

Newsletter No. 75 January 2021

Editor's Update

Firstly let me wish one and all a Happy and hopefully vaccinated New Year! Some of you are probably ahead of the game and feeling safer. Christmas was very different for us and with 2021 we have new adventures to look forward to on the horizon. Lockdown measures have been tough and likely to continue but we have managed to keep many U3a activities going with the input of our lovely group of convenors. Hats off to them all! The newsletter this month is not brimming as per usual probably because you have been partying far too hard and can't find your pens! Try harder for next month!!

Tony Darbyshire has been busy putting together all of his Chalfont U3a videos as a playlist on YouTube, and the link can be found under the member's page on the website. Some lovely memories of our activities so thank you Tony.

Members Survey . Jane Barker wanted to give a big thank you to the 342 members who completed the survey . Your feedback is much appreciated and will help us shape our future monthly meetings and the groups we are able to offer with your support . A summary of the survey results will be sent out with the next Newsletter.

The Rotary Club of Gerrards Cross and Chalfont St Peter have been in contact re this upcoming talk 'Understanding the Dilemma of Plastic' on Wednesday 20 January at 7.30pm.

The speaker Daniel Castle has first hand knowledge of this subject and will fill us in about the complexities of reducing our dependency on plastic, which we all are desperate to do. Not all alternatives are necessarily an improvement. No need register use the link below.

[.https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8403791328?pwd=ODFvQStQTzA2TTFrRFIxTG5KSjI5UT099](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8403791328?pwd=ODFvQStQTzA2TTFrRFIxTG5KSjI5UT099)

Monthly Meeting

The guest speaker via Zoom on Wednesday 13 January at 2pm is David Allen whose talk is entitled '**The Weird & Wonderful World Of The Law**'

An enjoyable romp through the legal world, drawing on over 25 years as a locum solicitor travelling around the country, encountering raging judges, dotty clients, and weird cases. Join David on a sideways journey through bizarre true-life oddities, daft old laws still in place, and political correctness gone raving mad!

With over 10 years' experience, David is a very popular public speaker, who is the perfect combination of being both hugely knowledgeable and a very skilled and entertaining storyteller. Light-hearted, but meticulously well researched, trawling through the archives dating back to the 1800s; his talks are both fun and thought-provoking and are either taken from his own life experience - travelling the world or in his professional life as a solicitor, actor, and professional storyteller.

Login details will be sent out 48 hours prior to the talk. If I could remind you once again to both mute and turn the video camera off once the talk begins, reducing any distractions for the speaker and other members.

The Bucks Council Covid -19 Dashboard will take you straight to the number of current active cases in South Bucks which is now **512**. As highlighted below do join the COVID-19 Study. 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. Download the Ask Zoe/Covid-19 app and report daily, any symptoms including 'none' will help them track the path of the disease particularly among the elderly. It now has **4.522 million** subscribers so please be one of them and help the researchers.

Also consider downloading the NHS COVID-19 app on your phone. This is the 'official' NHS Test and Trace app designed to track the virus and to bolster the Test and Trace system. People with smartphones will be



able to download and use the app on a voluntary basis if their phone's operating system supports it. It will mean you can get an alert if you've been near another user who's tested positive for coronavirus. You will also be able to log symptoms, book a test if you need one and will get advice on whether you need to isolate if you've got symptoms or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive. Users will also be able to use the app to 'check in' at any venue they visit, such as a pub, restaurant, or a church. The app works on an anonymous basis – it tracks the virus, not the user, using Bluetooth technology. You can find out more at www.covid19.nhs.uk.

Chalfonts U3A Facebook Group . Our group has now leapt to 108 members! Do consider joining us. Our members do a great job keeping us posted on events in their locality and giving suggestions for us to consider eg: cultural activities, places to visit etc although at the moment due to lockdown rather curtailed. 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 You can also post your questions on the Chalfonts U3a Facebook page.

Existing Groups The Chalfonts Family History Group have been making the most of lockdown with the majority of our members able to connect to Zoom, and master screen sharing, offering fascinating stories of their ancestors' lives. During the toughest phases, we interspersed the monthly meetings with coffee mornings to 'troubleshoot' genealogical problems and simply catch up with each other- often with advice on food deliveries and other lockdown matters. 2021 is starting on a high with Dave Metcalf's eagerly anticipated account of the newly published book of The Metcalf's, which we hope will inspire the rest of us to put our stories into print for our children and grandchildren. Dave will share his expertise and advice to help us avoid publishing pitfalls of our own. Jan and Marguerite have been overwhelmed by the exceptionally positive attitude of the group which has enjoyed an enormous amount of laughter and friendship during these difficult times.

Now over to our Members' Musings

First Footing – Stewart Fraser

As a Scot, the New Year in Scotland is usually a time when neighbours visit friends. First Footing is the 'first foot' in the house after midnight. To ensure good luck for the house, the first foot should be a dark haired male and he should bring with him pieces of coal, shortbread, salt, black bun and of course a wee dram of whisky! These items are said to represent warmth, food, and good cheer . However with Covid -19 restrictions this year we met with neighbours at noon on 1st January and socially distanced on each other's driveways to wish each other a Happy and healthy New Year with drinks! It was a success with a commitment by all to meet again on our driveways each month. I said I would bring a bigger glass!

January 2021 - Linda Liston

It would be normal in January to be miserable if it has rained a lot or snowed or anything which makes it muddy and slippery underfoot and, for me, most important, having to carry my golf bag. So, here I am happy and smiling carrying my bag, albeit with 3 clubs and a putter, but the golf course is open and I can converse with people other than my lovely husband even if it is only one at a time. Friends and family were very creative in their choices for postal Christmas presents with novelty tree hangings and very yummy cheese being our highlights. In return we found wonderful, flavoured vinegar and the delights of the garlic farm on the Isle of Wight. It also made us all think about those less fortunate and one section of the family got everyone to agree to make a charity donation on their behalf so £150 went to their local hospice on behalf of family here and in New Zealand. Other members chose charities they support and the youngsters came up with some great ideas. I think this may become a tradition. As I write it sounds as if we will get



more isolated whilst we wait for the vaccinations to take effect but more than before there does seem to be a light ahead. So, to everyone stay safe and Happy 2021.

Reflections on 2020 - David Brodie

For many it has been a torrid year and my sympathies go out to them. However, I refuse to be bowed by the negativity of the situation and proffer the following **Positives** which, at least for me, have been encouraging and sometimes even uplifting...

1. When out walking, far more people have greeted me with a friendly "Hello" and a "Thank you" when you move to a social distance.
2. I have recovered well from a 4-hour sinus operation and from a nasty bout of Covid19.
3. I have learned that now I am starting to jog again, walking for a while is perfectly legitimate and even liberating. It allows me to commune more with the natural world instead of worrying where the next foot will land.
4. I have learned to play bridge using BBO (online bridge) and have even increased the frequency of games as a result.
5. I have published my first children's book.
6. I have learned to use Zoom.
7. I have made good progress on a Rotary Global Grant to provide health and education to disadvantaged women in Nepal. Rotary have offered me \$10,000 in support, so only \$10,000 to raise. It could be a busy 2021. What can possibly go wrong!
8. I have grown vegetables for the first time since moving here and increased my strength by lugging filled watering cans up to my top terrace.
9. I enjoyed the warm weather during the first lockdown.
10. I have achieved a deliberate weight loss because I was getting a bit porky, but have now achieved my target weight.
11. I have not worn a tie for 12 months.
12. I have brought a 60-year-old model train set back to life.
13. I have achieved something on my bucket list, namely wild swimming in Lake Windermere on my way back from finishing the 3 National Peaks in 24 hours.
14. I have received more jokes and cartoons through the internet than I care to remember.
15. Although rowing has been almost impossible, I went out once in perfect winter conditions - clear and cold with flat water. Most memorable.
16. Certain rooms in the house have been freshened (painted) and modernised (internal shutters).
17. I have taken up 'the last chance game', namely golf. Every time I play, I say 'never again', but keep coming back for more.
18. I have written a 200-page story and will now spend about a year converting it into a novel.
19. Liverpool FC won the Premiership title for the first time in 30 years.
20. I have kept warm, had a regular income, food and saved money on petrol, haircuts and servicing the car.
21. Although unable to travel abroad, I managed to get three short breaks to the West Country, camping in farmers' fields and enjoying a less familiar part of the world.
22. And to cap off a year of amazing Positives, I learned only recently, that I won first prize in the Christmas draw of the Rotary 100 Club!

Just Brilliant! Best wishes for an even more **Positive New Year**



The Vaccination - Bob Leven

When will it be? When shall I be able to go out, unmasked and unafraid, head held high, breathing freely the village air? My friend is younger than me, I muse. And she had hers last week. On what basis is the practice calling patients? Should I phone them? No, it's not fair, they're probably being pestered by people like me too much already. But my friend's name comes after mine alphabetically and she doesn't admit to any underlying problems either.

It's Friday, shall I phone? No, I'll forbear and, perhaps, phone on Monday.

Monday comes, I get back from golf---- nobody has rung--- shall I phone? No. I'll **definitely** ring them tomorrow.

11 am Tuesday, I haven't got round to it yet. The phone rings, a strange voice asks for Mr Leven. "I'm calling from the Doctor's surgery, will Tuesday at 4 pm be convenient?" "Yes! Yes! Yes! Any time will be convenient, even 4 **am**"

Euphoria! At last! Hold on though, "I don't like injections, can my wife come with me?"

"No" Mr Leven"

A New Year – by Sheila Ross

Is there, just waiting

2021

There for Everyone

What lies ahead?

Opportunities to seek

Each and every week

Look, and find them

In the most unlikely places

It is up to you.....

Follow your heart

That will be a good start

Won't it?

This final thought from **Christine Pearson** 'Life is like a toilet roll. The nearer you get to the end the faster you use it up!'

