



## Odiham District U3A Newsletter November 2020

**Dear Members,**

Exciting news from John Charlewood, who arranges the speakers for our Monthly Meetings;

'I have now confirmed all the Speakers up to and including July 2021. I hope you will agree they represent a varied and exciting range of topics and include return visits by old friends!'

2nd Dec.	'All I Ask is A Tall Ship'	Geoff Saunders
6th Jan.	'Guide Dogs for the Blind Assoc.'	Ann Bradford and her dog
3rd Feb.	'Richelieu, the Cardinal and His City'	Brian Freeland
3rd March	Musical stories & performance	Fool's Gold (musical duo)
7th April	'Rushing into Russia'	Aldon Ferguson
5th May	'London Curiosities and Oddities 2'	Sally Botwright
2nd June	'The History of Smuggling'	Malcolm Nelson
7th July	'War comes to the North Atlantic'	Colin Hobbs

### **Monthly Meeting - all via Zoom**

**Wednesday 4th November: Derek Spruce - Old and New Towns of NE Hampshire (via Zoom)**

Derek, our own local historian, has a fascinating talk on our local towns and their varied histories which has been very well received by several local organisations.



**N.B. Our AGM has been rescheduled - more information next month**

## **Groups News**

A message from Nick Baker and Hugh Thomas our Group Coordinators;

### **Zoom Meetings**

As you know by now, a great many of our interest groups are having their meetings on Zoom. This potentially means that there could well be capacity for additional people to join in. If you are interested in joining a group, that is not face to face, please look at the information on the [Odiham U3A website](#) and see what is available. The next step is to contact the group leader to enquire about joining as a taster and receiving a Zoom invitation.

### **Groups Update**

We are very grateful to group leaders who are finding ways to keep their groups active, whether on Zoom, email, WhatsApp or face to face. We are going to use the Newsletter and website to keep all members up to date on developments as we all make adjustments to the new ongoing realities.

Considering Art 2 is now meeting in the Baker Hall. It is also hoped that Poetry Too will start their meetings in November. Wine Group 2 is also planning to continue to meet in the Cross Barn. These groups are able to comply with the 'rule of six' by having separate socially distanced groups in the COVID-19 secure halls and by limiting numbers to the hall's COVID-19 risk assessment maximum.

### **Groups meeting on Zoom with spare capacity;**

### **Current Affairs**

Having spent two sessions focused 'across the pond' looking at attitudes and news reporting in the US followed by an examination of the Electoral College system, we have just launched our POTUS (President Of The United States) PUNDITS challenge! Members of our group have been invited to submit their forecast of what will be the Electoral College votes for Trump and Biden to the 'Returning Officer' (Ian Green) by midnight November 2nd. The competition is fierce!



Next month we will review the results and its implications but also return to 'Blighty' to look at the outcome of the UK and EU trade talks.

If you would like to join us for a taster session, please email [currentaffairs@odihamu3a.org.uk](mailto:currentaffairs@odihamu3a.org.uk)

### **Family History**

Did you watch David Walliams on 'Who Do You Think You Are?' earlier this month? The comedian, actor and writer unearthed exciting careers in his family story, including his great-great-grandfather who was a travelling performer. He also discovered a tragic story of shell shock as he learnt more about his great-grandad. If you have been meaning to look up your ancestors in the hope of finding something interesting, even if only a minor barony, you could join a Family History meeting.



As with our other groups that use Zoom, they have spare capacity for taster sessions. The members have a wealth of family research experience between them and are always happy to support in ancestor hunting.

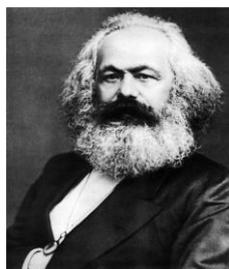
If you would like to know more, please contact Tom Flintham on 01256 703606; this group meets on the third Tuesday of the month 2.30-4.30pm.

### History of Philosophy

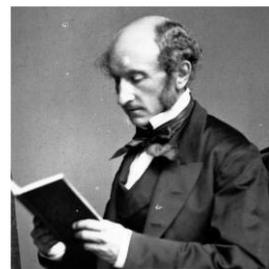
We have a programme for History of Philosophy up to December, the theme this term, is 19th Century Political Philosophy.

Our meetings are held on Zoom and we would welcome a few additional members.

Email [philosophy@odihamu3a.org.uk](mailto:philosophy@odihamu3a.org.uk) to ask about a taster session.



Karl Marx



John Stuart Mill

### MOTO - members on their own

Our Group is continuing to have friendly weekly Zoom chats on Friday at 6 pm and a special 'First Friday' of the month is marked with quizzes, or suitable seasonal topics. Local information and helpful suggestions are willingly shared and often emailed to all MOTO members so, if you are not a Zoomer, then you don't totally miss out.

We welcome new members at any time so if you are on your own and feeling on your own, then why not get in touch. [moto@odihamu3a.org.uk](mailto:moto@odihamu3a.org.uk)

### Science and Technology

S & T have an exciting programme on Zoom for the next three meetings;

- Wed 18th November  
Dr David Price talking on the Diamond Light Synchrotron research project at Harwell, Oxfordshire
- Wed 9th December  
Prof Andrew Dove (Birmingham University) talking on Plastics and plastic recycling technologies
- Wed 20th January  
Dr Hugh Chissell (orthopaedic consultant at Clare Park Hospital) talking on the biometrics of the knee



The Diamond Light Source building

New members are always welcome, so if you are interested, please email [scienceandtechnology@odihamu3a.org.uk](mailto:scienceandtechnology@odihamu3a.org.uk)

## Zooming in on Creative Writing 2

Helen New describes the journey of Creative Writing 2 since the beginning of lockdown.

'Following conversations with friends in Hong Kong and Madrid about the pandemic during March this year, my instincts were jangling. I may have emailed or texted the Creative Writing 2 group members to suggest we cancel our monthly get together at Bel & the Dragon, I can't clearly remember now, but people agreed to my suggestion. Immediately one of the group suggested we use Zoom. Back in March most of us had never used Zoom but that soon changed. Fortunately, I had the experience of being a participant so I had a go at hosting. Sadly, our group of eight quickly became five but given the time restriction on Zoom the fewer number is an advantage.

We kept to the regular meeting time of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at 10.30am. We, also, kept to the structure of everyone writing 500 words to a given title, then discussing, constructively criticising and giving feedback within the group at the meeting. At first, we struggled with Zoom's 40 minute limit\*, running out of time and often rushing the discussion but two sessions seem excessive. Then, in April, we decided to email our pieces to each other during the previous week of the meeting date, something we had not done previously. This has meant we give thorough attention to each other's writing before our discussion. It works well.

Zooming, with and without glitches, have taken place from Brittany, The Alps, Scotland, Dorset and Cornwall as some of us have taken holidays following the lifting of full lockdown. It has been notable and appreciated that other group members have stepped up to host or to communicate with committee members when I haven't been confident in getting online while away. Group members with more Zoom expertise have supported others with less and a few spouses have helped too. Zoom meetings have kept us writing and our efforts, we all agree, have improved since March. Yet, despite the success of Zooming, we have decided to brave the weather for October's meeting. Generously, a group member has offered his garden for our next meeting. It seems silly to be excited about seeing everyone in the flesh soon but I shall don my hat, coat and thermals, if need be, to escape the screen gallery before Winter takes hold'.

*\*Zoom offers 40 minutes free; CW2 now use a group member's licence which allows longer sessions; remember support is available to members who do not feel confident using Zoom.*

Another member of CW2 has sent in a short story for a Coffee Time treat.

## Ballet for Fitness

Members gracefully demonstrate social distancing!  
(sorry - this group is full)



## AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST ...

a final but important word from Nicki and Hugh;

### CAN YOU HELP YOUR U3A?

It seems increasingly clear that this COVID-19 pandemic is not going to leave us alone. Whether we face a 2<sup>nd</sup> lockdown is in the lap of the Gods, or at least our politicians! What however is clear is that despite the best efforts of Group Leaders to organise face to face meetings, they will be, for most of us, rare events in the coming months.

Given this we need to bolster our efforts to help create ways of keeping members in touch with each other and to provide support to Groups to innovate and find solutions to making on-line communications more personal, effective and accessible.

So, if you have experience, in marketing, communications, IT training or just have a creative and innovative mind which can help others, we would love to hear from you.

Quite simply we need help to work as part of various project teams and get these initiatives going to help fellow members. If you find it interesting and engaging, we will certainly welcome your on-going help, but at this juncture we are primarily seeking help in the coming winter months.

If you can actively help please drop an email to [groups@odihamu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@odihamu3a.org.uk)

Thank you

Hugh & Nicki

## Light Relief



### BREAKING NEWS ...

John Travolta was hospitalized for suspected COVID-19, but doctors now confirm that it was only **Saturday Night Fever**, and they assure everyone that he is **Staying Alive**.





[Watch How The UK Picks Its Lockdown Policies](#)

[Wildebeest](#)

[Coffee Time](#)

[Forces of Nature with Brian Cox - BBC](#)

[Sugar Plum Fairy by Tchaikovsky - Glass Harp](#)

[Danse Macabre for Halloween](#)

**Quizzes**

[Guess The Song: 80s!](#)

[IQ Test For Genius Only - How Smart Are You ?](#)

The new [Winter Learning Programme](#) is now on the National U3A website.

A Coffee Time Story from Nick Granger, a member of CW2.

### **A SCENE BY CANDLELIGHT**

Brian began to worry as he put his key in the front door. He was hoping for a quiet evening watching the England match on TV. Even before he opened the door, he could smell a candle burning in the hall. 'Please don't let it be the dog puking on the carpet again' he thought. The dog had been ill a lot recently. He was astonished that a small animal could regurgitate so much, so often.

Door open, he was in the hall, and was a little surprised that the dog did not come to welcome him. He must be in the kitchen, scrounging food, Brian thought. He took a closer look at the candle in the hall – Yankee Candle 'Cinnamon Stick'. He had a general dislike of scented candles, and a particular aversion to Yankee Candles. The aversion started when he saw a piece

on TV about the owner of the company, who had made so much money from the candles that his collection of classic cars filled an aircraft hangar. 'Filled' was an inadequate term. The cars were jammed in so tight that the (generously proportioned) owner could not get into most of them. This struck Brian as insupportable excess, so smelling any Yankee Candle tended to put him in a bad mood.

That evening, there was apparently nothing to scold the dog for, often his first task on returning home, so Brian made his way to where the table was set for dinner. His mood darkened further as he saw the table. Jo Malone 'Myrrh & Tonka' already burning. This implied a dinner drawn out with significant conversation. He recognized his chances of seeing the match had just declined to near zero.

Jane had her back to him, stirring a saucepan on the cooker. He was convinced that her passion for scented candles was, as well as being a device for setting fire to his wages, a cover for the smells her somewhat idiosyncratic cooking produced. They differed on the matter of cooking. She always liked, as she termed it, to experiment. He thought recipes existed to be followed, the more precisely the better. Tonight, the presence of a £60 Jo Malone candle burning down on the dinner table suggested that her experimentation had gone off the scale. He began to worry what would be on his plate.

He sat down at the table. Jane turned toward him with an odd smile on her face, and she set his plate of food in front of him. 'You know we were thinking about getting rid of the dog, given all the messes it has been making around the house recently. Well, I have hit on the perfect, environmentally friendly solution. This is a Korean dish I found on the internet. Eat up!'

There followed a scene, by candlelight.

Nick Granger

September 2019.