

## HANDS ACROSS THE "C"

### Dear Members

Here we are in May, it's gone a bit chilly and spirits might be dipping a bit. So everyone, here is your cheery newsletter to get you back in good form!!

I have had a go at making a mask to get ready for release day, it makes me look like Gangster Granny!!! I might need a different pattern, ha ha!

I hope you are all making use of your time too, there is such a lot on the websites for us all to enjoy. I am sure the links will be on this newsletter, so if you haven't tried them out, have a go and see what you think.

Your Committee are still working away getting used to Zoom meetings and keeping all the paperwork up to date. If you are in a group I expect you are emailing fellow members and chatting away, sharing your interests. We have been concerned about some of the Members not on email and we have been trying to ring them and check they are ok. However, I think we are a resilient lot as their phone lines always seem to be engaged!!! Good for you - keep in touch and keep well.

We are all looking forward to getting back together again, meanwhile please share some of your U3A News and let Brenda Smith know if you would like a photo and a few words included in future Newsletters ([bejay179@gmail.com](mailto:bejay179@gmail.com)).

**Brenda Stevenson**



### U3A VIRTUAL GROUPS

The Trust Facebook group at:

<https://facebook.com/u3a.uk>

National Newsletter:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>.

Learning & Diary Project: <https://u3a.org.uk/learning>.

<https://u3a.org.uk/keeping-in-touch-links/42-u3a-support-forum?highlight=WyJmb3J1bSJD>.

Dudley Libraries are offering free access to Ancestry.co.uk for library card holders.

<https://www.better.org.uk/dudley-e-resources>.

The National Archives are offering free access to their digital records if you create an account in

Discovery. <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>.

CHIN  
UP!  
CHEST  
OUT!

# INTEREST GROUPS

**Our Group Leaders are continuing to keep in touch with their members in various ways:**

As well as video recordings, Keith Picken is hoping to do some UTube sessions for his **Relaxation & Motivation** and **Ukulele** groups. These will enable him to demonstrate a few things, in a way that is impossible in just an audible recording.

Mollie Berry is giving her **Tap** group short tap routines to practice at home.

Janice Evans has asked for feedback from her **Lifestyle** group on the following questions in order to stimulate discussions at their next meeting:

- 1 What do you think has been positive during the Coronavirus Epidemic?
- 2 Do you think people have changed their behaviour as a result of self isolation and social distancing?
- 3 Will the Crisis change the way we feel about things when it is all over?
- 4 Will we appreciate simple pleasures in life, a cup of tea out, giving someone a hug, etc?
- 5 What will the UK be like when the crisis is over, social, economic, the working world, leisure, etc?

Instead of their fortnightly meetings, Mary Schirrmacher's **Advanced French** group are keeping in touch via What's App, their texts being written in French, of course; the videos and pictures are a source of great amusement. A French friend of the group is marooned in her house in the south of France and they hear with humour about her everyday life there in these surreal times

The French exchange they started some 5 years ago was due to take place in early May, but once again some of them are able to contact friends they have made there via email and Face Time.

A positive knock on effect of all this is that their techno skills are improving daily and also their use of more colloquial French. Prenez bien soin de vous (take good care of yourselves).

**Book Club 2** was formed early in 2020 and they agreed to meet on 20 April for their first discussion. However, the Library closed before they could get their books, but it seemed a pity not to 'meet up' somehow. Five of them (none of whom had used SKYPE before) decided to give it a go and leader, Peggy Paterson, consulted an 'expert' (her granddaughter) on how to set up a Group Chat. Peggy asked the group to send her a list of three of their favourite/recently read books and they talked about them for an hour online. They agreed to 'meet' again in a fortnight and continue the experiment.

Mervyn Evans's **Kitchen Garden** group are corresponding by email and sharing garden activities and ideas as they arise. This activity seems to happen almost daily at this busy gardening time. Comments have been made on "How important gardening is to good health and overall well being" and "I have never enjoyed this wonderful activity as much as now."

They are all gaining a great deal of experience from other group members and hopefully maintaining a form of contact which can stand them in good stead when they reconvene.



Last year Barbara Sykes, a member of the **Gardening** group, asked The Clematis Society whether she should prune down a "Wadas Primrose". They said "yes", but you had to know when and how. Barbara asked how to find that out and they said "experience"!

She cut it down (tentatively) and not a single flower appeared, so left it alone and did not prune it this year. Now, it is absolutely covered with large beautiful flowers.

Barbara won't forget what to do with this one – just leave it alone!

## THURSDAY SPEAKERS LIST

(subject to change)

- 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 - Alan Hill - The Panama Canal.  
1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 - Nigel Metcalfe - Clean and Decent.  
5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 - Andrew & Pam Kallender -  
The Glass Barge.  
3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 - Max Keen - Dudley Castle.  
7<sup>th</sup> January 2021 - Stourbridge Street Pastors.  
4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 - Peter Bates - A History of Prisons.  
4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - David Hudson - Three men in a canoe.  
1<sup>st</sup> April - AGM  
6<sup>th</sup> May - TBA  
3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 - Linda Newey - Shady Rock Cottage.  
1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 - Kevin Reynolds - Garden Birds.  
5<sup>th</sup> August 2021 - Andrew Scudamore -  
The alternative Kathmandu.

**Max Keen has recently posted some of his entertaining talks on Utube.**

*Some more pictures to identify from around the Stourbridge town centre.*



Answers to the picture quiz in Issue 3, I to r:

- High Street, opp. NatWest bank
- Lower High Street, Giles Hill
- Lower High Street, Unitarian Church
- Market Street, Town Hall
- Market Street, formerly Bell Pub

## ISOLATION

I'm normally a social girl.  
I love to meet my mates.  
But lately with the virus here  
We can't go out the gates.

You see we are the 'oldies' now,  
We need to stay inside.  
If they haven't seen us for a while,  
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did  
Before we got this old.  
There wasn't any Facebook,  
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies  
Who would never be uncouth,  
But we grew up in the 60s –  
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll  
The pill and miniskirts,  
We smoked, we drank, we partied  
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married  
And turned into someone's Mum,  
Somebody's wife, then Nana,  
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace  
Because our lives were full,  
But to bury us before we're dead  
Is like a red rag to a bull!

*Part of an Ode by New Zealand poet Jan Beaumont  
(aka Grandma Williams)*

The Algebra quiz is an interesting one:

One shoe = 5 + (one boy = 5 + 2 cones = 4 + (wearing)

2 shoes = 10 so total = 19) x 2 = 38 + 5 = 43

OR remove brackets 5 + 19 = 24 x 2 = 48

Several people have said the answer should be 43 but what did you get?

**Chairman: Brenda Stevenson: (brendastevenson53@gmail.com)**

**Business Secretary: Mike Billings (ictmike@hotmail.com)**

**Membership Secretary: Pat Orme (plmorme@talktalk.net)**

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