



## FROM THE CHAIR - Tim Young

It's awfully hard to keep up isn't it! One month we are looking at a lockdown, next time we are all anticipating a vaccine. What will Christmas 2020, have in store for us?

We know that our **U3A** has in store our first **Digital Christmas Concert**. Details of this are in the **DRAMA** section further down the magazine. I do hope you will join us through the 'magic' of Zoom.

Following the AGM our committees are getting organised and restructuring for the coming year. So, you will probably see some new names in this Newsletter. I welcome our new committee members and look forward to the year ahead. I am sure that we can begin to look more optimistically to the future and perhaps to real meetings once again later next year. In the meanwhile, we have some new digital groups, of which the latest is the Cook off Friday Group, to provide interest and activities before the restrictions end.

I am sure that we are all planning our Christmas, determined to make the most of the season and the celebration, whatever the circumstances at the time. Then 2021 will begin and we can all look forward to a gradual improvement in daily life as we begin to return to normal.

We will be in touch with you once more in 2020 to wish you, more formally, the 'Season's Greetings'. Meanwhile I do hope that you will soon be able to begin to enjoy preparations for Christmas, which I am sure we will be able to celebrate in style once again.

*Tim Young*  
Chairman

## Latest News: Christmas Activities

### Drama – Tim Young

Thanks to the 21<sup>st</sup> century computer, we shall offer you a remote festive event. Through the power of Zoom we have a programme of Christmas and seasonal items (see the next page for further details).



Newmarket U3A Drama Group Presents

## A Digital Christmas

*'A Visit from St Nicholas' – the well-known traditional Christmas poem*

*'A Christmas Carol' – an excerpt from Dickens' famous story*

*'When Icicles hang by the Wall' – a poem by Shakespeare*

*'How the Grinch Stole Christmas' – from the well-known Dr Seuss story*

*'A Politically Correct Christmas' – how Health & Safety might influence celebrations*

*'Herod's Henchmen' – a view from the back row of the Chorus*

*'The 12 Days of Christmas' – a new version for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*

*'It is Enough' – a traditional Christmas tale told as an unscripted story – a new style for us*

*'I used to be a Social Girl' – a poem for mature members*

*'A Crabby Christmas' – by the ever-perceptive Pam Ayres*

*'I want to be Joseph' – a poem about that traditional school nativity play*

Final selection of items, casting and staging, (yes staging!), are still to be confirmed and rehearsed but it will be a **fun and festive afternoon on Tuesday 22 December at 3.00pm.**

**Details for watching via Zoom will be published closer to the date of the show**



**Refreshments will be served in the interval – provided you have your own!** Our new **COOK OFF FRIDAY** group will take to the stage with their mincemeat tarts for a 'Bake Off' style tasting and analysis.

## More Christmas Activities

### Shoebox Appeal – Grace Crump

Although this year our members could not help sell the Charity Christmas Cards, they made up for it with the generous shoebox donations. Although there was only a short amount of time available, our members contributed 23 shoeboxes to the total of 323 that are to be distributed to children and adults in need in Romania and Belarus. Thank you to everyone and I wish you all a very merry and safe Christmas.



### Christmas Tree Festivals – Niddy Walpole

The Christmas Tree Festival at St Mary's Church in Ashley, mentioned in the November E-News, is still to go ahead, but the COVID-19 restrictions have meant a change of dates. The trees can now be viewed on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of December. We will also participate in the Stetchworth Tree Festival, during the 13<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> of December. Both Festivals are of course subject to change depending on COVID-19 Restrictions. Please see the Events page on the U3A website for details of times for visiting, when stewards will be available. Do try and visit to see the Newmarket U3A trees.



### Thursford Spectacular – Niddy Walpole

For those of you who booked for the 2020 show, which was cancelled, I am delighted to say that we have received the replacement tickets for 2021, which gives us something to look forward to. We wish you all a Happy Christmas and a better 2021.

## Latest News: Group Activities

### Carpet Bowls – Alan and Kath Gifkins

It is many months since we saw each other and held a bowl in our hands, but hopefully we can start chasing the jack again early next year. Those of us who were keeping our fingers crossed for our bowling break in November had it snatched away at the last minute, but never mind there is next year to look forward to. Happy Christmas and our very best wishes for 2021.

## Camera Group – Barry Coles

We all miss the social aspect of our meetings at Tesco, but members of the group must be congratulated on their diligence and participation in our online monthly competitions which have been running since April and have included challenging themes. The subject for November was 'Food/Drink'.



**Winner**  
**LIQUID SUNSHINE!**

The winner was John Timmins, with LIQUID SUNSHINE! The runners up were Lucy Clarke, with Edible Physalis Berry in its 'Wrapper' and Gordon Duthie with Lunch time at last! Congratulations to you all. We hope that the New Year will be on the brighter side but it is likely to be some time before we are able to meet. Looking forward meanwhile, I hope you will all be able to enjoy the festive season. So that you have advance notice this time around - keep your camera handy - we will expect to be running the Annual Christmas Card Competition, for all U3A members, again next year!



**Runners up**  
**Edible Physalis Berry in its**  
**'Wrapper'**



**Lunch time at last!**

## French Conversation – Alison Giles

The group is still unable to meet in person, but those who wish to can create a written piece in French for an email which is sent round once a month. We're hoping to meet via Zoom in December for an actual conversation (not necessarily in French!). If you would be interested in joining us please email Alison on [education@burwellmuseum.org.uk](mailto:education@burwellmuseum.org.uk)

## Garden – Kath Gifkins and Rosemary Foreman

You are all invited to join us for a festive zoom meeting on December 16<sup>th</sup> at 2.30pm. Please email Kath for the link ([gifsmrs@gmail.com](mailto:gifsmrs@gmail.com)). Sorry but you will have to supply your own sausage rolls, mince pies and drink this year, alcoholic or otherwise! We will chat about the past gardening year and our plans for 2021. The ROSKA results will also be announced. If you haven't already made your nominations the link is on our page on the website. Happy Christmas.

## History – Niddy Walpole

We are still having Zoom meetings, which are generally on the first Friday of the month but may vary to accommodate members' commitments. The full schedule is on the website. Time limitations of Zoom mean that presentations may stretch over two consecutive sessions, with a brief interval break. In addition we are commencing research into local museums that we hope to visit in Springtime.

## Lunch Group – Brenda and Mike Hastings

With the introduction of a vaccine for COVID-19 it may not be that long before we are all able to return to meetings again, so we look forward to the day when we can enjoy our lunches together once more. In the meantime we would like to wish all members a very happy Christmas, and our best wishes for 2021. Keep safe everyone.

## Music Appreciation – Mike Jocelyn

This month's offerings are a bit different again, just click the links and enjoy. It's been OK for me to upload these but due to copyright issues you may get adverts at the end.

Toronto Symphony Orchestra suitably distanced with Canada ballet dancers: 'Bach and Ballet' <https://youtu.be/DeBTcLBZDfw>

As an extra, Richard has supplied this little gem, which all U3A members can enjoy: Brexit a la francaise <https://youtu.be/omvSTzUQxoM>

## Realm of Books – Margaret Jocelyn

During the current circumstances we have adapted to Zoom to help us to run our group as well as we can. The reviews are on the website, but if you would like a paper copy please let Margaret know, on 01638 615252. Our October books were by the American writer John Grisham. "The Runaway Jury" uncovered corruption in American courts of law and "The Whistler" was a compelling read about a corrupt judge. In November the author was Kate Summerscale, with "The Suspicions of Mr Whicher" or "Mrs Robinson's Disgrace". We will be taking a break in December and will meet next in January.

## Scrabble – Janet Neville and Liz Langley

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members good health in these incredibly difficult times, and we sincerely hope that we can all meet again before too long. With our best wishes for 2021 to you all.

## Cook off Friday – Niddy Walpole

For the first meeting, held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November, participants followed the same Fork Biscuits recipe, and then reviewed their produce over coffee at 11am. Rosemary Foreman's "cat biscuit" was declared the winner, and Rosemary chose cheese scones to be the subject for January's meeting. Meanwhile, we will be following Mary Berry's recipe for mincemeat tarts (given at the end of this E-News) and then presenting our products during the interval of the Drama Group's Digital Christmas Concert on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.



## Wings, Wheels & Water – Tim Young and Stephen Garner

The group continues to encourage participation, and in November, David Soanes, a group member, talked about Mulberry Harbours, a great engineering achievement of World War II. David taught us new things about areas of the country which we previously thought we knew well. Subsequent discussion covered both sad and humorous personal experiences, reminding us that the people are an important part of Wings, Wheels & Water, not just machines. The future presentation schedule has been adjusted a little, with December's talk being about great inventions from the ancient world. Best wishes for Christmas, and we hope that 2021 will bring us an opportunity for more face-to-face interaction.

## Recipe for Cook off Friday (22<sup>nd</sup> December)

### Mincemeat and Orange Feathered Tarts

This recipe is Mary Berry's from her book Absolute Favourites page 290.© This makes 12 tarts which can be frozen for up to 2 months. The pastry can be stored up to 3 days in an airtight tin.

#### *For the pastry*

- 175g (6oz) plain flour
- 75g (3oz) cold butter cubed
- 25g (1oz) icing sugar (plus a little for final dusting)
- 1 beaten egg
- Zest of 1 large orange

#### *For the filling*

- 250g (9oz) good quality mincemeat
- 100g (4oz) finely chopped ready to eat apricots
- 100g (4oz) natural marzipan, grated (tip 3)



- 1) Preheat an oven to 200°C/180°C fan /Gas mark 6. Place a baking sheet inside to heat up.
- 2) Make the pastry in a blender or by hand until consistency of fine breadcrumbs. Add the icing sugar and the orange zest, mix briefly then add the beaten egg. Mix well until the dough just holds together. Wrap in greaseproof paper and place in the fridge to chill for 15 mins.
- 3) Roll out the pastry thinly (see tip 1) to 1-2mm thick. Cut 12 rounds with your fluted cutter and line each of your 12 bun sections in your bun tin.
- 4) Mix the mincemeat, chopped apricots and fill each pastry case. Top with grated marzipan.
- 5) Slide the bun tin onto the hot baking sheet. Bake for 12-15 minutes until golden brown.
- 6) Dust with icing sugar, when cooled to serve but still warm.

#### *Tips*

- 1) To make thin pastry, roll out between 2 sheets of greaseproof or clingfilm so it doesn't stick to the rolling pin.
- 2) For a stronger orange flavour add half the zest to the pastry and half to the filling.
- 3) To grate the marzipan first chill in the fridge.