



u3a
Newent & District



NEWSLETTER

February 2021

Welcome to Issue 6 of our Newsletter.

**As you will all know following
Government advice regarding
the Covid19 virus
all our Monthly General Meetings are suspended.
However, there is a programme
of Zoom Monthly Meetings planned.**

**Many individual Group meetings have not been
able to meet face-to-face
because of Covid restrictions but
are now using Zoom.**

**No longer in full time work or raising a family?
Join your local u3a to meet new people
enjoy exploring a wide variety of interests
at low cost.
All still possible using Zoom!**

See <https://u3asites.org.uk/newent/events> for more details.

NEWENT AND DISTRICT u3a NOTES AND NEWS

Welcome to the February Newsletter. Who would have thought a year ago that we would still be subject to Covid restrictions in the way that we are at present? Many of our members continue to find creative and fulfilling ways of using time, but no doubt some are finding loneliness and isolation difficult to deal with. The news about vaccinations is welcome and we all look forward to being able to return to life as we once knew it, whenever that may be. The Management Committee sends its condolences to those of you that have lost family members or friends to this wretched virus - we are sorry for your loss.

Despite the difficult times, it is very gratifying that so many friends, care workers, volunteers, and local businesses are rising to the challenges of staying in touch with people and providing help and support for members of the community – not least within the Newent and District u3a.

By the way have you wondered about the use of lower case in u3a? Work has been going on at the Third Age Trust (TAT) about how to brand ourselves. The decision has been made to move to u3a and not continue to call ourselves University of the Third Age. The TAT believe the words “University” and “Third Age” do not correctly reflect what we are all about and may even put some people off. Because of that, it seems logical NOT to use the terms University or Third Age in future as it simply reminds people of the past. Hence, we are now u3a.

Whilst some members do not have access to a computer, many interest group members are keeping in touch with each other in conversations by phone, letters, across the garden fence or in some cases across the street. Those who are able are using social media such as Facetime, Skype, Zoom. The roll out of Interest Group Zoom Meetings has greatly helped several groups to successfully re-establish contact and to start meeting again. Twelve Interest Groups now have scheduled Zoom meetings (see below for more information).



The Management Committee has fully embraced Zoom to be able to meet regularly. Above is a “rogues gallery screenshot” of the most recent management meeting. It is pleasing to see how many interest groups are now using Zoom meetings, using the licence that Newent and District u3a has purchased for the purpose of re-engaging with members.

Reminder alert!

In November 2020, the Committee decided the following changes on membership periods.

1. **Current 2020/21 Members** – Those members who renewed their membership from 1st April 2020, will have their membership period extended through to 31st March 2022. In other words, they will not have to pay any subscription fees for the 2021/22 membership year.
2. **Lapsed and New Members 2020/21** – Any lapsed members, or any new member, joining before 31st March 2021, will have their membership period extended through to 31st March 2022. Thus, they will not have to pay any subscription fees for 2021/22 membership year.
3. **Lapsed and New Members 2021/22** - Any lapsed or new members joining on or after 1st April 2021, will have a normal twelve-month membership that will end 31st March 2022. Please note that subscription fee rates remain unchanged, and that they will reduce pro-rata through the 2021/2022 membership year as usual.

Have you taken part in any of the Interest Group Zoom Meetings?

There is a timetable of meetings below.

The Committee's decision last November about members' subscriptions for 2021/22 means that members will continue to enjoy the benefits of our u3a, whilst maintaining value for money from their subscriptions. On the matter of membership benefits it is worth remembering that the Third Age Trust will be launching a national retailer and services discount scheme early in 2021 (see Page 9 of the Winter Edition of Third Age Matters for more detail) Even more reason to ensure that your u3a membership is up to date. However even if you are not up to date you are not barred from joining Zoom meetings at present.

You can all join in Zoom Meetings,
whatever your membership status,
at least for the foreseeable future.

See below for more information about
“how and when”.

Are you going to give it a go?

DIARY OF INTEREST GROUP ZOOM MEETINGS

GROUP	TIME	DAY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Writing for Pleasure	14.30	Thursday	4	4
Latin	14:30 (1hr.)	Friday	5	5
Wrens (Nature Appreciation)	10:00	Wednesday	10	10
Spanish (Intermediate)	10:30	Thursday	11	11
Latin	14:30 (1hr.)	Friday	12	12
Photography	14:00	Monday	15	15
Historic Buildings	14:00	Wednesday	17	17
Spanish (Elementary)	10:30	Thursday	18	18
Latin	14:30 (1hr.)	Friday	19	19
Q.A.C.K.S	14:00	Monday	22	22
Spanish (Advanced)	10:30	Thursday	25	25
Latin	14:30 (1hr.)	Friday	26	26

- All meetings are scheduled for 2 hours unless otherwise shown.
- Contact the Group Leader for details of the zoom I.D. and passcode.
- JAZZ APPRECIATION is by clicking on an internet 'link' emailed every Wednesday.
- Contact Roy Cansdale with your email address to join in! (roy.cansdale@sky.com)

This list compiled from participants details as at 29/01/2021.

NOW! A RETURN TO OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

In more normal times there were Monthly Meetings in the Newent Memorial Hall. Do you remember sharing a cuppa and some conversation before and after listening to a talk? There were many happy mornings and interesting speakers. Covid put paid to those "3rd Tuesday morning in the month gatherings". With no obvious end of Covid restrictions in sight at present, there is a series of Zoom Monthly Meetings starting in March and continuing through April and May. You will receive an email invitation to take part which will include more details about the speakers for the meetings.

The first scheduled meeting is: -

Tuesday 16th March 2021 -10:30a.m. "Fool's Gold - The Zoom Show"



We - that is Carol and Steve Robson - get to play our concert performances all over the UK (and beyond too). People say nice things - very nice things - afterwards and we have great fun doing it.

So; we are very lucky!

Our shows are a bit different as they are usually not just a straight music recital. Our shows are themed, and each song fits the theme and has a strong story attached to it. The stories are told, supported by projected visuals, the song is played live (supported by more visuals) and usually there is plenty of opportunity to join

in! The programmes are varied and usually include a mixture of well-known and original music - the stories are fascinating, moving or funny but always engaging.

Further Monthly Meetings via Zoom are planned – details will be emailed to members. Meeting dates are as follows: -

Tuesday 20th April 2021 – 10:30a.m. To be announced.

Tuesday 18th May 2021 – 10:30a.m. To be announced.

Please remember this will be the first time we have used zoom to run a large-scale meeting, so it will be a learning curve for us too!! We will do our best but please be gentle with us if we have technical difficulties!

THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS OF KEEPING IN TOUCH AND IDEAS FOR INTEREST GROUPS ON THE u3a WEBSITE AT: -

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/component/content/article/197-covid-19/556-keeping-in-touch?Itemid=490>

THERE ARE OTHER WAYS OF FINDING HELP AND SUPPORT.

There is a group in Newent called 'We Will Help Newent' whose volunteer members will give assistance to those who are vulnerable and needing support. There are details on their website about accessing hot meals and delivery etc. <https://www.newentonline.co.uk/#grocery>

Also, the GCC Help Hub: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub/>

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Members are asked, wherever possible, to share copies with other members in the same household who receive email copies. More of you have been in touch with Tony Snowdon and provided email addresses for circulation of the Newsletter and other communications for which thank you. If you have not already, please would you consider letting Tony Snowdon know your email address so that you can receive information electronically. You can email Tony at tonys2112@icloud.com

WHAT TO DO IF YOU NEED MEDICAL HELP.

If you need medical help for any reason, do not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy, or hospital. If you have symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature or a new, continuous cough), use the [111 coronavirus service](#) in the first instance.

If you need help or advice not related to coronavirus:

- for health information and advice, use the [NHS website](#) or your GP surgery website;
- for urgent medical help, use the [NHS 111 online service](#) – only call 111 if you're unable to get help online;
- for life-threatening emergencies, call 999 for an ambulance.

Contributions from some of our Interest Groups.

The Writing for Pleasure Group have been sharing their pieces with each other over the past months via email and Zoom. A piece is printed below. Thank you, Paul, for writing it and Pam for sending it.

The Light at the End of the Tunnel

Spike Milligan's daughter asked him "Daddy, where does the dark go when you turn the light on?" Clever people today, scientists and the like, might have told her that dark does not actually exist. Dark, they might say, is just an absence of energy within a particular narrow wavelength that enables you to visualise reflected images. Luke, on the other hand, would have told her that it was wrong to suggest that dark does not exist. Wrong and very foolish, because it is disrespectful to the spirits. And you will not last long underground if you are disrespectful to the spirits that surround you.

Luke started to work underground with his father when he was six years old. You had to then. Everyone had to do whatever they could to help the family to survive. He had no need to go to school because his father taught him everything he needed to know for his future as a miner. That included respect for the spirits and understanding the dark.

The spirits were everywhere. People and animals were kinder to you if you respected and were kind to them. Plants and trees also had spirits that responded to respect and care. If people and animals and plants and trees had spirits, then the rocks that surrounded working miners must surely and especially have spirits that must be respected. They had the power to reward respect with deposits of the finest iron ore, and with protection from rock fall and lethal gas. They were omnipresent and omnipotent in his world, dark or light, but he never felt closer to the spirits that when he was underground.

Luke had also learned to understand and appreciate the dark. Far from being a mere absence of light, the dark simplified and enriched the use of other senses. Underground, he exchanged the vagaries of our weather for an environment that was always temperate and dry. He left behind the cacophony of noises that surrounded him on the surface. He learned instead to become exquisitely sensitive to the sounds of water dripping gently from stalactite to stalagmite, to the different echoes of rocks that were all around him, soft or hard and near or far, and to the very occasional sounds of the earth settling through geological time. The miscellany of smells on the surface were replaced by the more subtle aromas of hard limestone, moist sandstone and metallic iron ore. They felt different too, and he soon learned to distinguish the touch of iron enriched limestone from the more easily won brush ore.

The caves were his workplace, the place where he spent almost half of his life. His mind built up a detailed map of them, from the old routes that would have been familiar to his father to the newer spaces that he had created by his own labours. Obstacles there were a 'plenty, but they were either fixtures or ones that he alone had created. He had a candle, of course, but seldom needed or wanted to use it.

As Luke emerged from the mines at the end of each day, the light that appeared at the end of the tunnel signalled his transition from one very real world to another one that was just as real. But not, most definitely not, from an absence to a presence.

I should love to know what explanation Spike gave his daughter. I'll bet it was more entertaining than this one!

Paul Evans January 2021

Ginny Birkett has contributed the next item about WRENS.

The Wrens Group enjoys Nature, and we are concerned about Environmental Issues.

Instead of our monthly meetings on the 2nd Wed of the month at 10am, we have kept in touch recently with our Zoom Conversations.

In January, we all had a rummage in our cupboards and fridge, noting where our food had come from. On Zoom we had a lively discussion about it; what we should eat, or not, to save the world, but also what we cannot do without, despite the food miles!

This month (Wed 10th Feb) the topic is Home Energy, when we will each measure our consumption, and discuss how we could do better to reduce our carbon footprint.

Please email me if you would like to join in our jolly chats about serious issues, and maybe outings again later in the summer.

Wrens Group Leader

Ginny Birkett vmbktt@gmail.com

If you would like to find out more about: -

**The Writing for Pleasure Group,
The WRENS Group,
or any of the other groups
go to the Newent and District u3a website at**

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

**If you have suggestions for new groups, please email
the Group Co-ordinator
Roy Cansdale at: -**

roy.cansdale@sky.com

Fancy some time cooking?

Salmon fennel bake – courtesy of Anne Jones.

Salmon with fennel bake – serves 4.

Ingredients

Large	Knob of butter
3	Large banana shallots, sliced
1	Fennel bulb, core removed and thinly sliced
5 fl.oz	White wine or vermouth
7 fl.oz	Full fat crème fraiche
4 x 4.5 oz	Thin centre cut salmon fillets, skinned
4 oz	Frozen petit pois, defrosted
Squeeze	Fresh lemon
2 tbsp.	Chopped parsley
	Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

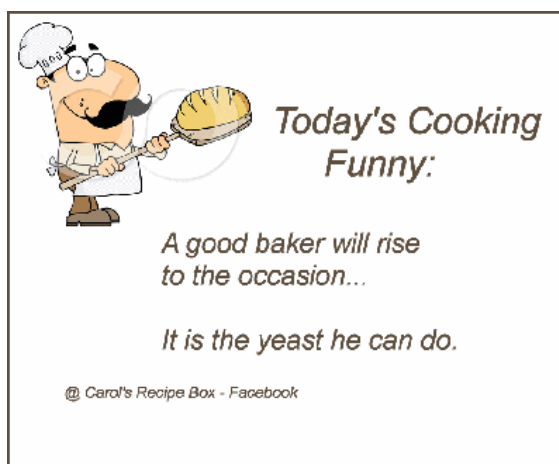
Melt the butter in a large, wide-based pan over a gentle heat. Add the shallots and fennel and fry over a high heat for about 2-3 mins.

Lower the heat, cover the pan with a lid and continue to cook for about 8-10 mins until tender. Pour in the wine and boil to reduce by half, then stir in crème fraiche and bring to the boil. Season with salt and pepper, then place the salmon on the top of the sauce. Cover pan and simmer for about 4 mins until salmon is nearly cooked. Add the peas, pushing under sauce and continue to cook for 3 mins. Stir in lemon juice, check seasoning and sprinkle with parsley.

Serve with some rice, new potatoes or mash or crusty bread and a green salad.

A glass of chilled white wine would enhance your well-deserved efforts, whilst cooking and after!

Don't like fennel? Leeks do just as well. Adapted to suit your taste and make it your own.



Time to exercise your braincells with a quiz!

#	QUESTION	A	B	C	D
1	Name of the Jewish New Year?	Hanukkah	Yom Kippur	Kwanza	Rosh Hashanah
2	How many blue stripes are there on the U.S. flag?	6	7	13	0
3	Hottest planet in our solar system?	Venus	Saturn	Mercury	Mars
4	According to Forrest Gump, "life was like a.... ?	bag of lemons	box of roses	lollipop	box of chocolates
5	What is the rarest blood type?	O	A	B	AB Negative
6	How many bones are there in the human body?	206	205	201	209
7	What language is the most spoken worldwide?	Chinese	Spanish	Arabic	English
8	What year did Barbie debut?	1958	1959	1956	1961
9	Longest river in the world?	Amazon	Congo	Nile	Hudson
10	As an adult, how many teeth should you have in your mouth?	35	32	30	42
11	Largest planet in our solar system?	Jupiter	Saturn	Neptune	Earth
12	How many elements are there on the periodic table?	112	118	120	143
13	How many keys are on a piano?	86	87	88	89
14	In days how often does the moon orbit Earth?	every 7	every 27	every 30	every 365
15	In which city would you find the Fisherman's Bastion?	Rome	Budapest	Barcelona	Athens
16	In Greek Mythology, who is the Queen of the Underworld?	Pandora	Medusa	Helen	Persephone
17	How many ribs are in the human body?	16	24	19	29
18	Which musician won the Nobel Peace Prize for Literature in 2016?	Bob Segar	Eric Clapton	Bob Dylan	Elton John
19	How many time zones are there in the world?	7	24	23	9
20	How many eyes does a spider have?	8	9	10	2

Don't turn over until you want to know the answers!

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

Question #	Answer	Question #	Answer
1	D	11	A
2	D	12	B
3	A	13	C
4	D	14	B
5	D	15	B
6	A	16	D
7	A	17	B
8	B	18	C
9	C	19	B
10	B	20	A