



## FROM THE CHAIR - Tim Young

Dear Members,

In its usual way Christmas has come and gone; a different one for very many of us but I hope you were able to share some of the inherent festivity of the time with family and friends, even if it was a somewhat muted occasion compared with previous years.

Having said that, Newmarket U3A has been busier than usual and members worked hard on various projects. As we couldn't help with the Charity Christmas card Shop, (it couldn't function this year), we became involved with the Charity Shoebox Appeal run by Ashley Church. In short order we were able to contribute 23 boxes. Next we joined two Christmas Tree Festivals at Stetchworth and Ashley, presenting two lovely trees in our colours of yellow and blue. Many hours had been spent making decorations. Finally the Drama Group presented our first Digital Christmas Concert, supported by the new Cook off Friday group. More details and pictures of all these events can be found in this edition of E-News.



Now we look forward to 2021. As it is starting with a lockdown, it seems in the short-term at least, more of the same, I fear. In the long-term, relief in the form of vaccines no doubt. It might be a rather slow job but at least we shall generally be nearer the top of the list. I wonder if any of our members have had their first injection yet?

At least the weather will be improving and we shall be able, again, to go for those lovely peaceful walks as we did last spring. In U3A we shall be redoubling our efforts to provide stimulation and activity in various ways. Our main communications and activities will still be digital; our E-News, the website and Facebook and Zoom meetings. If, for any reasons, you are reluctant to use these may I suggest a New Year's Resolution in that direction. Meanwhile, of course we shall continue to provide anyone who wishes with printed versions of E-News.

I wish you a healthy, happy and prosperous new year.

*Tim Young*  
**Chairman**

# Christmas Activities Review

## Drama – Tim Young

When the Drama Group started four years ago, it had three key objectives: to develop individual personal confidence and drama-related skills, to work with others to create a performance, and to perform before an audience. In previous years we have achieved these through building and presenting a public performance. We did three different shows.

This year we could not do our live shows so we developed our digital concert using Zoom. This is quite a difficult medium to use creatively but we were pleased both with the result and with the number of members who joined to watch.

Below you will find a link to a YouTube video slide show, on the [Drama](#) page of the website, covering both the performance and refreshments, and a selection of photos from the video.

<https://youtu.be/4BAUsr1wTZ8>



So enthused were we that we are now working on another, more advanced show for Easter. If you would like to join our troupe you would be most welcome.

## Cook off Friday – Niddy Walpole

The Cook off Friday bakers with their mincemeat tarts were the interval highlight for the Digital Christmas. They proved to be very tasty but a bit fiddly to make (from a single person who doesn't bake that often now: me!)



The participants made slight variations to the recipe supplied, which resulted in Niddy choosing two winners. Ann Molloy used the Mary Berry recipe throughout, while Julia Brunning adapted it to suit her tastes, with a pastry star on the top. Well done to both of you. Ann's choice for a future recipe will be cheese straws, and Julia has chosen muffins. Recipes will follow in subsequent editions of E-News, and on the website.



Ann's mince tarts



Julia's mince tarts

Meanwhile Rosemary Foreman's cheese scone recipe for the January 22<sup>nd</sup> Cook off Friday can be found at the end of this E-News, and on the website [page](#).

## Christmas Tree Festivals – Niddy Walpole



I will start with a big thank you to everyone that helped with the project, it couldn't have been achieved without the tremendous team effort. The aim was to bring the U3A activities to a wider audience by participating in Christmas Tree Festivals in Stetchworth and Ashley. Our trees were in U3A colours, blue and yellow, with baubles and wooden decorations highlighting the variety of U3A Group activities.

The festival at Stetchworth was quite small, with about 10 trees, but was open for a week. Our tree was in the church porch, and therefore the first to be seen. Ashley's event was larger, but only open for two days.

From comments received the trees did raise awareness of Newmarket U3A, so perhaps the activity can be developed further next Christmas?



## Latest News: Group Activities

### Antiques – Niddy Walpole

We have great news from the Antiques Group. David Palmer, our regular speaker who is a freelance auctioneer and regular guest on television programmes, has agreed to talk to us via Zoom, about his year in lockdown. (Please see the [Antiques Group](#) page on the website.) The talk will be on Wednesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, 2021 at 2.30pm. It is open to all U3A members. To join the presentation, please use the Zoom link that you will find in the email which accompanied this edition of E-News.

### Discussion – Ann Lay and John Herring

We wish all our members best wishes for the new year and look forward to the day when we will be safely vaccinated and can meet again. Alas this is not quite yet, but the day will surely come and won't we have a lot to discuss! Best wishes to all.

### French Conversation – Alison Giles

The French conversation group continues by email, with members submitting a written French response to a challenge each month. We had December off, with a few people meeting via Zoom as a social event. We will continue to follow events and restrictions and will get back to meeting in person when we can - at the very least we may be able to meet in small groups outside when the weather is a bit warmer!

## Camera Group – Barry Coles

The subject for December 2020 was 'Up Close'. The winner was Barry Coles, with 'Bee on Marigold'. Placed second, was 'Thanks Mum'. Congratulations to both of you. It looks as though the New Year may be on the brighter side but it will be a while before we can appreciate it! I hope you enjoyed the limited festive few days that we were allowed.



**Winner: 'Bee on Marigold'**

As mentioned last month, keep your camera handy, we expect to be running the Annual Christmas Card Competition for all U3A members, later in 2021. We have already had a slight flurry of snow, perhaps next time it will be heavier.

It looks as though we'll have to continue with online competitions for a few months of 2021. Members of the group must be congratulated on their diligence and participation over the last nine months with the online monthly competitions, these have included some challenging themes. Camera group members' challenge for January's competition will be 'Viewed from above'.

If you are not already a member of the Camera Group why not start the year with a new project for 2021? If you join our group, you would be very welcome and begin to enjoy your photography more. No specialist photographic knowledge, or a fancy camera required! All that is needed is the desire to enjoy your photography and give you another interest. The webpage we use is private and only other members of the group are able to see the entries.



**Runner Up: 'Thanks Mum'**

Camera group members have until the 16<sup>th</sup> of the relevant month to upload their entries after which voting for the best photo of the month is completed by the group. Please contact me on 01638 612466 or Email: [barry.coles@ntlworld.com](mailto:barry.coles@ntlworld.com)

## Speaker Meetings – Trish Newell

On January 25<sup>th</sup>, the Speaker Meeting, presented via Zoom will feature Brad Ashton talking about "The job of a laughtime".

As an international television comedy scriptwriter Brad Ashton has worked with many comedians, many of which you will know, and will reveal humorous backstage stories. Prepare to have a good laugh. (See the [Events](#) page of the website for further details.)

## Walking Group – Rosemary Foreman

Happy New Year to all our walkers! After all the Christmas feasting it's time to put those boots on again and get out in the fresh air for some exercise.

I know we can't meet in groups, but hopefully some of you can enjoy socially-distanced exercise, within current COVID-19 guidelines. It may be some time before we can enjoy our walks and lunches as in the past, but periods of exercise will keep us in practice!

## **Garden – Kath Gifkins and Rosemary Foreman**

We hope you had the best Christmas allowed and are looking forward to a safer and more sociable 2021.

Thanks to those who sent in nominations for the Roskas and joined in the Christmas Zoom awards ceremony. It was interesting to see the variety in the answers and discover the jobs which were considered a chore by some brought pleasure to others. The full results will be on our web page later in January. We hope it will not be too much longer before we can get together again.

## **Music Appreciation – Mike Jocelyn**

This month's musical treat is another virtual orchestra item. A performance of 'Nimrod' from the Enigma Variations by Edward Elgar. It seems most of these virtual items remain copyright free which makes uploading to YouTube less of a problem. I wonder when we'll meet again? Click the link and a Happy New Year to all.

<https://youtu.be/31ITH2ltmCM>

## **Realm of Books – Margaret Jocelyn**

I never would we have thought that the Realm of Books group would have spent most of 2020 so differently from what we would have expected! Nevertheless, although we did miss our monthly meetings at All Saints Church hall, we made use of every opportunity put our way. Our members managed to communicate via email to share the views of the books we had read and for the last months we have been enjoying our monthly Zoom meetings - normally about nine of us giving voice from our different sitting rooms.

We decided to have a break during December in order to give ourselves plenty of time to read Claire Tomalin's 'Charles Dickens: A life' which we will now read for January. If you would like to learn more, the full reviews and latest timetable appear on the website under Covid-19 Book Group for each month. Wishing you all a Happy 2021.

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

After some five years of monthly talks on the whole range of machines, for our December meeting Tim took the topic back some five thousand years to look at the very beginnings of engineering and the six fundamental basic machines. These were: the Inclined Plane, the Wedge, the Wheel and Axle, the Pulley, the Lever and the Archimedean Screw. Most of the modern machines are based upon one or more of these six guiding principles. Some of it was a little complex and it was not very seasonal but nonetheless it was good to look at the beginnings of our technological society as well as where it is now.

With E-News being issued slightly later than usual and the WWW Group meeting early in the month, the January presentation will have already occurred before you read this. Steve will have talked to us about Operations Research, sometimes known as "quantitative common sense", and its role in military strategies. We learnt about the personnel, many from civilian academic life and the projects they were involved with. Some are well known, while others remain more obscure and were not always successful.

## Recipe for Cook off Friday (22nd January, at 11.00am)

### Cheese Scones

As the winner of November's Cook off Friday, Rosemary Foreman has chosen the recipe for January. Much of Rosemary's cooking is done on a creative "try it and see" basis and she would like the following basic recipe for cheese scones to be used for the January Cook off Friday event:

Makes 6 – 8 scones:

6 oz self-raising flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

Half teaspoon mustard powder

Half teaspoon salt

1 oz butter at room temperature

3 oz strong Cheddar cheese, finely grated

1 tablespoon Parmesan

1 large egg

2-3 tablespoons milk

Oven gas mark 7, 425°F or 220°C. Well-greased baking sheet.

Sift flour into mixing bowl. Add baking powder, mustard and salt then rub in the butter. Mix in Parmesan and most of grated cheese, leaving about 1 tablespoon. In another bowl, beat egg with 2 tablespoons of milk and add this to the mixing bowl to make a soft dough – add a few more drops of milk if too dry.

Roll out dough on floured surface to a thickness of about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch and use 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch cutter to cut out the scones. Place scones on baking sheet, brush the top with milk, then sprinkle remaining grated cheese over the top of each scone. Bake for 15-20 minutes.

