



Editor's update

Welcome to the first edition of 2022 and we have some exciting news to share with you as this year we are celebrating our 7th birthday!! Many of you I am sure were one of the 300 people attending the meeting to launch our u3a on March 11th 2015 and we have gone from strength to strength, so our request is very simple!

SAVE THE DATE ** Chalfonts u3a Celebration event - Tuesday 5th April 2-4pm



We are holding a celebration event on Tuesday 5th April from 2-4pm to mark the 7th birthday of our wonderful u3a by showcasing our organisation.

There will be live performances, demonstrations, and lots of information about our interest groups. These groups cover over 70 subjects such as Languages, Walking, Outings, Singing, Theatre trips, Bridge, Science, Technology, Sports and many more. There is something for everyone! You will be able to meet the convenors, chat to lots of members and try out new activities. There will also be refreshments available. **Please do come along** - no need to book, just drop in. The event will be held at The Hub in Chalfont St Peter and be open to the public, so bring your friends along as well. Please note the celebration event will replace the monthly meeting in April.



Geoff Clegg our monthly speaker organiser is trying to 'tempt us' with his latest offering. We will be welcoming a speaker from the Chalfont Beekeepers who will talk about all aspects of beekeeping and will be held at 14:00 on 9th February, and maybe she can recruit some new apiarists from our members! As usual members can access the meeting either in person or via Zoom. Members who receive their newsletter by post should let Eileen Powell know if they are coming. Her contact details have already been sent out.



Perhaps you are planning a holiday, Remember those carefree days!! Members may be interested to know that Riviera Travel continue to offer 10% discount to u3a members when booking their holiday with them. Members must state the name of the u3a they belong to, and it must be done at the time of booking.

Membership Secretary Would you like to become part of our active and thriving u3a by joining the committee to manage the membership? It's an engaging role and a great chance to get to know everyone and help new members become part of Chalfonts u3a. There is always support from the team and it is a satisfying role involving social interaction and administration. For more information contact Val Smith membershipsecretary@chalfontsu3.org.uk or phone on 07766771323 for a chat.

Interest Groups Update from Lesley Bedford.

Further to previous updates in recent newsletters I wanted to update you on how things are progressing. Clearly Covid is continuing to cause quite a bit of anxiety and your group convenors will be discussing the best way to keep everyone safe and comfortable with the activities you are involved in. Some groups may have returned to meeting on Zoom, others are continuing to meet in person.

I am very pleased to be able to share news of some groups we hope to get 'off the ground' which is quite apt as these groups all involve some movement!



Firstly, please let me know if you would be interested in a '**Tai Chi taster session**' which we are hoping to put in place at the end of January, probably Friday 28th January at 12.15 pm and if we have sufficient numbers, we hope to get sessions booked on a Friday lunchtime from February.

We have three **Pilates groups** running now and there is currently a waiting list, so we are hoping to start a fourth group if there is sufficient interest.

Finally, our **Ballroom dancing** group has proved very popular and there is some demand in starting a beginners group. Do you know of someone who perhaps would be prepared to instruct such a group? If so please let me have their details, and if you are interested in this group do let me know.



Coffee Morning Group. Further to our last two coffee mornings being a great success we have arranged another one on Thursday 20th January at the Greyhound Inn at 10 am. If you would like to come along for coffee/tea and croissants and an opportunity to meet some new friends or catch up with some old ones, get in touch.

Please do contact me concerning any of the above or if you need specific information about joining a group or are keen to start a new group either now or the near future at groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk



Photography Group We are meeting in the CSP Community Library (next to the Co-op Store) on Thursday 20th January from 2pm to 4pm.

The topics being covered: 1) the Open University Digital Photography Course and, 2) how to use the website [flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com) to help with improving and backing up photographs and learning from other people's pictures. In addition, if we have time, we will be discussing how to improve the pictures you take with three basic principles; light, focus and composition, using practical examples. We have now planned our meetings for 2022 and this information can be found at <https://chalfontsu3a.org.uk/interest-groups/photography/> New members are always welcome. Use the Contact Form on the website to contact the group convenor to register your interest at photography@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Yoga. Our yoga groups are just starting a new term of classes. The classes are small, friendly, and are specifically designed for our age group. This is a lovely way to bring some relaxation and “my time” to your week.

We run two classes each week at Chalfont St Peter Community Centre: Tuesday at 11:00 to 12:15, and Fridays 12:30 to 13:45. If you'd like to try a class, please get in touch with me. Geoff Clegg yoga@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Now over to our Members' Musings ...



Just a thought for me and everyone. It is said there is a remedy for every illness.

- If you love your body you must exercise.
 - If you love your breath, practice breathing exercises.
 - If you love your soul, you must meditate.
 - However, if you love your life, it is the Almighty that gave it to you, the love of all people.
 - Love is very important and an essential part of life.
 - There is no medicine or exercise better than love.
 - Love can resolve the greatest of problems and avert the most terrible disasters.
 - Love teaches you how to live your life because Love is the true essence of life.
- I try to practice this and hope to carry it on for the benefit of all people.

Siddharth Patel



LOCKDOWN PROJECTS

Many of us over fifties have coped with the various pandemic lockdown stages by taking on little projects, chiefly those which may be completed around the house and garden. B&Q and Homebase have announced record sales over the past couple of years, which good fortune they attribute to the Covid lockdown. Such home improvement and DIY projects have been useful in combatting boredom and taking folks' minds off their loneliness whilst also giving them and their homes a welcome boost. If we have to forgo holidays and spend more time at home, then improving our nests is conducive to easing the tedium of this new kind of government regulated or self-imposed isolation.

My own first lockdown project was the construction of an octagonal summerhouse at the very far corner of my garden. I dubbed this my 'Japanese Tea House' and I painted the outside with black wood preservative and the inside lacquer red. With the addition of some comfy wooden garden chairs, also painted black, and their cushions recovered in Japanese fabric, and with some blossom trees and Japanese acers planted around it, the tea house really began to display a Japanese-themed vibe.



The great thing about the finished tea house was that it gave me somewhere to go during lockdown – somewhere which was not the house.

Heartened and inspired by how it had turned out, I looked around for another creative project which would occupy me and would make my house somewhere in which I didn't mind too much being in self-imposed lockdown. Inspiration came during a visit to our downstairs loo.

Some years ago, I had visited the furniture village in Chalfont St Giles, looking for a small chest of drawers to place in a small, dark corner on the upstairs landing of our old cottage. One of the artisan furniture makers had just what I was looking for. To my surprise and delight, the small, knotty pine chest was remarkably cheap, compared to his other pieces.

I asked the man why this solid and well-made piece seemed so much cheaper than his other lovely creations and he said that, for some unfathomable reason, he had been unable to sell it. It had sat in the middle of his workshop for the past two years and had been seen by everyone who entered. Lots of ladies had admired it and checked out its solid construction and dovetail joints, then had shaken their heads and moved on. He could not understand why no-one had wanted to buy it and so he had reduced the price several times. Naturally, I soon had the delightful little chest in the boot of my car and then installed on my landing.

Several years later, we moved to a bigger house, and I placed the little pine chest in our downstairs loo. It provided ideal storage for soap and loo paper, etc. One day, however, as I sat on the loo gazing at the chest, the reason for its unpopularity and undesirability suddenly became obvious. I could not understand why I had not noticed this before, but there, on the front of the chest, on the second drawer down, was an elongated knot in the wood. No matter which way I looked at it, I could not escape noticing how much this resembled ... a rampant willy! It was true. This imperfection was obviously and inescapably shaped like a phallus. I blushed as I wondered how many visitors to our house had noticed this and been too polite to comment.

When next on the phone to my Edinburgh-based daughter, I mentioned the 'willy chest' and, to my surprise, she said she had noticed the embarrassing mark the day I had brought the chest home, but she had said nothing as she hadn't wanted to put me off my latest acquisition. Well, just yesterday, I called at an upmarket home décor shop in a nearby town and picked up a pot of midnight blue chalk paint. The American owner of the shop, who is something of an expert in paint finishes and who clearly wanted to chat with his first customer of the day, asked me what project I had in mind for his excellent paint. I told him the story of the chest and he became hysterical with laughter. I had the feeling he would be regaling his next few customers with the story of my chest. Now then, I'm standing looking at the chest and am keen to start on my latest project. I'm thinking of gilded knobs. What do you think?

Denise Beddows



A Happy New Year to you all on this the first of January 2022 and may it bring you everything you ask for.

It is traditional to make New Year Resolutions at this time of year and I am sure that many of you have - perhaps even broken a few already.

For many of us, the resolutions involve personal things like losing weight, taking more exercise, reading more, watching less television, or cleaning our teeth for longer. And there is nothing wrong with that, especially as they all have the potential to improve our overall lifestyle or health.

The *New Scientist* magazine ran a piece one week on the noises older people make when they bend down or even sit down. The sort of groans and hurrumph as they bend.

My brother-in-law was the worst offender I know, making a noisy exhalation every time he sat down in an easy chair.

The correspondence in *The New Scientist* suggested a number of reasons, some physiological and others psychological. I accept both, but perhaps give more credence to the psychological explanation.

This is because one New Year I resolved I would stop ever making such noises forthwith. And that is what happened, I simply stopped, quite possibly the only New Year Resolution I have ever kept.

But once again it was very personal, affecting me and no one else.

So, this set me thinking; why are most resolutions of such a personal nature?
Why don't we resolve to do things which are of benefit to others, not just ourselves?

Let me give you some examples.

How about making a regular phone call to that aging relative who would really appreciate speaking to you? Why don't you diary it for say once a month?

How about wishing a cheery "good morning" to that lady with arthritis that you see buying her newspaper every morning and perhaps even offering to buy her a coffee?

How about clearing up the litter from outside your house every week and inviting your neighbours to do the same?

How about asking some friends if they have children that need extra help with their reading and give them an hour a week to help? Not easy, of course if you are in full time work, but if you work from home, it may be possible to squeeze in just one hour to your busy schedule.

How about giving a few hours one evening a month to help at your local food bank? The television programme you will miss can easily be found on 'catch up TV'.

I could go on with 'How abouts' but time prevents it.

Why don't you start by sitting down with a cup of coffee and writing your own 'How about' list?

The strangest thing is, that if you do resolve to engage in just one thing to help others, you will gain tremendous personal satisfaction.

I can assure you that the resolution will be of amazing mutual benefit.

Everyone involved feels better. Now that is no bad thing.

Happy New Year and may your resolutions be full of wonder!

WRITTEN FOR THE RADIO FOUR PROGRAMME "THOUGHT FOR THE DAY" AND REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION.

