

WBU3A CORONAVIRUS TIMES!

No 6

Dear Member,

Once again, welcome to the Coronavirus Times - edition 6, my, doesn't time fly when you're enjoying yourself! And, once again, many thanks to the numerous members who have sent me pieces for inclusion. I do try to ensure a cross section of everyone's input and, as I have said in previous editions, everything that comes along I keep in a separate file so even if it is not used this week it is there for a future edition.

One of the things that has both delighted and surprised me has been the breadth of stuff sent in by members - from cartoons to creative writing, poems to puzzles, information to ideas to help you through our present discontents - and everything in between. It has been both a pleasure and a humbling experience to read what has been sent, and continues to be sent.

On that theme there are two items in this week's edition about which I would make a special mention. Founder WBU3A member Shirley Brooks has sent us a wonderful piece entitled "Out of Sight - Sweet Liberty" - a light hearted but humbling description of the opportunities (not the challenges!) of coping with macular degeneration at this time. And Sue Bailey sent me a poem that she had come across which I found both powerful and moving - the sort of thing that one doesn't necessarily understand it all but you intuitively know that this is something good and worthy. The poem, by Richard Lovelace, a 17th century soldier and poet, was written while he was imprisoned and is called "To Althea, from Prison" It was written to his lover when Lovelace was imprisoned in the early days of the Civil War. The poem is largely forgotten (shame!) but its final verse contains some immortal words that have been passed into our language:

*".....Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage...."*

As we enter our 6th week of isolation - with probably more weeks to come - they are, I would suggest, words worth remembering. We might not be able to get out and about with the same freedom that we are used to but as Lovelace wrote and Shirley suggests we need to look outwards and find our own freedoms ("liberties" as both Lovelace & Shirley call them) within our present discontents - rather than dwell on the negative ideas of being confined like a prisoner in his cell. Keep well & stay safe, Regards Tony Beale



Janet Gibbons Creature Quizzes: Answers to the Quiz No. 1

As promised I've posted the answers to the first quiz on the U3A website - well Sue Bailey has on my behalf. I wonder how many of you had a go - and if you are now working on the next ones?

I know many people like to test their general knowledge with quizzes and may find these disheartening, as I'm sure very few answers will be immediately forthcoming. But these are designed to keep the quizzier occupied for many an hour (week, month), and in doing so they may learn all kinds of interesting (and probably useless) facts that were not immediately available. My pleasure comes from finding those elusive questions. Oh no! Did you really think I was so clever as to know all that information? I can't even remember the answers to the questions - but it keeps me occupied! Happy puzzling, Janet Gibbons.

[ALL THAT JAZZ!](#)

As I have mentioned before in these columns I am a bit of an ignoramus when it comes to matters of Jazz music. My love is the music of JS Bach, but as I suggested a week or two ago I am utterly convinced that had Bach lived 200 years later then he would have been a keen Jazz composer and musician. This belief is shared by many, I know, and it can be seen at its best in the Jazz of the late, great French Jazz pianist Jacques Loussier. The Jacques Loussier Trio sold millions of records from the 1950s onwards concentrating on "jazzing up" great Bach works. Here is Loussier giving his version of Bach's great Toccata & Fugue:

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH](#) .

On the same theme arguably the greatest Bach pianist of today is Canadian virtuoso Angela Hewitt - one of the real superstars of contemporary classical music. Some months ago I was listening to her being interviewed on the radio and to my surprise when asked if there was any living pianist that she admired she quoted not a classical pianist but a jazz performer - fellow Canadian Diana Krall. Hewitt said in the interview that she dearly wished she could play the jazz rhythms like Krall. This was a new name for me so I Googled her and was completely blown away by this recommendation from Hewitt:

[CLICK HERE FOR DIANA KRALL](#) singing and playing Joni Mitchell's "A Case of You".

And finally, for all those who are really into Jazz, Jacky Arnold sends a link that you might appreciate. It's an app called JAZZED which is advertised as "The world's first audio-visual app dedicated to jazz". [CLICK HERE FOR JAZZED APP](#)



[YouTube & Covid-19!](#)

Social media and platforms like YouTube frequently get a bad press from people of our generation. But as with most things one has to be selective. We might complain about our present predicament but our tablets, lap tops & smart phones have given us all a window on the world and made self isolation a little more bearable and feeling in touch. And occasionally one comes across something that is a delight - like these two YouTube clips from Ray & Jacky Arnold.

[CLICK HERE FOR GILBERT & SULLIVAN](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR QUARANTINE THROUGH ART](#)



*More quirky humour from Jan Tilsley!
I'm sure than many can relate to this!*

[Bonjour Tout le Monde](#)

The USA French Conversation group is alive and well! We are still meeting at 7 pm on alternate Wednesday evenings and enjoying an hour of light-hearted and informative conversation in French. Our leader, Anne Parkes, has helped us all to set up Zoom on our laptops or tablets and, despite one or two initial hiccups, it now works very well and approximately 10 of us are now able to chat freely with one another (partners are very welcome too). The current situation has meant we have had to learn some new vocabulary and it is always interesting to hear from Anne how her family in France is coping.



Don't be afraid of trying out new technology - there are always plenty of people available to help and it may just broaden your horizons.

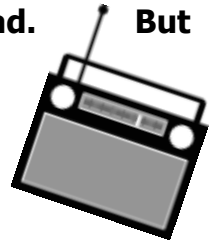
Bon santé à tous!

Pat Beale

"OUT OF SIGHT.....SWEET LIBERTY!"

One of our WBU3A founder members, Shirley Brooks, rang me to ask if she could put an item in this mailshot. I was delighted to receive the piece below in the post a few days later. Many of you will know that Shirley has macular degeneration which severely limits her sight – that in itself must cause great concerns but our present discontents must make life even more trying. Well, not for Shirley! This humbling and inspiring piece is a timely reminder of how important it is to always look for opportunities rather than become despondent by the challenges of life. Thank you Shirley for sharing this window on your life and on your positive outlook on the world.

What are the vital necessities to your happiness in life? As a former library assistant, for me it is love, friendship and books so as an avid reader it was a great shock for me to lose my ability to read my books. There they are on my shelves now unread. But having been trained to look up and find out, as a former library assistant I soon discovered audio books, talking newspapers and the radio. I had always been a daytime radio listener but now I find evening listening is even better for news, company, stories and plays, and all kinds of learning.



Like a miracle I suddenly realised I am no longer a slave! How can that be?

Well, take the news for example. I am no longer a slave to the Sunday newspapers with their scurrilous attacks on government, celebrities, and other famous people – and all that advertising! Now I can listen to books, read by actors whose skills bring the books and their stories vividly to life!

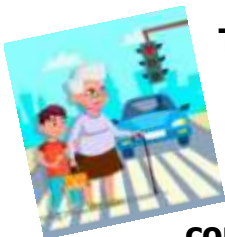


No, I am no longer a slave! I am often asked do I miss my car? My answer is "Never" – well, hardly ever! In Nottingham in normal times we have excellent public transport which is free so I no longer have the hassle of car parks, M.O.T. tests, licences, insurance and the possibility of accidents.

And, I should add, train travel is a delight for getting into the countryside!

I love cooking but I have found that I am now no longer a slave to weighing the ingredients! Imagination and memory are my watchwords so every dish is an "original"! As they say, variety is the spice of life!

Dictaphones are easy to use and I have listened to my parents' memories and recorded them for my archives. It has been amazing how many other people have told me that they wish they had done this.



Technology has been a wonderful help. Mankind's wondrous skill at inventing has made such a difference and made so many things possible. The telephone and the computer and other pieces of technological wizardry mean that I am no longer a slave to macular degeneration, the cause of my sight loss. If you are unfamiliar with this condition look it up – and if it happens to you, take heart. It can, as I've found, be a liberating experience and make you realise the extraordinary kindness of people who are only too willing to help and give assistance – that in itself is a great solace.



And, of course, I can wave my white stick at buses which is hugely satisfying especially when they screech to a halt just for me! I may be out of sight – but what sweet liberty!

Shirley Brooks

Thank you Shirley for that. Enjoy your liberation - keep waving your white stick at the buses!

SHOPPING:

David Alexander has kindly shared this link which gives details of Nottingham shops that will deliver to you. **[CLICK HERE FOR LINK](#)**

THIS ENGLAND!

Member Muriel Ryan obviously has, like me a rather black sense of humour! She sent in this clipping from the *Wembley Observer* of about 20 years ago which had obviously appealed to her.

"Tea dances are usually exempt from the violence found at discos and clubs. But their image may be changed forever after two pensioners brawled at one of the afternoon gatherings. The trouble started when one of the men accused the other of harassing the ladies. Aubrey Powell, 77, responded by telling 71 year old Mark Lester: "I'll kill you, you b*****d. You had this coming." He then hit Mr Lester in the head and body with a wood file wrapped in a tea towel. Mr Lester received head injuries as well as a fractured nose and wrist in the incident. The tale of unrest at the tea dance at Brent Town Hall, North-West London, unfolded in court yesterday when Powell pleaded guilty to wounding with intent. Harrow Crown Court heard the two men went to the dances regularly and had known each other for 30 years. Problems first flared last March when Mr. Lester accused his dancing rival of being too familiar with the ladies. The court was told Mr Lester attacked Powell, punching him in the back of the head. Powell claimed the attack prompted him to carry the wood file for protection. He had it with him when he was approached by Mr. Lester last September. Thinking he was about to be attacked, he used it to strike him first, the court heard. Powell, of Stamford Hill, was given an 18 month suspended jail term and ordered to pay £500 compensation. After the case, he said he had never been a threat to Mr. Lester. "He's much bigger than me," Powell said. "He said I was interfering with the ladies but I'm a gentleman. I just enjoy dancing. Most of the ladies have Zimmer frames anyway and it takes a lot to get me excited."

Follow that! Well, Muriel's offering got me thinking. In the "New Statesman" magazine each week there is a short column on this theme. Readers write in with items of quirky British news gleaned from newspapers. I always chuckle when I read these. Here are a couple that recently made me smile:

- "A Gospel Church has been evicted after locals complained of hymn-singing and preaching emanating from the church hall and ruining their day of rest. Lewisham Council has refused permission for the Redeemed Christian Church of God to meet in Catford after deciding that its Sunday services were causing an excessive noise nuisance. Neighbours claimed worshippers were so loud that they were unable to watch television when services were in full swing". (South London News)
- A headmaster has defended his decision to order a schoolgirl to wear a wig during school examinations because she had dyed her hair bright red. Dr Ian Garrero rejected suggestions that his action in buying 16-year-old Sabrina Cohen an £8.99 wig had been ridiculous. He said yesterday that his aim had been to protect other pupils. "Her dyed hair would have created an unreasonable environment for other students to do their best," said Dr Garrero. - (Independent).



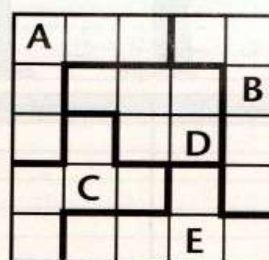
'No player may move, collect money, or buy anything'

PUZZLE CORNER!

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| | 8 | | 2 | 5 | | | | 1 |
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| 9 | | | | 1 | 8 | | 7 | |
| 7 | 2 | 8 | 6 | | | 5 | | 9 |

Logi-5

Each line, across and down, is to have each of the letters A, B, C, D and E, appearing once each. Also, every shape – shown by the thick lines – must also have each of the letters in it. Can you fill in the grid?



*“.....Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage....”*



As mentioned earlier Sue Bailey has sent in what I think is a wonderful poem. I'm no poetry buff but am always delighted and overawed at the power, cleverness and beauty of poetry – even when I don't really understand it. The poem was written by the 17th century poet soldier Richard Lovelace as he lay incarcerated in Gatehouse Prison which was adjacent to Westminster Abbey in 1642. Lovelace was a cavalier soldier in the English Civil War. Born in 1617 Lovelace died aged only 40 in 1657. He came from the lower aristocracy and after boarding at Charterhouse School he was

sworn in as a *Gentleman Wayter Extraordinary* to King Charles I in 1631, an honorary position for which he paid a fee. He went up to Gloucester Hall, Oxford, in 1634 where he was praised by a contemporary who said of him: *"the most amiable and beautiful person that ever eye beheld; a person also of innate modesty, virtue and courtly deportment, which made him then, but especially after, when he retired to the great city, much admired and adored by the female sex"*. Clearly, it would seem that Lovelace was popular with young ladies – and his poem *To Althea, From Prison* without any doubt shows his romantic side.

Little is known as to who the lady Althea was – but it is commonly thought to be Lady Lucy Sacheverell. Much of Lovelace's poetry is lost but this lovely verse is his most well known; to me it speaks of a more gracious time and the beauty and power of its words are, I think wonderful. And, of course there are those few words in the final verse – I wonder if Richard Lovelace ever dreamed that long after he had gone *"Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage"* would become very much part of our language – and now in the 21st century almost 400 years after he wrote them become such an important reminder and piece of advice to all of us who are at the moment "imprisoned"?



To Althea, From Prison

*When love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fettered to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.*

*When flowing cups run swiftly round,
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.*

*When like committed linnets I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King:
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlarged winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.*

*Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage:
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage.
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.*

Richard Lovelace 1642

MISSING THE ART GALLERY? Members will know that many art galleries are streaming exhibitions so that you can enjoy them in the comfort of your home. But here's something different sent in by John Pike – "it's terrific" John said and he isn't wrong! It's a video of many of the religious works of Caravaggio – but portrayed by dancers and actors as "statues" – and all to the music of Mozart's *Requiem*. Look for the wonderful depictions of Caravaggio's *Judith's beheading of Holofernes* and his *Bachus* – they're stunning! [**CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO.**](#) If you don't know the works of Caravaggio you're in for a treat. Google him and compare Caravaggio's original paintings to the video – it is incredible!

MY PRICKLY FRIENDS!

Just thought I would send you a photograph I took today of something really beautiful.

Last year I was at Keith's Garden Group meeting and commented on this flowering cacti, (high on a shelf in his greenhouse), being so lovely. Keith took it down and said 'have it'. Really! Did he mean it? Yes he did! I was so happy and couldn't believe he would part with it, but so glad he did.



This year 'my' cacti has produced so many flowers, but even more surprising, because during the year in my possession, I gave it a little drink only very occasionally.

This is a big thank-you to Keith because of his generosity, but also a gift to look at and enjoy, so beautiful in these very strange testing times. Nature never stops giving and sometimes with not a lot of effort. Happy gardening WBU3A members; and if you can't, just enjoy the efforts of others. We don't just do it for ourselves.

Kindest regards, Jacqui Flude

Many thanks for sharing this Jacqui – I'm sure that many members will agree with you.

A DAY IN THE LIFE!

More whacky but wonderful tales from Rob Nicholas!

Back from my morning brisk 3 miles, as advised by my heart surgeon, after a slight delay for a chat to some nice ladies. A WPC and a Community Support Officer enquired why I was out walking *again*. Obviously I had a sort of valid reason but I said "Me bike is broken!" WPC (Jane) said "You mean **my** bike" so I replied "No, don't think your bike would suit me". As she edged towards the Taser, the Community Cop explained the Government "rules"; apparently I was wrong in assuming they were like "guidelines". We then got into a discussion as to the correct message is it "Stay Home" or "Stay AT Home"? She took down details; I am sure instead of my name she wrote "village idiot"!

The pictures on the right show an "interesting" emergency call out that I once attended. The tenant in the first floor flat decided to "end it all" by gassing himself (after spending the evening in the pub). However, he got bored waiting and lit a cigarette! Thankfully nobody was killed. The blast threw him out into the back garden along with most of his kitchen; the couple in the flat above were in bed at the time and ended up on the front lawn.

They were all shaken but OK and by the time I arrived had been taken to casualty. Actually the pensioner in the adjacent flat was worse off as she had severe shock. The PC in attendance, of course, came out with the obvious "Did the earth move for you darling?" which he repeated quite a few times as each new "professional" joined our group! I was glad the paramedic was still around, as I really expected someone was going to thump him. There was a debate as to whose responsibility it was to assess the damage; in the end they sent me in to make sure the structure was safe to send in the firemen!

Again, many thanks Rob for your gently humorous look at life!



With apologies to Michelangelo!

WRITERS' GROUP

Over the last few weeks with each edition of the Coronavirus Times I have been both delighted and impressed with all the items that have come in from members. We obviously have some talented writers and would be journalists out there! If you have enjoyed writing something for our little mailshot (or even if you haven't!) why not join the WBU3A Writers' Group?

You don't have to be a Charles Dickens or a Jane Austen – none of us are; we're just a few people who enjoy putting pen to paper and sharing our work with others. We meet once a month to share our work on a previously agreed theme.

It has been a bonus in the present climate that we've been able to carry on writing – albeit in isolation. We've put our meetings on hold but still carry on with our scribbling and sharing our work on-line. So why not give it a go? You'll be very welcome. If you're interested contact Tony Beale: email wbu3a.members@gmail.com



KNOW YOUR NOTTS!

Can you work out where these towns, villages, streets etc are in Notts. & Nottingham from the cryptic clues?

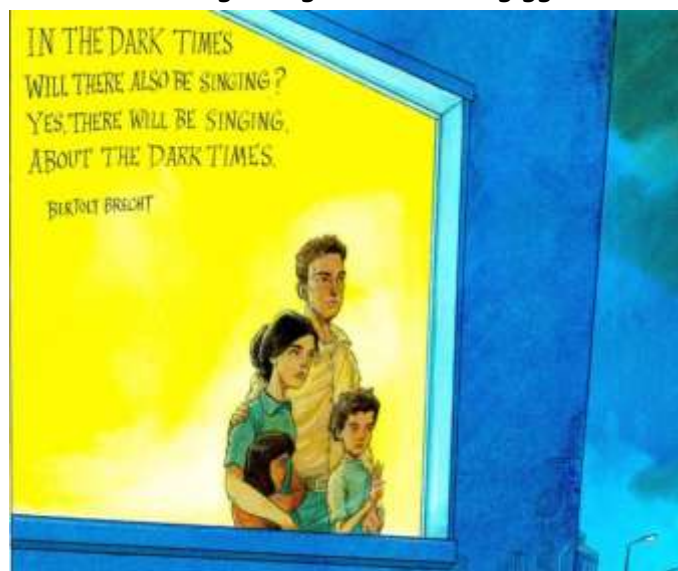
1. Place of trade; type of root or meal
2. Fruit - you can't hear its bark
3. Definite Article; Grassed area
4. Rain refuge - Aviation pioneers; Thoroughfare
5. Precipice - weight unit
6. Queen; Middle point
7. Orient; Plumbing problem
8. Dainty trim; Stock or Black...
9. Bequeath - Nixon's successor
10. Guy-s-paddock
11. Of great duration; column's counterpart
12. Sunset site; Card game - river crossing
13. Google alternative - Deli meat
14. Fan setting; pedestrian space
15. Greeting- Abel to Adam; Gullible
16. Tawdry-flank

DEAR FRIEND.....

Nottingham Wire has an appeal for people to write letters to patients in Lings Bar hospital. The idea is to send letters to a stranger, addressing them as *Dear Friend*. [CLICK HERE FOR FURTHER DETAILS](#). I thought some of our U3A member might be willing to put pen to paper. Sue Bailey

WHAT WILL OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN REMEMBER?






When all this is over, and the years have passed what, I wonder, will those that come after us say of these strange times? It's not an idle question. Our own generation recalls the war years and the years of rationing that followed with both nostalgia and pride. Will we tell of our own generation's "Bulldog Spirit" winning the day against Covid-19, and of what we lived through in the great lockdown? Will our children and grandchildren tell their children and grandchildren of the pandemic months and of standing outside ASDA with their mum in a long queue for food? Will our great grandchildren giggle when they hear of the great loo roll shortage? And will our children re-tell heroic tales to their children of doctors and nurses who fought, and often died, winning pandemic war - just as the valiant Spitfire pilots of the Battle of Britain did in that long ago summer of 1940? The Guardian "cartoon" on the right says it all. It's a basic human instinct to sing and to retell the glories and stories of the past - all societies do it. The "cartoon" reminds us of Bertolt Brecht's famous words from his poem "Motto": "Yes, there will be singing, about the dark times" - written in 1930's Germany as Hitler rose to power. As Brecht reminded us, this is what we do and must do; look back to our shared past to find our place in the great scheme of things so that we know where we must go next in our shared futures.



COVID SYMPTOM TRACKING APP Lynn & John Tidmarsh write: "Friends of ours told us about this app and we wondered if it might be included in the news bulletins. They're looking to increase reporting to 5 million people and particularly those aged 69+". Scientists from King's College, Guys & St Thomas' Hospitals are seeking as much data as possible by people self reporting symptoms (or lack of them) and then using this data to help slow down the spread of the virus. You can download the app by clicking on one or other of these links [Android](#) or [iOS](#). To visit the web site and find out more [CLICK HERE](#)

PICTURE QUIZ. Can you answer these picture clues supplied by Rob Nicholas: what are they or where are they! (Answers below left - don't cheat!)

COVID 19 Isolation Quiz 30

Identify and note down the creature, place, "item" along with the appropriate date and number.

Q Which Turkish city is named after a comic book hero?

STRUGGLING WITH 'ZOOM', SOCIAL MEDIA OR OTHER 'TECHY' PROBLEMS?

Then I might be able to help! At work, I offered remote (telephone) support IT to users so I'm happy to talk to anyone, whether tech-savvy or simply scared of technology. I can't promise any solutions but I can offer a patient ear at the end of the phone - all FREE! If you're having issues with using your computer or you would like to find out how you could get 'better connected' (either with U3A friends or family) in these strange times, just send me an email (paulbeverley@btinternet.com) or call me on **0115 923 1352**. **Paul Beverley**

Thank you for the many emails of thanks for producing this weekly missive. Please keep your items for inclusion coming - without them we will have nothing to write! Tips, quips, anecdotes, news of how you are coping, hopes, dreams, fears, items to raise the spirits and much more will all be gratefully accepted! Also, if you have suggestions for topics that we might include please let me know and I'll do my best to oblige. Keep well & safe. Regards Tony Beale

Today's Thought Upon Our Current Discontents!
I read this week that Donald Trump still plays his daily round of golf despite his own laws forbidding it. As, open mouthed, I read the article the words of 17th century French mathematician & philosopher Blaise Pascal came to mind:

"So wretched is man that he would weary even without any cause for weariness, and so frivolous is he that, though full of a thousand reasons for weariness, the least thing, such as playing billiards or hitting a ball, is sufficient enough to amuse him".

Quite!