



News from U3A Guernsey

Issue No: 22 - 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

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Dear Member

We are all facing, and are having to deal with, some fundamental changes to how we live and, more especially, how we socialise and engage with other people. With no coffee mornings, no afternoon meetings over a nice cup of tea & cake, no relaxed lunches nor dinners out at some posh restaurant, we are having to find new ways of staying in touch.

The U3A National Office is now publishing newsletters by email on a much more regular basis than in the past. Find out below how you can very easily subscribe to these and learn how other third agers like yourself are adapting to our new circumstances all over the UK.

At U3A Guernsey, your Executive Committee have started to reinvent how we do things to support you, the members, in ways we did not even dream about a few weeks ago. We held our first 'virtual meeting' of the committee on Monday morning this week using 'Zoom', the latest video conferencing technology, which most of us had never used before. We recount below how we did it and how you could also do it to join together 'virtually' with your families and friends.

Jane Pearson, our Interest Groups Co-ordinator, and some of our interest group convenors have also been working out alternative learning methods so that their groups can continue, which she relates in her article below.

In addition, Alan Chubb, our Vice Chairman, has been showing his true colours as our FaceBook guru by helping members publish stories, ideas and news snippets to help members stay informed of the new world order that we are all having to come to terms with. Click on the FaceBook link below to find out more.

Whilst 781 of our members have email and are able to get this newsletter and our other newflashes electronically on a regular basis, we do have 49 members who do not. If these latter 'non email' members wish to receive a copy of the newflashes & newsletters, we would ask you to nominate an 'Email Buddy' (a friend, a neighbour or a family member). You can ring on the U3A phone line (07781 193333) and leave a message with the details of your 'Email Buddy' or get your 'Email Buddy' to provide their email address to Gill Slimm, our Membership Secretary, at: [u3aguernsey.membership@gmail.com](mailto:u3aguernsey.membership@gmail.com) together with your membership number.

It is clear that the iPad, which hit our desks only ten years ago, and other computer tablets have become an ubiquitous part of our new 'lockdown' life giving us access to these new forms of communications, new entertainment streams, as well as important broadcasts by our leaders (how many of you missed Gavin St Pier's live broadcast via FaceBook watched in 14,500 homes last Tuesday week?). We are aware that there are some of these 'non-email' members who would now like to get a computer so that they can get online. Read below about how we may be able to help you.

Finally, some time out for everyone from our current worries with Eileen Gaudion's short story entitled "**Pride**" (see below). Eileen is a member of the U3A Creative Writing group and her short story won the 2020 Guernsey Eisteddfod Literary Senior Prix d'Honneur for Prose. Congratulations to Eileen! We hope to bring you more short stories from the Creative Writing group in future newsletters.

Please do STAY AT HOME and stay safe, and use your computer, your tablet or your phone to stay connected until this is all over...

Ian Daish

Chairman & Newsletter Editor, U3A Guernsey Learn, Laugh, Live!

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## Interest Groups find new ways of meeting up...



Pastel work by Marion Richards, convenor of the Beginners Guitar group, who has also set herself the task of learning to play on her guitar "Blackbird" by Paul McCartney.

Well you can't keep a good thing down.... some of the Interest Groups are continuing to meet whilst 'socially distancing'. You are an amazing group of people who think outside the box and have solved the problem of not meeting in the same room. Please read on:

**Drawing for Beginners** - Sheila Brown invited her group by email to show each other their drawings. She sets a theme, this week it is "A favourite possession" and she is happy to have new members.

Contact her via the pigeon on the website.

**Creative Stitchers** - Leila Le Messurier set a task of designing and then making flags which can be put together as bunting with her group. This was originally for the U3A day in June, but I think it may come in handy for the massive party we will have when we are allowed out of lockdown! Sure she wouldn't mind if you want to have a go and join in. Again, contact her via the pigeon on the website.

**Wine Discovery** - Karen & Mark Winter sent out a wine blog with a suggestion to read Richard Allisette's wine column from the Guernsey Press, plus some interesting information about cork or screw top wines. I must admit I enjoyed reading this whilst opening a nice bottle of sweet sherry!

**Singers** - Molly Thompson is, with the help of her husband Bob, looking to set up a FaceBook group for passing on messages.

**Ukes** - Sue Knowles has been busy trying to use Zoom to connect everyone to practice songs. I believe it has been a great success [see more below - Ed.], although the songs are a little different from normal.

Keep up the good work guys!

**Creative Writing** - Margaret Moffatt's writers are thoroughly engaged and send each other stories and everyone provides feedback. I'm afraid it's all I can do to string a few sentences together.

**Psychology** - Pat Child is using Zoom, a video conferencing forum, to continue to have sessions and discussions.

**Water Colours** - Pearl Guille & Chris Gosselin are keeping in touch with their group members by emailing pictures and sharing their thoughts on progress of their masterpieces.

**French Conversation** - Simon Wood is presently looking to use short videos in French and asking his group to translate.

**Scottish Dancing** - Stuart Hardie is offering a prize for any members who can compose a new dance entitled "Social Distancing" where the ingredients involve no hand contact and dancing two metres apart. This new dance will be danced some time in the future on some isolated beach!

**Photography** - Julian Bolt suggests his members include their camera when they 'exercise' for an hour or two each day...and forward photographs to him. He also has recently emailed his members suggesting tabletop photography might be a good option. He especially likes the idea of 'Flat Lay Photography' and he has suggested websites to look at and asks his group to try a version outside with a mobile phone or camera and send photographs to him and then he will post back comments.

I feel immensely proud to belong to such an organisation as U3A. You are finding ways of connecting, whilst keeping each other safe and well. A good friend who lives on her own told me the other day that she is contacting two different people each day - a great idea. Incidentally if you have a good idea and you think it could work again please let me know. I will happily pass on messages. This is a difficult time and no one should feel isolated. We have a duty to reach out and support each other. There is no reason to feel on your own. Send me an email at [u3aguemsey.groups@gmail.com](mailto:u3aguemsey.groups@gmail.com) or pick up the phone and call me on 250755.

## Ukes Zoom in tune now and again

Despite the Lockdown, the U3A Ukulele Group are all busy practicing, well most or even

some, hopefully. It is sometimes difficult to keep up the momentum on your own, though YouTube can always assist, but not always using the same chords.

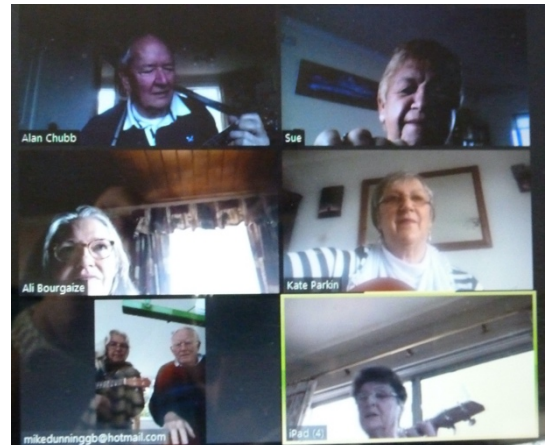
So, we thought we could investigate a virtual Ukulele meeting. Can't be too difficult in this day of virtual technology, we thought?

So, a small group decided last Thursday to put our theory in practise using Zoom, as previously experience with WhatsApp had been too discordant.

Every picture tells a story, as can be seen from the photo above, add a mismatch between lips and words and the unfortunate effect of a lag in the instruments and you may get the picture, certainly Laugh, Live and Learn in that order.

Not to be deterred we are going to give it another go this week...

Sue Knowles



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## U3A Guernsey Exec Team follow in Boris's footsteps (and probably never again)!

Like the vast majority of U3A members, until last week most of your Executive Committee had never even heard of Zoom, let alone used this video conferencing software. But with Guernsey going into 'lockdown' mode, we needed to find a way for the U3A Exec Team to get together to discuss how we could best carry on with our U3A activities with everyone now stuck at home.

Why use Zoom you may well ask? Many of us will be familiar with Skype and FaceTime for one to one video chats on our phones and tablets with family and friends, but these are not any good for chatting with several people all at once. This is where Zoom comes in to its own (as do other similar software programmes such as Microsoft Teams and WhatsApp). Downloading the Zoom software as either an App (for an iPad/tablet or a mobile phone) or as a download on to a PC, was pretty straightforward. The host then needs to register as a Basic user, which is a free service (but limited to only 40 minutes of time per meeting). [NB As we needed longer time and few other better control features, I paid £119 for the upgrade to a Pro user for a year's worth of usage.

But, how then do you use it to talk to the others, and how easy is it for them to join in? Someone needs to be the host, or organiser who sets up a meeting time and date, together with a meeting name - in our case "U3A Guernsey Exec Team Meeting". It's then a simple case of hitting a couple of menu buttons to get Zoom to produce an invitation text to be sent out to all the other Execs by email. This text contains the time and date of the meeting, the Zoom meeting number and a password needed by participants to access the meeting. But to make it even easier, there is an alternative single 'link' within the text which the recipient can just click on and the Zoom software does all the connecting for them!

All that the meeting participants then need to do is to also download the Zoom App or the software onto their computer or phone or tablet. But they don't need to register as a user. Just before the meeting is scheduled to start, the participants then simply click on the 'link' in the invitation email to join the meeting (or gathering or get-together or whatever else you want to call it).



Boris Johnson uses the Zoom app to chair the first ever digital meeting of the UK Government Cabinet while he self-isolates with Covid-19

Amazingly, bar one of the Execs whose PC had a power failure minutes before the meeting was due to start, everyone was able to successfully connect, even our oldest and perhaps least technically minded Exec! Our meeting was like any normal meeting, except that it may have gone on longer than normal, as no one "needed to get home" afterwards!

NB A couple of days later, we were all amazed to see that Boris Johnson and the UK Government were also now using Zoom to run the country, as the photo above evidenced!

Ian Daish

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## Staying in touch with U3A Nationally and locally

The National U3A Office is sending out newsletters much more often now as a more in depth means of communication with members throughout the UK and here in the Channel Islands. We would encourage you to register for these here: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/email>

They have also:

- Started a new Facebook page which already has 1,400 followers. You can [access it here](#).
- There is support and advice on the national website including on how to keep active, keep learning and keep connected with each other.
- U3A has launched a UK-wide Diary Project - where members are encouraged to diarise their experience of these times. You can see more on the national website or contact via [diary@u3a.org.uk](mailto:diary@u3a.org.uk)
- Our insurers continue to provide cover for all members' liabilities, as well as providing cover for all trustees/committee members.
- Our national legal advisers continue to support the National Office's responses to members especially in connection with cancelled trips and holidays.
- Third Age Matters magazine (TAM) is being distributed as normal in a week or so.
- IT support continues uninterrupted including security protection for U3A websites and Beacon.

### Quick Links and How to Guides

The National Office has also produced a set of [How to Guides on how to use digital platforms like Zoom](#). You can find them on their [website here](#)

The national website also has a [quick links which are helpful for the latest advice on coronavirus](#) and has [quick links on how to Stay In Touch during these times](#).

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## U3A Guernsey AGM postponed to the Autumn

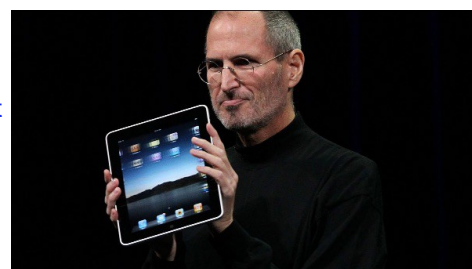
Unsurprisingly our AGM that we had hoped to hold on 29th May has been postponed until the Autumn. However, the good news is that our guest speaker, Christopher Beaumont, the Seigneur of Sark, is still as keen as ever to come over to talk to us whenever we can set a new date. We will keep you posted!

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## Today\* is the 10th Anniversary of the iPad tablet; it has come along way in that time...

It is remarkable that it is only 10 years ago today\* that Steve Jobs of Apple Computers launched the groundbreaking iPad tablet computer. Before that computers were either a BIG desktop machine, a heavy laptop or a [rather small] mobile phone. Today, our grandchildren would not be able to be taught at home and we would not be able to communicate so widely with other people (and them with us), without one.

As well as the iPad, there are now many other tablets available at prices that make them now almost a functional, everyday necessity.



If you would like to get a computer and be able to receive email, use Zoom or other videoing software

to join in with others whilst we are all in 'lockdown', we may be able to help you.

We have been in contact with one of Guernsey's leading computer retailers (who is otherwise officially 'shut' for business under the new lockdown rules), who is willing to try to source new iPads or other makes of computer tablets for U3A members. We would like to let them know how many members might be interested in getting a new iPad/tablet. Prices start from £290. If you would like to register your interest in possibly buying one, then please phone our U3A Guernsey phone line on [07781 193333](tel:07781193333) or email our media team at [u3aguernsey.news@gmail.com](mailto:u3aguernsey.news@gmail.com)

\*Today is 3rd April 2020

## Pride

by Eileen Gaudion of the U3A Creative Writing Group

*[Eileen's short story won the 2020 Guernsey Eisteddfod*

*Literary Senior Prix d'Honneur for Prose]*

If there was one thing Edward Raybould learned quickly when he moved to Cragside Manor, it was that he was now in the midst of a fantasy world.

As a successful banker, a fact never to be revealed to his new companions, Edward had chosen his retirement home with the same care he had given to foreign investment sheets and endless financial data which had consumed him before he made the big decision. Time to move out and on with the rest of his life.

Money was never an issue, but communities that extolled words beginning with 'Sunny' or ending in 'Home' were to be avoided at all costs. Cragside Manor was at least worth a look. It was still accessible to the bustle of city life while basking in the peace of the surrounding countryside.

A hastily arranged viewing and the propitious availability of a fine apartment convinced him to buy it.

Breakfasting in the bright dining room allowed the community members to interact and assess their new resident. Introductions were made and friendly, non-intrusive chatter abounded. Edward felt welcome.

Within a few days, Edward's keen sense of detail picked up on the main topic of conversation – pride in a person's children or grandchildren. Politics, the economic state of the country, religion, were seemingly banned from the room.

As Edward listened in, he began to perceive a certain amount of licence was permitted. They were all at it. Pride in a son who was a doctor in New Zealand; pride in a daughter who taught in some far-flung place. Edward got it! The more remote the territory, then the least likely that person could ever visit. New Zealand was definitely the top country for this migration of dedicated, successful young people.

The residents needed pride in themselves. Of course they weren't lonely, forgotten people! As if!

Edward had a choice to make. Did he stir things up, question the validity of such claims or realise he too had no family to visit him.

He waited a further month before he launched in. His kitchen table was covered in maps, careers information, and photos carefully cut from financial magazines.

He just had to tell them about his 'sister' (his 'children' could wait their turn). He was so proud of her. She had just saved a stranded penguin colony in Antarctica.

'That's wonderful,' his listeners echoed, eager to hear more. Edward understood!



[U3A Guernsey \(Closed\) Facebook Group](#)



[U3A Guernsey Website](#)