



Long Eaton and District u3a
in the County of Derbyshire
www.u3asites.org.uk/long-eaton

newsletter 251 of 1st February 2021

Zoom Open Meeting for our u3a

Following on from last month's newsletter, we are pleased to advise you that we will be holding our first 'Zoom Open Meeting' on **Wednesday 17th February at 2 pm**

Our speaker will be Lance Pierson, who will be giving us a virtual guided talk around 'Shakespeare's London'. Lance gives regular guided walks, but this presentation shows sights of London – not only those associated with Shakespeare, but others as well – all in a different light during lockdown, with no crowds of people around. The presentation has been seen by several other u3a's and has good reviews.

Full details as to how to access this talk will be given shortly, but please note that our Zoom licence is limited to 100 'attendees', so make sure that you log in, in good time.

Round Up of My Zoom Groups – Hilary Wells

Cook Book Group

This group has been meeting on Zoom since last summer and we continue to meet on Zoom every 2 months. We pick a chef or cook and each person cooks a dish they choose from that chef or cook, in their own home. We then tune in to Zoom and eat and chat for a couple of hours. Not all members join in but we have between 6 and 8 diners regularly.

Quiz Group

We are now meeting monthly and different members of the group set the quiz each month. It seems to work well and, as long as people remember not to shout out the answers, we are OK!

Thrillers and Crime Writers Group

Because we cannot all read the same book, having no access to the library, we discuss books we have read from this genre. We also recommend books that members might like. We are meeting monthly.

Current Affairs Group

I have recently taken over joint leadership of this group in order to enable members to meet on Zoom. There is plenty to talk about at the moment and our first meeting was quite lively. We will continue to meet monthly.

Whilst meetings can be problematic on Zoom, they are proving successful and enjoyed by all those taking part. It is not the same as meeting in person but it does enable members to see each other and have a chat as well as learning a little. It is really quite easy and will benefit all those taking part. I recommend it.

Plant Study Group – David Pinney

Members of the Plant Study Group have continued sending in their photos of wild flowers and trees, also text, for our bulletin which has now reached issue 30. With fewer wild flowers in bloom over the winter, the bulletins have been less frequent. We have enjoyed two informal coffee mornings on Zoom.

We hope to see an article about our Group in the spring edition of the magazine 'Third Age Matters'.

More About Zoom for our u3a groups

We have 48 interest groups in our u3a, six of which are unable to operate at the moment either due to lockdown restrictions or because, in any case, they are seasonal activities. Of the 42 remaining groups, 20 are using Zoom regularly as a way of offering their members the opportunity to meet up. This is pretty good going considering that many of us hadn't even heard of Zoom nine months ago.

Some members using Zoom for the first time have reported being pleasantly surprised by the experience. For example, restricted mobility is no longer a problem and they can participate without leaving home. Others are pleased that they don't have to drive to meetings in poor weather. Full training is readily available for Interest Group leaders who would be interested in trying it out.

A Drinker's Life by u3a member Pat Kelly

When I was young and only a child,
I never drank Bitter, I only drank Mild –
When mixed in a Shandy – or Cider for lunch,
And for celebrations, a glass of Hot Punch.
When teenager years and boyfriends came in,
I switched my allegiance to Tonic with Gin,
Or Dubonnet with Lemon – a fine 60s drink
With ice cubes inside it to Make it go “clink”.
During my twenties, wine did then appear,
Displacing the Stout and Barley Wine Beer.
It was only Mateus, Liebfraumilch or Bull's Blood,
Much later when good wine came in like a flood!
Out drinking, there was Brandy and Pep by the score –
And many a tough miner I left on the floor!!
But as I grew older, my tastes more refined,
For Ouzo and Pernod, my taste buds repined.
Quality Red Wine on my table appears
And new Gins with Tonic to fit with my years.
Absinthe, they say, makes the heart grow much fonder
But I wonder as I now gaze towards a “blue yonder”
When I take up my harp and my place on a cloud.
“Will Nectar in bucketsful still be allowed?”

Visiting another u3a Interest Group using Zoom

Now that many groups are using the Zoom platform until we can all meet up again in person, there is an opportunity for individuals to join Zoom meetings for groups when they are not members of that group.

However, if you wish to make use of this opportunity, you MUST make enquiries first from the Group Leader, to see whether they are happy BEFORE trying to join a group. (Some groups by their very nature require a limited number of people/a certain level of prior knowledge and therefore cannot accommodate random outsiders). Assuming the GL is happy they will then send you the appropriate Zoom link and you can click on that in the usual way to join the meeting.

This is a great opportunity to try out new groups/new ideas/new learning without a huge commitment initially, and so we encourage you to take a step into the unknown and see how you get on.

Visit our u3a on Facebook and also our u3a website

Hi everyone! This is just to remind you of our page on the 'Facebook' site and to request that from time to time it would be nice if you would upload some photographs of your group's activities, interesting things you have been up to during lockdown. Poetry, anecdotes etc. You can do this yourself or go through Julie Gilson juliegilson@live.co.uk who is our page builder then everyone will have something to browse and enjoy during this dreadful time we are all having. Maybe you could extend some things to our website too which will make it more interesting for new potential members.

Go into Facebook – visitor post if you are doing it yourself. Long Eaton and District u3a scroll down and you should find us.

If you have any difficulties, please contact Julie, email above!

u3a Diaries

2021 Diaries are still available if any member would like one. For further details, please contact Joan Morris, who can either send or deliver them: joan_morris49@hotmail.com

u3a Subscriptions

At the last Committee meeting, we discussed the level of subscriptions for the coming year and have decided to keep them at the present level for the time being – £19 for full membership, £15.50 for Associate Members (i.e., those members who already pay a full subscription to another u3a).

We appreciate that, due to Coronavirus issues, we have not been able to offer as many meetings etc to all of you as usual over recent months but, as you will see elsewhere in this Newsletter, we have around half of our Interest Groups running via Zoom and we also are looking to re-commence the monthly meetings using this technology.

Our fixed costs remain high and we do have to make a considerable payment to the u3a National body – but they, too, have been providing an extensive range of on-line activities during the periods of lockdown and will, of course, continue to do so.

Our finances have also been impacted by an HMRC decision, whereby we are unable to claim Gift Aid on the subscriptions that you pay to us – previously we had been advised that 25% of eligible subscriptions would be refunded to us going back over a number of years but, unfortunately, this is not the case.

Renewal details will therefore be sent out shortly, but we are pleased to advise you that there will be no need to complete a Membership Renewal form this year, but if any of your contact details have changed, please contact Noeline Buxton, our Membership Secretary, on noeline48@yahoo.co.uk

King Lear Prizes, Creative Arts for Older People

King Lear Prizes is the national creative arts competition for older people during the COVID-19 pandemic. The latest round of the competition has just opened to entries and is running from January to 19th March 2021.

The competition is specifically for amateurs and beginners who are over the age of 65 and the competition accepts entries of poetry, real-life stories, art and musical performance. There are over £2000 worth of prizes on offer. The winners will be picked by our panel of expert judges including Gyles Brandreth and Julian Lloyd Webber. The website gives more information about the competition:

<https://www.kinglearprizes.org.uk>.

Carsington Sailing Club

We have received an e-mail from Carsington Sailing Club to see if anyone would be interested in joining them in a Derbyshire u3a Sailing Group. The Club offers sailing for all abilities, from absolute beginners to seasoned racers.

If anyone is interested, they should contact Phil Holland, Commodore at Carsington Sailing Club on 07850 943 503 for more details.

Long Eaton and District 50+ Forum

We have been asked by Roy Smith, who is vice-chair of the Long Eaton and District 50+ Forum (and, incidentally one of the founder members of this u3a) if anyone could help with one of their activities.

The 50+ Forum is currently running a project whereby they are loaning out laptops and IT tablets to elderly members of the local community in order that they can use the internet – whether it be to connect with friends or relatives or to merely see what the internet is all about – and full training will be given.

If anyone knows of anyone who might be interested in taking advantage of this scheme, they should contact Steven Elliott on 07505 634 288.

Similarly, if anyone is interested in the activities of the 50+ Forum, Roy can be contacted by e-mail at longeaton50plus@yahoo.co.uk

For any matters to do with Long Eaton and District u3a e-news, please contact David Pinney at lead.u3a@live.co.uk

Please send items for the March newsletter to David by 24th February.