



EDITOR'S UPDATE

Hello everyone welcome to the latest edition and with 19 July looming closer we are all hopeful of the positive changes that will come into our lives. Some important requests this month namely the AGM on 21 July which we hope you will attend. You will also notice several groups are beginning to meet up face to face and I have received some lovely musings. Many thanks. We will also bid a fond farewell at the AGM to our Chairman Bob Borwick who has been at the helm for the past 2 years, working hard on our behalf and we certainly wish him well and hope he will enjoy some free time and the prospect of lowering his golf handicap!

Your u3a needs you!! Please attend the AGM.

Members will find the papers for our Annual General meeting enclosed with this Newsletter. The meeting is taking place on 21st July at 2pm via Zoom. We need 82 people for a quorum and so far are a long way off this number. **If you have not already done so it would be appreciated if you could register to attend the meeting via Zoom with our Secretary Jane Barker asap email secretary@chalfontsu3a.org.uk.**

If you are not able to attend the meeting you can exercise a proxy vote by completing and returning the proxy vote by the **deadline of 18th July**. The proxy vote form is with the AGM papers and also on the Chalfonts U3A website.

CHALFONTS U3A CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

Dear CU3A Members,

When I wrote last year's report, we were into the first wave of pandemic lockdowns and trying to understand a new way of living our lives. Little did we all know, that one year on, this dreadful virus would still be with us, albeit in mutated variant forms. At every step of the road map out of lockdown, our U3A members have responded with innovative ideas to pursue our activities within the legal framework of restrictions. Zoom, Skype and the like became our saviour and allowed us to continue some of our activities in a modified format.

We were able to continue our monthly meetings in the comfort of our own homes via virtual conferencing. At the beginning of the pandemic only a handful of speakers, seemingly, were able to present their talks via Zoom. Within a few months, we were back to having a large number of speakers to choose from. Everybody it seemed was adapting to the new way of communicating and staying safe.

Positives of the Pandemic Year.

During these worrying days, your committee continued to meet regularly (by Zoom of course!) to plan for a future that seemed to have no tangible start date, middle or end date in sight. Nevertheless, we pressed on with lots of 'what if's' and 'maybe's' to add to the cauldron of thoughts, ideas, and plans. On your behalf, I wish to thank the entire committee for their dedication and hard work during this difficult time for the benefit of the CU3A cause. One of our early achievements was the successful creation of our very own CU3A 'Facebook' page. This was very much the creation of our Webmaster Gary Tomlin who has done a brilliant job in running Facebook with his wife Debbie, who is also a member of CU3A. Gary has also excelled at looking after our Virtual Conferencing requirements whenever needed.

Fortunately, through prudent financial management by our Treasurer Peter Brady, we had sufficient funds in reserve to give serious consideration to how best effect a reduction in the 2021/22 subscriptions. As a committee, we wanted to reflect the lack of CU3A activity brought about by the Pandemic and reward the loyalty and support of our wonderful membership, which has now reached a total of 805! In February of this year I was delighted to be able to announce to the membership that for current members there would be zero cost for subscription renewals. Whilst some u3A's have not increased their subscription rates for the ensuing year, some have reduced their fees, I am unaware of any other U3A in the U.K. that have matched our 'free year'.

One cannot talk of positive impact without thinking of our fantastic Newsletter produced by our Editor, Eileen Powell. This publication, which Eileen produced fortnightly during the pandemic, rather than monthly, became an eagerly awaited good read. The 'members musings' provided great inspiration for other members to send in their personal 'gems' for the next edition. Eileen received many well deserved plaudits for all her hard work which continues. The Newsletter became a ray of sunshine during the gloomy lockdown months.

This will be my last 'Chairman's Message' before the AGM. I have decided to stand down from the Committee after three and a bit years as Vice Chairman and latterly as Chairman. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to help guide this wonderful organisation of ours, onwards and upwards. I felt it was the right time to step down from the Committee now in order to help succession planning for the future. Our constitution dictates finite periods that any member can serve on the Committee. Next July (2022) a significant number of our Committee members must stand down and new Committee members appointed. I would urge you to consider joining the Committee and if, like me, you have gained a lot from u3a, it provides an opportunity to give something back. We all have the qualifications required, they are called 'life skills' and maturity.

Before I close, I would like to thank in particular my Vice Chairman, Mike Lawson for his constant and valued support and advice during my Chairmanship. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank our CU3A Secretary, Jane Barker who has, quite frankly, been outstanding and quite brilliant in every aspect of providing an exceptional Secretariat to CU3A. I am delighted that Jane has chosen to put herself forward for the post of Chair at the AGM on the 21 July. If it is your will to confirm that selection, you will, I know, have an outstanding Chair to take this wonderful CU3A out of Covid 19 and into a bright new future. My warmest regards to you all, Bob Borwick Chairman CU3A.

Reminder about this month's speaker for all Gilbert and Sullivan fans this is a must! THE TOPSY TURVY WORLD OF GILBERT & SULLIVAN Wednesday 14 July 2021 at 2pm via Zoom (The zoom invitation will be sent out 48 hours in advance and log in will be from 1.45pm) Our July speaker is Jim Stebbings. Jim will talk us through The English institution that is Gilbert & Sullivan: their work and their lives. A tale of brilliant success, complex relationships, drugs, sex, and controversy.

What to do if you think you are not receiving Chalfonts U3A emails.



From time to time Members report that they are not receiving emails from Chalfonts u3a, either from their group convenors or from the committee about monthly meetings or the newsletter. This could be due to your email software treating the email as Spam.

If you think you are having problems, we have added a **HELP** section to the Chalfonts u3a Website which can be found at <https://chalfontsu3a.org.uk/help/> This has suggestions on what to do to prevent emails being reported as Spam.

If you have any difficulties following these instructions or need further help, then please contact support@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Existing Groups

Italian Conversation Advanced – Convenor Barbara Lloyd



On 24 June our small group met again at my house for the first time since lockdown began last year. We celebrated our reunion with coffee and cake and exchanged stories of our activities and experiences during the long period of restrictions. This was followed by a game of Scarabeo, the Italian version of Scrabble, which proved challenging and instructive and was much enjoyed by all. It will certainly feature again in future meetings!

Lawn bowls update from Mike Alderton

We have had 3 sessions of lawn bowls every other Tuesday, and it has been very successful so far with up to 15 people turning up. Weather has been good to us so far - long may it continue!

Mahjong Group- WE ARE BACK! Update from Sam Patel

Having played online since March 2020 we are now back to playing face to face at Chalfont St Peter Community Centre. Games will take place on the 3rd and 4th Wednesday of every month starting at 10.30 am. We are all very excited about seeing folks in the flesh so to speak and whilst Boris has relaxed all the rules, we are keeping in place one or two just to keep everyone safe at least in the short term. Whether you are a complete novice, an expert or somewhere in between and would like to join us please send me an email. We predominately follow the British rules but have made some tweaks to improve our experience.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who played online thus keeping us mildly sane, to my co-hosts, Alan Higson, Chin Fenton, and Sue Woodcock without whom I would never have survived, and to the u3a for all their support and encouragement – it means so much. mahjong@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

The Photography Group is meeting in the garden area of the Madeira Café at 1.30pm on Thursday 15th July, for a social chat about what to do for the balance of 2021. An email has been sent out to the group members about this meeting. If you're not a member and would like to come along to find out more about the group and what we do, then please write to: photography@chalfontsu3a.org.uk and let the convenor Tony Darbyshire know you'd like to attend. You can find more details on the website about the Photography group.

I would like the members of the **Singing for Pleasure Choir** to know that because our excellent pianist has now left the UK and we are unable at the moment, to find a replacement, I have arranged for twelve songs to be recorded directly from the music to discs and hopefully, we will be able to rehearse this way until we find a replacement for Ben. If in the meantime, someone within the group is willing to play the piano for us please let me know. We are willing to cover any expenses that maybe incurred. Brenda O'Gorman.
Singing4pleasure@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Walking group up to 6 miles. -Update from Nigel Trotman



After a break of 15 months the group restarted in mid-June. We were limited to numbers to comply with regulations. Following a few very hot days we set off for the walk in rain, which was not forecast. The rain soon cleared up and we had a good walk from The Cock Inn at Sarratt, down into the Chess Valley. It was so good to see all the familiar faces again and catch up. Lunch was taken in a large tepee tent in the pub garden. We hope to be able to return to our normal routine in the not too distant future. Some photos were taken of the group

enjoying lunch by Ray Higginbottom and these can be seen on our members' page.



Wine Appreciation Group One- Grace Hunter

Joy oh joy we could meet together in person as a group in the garden instead of on Zoom. Zoom was useful for keeping us in touch but actually meeting in person we realised how much we had missed it. There were 15 of us seated under gazebos in sunshine, at least before a very heavy downpour, but it did not last long. We had a few drips where the two gazebos met, but quickly sorted by the use of a few clothes pegs and umbrellas. We tasted white wines from Hungary, Germany, and South Africa, followed by red wines from Italy, Lebanon, and New Zealand. We always enjoy these evenings but this get together was specially joyous because of the long break.

Now over to Members Musings



Lorna Cunningham shares her thoughts

I'm enjoying things starting up again, my art class, keep fit, more walks...

So lovely to see the grandchildren, but I feel sad that I missed such a big part of my grandson's life. He is suddenly much taller than me with size 8 ½ feet and his voice is breaking. He's tall and skinny and permanently attached to his phone and my first hug felt really strange, all lop-sided because our heights have changed. And of course he's become cool and distant and pre-teenage, until we had a long walk with the dog and he sort of thawed and chatted like he used to. Grand-daughter is just so perfect, her little face furrowed with concentration, her enthusiasm and unalloyed joy. I looked after her during a training day and she said it was a Great Day! Just a walk and a picnic, but so precious. I feel that I've missed huge chunks, but so grateful I can be with them.

"TANNERS & BOBS" Ann Middleton



Back in the days of tanners and bobs,
When Mothers had patience and Fathers had jobs.
When football team families wore hand me down shoes,
And T.V gave only two channels to choose.

Back in the days of threepenny bits,
when schools employed nurses to search for your nits.
When snowballs were harmless; ice slides were permitted
and all of your jumpers were warm and hand knitted.

Back in the days of hot ginger beers,
when children remained so for more than six years.
When children respected what older folks said,
and pot was a thing you kept under your bed.

Back in the days of Listen with Mother,
when neighbours were friendly and talked to each other.
When cars were so rare you could play in the street.
When Doctors made house calls and Police walked the beat.

Back in the days of Milligan's Goons,
when butter was butter and songs all had tunes.
It was dumplings for dinner and trifle for tea,
and your annual break was a day by the sea

Back in the days of Dixons Dock Green,
Crackerjack pens and Lyon's ice cream.
When children could freely wear National Health glasses,
and teachers all stood at the FRONT of their classes.

Back in the days of rocking and reeling,
when mobiles were things that you hung from the ceiling.

When woodwork and pottery got taught in schools,
and everyone dreamed of a win on the pools.

Back in the days when I was a lad,
I can't help but smile for the fun that I had.
Hopscotch and roller skates; snowballs to lob.
Back in the days of tanners and bobs.

THE SOUND OF ENGLAND by John Forsaith



Church bells, the sound that's drifts on a warm summer breeze and comes to rest lightly on the ear – well for many anyway. Instantly recognisable and conjuring up images of those being called to worship or perhaps starting their lives together.

St Patrick is credited with inventing the hand bell in the 5th century and his disciples were given them to ring as they walked around Ireland as Heralds of God's Word.

In the 6th century the bell crossed over to England where it retained its religious connection as a source for blessings and healings invoking special powers. They were carried into battle to banished demons. In time the roaming missionaries settled and built monasteries. Here the bells were used to signal the start of prayers. Ringing every three hours the workers in the fields could tell the time of day. They now had a practical as well as spiritual use. The Celtic name for a bell was *clocca* from which we get the word *clock*.

By the 10th century bells were being made from bronze rather than iron and getting bigger requiring towers to be built. In December 1170 when Thomas a becket was murdered at Canterbury legend has it that the bells fell silent for a year. Bells were used in the 12 Century

to signal when the village oven was hot enough to begin baking bread and the Normans would ring them every evening to tell the people to 'cover their fires. This was called '*couvre feu*' (French) from which we get the word '*curfew*'.

Into the 13th century the idea of praying for yourself with others rather than having the monks doing it for you gained ground and the bells would summon the local population to prayer. Bells took on a higher level of significance and would be blessed and named. The 'Sanctus' Bell rung at communion would signal the congregation and those working in the fields to fall silent. At baptism and at death the bell was also sounded. The death knell, a tolling bell, also called for silence. It was used with dramatic effect at Wootton Bassett when the town received the dead soldiers back from Afghanistan.

The oldest factory in England is a bell foundry. The Whitechapel Foundry has been making bells for 440 years and still used the old formulas of sand, clay, goat's hair, and horse manure to make its moulds.

Up to the mid-17th century bell ringing was hard work and a job for the local young men to show their prowess and strength. Then the use of a rope and wheel with stops enabled the ringer to bring the bell to an 'up' position and hold it there until it was time to make it ring. Bell ringing was now a very controlled activity allowing for peels to be composed and rung. Change ringing had evolved. Six bells can ring 720 combinations taking about half an hour, eight bells allows for 40,000 permutations and needs 22 hours of ringing and twelve bells would require 30 years to work through a complete change