

January 2021 Newsletter

New Look for 2021 to conform with National U3A standards

All Good Wishes for 2021, Let's hope it's a better year

Chairman's Chatter

As I write on a cold freezing day, there is good news that another vaccine has been approved for use in the New Year so there is reason for more hope all round. Some lucky people in our U3A have already received their immunization and will be having their second doses very soon. In these darkest months, it is usually difficult to stay positive and the darkness of the current situation seems to make it worse; but we have to stay resolute and determined! To fall at this last hurdle would be such a waste of all the effort that we've already made. We have to stay the course, because that finishing tape is definitely in sight.

My best wishes to everyone for the New year,

Clare Gwilym



Keeping Myself From Going Crazy During Lockdown At Home,

I was just talking about this with the microwave and the toaster while drinking my tea, and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

I didn't mention any of this to the washing machine, because she puts a different spin on EVERYTHING!! Certainly couldn't share with the fridge, cause he's been acting cold and distant!

In the end, the iron straightened me out! She said the situation isn't all that pressing and all the wrinkles will soon get ironed out!

The vacuum, however, was very unsympathetic...told me to just suck it up! But the fan was VERY optimistic and gave me hope that it will all blow over soon!

The toilet looked a bit flushed but didn't say anything when I asked its opinion, but the front door said I was becoming unhinged and the doorknob told me to get a grip!! You can just about guess what the curtains told me: they told me to "pull myself together!" WE WILL SURVIVE!!

(From c3a Cyprus)

Notices & News Items

Marple Bridge & Mellor u3a Zoom Meetings all commence at 10.00am

We are continuing to hold our Monthly meetings on ZOOM and they are as follows:



Tuesday 19th January

Steve Moy

Investments in Old Age

Tuesday 16th February

Paul Redfern

Manchester Blood Bikers
(Our charity for 2020)

Tuesday 16th March

Craig Wright

The Story of Rose Hill Station

Look out the week before for the Zoom invitation

Postponement of Marple Bridge & Mellor U3A's AGM

Due to the restrictions caused by the Corona Virus the committee have decided to postpone this year's AGM. It will now take place on Tuesday, April 20th 2021, in place of the usual time in February. This year it will be a virtual and we will keep you informed and sent you AGM papers nearer the time.

Enjoy a chat and a cuppa!



I am planning to set up a zoom session when members can meet up for half an hour for a cuppa, a cake and a chat with other members. I realised how much we've all been missing, when at the beginning of our General Meetings we suddenly saw people we used to meet regularly but now have not seen for months. So I thought I'd offer you the chance to chat or to listen to others chat for just half an hour at a time.

Recently, I have been sharing memories of things that have happened over the years at Christmas. You must all have these funny family memories. Just make a note of a couple of stories and if we need anything to focus on to get the conversation going we can tell a few of these stories.

There may only be 1 or 2 people who join me and that would be fine. At the other extreme there could be 300 people and that just wouldn't work! We can only try and see.

The first of these sessions will be on Tuesday January 26th, 10.30 until 11.00am. I will send out an invite nearer the date through our Beacon e mail system. I look forward to having a chat with some of you.

Shirley Hammond

Isle of Wight Trip

Because of the current circumstances and the likely timeline for the vaccination of the members of our u3a, the trip to Isle of Wight may have to delay for a few weeks. The company is investigating the feasibility and revised cost of the trip at present and I will inform you when it is known.

Hazel Bhatt

Lands End to John o Groats and now Cardiff

With the shutdown in March last year I decided to dust down my exercise bike and go from virtual Lands End to John o Groats. I worked out that if I did 7 km per day I could be in John o Groats by November. I also decided to call at Hyde and Gretna Green on the way.

When I arrived at Gretna green I decided to tarry a couple of days, drape myself over the anvil in the hope of a marriage proposal, this didn't happen so I continued on to John o Groats, arriving there on the 4th December.

By this time I was sick of the sight of my bike, so I left it to gather dust and enjoy my Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

By January 4th I decided to remount my trusty steed and go off to Cardiff, where I should reach by the middle of February. While there I will visit the castle and the swimming pool, returning home by bike, assuming that the bike is still working, the COVID injections I have had are still working and I am still here!

Margaret Williams (The Ron Hill of Hyde)

Mike Bowden R.I.P. (15 August 1933 – 4 December 2020)

Mike was a founder member of Marple Bridge U3A, offering courses in Antiques and Collectables, a profession he had enjoyed for 25 years after he had taken early retirement from being a Chartered Electrical Engineer.

He was responsible for floodlighting Manchester's primary buildings, when this was uncommon. Later he moved to nuclear fuel production and then on to the electricity board.

He helped taking U3A groups to Barton aerodrome and to visit Concorde at Manchester Airport. He regularly enjoyed outings and dinners with U3A members and a lovely holiday at Cromer.

Prior to his National Service with the RAF, he played clarinet and tenor saxophone and had his own band, Mike Jackson, who played at Stockport Town Hall one New Year's Eve. He always said he was a boy band before The Beatles.

Mike flew for over 60 years (more than half the time flying has been in operation) and was still flying until 2 years ago. It was a very sociable life, flying to Sherburn for a Bacon Butty, attending Fly-ins and rallies around the country, Wings Dances, or just sitting chatting with friends.

Living in the centre of Marple Bridge, he helped develop the Annual Winter Wonderland where he helped put up community Christmas trees, videoed the day, booked the jazz band, etc., raising funds for summer hanging baskets.

It's not difficult to see just what an amazing happy life Mike led. He was a true gentleman, honourable and dignified who remained young at heart. He will be greatly missed.



David Davies R.I.P. (26 September 1940 – 24 December 2020)

David was a committee member and was particularly helpful at our monthly meetings. He was co-opted originally just over two years ago when he came to St Paul's a week early, thinking it was our monthly meeting week. It was in fact the committee meeting and he was persuaded to stop and get involved.

He was born at Dane Road, Dane Bank, Denton which gave the family many smiles as there were a lot of D's along with his name!

He moved to Marple in his early teens, with his parents to The Hatters Pub, where he met his wife Doris (Doris-more D's).

In his early days, David was a proficient footballer, representing Cheshire Boys and even had trials at Man City, one of which, the tale goes, he did not turn up to, as he was taken by Doris to Isle of Man.

In his late 30s / early 40's he was a keen Man United supporter and season ticket holder, He took up Karate and over time attained a Black Belt.

The family moved from Romiley to the sweet and tobacconists shop, "Leonards" on Bents Lane where they resided until retirement. A great part of his social life revolved around the Bents Lane Social Club, (The Rat Pit) and being at the bottom of Bents Lane it was an easy stroll down for a pint and meet up with friends. He got involved at the Rat Pit and was on the Committee, becoming treasurer and was granted honorary membership.

After his wife died, he was struggling, and took up and got involved with Bowls, which gave him a great social outlet to keep his mind occupied. It was soon afterwards that he joined us at the U3A.

He moved from Smithy Green in June 2018 to Apartment No 2 Davies Court (this made the family smile as he initially teased the residents it was his apartment block).

David was a very private man and will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.





Christmas Tales from the Past



Christmas Cooking

When I was about 6 years old, my father's company bought the staff a Christmas turkey each. When he got home at 4pm on Christmas Eve, he found it was rotten. He then went out to find a last minute replacement, but could only find an enormous one. On Christmas Day, my mother managed to get it in the oven with much pushing and shoving. But it took forever to cook and we didn't get lunch till 3pm. Next year, we had a much smaller turkey, but my mother was so worried about lunch being late that she got up early to put it in the oven. That year lunch was at 11am!

A couple of years later, my father could not get the brandy over the Christmas pudding to light. He tried and tried, but it still wouldn't light. Finally he poured Meths over it. This time it lit easily! Surprisingly the pudding tasted OK.

Christmas School Dance

When I was seventeen and at school, we booked Hermans Hermits for our Christmas Dance. They had not yet had a number one hit and so we could afford them.

We invited girls from the local High School and I was very excited. We agreed to meet in the local pub before the dance but, unfortunately, I had too much to drink and had to be taken home and so missed the Group and also the girls!

The Icing on the Cake

When I was a little girl my mother decided to take cake icing lessons so that she could provide us with a most superbly, professionally decorated Christmas cake. After two and a half months of lessons she was getting very frustrated as the teacher was adamant they had to have a perfectly flat surface on which to put the decoration. Consequently every week they had to add another layer of icing! The cake grew and grew!

Then at last they started to make lattice work, weaving icing, holly, ivy, berries and a host of other Christmas decorations. My mother's mind was taken off the cake itself. The result was beautiful and well worthy of any banquet table.

The time arrived when the masterpiece of a cake was to be served to all the family. My mother was extremely proud. My father, ever the joker, tried to cut into it.....but he couldn't get the knife to go through! He went to his tool box and came back with a hammer. He eventually managed to hammer and cut through the extremely thick icing.

My mother went on to decorate fantastic cakes for all our celebrations but we never let her forget her first attempt.

The First Christmas Tree

The first Christmas tree I remember was one my father brought home. We all decorated it beautifully. The crowning glory was the lights; real candles that simply clipped on the branches. As darkness came my father lit the candles and we all stood back to admire it. Within an extremely short space of time my father was seen running through the kitchen carrying a blazing Christmas tree! In the following year he invested in a set of electric lights.

(Tales cont. overleaf)

My Christmas Present



When I was eleven my aunt asked me what I would like for Christmas. This was a great surprise as she had never given me a Christmas present before. My aunt and uncle owned two news agent shops and I knew that they sold fountain pens, something I had wanted for quite a while. So I asked for a Parker fountain pen. Eventually, Christmas Day arrived and the pillow case hung at the end of my bed was filled with colourful packages. Taking my presents to my parent's room I took great delight opening them and eventually I came to a small package from the aforesaid aunt and uncle. Tearing off the paper in anticipation there was a plastic case with Parker written on the clear plastic cover. Inside was my dream Parker pen.

I took the pen out of its case and unscrewed the top. To my dismay there wasn't a nib on the pen. I unscrewed the barrel and discovered that there was no rubber tubing inside to hold the ink. Very disappointed I picked up the plastic box and turned it over. Printed across the bottom, in capitals, was printed FOR DISPLAY PURPOSES ONLY.

Thank you to the members of the u3a French Group for these articles, the only ones who responded to the request for these articles for the Newsletter

Malcolm (Newsletter Editor)

Crossword Compiled by Marple Bridge and Mellor U3A Crossword Group

compiled jointly by U3A Crossword Group

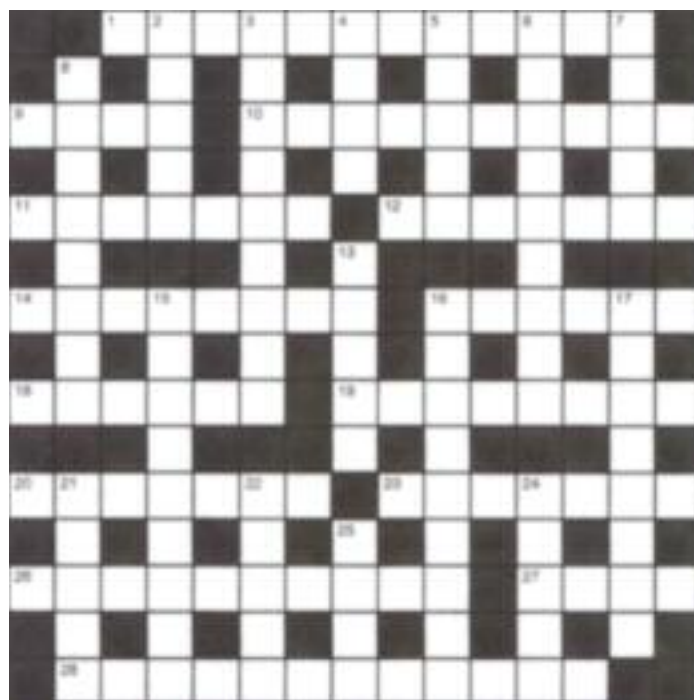
Clues across

1. Parson's itchy after cooking local delicacy. (7-5)
9. Leading cherished Oxford detective – Endeavour Morse perhaps? (4)
10. Walker earned tips for moving. (10)
11. Business relationships. (7)
12. Middle East repeatedly enthusiastic without one reminder. (7)
14. Dated music player from the Anglicans holding peculiar tastes. (8)
16. Have a good look at French attraction I hear. (6)
18. Roll-on transport ship carrying the Duchess of Cambridge. (6)
19. Dismiss after scrum in bag. (4-4)
20. Aggressive tirades on both sides. (7)
23. One short of members could struggle to keep going. (7)
26. It's a concern, no small rocky collapse. (10)
27. Small measure in Switzerland. (4)
28. Alice, Ned and Tess mess about in food shop. (12)

Clues down

2. Norma, for instance, can do a rope trick. (5)
3. Complaint writer raised? It's holding up HR. (9)
4. Team swindle regularly. (4)
5. Stick Dad's two front teeth together. (5)
6. Cross seer upset to find witch. (9)
7. Fungus as yet problematic. (5)
8. House cover to cause pain for luggage carrier. (8)

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



Clues down cont.

13. Length of some trenches. (5)
15. Is it Clara being cynical? (9)
16. Surround points to modern loadstone. (9)
17. Relative not clearly happy at first to become less tight-fisted. (8)
21. We heard of a breeder that was positioned upright. (5)
22. Style of architecture initially designed on Roman idealistic culture. (5)
24. One meets Head of Education to marry. (5)
25. Eating regime doesn't include eating teacakes for starters! (4)

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Announcements

It is with deep regret that we record the death of Mike Bowden in December.

We send our sincere condolences to Jane Rhodes and also to Mike's family

We also regret to record the death of David Davies and we send our sincere condolences to his family. David was a member of our u3a committee for the past two years and will be sadly missed

We also send our sincere condolences to Christine Raymond and the family. Christine's husband, James, who was also a member of our u3a, died on Christmas Eve



Crossword Solution
Across
1. Cornish pasty 9. Code 10. Pedestrian
11. Affairs 12. Memento 14. Cassette 16. Eye-ful
18. Skates 19. Rucksack 20. Astride 23. Amputee
26. Concertina 27. Inch28. Delicatessen
Down
2. Opera 3. Nephritis 4. Side 5. Paste 6. Sorceress
7. Yeast 8. Roof-rack 13. Metre
15. Satirical 16. Encompass 17. Unclench 21. Stood
22. Doric 24. Unite 25. diet

This Newsletter appears bi-monthly. The next edition will be published March 2021
Please send items for publication by email

to Malcolm Moss

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.mbm3a.org.uk

***All contributions for the next edition of the Newsletter
should be received no later than Wed 24th Feb 2021***