



### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Monthly meetings are still suspended due to covid-19 restrictions.

### **U3A RADIO**

The u3a Radio Podcast has been created by a talented team of u3a members with radio experience. Episode 5 includes a member's experience of family life in Japan and partaking in the Japanese tea ceremony. There are also items on philosophy, wild water swimming and ways to help you stop worrying. The Podcast comes out on the 17th of each month from 6am onwards via u3a's [YouTube channel](#).

If you have a story to share, you can email it to: [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk)

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Total membership is unchanged since last month (328). We are now approaching the end of our financial year and membership subscriptions are due for renewal on 31st March 2021.

We are very much aware that members have been unable to enjoy normal events and interest groups during the past year and will be taking this into account when membership renewal letters are circulated during the next couple of weeks.

Membership Secretary Alan Stevenson can be contacted on 01782 395760.

Thank you once again for your patience and understanding in these difficult times.

### **MEETINGS, ETC.**

Although we still need to be cautious, at last there is some light at the end of the tunnel!

The Government roadmap to lifting restrictions has been issued and gradual lifting commences on 8th March, with schools finally opening and we can meet one person outdoors for social activities rather than just exercise.

The 'Stay at Home' advice continues but from 29th March a maximum of six people from two households can meet outdoors and outdoor sport such as tennis will be allowed.

From the 12th April, non-essential shops, libraries, museums, zoos and theme parks are allowed to open, and at last we will be able to visit the hairdresser! You can have an outdoor drink without ordering a meal at pubs with outdoor seating. The rule of six still applies (two households) but the earlier closing imposed last year will no longer apply.

From 17th May you will be able to dine indoors at pubs and restaurants, still with the rule of six and with table service only. The limit on numbers meeting outdoors will be removed and this provides opportunities for some U3A groups to start.

Finally, from 21st June removal of all social contact restrictions allows nightclubs to open and larger events can take place, giving an idea of when indoor groups will be able to start, subject to availability of suitable venues.

*However, it is stressed that these are the **earliest** dates for relaxation of restrictions and could therefore be subject to change if essential criteria are not met.*

## A FEW HISTORICAL EVENTS THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN FEBRUARY

(Listed by the date of occurrence during the month rather than in strict chronological order)

FEB	YEAR	EVENT
-----	------	-------

1 & 2	1901	The body of Queen Victoria was brought to Portsmouth harbour by the royal yacht <i>Alberta</i> en route to her funeral in London the following Day. The Queen had died at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight on 22 <sup>nd</sup> January, aged 82 and had left specific instructions to be dressed in white and wearing her wedding veil, with a plaster cast of Prince Albert's hand and his dressing gown at her side in the coffin.
-------	------	--

Her funeral service took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> February in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle. She was interred beside Prince Albert in the Royal Mausoleum at Frogmore in Windsor Great Park after lying in state for two days.

4	1926	A new world land speed record of 174 mph (278 km/ph) was set by Malcolm Campbell at Pendine Sands in Wales, in 'Bluebird'.
---	------	--

8	1587	Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded at Fotheringhay Castle, with her execution for treason ordered by her cousin, Queen Elizabeth I, who suspected her of trying to steal the throne.
---	------	--

11	1975	Born Margaret Hilda Roberts in Grantham, the daughter of a shopkeeper and local Mayor, Margaret Thatcher became the first female leader of the Conservative Party. She was elected as Prime Minister in 1979 and given the nickname "the Iron Lady" by a Soviet journalist. She continued as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Leader of the Conservative Party until 1990, when she was succeeded by John Major.
----	------	--

12	1554	Lady Jane Grey was beheaded at the Tower of London and her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, was executed at Tower Hill on the same day. <b>She was just 16 years old and had been Queen for only nine days.</b> Lady Jane was the eldest daughter of Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk and the great-grand-daughter of Henry VII.
----	------	--

She became Queen after the death of her cousin, protestant King Edward VI, son of Henry VIII. Although fifth in line to the throne, she had been the King's personal choice as she was a Protestant.

His choice was not popular as Edward's half-sister Mary, the Catholic daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon had been next in line to the throne. The country rose in favour of the true royal line and Mary was proclaimed Queen nine days later. Lady Jane's death was brought about by the incompetency of advisors and her father's involvement with the Wyatt rebellion, a conspiracy against the marriage of Mary to Phillip of Spain.

**FEB YEAR EVENT**

15 1971 The introduction of decimalisation in Britain to replace the old pounds, shillings and pence currency or 'lsd', which dated back to Roman times, when a pound of silver was divided into 240 pence, or denarius. The 'lsd' originally stood for 'librum, solidus, denarius'.

New 5p and 10p coins had been introduced in 1968 – a similar size and value to the one and two shilling coins. In 1969 a new 50p coin had been introduced to replace the old 10 shilling note. Banks were closed for four days before changeover to prepare, currency converters were available for everyone, and shop prices were shown in both old and new currencies.

22 1797 Napoleon was busy conquering parts of central Europe when the newly formed French revolutionary government (the Directory) planned to invade Britain. A reserve force of around 1400 troops, including newly released prisoners, led by 70 year old Irish-American Colonel William Tate, set sail to destroy Bristol, before crossing into Wales and marching north to Chester and Liverpool.

Wind conditions prevented the landing and they continued to Fishguard Bay but nervously withdrew after hearing cannon fire, not realising it was merely being fired to warn the local people. They finally landed near the village of Llanwnda then after unloading, the ships returned to France with news of a successful landing. However, the invasion collapsed when many of the troops were too drunk after a looting spree and the force surrendered to local militia under Lord Cawdor.

The surrender agreement drawn up by Tate's officers said they were opposed by "troops of the line to the number of several thousand." No such troops were near Fishguard, but hundreds or possibly thousands of local Welsh women dressed in traditional scarlet tunics and tall black hats had come to witness any fighting, so perhaps at a distance and after a glass or two, the women may have been mistaken for British army Redcoats!

Jemima Nicholas aged 47, was the wife of a Fishguard cobbler. Hearing of the invasion, she marched to Llanwnda, pitchfork in hand, and rounded up twelve Frenchmen, whom she 'persuaded' to accompany her into town, locking them inside St Mary's Church before promptly leaving to look for more! She is sometimes referred to as "Jemima Fawr" (Jemima the Great) and it is said that the ladies of Fishguard saved Britain from invasion!

26 1797 The Bank of England issued the first one pound notes (handwritten), due to gold shortages during the Napoleon Wars, and in part as a result of panic in London caused by the Fishguard invasion. After the Napoleonic Wars the gold shortage was alleviated and notes could be exchanged for an equivalent amount of gold when presented at the bank. One pound notes ceased to be issued in 1821 and were replaced by gold sovereigns.

**FEBRUARY QUIZ** (Answers next month)

Answers to this quiz are all women named Mary:

1. The Queen of British baking
2. A cocktail
3. Book by P.L. Travers about a nanny
4. Real name of Middlemarch author
5. Founder member of the Supremes
6. US athlete famously tripped by Zola Budd
7. Fashion designer famous for both the mini skirt and hot-pants
8. US singer who had a number one hit with “My Guy”
9. Star of the silent screen; co-founder of United Artists
10. Spiderman’s girlfriend in the 2003 movie
11. Creator of Frankenstein
12. First female president of Ireland
13. French tennis player who won the French open in 2000
14. Author of “The Borrowers” series of books
15. Welsh singer, represented UK in the 1970 Eurovision song contest
16. The wife of George V, mother of George VI
17. Real name of Dusty Stringfield
18. A British Prime Ministers wife
19. Only child of Henry VIII & Catherine of Aragon
20. Actress who played wife of Dick Van Dyke on 60s TV

**Answers to the January Quiz:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Kate Thornton                           | 2. Nelson Mandela House                        |
| 3. Erinsborough                            | 4. John Noakes (12 years from 1965-1978)       |
| 5. Cats                                    | 6. Irn-Bru                                     |
| 7. The Netherlands                         | 8. Vodka                                       |
| 9. Naples                                  | 10. Ready to eat                               |
| 11. Canberra                               | 12. Ben Nevis, Snowdon, Scafell Pike           |
| 13. Edinburgh                              | 14. Helsinki                                   |
| 15. Portuguese                             | 16. Celery, apple, walnuts, grapes, mayonnaise |
| 17. Albert Arkwright, or just Arkwright    | 18. Olaf                                       |
| 19. Giraffe at approx. 16ft (elephant 9ft) | 20. Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger           |

## ENGLAND & WALES 10 YEAR CENSUS / FAMILY HISTORY

The next national census is due to take place on Sunday 21st March 2021, to be run by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). It is a legal requirement that the census is completed and results are used to plan important services such as transport, education and healthcare. Watch out for your census forms which will soon arrive by post with advice on how to complete them. Further information is available at: [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk)

For Data Protection reasons, survey results are not published until 100 years have elapsed but they are an important source of information for anyone researching their family history, so we will be looking forward to the 1921 census being published this year.

If you've hit a brick wall with your family research, it may be worth taking a look at Findmypast's British genealogy Q&A site on YouTube, where one of their expert genealogists holds a live chat session to answer queries: [Watch video](#)

## GARDEN & NATURE

It's such a pleasure to see everything coming to life in the garden now. Some of the daffodils are in flower and others are in bud. Even one of Fay's camellias is in bud earlier than normal and one of the hedgehogs was awake while the ground was still covered with snow and ice. He or she is now visiting for meals and water on a daily basis (pictures below) and it is thought that at least one more may also be awake and visiting.



The British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS) organise an annual Hedgehog Awareness Week, which this year runs from **2nd – 8th May**. It aims to highlight the problems hedgehogs face and how you can help them. The Charity is asking people create their very own hedgehog haven! Hedgehog numbers have drastically declined in recent years and we can help them to survive with very little effort! You can find out more at the Charity's website, which is [www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk](http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk) BHPS can be contacted on Tel: 01584 890801 or Email: [info@britishhedgehogs.org.uk](mailto:info@britishhedgehogs.org.uk)

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) give advice on support and identification of British birds but are committed to a wide variety of large-scale conservation projects which also benefit other wildlife species. You can find out more on their website at [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)

## LOCAL HISTORY

The Leopard pub in Burslem now has a new owner and has been granted the status of 'asset of community value', but it's going to cost a huge amount to renovate the building. <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/historic-burslem-boozers-visited-robby-4993740>

St. Modwen intends to sell the Trentham Estate and there have been rumours that it has already been sold to the National Trust. A Sentinel article can be found at: <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/trentham-estate-including-gardens-shopping-5006598>

James Morgan was an amateur photographer from Trentham, who cycled around the City during the 1970s and 1980s capturing local scenes, many showing the considerable changes going on at the time. All the pictures are owned by his family and remain subject to copyright. However, the Sentinel were granted a single publication and you can view recently published photos of the City, including Fenton, Shelton and Stoke at: <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/gallery/1970s-stoke-trent-north-staffordshire-5020590>

Photos of the Longton area have also been published and you can access those at: <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/gallery/20-fascinating-images-james-morgan-4966673>

Demolition of the former Crystal Ballroom / Zanzibar venue started at the end of January, 15 years after the building was vacated: <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/demolition-works-start-former-zanzibar-4940016>

A set of Bert Bentley photos has just been posted on-line by the Sentinel - they're described as relating to mining, but there are a number of pottery photos as well: <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/gallery/31-pictures-staffordshire-stoke-trents-5028312>

The new series of 'great canal journeys' with Sheila Hancock and Gyles Brandreth will continue on Monday 8th March on More 4 (Freeview 18). This episode and possibly the next will cover the Caldon and Trent & Mersey canals in Staffordshire, presumably moving from one to the other at the junction next to the Etruria Flint Mill Museum. It should also include footage of Sheila Hancock talking to Flavia Swann at her beautiful arts & crafts house 'Chetwyn House' in Clayton, the house where Clarice Cliff and Colley Shorter lived.

The latest Weekend Sentinel has an article entitled "Pot Luck Thrown In!" which is about the Gladstone Pottery Museum. As a result of the Council's successful bid to the Heritage England's Culture Recovery Fund, the museum has been awarded a grant of £25,000 which will be used for roof repairs and window restoration.

The article also refers to the museum hosting the Great Pottery Throw Down: <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/stoke-trent-museum-hosting-tvs-5041409>. The previous series had been filmed at Middleport Pottery.

## **A LITTLE LIGHT HUMOUR**

### **Holiday Plans**

I have been in many places, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognises you there. I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I have made several trips there, thanks to my friends, family and work.

I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump, and I'm not too much on physical activity anymore. I've also been in Doubt; a sad place to go, and I try not to visit there too often. Sometimes I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I'm getting older.

One of my favourite places to be is in Suspense! It really gets the adrenalin flowing and pumps up the old heart! At my age I need all the stimuli I can get. No doubt one day I will be in Continent, and I don't remember what country that's in. It's an age thing!

### **COMICAL VIDEOS**

A Millennial Job Interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo0KjdDJr1c>

Not The Nine O'Clock News - The Walk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTzRYoMcR6Q>

### **INTERESTING & AMUSING SIGNS**

Cocktail Lounge, Norway:

LADIES ARE REQUESTED NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN IN THE BAR.

Doctor's Office, Rome:

SPECIALIST IN WOMEN AND OTHER DISEASES.

Dry Cleaners, Bangkok:

DROP YOUR TROUSERS HERE FOR THE BEST RESULTS.

A Nairobi Restaurant:

CUSTOMERS, WHO FIND OUR WAITRESSES RUDE, OUGHT TO SEE THE MANAGER.

On the main road to Mombasa from Nairobi:

TAKE NOTICE: WHEN THIS SIGN IS UNDER WATER, THIS ROAD IS IMPASSABLE.

On a poster at Kencom:

ARE YOU AN ADULT THAT CANNOT READ? IF SO, WE CAN HELP.

In a Cemetery:

PERSONS ARE PROHIBITED FROM PICKING FLOWERS, FROM ANY BUT THEIR OWN GRAVES.

On the menu of a Swiss Restaurant:

OUR WINES LEAVE YOU NOTHING TO HOPE FOR.

Airline ticket office, Copenhagen:

WE TAKE YOUR BAGS AND SEND THEM IN ALL DIRECTIONS.

### **AGM 2021**

We were unable to hold the AGM last year due to the strict social distancing rules caused by the covid-19 pandemic.

Our AGM is normally held towards the end of May and although we are keen to get back on track, this is going to prove difficult again this year as restrictions will still be place. The earliest proposed date for social distancing limits to be removed is 21st June. As we get nearer to that date we'll have a better idea of whether there's likely to be any further delay and when the venue is available.

We have an obligation to give plenty of notice regarding the AGM date, allowing members to submit applications for committee membership and agenda items. It's also necessary to book entertainment in advance. With these issues in mind, the AGM will probably be delayed by at least 2 - 3 months and possibly a little longer, but further information will be sent out to members in due course once the situation becomes clearer.

Apologies for the typing error on the front page of the last newsletter – the AGMs were referred to as 1920 and 1921 – only a century out of date! We'll just blame it on dementia caused by the pandemic!

### **U3A DAY 2021**

U3A Day will be on Wednesday, 2nd June and information can be found on the u3a Day page via the national website. You can share ideas and look for inspiration on the [u3a Day Facebook group](#). If you have ideas for promoting our u3a while keeping within any remaining social restrictions, then please let the committee know.

*Please try to stay in touch with fellow members. Even a phone call can lift the spirits of someone who is feeling isolated. If any of your friends don't have access to the internet, it would be very helpful if you could let them have sight of this newsletter.*

If you haven't already signed up on the national website at <https://u3asites.org.uk> to receive the National Monthly Newsletter by email, you could be missing out. It's worth a look and it might give you some interesting ideas to keep you entertained until we get back to normal. There are some lovely photographs which have been submitted by members for the competitions which are continuing to be run.

**Items for publication in the next newsletter will need to reach Fay Howell by Friday, 19th March, 2021. Tel: 01782 658659 or email: [hfhowell@live.co.uk](mailto:hfhowell@live.co.uk).**