



Crawley u3a

Lockdown News 7/21

July 2021

Dear members,

Welcome to the July edition of the Crawley u3a newsletter. An especial welcome to our new members who have joined us since our Open Day last month. We hope you are soon able to meet up with our existing members in person. Table Tennis is back in business (well, it's a bit difficult for them to hold Zoom sessions!!) and has been going from strength to strength with new members appearing weekly. Our energy reserves might not have reached pre-covid levels, but our enthusiasm knows no bounds! Some of us are even improving technically. Come and join Trevor and Dave on Thursdays at 12 noon at St Pauls -access from the car park.

The Quiz Group met in the park last month and hope to do so again, weather permitting!! And of course there are regular Zoom sessions for Book Groups, History, Quiz, Poetry, Earth Matters, Russian, Ukulele and Bamboo Pipes.

Mahjong is restarting shortly with sessions to be held in a member's home and garden until they can return to their regular venue, which they hope to do from 1st September.

Some walking groups have started to organise larger group walks. Please contact the Group Leader for information about any of our groups.

We still hope to resume our group meetings in person in September. Your Group leader will be in touch with further details.

Ambling on!

It has been quite a difficult time for the Amblers as several of our members do not drive and until recently we tried to avoid public transport as much as possible. None the less, we managed to keep going most months with local walks with about 15 members attending on a regular basis. More recently we have ventured out by train and plan to make the most of the summer with coast and country walks – and hopefully pub lunches! Our members are looking forward to life returning to normal and we are planning a full programme from 1st September, fingers crossed!

Phil Light

Out & About 7 fight back against Covid!

As our normal visits to places of interest have been seriously affected by Covid, we have had to adapt and arrange walks and simple days out in order to keep going and remain active as a group. Most of our members have been keen to join in and we have managed to have enjoyable days out, recently visiting Emsworth and then Chichester – and next up – Hastings, for a day at the seaside!

Something different at the end of August, with grateful thanks to Neil and Jackie Hoey and Crawley Croquet Club, we are returning for another Croquet lesson – hopefully followed by a picnic in the park. A very pleasant way to spend August Bank Holiday Monday!

Thank goodness for What's App and Zoom, they have kept us in touch – and provided us with a lot of fun! If you don't use either of them yet, I strongly recommend them, why not give them a try in your group. Phil Light



A combined groups trip to Emsworth

Emsworth is a very popular place for walking and out and about groups and on 13th July, Out & About 5 are linking up with Walkers 1, for what will be, their first trip for well over a year. There are also a number of other group leaders going so who knows – other groups may follow over the summer before planning their programme from 1st September.



Monthly meetings

The July monthly meeting will be via Zoom when Ann Sole will present the second part of her talk about Ecuador.

As you may be aware we normally have an Open Meeting in September where there is an opportunity to meet Group leaders and discover more about their group. This year, this meeting is planned for 8th October so we all have a few weeks to settle back down into meetings.

The **AGM** will be on **12th November** where we will be requiring a new Communications Officer. This role includes promoting the u3a to both our members and to the wider population and oversight of the web site and publications.

Group fees

As most of you are probably aware, the committee have been planning to move away from collecting group subs at meetings and instead, setting an annual charge for room based groups, payable on or soon after membership renewal, with the facility to pay by instalments if required.

This was due to be implemented on 1st September, but in view of the interruption to our activities over the last 15 months, we expect this to be a busy time with groups restarting after a long period of inactivity. We have therefore decided to postpone it, and instead, concentrate on getting Crawley u3a up and running again, hopefully with Covid restrictions well behind us.

Contact details

Last year our membership secretaries worked very hard to bring the Beacon membership database up to date. This exercise is shortly to be repeated. Please reply to the contact email as soon as possible and remember to keep our membership secretaries informed of any changes to your contact details eg address, phone number, next of kin etc. They can be contacted on membership@crawleyu3a.org.uk or 07555 021879.

Coffee morning

We held another virtual coffee morning last month and although not as well attended as the first one we all had a very good chat! Topics discussed included marmalade, the poems of AA Milne, regaining fitness post lockdown and the perils of internet shopping. No, not the danger of being scammed but that awful moment when your Tesco order arrives and you realise that instead of 8 carrots, you ticked the box for 8 bags of carrots! It seemed it was a very common mistake.

Zoom talks

There will be SUN Zoom talks on:

Saturday 31st July at 10.30 - 12pm. Shepherds of the South Downs - their lives and times with Ian Everest. Booking open from 15th July by emailing sunbookings548@gmail.com and stating your u3a.

Saturday 14th August at 10.30 - 12pm. Recycling in West Sussex & National Recycling Schemes with Colin McFarlin. Booking open from 4th August by emailing sunbookings548@gmail.com and stating your u3a.

George's jam pot

George shared some family history.

"I had this silver jam jar lid engraved recently. My grandmother died when my mother was two and my grandfather died when my mother was eleven. She and her younger sister went into an orphanage. Occasionally the wife of the local vicar would invite a group of girls to have tea at the vicarage. My mother said that the vicar's wife would ask them, "What would you like for tea girls?"

And they would reply, "Strawberry jam please."



Learn, Laugh, Live

The motto of the u3a can certainly be applied to our experience of joining the Russian group!

The group evolved during History group's exploration of Russian history, when Janet Sully, quite the linguist, suggested setting up a Russian group. Although I'm not a member of history, Clive is and we decided it would be a bit of fun to give the sessions a go.

The learn element of the motto chipped in right away because of course Russian is based on the Cyrillic alphabet which bears little resemblance to our own. However with a thoughtfully provided pronunciation guide we were soon enjoying decoding a list of Russian names. And then the laugh element came in... just attempting the pronunciation made me laugh especially when Janet referred to some phrases as being jaw crackers! We progressed on to numbers, (I liked the one where 70 could be translated as seven ten), days of the week, months and seasons as well as learning some basic phrases, grammar and vocabulary. We were able to listen to conversations in Russian (with English translations available) and to live the Russian experience through talks several members gave about their various trips to Russia and its predecessor the USSR during different periods of history.

Although only a short course I'm glad we indulged in it as (in the words of our seven year old grandson) we really grew our brains and it made us think!

It has revived an interest in languages for me and I have now signed up for a Duo lingo course in Italian. My ambition is to enjoy Inspector Montalbano without the subtitles!

Nature at its finest

A mother and her cygnets at Tilgate Park about 2 weeks ago . The family were grazing on the Lake shore when it started to drizzle. Without any hesitation the cygnets dashed off to see mum and get some protection from the weather ! Could this be were the expression of "take you under my wing "comes from .

Thanks to Roz and Bryan for the photo



Walkers Extra walk

Walkers Extra have been very proactive in organising walks as restrictions ease. A group of ladies chose what was probably the hottest day of the year to undertake a walk from Ifield Mill to the Frog and Nightgown and back. Luckily the pub provided excellent sandwiches and lashings of tea to fortify us for the return trip.

We were then treated to a 6 mile circular walk from the Holmbush Inn.



18 walkers set out on the route which took us through the peaceful countryside (well it was till 18 walkers who hadn't met up for months passed by!!) towards the Lamb....but we didn't go in!

We continued on round through some vigorously growing crops where we nearly lost some shorter members of the party, back across the railway line (cautiously looking both ways!!) to the Holmbush Inn.



14 of us stayed to enjoy a well earned pint and home cooked food under the awning in the garden. It was great to see so many old friends and catch up with their news. We're all looking forward to the next walk at the end of July which takes us to the Loxwood area and our regular 4th Thursday walks are planned to the end of the year.

Earth Matters

Although a new group, we already have an enthusiastic following each month. In addition to discussions on local recycling efforts we have covered issues such as the depletion of nutrients in soils, more environmentally friendly ways of farming, reducing water run-off and the effects of droughts. One farmer described his plentiful population of worms as his principal workers. We have learnt how to assess the nutritional state of your soil by 'soiling your undies' i.e burying cotton underwear in your soil to see how quickly they are digested by the soil invertebrates.

We have discussed single use plastic bottles. Whilst we know that internationally we need to reduce the use of these, we also realised that for some countries with prolonged droughts and no reliable clean water supply, these are a lifeline. We need to improve the worlds water supply infrastructure. We also saw pictures of a man in Iguazu, Argentina, whose Casa de Botellas (House of Bottles) made almost completely of recycled plastic water bottles including the bed, furniture, light fittings, and children's toys for sale, provided his only income from paying tourist tours. People in the townships in Africa make an income from selling decorated bottle bags.



Closer to home we plan visits to Ford recycling site and a sewerage treatment plant (maybe even an extinction rebellion event!).

If you would like to join us, we hold Zoom meetings at the moment. The next meeting will be on Friday 16th July at 2.30pm when we will be considering batteries and all matters relating to chemical reuse/disposal. If you would like our meeting write ups for your own study let me know and I will add you to our distribution list.

Happy recycling.

Ann Sole 01293 883272

History Group

Crawley u3a history group has met by Zoom since November 2020 when they researched the Ottoman Empire. They swiftly moved on to Russia in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries where a lot of time and effort was put in by group members in researching and producing many essays on the subject. These were discussed at the Zoom meetings and circulated to members unable to attend. With the amount of work involved they have now decided to bring these works into one document for circulation to group members and potentially the wider membership.

A little humour

Hey, come over here," hissed a voice. Looking around, the man couldn't see anything except for an old, mangy greyhound. "Yes, over here," said the greyhound. "Look at the state of me! I'm stuck in this shed when I should be out winning more races. I was a triple champion in my time, you know?" The man was dumbfounded. A talking dog! He could become famous! Everyone would want to see it. He started to dream about the millions he could make. He went to look for the dog's owner. "I'd like to buy your dog," he said. "Is it for sale?" "The owner shook his head, "Nah mate. You don't want that old thing." "Oh, but I do!" persisted the man. "I'll give you £100 for it." "All right, fine. But let it be known I think you're making a great mistake." "Why's that?" the man asked. "The dog's a liar. He's never won a race in his life."

Alternative definitions

Doughnut- an eccentric millionaire

Elbow- Spanish archer

Excrete- no longer a Greek island

Extractor fan- one who used to like farm machinery

Abacus- Swedish swear word

Fondue- affectionate sheep

Granary - old folks' home

Intense- camping

Overrate- nine

Parasites - view from the Eiffel Tower

That's all for this month. Please keep sending me items of interest, photos ect for inclusion in future publications.

Jan Morris Crawley u3a Communications newsletter@crawleyu3a.org.uk