

SHIPSTON ON STOUR U3A

UPDATE

OCTOBER 2020

In this issue of Update, we have information on the reinstatement of the Monthly Meetings via Zoom on the Internet, advice on which Groups are active, an invitation to join a new Walking Group, further updates on the new Website and a request for a volunteer or two to join the Executive Committee and to take up the role of Secretary. There is also an opportunity to become a Regional Support Volunteer to act as a conduit between Shipston U3A and the West Midlands U3A and to help with post-Covid recovery.

Executive Committee

We are looking for a few more volunteers to join our Committee - might you be interested? No particular skills or experience needed, just a willingness to help out in a variety of ways to suit your preferences.

In particular, we are looking for a replacement Secretary as, unfortunately, Sarah (Elliott) has had to stand down from the role. She has done a fine job and will be much missed.

We are, therefore, in need of a new Secretary and looking for volunteers. It's a role which has been carried out to date by one person but it could probably also be performed as a job-share if you would prefer that approach.

The main duties are drafting Agendas, taking Minutes, circulating information across the Committee and maintaining contact with U3A HQ and remaining up to date on its advice.

If you might be interested, please contact cgreen.wth@gmail.com

"The musical theatre of Gilbert and Sullivan" by Bernard Lockett

27th October at 2 pm

The Monthly meeting in October will be a trial of an online talk using Zoom since Covid restrictions will not allow our normal monthly meetings to proceed. The talk, by Bernard Lockett, will be of general interest rather than specialist but will not include music or other illustrative material.

Bernard has authored books about G&S. He is a trustee of the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival that takes place annually and is the biggest G&S event in the world. The Festival has its own professional company – The National Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company. His talk begins with a historical background and assessment of the works. It considers G&S both as an essential part of this country's theatrical heritage and as the origin of what we now know as musical theatre. He describes the vast amount of social and political satire within the works. Finally, he includes how G&S is now more popular than ever and considers modern production values.

This meeting is open to members and is free. Numbers are limited to 100 so you should pre-book. Bookings will be accepted through Eventbrite up to Thursday, 22nd October. You should click on [this link](#) to connect to Eventbrite and register for one of the limited number of places

The talk will be given using Zoom. You will be sent an email the day before the event with a link to the talk. There is no need to download Zoom, just click on the link up to 10 minutes before the time of the talk and follow the instructions. There will be an opportunity to ask questions using CHAT on Zoom. Note that we will not be able to provide help to anyone having difficulty with the connection.

Update on Interest Groups

Whilst the Covid restrictions still curtail some Groups, others are active in one form or another, as set out below.

- Ancient Greek for Beginners - via Zoom.
- Book Group - via Zoom with the current book being "Chance Developments" by Alexander McCall Smith. A very imaginative approach to short story writing.
- Current Affairs - via Zoom.
- Jazz/Blues
- Latin - via Zoom.
- Mindfulness and Meditation - via Zoom.
- Table Tennis

Further, the Wine Appreciation Group is seeking a new Leader if you are interested. This needn't be one person, but could be several or shared across the Group as a whole.

If you wish to join one of the Groups, this is done easily by contacting the leader of the Group in which you are interested by using the email link on our website. Please remember that safety is the key consideration in those Groups meeting face to face and that numbers may be limited for this reason.

Walking from Shipston

Would you like to join a very local walking Group with a maximum of six walkers at a time, observing Covid-safe practices?

Therese Woodward would like to set up such a group with all walks, of duration of one and a half to two hours, starting and finishing in Shipston. We can run more than one Group if there is sufficient demand.

Would those interested please email Therese so that she can set up a Zoom meeting to hear your views about how often you would like to walk and if the duration I suggest is about right (approx distance walked should be 3 to 4 miles). We would also discuss the health, safety and hygiene measures we would need to adopt.

Using Zoom is very easy. Therese will send out invitations by email to join the meeting with a link that you just need to click on to access it. If anyone is not familiar with Zoom or has problems I will explain the process in more detail. My email address is theresewoodward@btinternet.com

Apologies but this Group is only open to those that have internet access at this time.

Website Update

The SOSA U3A Website has been updated recently to provide members with better information and to introduce some new functions. We still have more work to do to ensure that the information on individual Interest Groups is as up to date as the Covid 19 situation develops. Christine Russel (christineaarussel@outlook.com) is to be our website manager and would welcome suggestions for further improvements and specific updates from Group Leaders.

A new Membership Page has been added which is backed up by a new computer system called Beacon which holds members data in a secure manner. The system is now live and new members can join and pay their membership fee, using PayPal, or in more conventional ways. When members are renewing their membership they will be able to view and update their personal information and make arrangements to pay using the new system. Further details will be sent out when memberships are due for renewal.

Regional Support Volunteer Needed

Allan Walmsley is the new Regional Trustee for the West Midlands U3A and is proposing to set up a Regional Support Team with Members in each local U3A helping to link together the various U3As and to provide help and support in getting the Movement back on course following the impact of Covid 19. The information is set out below as is the means of submitting your interest. We believe that the Shipston U3A Regional Support Volunteer should also be a Member of our Executive Committee and, to this end, it would be of great help if you will contact cgreen.wth@gmail.com you take up the post.

Information provided by Allan Walmsley;

“Regional Volunteers - We are looking for members who are interested in a role beyond their local u3a, to help support the movement within the West Midlands at this critical time. Experience is always an advantage, but more importantly we are looking for a willingness and commitment to help as we struggle to retain members and help u3as to recover. See role description for Regional Support Volunteer and if interested, contact Allan Walmsley, Regional Trustee on allan.walmsley@u3a.org.uk or 0771 351 1941.”

Role title: West Midlands Regional Support Volunteer

Role is supervised by: West Midlands Regional Trustee

Overview of role This role has been developed to support the Regional Trustee in a variety of ways, within the region

Main

responsibilities

- To assist with the organisation and delivery of regional events such as study days, regional conferences, recruitment fairs
- To provide support with websites and social media support
- To provide support with regional communications such as newsletters
- To identify gaps in U3A presence

- To identify local organisations, events, initiatives or personalities to link into
- To attend regional and network meetings
- To work as part of a team with other Regional Support Volunteers and the Regional Trustee
- To be aware of the need for confidentiality, equality and data protection.
- To keep up to date with new material relating to policy, practice, legislative and constitutional changes

- Time commitment**
- Variable, dependent on the person and the priorities
 - Flexible

- Skills and knowledge required**
- Effective communication skills
 - Willingness to help
 - Reasonable knowledge of the U3A movement
 - Knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion

- Training and support provided**
- Communication with Regional Trustee
 - Workshops, Email and telephone support
 - Advice available

Expenses and subsistence When travel allows, reasonable travel expenses will be provided. This will cover public transport, car mileage paid @ 45p per mile. Expenses claims must be approved by the Regional Trustee who will then submit them to national office for payment.