

APRIL 2020 NEWSLETTER ISSUE 58

Editors' Comments:

Well – where do we start? The tumultuous events of the last few weeks have changed our lives, and changed the way the U3A operate, but there is still plenty to look forward to. Spring is here, the rain has stopped (at the time of writing) and the sun is out. Our garden and much of Sidmouth is awash with yellow flowers, such as daffodils, primroses and celandines, which although regarded by some as a weed really do look pretty when growing in abundance. Our front page picture shows some of the daffodils in our garden.



Issue 58 of our Newsletter is by default somewhat different to our normal newsletters with so many of our activities grinding to a halt. But our Chairman and Groups Co-Ordinators are eager to get the message across that we must look at different ways to communicate. Some of the events to be advised in our forthcoming programme will inevitably fall by the wayside, but we must live in hope that matters will begin to improve as summer moves in. We wish you all the very best and hope that you keep well.

Chris and Janis Huntley

OUR U3A IS FUNCTIONING, ALBEIT VERY RESTRICTIVELY. OUR MEMBERSHIP IS STILL OPEN, OUR NEWSLETTER IS CONTINUING, VARIOUS GROUPS ARE MEETING ONLINE AND OTHERS ARE THINKING OF NEW WAYS TO KEEP THEIR GROUPS ACTIVE. PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH WITH ONE ANOTHER AND SEND US YOUR VIEWS, COMMENTS AND IDEAS ON HOW WE CAN ADAPT DURING THIS TIME OF UPHEAVAL.

WORDS FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

I am writing these words in a rapidly changing world with life as we know it hanging in the balance. But one message I would like to get across to all our Sidmouth U3A members is that we ARE still open. We will accept new members if they are willing to wait until we can get back to normal before joining in our activities. Sidmouth U3A is lucky in that we will be able to pick up from where we left off and carry on with our lives at some time in the near (hopefully) future.

Before our lives were disrupted by the Coronavirus, we had reached a milestone in our U3A with a move from St. Francis Church Hall to Stowford Community Centre. Our first meeting which was also our AGM took place in the afternoon on Tuesday March 10th about a week before the current restrictions started to take place. Stowford Community Centre proved to be an excellent venue for our monthly meetings, with plenty of space and light, comfortable chairs, a large well equipped kitchen, and a second reception room to welcome members. Most of the 90+ people who attended the meeting were pleasantly surprised and eager to attend future meetings. Unfortunately, along with all other meeting venues Stowford has now had to close its doors and we do not know when they will be able to open again!

The AGM itself went very smoothly, and the accompanying talk about 'Jumping Joe Beyrly' by our own excellent speaker, Brian Fernley, was very well received. Some people had heard the talk before and were eager to hear it again. Back in January we had Peter Edwards with a talk entitled 'Cataclysmic Italy' which was very well attended and expertly rendered. February's speaker, James Taylor, entertained us with a slick talk showing a multitude of images of all types of Picture Postcards dating from 1840 to 1950. All our speakers during the last year have proved to be popular with requests for some of them to return for future talks. One such speaker, David Boag (wildlife photographer), was due to return in May but of course that is now cancelled. Hopefully, we will be able to invite him back next year.

My initial year as chairman has been particularly busy, firstly registering with the Charities Commission to enable us to become a full charity in our own right, followed by the introduction of Associate Membership, which has now been 'mothballed' due to our larger, meeting venue, and more recently working with the Committee to find and organize a venue which suited our growing numbers.

Sidmouth U3A is bucking the national (U3A) trend by having a continuously growing membership – we have now reached a staggering 440 full members! I have been asked by our Membership Secretary to remind everybody to inform her of any changes in your contact details (e-mail/ telephone/postal address). If you do not inform us of any such changes we will be unable to communicate with you or send you a newsletter.

During this potentially stressful time we all need to keep in touch. We will therefore be issuing Bulletins from time to time to inform you of any changes in our current situation and to keep the principles of our U3A movement functioning as well as we can under the circumstances.

Keep safe and well.

Janis Huntley

EVENTS PROGRAMME – SPRING/SUMMER 2020

<u>APRIL 14TH</u> <u>2.00 pm</u>	U3A Monthly Meeting, Stowford Community Centre Gary Holpin '50 gems of South Devon' CANCELLED
<u>APRIL 29TH</u>	Active Outing: Bowls Taster Session CANCELLED
<u>MAY 12TH</u> <u>2.00 pm</u>	U3A Monthly Meeting, Stowford Community Centre David Boag CANCELLED
<u>JUNE 9TH</u> <u>2.00 pm</u>	U3A Monthly Meeting, Stowford Community Centre Helen Baggott 'Posted in the Past' TO BE ADVISED
<u>JUNE 30TH</u>	SOCIAL OUTING TO SHERBORNE CASTLE TO BE ADVISED
<u>JULY 14TH</u> <u>2.00 pm</u>	U3A Monthly Meeting, Stowford Community Centre, TO BE ADVISED
<u>AUGUST 11TH</u>	Groups Display: Stowford Community Centre TO BE ADVISED

NOTE: It is highly likely that the June meeting at Stowford will NOT go ahead, but we will advise nearer the time. We are hopeful that the outing to Sherborne Castle will go ahead, but again it depends upon circumstances.

SIDMOUTH U3A – ANNUAL LUNCHEON 29TH SEPTEMBER 2020 TO BE HELD AT THE BELMONT HOTEL, SIDMOUTH

Hopefully, this event will go ahead. As we will be unable to put out interest forms at the monthly meetings, contact me, Janis Huntley chrisandjanis@btinternet.com (01395 578392) if you would like to put your name down for the meal. Cost will be approximately £23 for a 2 course luncheon. Full details will be provided in the next newsletter.

Another 'You the Jury' session at Sidholme hotel has been arranged for the 29TH OCTOBER 2020. This is a full day event which includes lunch, workshop and refreshments. Full details to follow later in the year.

SOCIAL OUTINGS NEWS

MARCH 4TH VISIT TO THE TO PRINCESS THEATRE, TORQUAY TO SEE 'THE WOMAN IN BLACK'

This was our last outing to take place before the virus regulations came into effect. Twenty nine of us headed off to Torquay – the numbers slightly depleted from the original 32 booked. We departed Sidmouth at 10.15 and stopped off for a comfort/refreshment break at The House of Marbles in Bovey Tracey. This was a revelation to those who had not been before, virtually everybody claiming it to be an ideal place to stop. We were there just over an hour which gave us an opportunity to partake of some refreshment and look around this very interesting attraction. Watching the 'glass blowing' undertaken on the premises was fascinating. There is plenty to see with various small museums depicting marbles, and a variety of old games for children and adults. Most of us enjoyed some refreshment in the excellent café before moving on to the Princess Theatre.

We arrived in Torquay with time to spare for lunch to walk along the front. before settling down to enjoy the performance. Attendance was down - the theatre being less than half full. Already people were getting the message to stay away from confined spaces and entertainment venues. The play itself started slowly and surprised most of us by having a cast of only two people plus the ghostly figure of the woman in black. The scenery was simplistic but used to very good effect. Two actors cleverly took on various different roles. Initially it was hard to follow, but eventually it began to take hold with some very good visual and sound effects. At the end of the performance the comments were very diverse, some of us enjoying it very much whilst others said they would have preferred to stay at The House of Marbles!

The whole outing went very smoothly and we managed to arrive back in Sidmouth earlier than anticipated. I am sure this outing will be remembered for many things, none the least for the fact that it could be the last outing for Sidmouth U3A for quite a while. *Janis Huntley*

ACTIVE OUTINGS

FEBRUARY 20TH 'INDOOR GUN RANGE'

Eleven members met at Crackshot Indoor Gun Range at Heathfield. We split into three groups, one on each range – Pistol, Rifle and Simulator where we were given instruction on how to use the guns. Both pistols and rifles used small compressed air cylinders. The pistols had a ten pellet magazine for rapid fire and the rifles had good telescopic sights. After twenty minutes on each range we moved on to the next range. When we had experienced all three ranges we compared notes and studied our paper targets. We then drove five minutes down the road to the House of Marbles for a well-earned tea and cake.

Our next Active Outing was to be a further Bowls Taster Session, which has now been cancelled. Hopefully I will be able to arrange a further session with the Sidmouth Bowls Club either later in the year or next year.

I do have some ideas for future meetings but these are all on hold for the time being.

Chris Huntley

AGM 2020 – JOE BEYRLE

I would like to thank everyone who attended the AGM and left a donation after my talk – the overall amount raised was just over £105. Donations not only help the trust to maintain and improve their heritage centres but also to support the community by undertaking school visits to make the younger generation aware of what happened so many years ago. We also act as consultants to groups wanting to organise second world war related events and ensure that local aviation history is preserved.

Thank you once again for your support and comments following my talk. If you have not done so already please visit our centres once the current national crisis is over.

Brian Fernley

Groups News April 2020

We now have 60 groups, although none of them are active because of the current situation. The following information is so that you can plan for getting active again, when the situation changes.

If you're part of a group, but do not wish to remain in it, please let your group leader, or groups co-ordinator, know, so that your place can be offered to someone on the waiting list.

Not all groups are taking an enforced break. Gardening Topics is holding advice sessions via email on the same day of the meeting. Janet Fernley from Nature Walks has been sending out a quiz and identification chart for the members to do. Carol Pearce from Wine Appreciation is sending out homework and suggestions of wine for members to buy and write up tasting notes.

Please let your group Co-ordinators know what your group does during the break if you still have activities at this time, all be it, non-contact activities.

Wishing everyone the very best of health. Please don't go potty if you are on your own, please ring someone on the list. After all, we're all in it together.

Janet Bailey
Groups Co-ordinator

NEWS FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Group Leaders: Malcolm Seymour and John Oxley

Our members are keeping in touch by e-mail and are being encouraged to share photos taken during this period of isolation. The group have a 'flickr' account to upload their photos to share with and inspire others.



The next page depicts some recent local photos on a wildlife theme taken by various members of our group:-

Top Row: Cattle in a field, and primroses on the hill in Burscombe Lane, Sparrow Hawk in Garden

Middle Row: Comma Butterfly and Pony on Peak Hill

**Bottom Row: Pony in woods on Peak Hill
Two of our members taking a well-earned rest in the garden!!**

If any U3A members feel like joining in and would like to submit photos for the next newsletter the theme is 'THE VIEW FROM MY WINDOW'. These can include garden images, wildlife spotted, still life and humorous photos – anything in short that captures the imagination.

Photos should be submitted by e-mail to chrisandjanis@btinternet.com by the end of May.

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TIP: Boost the Immune System to help ward off Coronavirus: Ensure that you have an adequate intake of VITAMINS C and D, both of which are lacking in modern day diets. It is now more important than ever to eat plenty of fresh fruit, green vegetables and salads (7-10 portions a day are recommended) to improve your level of Vitamin C. Make time to take in some sunshine and fresh air to help you absorb Vitamin D. If you do not have a garden or live in a flat, good dietary sources of Vitamin D are eggs and oily fish.

Lost Glasses

A pair of lady's glasses were found on the Social Committee Desk after the AGM at Stowford Community Centre on March 10th



Attractive pinky mauve colour with black design marking.
Ring Janis on 01395 578392 if you think they belong to you.

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

