

# HANDS ACROSS THE "C"

## Dear Members

Here we are with our 3rd Newsletter!

Many thanks to you all for the contributions you are sending in and to our editor Brenda Smith for making them into a cheery, readable and informative sheet.

Our Committee are still hard at work - we have been having fortnightly Zoom meetings (video online) and we are beginning to get the hang of it!! Our Treasurer, Business and Membership secretaries have been keeping the 'Official' tasks going and others have taken on organisational jobs.

I notice from the Website our Group Leaders are also keeping in touch with you all, thanks to them for thinking of ways to interest their members.

There are quite a few things to do on the National U3A site, so do have a look and see if you want to try them.

Meanwhile please take care of yourselves - we are getting there!! Keep up the good work and we will see the back of this strange time.

Best Wishes

**Brenda Stevenson**

## U3A VIRTUAL GROUPS

During these times of "lock down" the U3A has various ways for you to keep in touch.

There is the Trust Facebook group at:  
<https://facebook.com/u3a.uk>

which is used to promote various learning initiatives as well as discussion forums.

If you are interested you can join at  
<https://u3a.org.uk/keeping-in-touch-links/42-u3a-support-forum?highlight=WyJmb3J1bSJD>.

You should also sign up to the National Newsletter which is the best way of

keeping in touch with everything that is happening nationally. Go to:  
<https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>.

If its more learning you are after, which your local interest group is not offering, then look under the 'learning tab' on the yellow menu on the U3A website, at: <https://u3a.org.uk/learning>.

There are lots of things there. I would point you to the 'diary project 2020' which is a way for members to record their experiences during these unprecedented times.

Keep safe and don't feel too isolated.

**Mike Billings**

# INTEREST GROUPS

**Bridge** - Pauline Brown sent a discount code to group members for three months free on-line bridge and 25% off annual membership with No Fear Bridge (a total of six months free).

A lot of the group are now playing on line to keep their hand in and, as there is a teaching section, they are hopefully learning something new as well. Pauline is also sending out a quiz every ten to fourteen days compiled by member Mike Wall. Answers are given on line and weekly emails are helping her group keep motivated.

**Family History** – Sandra Bull has a comprehensive comparison of research sites for their group with prices and what is provided by Ancestry.co.uk; Findmypast.co.uk; British Newspaper Archive; Forces War Records and My Heritage. Why not take advantage of this time and research your own history? But make sure you don't start a short monthly or 3-monthly subscription and leave it running! This can be very expensive. It is usually very easy to cancel subscriptions.

**Lifestyle** - Janice Evans asks:

What are we all doing to occupy our time?  
What do you miss most at the moment?  
What are the first things you will do when everything gets back to normal?  
How do you feel every day and what has made you feel like this?  
Are you sleeping as well as normal?  
Are you having bizarre dreams?  
What helps you most during this difficult time?

*Her advice is to:*

Spend time in the garden if you have one.  
Go on local walks for exercise if you are able.  
Keep the house clean and tidy.  
Get as much sleep as you can.  
Send emails to friends and make telephone/ video calls for human contact.  
Enjoy the lovely natural world, flowers, birds, trees, etc.  
Spring continues in spite of the virus.

*My mind is free, I can go anywhere.*

## GARDENING TIPS

Mervyn Evans, Kitchen Garden group, says a feed of fish blood and bone always seems to work well on broad beans and virtually everything else. Support them with canes when fully grown and pinch out the tops if black fly becomes a problem.

He has sown sweetcorn, squash and cucumber in pots which can be transferred indoors if the weather turns bad. Also a first row of beetroot in the hope it does not get too cold and plants bolt. A good soaking is imperative.

In gardening circles Good Friday has always been claimed to be the start of the back garden year, but do take weather and other factors into account.

**Jobs to do in April** from Liz O'Mara, Gardening Flowers group:

Plant seeds of annuals.  
Pinch out growing tips of sweet peas.  
Create supports for perennials and climbers.  
Prune hydrangeas, forsythia, flowering currant.  
Split hostas and spray with garlic mixture to get rid of slugs.  
Divide primulas.  
Deadhead daffodils, but not snowdrops.  
Watch out for Red Lily Beetle!  
And watch out for late frosts if you have risked putting dahlias, begonias and lilies in pots already.  
Tidy lawn edges, to make the garden look neat.  
Also, weeding never ends.

*Those of you with allotments, keep up the good work, we might be depending on those home grown veggies!*

## ACME WHISTLE FACTORY

We were very lucky to have got this trip in before the lock-down when over 30 of us went on an organized tour of Hudson's Whistle Factory in the Jewellery Quarter.



Most of us travelled by train from Stourbridge Junction to the Jewellery Quarter and took in the Banksy picture on the railway bridge as we started our walk down to the factory.

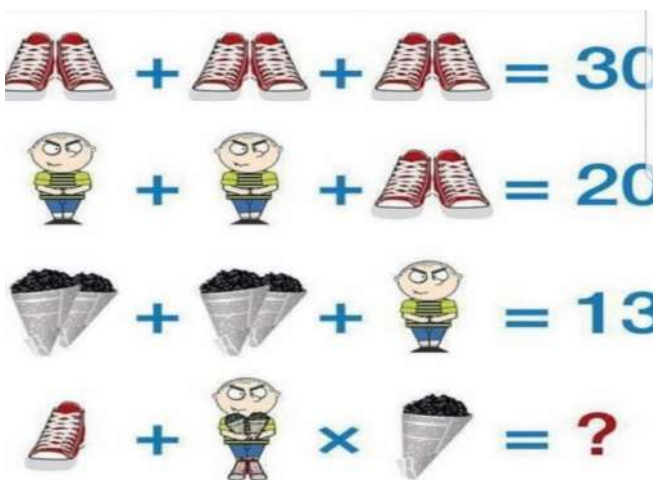
We had a fascinating morning with the tour being led by CEO Simon Topman, who gave us an interesting and entertaining talk on how the factory started and is still in the ownership of the original family, plus the added bonus of tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits.

We were then taken around the factory, where we were able to speak to the small workforce. It was a brilliant morning and our fee for the tour went to support the local Mayfield school. We also had the opportunity to buy any of their products at half price. It was well worth the trip.

Tess Wagstaff

Answers to the quiz in Issue 2:

1. Carbon dating; 2. David Copperfield; 3. Diamond ring;
4. Emerald City; 5. Golden; 6. Cast Iron stomach;
7. Steel drum/pan; 8. Good as gold; 9. Oxygen masks;
10. Silver lining; 11. Neon signs (Golden Mile); 12. Arsenic;
13. Iron fist; 14. Calcium; 15. Swing the lead;
16. Helium (Argon, Neon), 17. Tin opener; 18. Brass plate/plaque;
19. Iron chair/maiden; 20. Silver-tongued.



Stourbridge Coat of Arms explained:



How often do you go into the Crown Centre and walk across the Stourbridge Coat of Arms mosaic?

Do you remember when it was in the foyer of the Odean? Do you know the significance of the various images?

**Pears:** Stourbridge was part of the county of Worcestershire. Pears are on the Worcestershire coat of arms referring to fruit growing.

**The bridge** is from Stourbridge's name, bridge over the Stour.

**The bricks** relate to the area's brickmaking and clay mining industries.

**Chain**, the local chain making industry.

**The fleece** refers to local skin and leather industries.

**ONE HEART ONE WAY**

Can you identify these buildings in and around the Stourbridge Ring Road?



## STOURBRIDGE COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We have been asked to point out that the Stourbridge Community Support group has been set up as a central point of contact for various charitable organizations across the local area. All these charities still in operation and donations can be made in the usual way.

Financial donations to the Stourbridge Foodbank can be made through their website at JustGiving and food donations are greatly in demand during these unprecedented times.

Chairman: Brenda Stevenson: ([brendastevenson53@gmail.com](mailto:brendastevenson53@gmail.com))

Business Secretary: Mike Billings ([ictmike@hotmail.com](mailto:ictmike@hotmail.com))

Membership Secretary: Pat Orme ([plmorme@talktalk.net](mailto:plmorme@talktalk.net))

Website address: [stourbridgeu3a.org.uk](http://stourbridgeu3a.org.uk)