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NEWSLETTER

for

OUNDLÉ & DISTRICT

Edition Number 151

May 2021

If you would like to find out more about Oundle & District u3a, take a look at <http://u3asites.org.uk/oundle/home> or contact Chairman: oundleu3achairman@gmail.com Membership Secretary: oundleu3amembership@gmail.com Webmaster: oundleu3awebmaster@gmail.com

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Our AGM will be held via zoom on 10th of this month and I hope that by now, you have had a chance to read both the Treasurer's report and my report, summarising activities and finances over the past year and also looking to the future. The Agenda and reports are on the website under the AGM tab.

Lots of people avoid AGMs like the plague (or should that be Covid-19?) as they fear long drawn-out meetings, but I can assure you that this AGM will be very short. We have tried to streamline it as much as possible by sending reports out and asking you to vote in advance, so I hope you will join us – we need a quorum of sixty people. Once the formalities of the meeting are over, we have a very entertaining speaker. Please note that you will need to join the meeting before 2.00pm. You cannot join later on just for the talk!

I would like to thank the Arts Society Oundle for allowing us to use their Zoom platform for the event and our special thanks go to Stefan Pijanowski for managing the technical aspects of the meeting. We co-opted him to our AGM sub-committee and he has been a tremendous help with the planning.

As I said in the April Newsletter, we are keen to recruit new Members. Lidia, our Groups Co-ordinator, has been contacting Group Leaders to check that information about the Groups is up-to-date for the website and to find out whether there are now any spaces in Groups. I do hope that Members will give some thought to what types of new Interest Groups we could start, once we can get back to normal.

On the subject of getting back to normal, lots of you have been asking when Monthly Meetings will resume in QVH. We are waiting for Oundle Town Council to confirm opening dates and capacities for their venues, once further Government guidance is given about the next phase of lockdown easing on 17th May. We will let you know as soon as possible.

Stay safe and I hope to see you on the 10th for our AGM.

Gill

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Please send your articles as early in the month as possible using the above email or via the CONTACT page on the website. Articles may need to be held over to the next month if the Newsletter is already full. Any member may send in a piece for the Newsletter – not just Group Leaders.

u3a Day

Next month, the first national u3a Day will take place on Wednesday 2nd June. While we do not feel that we can host a face-to-face event on that day, we hope to issue a bumper Newsletter to celebrate Oundle u3a's successes, past and present. Please have a think and see if you can send in an article about your Group or something u3a related, especially if you haven't contributed before.

u3a Day Quiz

To celebrate u3a Day, there will be a virtual Quiz on Wednesday 2nd June hosted by the Leicestershire and Rutland Network to which all u3as in Northamptonshire have been invited. Full details can be found on our website under the Amusement tab. You do not need to be part of a team.

Committee Meeting

Our April Committee Meeting took place on 28th April, so too late to give you any feedback in this month's edition. Information from that meeting will be in our June Newsletter.

The FOOL Quiz 2021

Please support Oundle Library by purchasing the 'How well do you know your Shakespeare' Quiz (compiled by Shakespeare Group 4). It costs £1 and can be purchased from The Bookshop, Colemans, Norths Shoes and White Vanilla.

The closing date for entries is 28th May. The winner will receive a £25 book token

Website

If you haven't visited our website lately, please do. Barry has given it another revamp and there is now an Amusement tab, where you will find a variety of interesting information, which we hope to add to over time. Your contributions would be very welcome too.

Next of Kin Information – What do we need to know?

Carol Sandall

With the potential for some Groups to begin meeting in person, now is the moment for us all to think about whether Group Members should share Next of Kin information with their Group Leader so that they know who to contact in case of an emergency. For some activity Groups, that should be done as a routine as part of the overall Risk Assessment. Our other Groups vary a great deal and, in particular, there are Groups where everyone knows everyone else and will know exactly how to contact the right person if there is a problem. That may not always be the case, and in any event we hope that we will soon start to recruit a few new Members. In discussing this issue, your Committee felt this should not be about laying down "rules" but about us all taking responsibility for ourselves as much as for others.

So:

- Group Members, please consider if you need to check that you have given your Group Leader the right mobile phone number for your Next of Kin, for example;
- Group Leaders – do you need to update any information you already hold, and have you asked a new Group Member if they would like you to hold such information?

On the Oundle and District website under the Documents Tag, you will find the Legitimate Interest Assessment – Next of Kin Document, which explains the basis on which we ask for and hold such information, thus ensuring our compliance with the GDPR legislation.

We have managed to "stay safe" so far – let's keep doing so!

Oundle and District u3a Online Monthly Talks

Gill Phillips

Our two free monthly talks continue with our Oundle monthly talk on the second Monday of each month, together our joint talks with Peterborough u3a, which are on the final Tuesday of each month.

In April, Paul Needle spoke to us on 'The History of Broadcasting'. It was a real trip down Memory Lane recalling programmes such as Mrs Dale's Diary or ITMA or those long Sundays when programming was limited to the religious or educational. It was interesting, too, to hear about one particular day in 1930 when the news bulletin consisted of one short sentence – 'There is no news'. I do sometimes wonder if that would be preferable to the 24-hour running news that we have these days, when every man (and woman!) and his dog likes to have his say!



We are very much hoping that as many of you as possible will join us for our AGM meeting on Monday 10th May at 2.00pm. This will be followed by our 'entertaining and inspirational' speaker, Christine Green. Christine's subject will be 'Working for Auntie' and she will be discussing her time as a graphic designer for the BBC, when she worked on shows such as the *Queen's Christmas Speech*, *Foyle's War*, *Our Friends in the North* and *Tracey Beaker*. She has numerous examples of sequences, storyboards and artworks to share and was BAFTA nominated for her work on *Cambridge Spies*.

On Monday 14th June at 2.30pm, Anthony Poulton-Smith will speak to us about 'Britain's Lost Lines'. This talk examines what has happened to the large amount of land which was released following the closure of more than 2,500 railway stations and the lifting of 5,000 miles of track following the 1963 Beeching Report.

Once again, these two talks are exclusively for members of Oundle and District u3a on Zoom, so do watch out for your invitations to these meetings.

The next of our joint pre-recorded talks with Peterborough u3a is at 2.30pm on Tuesday 25th May and is entitled 'You're Never Too Old to Rock 'n' Roll'.



Given by one of Britain's original teen idols, Vince Eager talks about his appearances on television shows such as the "*Six-Five Special*" and "*Oh Boy*" and his becoming part of the British rock 'n' roll dynasty alongside Tommy Steele, Billy Fury, Cliff Richard, Adam Faith and Marty Wilde. Vince also reveals the mischief and mayhem created behind the scenes whilst touring with his pal Joe Brown. In order to access this joint talk you will first need to register on the Mirthy site using a link which will be sent to you, or by using the link on the events page of the Oundle and District u3a website. Once you have registered, you will receive a confirmation email with a unique link to enable you to access the talk on the day. Mirthy will send a reminder email a little while before the talk is due to start.

If you register and do not receive the confirmation email, please check your junk or spam folders.

GROUP PROFILE

Military History

Graham Evans & Dave Bradley

Military History Group 1 (MHG1) (pictured right at Verdun) were, as the name suggests, the first Military History Group formed in Oundle when u3a kicked off all those years ago, writes Graham Evans. Since starting we have always run with a maximum 10 members, resulting in the waiting list coalescing into MHG2 and MHG3 (see below). We call ourselves the Oundle History Boys and have the tee-shirts to prove it. At present we are all male but will accept all comers, modifying the tee-shirts accordingly.



Joining MHG1 has obviously been beneficial to

the health of members, as 6 of the original 10 members are still attending meetings, with the other 4 having moved away and been replaced by new interested people over the years, including myself (I've been a member for 8 years, taking over as the 2nd Group Leader about 5 years ago). Surprisingly, as a group, the only person with a military background is me.

We have stuck close to the u3a ethos, with monthly meetings in each other's houses, where we sit together for 2 hours and listen to a 90-minute presentation by the host, with discussion afterwards. Covid has meant that we have had to move to Zoom meetings, which has taught us a lot about Zoom. As a well-established group this has been comparatively painless, but we look forward to meeting up for real soon.

Each of us has personal interest areas, and our monthly presentations have been very wide ranging. We have studied Roman campaigns, Medieval Battles, the Rise of Prussia, Verdun, the Russian Revolution, Edward 1 and the Welsh, the Fall of Crete, Secret Operations of the Falklands War, the Mexican/American War, Custer's' Last Stand, Midway, Anglo/Zulu Wars and the 90 invasions of Britain since 1066. Pretty eclectic really. Some of our presentations have been adapted and expanded into public lectures for the benefit of the Oundle Museum and Library, celebrating anniversaries such as Korea, El Alamein, the Berlin Airlift and the life of Wernher von Braun (from V2 to Saturn 5). We hope to restart those lectures when Covid restrictions allow.



Almost from the beginning of MHG1, we have tried to have a few days away together every year seeing military sites, eating well and trying local beers (see left). We have done this by hiring minibuses and by sharing cars. We have been to Normandy, Ypres, the Somme, Bastogne, Waterloo, Agincourt, Jersey, Verdun, and the UK museums of the West Country. We have also done day trips to Duxford, Newark, and the Imperial War Museum

Lastly, we finish every year (except 2020) by meeting for a Christmas Lunch with MHG2 and MHG3, exchanging news and trying a small military quiz, the difficulty of which varies, but is always fun.

Military History Group 3 (MHG3): Before moving to this area in November 2018, writes Dave Bradley, I looked up the nearest u3a to see what was available. I was delighted to see that there were two military groups. I was less than delighted to find they were both full! After a bit of toing and froing I decided to start my own group and we have been up and running for just over two years now. We are a small group - we have to be as we meet in my home and my lounge is not very big. As well as monthly meetings where someone gives a talk of their own followed by a discussion, we have trips out in the better weather months.

We cover all aspects of military history. There is no limit as to period of time, part of the world and we are not limited to battles. Politics, medicine, prison camps, causes. Anything goes as long as it has a connection to military history.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Gardening Group 2

Pat Rhodes

The group continues to keep in touch via emails and phone calls although we have not been able to meet before. However, we are looking forward to now being able to meet together in my garden. Spring is a wonderful season to look forward to. When the snowdrops were over it was a good time to split and share. Likewise with perennials that need dividing so there is always work to do.

Unfortunately, the strange weather recently has had some very depressing effects in the garden. As you can see from the before picture (left, below), my camelia was glorious. The after picture on the right shows how all its beautiful flowers were affected. I am sure I am not the only one.



In happier news, our local Horticultural Society in Warmington is planning a plant sale on Saturday 22nd May outside the Church in the morning from 9.00am-12 noon. All contributions are very welcome – it is also a good opportunity to buy lovely plants. Obviously, all government guidelines will be adhered to but it has always been quite a highlight event in our village.

Shakespeare 3

Philip Douglas

During the past year Shakespeare Group 3 has carried on meeting virtually. After the sad loss of Jane, who had led the group for many years in studying almost all of the plays, Carol stepped into the breach and we decided as a group to study the 154 sonnets mostly written to the handsome young man and the mysterious dark lady. Members of the Group picked and read their favourite sonnets and we used Study Guides and online resources to explore some of the deeper meanings and innuendo of the Elizabethan language.

For the past few weeks we have been studying *King Lear*, reading it in our allocated parts and then watching via Screen Share recorded performances by famous actors to see how the play could or should be presented to an audience. This is really an excellent way to get inside such a brooding tragedy where the themes of old age and dementia resonate with contemporary society. In normal years, the Group takes in a Tolethorpe performance and we have recently heard that outdoor Shakespeare may be a possibility in the summer.



MAY QUIZ

HOW IS YOUR PAST ROYAL HISTORY KNOWLEDGE?

1. How many monarchs have there been of England and Gt Britain?
2. Who did Harold II succeed in 1066 and what relation to him was he?
3. Which House followed the Normans?
4. Who set up the Eleanor Crosses?
5. When was England made a republic and the Commonwealth of England declared and by whom?
6. Who was the first Queen of England?
7. Who was the last English king to lead his army into battle?
8. Who was the first king to be buried in Westminster Abbey?
9. Which one of Henry VIII's wives lived the longest?
What was the actual first name of Queen Victoria?

AND WHILST WE ARE ON A ROYAL THEME...

1. Which actor played James Bond in the 1967 film Casino Royale?
2. And who played the role in the 2006 version?
3. Which London venue was planned to be called The Central Hall of Arts and Sciences but the name was changed in 1867 by the person who laid the foundation stone in memory of her husband?
4. What is the difference between a Kir and a Kir Royale cocktail?
5. The former royal yacht of the Queen, The Royal Yacht Britannia, is now moored where?
6. Who played Nana in the Granada TV series The Royle Family?
7. How is the Royal Opera House in London better known?
8. Who is the current Princess Royal?
9. How many grandchildren does she have?
10. Can you name them all?

April's answers:

Part One: The answer was **SPRINGTIME**: 1. **S**halom; 2. **P**ol Pot; 3. **R**obert Robinson; 4. **I**guaçu Falls; 5. **N**apoleon; 6. **G**oats; 7. **T**ony Awards; 8. **I**ndiana Jones; 9. **M**anfred Mann; 10. **E**verton

Part Two: 1. Semana Santa; 2. Poland (and also Ukraine); 3. Chile; 4. A type of cake; 5. The Easter Egg Roll; 6. Mexico; 7. Easter Beer; 8. 5th Avenue; 9. Church Bells; 10. Bermuda