir, with over 5000 singers from around the world, with ten weeks of rehearsals, for a special digital event to celebrate the anniversary.

During the last nine months many groups have been formed to allow choirs to sing and I know that some members of the U3A have joined Opera North and enjoyed singing choruses from *Carmen* and *The Bartered Bride* (see Helene Adam's report on next page).

I was introduced to the 'Self Isolation Choir' a few months ago and very much enjoyed the experience. Mark Strachan, the founder, says, "The self isolation choir aims to provide comfort and support to people feeling disconnected from family, friends and society by bringing us all together to sing glorious choral works."

There is a full programme of works for 2021, from Abba Songs to Beethoven's Ninth to choose from, so even if you haven't much music training why not check it out. www.theseisolationchoir.com. and join the thousands from around the world who take part.

Grandchildren

Allan Witton

Those of us with young grandchildren will know what delight they can bring to our lives, and will share with us the sadness of not being able to see them in person as much as we would have wished during the last year.

And of course grandchildren give us the opportunity to behave in ways that we wouldn't otherwise. Our two grandsons, Stanley aged 4 and Arthur aged 2, were delighted when the snow arrived in Kent and (with a little help from their father) built snowmen, a snowdog and even an igloo in their large garden. Unable to be with them in Kent, I did my bit in Gatley, and they were pleased with the picture.

After our daily 3 mile walk there was just enough time to roll a snowman before lunch



Opera North Couch to Chorus

Helene Adam 428 2100

Last June, following a link from U3A, I and a few others from the Singing for Pleasure group attended Opera North's Couch to Chorus, which enabled those interested in singing to sing, weekly and online, extracts from operas. It was all on a Pay as you Please basis.

This initiative was very well organised and immensely enjoyable. We could choose which voice group to join. At a regular weekly time, we linked in with several hundred singers, many from far distant locations.

The singing was led by Jenny Stirling, whose lively and friendly approach was totally professional. The pattern for each session involved a warm welcome from Jenny, followed by physical warm-ups and vocal exercises. We were muted (zoom-wise!) and then guided through our music scores, which were displayed on screen. The music included extracts from *Carmen*, *The Bartered Bride* and *Nabucco*. Jenny would take us through the score a little at a time, and at the end of the four weeks of rehearsal, we sang along with members of Opera North.

We participants were sorry to see the end of this run of Couch to Chorus, and really pleased when a second opportunity arose to join a similar event in November, and a third Couch to Chorus is scheduled for later in February.

I have to say, this has provided a lovely focus during its run and I would highly recommend any singers who have not so far participated to have a go at this uplifting event, by applying online to Opera North.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Stag at Dunham Massey (Michelle Slater)

Sparrows are Hooligans

Catherine Dwyer

Definition of a hooligan: a violent young troublemaker.

Who knew? Well, not me, having for years been denied the ability to watch them at close quarters owing to the fact I have been the owner of cats all my adult life. To have put a bird feeder of any sort in the garden would have been tantamount to setting up a feline meals-on-wheels facility. Then a few years ago I lost my two cats in a short space of time, and for some unknown reason I did not look for a replacement.

And despite the sadness, gradually I realised the freedom I had gained, and enjoyed the feline company provided by my neighbour's cats instead. And then came Covid, and then lockdown, and then birds. Birds of all sorts, but in particular sparrows, and in some numbers. I could see them in the hedgerows and the shrubs, swooping into the garden and out again and seemingly enjoying the peace and quiet now that planes were largely grounded.



For Christmas I asked for a bird feeder, which duly arrived and was erected on Boxing Day morning. Loaded up with nuts, seeds and fat balls, it sat untouched for about 24 hours, despite the turn in the weather. And then they started to arrive, a few at first, then a gradual build up. It has been too cold for the cats next door to step out except for the necessities, and although one of them made a valiant attempt of jumping up at the feeder yesterday, too much turkey over Christmas put paid to a successful outcome.

Now I spend a lot of time, too much time, watching my garden visitors and their antics, the fun and the fights, and my goodness, what fights, and have concluded that despite the games and the aerobatics, sparrows are hooligans. And very welcome.

Robins are Friendly

Allan Witton



We met this friendly robin in Stenner Woods, but unfortunately Lesley just missed it landing on my hand to take the biscuit

Singing the Blues

Josephine May

Oh I never felt more like singing the blues
It's on the telly, it's all over the news
It's COVID, the Covid 19 blues.

Oh I never felt more like running away
But I do my mandatory walk every day
Cos of COVID, the Covid 19 blues.

What would we do without Zoom calls
For Christmas, Birthdays, meetings and all
There'd be nothing left for us to do
But cry, cry, cry over the Covid blues.

Oh I haven't tried TIK TOK, but maybe some day
Our 'Front Line Heroes' are leading the way
Against COVID, the Covid 19 blues

Oh the 'Vaccine's' here, hip hip hooray
Maybe soon 'Goodbye' to COVID we'll say
Yes COVID, the Covid19 blues

But until then, what can we do?
Just keep singing the Covid 19 blues
It's COVID, It's got me 'Singing The Blues'
'Yeah'!!

Mystery Christmas Parcel

Catherine Dwyer

In the lead-up to Christmas, I was taking receipt of Amazon parcels on behalf of my brother, who works in Munich. He was due home the week before the holiday (taking Covid tests and self-isolating before and after leaving Germany I hasten to add).

One day I heard the porch door opening and closing. Amazon delivery, thinks I, and sure enough there was a cardboard box on the floor of the porch. I bent down to pick it up.....and couldn't. I eventually managed to drag it up the step and into the hall to the bottom of the stairs. It was marked for my brother's attention, so I rang and asked him what on earth he had ordered. It's a secret, he said. Well your secret is staying at the bottom of the stairs until you get here, said I.

My mind went into overdrive trying to guess what it was. I settled on a safe for drilling into the concrete floor of the garage. Why not? It seemed heavy enough.

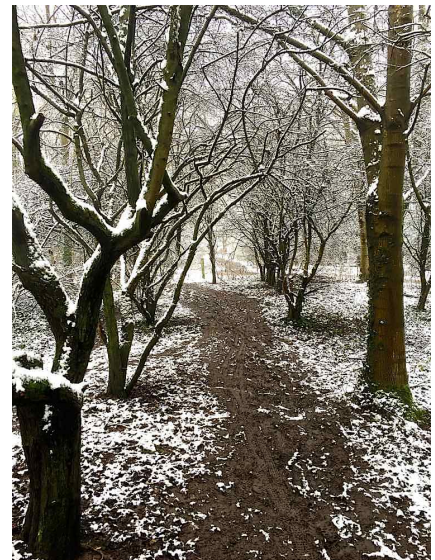
Christmas duly arrived and one of my presents from him was the hardback version of Hilary Mantel's *The Mirror and the Light*, which I was thrilled about. When I'd opened my present he left the room and returned with a cardboard box which he proceeded to empty on to the floor.

Five more hardback copies of *The Mirror and the Light*! The mystery of the heavy box was solved. The mystery of why six were sent has not been fully explained by Amazon, however, but they didn't want them back. Thank you Mr Bezos, but what do we do with them? Whatever we want apparently.

So I have decided to offer them up for sale at £10 each (full retail price £25, Amazon around £15) and donate the money raised to the Macmillan Cancer Support organisation. I have sold two through the Cheadle Library book club, and have another three available. If you're interested please call me on 0161 428 5621 or 07599 946533. First come, first served.

New Year's Eve walk along the Mersey

Lesley Witton



Like many of you, I'm sure, I decided to keep a journal when we first went into lockdown as I thought this would be one of the most interesting times of my life and it would be worth recording how it developed.

In early March we were not expecting the coronavirus outbreak to affect us significantly, but on 6th March it was reported that someone who had attended Gatley Medical Centre had been diagnosed with Covid-19 and the committee decided that we should cancel the monthly meeting due to take place on the following Wednesday. On the Thursday, the government advice was to self-isolate for 7 days if you experienced a high temperature and persistent cough. From that point meetings and activities were cancelled right left and centre, but I have to confess that at the time I felt that some of the restrictions were rather extreme.

Then in the following week, Boris Johnson announced that social contact in pubs and restaurants was to be avoided and I realised that it was now time to take social distancing seriously. We were told that 20,000 deaths would be a good outcome if all restrictions were adhered to. The Gatley community set up a help group and leafleted the whole village with the offer to help the elderly and the self-isolating with shopping and the collection of prescriptions etc. Schools were closed and public examinations were cancelled and many people worked from home.

WhatsApp, Skype and Facetime came into their own in maintaining contact with friends and family and before long many of us discovered Zoom to hold meetings.

On Monday 23rd March we entered full lockdown and could only leave our homes for four reasons. The sunny weather during spring made the lockdown easier and we enjoyed our daily walks and did lots of gardening. We all put rainbows and teddies in our windows to show our determination to stay positive and came out onto our doorsteps on Thursday evenings to clap in appreciation of the work of the NHS.

It was also my intention to compile a photo journal to record family activities and what was going on in the wider community over the year, so I saved my photos in monthly folders so that I could plan my book.



In April the Prime Minister was admitted to hospital and ended up in intensive care, which brought home that the virus can affect anyone. Easter holidays were cancelled, but the weather was fine and we were fortunate to be able to enjoy the sun in our gardens. When we were allowed to meet outdoors in groups of six, we had committee meetings in our back garden!

In August we were lucky enough to meet up with some of our family for the first time since Christmas, but we had to move out of our house so that our son and family could stay for a few days as different households weren't allowed to mix indoors. By this time my Dad had been admitted to a care home, so we moved into his house for the weekend!

Christmas was very different for everyone and Allan and I had our festive lunch on our own for the first time in 51 years of marriage! We still had the traditional meal with all the trimmings and pulled crackers, told silly jokes and wore paper hats! Later our youngest daughter and family called round and we had a Zoom chat with the rest of the family.

In November I had finally ordered a 100 page photobook. The next few weeks were taken up with organising and editing my large collection of photos and then uploading them to my book. I really wanted to cover the whole year and I completed it just after Christmas and sent it off for printing.

It was with great excitement that I opened the package that arrived in January and examined my book. I hope it will be of interest to the family in future years when we can look back on the events of 2020.



Editor's note: anyone who wishes to can zoom in to read the majority of the text on the Photobook pages.

The Threads of our Lives

Rosaleen Davies

The silken thread glides, languorously, through time.
 Heedless of our hopes and desires.
 Sneaking silently around us.
 Invisible, but always there.

Weaving, weaving, forever weaving.

Its job is to intertwine all that we encounter.
 Be it other souls or a breathless adventure.
 Seamlessly it melds us together.
 Creating a picture of our lives.

Then comes our twilight, when we are ready to leave.
 And we think the thread will snap.
 But, unbeknownst to us, our link cannot be broken.
 For, the silky thread continues on its way.

Weaving, weaving, forever weaving.

Weaving, weaving, forever weaving.

When we come into the world, we think the cord is cut.
 But, the thread has formed, intact.
 Connecting us, inexorably, to the world.
 To our experiences, our achievements, our defeats.

Sinuously snaking its way into our descendants.
 As it did through our ancestors before us.
 Weaving the tapestry of our very existence.
 To be remembered by all who come after.

The Cure

Alma Gardner, 1994

This poem is taken from the book of Alma's writing produced for her 90th Birthday.

Has sly-boots got your job again,
 the one you taught him how to do?
 The pressure's on; your love life's off,
 And several bills are overdue?

Hang on! You need a pussy cat!
 Who for just a saucer of cream
 Gives all her love unquestioning
 To purrsuade you back to self-esteem.

All night long you toss and turn,
 Seek in vain a ray of hope!
 Your ulcer gives you acid burn;
 You're at the very end of your rope -

A man can be content possessed
 By soft-pawed, feline gentleness.



Have you ever heard that saying, "If you remember the Sixties, then you weren't there"? Well, I do remember the Sixties, and I *was* there. Maybe the saying came from the notion that everyone was in a haze of drugs in that period.

I started attending Manchester College of Building in 1964 at the age of sixteen. Things have changed in Manchester over the years, buildings demolished and roads closed and diverted. However, in 1964 at the junction of Quay Street and Hardman Street there stood St John's Business College, and behind it was the College of Building.

In my first week at college I noticed a fellow who attended St John's. He stood out because he had a large black beard, wore a green anorak and drove round in a green Mini Moke. It was Dave Lee Travis. DLT had also just taken over from the now notorious Jimmy Savile as resident DJ at the Ritz ballroom on Oxford Road.

At that time Top Of The Pops was being broadcast from a converted church on Parrs Wood Road in Didsbury. There were many clubs and cellar clubs in Manchester at that time. Beat City, Oasis, Bodega, Mr Smith's, Jungfrau and The Twisted Wheel, to name but a few. I never actually went to The Twisted Wheel because it was rumoured that drugs could be bought there, and I was afraid of getting a spiked drink and becoming addicted. Years later, a relative told me that there were drugs at The Twisted Wheel, but one had to be determined to search out the dealers. It wasn't blatant or on open show. Perhaps the London scene at the time was more liberal, hence the opening saying.



Mentioning a few other music venues in and around Manchester, there was the Student Union, the Ardwick Apollo, Stamford Hall in Altrincham, The Manor Lounge in Stockport and The Bamboo Club in Hazel Grove. Also, Woodford Community Centre held a monthly "Jazz Northwest" where the likes of Kenny Ball, Acker Bilk and Chris Barber could be seen live.



At The Bamboo Club (Beeley's Café by day) in the mid sixties I saw a then unknown American group called "James Brown and his Famous Flames". In 1965 a relatively unknown singer had been booked for some time to play at The Manor Lounge. The Manor Lounge was at the junction of the A6 and Bramhall Lane opposite the Blossoms Hotel. The song "It's Not Unusual" was released in early 1965 and catapulted Tom Jones into the limelight. Honouring the booking Tom appeared at The Manor Lounge, but so many fans turned out to catch a glimpse of him that the A6 was blocked for a while until the police took charge.

Back in Manchester my future wife saw The Hollies and Chuck Berry at the Student Union, and memorably, The Beatles at the Apollo. Most people by now have seen the grainy black and white clips of The Beatles performing at the Cavern Club in Liverpool. Many of the Manchester cellar clubs were very similar. Brick walls with a smoky atmosphere and clubbers tightly packed in. One could reach out and touch the performers at the front. Beat City and some other clubs were also open at lunchtime, where resident DJs would play the charts.

Well known acts played in these clubs in the early sixties, and it wasn't until The Beatles played at Shea Stadium in the US that the big arena tours started to flourish. I remember seeing The Kinks and The Who at evening sessions in the cellar clubs. There was no rushing up to the acts and screaming, everyone just enjoyed themselves. Looking back, the most surprising thing was that some of the cellar clubs sold only coffee, cola and cordials. NO alcohol. Nobody came in already tanked up with alcohol for the night, nor did they collapse outside on the street at the end of the evening.



Back at the College of Building, we frequented the Victoria Hotel on Hardman Street at lunchtimes. Pat Phoenix (Elsie Tanner of *Coronation Street*) could often be seen at the cocktail bar. Walking up and down Hardman Street and Quay Street, one would often see "Celebs" of the day heading to and from Granada Studios. Many pop stars of the day would go to Granada to record interviews. We passed Allan Clarke of The Hollies on Hardman Street, and he graciously gave us his autograph. There were no bodyguards or paparazzi following the stars around, just the likes of old Albert Tatlock (*Coronation Street*) trudging up to Deansgate to do a bit of shopping, unhindered by any fans wanting a "selfie".

Happy Days!

The Big Snowfall



The night of the big snowfall - 20th January (Barbara Joyce)

The following morning in the Wittons' garden



23rd January in Hollyhedge Park

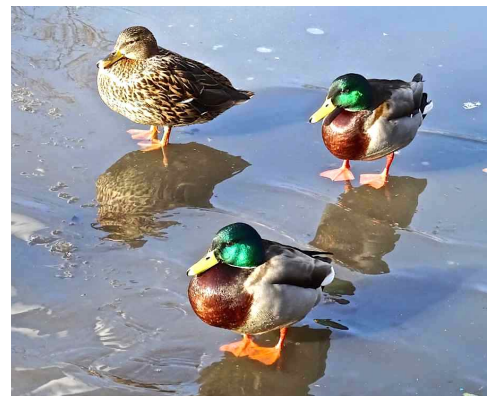
Birds at Cheadle Royal Business Park



Ducks in a row (not ducks really, but Canada Geese, *Branta canadensis*)



Real ducks in a row (Mallards, *Anas platyrhynchos*) ...



... skating on thin ice

GROUP NEWS

Book Group 1

Lesley Witton

We have been meeting monthly via Zoom since October and it has been lovely to see each other, if only virtually! In addition to reading whatever we found on our shelves we have covered the topics of Booker Prize Winners, Black Writers and Ageing!

On 10th February some of our Group, together with other friends, met outside Homebeck House to wish one of our members, Alma Gardner, a happy 90th birthday through her window.



Book Group 2

Tina Kelly

At the Book Group 2 Christmas meeting, each reader brought an item from their own recommended Christmas booklist. These that follow are chosen particularly as providers of much needed uplift, inspiration, comfort or escapism in our current Covid-beset times.

<i>Some Tame Gazelle</i>	by Barbara Pym	First novel, clever and funny.
<i>Unsung Hero</i>	by Tom Crean	An Antarctic Survivor. Factual account of the adventures of a modest Irishman. He was the valued heroic companion of Scott of the Antarctic. An inspiring man deserving of recognition.
<i>Us Against You</i>	by Frederick Bachman	A novel with a big heart. Could make you laugh and cry.
<i>Redhead by the side of the Road</i>	by Anne Tyler	From <i>A Good Read</i> (Radio 4)
<i>Last Seen Wearing</i>	by Colin Dexter	Dated but reliable pleasure by the 'Morse' author.
<i>The Word for World is Forest</i>	by Ursula Le Guin	For those who love science fiction it takes you completely out of this world and its philosophies - desirable at the moment.
<i>The Living Mountain</i>	by Nan Shepherd	A slender book which 'raised my spirits.' Described as 'The finest book ever written on Nature and Landscape in Britain.'
<i>Absolute Proof</i>	by Peter James	Just a very easy read.
<i>River God</i>	by Wilbur Smith	One of his Ancient Egypt-based series of stories by an accomplished storyteller.
<i>The Phone box at the Edge of the World</i>	by Laura Imai Messina	Deals with the notion of having a means of phoning people who have died. 'We all have something to tell those we have lost.'
<i>The Pursuit of Love</i>	by Nancy Mitford	A neglected novel full of humour and wit.



Borrowbox**Tina Kelly**

Have you run out of books to read under lockdown? Have you a hand-held device, e.g. Kindle-Fire, iPad or similar? Why not try Borrowbox, an on-line library service, free to use, run by Stockport Council. Just go onto the council website, look for Libraries section and follow the leads to the Borrowbox service. You can browse what is on offer and reserve or borrow up to 5 e-books at a time. It also has e-audio books. You can download onto your device immediately or when they become available.

To get into Borrowbox, you need your library card number (this is the long one by the bar code) and your password. The library wants to be helpful and tries to sort out any difficulties. You can try ringing if you have any problems on 217 6009. Alternatively phone me on 376 7909 and I will do my best to assist you.

Bridge**Linda and Ian Ewing**

The Bridge group has managed to get 5 of its members online so that we can play together on our usual days of the month and also play social bridge with members of other u3as and others. We were able to do this as a direct result of a letter in the u3a magazine from Steve Carter in Norfolk and our thanks go to him for his infinite patience for his assistance in getting us up and running.

It was tricky to start with and I think we were all nervous when taking our first dip into the waters of online bridge. It gets better with every game and we are able to talk to each other just as if we were in the Church Hall. If anyone else would like to join in please let me know. It has proved to be an excellent addition to days when it is difficult to be doing anything else.

Bus Pass/Day Trips/Holidays**Janet & Pat, Brenda & Yvonne**

Each month Pat and I send an email to the Bus Pass and Day Trippers. Until we can safely get together again we have nothing much to report other than to wish you all well, and to say the Holiday is being kept under review.

Editor's note: The first poem below has been 'doing the rounds' and some of you will have already seen it. It was sent to me by Janet.

As the first quiz in this edition, can you name all the (literary) allusions in the first poem (the work and the author)? The answers are on the last page.

I won't arise and go now, and go to Innisfree
 I'll sanitise the doorknob and make a cup of tea.
 I won't go down to the sea again; I won't go out at all.
 I'll wander lonely as a cloud from the kitchen to the hall.
 There's a green-eyed yellow monster to the north of Kathmandu
 But I shan't be seeing him just yet and nor, I think, will you.
 While the dawn comes up like thunder on the road to Mandalay
 I'll make my bit of supper and eat it off a tray.
 I shall not speed my bonnie boat across the sea to Skye
 Or take the rolling English road from Birmingham to Rye.
 About the woodland, just right now, I am not free to go
 To see the Keep Out posters or the cherry hung with snow.
 And no, I won't be travelling much, within the realms of gold
 Or get me to Milford Haven. All that's been put on hold.
 "Give me your hands," I shan't request, albeit we are friends
 Nor come within a mile of you, until this trial ends. Anon

Sent by Judi Marsden

Thirty days has September,
 April, June and November.
 Unless a leap year is its fate,
 February has twenty-eight
 But all the rest have three days more,
 Excepting January,
 which has six thousand,
 one hundred and eighty-four

Brian Bilston

German**Marianne Owen**

Since last summer most of our monthly meetings have taken place via Zoom. That has meant that we have lost a few members of our class. We hope that this will only be temporary. To give you an example, our January session was very well prepared by Leena Kirk. About a week before our lesson she put some homework in the post. Each student received a different picture from a magazine to talk about. She also sent small pictures suitable to play a Zoom game with and a few pages from an illustrated book for translation during the lesson. It all worked well enough, but we still hope to go back to normal as soon as possible. Normal is face to face from 10 till 12 on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Taking it in turn to be the host or hostess and thus be responsible for the content and smooth running of the lesson.

Gardening

Heather Wilkinson

The gardening group usually start their year off with a quiz. As many of us during the lockdown have been spending more time in our gardens and green spaces we thought you might like to share it with us. Have fun and good luck! The answers are on the last page.

Garden Quiz

1. Which famous play contains the line "*That which we call a rose by any other word would smell as sweet?*"
2. Which one of the following people does not have a rose cultivar named after them?
Agatha Christie, Oprah Winfrey, Michaelangelo, Steffi Graf, Tess of the d'Urbervilles
3. What plant am I? I am the national flower of Belgium, Bhutan & Poland. I am a herbaceous plant. I am used variously as a symbol of sleep, peace & death.
4. Scoleciphobia is the fear of which common garden creature?
5. What crop has varieties that share their names with an ancient city in Israel & the shape of the world?
6. Three anagrams of flowers to solve: swornfuel aspetition omenspent
7. What material is produced from *Quercus suber* - a member of the oak family - and used around the world?
8. Foxgloves & wallflowers are often called biennials. What does this mean?
9. *Spencer* and *Grandiflora* are cultivar families of which popular annual?
10. Who is the patron saint of gardeners?

Lunch-time Concerts for free

Barbara Wingard

Chethams made a good start back in March with very interesting recitals by young artists from their own homes but this came to an end in July. Likewise the university and the college have nothing on offer. For our small group listening to YouTube is not the same!

Singing for Pleasure

Barbara Wingard

It's nearly a year now since our last Singing for Pleasure session and it still looks as if it will be some time before we return to our usual routine.

However, there is some good news! Ian with his voice, guitar and his amazing repertoire will soon be starting up Zoom folk song sessions.

Some members of the choir have already taken part in the online singing sessions From Couch to Chorus from Opera North and the Self-Isolation choir. Articles by Keith Harris and Helene Adam earlier in this Newsletter convey their rewarding experiences. Do have a look into these programmes if you are interested.



As a reminder of better times, here is Barbara Wingard conducting the Singing for Pleasure Group in a rousing rendition of the Hallelujah Chorus for our 2017 Christmas Concert

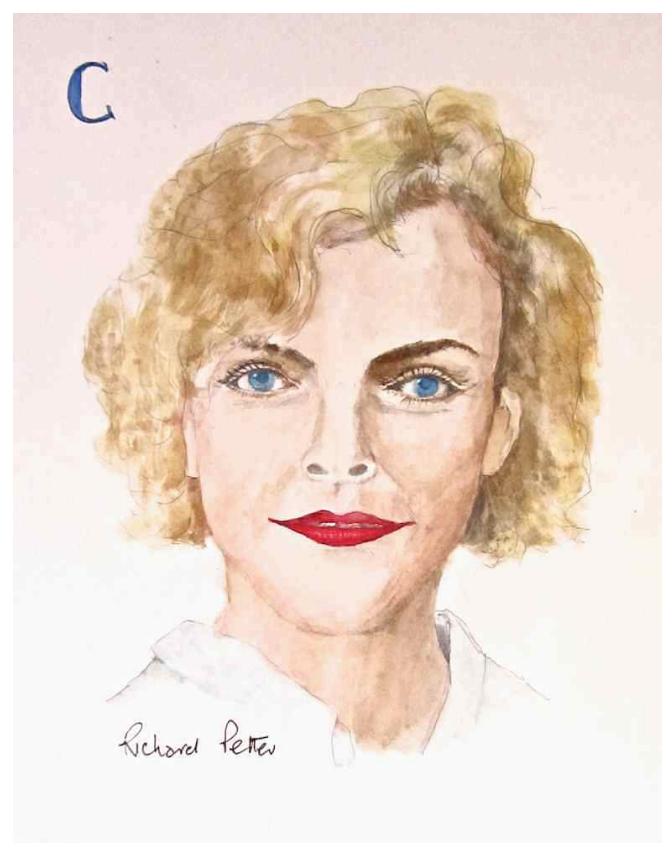
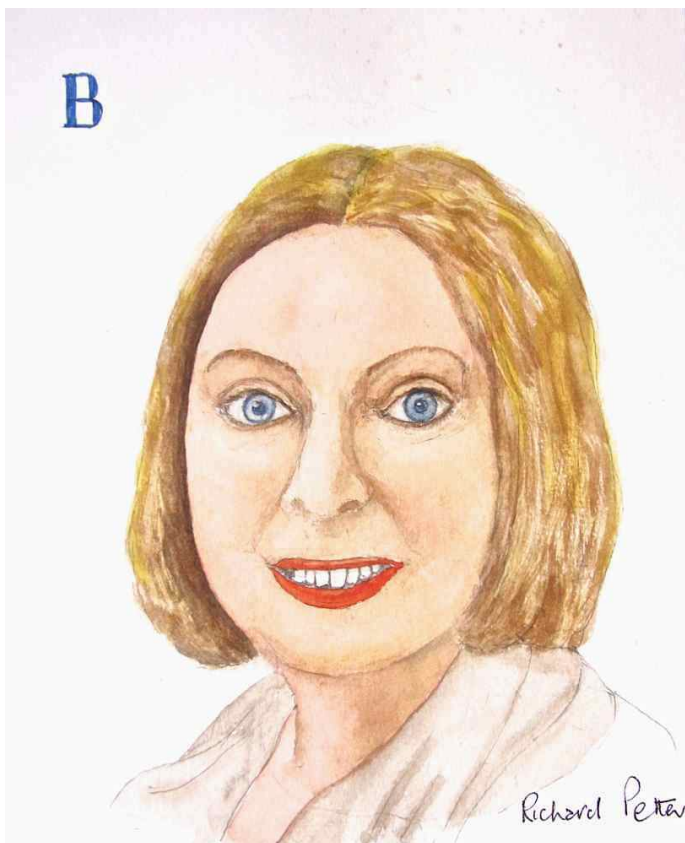
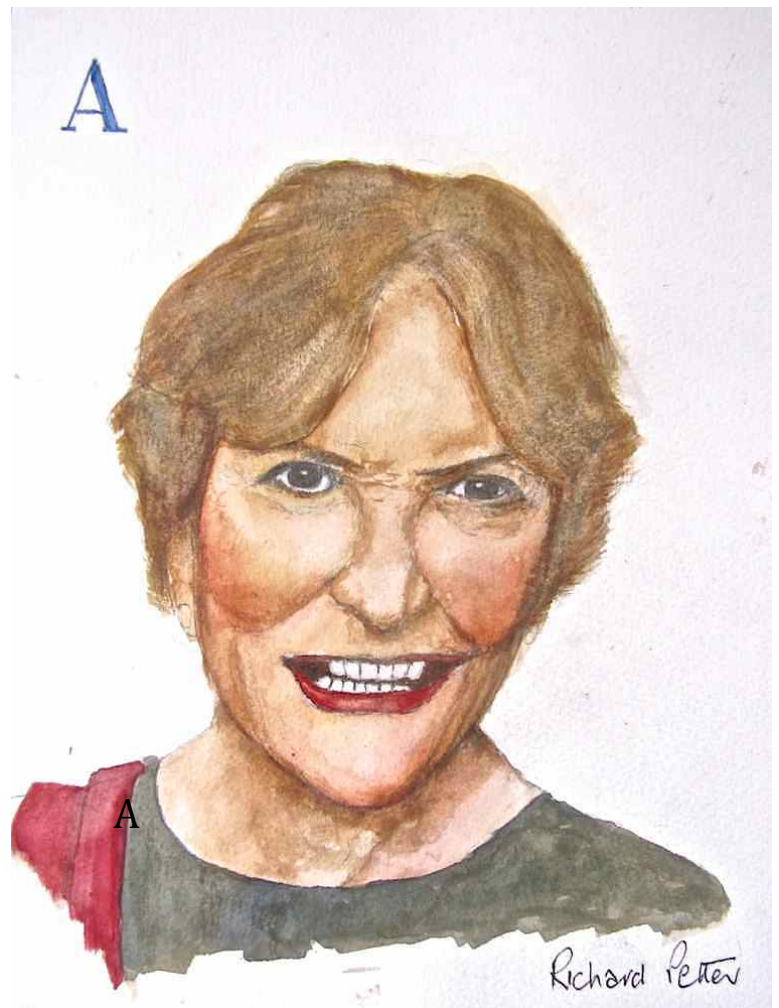
Editor's note: Huge thanks once again to Richard Petter for sending three more splendid portraits for us to enjoy.

The third quiz in this issue is: Can you identify who they are? They are all 'local ladies of distinction'.

Also, thanks to Linda Corry who took the photographs of the paintings and sent them to me.

As last time, I got just two of them, A and C.

The answers are on the last page.



Our good news is that we have managed to meet up, on Zoom, every week since the March lockdown. Not only have we kept up with our Spanish but we have got to know each other better. Without our weekly session, I know that I, for one, would have given up. As it takes time to plan and prepare each session, members of the group are now volunteering to lead the meeting. This has helped me enormously.

One of the exercises we have been doing is to find the answer to clues that give a word beginning with a certain letter. Last week it was Spanish words beginning with the letter O. I got the clues from Paul who leads the Poynton group but now we are making up our own. Here are 10 clues for you to give it a try.

Editor’s note (for slow people like me!): The idea is to give the Spanish word beginning with the letter at the start of each item (A to J). My only words of Spanish are ‘dos cervezas grandes por favor’, but I managed to get 4 of them right (the English words, not the Spanish!). The answers are on the last page.

10 palabras en español encontrar

- A. El contrario de nada.
- B. Un grupo de islas en el Mar Mediterráneo.
- C. No está abierto.
- D. No es fácil.
- E. Animal enorme con orejas grandes y con nariz en forma de trompa.
- F. No es caliente.
- G. Algo que se compra a buen precio.
- H. Una manera de conseguir el dinero para comprar una casa.
- I. Es donde los fieles siguen la religión de Jesu Cristo.
- J. Se usa para lavar.

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Some early signs of Spring



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Theatre

Chris Bester

Living next door to an actress who takes part in local productions, I am constantly reminded of how much I miss the enjoyment provided by our local theatres. If government fulfils its promises, who knows we may be seeing a return to productions in Autumn. I will be in touch then.

Meanwhile, we have to rely on visual media and finding something to watch is quite a task unless it is American/violent/ involving drugs and vices in all their gaudy multiplicity.

You can go on Channel 4 and get *Walter presents* serials on there from across Europe which can be absorbing. I have particularly enjoyed *Seaside Hotel*, a cheerful, colourful Danish production and worth a browse. I also liked *CAIN*, a French production involving a wheelchair detective.

If you have Netflix, *LUPIN* is very popular. It is a serial based on the stories of a French ‘Gentleman Thief’, Arsene Lupin, (similar to Raffles and Flambeau), updated to modern day. Another frothy French serial is *Call my Agent* and features real French film stars playing themselves.

On Netflix film, I have particularly enjoyed the following, again avoiding anything too ‘dark’. *The Two Popes*, *Bridge of Spies*, *Enola Holmes*, *State of Play*, *The Post*, *The Imitation Game*, *Eye in the Sky*. Hope to see you in better times.

Long Walks

Allan Witton

Our temporary plan of replacing our regular walks on the third Friday (average about 12 people) with more frequent walks at irregular intervals for groups of up to 6, has been frustrated by tighter lockdowns, and we have managed to fit in just one, on 15th December. This was a local walk through the green spaces around Gatley and Cheadle: Gatley Hill, Cheadle Royal, Bruntwood Park, Brookfields Park, Cheadle Ginnels, Abney Hall Park, Cheadle Cemetery and Gatley Carrs - 7½ miles before lunch!



On Gatley Hill



In Bruntwood Park



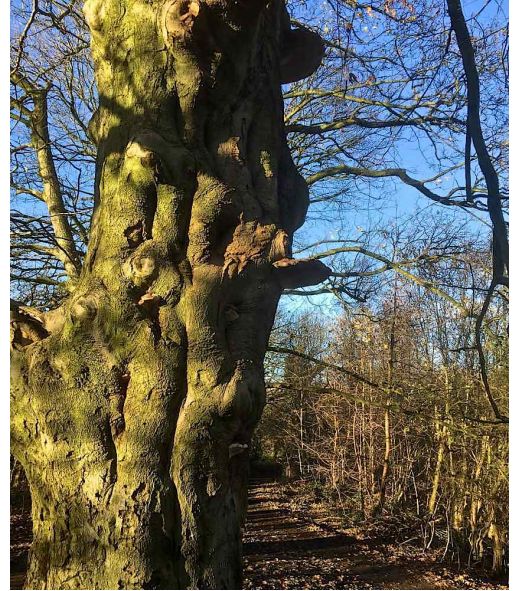
At Cheadle Royal



Escaped parrot in Brookfields Park



Coffee stop in Abney Park



Knarled tree trunk in Abney Park



At the viewing platform by the pond on Gatley Carrs, with a rare sighting - of Allan in trousers!

The recent snow reminds me of my favourite U3A winter walk, from Hayfield in January 2016.



On the shoulder of Mount Famine, with Kinder Downfall and Kinder Low End on the skyline

Margret Broadhurst

One of our members, Margret Broadhurst, sadly passed away in December and her son Dominic told us how much she had enjoyed being part of our U3A. This is part of his eulogy read at her funeral, which he wanted to share with us.

Margret was born as Margret Maria Schwemin in Iserlohn Germany in May 1938, the third child of four to Lucien and Martha Schwemin, following on from the births of sister Gertrud and brother Alfons. Her little sister Ulla was born in 1942 with the family now complete.

Although things were tough at times, especially in the post war years, she was lucky to grow up in a loving and stable family unit, with a strong devotion to the Catholic faith underpinning their family life. Although she moved to England, her strong links with her German family remained to the very end and our family enjoyed many happy visits to the country and our relatives over the years.

She both enjoyed and blossomed at school, thriving at her subjects, especially maths and languages. It was her aptitude in languages that led to Margret taking on a job as a telephone receptionist at the local British Army base in Iserlohn, a decision that fundamentally changed her life. At the army base she met the absolute love of her life, her future husband Terry and following their marriage in June 1963 she moved with Terry to England, settling in Cheadle. Their sons Martin and Dominic were born in 1964 and 1967 respectively.

It's fair to say Margret showed great resilience and strength moving to England at such a young age in a time very different from today. These qualities endured throughout her life and helped shape her as the committed person she undoubtedly was. She moved to a new country, needing to adapt to a new culture and way of life, initially over a serious illness, whilst often spending much time alone with a young family as Terry worked shifts. She often worked at several part-time jobs juggling her many responsibilities. This spirit she displayed shone like a beacon throughout her whole life.

They moved into their house in Marrick Avenue in 1972 and enjoyed a strong and happy marriage until Terry passed away in 2011. Fortunately, after they both retired in the late 1990's they were able to share some very lovely years together undertaking many activities, hobbies and holidays. They enjoyed each other's company and that of their many friends to the full. Margret also really appreciated her many activities with groups such as the Elizabeth Gaskell Society and the Cheadle and Gatley U3A, where again she made many new friends and always was willing to try new experiences.

She will be fondly and lovingly remembered by her family and friends as a warm affectionate and engaging person. She wore her heart on her sleeve and showed great passion and commitment in all the relationships she nurtured and displayed great enthusiasm in everything she tried her hand at. She endured a very difficult final year, but this should not take away from all that she achieved and the number of lives she touched in her life.

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Answers to the quizzes

Literary allusions

Editor's note: I recognised most of the references, but being a scientist got only two of authors, Wordsworth and Kipling, and one of the works, *The Skye Boat Song*. All the information was found online.

I won't arise and go now, and go to Innisfree	W. B. Yeats, <i>The Lake Isle of Innisfree</i>
I won't go down to the sea again	John Masefield, <i>Sea Fever</i> *
I'll wander lonely as a cloud	Wordsworth, <i>I wandered lonely as a cloud</i>
There's a green-eyed yellow monster to the north of Kathmandu	Stanley Holloway, based on a poem by Milton Hayes
While the dawn comes up like thunder on the road to Mandalay	Rudyard Kipling, <i>Mandalay</i>
I shall not speed my bonnie boat across the sea to Skye	Sir Harold Boulton, <i>The Skye Boat Song</i>
Or take the rolling English road from Birmingham to Rye.	G. K. Chesterton, <i>The Rolling English Road</i>
About the woodland, just right now, I am not free to go To see the Keep Out posters or the cherry hung with snow	A. E. Housman, <i>Loveliest of Trees</i>
And no, I won't be travelling much, within the realms of gold	John Keats, <i>On First Looking into Chapman's Homer</i>
Or get me to Milford Haven.	Michael Drayton, <i>Milford Haven</i>
"Give me your hands," I shan't request, albeit we are friends	William Shakespeare, <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>

* Spike Milligan's version I must go down to the sea again,
to the lonely sea and the sky;
I left my shoes and socks there -
I wonder if they're dry?

Gardening Quiz

1. Romeo & Juliet
2. Oprah Winfrey
3. poppy
4. worms
5. Artichoke (globe & Jerusalem)
6. sunflower, poinsettia, penstemon
7. cork
8. They grow over two years
9. sweetpea
10. St. Finacre

Portraits Place names refer to their place of birth.

- (A) Dame Joan Bakewell (Hazel Grove),
- (B) Dame Hilary Mantel (Glossop),
- (C) Maxine Peake (Westhoughton).

Spanish words

- | | | | | |
|---------|-----------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| A. Algo | B. Los Baleares | C. Cerradao | D. Dificil | E. Elefante |
| F. Frío | G. Ganga | H. Hipoteca | I. Iglesia | J. Jabón |

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Editor's Note: As I wrote in the last edition, our Newsletters can be only as interesting as the contributions submitted, and I am most grateful to all those who have sent copy for this edition making it very varied, lively and informative.

Please start collecting material now for the next edition.

Allan Witton