



Reg. Charity No. 1104944

Marple Bridge & Mellor U3A

NEWSLETTER May 2020

(Nothing is Normal)

As I sit here on the 30th April compiling the Newsletter for May thinking about this particular day in 2020 my thoughts turn to the fact that it is the 100th birthday of Captain Tom Moore who has raised money by walking laps of his garden for our NHS

In the difficult situations we find ourselves in at the present time I think what an inspiration he is to us all in what he has achieved over the past few weeks, raising over £31m pounds for our wonderful NHS. Amidst all the things that are happening at the moment he brings to the fore something that is so inspiring and helps us think about things which are good that are happening at the moment, he is a wonderful credit to his generation and the rest of us.

Happy 100th Birthday Captain Tom Moore

Malcolm Newsletter Editor

Chairman's Chatter

At the time of writing we have been in Lockdown for 25 days and we may very well need to repeat the same again over the next few weeks! My answer to this extended period of confinement has been to put my energies into various craft projects; I've taken up my knitting needles again and have found the results quite rewarding. I am lucky because my husband is at home with me and we have fallen into a very distinct routine each day, starting with our daily dog walk, followed by our chosen activities. I have also spent a considerable amount of time replying to emails and speaking to people, either on the phone or using Whatsapp. Early on I did some research about people who have had to survive in isolation for whatever reason and how they coped with the experience.

The first one that came to mind was Anne Frank and her family who went into hiding in a secret annex in Amsterdam during the Second World War. They survived for two years in very cramped conditions and with the constant fear of discovery and arrest. One thing that she mentions in her diary is the contact that they maintained with the outside world through the medium of the radio and indeed they listened to the BBC when they could late at night. They also had to settle into a daily routine as they were with a number of other people.

Other groups of people train to do jobs where isolation is an essential part of their jobs. I was listening to a Polar scientist who is isolated for long periods while carrying out his research. Astronauts also undergo rigorous training to prepare them for extended missions in space and accept the difficulties that they might face. Along with lighthouse keepers and night watchmen; all of whom have to accept the isolation that goes with the job, as do many others. Ordinarily we would not expect to be put to the test in the way that we are at the moment and having a routine does seem to be the key to being able to cope.

Alexander Selkirk, who was the inspiration for the character of Robinson Crusoe was cast adrift on a desert island for 4 years before rescue came and Ernest Shackleton and his crew lasted 105 days before their rescue. Certainly gives you something to think about! When I was in Falmouth last summer at the Maritime Museum, I saw the dinghy in which Douglas Robertson and his family were adrift for 38 days when their boat capsized and I was amazed that anyone could survive in such a small place; yet they did and were finally rescued.

Hopefully some of their stories can give us food for thought and some inspiration as well. It has been lovely that everyone has been sending through all their ideas for me to pass on to everyone else in our U3A and to help maintain our contacts.

I'll finish with a quote from Anne Frank who said, 'Deep down the young are lonelier than the old.' From 'The Diary of a Young Girl.'

Clare Gwilym

Crossword Compiled by Marple Bridge and Mellor U3A Crossword Group

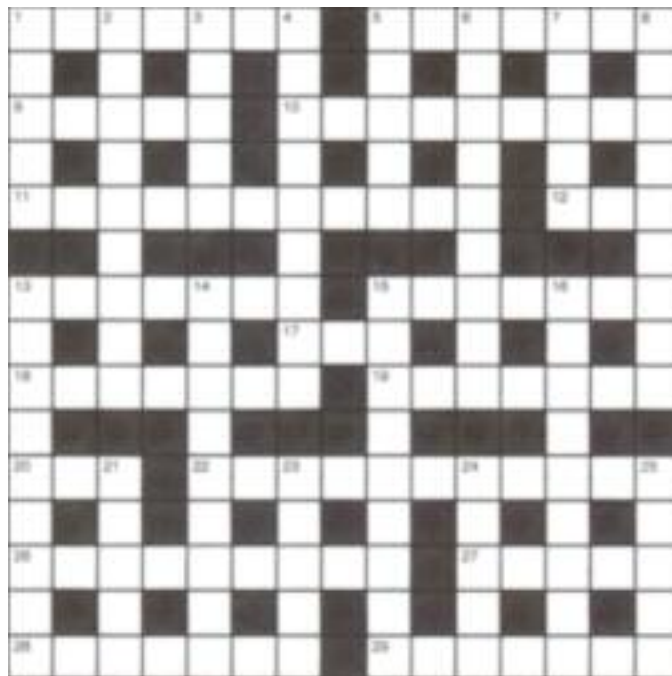
compiled jointly by U3A Crossword Group

Clues across

1. Expletive about bottom, it's ruder. (7)
5. Mother insect is big old beast. (7)
9. Reach strategy without start. (5)
10. Run after cat following girl presenter. (9)
11. red top idol gives you the reverse picture. (6,5)
12. Regret starting rigorous University education. (3)
13. I hear a booklet could draw you. (7)
15. Ram wearing lace concoction is sweet. (7)
17. Odd Indian Princess. (3)
18. Like a wanderer, Damon is back in charge. (7)
19. The French are quietly optimistic about this disease. (7)
20. You eventually see introductions in the affirmative. (3)
22. From China, rep with oil unusually fascinated by dead bodies. (11)
26. Madly I scan USSR for beautiful youth. (9)
27. Received and understood lad. (5)
28. Hires my poles out. (7)
29. Gents say, get thrown in the river. (8)

Clues down

1. Switzerland is on a limb – that's the attraction. (5)
2. Amber took tour around area of trees. (9)
3. Group also sounds ready for a fight. (3,2)
4. Article is altered to become true to life. (9)
5. Married girl gets windfall. (5)
6. Play to catch vermin. (9)



Clues down (cont)

7. Happen initially on canoe coming up river. (5)
8. Sounds like rough drama was just fooling around. (9)
13. Anyone can, when disturbed, give rise to irritation. (9)
14. Fairly slow pace when scoring. (9)
15. Deceitful after cry to educators in cold blood. (9)
16. Have extra job playing sonata. (9)
21. Remove team's outfit. (5)
23. Selects for part in sheds. (5)
24. Mother once tried to trap bird. (5)

The crossword compiling group were not able to meet this month and discuss our clues due to the current situation, however, 4 members sent me their homework and I have put together the usual joint effort,

Sheila Stafford Group Co-ordinator

Nothing is Normal

Due to the situation, where 'NOTHING IS NORMAL' I thought it would be a good idea to highlight some of the things that our U3A does on a regular basis so I invited all our Group Leaders to report on what their group does and also to highlight any particular things that have happened in their group recently.

Here are some replies I received

Malcolm, Newsletter Editor

Information and Stories from Our Groups

Crown Green Bowls

Almost every Monday morning this winter a few hardy members have battled the elements and played bowls. As we move back to the Memorial Park in Marple we have been stopped in our tracks with this coronavirus. I hope that when the current situation has been resolved we can restart the bowling group,
Keep safe & well.

Bill Prophet Group Leader

Strolling Group

In August the Strolling Group will have been running for five years . When we started I never imagined the success it has been and continues to be .Over these years we have had approx ninety people. We have walked over areas covering from Hayfield , Strines , Haughton Green , Godley, Marple and many others areas.



We thank the numerous volunteers who have led strolls, but always looking for new ideas. We have surprisingly been lucky with the weather, although there has been occasions when we have not been so fortunate. One stroll comes to mind when we tried on two occasions to walk from Mellor Church both walks were aborted because of rain and mud.

We once did a recce trying to find a path across a field only to find we had to avoid horses, mud and poo, after meeting people out walking dogs we gave up and returned to our cars. On another recce we were having to walk across a farmers field knee deep in mud, climb over three or four stiles but we got there in the end (with plenty of laughs).

We still continue to enjoy our strolls and long may it continue.

Geoff Fogg Joint Group Leader

Badminton Group

The Badminton group has been running for a number of years now and although numbers have fluctuated , we seem to have settled with a stable nucleus of 10 -12 regular players,, meeting on Thursdays between 2.30 and 3.30pm.

We are a very lively group and are always on the lookout for new members. We have been based at Dialstone leisure centre for the last three years but we were given the news recently that we would have to find a new venue from April onwards, as result of the closure of this centre during the day . It seems that the council are drastically reducing the opening times at a number of local leisure centres in order to save money. It was suggested that we move to the new leisure centre in Brinnington and we were looking at moving there when we restart. The facilities there are indeed very good and it is reasonably easy to find, so we may well decide to use it in the future.

We play purely for enjoyment and we find that it helps to keep our reflexes well -tuned and keeps us fit as well. That's apart from being great fun! We held our first Badminton social this year, which was held at Dave Wenham's house in January. We had a lovely evening and everyone contributed to the food and drink by bringing something with them. Not all our members are from MB&M U3A, some are from other groups like Marple U3A, which are part of the Pennine Link, and means that if we are short of members we can open the group up to members from those U3As.

We are missing our weekly workout at the moment and I hope that we won't have to wait too long to get back to our usual schedule. Look for further details on the MB&M U3A website.

Clare Gwilym Group Leader

Poetry Group

When we sadly had to abandon our March session on poetry the subject was 'Buildings'. Any kind - factories, mills, apartment blocks. A challenge you might think. But not for this group. This is how we work: we have a different subject each month and the search begins. It's not always easy thinking of a new subject. After all, we've been through the usual candidates: love, birds, water etc. at least once. We are like detectives searching out the elusive, the unusual poem.

As we prepare for the session you often hear somebody say, 'Oh, I've been run off my feet. Thank goodness it's poetry'. This is the key thing I think. It gives time to reading, listening and diverting our minds in a way that is calming. We never analyse the life out of a poem. We enjoy it (or not), we let it be itself. Sometimes, but not often, two members bring the same poem. Usually a classic that is well loved but there is always an element of new, contemporary poetry as well.

When we are allowed to meet again, 'go out', again I wonder what the new subject will be. 'Freedom'. 'Survival'. I know for a fact there are many poems on that subject and very humbling ones from around the world.

Frances Sackett Group Leader

Dining Group

Pat Walker and I (of course with our husbands) have the "arduous" job of constantly visiting restaurants and tasting their food, to find those that are suitable for our members! At the moment, in these abnormal times, our tastings have ground to a halt. We usually arrange a meal every month, mainly a dinner in the evening but we always include at least one lunch at midday and an afternoon tea throughout the year.

We try to find a variety of venues and tastes including College restaurants, Indian, Chinese, Thai, Turkish, Pub food and as near to fine dining as we can find (and as fits our member's purses). It's not just the food that we see as important, but also the convivial atmosphere where people can make new friends and enjoy great conversation. Whether you are on your own, a couple or a small group you would be made most welcome.

Our exploring visits have been extremely varied; some good and some not so good! One restaurant, that came recommended, sticks in my mind. It had a spacious, large conservatory that could easily accommodate our group, friendly service and tasty food. What more could we want. However on making enquiries about a group booking we were directed to the manager/chef. He was extremely concerned about his 6 to 8 locals and couldn't see the benefit of us bringing 30-40 diners who would also be buying drinks and may also return to the venue for a meal in the future. Unfortunately that restaurant has since closed. I'll say no more!

The dining group is an open group which means that all members of Marple Bridge and Mellor U3A are welcome to join us. Our main constraint is the number of diners for which a restaurant can cater. We hope to see many of you in the future.

Shirley Hammond Joint Group Leader

Zumba Gold

Classes are held in the Church Hall every Friday morning starting promptly at 10.00 am for 45 minutes by Emma, a trained dance teacher. Much emphasis has been placed on the great value of exercise during this Coronavirus pandemic with many valuable programmes on the TV but we have found it so much more fun to gently exercise to music each week with Emma.

We hope you will continue to support the Group when this is all over and maybe we can encourage a few more members to join us. We have about 22 (mostly regulars) and can take a few more (men are more than welcome). Price is £2.50 per session.

Jenny Summers Group Leader

French Group

Using this time to spring clean my cupboards I came upon some of my old diaries. Looking through them I was surprised to realise that I have been running the French group for over 10 years. There is a saying "Time flies when you're enjoying yourself!" I have to admit that the group have certainly given me a truly enjoyable experience over the years. Members of the group have changed slightly since its inception, but many of the original members still attend.

I am not a French teacher, but having lived in France for a few years, I have some first-hand knowledge of life there and also many French friends who supply me with interesting snippets of French life.

We are a sociable group and our meetings are full of fun and laughter. I provide a variety of articles, some from books, newspapers, magazines and some sent to me from my friends in France. We have recently been looking at some information from a residential home and were astounded to see how many people over the age of 100 lived there.

The articles I bring inspire homework which members bring to the following meeting. We also take part in activities and games. Members work to their own ability and there is a helpful level of support from the other members of the group. Any conversations include a mixture of French and English.

Shirley Hammond Group Leader

Rummikubs Group

Rummikub is a game that anyone can play. It is suitable for children as well as adults, so you can play it with your grandchildren and great grandchildren. When I first played it we used 2 packs of playing cards. Then I was bought a recognised set that used small tiles with numbers on them.

Normally we play in fours and we can have an interesting conversation during the game. We follow the rules but don't keep a record of the score so it doesn't become overly competitive. The afternoon flies by with jovial banter and more serious thought processes. The game is based on the original game of gin rummy where you start with 7 cards and have to make sets of a number, or runs of the same suit.

Rummikubs takes that game and develops it where all players start with 14 tiles and try to make sets and runs in the same way. You can then build on the sets and runs others have made. It can become extremely challenging working out the possibilities of your move. Somebody who appears to be losing can turn the game around very quickly and end up winning. If anyone is struggling other members of the group often offer to help out.

All in all we pass a very enjoyable afternoon.

New members are always welcome and we help them to learn how to play. We usually find they pick it up quite quickly.

Trixie Ballard and Shirley Hammond Joint Group Leaders

IPad Group 2

The group meets about every 3 to 4 weeks and we share discoveries and problems it has become a useful and enjoyable session.

Joy Close Group Leader

Walking Group

We moved from Kendal in Cumbria to Marple in 2013. I have often been asked why we would want to move from somewhere as beautiful as Kendal and the Lake District, to Marple. The answer is simple; we have exchanged one exceptionally beautiful area for another and brought us nearer to our family. Not a moment's regret.

Getting to know a new area was always going to be a challenge.

I joined Marple Bridge and Mellor U3A Walking Group not only to tap into others' expert knowledge of the area, but also for companionship. I was embraced into the Group and have enjoyed the company and friendship of others whilst exploring this beautiful place that we all call home. We have walked in the sunshine; we have walked in the rain; at times we have even walked in the snow. The common theme is always to enjoy our countryside in the companionship of others.



I hope like me, you are all managing to find a quiet spot in our beautiful countryside to get your daily exercise. As I write this in mid-April, how lucky we have been to have had such magnificent weather since the lockdown.

I am sure we all look forward to the time when we can walk together again, and maybe even welcome some new members to our group.

Sue Ward Walking Group Coordinator

Reading Group 3

We meet the second Thursday of each month at 10am. We meet in each other's houses, to discuss the book we have read that month, where the host kindly provides coffee and biscuits for which we make a small monetary contribution. Only those who wish to or can, offer to host, there is no rota or compulsion to do this.

We read a different book each month, provided by the library service. Every so often we get together to choose books we would like to be put on the list of books to read, which is then sent to the library service who generally stick to our list. Occasionally if this is not possible we are sent a set of books not from our list. All this ensures we read a wide variety of books, perhaps books we would not individually have chosen to read.

Our discussions are very informal and friendly, usually started off by the host for that meeting. We discuss all aspects of the book, sometimes going beyond the book itself should it lead us to wider subjects. Often we have very different views, but we always respect each others' opinions.

At the moment we have one vacancy. Should anyone wish to join us in the future, please contact me on 0161 427 3844/07801490818

Elaine Owen Group Leader

Card Making Group

Carol Rice leads the Card Making group which is divided into two smaller groups which meet monthly on different days of the week at Carol's house. We don't have set dates to meet, rather each group meet at their convenience, agreeing the date in advance.

Our card making groups are relaxed and informal. At each meeting, we make two or three beautiful cards which follow a pre-prepared card design presented by Carol (and on occasion by another member of the group). The cards are unique and are a mix of celebration cards for male and female recipients.

When making a card, Carol teaches or provides a refresher on the techniques used. Over time, we have learnt a number of card making techniques, including stamping; dry embossing; heat embossing; using inks and powders; masking; matt and layering; stencilling; die cutting; water colouring; alcohol marker techniques and many more. The groups provide the opportunity to learn new techniques or skills, share ideas or to present and discuss cards made at home.

We have been meeting now for over eight years and the group is very popular. Regrettably there are no current vacancies but you can always ask Carol to put your name on a waiting list.

Displayed are some cards made by the group.



Group Leader

Marple Bridge & Mellor Open Gardening Group

The meetings that we hold at Marple Methodist Church on the second Wednesday of each month are open to members of other local U3A groups. Our charge for use of the room, speaker, tea or coffee is £3 pp.

For this amount we have some most interesting speakers. These included David Winnard talking on the subject of plants that kill and plants that cure. He gave a most colourful slide show and description of where we might find some of the plants talked about.

Last February our speaker was Jeff Bates who gave us an illustrated talk on Alpine and Rock Gardening showing how an Alpine Garden should be built, to do's and don't's of where to put the rocks - not in straight lines - as that is not how nature intended. He also brought some plants to sell, these soon went.

In March 43 of us went on a trip to RHS Harlow Carr Yorkshire to see their Winter Garden. Unfortunately the weather was rather like the name of the garden we went to see. However, we all survived but came home a little earlier than scheduled bringing quite a few new plants with us.

Most of the rest of the programme for this year has been re-scheduled for next year including visits to Breezy Knees Gardens near to York and the new RHS Bridgewater Garden at Worsley which now will not be opened until next June due to the present shutdown.

As a group, we are hoping to restart in September of this year with our Annual Show. An email will go out to all who normally come to the meetings, this will include a Show Schedule.

Margaret Hogg. Group Leader

Marple Bridge & Mellor Photography Group

The aim of this group is to take better photographs without the recourse to Digital Manipulation

Learn to use your camera fully and understand what can be achieved by using all of its programmes.

Frame your picture successfully and look for landscapes, patterns, textures, buildings, portraits and events etc. from different aspects as opposed to just taking 'snaps'.

Any type of camera is acceptable, SLR, Compact, Digital, and even a telephone although not everything can be achieved with a phone!! A different theme is chosen each month together with an annual theme usually over 12 months of pictures - these are normally mounted on colours of card to enhance the final effect.

We have a days visit taking pictures to show the venue. Previous ones have been - Blackpool, Chester, and Liverpool.

We meet at private houses, sit round a table, show our photos, comment on them and offer informative advice. Our meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month starting at 1.30pm.

Margaret Hogg Group Leader

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July Newsletter

As it looks unlikely that we will be back to normal by the time of the July meeting I would be grateful for any little articles, photographs etc, which are relevant to our U3A, possibly something interesting about how you came to be a member of our U3A, which I can use for insertion in the July Newsletter

Any Group Leaders who have not sent articles for this issue can send them for the July issue We want to keep up to date with anything which is of interest to our U3A.

Newsletter Editor

Crossword Solution
Across 1. coarser 5. Mammoth 9. Ambit 10. announcer
11. mirror image 12. Rue 13. Attract 15. caramel 11. Ida
18. Nomadic 19. leprosy 20. yes 22. necrophilia
26. Narcissus 27. roger 28. employs 29. yangtze
Down 1. charm 2. Arboretum 3. set to 4. Realistic
5. manna 6. mousetrap 7. Occur 8. Horseplay
13. annoyance 14. andantino 15. Callously 16. Moonlight
21. strip 23. casts 24. Heron 25. agree

This Newsletter appears bi-monthly. The next edition will be published July 2020
Please send items for publication by email

to
Email: newslettereditor@mbmu3a.org.uk

Any stories, articles or photographs of interest to members are welcomed.

You can read all issues of the newsletter on our website www.mbmu3a.org.uk

**All contributions for the next edition of the Newsletter
should be received no later than Wed 1st July 2020**