

Editor's Update. Welcome everyone to the current Covid-19 edition of the newsletter and I was amused to read on Facebook that The Seven Dwarves have been told that from Monday they can meet in groups of six. One of them isn't Happy!! I will be emailing information about the AGM in the next few days so would really appreciate if you could spend some time reading it and taking any action required. Several musings from members and one in particular that I think will interest you is from Gillian Walmsley who due to Covid-19 is stuck out in Western Australia, fortunately staying with family. She has promised to update me on her journey to get back home. I wonder if there are any other Chalfonts U3A members stuck somewhere. Would be good to hear how they are coping. Two local businesses that are reopening with restrictions, are Crumbs café in Chalfont St Peter which opened this week for takeaways and the Gerrards Cross bookshop reopening on 15 June with a number of measures in place to ensure safety. They are continuing their delivery service for those within 5 miles, free for orders over £30.00, as well as offering click and collect
<https://chilternbookshops.co.uk/contact/gerrards-cross-shop/>

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 already has 3.8 million subscribers so let's hope you are one of them. Some of you who are reporting daily on how you are feeling may have been asked whether you want to be part of the Covid-19 Symptom Study Trial testing the accuracy of a digital test to diagnosis Covid-19.

Chalfonts U3A Facebook Group . We now have 77 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 to 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.

As you know the AGM is going to be relayed using Zoom ,so if any of you need some help ,there are links to installing it on the front page of the ChalfontsU3A website.

Jane Barker has sent me this news about some of the gardens now opening up. With the lockdown restrictions easing there are more places opening up to visit and enjoy . You will need to be book in advance but why not have a look at:

RHS Wisley <https://www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley>

Kew Gardens <https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/visit-kew-gardens/opening-and-closing-times>

Stonor Park <https://www.stonor.com/> which this weekend has some Street Food Takeaways open

Cliveden <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cliveden>

Waddesdon Manor <https://waddesdon.seetickets.com/timeslots/waddesdon-grounds>

and keep an eye open for some local NGS gardens expected to open soon <https://ngs.org.uk/>

Member's Musings.

My request for VE Day reminiscences from parents or grandparents brought in an email from Geoff Glover. I don't think much about age, but I was there! Albeit aged 9 but have clear memories of building a bonfire outside our house in SE London in the road. Just imagine what our current council would have

thought about that.....but we had the stirrup pump and bucket ready in case all got out of hand. VE Day was special for us (not as special as for the forces of course) as Hitler had dropped a bomb on our house 4 years earlier while we were trying to sleep and my father (an Air Raid Warden) had to dig us out!

From Gillian Walmsley. I was due to fly home with Singapore Airlines on 22nd April but the flight was cancelled and re-booking was extremely difficult because of travel restrictions. Also Australia put a ban on all visitors wanting to enter the country, except for citizens and residents. Added to this, has been a ban on all interstate travel in WA. As I am living with my family in Albany, five hours drive from Perth, we couldn't drive to the airport anyway. Also there is no rail link. I then decided to change airlines and managed to get a flight on the Dreamliner non-stop flight from Perth to Heathrow - thus avoiding Singapore, on 6th July. However, this has also been cancelled and Qantas has grounded all their planes until the end of July.

What a situation! I now have two lots of credits for the cancelled flights but have no idea when I can eventually leave the country. However, being with my family is a real bonus. We've also had restrictions, but nothing like the lock-down in the UK and now even these are being lifted and life is getting back to normal. WA has had very few cases of the virus and none at all in Albany. I'm safe and well and dare I say it, still enjoying life - getting out and about, including going to the beach, although it is now well into Autumn and getting chilly on some days. I'm able to go shopping with my son and here there is no panic buying as the supermarkets are well stocked. The standard of hygiene is superb and social distancing is calmly observed. However, like the UK, the economy has been badly affected and many people have lost their jobs as businesses have closed.

I've been given a bridging visa to allow me to stay in Australia until I can eventually depart but I've also applied for a new visa so I can return in November. I usually spend five months each year with my son and his family but I have a feeling it might be more difficult in the future. My application was registered over a month ago, but still no news as to whether it will be granted.

I'm always amazed at how positive and helpful people are in the villages and the wonderful 'on-line' activities that have been established and the U3A newsletter too is so good to keep me in touch. I keep up to date via the village's website and also news from the various organisations I belong to. I've also joined the Zoom group for daily prayers with Chalfont St Giles Parish Church and it's great seeing people I know well. I've yet to explore Facebook as I've avoided this in the past but now I'm wondering whether to join. I also read the digital version of the Daily Telegraph to get the UK news and I watch the daily news concerning Australia and the World on the TV.

A short story from two of our intrepid birdwatchers Dennis Hotten and Tony Micallef .It reads like a tale from 'Wind in the Willows' with the characters Toad and Mole or perhaps Ratty!

Taking advantage of the relaxation of the CV19 Guidelines, Dennis the Menace and Bony Tony went for an adventure along the Jubilee River. Maintaining a social distance the boys ambled along the river bank. It wasn't long before the birds started to appear. Swallows and swifts performing aerial acrobatics. The air filled with the song of cetti's, reed willow warblers and reed buntings. On the river the majestic swans, elegant great crested grebes, the darting coots, cruising mallards, a haunting silhouette of the cormorants and the honking of the Canada geese. Then in the air the diving common terns, storming herring gulls, and a crowd of black headed gulls. But no sign of the magnificent Two: the cuckoo or the hobby.

Suddenly the dark shape of a raptor high up in the sky, a red kite. They continue along the riverbank many birds calling, but not a sound from a cuckoo! Then out of the blue a flashing black shape! Denis the Menace says is it a kestrel or a hobby? Bony Tony pipes up, it's not a kestrel, it's a hobby! It turns and passes by again and Dennis agrees.

Lots of banter and hopefully they will see the hobby on the way back, but not a sound from the cuckoo! A pause at the bridge, and what's to do next? Let's return to the weir. Off we go buoyed with the hope of seeing the holy grail. 'Hark' says Dennis! Is that a cuckoo? The hunt is on. Like searching for the Scarlet Pimpernel. Then high up in a tree is the elusive cuckoo. The boys train their binoculars and get a great sighting. They continue onwards and a flash it is a hobby! Then Dennis says listen, is that a cuckoo call?

The search is re-established, and again it is found high up in a big tree.

Back at the weir with spirits high, it is time for another coffee and more chatter. Flying up and down the river is the hobby. After a while it is time to head home. Chirping in the tree is a goldfinch.

Throughout the walk the butterflies have been fluttering by, cabbage white, orange tip, brimstone, peacock, red admiral and both male and female small blue. Alas no holly blue!

When Dennis and Tony get home they had a cup of hot tea and honey on buttered bread, followed by a glass of red wine. 19 Crimes Cabernet Sauvignon!

A great end to a great adventure. They went to bed very tired and happy.

The birdwatching group hope they can re-start their trips very soon and have as much fun as this encounter!.

Update from Geoff Glover on bridge sessions. The Bernard Magee tutorial sessions on Youtube continue at 11am on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in relaxed style if you haven't tuned in yet. Well worth watching. Bridgebase Online (BBO) works very well for pairs or for individuals who want to play with folk they know. There appear to be almost limitless combinations for players at different standards against real people or robots but teaming up with familiar pairs suits us well. It's free and easy to operate once you take the plunge. Then there's the Chiltern Virtual Bridge Club run by Keith Jones also using the same BBO platform. You can read all about this on his website www.bridgewebs.com/chiltern. There is an 'open' session at 2pm on Wednesday afternoons for all comers and other competitions for members of local Bridge clubs. Keith offers an open invitation to members of CU3A Bridge Group to join in. These sessions do attract a sub of around £2.50 per session payable through the BBO website. Sessions can also be set up for individual clubs but a minimum of eight tables applies which we would struggle to achieve.

Flower Arranging 'New kids on the Zoom block' had their first experience of using Zoom with 8 of us enjoying a relaxing hour arranging flowers led by Pippa our florist expert. Probably the quietest Zoom session any of us will encounter as we were concentrating so hard, little need to speak! Now that makes a change! We are planning to continue with this on a monthly basis.

New Interest Group - Social Interaction You only need to think of the difference that Chalfonts U3A has made to see that one of its benefits is the social activity it offers in its different forms. This may be missing from many peoples' lives at the moment, especially those living alone, and compounded by the absence of U3A meetings and activities.

With this in mind we are setting up a new Interest Group –so that any member who wishes can, using the Zoom technology have video conversations with other CU3A members. Some interest groups are already using Zoom. Quite a number of people, even convenors, have needed help to join in, mainly because they are not familiar, or more often, afraid of the internet and the technology. You are not alone if you have anxieties about it, but it is much easier than you think.

So many people have been delighted to overcome their fears and now have the chance to see and belong to a group and take part in chat and laughter. So don't miss this opportunity.

Our objective will be to try to help as many as possible to join in online. You will need to have either a computer, laptop, Ipad, tablet, or smartphone.

Lesley Bedford has very kindly offered to get this group up and running so please contact her with your name and any groups that you belong to. if you would like to have a go, or just find out more.

socialinteraction@chalfontsu3a.org.uk We would also like to hear from anyone who is willing to help in any way, especially anyone with the technological expertise.

Excursions We are looking forward to arranging future excursions, but we are sure everyone realises this is not possible at the moment until properties are re-opened, and whilst social -distancing is still in place we will have the problem of hiring coaches to take us to the various venues. In the meantime we will continue to research future interesting and exciting places to visit -your suggestions are always welcome. Looking forward to meeting up again as soon as possible. Tricia and Val
