



Newsletter No.76 February 2021

Editor's Update

Here we are already having crept past January and Spring and vaccinations beckon!! NHS staff have been doing a tremendous job rolling out the vaccination programme with such efficiency. This has been a tough time for us all being further locked in but stick with it and we can all get back to those things we are missing, seeing family, friends outings and of course The **CU3A!!**

“Show some love to key workers this Valentine’s Day” says Buckinghamshire Council and Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, as they ask residents to fill the county with love, by placing a heart in their windows from 1st February through to Valentine’s day on Sunday 14th February.

People in Buckinghamshire are being invited to take part to thank all our key workers for the incredible commitment and sacrifice they have made for us every day, throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. To take part simply draw or decorate some hearts and place them in your window for the world to see. The council would love to see them too, so please do share on social media using the hashtag #ShowSomeLove to spread your thanks online. To find out more uplifting stories about how people are coming together to support each other during this pandemic, please visit the Proud of Bucks blog.

My request for Valentine’s Day musings has brought some lovely stories and poetry which I know you will enjoy and if you have any items of local news for future newsletters please let me have them. I know we have many musicians amongst us and I would love to hear from any of you who might be interested in being part of an afternoon concert type event which could be seen by members on zoom or YouTube. Let me know if this idea gets your musical juices flowing!! newsletters@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Monthly meeting: Details have been already sent out about our speaker on 10 February at 2pm, but just a reminder. We will be welcoming Dr Graham Twemlow whose talk is entitled **The Great British Poster Artists: The Golden Age of Posters in Britain**. Login details will be sent out 48 hours in advance. We have increased the Zoom license to 500 participants for the coming meetings so no-one need miss out..

We Need Your Help !

Many thanks to those of you who have already signed up to attend our Special General Meeting on 24 February at 2pm on Zoom. You will receive joining instructions nearer the time. We need more members to sign up to attend on Zoom as we are short of the quorum for this meeting. Please email secretary@chalfontsu3a.org.uk as soon as possible giving your name if you are able to join us. Your support would be appreciated. If you can't join the Zoom meeting please can you consider completing a Proxy voting form so that the meeting can go ahead. The PROXY vote form is attached to this Newsletter. Please print it off, fill it in and sign it, and either scan and email it to secretary@chalfontsu3a.org.uk or post it to Jane Barker, 25 School Lane, Chalfont St Peter SL9 9AT. If you are unable to print the form please email the secretary and she will post one to you . All PROXY vote forms must be received by 19th February. Many thanks.

There are some very good events being organised by Thames Valley Network and most recently the Quiz on 3 February where I spotted quite a few Chalfonts members but as we were all mixed up into different teams alas I could not be with any of you. In case you didn't see the other events which I sent out, two more are upcoming: Friday 12 February. **'The Americans elect a President.'**
<http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/?p1421>



and the second event on Thursday 11 March is entitled '**Brunel to the Eden Project**' and is about the great 19th Century engineers and how they inspired 20th century structural engineering.

Both events are free and try and book via the Ticket Source link on the website as it saves a lot of time for the organiser and us! If not possible there is an email alternative.

For events organised by National U3a please go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events> Christine Sturley forwarded this information re some free classes members can sign up to from Care Visions Healthy Ageing – they offer over 30 free, live, online classes each week including Yoga, Tai-Chi, Painting, Reflexology, Singing and lots more. The link is: https://mail.cvhealthyageing.co.uk/all_classes

You can just log in – log out when you want – you can link via video or just audio. Christine and some of her friends are enjoying them ,no pressure and they are free.

Chalfonts U3A Facebook Group . Our group has now leapt to 114 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 though 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/cu3afacebook-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

Book Group 1. In January we tackled "Wolf Hall " by Hilary Mantel . Truly a book of epic proportions it was a good choice for a longer and more serious read during a lockdown in Winter. The book is very well written, bringing the Tudor court and all its characters to life. We all admired the way the book was constructed, the author's commanding use of language and description, and many of the group really enjoyed reading this great historical novel.

Computing Group. The **Computing Group** are discussing Digital Photos at their next meeting on 25 February at 2pm. This will include managing, editing and storage. The meeting, as always, is open to any Chalfonts U3A member. To receive notification about the meeting email computing@chalfontsu3a.org.uk to be put on the list.

Language Groups. Lesley Bedford is keen to find out about your foreign language needs and whether we can get more groups started, so could you let her know which language group you are interested in joining and at what level. Also if you think you could be the one running a group, sharing your knowledge and expertise with others, don't be shy, she would love to hear from you.

Many groups have continued via zoom during the pandemic with great success, both for language improvement and social contact with each other. The languages currently on offer are German, Italian, Spanish and French. Please don't worry if you are not a zoom user as there is a great deal of support available to you. her email address is groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Lockdown Quizzes Following the highly successful quiz ran last month, Jacqui Robinson will be organising another opportunity for you to join in on 18 February at 7pm. When applying for a place can you say who else will be sharing your screen and if there are any requests to be in a team with friends.

please let her know and she will try to arrange. I for one am looking forward to trying it out. Let's hope my specialist subject comes up!! lockdownquizzes@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

London Walks This update from Carolyn Edwards



I signed up for London Walks "The Story of London" virtual tour which are a series of walks covering the history of London. These have been fascinating and have been illustrated by maps/photos/videos and interesting facts from the very knowledgeable and amusing guides. The series of walks covers an eight week period but as each walk is recorded once you have signed up you have access to the talk at a time of your convenience or to review the walk if you missed something.

London Walks have opened these up for u3a members (at a reduced cost) and they have been so popular that they had a waiting list and because of this they are planning to run another series. If you are interested you need to register with them. Go to <https://thestoryoflondonu3a.eventbrite.co.uk>

You will need the password Londonstory then put your name on the waiting list. They are planning a follow up to the series called "Twentieth Century London" by popular demand. New walks planned are "Art in London" and "An A to Z London" based on London street names.

We have also been invited by Chess Valley U3a to join their members on a virtual tour of Holborn (Kingsway) by the London Transport Museum on Thursday 25 February at 2pm.

Jacqueline Cobb, Chess Valley u3a Events Coordinator has obtained a group price of £10 per person with an expert guide via zoom. Explore fascinating and secret spaces in London from the comfort of your own home. There will be a question & answers session at the end .contact_events@cvu3a.uk

Now over to our Members' Musings

Ann Whaley

In 1963 my future husband gate-crashed my 21st birthday party. I lived in a large shared flat (6 of us!) in Central London. It was invitation only, and several people came a long distance to enjoy it. I was extremely annoyed as the hostess, when this chap kept following me around all evening trying to talk to me - to the extent that I eventually told him that if he were that keen to meet me, he would have to return the following Monday evening for coffee. I heard a taxi arrive and looking out of the window I saw Geoffrey leap out clutching a guitar. He rushed up seven flights of stairs, went down on bended knee and played a Beatles refrain! He asked me to marry him 3 weeks later! After he died 55 years later of MND, I found a letter with his will dated a year earlier saying, "I have loved you from the first moment I saw you and have considered myself the luckiest person in the world to have spent my life with you". My accountant husband was a private man when it came to expressing feelings, but no one could possibly have received a more loving statement than this.

First Love - David Brodie

I had seen her from a distance; she was always with others
This time she was alone
I raised my hand a little, just hoping for some slight sign of interest
It never came
I became braver and waved
Not too enthusiastically; I didn't want to appear over keen
I caught her eye for a brief moment
Then joy, she walked slowly towards me
As she approached, I felt her promised presence flowing into my very
soul It was her dark brown eyes that had me utterly transfixed
We touched.
She seemed willing
I held her head with trembling hands
A gentle caress
I slowly, cautiously, bent for a kiss
But she turned
I was downcast



She moved away
To join the other horses, in a far-off field.

Jane Mackay

I moved into a new house and the building inspector wanted to do a final inspection. I left my keys with a neighbour. She told everything was fine so I was a little surprised when the building inspector returned not once but many times. We had long discussions about everything and anything. For lots of reasons I moved and assumed that was the end of it but he contacted me later. Despite us both being married to other partners we did meet for lunch. To say we were soul mates is an understatement. We were deliriously happy until he died. We'd been together 40 years and married for 34 years. When I asked him why he'd come back he told me he'd fallen for my photograph and had to see me at first hand. I miss him.

Anon I was 34. I had just broken off a four-year relationship (yet another disaster!). I decided I was never going to meet the right person. I felt grim. As if on cue, that same evening, the 'phone rang - an old pal calling from the States to see if I'd be interested in a week's sailing in the Caribbean with his brother and wife and two friends; I would only have to pay for my flight. If I was going to remain single, I thought, I was going to enjoy myself and the reply was an instant 'yes'.

It sounded such an exotic holiday that I felt there was only one way travel. I worked out that, if I returned home on the Laker Skytrain, I could just about scrape enough money together to fly out to New York on Concorde. I got leave from work and booked my ticket.

There were lots of interesting people milling around the Concorde Lounge, including a gorgeous looking chap who seemed to be on his own. The flight was called and, ta-daa, who was I seated next to? . . . only the chap I'd spotted in the Departure Lounge! Three-and-a-half hours (and rather a lot of champagne) later, we landed in New York. We exchanged 'phone numbers and off I went to meet my friend and had a wonderful holiday in the Caribbean but I couldn't get this man out of my head.

We did meet again in London and the following year, on Valentine's Day, 'Mr Concorde' and I became engaged and have recently celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary!

The quest for love.- Cecelia Winkett

It was a cold winter afternoon when he first heard it - a distant howl – faint but clear – a female calling for a mate.

He had only recently left his pack to look for a mate of his own and already he could hear one calling. He stood as tall as he could and pricked his ears to locate her more accurately. His nose picked up new scents. He had left familiar territory and now he would need to be very alert as he would be a stranger, an interloper, in another pack's range. He loped along until the dawn sky lightened. He pounced on a startled rabbit just leaving its burrow and dragged it into the undergrowth to eat. With a full belly he slept.

At dusk he heard her again - still a long way off. Both ears erect and alert, his nose constantly twitching, he set off downhill, through the trees. Somewhere he would have to cross the valley. The smell of people grew stronger. He padded silently through fields and round gardens. It started to rain. The village dogs were in the houses and were unaware of him as he trotted past.

He felt and smelt the warmth of the road and of the vehicles rushing by. He had not encountered such noise and lights before and stood wondering what to do. He was wary and watchful. Gradually the cars became fewer and he made a quick dash across to hunker down in the shadows and wait for his heart to stop pounding. A quick rest, and he set off again.



He trotted downhill until he came to a river. He knew water. He had swum across rivers with his mother and the pack. He crossed, shook, and started the climb up the other side of the valley – always towards her call. The smell of sheep, the smell of dogs and suddenly there was a fury of barking and several large dogs rushed him. A mad dash, twisting and turning, careless of brambles, around trees and through thickets until the dogs gave up – content that they had driven him off and that their sheep were safe. Exhausted and footsore from sharp stones he was safe but off his path. Dawn found him sheltering between some fallen boulders, licking his paws. He limped into the shade of trees and rested. That evening her howl was louder, nearer.

The young wolf's strength recovered; he started again to climb out of the valley. From a clearing he looked up and there she was, standing on a rock, head thrown back, silhouetted by the light of the moon. He answered her. She turned to listen. He was so near.

Suddenly, there was a sharp acrid smell in the air, a deeper howl, another male. They both stood tall, fur bristling.

Which of them would she choose?

He watched as the larger, older male approached her. They nuzzled each other, rubbing cheeks, licking faces.

She had chosen.

She would not be his. He would be foolish to start a fight he could not win. He turned away, dejected, and started back down the hill.

A memory of stars - Ray Higginbottom

You spent your life,
looking down, marking
time, in a goldfish
bowl

of pointing fingers, wagging
tongues,
rash judgements made,

You lived a lie, all smiles and
platitudes,
and paid the Devil's toll,

A choice was made,

Whether right or wrong,

Who knows?

A new day dawns, blue
skies, a memory of
stars the way before
you laid,



So listen to the voice of truth,
That whispers in your ear, There
is a ray of hope, Waiting round
the bend,

It's not that far.....

Take one more step
One more step Just one
more

Sheila Ross - Better Together

Since we were six years' old, the friendship grew And
now, past four scores, here we are, us two Bumbling
along, sometimes up, sometimes down How much
longer will we be in this Town? That question seems
to be considered, now

What to do, where to go, who with, and
how No decisions have been made, not as
yet Planning and thoughts, application I bet
Uncertainty reigns for the time-being The
future is still bright we are seeing..... I shall
always love him, always and ever Could I
ever swop him? Never – No! Never! Better
together.

Your Voice - Vivienne Blewett

The sound of your voice is the sweetest I've known
Whether up close and whispered or over the phone
Whether making me laugh or making me melt
Your voice makes me feel the best I have felt

At the sound of my bell I unlock the door
Then wait as the lift brings you up to my floor The
sound of your voice brings joy to me ear
It's the sound that tells me at last you are here



It moves me, it soothes me, it eases my soul
It makes me want to rock and roll
And if I had to make a choice
I'd choose your thoughts, your words, your voice

