

Editors Update Hello everyone and welcome to the sixth edition of our Covid-19 newsletter. We are now being released a little bit more from our hideouts and I for one will be pleased to see my hairdresser though she may not recognise me after such a long spell! Thanks to all those who responded to my request for stories for 'Members Musings' much appreciated and hope you enjoy. Susie Weisz takes us back to the 50s and Mary Pace brings us right up to the present day with Covid-19. And finally Dennis Hotten is our weatherman!

A reminder that the AGM will be taking place on Wednesday 1st July at 2pm via Zoom and we hope to see some of you then. Jane Barker has been collecting all the proxy voting papers which made the 26th June deadline. Many thanks to all those responding. We are continuing to look at ways to keep our U3A running as the situation on Covid -19 changes .

Following a Survey Monkey poll of members the consensus was that they would be happy to hold our monthly meetings via Zoom whilst the current pandemic continues. As a result David Morgan is in the process of trying to recruit an interesting speaker capable of presenting a talk via Zoom so at this moment it is 'watch this space' for July 15th .You will all then be invited via Zoom ! Have your cups of tea at the ready ! We are also looking at resuming some outdoor based activities although the current restriction to 6 participants is something of a barrier. More news soon, hopefully. In the meantime please keep supporting your groups through Zoom and engaging in any other way you can.

A reminder to those of you who haven't already done this. Covid 19 monitoring is being carried out by King's College, Guys and St Thomas 'Hospitals in partnership with ZOE Global Ltd a health science company. They are asking people to Download the Ask Zoe/Covid-19 app and report daily, any symptoms including 'none' to help them track the path of the disease particularly among the elderly. It now has 3.9 million subscribers so let's hope you are one of them.

Now we are becoming a generation of 'Baby Zoomers' it might be useful to bear in mind some of the etiquette when joining one of these groups and apologies if this is repetition. Our convenors are doing a great job and let's try and make their role easier by doing a few things once the group is 'Zooming'! Remember if everyone is trying to speak at the same time no one gets heard properly, so your convenor may mute everyone and then when you want to speak there is a button to press with a chat or raised hand icon . I know for some groups that is not possible as the purpose is to contribute but also to listen! Turn any of your phones off or on silent as this can disturb the flow and if you do have to take a call , take it in another room. Close the door to the room you are holding your Zoom meeting in as any outside conversations will be heard by everyone in the group and if your neighbours are cutting their grass perhaps move to a quieter part of the house as everyone else is going to hear it too!

You may be interested during lockdown in finding ways to keep our 'little grey cells working' and The Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge are offering a Virtual Summer Festival of Learning and you can sign up for news about the events at www.ice.cam.ac.uk/intsummer. This came from U3A National Office a great video on YouTube about what we are all getting up to with our U3A groups during lockdown <http://www.youtube.com/watch?V=aBSfUGisszz0>

Mike Lawson informed me that The GXCA Community Kitchen has updated their menu .Chalfonts U3A are still providing them with the most responses, so it seems it is working well. They are anything but expensive and even then they now have a support programme.

Update from Martin Tett, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council re library 'Request and collect' service which has been launched enabling customers to borrow books for the first time in a safe and contactless way. If you have no internet access, you can place a request over the phone by calling 01296 382 415. Fines have been automatically extended until Friday 31st July which is good news.

Chalfonts U3A Facebook Group . We now have 82 members keeping us posted on events in their daily lives and giving suggestions for us to consider eg cultural activities, updates on local news shops that are open etc. Let's see if we can make it 100 members! There is a link on the Website's home page to the following page: <https://chalfontsu3a.org.uk/cu3a-facebook-group/> There you will find a link to the PDF with instructions on how to join Facebook and the CU3A group. Gary Tomlin our webmaster can help where there are any questions or issues you may have in creating a Facebook account or joining the group. He has also set up an email address facebook@chalfontsu3a.org.uk. **Computer Issue?** If you are having any problems with your computer please email support@chalfontsu3a.org.uk and we will try and assist you via email. You can also post your questions on the Chalfonts U3A Facebook page. For those of you not on CU3A Facebook page you may not have seen the post Peter Brown put on taken from YouTube. Henry's adventures Past and Present Chalfont St Peter. There are 4 parts. https://www.youtube.com/results?Search_query=chalfont+st+peter+past+and+present. Thanks to Val Smith for letting us know about this.

Existing Groups.

Book Club. Book Group1 continues to meet via Zoom and discuss and review a book a month . We have started circulating questions in advance so we have to come prepared!! Last month we talked about "The Penguin Lessons" by Tom Michell. This is a gentle story of a young teacher from the UK working temporarily in Argentina as part of his travels, who rescues an oil covered penguin. The penguin becomes quite a star. We learnt quite a lot about penguins and we all thought it a refreshing and easy read in a time of lockdown.

Creative Writing Group

The U3A creative writing group (small but beautifully formed) has been meeting monthly since lockdown by Zoom. We always set a topic and pre-circulate about 500 words so that we can comment on each other's work, in a very friendly way. One piece was on a common phrase or saying, another writing a character in the style of Dickens and this month's topic is 'our dreams'.

If anyone is interested in joining our lively group, please contact our convenor, Denise Beddows.

Cryptic Crossword Group Bob Leven, who is convenor, runs this group on a Friday morning and although full at the moment, if anyone would like a taster session please contact him crypticcrosswords@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

French Intermediate Group Update from Ray Luker We are not enjoying the lockdown of course, but we started several weeks ago to try and resume our regular meetings on Zoom. After the first attempt we have found it very good and meet every Tuesday for an hour or just over. Normally we meet at alternate houses for 2 hours every 2 weeks. We now do 2 sessions of "free Zoom" Very enjoyable, and it is keeping our conversation going. It will be nice to meet up with everyone again though.

German Conversation Renate Danner says they have met on Zoom recently but there are still some people finding it difficult to join. She is hopeful they will manage soon!

Italian Beginners – Update from Lesley Bedford. We have adapted our weekly sessions to fit Zoom and I think everyone agrees that it is working well and inventive measures are being used to keep everyone interested, motivated and happy. The group splits into pairs for a 40 minute session working on topics that have been decided on the week before, then after a well-deserved coffee break the group gets

together as a whole and compares what they have been doing including problems encountered and sharing new words and phrases. All in all the group is making good steady progress and enjoying the interaction.

The Philosophy Group Update from David Burbidge. The group has continued to meet via Zoom to discuss topics relevant to the current circumstances we all find ourselves in. However, at the last meeting we strayed onto the subject of the Wachowski brothers film The Matrix which, in its own way, explores the nature of reality. The discussion was quite short and concluded with one of the regular members opining "I think it's a load of bo***cks!". We are always on the lookout for new members so if you thought philosophy was some dry, abstract endeavor you can see how modern, relevant, and expansive it can be. So, if you are curious about the world; or need an outlet for your wilder opinions; or simply like fruity language, why not give us a try? You can contact the convener David Burbidge via the website in usual way

Social Interaction Group -Update from Lesley Bedford. This new group has now had two meetings on Zoom and some interesting current topics have come up and been discussed enthusiastically, the group is small but works well and enables people to see and chat to people once a week. If anyone would like to join the group please get in touch.

London Walks have now made some of their walks available via Zoom and last week a number of those that had booked for the Spies and Spycatchers walk, that was planned for March 18th. took part in a virtual version of the walk. The Guide was at home and by means of maps, photographs, and video clips, we were taken past the Gentlemen's Clubs of Pall Mall, and places in St James and Mayfair used by the Cambridge Spy Ring and others, during the cold war. The London Walks web site, www.walks.com lists more than 20 Virtual walks open to the public and anyone can sign up on line and go for a walk from the comfort of their own home. For example you could join the Lure of the Underground Virtual walk on Tuesday June 30th at 5pm, London at War on Tuesday June 30th at 7pm, Scandalous Mayfair on Wed July 1st at 7pm, the Sights and Secrets of Kensington, every Thursday at 4pm or Disastrous London, every Thursday at 7pm, to name just a few. I know of Chalfonts U3A members who have recently done both the Inside Covent Garden Virtual Tour and the Lure of the Underground Virtual Tour and thoroughly enjoyed both. Why not give one a try. Their web site details even longer list of Private Virtual London Walks which can be organised provided more than 15 people are interested. So if one takes your fancy, let John Hardwick know at londonwalks2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk and we will see what can be arranged.

Now over to our 'Members' Musings'.

Susie Weisz has fond memories of her childhood to share.

As a child I was lucky enough to live on Chalfont Heights. At the junction of Chiltern Hill and Lincoln Road there is a letter box and after school my friend Carol and I would sit on the bank, chat, and watch the world go by.

We were lucky to have as one of neighbours Dame Flora Robson. Of course she wasn't a Dame then. She did a lot of filming at Pinewood and quite regularly would pass Carol and me on her way home to Mount Fort in Ellis Avenue and if we were there, she would call us over "Gals, please would you post my letters for me", which of course we did. And off she drove up the hill.

One year, I suppose we were about 10, and in those days incredibly young and naïve, she asked my parents if I could go to her firework party, not with my parents or Carol's, just the two of us.

We went and boy was it a party. She had an enormous bonfire, lots of people were there and we had a wonderful time. When I got home my parents asked me if I had had a good time, of course I said I had. I explained that someone helped me put a potato on a stick! "Who was that?" my parents asked, "Oh, I don't know... but then we put the stick and potato in the bonfire". "Yes, but who helped you" asked the fascinated parents "Oh, a man" I reply. "What was he like?" "Oh, a bit like Dad" (My Dad was a really

good looker in those days). I went on "And then after a few minutes we took the potatoes out and guess what? We ate them and they were great". Well the questions as to who the guests were went on and on from my parents, but, as I said, I was very naïve and had no idea who was there. However, looking back I would not be surprised if there had been some truly great faces from the silver screen enjoying the innocent delight that two little girls were having around her bonfire. Anyone got a time travelling machine so I could go back and check?

Back in the 1950s Chalfont Heights did not have that many houses and most of the south west side of Lincoln Road was a field. So, all the children on the Estate would get together and build camps out of straw and generally be feral. Life was so much simpler in those days. Then of course the building started all along Lincoln Road and at the top of Woodside Hill. Carol and I were real tom boys and would play on the building sites, jumping out of first floor windows into the piles of builders' sand below, it was amazing we never broke a bone.

We loved our bikes; they gave us extra freedom. However, unlike today, the bikes were never new, they were handed down as children grew out of them. I knew which one I would be having and was ecstatic when it finally arrived. I painted it yellow! The happiest days were in the summer when Mum would make me some corned beef and beetroot sandwiches and off Carol and I would go, usually to Latimer, where we would dangle our legs in the river and eat our sandwiches, before peddling back up the hill and home in time for supper and bed.

It wasn't until the late 50s early 60s, I think, that the bypass was built, we lost a lovely field that was filled with wild roses (rosehips in the Autumn). There was an enormous area at the front of the youth club, with barns opposite, that used to be Swan Farm Lane (not sure where Swan Farm ever was), but there was also a bit of a dump and I remember that on a lot of occasions there was an old tramp fiddling about there, I was a little frightened of him as he had an enormous fiery red beard.

Of course, all this was before the precinct was built and the houses were like those in Chalfont St Giles. The Greyhound was renowned for the amazing stagecoach parked outside; I wonder what happened to that.

Every year we enjoyed Feast Day on Gold Hill Common. I remember seeing a huge bonfire and an ox cooking on it for several days before. That wouldn't last over-night these days. The fair was great, all the sounds and rides and desperation to win some poor benighted goldfish, fortunately we had a little pond, so it had a better life than the plastic bag! But of course, the highlight was the parade down The Market Place with the carnival queen, I wonder who was the last one.

Then there was the Adstock Church Fete. My Dad always manned one of the splat the rat or similar games, they were great fun and I remember maypole dancing there. The site of course has gone, and we have the doctors' surgery and houses there now.

In the winter if it snowed there were two places that were great for tobogganing the first was down Gold Hill, I remember going down on a piece of corrugated iron with about five boys, I survived, but boy would Health and Safety have a field day today! The second was at the Golf Club. That was a wonderful long slide down and many happy hours were spent trudging to the top to slip to the bottom in less than a minute, but at least it kept us out of mischief.

Such innocence and simple pleasures that cost nothing. Now some nearly 70 years later Carol and I are still good friends but communicate by WhatsApp and email as she now lives in Johannesburg, but my roots are still firmly here in Chalfont St Peter.

Writing this has brought back so many more childhood memories, but I won't bore you any further! Thank you Susie I can picture it all!!

This from **Mary Pace** enables us to share Covid -19 and its impact on one family.

We went to Madeira on 9th. March for a week. By the time we got home, Madeira was just beginning to close down, although there was no Covid-19 on the island and to date I think they've only had one case! We arrived safely back in the U.K. on 16th March and exactly a week later, in fact it was Mother's Day,

22nd March and Terry , started to feel unwell and by the Friday 27th he felt quite poorly. He phoned our surgery and had a telephone consultation with a doctor who confirmed he had the virus, although he was never tested for it but he had classic flu like symptoms, no energy, breathing bad and a cough. He had to phone the surgery on the Monday as an update but that if he deteriorated during that weekend we were to phone 111. Luckily, he didn't have to be admitted. We were told by the doctor that we had to isolate, separate rooms in the house, bed, showers toilets etc, and not to be in the same room at all. Terry lived upstairs for two to three weeks and apart from going to bed I lived downstairs. Meals and drinks, not that he was eating much, I would take upstairs and just leave inside the room where he was. I was told I could get it up to 2 weeks after he first became unwell, also not allowed to go outside the house, apart from the garden and then another week after that, even if Terry was feeling better and after two weeks he was feeling better and eating better but we still had to live separately as much as possible, which we did. The amazing thing is that I didn't get it.

Our neighbours were absolutely amazing during the three weeks of isolation. I had all our shopping done, flowers, cakes , chocolates etc were left on our doorstep. Our immediate neighbour cut our large lawns, hedges and cleared it all away. Amazing. We had messages every day from one or more of them to see how we were and did we need anything. There's only 16 houses in this Close and we heard from all of them. One of them had set up a helpline with all our mobile numbers so we could contact each other anytime of night or day.

Before Terry became unwell I never dreamed that I would be asking for help. Also we were so lucky to be able to live in separate parts of the house.

Terry coped with his illness really well, no complaints and very easy to look after.

I had some very emotional times, firstly because of him and also the kindness of everyone, especially our wonderful neighbours, very tearful on lots of days. Of course you are on tenterhooks most of the time, in case he got worse and then once in bed you relax a bit but you're also listening to make sure he's not coughing more or breathing louder than normal so although I relaxed once in bed I still felt a bit uneasy. Anyway all back to normal now and we're keeping very busy. As I say we count ourselves very lucky and Terry survived .

Thank you Mary for re-living those difficult months for both of you and you have top neighbours! Do they travel to cut grass and hedges??

Dennis Hotten sends these thoughts during lockdown of problems caused by the extreme heat and humidity. More water being used on gardens when there is already a shortage.

Pets suffer during these temperatures and need walking during the cool times, not many of those at present!

A lot of people with various illnesses can't cope with the heat, asthma for instance.

The energy is sapped out of everybody apart from the sun worshippers.

Children at school struggle in the heat.

Just to add further cheer, the nights are drawing in.

Make the most of July as when we hit August you will really notice the difference.

If you haven't worked it out yet I hate this type of weather and will welcome the thunderstorms and cooler temperatures.

I hope everybody is now managing to get out of their house or flat and beginning to get back some normality. Till the next time.
