

Chalfonts U3A Newsletter No.67 July 2020 ●



Editors Update Hello everyone and welcome to the July edition. Wimbledon is over and for sports fans apart from football, we now have some cricket to look forward to with the 2nd Test Match vs West Indies! Howzat!! Sorry not to give you anything more to watch! We are now seeing further lifting of restrictions to our daily lives but face masks will now be required to be worn in shops. I must say I do feel I look a bit like 'An up to no good gangster' just about to carry out a 'hold up' when I wear one and then I note I have a few other gangsters near to me all behaving quite normally !

We had a very successful AGM on 1st July using Zoom and we welcomed our new committee members Lesley Bedford, Group Convenor, Chris White, Financial Officer and Gary Tomlin, Webmaster. They all bring expertise and enthusiasm and have written a short personal introduction and their role.

We continue to look at ways to keep our U3A running as the situation on Covid 19 changes . We are also looking at resuming some outdoor based activities although the current restriction to 6 participants is something of a barrier. Lesley will be meeting with group convenors on Zoom to discuss any issues they are having and how she can move things forward where necessary.

On 15th July at 11am we had our first Monthly Meeting since lockdown using Zoom and were delighted to welcome Ian Keable who presented 'The History of Cartoons' tracing their development from Punch in 1843 to the present day. David Morgan has been scouring the country in search of speakers, and for our next virtual monthly meeting on 12th August , Jimmy Young, no not that one, but a man of many talents having spent his life in various senior roles in commerce. His talk is on the iconic Harley Davidson motorbike, their riders, and experiences. I am assured this is not a technical talk but highly entertaining.

Chalfonts U3A Facebook Group . We now have 85 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.

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 4.0 million subscribers so let's hope you are one of them.

Our new Committee Members' Personal Introductions. Lesley Bedford took over the Group Co-Ordinator role from Sue Fisher and Nigel Trotman.

My husband, Gio and I moved to Chalfont St. Peter in November 2018 having lived in a small village in South Beds for the previous 10 years. We had a house with an annexe in the garden for my Mum and when she sadly passed away in 2015 we started to think we needed a fresh start somewhere different. I grew up in Harrow and then moved to Watford so knew the area slightly and thought the easy commute into London would be ideal for theatre trips etc. We were lucky enough to find a house we liked and since

we have been in Chalfont we have made lots of new friends, many through the U3A, and have found people very friendly and keen to help us integrate.

My background is varied, having worked in the medical field as first a medical secretary and then a practice manager in the private sector specialising in Oncology, a job I thoroughly enjoyed and found both challenging and rewarding. When my two children were young I studied through the Open University and achieved a degree in psychology and I used this and an adult teaching qualification to teach at a college of further education. I enjoyed around 10 years of teaching psychology, including examining – they were good years. I finally retired from paid work in September 2017 and I am now enjoying doing things I never had time to do. Some of you will have come across me in the groups I belong to and it is certainly through these contacts that I have come to this role, I only hope I do a reasonable job in supporting the groups and encouraging new ones.

My name is Chris White and I was co-opted to the committee last year after I offered to assist our Treasurer Peter Brady. My husband and I moved to Chalfont St Peter in 1992 planning to stay a little while and 28 years and one daughter later we are still here.

Guy still works but I retired from a 38 year career in industry in May 2018.

Since October 2019, as Finance Officer, I have been primarily responsible for the financial management and financial reporting of the membership excursion side of the U3A activity. The first six months was extremely busy, but as we all know outings and excursions have been curtailed meaning far less for me to do. I am looking forward to the time when we can all get out and about more.

During the summer of 2018 I joined the U3A Book Club 2 which I love. I have since joined creative writing and flower arranging neither of which I am very good at, but I am constantly encouraged by my fellow members.

My name is Gary Tomlin and I am a third-generation Chalfont St Peter resident. I studied at Wycombe College and have worked in the electronics and computing industry all my working life. I still work on electronics and computing projects now I have more spare time. I am the Chalfonts U3A webmaster responsible for looking after the Chalfonts U3A website <https://chalfontsu3a.org.uk/> which was created by the previous webmaster Tony Darbyshire. I also help run the Computing Group with Tony where we discuss internet and computing topics and we welcome all levels of experience.

Existing Groups.

Group One Wine Appreciation. Update from Grace Hunter. Initially we started off with a newsletter with comments about wine and food, but now have progressed to Zoom Meetings, two so far and another planned. We each choose one white wine and one red wine and suggest food to go with each. We go around the group starting with a brief description of our chosen wines and suggestions about food we enjoy with them. We find it great fun and very informative as it covers many different regions, strength of wine, price and where purchased. We have kept to our regular pattern of meeting on the first Wednesday of each month and look forward to being able to meet up in our homes in the not too distant future. Meanwhile it is a good way to carry on enjoying wine together.

Garden visits -Jane Barker has good news! She has managed to arrange a couple of local garden visits to take place in August. **Thursday 6th August 2pm and Tuesday 11th August 2pm** . Sadly, each group will be restricted to just 6 people. The visits will be in line with government guidelines for Covid 19 - Social distancing must be maintained and you are to bring your own refreshments. Still it is a small step forward. Members of the group have been emailed the details of the two visits and a booking form but in brief they are: **Magnolia House/the Shades** in Wooburn Green on Thursday 6th August at 2pm - one group of 6. **Wind in the Willows** in Higher Denham on Tuesday 11th August at 2pm and 2.15pm. Two groups of 6, 15 minutes apart. It is important that you read the risk assessments for the visits and undertake your own personal risk assessment before deciding whether to come along. One of the most challenging aspects of the small group size will be deciding who can have a place. It seems the fairest way will be through a draw which will take place after all who would like to come along have submitted their forms. The deadline for applying for a place is 24th July. Please do not sign up unless you are sure you want to come along. You can apply on your own or with a friend and I will attempt to give places to a

balance of single and joint applicants. You can apply for both visits if you wish, but your name will be removed from the draw if you are successful in gaining a place in the draw for the first garden. Jane will attend as one of the six at Magnolia House but will not be coming into the garden at Denham. She will however meet each group separately in the car park beforehand.

French Intermediate Group

Update from Ray Luker

We have continued our Zoom Meetings and have progressed, I think. We now do two sessions of 40 minutes weekly instead of fortnightly - free!!

The WIFI signal is often a problem as so many people online, I guess, but it works. We have good fun, and a laugh as well as doing our homework.!

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!

Lawn Bowls. Update from Mike Alderton. We have had no lawn bowls yet, perhaps if things improve we could start in August.

London Walks John Hardwick has kindly forwarded this in the absence of our own live walks.

For 60s music lovers, London Walks are running a Friday Music Festival where they have created a series of virtual walks, each one dedicated the London history and music of a 60's band. The walks feature The Kinks, The Beatles, Pink Floyd, Bob Dylan, The Rolling Stones and a Rock and Roll Tour. They start at 7pm on Fridays through July and August. See walks.com for full details.

Table Tennis Update from Eileen Powell

Unfortunately, no table tennis yet as Chalfonts Leisure Centre still closed. However the group convenors have been in touch with their members through a questionnaire to find out their interest in returning to table tennis once the Leisure Centre opens and we have had many positive responses but at the moment we can only wait poised with bats at the ready!

Theatre Group Update Hello Dolly was due to open in August but it has been postponed until April 2022. We are currently in the process of refunding the members who had booked to go on the 8 September 2020 and the 2 February 2021 outings. Each refund is processed individually so we are asking for everyone's patience as it is going to take time to refund the 122 bookings. The remaining theatre trip is to see Pretty Woman on the 30 November and a repeat visit on the 15 December. Members who have bookings for these performances will be informed of any news as and when it is received. In the meantime, we send you all our very best wishes to keep safe and well during these unusual times. Sheila and Danny, Group Leaders.

Now over to our 'Members' Musings'.

Diana Sankey joins us from Western Australia to share her story. I have just been musing about being here outside Perth in WA when I am usually in Gerrards Cross in July. In fact it is the first time since moving here from Africa in 2003 that I have been here in July. It is mid-winter here and although it is not that much different to an English Summer I am missing the lovely warm summer evenings and the walks and pubs and all the places of interest from my younger years! However I console myself with the fact that we are actually better off here with this ghastly virus, which has interrupted lives throughout the World. Our borders are shut and being (according to general opinion) the most remote City of the World, we now have relative freedom and minus a few conditions are just about back to normal. Don't all rush here! We won't let you in but if you make it in the future, please pop in and have a cup of tea with me in Kalamunda!

This one is from Jean Paxton. I'm not sure that any of my musings are very interesting but there is one incident from my childhood which was very scary at the time and still leaps to mind.

Firstly I would like to applaud the miracle of modern technology which has made the months of isolation tolerable for me. It has let me have face-to-face contact with my 3 sons who all live on different continents, and to see them going about their daily lives thousands of miles away. Invaluable when there is little likelihood of them being able to visit, and especially when it has enabled me to see the 3 great-grandsons that have arrived in the last 12 months.

When I was about 6-7 years old we were living in Muswell Hill, a stone's throw from Alexandra Palace. My grandfather came to stay as he had a funeral to go to and suggested that he should take my brother and I for a row on the lake there. When we got to the lake there did not seem to be anybody

supervising, however my grandfather was undeterred and placed me at one end of a rowing boat and my brother at the other. He then stepped into the boat alongside intending to get in the middle of our boat and row us away. Instead to our horror he disappeared through the bottom of the rotten boat and emerged floating with his hat bobbing along beside him. My mother was alerted by my screams coming down the avenue "Grandpa's in the lake" "Grandpa's in the lake". How we got back to the boathouse I don't know but mercifully it was to find that a sopping wet, dripping Grandpa had been rescued by 2 boys rowing whose time was up and who had come to hand their boat in. They had hauled him out and pulled his bowler hat through the planks of the staging and it was as flat as a pancake. Once back home my mother was faced with the problem of drying his clothes and pressing them ready for the funeral the next day. Whether the bowler hat, an essential accessory in those days, was made presentable I can't recall. Grandpa was not a young man but survived the shock of his immersion and lived on for several years before dying on a bus!

An Ode to Lockdown by Richard Cranston (Pam Ayres eat your heart out!)

People might think me strange,
That's something I can't change.
This lockdown is driving me crazy,
And my mind is worse than hazy.

I just had a chat with the toaster,
I sense that I'm (oh!) not s'pposed ta.
The oven joined in with the chatter,
We all had to discuss the matter.

The Hotpoint wanted to join in,
But she always puts on a spin.
The fridge, too, she was insistent,
But she's always cold and distant.
I refuse to speak to the hair dryer,
Her comments are simply hot air.
And the torch is not much better,
Shedding no light since I met her.

The Hoover's not great, said the loo,
Sucking up, that's all he can do.
The bin is no better, said the dish,
Filling our heads with rubbish.

The food mixer's gone in a spin,
So, I won't let him under my skin.
And the toilet's just full of ****,
He won't be joining the chat-chit.

We thought we might ask the colander,
But she can't hold her own water.
We thought too of asking the kettle,
But she just can't seem to settle.

The stairs - they make me frown –
Always going up and down.
It was the iron that calmed me down,
Repressing my fears of Lockdown.

The Crisis by Sheila Ross

Friday, March 13th I think we started
in our beautiful house, here, down the Lane
As quiet as a mouse, and rather faint-hearted
We've been here before; resignation again
We reeled somewhat a while, for a week or two
Wondering, considering – What, Where and Who?
Rather unbelievable, for a very long shift
The energy fizzled, and started to drift
Quietly seeped away, Time merged into one
Fats, inspired, trainers on, his exercise begun
79 miles it's been today, and soon past the 80 mark
Purposeful as always, he gets up with the Lark
Striding like a Colossus, round the Common he goes
Does the perimeter. All change now – his healthy red-blood flows
16 weeks, and coloured cheeks, his corn now on the blink
The Podiatrist will not be pleased, no money there I think?

It's gone, it's fixed, it is no longer
Now for some paint from the Ironmonger
Yalden's the place, for a spruced-up bench
Preparation endless – not like David Brench!

The garden's dug, the weeds are back, the hoe is duly ready
The cuttings are still thinking, the wisteria was heady
The lawn's been cut and strimmed at least 4 or 5 times now
Himself? A Saint. A Cook. The Maid. The Gardener. Take a bow!
Chorus:
A Crisis? No. Himself is here
Keep your pecker up. Be of good cheer.

Another Crisis

7.7.20

The Lifetime Crisis, it simmered, with song
It blurted out the squashed-in, buried words. Long
Into the endless, hot, sunshiny days
This pair just pootled; and went about their ways
Independently together. Her and Him
Half a century, their love does not dim
Patience? Not my strong point. Himself? A lot
The cul-de-sac was left behind. So damned hot
Binoculars turned life around. All clear
A Crisis? No. Himself is here.
Be of good cheer!