

DONCASTER



Registered Charity No. 1074577

June - July 2020

From the Chair



When I agreed to take on the role of Chairman of DU3A, little did I imagine as I came to the end of my two years in post that the whole country would be in the grip of a pandemic that was seriously affecting the way of life of everyone in this country – indeed in most countries in the world.

I am pleased to say that the committee have continued to meet regularly using Zoom. This has enabled us to try and manage contact with our members. We are particularly concerned to ensure that members who are not on email and are on their own are contacted to see if they need any assistance. Thanks to Beacon I am able to email members and pass on information particularly about local shops who are delivering. We also initiated a Group Leaders meeting using Zoom – it was lovely to see everyone and find out how the different groups are coping. Some are using email to set tasks and share information, a number are now using Zoom and are meeting more regularly than before as they have fewer things to do with the rest of their time!

I have been asked more than once if DU3A intend to reduce their subs this year as we are not able to provide our usual service! I need to explain that a large amount of your annual subscription goes to the National organisation, the Third Age Trust, in three tranches – subs (used to be called capitation), a subscription to the magazine Third Age Matters, and a charge per head for using Beacon. The majority of the remaining monies collected in annual subs pays for printing – the newsletter, publicity material and membership cards. The monthly General Meeting is self-financing through the entrance fee and raffle and of course all groups and trips are self-financing. This means that there is currently no saving on the annual subscription that can be passed on to members.

We do not know when we will be able to meet face-to-face and as we are all near or at a vulnerable age (according to the Government) – because we have to be retired or semi-retired to join – then until there is a vaccination available it is unlikely we will be able to safely meet together. The Charity Commission website makes it clear that we can postpone the AGM even though that is going against our constitution (we didn't think to write anything about pandemics into the constitution!). The existing committee have agreed to stay in post for the time being.

The shape of the committee will change at the AGM. Derek Marriott has agreed to stand as Treasurer and has been attending committee meetings, as has Christine Curtis who will start to take over the role of Membership Secretary when Jill Laming stands down after 8 years of sterling work in the role. Chris Woolven will stand as Chairman and Diane Woolven will stand as Business Secretary. Jess Parkinson has done a great job as Speaker Finder

for the last 2 years, but preferred to do that outside the committee, however, Paula Harmer has agreed to take over and also come onto the committee. All of this is of course subject to votes at the AGM, when we are in a position to hold it.

I know many of you have already renewed your membership and I thank you for that. If you were wondering how to renew, your options are by post or bank transfer.

For post – look for the form on page 17/18 and send a cheque to Jill, with a SAE. (Details of where to send the form and payment is on **page 26**).

For bank transfer the sort code and account number can be found on **page 26**. Please put your name in the reference so we know who has paid.

For those who opted to collect their newsletter at the General Meeting [that option is no longer available](#). If you would still like to receive a paper copy of the newsletter - but this year posted to you - then please [arrange to pay an additional £4 for the postage](#).

I guess those of you, like me, who are lucky enough to have a garden have been enjoying the beautiful weather in April. It does make this lockdown more tolerable. It is good to know that we have so many cheery people in U3A who keep in touch with one another. I'm certainly looking forward to being able to meet again and I'm sure you are too – let us hope it is not too long. Keep safe.

Wendy Hattrell



WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new members

J M Brown, Bill Cofield, Bernard Gage, Elizabeth Gage, Sylvia James, Christine Lee, Yvonne McGowan, David Skelton, Lynn Snowden, Shirley Purser.

August - September Newsletter

Articles for the August/September newsletter need to be received by

Wednesday 1st July.

Please send news of group activities, articles, photographs, etc. to du3anewsletterbmt@btinternet.com

Cover photo : From the bridge in Whitby by Bill Dixon Digital Photography Group

GROUPS - UPDATES / NOTICES

INTEREST GROUPS

All meetings are cancelled until further notice. Contact group leaders to find out if alternative arrangements have been made for meetings.

GENERAL MEETINGS

All meetings are cancelled until further notice. The Chair of DU3A will be in touch with you when meetings start again.

CARD MAKING

The group leader for the Card Making group has now stepped down as leader. Although, at present, the group cannot continue due to Coronavirus, it will not continue in the future without a leader. If you feel you could lead this group in the future please contact either Janet or Vanessa.

PROPOSED NEW GROUPS

To think about for the future: **UKELELE** and **TABLE TENNIS**. If you are interested in joining either of these groups and would like more information please contact Vanessa, the Groups Co-ordinator. Go to the **Contacts** page, click on **Group Co-ordinator** and leave a message.

To Zoom or not to Zoom that is the Question

Technology has never been more important and those without technology are becoming second class citizens. I know that is something a large number of our members do not wish to hear, either because they don't have the internet at home or don't possess a smart phone, or if they do they struggle to use them.

We have been using Zoom for committee meetings and WhatsApp to pass information between committee members. I know some groups have used Zoom for meetings and now have more frequent but shorter meetings and are really enjoying that. It is easy to use and you can use it to put information up on screen or use the white board to write on for all to see. We recently had a Group Leader meeting using Zoom and for many that was their first experience of using anything like Zoom. I would encourage you to have a go. If your Group leader doesn't feel confident then perhaps another group member could help out. Even if you can't do your activity by Zoom – e.g. Walking Cricket, you can still 'meet' for a chat and a catch-up.



For some the potential cost is a barrier, but do you realise how much the prices have dropped? At the time of writing -

Internet to your house

PlusNet have a deal of unlimited Broadband including line rental for £13.58/month.

If you are on Pension Credit, BT offer a BT Basic line rental plus Broadband for £10.07/month. This is a basic deal which offers limited downloads. The BT Basic

deals don't seem to change much in price, but other companies deals come and go so you need to get someone to check for you which are the best deals.

Superfast unlimited Broadband - Shell are offering £17.74/month and TalkTalk £17.95/month.

All the above include line rental but not phone calls.

Smartphones

If you have a family member who can pass you on an older smart phone there are some great Sim only deals. Sim cards are what you put in your phone to make the connection to the mobile phone network. For smartphones there are three parts to the mobile phone networks – calls, texts and data. Most Sim only contracts now offer unlimited calls and texts and the charges increase with the amount of data. If you have a good mobile connection where you live you may not need internet to your house - you can use the mobile network instead.

Lebara (Uses the Vodaphone network)

2GB data £5/month Unlimited calls and texts included

Smarty (Three network)

6GB data £7/month Unlimited calls and texts included

TalkMobile (Vodaphone network)

9GB data £7.88/month Unlimited calls and texts included

Three

Unlimited data calls and texts £18/month

All these are contracts, not pay-as-you-go, and therefore need a credit check, but generally contracts offer much better deals.

After the Lockdown

Work is already underway to develop an App – a piece of software that goes on your smartphone. This app is intended to track your movement and log other people's phones that come near you as you move around. This data is collected on your phone and not centrally. Should you develop Covid-19 then your phone can be used to tell those who have been near you they need to self-isolate until they can be tested. That is as I understand it at the moment, it could change. The more people who carry smartphones and use the app, the more effective this will be as a tool in track and trace which is going to be vital in keeping us all safe.

U3A National

Too often we forget about our National organisation. They have been working hard to spread ideas of different ways of working during the lockdown. The website can be accessed on u3a.org.uk Here you will find a weekly quiz, a golf quiz, maths challenge, U3A Eye which asks you to send in photos on a theme which it then publishes, bird track for all bird watchers, mindfulness, creative writing, Mr Motivator for fitness daily and more. They also publish a monthly newsletter which you can sign up for by going to Home and then Newsletter - it is well worth taking the trouble.

I hope that has given you some ideas of how to keep in touch and keep busy while we wait for the powers that be to develop a vaccine – the only way we will be able to meet again face-to-face with confidence.

Wendy Hattrell

DU3A COMMITTEE NOMINEES



Derek Marriott

My name is Derek Marriott and I have been a member of U3A for just over 2 years. I am currently a member of the Easier French and German groups so my main interest is in languages. My wife and I were planning on joining one of the walking groups but I suppose that will have to wait for a while now.

I qualified as an accountant in 1970 and have spent my career in the public sector moving from transport to mining then part-time in education and the Health Service.

I have been retired for a few years now and my wife and I like to meet up with friends (can you remember when we could do this) and go on holidays. Clearly it's a tough life for some.

I hope to be able to make a worthwhile contribution to U3A but have not yet got to grips with my role of Treasurer since self-isolating makes that a bit difficult.



Paula Harmer

Hello U3A - let me introduce myself.

My name is Paula Harmer, erstwhile headteacher, ten years retired and three years in U3A.

I run a 'Cooking without Meat' group, the content of which speaks for itself, and I attend French and German groups. My husband David runs 'Enjoying Poetry'.

I have recently joined the committee as what Wendy mistakenly calls Speaker Finder, but I'm sure she meant to say SEEKER finder so there may be a Quidditch team in the near future - for those with broomsticks! If she really meant SPEAKER, then look forward to Dylan tribute acts and gardeners!

Well there's two of my main interests! In addition to spending as much time as I can in my beautiful, if chaotic, garden, I paint with pastels, cook and enjoy my two gorgeous dogs and my two very wonderful grandchildren.

Seriously, I'm looking forward to carrying on the established tradition of finding excellent speakers - there really have been some great ones during my time in U3A - a tough act to follow!

Christine Curtis

My name is Christine and I live at Kirk Bramwith. I moved from Northampton two years ago to be nearer my son and love it here. As I am now retired having been a teacher for the major part of my life it no longer mattered where we lived. I first came across U3A after I retired and I met a friend who was telling me about the language course that she was doing and at the time I wished to learn French, so I joined the local U3A and really enjoyed meeting new people. When I came up here not knowing anyone, it was one of the first things I did to join the Doncaster U3A. I now belong to several groups namely Basic and Easier French, Family History, Scottish Dancing, Coffee Quiz Group, Ten Pin Bowling and the Travel Club. I have made several good friends here which has been lovely.



My other interests include playing the piano, which I started only when I retired, and travelling. In fact we have just sold our house in France to give us more time to travel to places and then the virus appeared which has rather thwarted our plans for the moment. However, in previous years, we have managed to travel to many of the European countries and also India, China, and Canada outside Europe. My other interest is writing a book for the grandchildren about my life which will eventually be given to each of them along with a framed Family Tree of their direct descendants.

I am very much looking forward to my new role as Membership Secretary and being able to contribute to this wonderful organisation.

Diane Woolven



DU3A has been part of my life for the last eight years and for the greater part of that time I have been responsible for co-ordinating the monthly calendar. I've been a member of twelve groups and enjoyed every one of them. Due to time constraints I have had to whittle this down to seven. In the past I have been a group leader of four groups but now I concentrate on the Gardening group. Gardening is one of my hobbies along with family history and photography.

I have previously served as secretary for a period of four years, and after a 'rest' am happy to rejoin the committee. In the last few weeks I have launched the Facebook page for DU3A which is proving popular with members.

HISTORY

At the latest History Group meeting we had a absorbing presentation by David Penfold on the Roman Invasion of Britain.

The incursions by Julius Caesar were, David said, just 'fact finding missions'. The main Roman invasion occurred in 43 A.D.



Bust of Claudius

Under the banner of Emperor Claudius, the Romans with their iron discipline pushed up the country defeating attempts by the British tribes to turn them back. Two early leaders emerged, Caractacus and Boudicca. Caractacus was eventually captured, sent to Rome and allowed to spend the rest of his days there peacefully. Boudicca, after early successes, was killed.

The Romans now took over the country, aided and abetted by alliances with some British tribes (Bribes?) The Brigantes of the north were prominent in this!

The Romans left their imprint on the history of Britain, having stayed some 350 years.

Many thanks to David.

Jack Chantry



The Capture of Caractacus
- illustration by Sydney Herbert



Boudicca and her daughters
- statue by Thomas Thornycroft



HISTORY

Times past and History is an absorbing subject for many throughout the land. I prepared a subject a while ago on the importance of the improvements in agriculture alongside the explosion in population at the time of the Industrial Revolution. Great names such as Jethro Tull and Robert Bakewell made great strides in feeding the burgeoning population. It was a time when things got better for numerous people but not for many of course! The irony was for many their plight would get worse as they left the land and moved to overcrowded towns!



Jack Chantry

Robert Bakewell



Jethro Tull

facebook

FACEBOOK

facebook

DU3A now has a Facebook page. It is a private group which means it is only accessible to our members! It is a very good way of keeping in touch with other members of the organisation. We have 50 members so far but numbers are rising weekly. Will you join us?

To join you will need to have a personal Facebook account. Go to www.facebook.com/r.php. Enter your name, email, phone number, d.o.b., and gender. Add a password. Click sign up. Confirm email and phone number.

Once you have an account, type DoncasterU3A into the search bar and it should take you to our page. If you have any problems contact me (contact number inside the back page).

Diane Woolven

Doncaster U3A Stand at Bus Station - Tuesday 10th March 2020

What a day ! It seems a long time ago now when we had our stand at the Doncaster Interchange, even though it was only March - just before the isolation started.

I had 22 members helping on that day, helping to promote Doncaster U3A, giving out leaflets and telling the people of Doncaster about their own experiences with the DU3A. Everyone seemed to enjoy the day and being a part of the Doncaster group.

The following Monday should have been our General Meeting but was cancelled as you know. Some of the committee came down to Church View and were pleased that a few of those we spoke to at the stand came along to join. So our efforts were not wasted. Hopefully enough seeds were planted that day for more to come along when normal services resume.

So thanks to all who came and supported us that day and of course - 'we will meet again'.

Jane Page

STROLLERS

February

Despite all the rain and the cold winds that we had experienced recently, we were again very lucky with the weather for our February walk. We met at the Park Club and pre ordered our lunches before setting off.

We had a group of 26 strollers with some new and welcome faces and set off to walk along the rear of Highfields lake where the fishing landings were still under water from the floods last Autumn. At the bottom of Highfields we crossed the main road and walked towards the Park and Ride turning left to go carefully along a muddy track towards Doncaster Greenway.

As we approached the end of the track, Dave was able to point out what we believe to be the site of the motte and bailey castle that stood there from the 11th century and is recorded in the Domesday Book and makes sense of why that area is called Castlehills.

We then turned along the Greenway and came to a bench, that sadly has been vandalised with paint, commemorating the steam train Flying Scotsman with a model of the train built underneath. What a shame this is where no one sees it as it is a fine bench and could (should) be displayed in a better place. A little further on we needed our wellies as the path disappeared completely under water. For whatever reason, the men decided not to be gentlemen and piggyback the ladies through the water. Good job we are tough! We then came to what could be described as a modern, cast iron totem pole erected by the cycling group and depicting Doncaster through the ages and showing fossils, coalmining, the railways ropemaking and other Doncaster industries. We were very pleased to see this had not been defaced. It was then only a 10 minute stroll back to the Park Club and a freshly cooked lunch which we all enjoyed.

Dave & Pat Burton



Love of Nature photos opposite: taken by Malcolm Johnson

LOVE OF NATURE

March heralded our first meet with Kat at Potteric Carr for our Love of Nature meeting. The title of our event was **Reptiles and Amphibians**.

The hope was that the weather would have been conducive to copious couplings of frogs, toads and newts. Perhaps even a snake or two! Alas, no such luck. A few days prior to our visit the weather had indeed warmed and dried but on that particular morning it felt more like winter again instead of a spring morning.

Not to be daunted though we did head off to Carr Field on the far side of the reserve. Kat helped us discover the habitat of the grass snake, a non-venomous snake that resides readily there. (Potteric Carr is not know for adders). Carr field is as you would expect. It's a field mostly surrounded by trees. It's an area that has recently been managed as a scrub area specifically for habitats for insects, amphibians and reptiles and now it has returned to its natural growth.

Reptiles like the area on the outside of a wooded area. The scrub grass allows them to wake up slowly in the warmth of the sun and then quickly disappear into the trees and thicker undergrowth to hide away.

If you approach carefully you can often see grass snakes warming themselves on the fallen trees around the scrub. We not only didn't see the snakes but we didn't see the froglets that should have been venturing out.

Nature is a very temperamental lady and she wasn't sharing anything that morning. 'We' (Kat) went pond-dipping looking for nymphs, either May or Dragonfly. No luck. No frogspawn or toad spawn but that's not unusual. Potteric has many amphibians jumping and walking around but rarely do you spy frogspawn or toadspawn.



Not to be beaten, Kat took us off to the Discovery Area where we all hunted under logs and boulders for ...anything really, but Kat eventually found a female smooth newt. Obviously female, due to the lack of a bulbous appendage (because it's mating season). We all oohed and ahhed at this tiny frame. The only sighting of either amphibian or reptile!

The morning certainly wasn't wasted though. Kat wouldn't let that happen. Along the walk, in the various areas we visited around the reserve, we discussed signs of spring, checked any animal tracks and noted numerous fungi. Spring is a wonderful, fresh start to the natural world awakening and even though the wet weather had seemed relentless some times earlier in the year, always around the corner is a brand new day. No time is wasted at Potteric Carr. Just because you can't see what you want to see you won't be disappointed at what you do see.

Vanessa Whalley



Welcome to the June/July Culture Page with a difference



I hope you are all managing to stay safe in these difficult and very different times. I hope this gives you some ideas of things you can do whilst staying at home.

BOARD GAMES ETC



If you don't have them you can buy them quite cheaply online or if you're computer savvy there are free online games - Ludo, Chess, Draughts, Backgammon, Snakes & Ladders, Monopoly, Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit, Dominos, Cards, Jigsaws, (for free online jigsaws go to jigsawplanet.com). Most of these games you could do alone by playing as two people.

BOOKS

Don't forget the books. Read alone, read to each other, talk or think about your favourite book and why, use your dictionary to learn a couple of new words every day, read a book that's been on the shelf for years that you've never opened, challenge yourself to read a book in a set time, learn some new facts from your non-fiction books.



DIARY'S AND LOGS



Keep a record of your time in isolation. We are making world history and our descendants will be learning about the Coronavirus in their history lessons. You could give them some real history if you pass it on to your children and grandchildren.

MIND GAMES

Stimulate your memories of past events. You could do this by talking. See if your memory of something is the same as the person in your household (no arguments though!) Take it in turns to look at photos and describe the picture you're looking at to see if your description is good enough to spark a memory. If you're home alone just revel in the memories that will come flooding back. Sit quietly with your eyes closed and think of a place or person and see how your memory will expand that thought.



OUTSIDE



Look and listen to the birds and try to identify them. If you don't have a book there's lots online. See how many different species of bees you can see. Spot a new insect type (we saw a type of hover fly that we had never seen before). Catch up on jobs that you may have been putting off or just enjoy the unusual quiet.

EXERCISE

As much or as little as you like but keep those muscles going.

PLAN

These difficult times will come to an end. Keep a log of the things you want to do once you're free to do so. This could include routine things as well as new ideas. Once this is all over you can look back at your log and see how much you achieved.





KEEP IN TOUCH

Text, email, telephone. There will be people out there who would love to hear from you and exchange experiences of the last few weeks.

Take care DU3A and hopefully the next Culture Page will bring us back to some sort of normality, but in the meantime, I wish you all well and hope you stay safe.

Jess Parkinson



Submitted by Wendy Hattrell:

Culture and History

At the moment there is a burst of offers on screen, some prompted by the lockdown and the closure of theatres, cinemas and museums. I'm going to try and identify some for you.

On the Beeb

- Museums in Quarantine – a series on BBC4, so far there has been Warhol, Rembrandt, Tate Britain and the British Museum.
- Culture in Quarantine – Exhibition Tours - The Clash: London Calling, Art Deco by the Sea and Get Creative at Home, masterclass Antony Gormley
- The Joy of Painting – Bob Ross and American painter shows how he paints his stylised landscapes
- Rossetti – Sex, Drugs and Oil paint
- Pain, Pus and Poison – Dr Michael Mosley on the development of modern medicine - 3 programmes.
- The People's History of Pop – Twiggy celebrates the 60s
- Six Wives with Lucy Worsley and History's Biggest Fibs

At the time of writing all these were available on iPlayer or the BBC website

YouTube This has been a revelation to me. If you have an up-to-date TV you can now show YouTube on the TV.

- The National Theatre have been showing a series of their stage productions that were filmed, I think, for showing in cinemas in their theatre live productions. They stay for a week at a time on YouTube, they are free but they ask for donations. So far I have seen 'One Man, Two Guvnors' with James Corden and Danny Boyle's production of 'Frankenstein' with Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller reversing the roles on two different nights. They have also shown Twelfth Night and Anthony and Cleopatra.
- Andrew Lloyd Webber has been showing the Royal Albert Hall compilation of his music.
- Les Misérables has also made it onto YouTube.
- Opera North's Ring Cycle is there as are various other operas and opera companies – some require a subscription.

Continued on next page

Musings from DU3A members during Lockdown

On Hold

The old school stands silent, the town deserted.
Clocks tick away unused time.
Shadows move across the wall.
Life drifts away.
A glimmer of jail.
A glimmer of hell.

We count our blessings.
The benefit we hope - an appreciation of normal.
But for now wait for better times.
We hang on. We ponder our fate.
Tick bloody tock.

And yet without fail each evening a Thrush sings its head off.
Mocking our solitude and reminding us - that life goes on.

*Denis Marsden
Writers Group*

ENJOYING POETRY

The Enjoying Poetry group was really beginning to flourish before lockdown. We enjoyed a wide variety of poems from a range of different writers and had some great discussions and even better, some great laughs!

Since lockdown I have been circulating poems on a regular basis through Beacon as well as writing to those members who don't have an email address. I have received several ideas from members of poems they like and I have circulated those.

I have had a couple of phone calls too and encourage anybody in the group who would like a chat about poems, life, the lockdown and anything else to call me. (Contact number inside the back cover - page 27)

David Harmer

Continued from previous page

Channel 4 For relaxation I watch Jamie Oliver who managed to film himself after the lockdown started – with the help of his wife Jools. Such enthusiasm for food – I love it.

Channel 4 also have a category called World Drama which contains a number of foreign language films and don't forget Film 4 if you are missing the big screen.

Channel 5 Inside is a Channel 5 Documentary series and includes Inside St Pauls Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, the Old Bailey and The Houses of Parliament. There is also World War 2 in Colour.

I hope you will find something to your liking here, something to make you think and maybe something that could be used in your 'at a distance' U3A Group meetings. Perhaps we need new Groups to cater for the new circumstances we find ourselves in.



After receiving a very inspiring email from Vanessa on March 24th, having just had a really awful day when nothing went to plan, you know the kind of thing I mean, well I picked up my camera and went into the garden. It was coming up to 3 p.m. and the sun had been out all day. It really was a brilliant day. I managed to catch sight of a comma butterfly on my purple flowers, which was a brilliant start. I then walked across to my next door's patch of garlic and spotted some violets as well. Well, by then I was snap happy. I took many of the daffodils and hyacinths which were out and smelling really nice. It was a good time spent in the fresh air. Later in the day a gorgeous thrush came looking for food. My camera was still handy so I took several quick snaps. A couple turned out quite nice.

Anne Windle



FAMILY HISTORY

The Family History group held its third fortnightly meeting on Zoom with the latest subject being Death and Disease. Other topics have been Immigration and Emigration and Scottish and Irish Records but invariably we all get to discuss our own brick walls and discoveries with a bit of humorous banter thrown in. Attendees are a good mix of novice and experienced family historians who help each other and I'm sure in these times help to keep insanity at bay and since Chris Woolven put out an open invite to all DU3A members we've had a few attend who are curious. Any one who is interested is more than welcome to join to see what we do, just contact the group leader by email so she can give you the code.

Dawn Jarvis

Brian Good's Lockdown

Day 1: Tuesday 24th March

As we both like walking and being allowed to with the restrictions imposed we set off from Barnby Dun walking along the canals. The weather was perfect for walking. Other people we met along the walk were self isolating, keeping the permitted distance apart. Everyone we met engaged in conversation with a smile on their face. The route took us across the cricket pitch along to Glass Park. The site had been previously used as a cullet landfill site where glass waste had been deposited for more than 40 years. To make the area safe for community use they had to install a protective covering to prevent the glass from coming to the surface. The whole area was then seeded with native (British) wildflower seeds. The Millennium Green and Wildflower Fields will create a pleasant and colourful scene throughout the summer. They will provide a valuable food supply for local wildlife, including butterflies, insects and small animals and birds. We then carried on to the swing bridge crossing the road, then walked along the canal bank passing under the road bridge. We then carried onto a bridge, crossing over to the other side of the canal passing by the lock gates.

After lunch I sanded down the existing wood panels of the shed. For some weeks I have been repairing the shed with new shiplath panels and revarnishing the new and existing panels as shown in the photo opposite. The door side of the shed is now complete. The right side shows the existing timber panels before repair.

Day 2: Wednesday 25th March



We went walking again along the canal. Today there were not so many people walking. We walked up to the swing bridge. Adjacent to the cottages was a tree with beautiful blossom as shown on the left. We then returned, passing a beautiful church. After lunch we finalised the repairs to the shed.

Day 3: Thursday 26th March

Being a time served Bricklayer I had previously cut out and re-pointed the stone circle to the garden, so we decided to power wash the circle, patio and the garden furniture. We also had two garden chairs that needed a bit of restoration, removing the rust and then applying priming paint.

Day 4: Friday 27th March

Today as the patio was dry we brushed it down and put the potted plants back into position. As my partner is an artist she insisted in doing the gloss coats to the refurbished chairs, no complaints from me. The conservatory windows and sills were washed. Then later in the afternoon we walked from home past St Peter & St Paul Church and around the village.

While we are in lockdown if anyone requires any DIY tips do not hesitate in contacting me. I will try to assist. (Contact number on page 26).

Last words - please Keep Safe



Membership renewal 2020/21

Full Name/s:

Address:

Please tick the appropriate box:

Single membership: £14.00

Single membership with posted Newsletter: £18.00

For couples living at the same address:

Joint membership: £24.00

Joint membership with posted Newsletter: £28.00

Please make cheques payable to: Doncaster U3A.

This slip should be returned with your payment to: The DU3A Membership Secretary, (see page 26 for the address) Please remember to include an SAE for the return of your Membership card.

Membership Renewal slip: see previous page

(New members - please contact the Membership Secretary
for a New Members form)

FUTURELEARN

I did a short course on Robert Burns and have signed up for a mindfulness refresher, both with Future Learn. The courses are well organised and excellent quality. Massive range too, to suit all interests. Although there is the option to extend your learning for a relatively small fee, unbelievably they are free! Similarly with the Open University. So some excellent opportunities out there for those wanting to keep their brains ticking over and at the same time, sharing learning and making new friends through some online social networking.

Cath Lawson

Lockdown is about 'physical distancing and social solidarity'
but even better:

**'Don't count the days,
Make the days count'.**

This is your pilot speaking. I'm working from home today.

•••••

Mum, did you know that if you play in the mud and then don't wash your hands you get grownupvirus?

Joseph age 5

•••••

I'm beginning to understand why pets try to run out of the house when the front door is open.

•••••

In 8 weeks 88% of blondes will disappear from the earth.

•••••

I finished Netflix today!

•••••

Your grandparents were called to war. You're being called to sit on your couch. You can do this!

DU3A Potential Committee Changes – Subject to an AGM

Name	Current Position	Future Position
Chris Woolven	Business Secretary	Chairman
Diane Woolven	—	Business Secretary
Derek Marriott	—	Treasurer
Jill Laming	Membership Secretary	Committee member
Christine Curtis	—	Membership Secretary
Nora Boyle	Minutes Secretary	No change
Jane Page	Publicity	Publicity, Vice Chair
Vanessa Whaley	Group Co-ordinator, Assistant Treasurer - trips	No change
Paula Harmer	—	Speaker Finder
Diane Williams	Assistant Treasurer - GM	No change
John Wheeler	Assistant Treasurer - GM	No change
Wendy Hattrell	Chair, Treasurer, Beacon Admin	Beacon Admin
George Kirk	Newsletter Distribution	Retiring
David Smith	Raffle, Badges	Retiring

VIRTUAL U3A

<https://vu3a.org/index.php/what-is-vu3a>



Topical List

Queries and Suggestions • Understanding Science • Puzzles • Shakespeare • The Waterside Ape - BBC Production • WW2 Memories • History and the Present • Miall's Reading Group • An Unexpected pleasure • Mellow Jazz • Understanding Scientific Disciplines • WW2 Memories • Poetry Workshop • Things you treasure • Buried Treasure • How things began • Adoption Story by Miall James • Local History

Main Subject Areas

Art Workshop • Arts Appreciation • Arts General • Book Club • Books Reviews Discussion • Brilliant Books • Cafe Latino • Caffe Italia Beginners • Castles • Charlotte Bronte • Climate Change • Computers • Creative Writing • Discussion Groups • Drama • Emily Bronte • Exploring the Media • Family History • Geography and History • Geography and Travel • History • History and the Present • Jane Austin • Language and Literature • Le Café Français • Life and Living • Living History • Mathematics • Mellow Jazz • Members Work • Music • Natural History • On this day • Philosophy • Physics Astronomy • Poetry Corner • Raw Materials • Reading Music • Recreational and Hobbies • Religion • Science & Technology • Science & Technology Q & A • Shakespeare • Social Sciences • Tell us a Story • The Best of Humour • The World of Writing • Things you Treasure • Where I live • Women's Studies

There is an annual subscription to access courses on the Virtual U3A. Go to the website above for further details.

PUZZLE PAGE

Can you decipher the following quotations and their authors.

AZ LRBXVF XT, SFBFI RD MDADIIDJ JCLM ZDN
VLS RD MDRLZ. YIDVILTMXSLMXDS XT MCF
MCXFP DP MXAF. VCLIKFT RXVGFST

ZDN DSKZ KXBF DSVF, HNM XP ZDN RD XM
IXUCM, DSVF XT FSDNUC. ALF JFTM

SDMCXSU VLS HF HFLNMXPNK JCXVC XT SDM
MINF. ODCS INTGXS

HF MCF VCLSUF MCLM ZDN JXTC MD TFF XS MCF
JDIKR. ALCLMAL ULSRCX

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

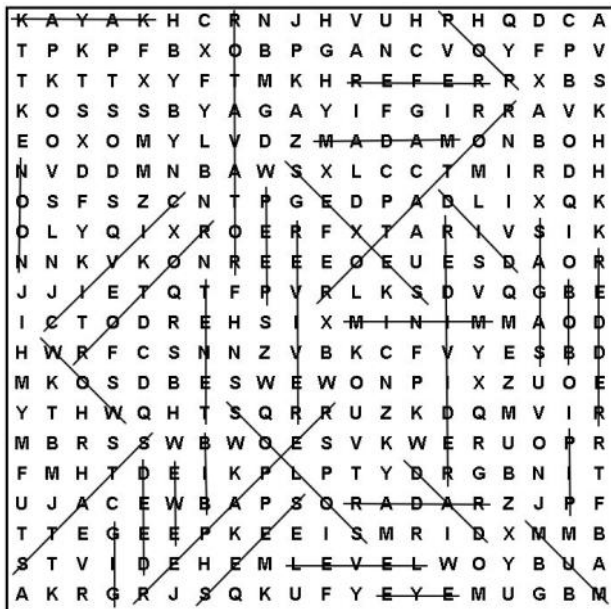


Do you know where this is?



Answer in the next newsletter.

Photo taken by Bill Dixon, a member of the Digital Photography group



Solutions for April / May puzzles

Page 21: Where is this?



Answer:

Wells Cathedral,
Somerset

Palindrome Wordsearch

Uncertain times

This is the twenty third of March. The pace of closing down our social life has quickened since the first inkling of what we then thought might happen, is now happening. There is an unreal feeling of being in a collective nightmare that will never end. Gradually what might happen has turned into a certainty, and the unbelievable is happening.

As an eighty seven year old person whose childhood was spent in a world at war, this reminds me of the same uncertainties that faced the generation of 1939. The plans made for the weeks, months, and years ahead scattered to the four winds, when the unbelievable happened, and everyone became the playthings of the gods of war. This time the effect is similar. The future of our world is uncertain. Sleep for most is fitful and restless.

In my own family we have a spate of new babies, three born in the first three months of this year. The future of these babies is uncertain. Just as the babies born just prior, during the war, and also those immediately after the war, had futures vastly different to those born prior to the war. So it may become the same, we just do not know.

It is now April the first. The race is on in earnest to beat this unseen killer. Like many thousands of others I am now confined, initially for twelve weeks. The longed for summer will be tilting into late Autumn before I can begin to think of going anywhere. Shopping, that has always been a chore, will be a pleasure, that is if we are still alive. But at the back of my mind is lurking the thought that things will be different.

All this effort being placed on keeping as many people as safe is possible, and rightly so, will have to be paid for. The government has no money except what its citizens give it. They are having to borrow, and borrowing costs and has to be repaid, ultimately by we, the citizens.

World politics will have changed too. If for the better or worse is just another unknown. This is a seismic shift that will leave governments in turmoil. There will be winners and losers. But who will be a winner, or who a loser is anyone's guess.

We have arrived at April the third. Usually a happy month for me. It was the month I married, in 1957. It is my birthday month too. I have just found out that one cannot get plants. So the garden, that is looking lovely and bright at the moment, with all the spring daffodils and tulips, will have to lie fallow, or perhaps I might let the weeds have a go and grow willy nilly as they choose.

This is now the fifth day of April. Happens to be a Sunday, twenty past twelve, and I have not stopped all morning, not even for breakfast, Welcome phone call from my niece Susan, who happens to be a nurse, and I am so worried for her and her family. Then a call from a nephew whom I have asked to deliver groceries to a friend who lives alone and is in quarantine and who is now accommodating four adults from abroad who need to be fed as well. Then another phone call from an acquaintance who asks if I want half a broccoli. I say, "Thank-you but no, as today is to be a ready meal day". However she insists I have it and says she will bring it round and leave it on my doorstep. The loneliness in her voice persuades me she needs conversation, so accept her offer and tell her that we can speak through the

window. The phone rings again, my nephew wants to know the number of my friends house, so that he can deliver. Then my sister rings to inquire if all is well with me. Then I collect the broccoli off the doorstep and decide to soak it in salt water as I am sure there must be the dreaded Virus on it. How could there not be? I wonder if salt water will kill the Virus.

I think I will have brunch, too late for breakfast now.

It's now the evening of April 6th. Another day gone. Where has the day gone? A series of telephone calls and emails with a shopping list for my sister to do for me. Two birthday cards written and put on the doorstep to be collected and posted for me. A coffee, and hair washed between phone calls, two from kind people I know but am not on telephone speaking terms in normal times. I do feel cared for by so many people. My age seems to bring out the urge to protect in people. Now time to watch Coronation Street.

This writing seems to have turned into some kind of journal. Would hate to categorise. There is a modern expression (which I hate) 'it is what it is', but it does feel the right expression.

This morning I designated as the 'toe nail cutting day'. Much to my surprise I managed to do it. Lots of twisting and turning of feet and legs and hips to get into position to cut, without cutting off my toes at the same time, but I made it. The finished nails are bit rough and ready, but done. In the process I have exercised my joints. and put them in positions I had thought were lost to me for ever. If I am ever interviewed on television, and asked what is the proudest achievement of eighty seven years, I will be very tempted to say 'The day I cut my toe nails without assistance, in spite of having rheumatoid arthritis'.

We have now reached Thursday 9th April. We are rightly giving heartfelt thanks to the N.H.S. But it has come to my attention that there is another army of people supporting relatives and friends. One such, who is incidentally over seventy and should be staying at home, is caring for a ninety three year old, living alone, except for official carers. This particular ninety three year old is profoundly deaf. For a profoundly deaf person with no speech, someone has to communicate on their behalf.....carers, doctors, chemists, household utilities, and her eighty six year old brother, etc. All time consuming and tiring to the supporting carer. This is all done without remuneration of any kind. The carer I speak of does it because she cares.

Another person of my acquaintance who has different difficulties, for different reasons has sacrificed her family life and working life, to care for her mother, thus saving the country a small fortune over many years. Her mother needs twenty four hour care, This week she was told she could not have groceries delivered as her mother was not on the list of vulnerable persons. This took my breath away.

Thinking of these two carers I realised that there must be many, many more in the same situation. Their efforts and sacrifices will never be recognised. They are quiet persons who do not speak out loudly, but do what they do because it is, in their opinion, the right thing to do. So when praising the N.H.S. remember the army of unrecognised, and unpaid carers of vulnerable people.

Betty Alexander

Christine Curtis' Lockdown

During these rather bleak days of lockdown I thought it might be helpful to talk about some of the positives from this situation, although like everyone else I guess, I have found the situation very restrictive especially as we are in the vulnerable group due to my husband's illness.

I cannot believe the generosity and kindness of the people around us. Having moved from down South and only living in the area for the past two years I am amazed by the generosity and help we have received, not only from the neighbours but also from the local community hub who are so helpful with essential things like collecting prescriptions, shopping and taking post. We have also received food parcels on a regular basis for which we have been so grateful when there have been no delivery slots from the supermarket. It is truly inspiring to see such support in the community.

Another positive from this situation has been a technological advantage. I had never before used Zoom or Netflix and now use both. Had I not been a member of U3A I would never have learnt to use Zoom as these has been used to keep in touch with other members of the U3A. Netflix has made me rather lazy as I now sit watching the television for longer than I would have previously done....but we have seen some wonderful films and drama series that we have never viewed before and is a very good distraction for the moment.

The beautiful weather has also been a bonus. We are very lucky that we have a large garden and have been able to spend more time than usual admiring the beautiful spring flowers and listening to the birds with their morning chorus, not to mention doing the gardening which has kept us busy!

It has also been an opportunity to catch up on all the jobs that needed doing as I'm sure many of you have. My front porch has been cleaned and oiled. My utility surfaces have been treated, bedroom and sitting room painted and clothes all tidied. Probably would not have happened without the pandemic and isolation.

This proves that even in the bleakest of situations there are always positives to find. Stay well everyone and look for the positives!

Geoff Tagg's Groups

Scottish Country Dancing: I am staying in touch via email, and we have picked a few dances that members can practice at home, hopefully have off pat when we do finally start again

Basic French and Easier French: We are sharing occasional worksheets to keep the brain ticking over. I have also received a couple of emails from a Retirement Home group in France - so we are using them to practice reading French!

Philosophy: We are sharing an article each month on a particular Philosopher, and inviting comments in response.

Playreading: We are picking a play being shown on TV recently, so we can all watch it, and share views afterwards. The first one is The National Theatre version of 'Frankenstein'.

Doncaster Council Community Hub for Coronavirus support

Community Hub



Since opening a month ago The Community Hub has focused on supporting our most vulnerable residents. It has already helped so many people across Doncaster and with the lockdown being extended, the support offered by the Hub is being extended too. It will now be a central point of support for any issues that have arisen due to the coronavirus.

Anyone who needs help and has no other support can ring the Helpline or email the Hub 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm.

Helpline: 01302 430300

Email: enquiries@dncommunityhub.org.uk

Go to: <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing/community-hub-for-coronavirus-support> for information about

• Access to food banks • Money problems • Support for parents • Mental Health and Wellbeing Support • Volunteering • Coronavirus Advice

YOUR PENSION ENTITLEMENT: FULL or NOT?

In the last edition of the national Third Age magazine there was a letter from a lady about national insurance contributions (NIC) and the state pension. It made me think of when my wife and I, this year, looked at our state pension forecast (we get ours next year). We found out that despite me having paid 46 years NIC my weekly state pension was £166 not £168. Yet I had paid well above the 35 years needed for a full pension.

I contacted the NIC department to be told that in 2 years I had not paid enough NIC and also I had, many years ago, contracted out of Serps so that my private pension would have some extra monies. It was agreed that I should pay 1 years contribution so I will now get the full weekly pension. This means that when the pension is increased then I get the increase on a higher figure. I have now 47 years NIC.

In my wife's case she had retired early and taken her NHS pension but her state pension forecast to be paid was £155pw instead of £168pw (the full pension). She had paid 41 years NIC. She was told that the reason for the lower figure was because she had not paid any NIC for 7 years (having retired early) and, unbeknown to her, the NHS pension had been contracted out of her Serps. She had to pay 3 years NIC to get the full pension of £168pw. She now has 44 years NIC.

As the lady pointed out in her letter people should not assume that just because one has paid 35 years NIC that you will automatically get a full state pension.

Is this something that maybe of interest to the members? I accept there are a number of members who are retired and have all pensions sorted out but there maybe some coming up to retirement who maybe unaware of the above. Also, members may have their own children who may have or will be taking early retirement that need to be aware of the above.

Mark Frost

Membership Renewal

The membership renewal slip on pages 17/18 should be returned with your payment to: The DU3A Membership Secretary. For the address - please refer to the inside of the printed newsletter. If posted please remember to **include an SAE** for the return of your membership card.

Page 3 Membership payments made by bank transfer:
for the Sort code and Account number - please refer to the inside of the
back page of the printed newsletter (page 26). Please put your name
in the reference so we know who has paid.

Contacting Group Leaders and Committee Members

Group Leaders can be contacted by telephone (see printed newsletter) or by clicking on the Blue Bird on their group page on the DU3A website. Go to: <https://u3asites.org.uk/doncaster> then click on the 'GROUP' tab. Go to the bottom of the group page to select the group that you require. Click on the Blue Bird in the top right hand corner and a form will open for you to write your message.

Committee members can also be contacted via the DU3A website by opening the 'Contact' page and then selecting the appropriate member.

Contact Numbers

DU3A Committee Members

Chair	Wendy Hattrell
Acting Vice Chair	Chris Woolven
Business Secretary	Chris Woolven
Treasurer	to be arranged
Membership Secretary	Jill Laming
Group Co-ordinator	Vanessa Whaley
Minutes Secretary	Nora Boyle
Publicity	Jane Page
Committee	Diane Williams
Committee	John Wheeler
Committee	George Kirk
Committee	David Smith

Activity Groups & Other: Contacts

Group leaders	see printed Newsletter for telephone numbers, or DU3A Website	
Newsletter Editor & Website Manager	B Thompson	bthompsonu3a@btinternet.com

DU3A Website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/doncaster>

Visit the DU3A website for information about all the current interest groups, latest news/notices, membership information, meetings, social events, monthly calendars and newsletters, help/advice links, links to regional and national u3a and more.....

Monks Printers

We are grateful to Monks the Printers for their help in printing and distributing this newsletter.

Prego Café

We would like to thank our friends at the Prego Café for their help over the past years. Not only is the tea, coffee and food excellent, but the free use of the upstairs room for meetings has been a great help to many of our groups. If you haven't been there yet, give it a try!

We wish them the best during the lockdown and look forward to having our meetings there again in the future.

Help the environment and save money by receiving the email version of the DU3A newsletters.

Deadline

Thank-you to all the members who have sent articles for this issue. Articles for the August/September newsletter need to be received by

Wednesday 1st July

Please send news of group activities, articles, photographs, etc. to
du3anewsletterbmt@btinternet.com



