



Hello everyone

A bumper edition this time, including the royal memories of some of our members.

I hope you're all well and keeping warm. October, already, and the trees from my window are still looking very green, and the sun, when we see it, is mostly warm and inviting.

The clocks go back on 30<sup>th</sup>, and this month we celebrate Black History (all month), the Battle of Hastings on 14<sup>th</sup>, Apple Day and Trafalgar Day on 21<sup>st</sup>, Agincourt and Diwali on 25<sup>th</sup>, National Cat Day on 29<sup>th</sup>, and Halloween on 31<sup>st</sup>. Something for everyone there I think. I missed Grandparents Day on 2<sup>nd</sup>, but I will watch out for it next year as I don't like to miss an excuse for cake!

Keep looking for those glorious conkers and don't forget to feed the birds.

Val

## Monthly meeting dates for your diary

### **12 October at 2pm The Perils and Pleasures of a Blue Badge tourist guide**

Amanda Bryett's team accompany around 6,000 visitors on private guided tours of Windsor, Windsor Castle and on evening private guided town walks.

In this talk, Amanda describes some of her experiences whilst acting as guide.

### **9 November at 2pm Age UK Buckinghamshire - its work within the community and services.**

Sue Gehnich will present an overview of the big range of services that are provided by Age UK.

Sue will also explore opportunities to volunteer your time to help in their worthy cause.

### **14 December at 2pm A Christmas Special!**



We still have some details to sort out, but we will be entertained by Ventriloquist & Magician David Tomkins, who has some super reviews from local groups. Watch this space!

## News from our Interest Groups

### Cake decorating

Our cake decorating group had an enjoyable session in September and another session is planned for Tuesday 11th October between 2 and 4 pm at the Chalfont St Peter Community Centre. Please contact us if you are interested in coming along -

[cakedecorating@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:cakedecorating@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)



### Coffee mornings

We held another successful coffee morning at the Greyhound Inn in Chalfont St Peter and we will be having another one on 13<sup>th</sup> October. Please contact Lesley Bedford [groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

### Ballroom Dancing – beginners

We have almost enough people to start a beginners ballroom dancing group so if you haven't already been in touch please do so and, in particular, if there are any men who are keen to dance we have a couple of ladies who need a partner. Please contact Lesley Bedford [groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

### Guitar Group

We are looking at starting a guitar group and have quite a few people interested in this already. If you have not been in touch please do so as soon as possible. Please contact Lesley Bedford [groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

### Theatre Trips

Firstly a huge thank you to Sheila and Danny for all their hard work running the group.

We are a group of 5 trying to carry on the good work. The joint Convenors are Angela Windsor and Howard Dawson ably supported by Elaine Watts, Sandra Dawson, Juliet Crussell and Sandie Webb.

We have managed to get our first outing organised to The Mill at Sonning to see Top Hat. We have lots planned for next year and will keep everyone informed. We are currently getting availability for Oklahoma which met with a hugely positive response.

Thank you for bearing with us as we get to grips with everything and will definitely have lots for you all next year.

Angela Windsor, convenor [theatretrips@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:theatretrips@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

### Badminton

The start time for the Badminton 2 group, which meets every Thursday at the Chalfonts Leisure Centre, will now be 9.30am from 15th September. I hope that this might suit more people and that the news will generate more interest.

Chris Pearcey, convenor [badminton@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:badminton@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

## Photography

Our meeting this month will be in the CSP Community Library from 2pm to 4pm on Thursday 20 October.

Members are asked to bring along photos (on a memory stick) they've taken since our last library meeting, and we will give constructive critique.

In addition we will be showing an amazing film of one of the world's greatest war photographers, Tony Vaccaro. He is an American photographer known for the photographs that he took during World War II and during the reconstruction of Europe. Drafted into the army in 1943 straight from high school, he applied for the position of photographer with the Army Signal Corps, but was refused because he was too young.

Undaunted, he brought his Argus C3 camera with him to boot camp, and for eleven months after D-Day, served as a private with the 83rd Infantry Division in the European Theatre both as a combat infantryman on the front lines and as a self-appointed photographer. By the end of the war, he had over 6,000 photographs.

In the film he revisits some of the sites where he took the photos and tells the story of how he took them.

On leaving the army he took photographs for the magazines, Look, Life, Flair, and many other top publications, and he amassed an extensive collection of portraits of some of the most noted figures of his generation. Tony is still living and will celebrate his 100th birthday in December.

**If any member, not necessarily in our group**, wants to come along to see the film, they're most welcome to join us. (Please send the group convenor, Tony Darbyshire, a message if you'd like come along so we can put extra chairs out.)

If you're interested in joining the group send a message to [photography@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:photography@chalfontsu3a.org.uk) and we will add you to our list.

## Pickleball



There is a proposal for a new U3A interest group to play Pickleball. Play would take place weekly on Tuesdays at 2pm at the Chalfont Leisure Centre in Nicol Road. A number of members attended a Pickleball taster session on Tuesday 16th August at Beaconsfield Pickleball Club, and at the time many expressed a wish to play more Pickleball and on a regular basis.

Further taster sessions will be arranged for those that could not attend. The new group convenor would be Richard Cranston.

Pickleball is a fast-growing racquet sport that appeals to people of all ages and levels of fitness. It is said to be fun, social and friendly. The rules are simple and the game is easy for beginners to learn, but can develop into a quick, fast-paced,

competitive game for experienced players. It is played in pairs against another pair on a badminton sized court with a low tennis style net. Players use a wooden bat and hard but light balls the size of tennis balls.

A nice introduction to the sport is to be found on the US Pickleball Association website:

<https://usapickleball.org/what-is-pickleball>

We have secured two courts so that up to 12 people can take part at one session, eight on and four off. Bats and balls will be provided, and regular players are encouraged to purchase their own bats. Dress in sports clothes and white-soled trainers. A charge will be made to cover the hire of courts.

In order to gauge the level of interest, we ask that members reply to Richard at [richard.cranston@talktalk.net](mailto:richard.cranston@talktalk.net) to say that they are either interested or very interested in playing.

### Flower Arranging



This is an urgent request from convenor Angela Kemp on behalf of the Flower Arranging Group. **Members we need your help!**

Angela Kemp has been the convenor of this group since our u3a was set up and we have over the years enjoyed learning new skills from Pippa our floral demonstrator but Angela has decided it is time to pass 'the bouquet' on to someone else? Could you do it' and save it from closure? She will be giving up this role in December and so is there anyone out there that can come forward and help this group continue? It will be sadly missed if we have to close it down.

Please contact Eileen Powell at [vicechair@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:vicechair@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

### Yoga groups

Our yoga groups are starting a new term of classes in mid-October.

The classes are small and 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 three classes each week:

Chalfont St Peter Community Centre on Fridays at 09:20 to 10:35

Chalfont St Peter Community Centre on Fridays 14:00 to 15:15

The Studio at Chalfont Leisure Centre on Tuesdays 11:15 to 12:15

If you'd like to try a class, please get in touch! Geoff Clegg, convenor  
[yoga@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:yoga@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

### **Garden visit -The Savill Garden**

On a rather cool day at the end of September 42 members of the garden visits group went to the Savill Garden. This garden is part of the Crown Estate and was established in the 1930s. The group learnt about its history as well as having a guided tour around the garden with its many interesting plants and beautiful areas. The art tour (see picture) was also on while we were there. Lunch was included in our trip- a most enjoyable outing.



If you'd like to join us for a future visit please contact [gardenvisits@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:gardenvisits@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

### **Mixed Walking Cricket Taster.**

I have had a very good response from members to the Taster session on Tuesday November 1st from 10-11 am at Chalfonts Leisure Centre but we still have room for more. There will be a small charge as we have to pay for hire of the hall. Contact Eileen Powell, convenor [Mixedwalkingcricket@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:Mixedwalkingcricket@chalfontsu3a.org.uk).

### **Book Group 1**



I took over as convenor for Book Group One about a year and a half ago from Jane our chairwoman. As this was a new experience for me I wanted to investigate the different ways book groups were run and to try and engage every member of the group in its organisation.

There seemed to be to be about three different ways of running a book group, but I settled on the one where each member takes responsibility for one month providing the title of the book to be discussed, the venue and the refreshments. There are ten members in our group, so we had two months left over. We had in the past compiled a list of classical books to read so the 11th month is from this list and the 12th month we have a Christmas celebration.

At the end of each meeting, we rate the book in two different ways, its writing style and secondly for pleasure and hopefully the results will be discussed at our Christmas meeting.

It has not always been easy to keep to our meeting schedule during this year but with some juggling we have managed to keep on track. At our June meeting, with everybody supplying something, we had a cream tea and I know we will enjoy a Christmas meal together in December.

Carol Lyons, convenor [bookclub1@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:bookclub1@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)



## Textiles & Crafts



At the September meeting, the Textiles & Crafts group had fun with block printing tea towels. The workshop was run by artist and designer Julia Phillips, who brought along a wide range of wooden stamps and paints to use in decorating cotton tea towels.

From the photos you can see some members opted for an autumnal theme whilst others went for a Christmas theme.

We have two further workshops booked for this year; a Christmas themed knitting project on Thursday 20th October and a Christmas themed sewing project on Thursday 17th November.

If you are interested in joining the Textiles & Crafts group, please contact the Convenor, Teri McAvoy [textiles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:textiles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

## Intermediate French

We continue to have two very enjoyable and interesting sessions every Tuesday on Zoom – approximately one and a half hours.

We started Zoom meetings as a result of Covid over 2 years ago, and have continued them, as they are very convenient for our members.

There are currently have 8 members in our Group and our meetings are, in my opinion, excellent.

Each member purchases Rendez-Vous Magazine (an issue every 2 months) which gives us up to date French news and interesting articles on France and its countryside,

We take it in turns to read and translate for a 45 minute session. Then we talk for the second 45 minute session – all in superb French, of course.

Contact Ray Luker, convenor [frenchconversation2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:frenchconversation2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk)

## Cruising group

As you know there is a U3A national cruising group and I have been a member since it started some years ago. This year we sailed from Dubrovnik and it was a wonderful holiday visiting the small islands and harbours. There were 10 boats in total from 2 locations and 2 different dates. There were 48 Skippers and crew in total.

We are planning to do the same in 2023 this time from Southern Turkey. The options for dates are May 6-16 and May 16-26. I have recently heard there have been a few dropouts so we are looking for more crew. We have the Skippers.

Here are a few points for consideration:

- No experience necessary, but one prerequisite is that you don't get seasick since that would ruin your holiday and also shorthand the crew in a boat
- You are reasonably fit and healthy and willing to share duties
- You are willing to sleep on a boat (there are cabins)
- You are responsible for your own travel insurance
- All boat costs are shared

If you are interested please contact me – Colin Smith - as soon as possible and I can give you more information. My email address is [cherryacre@gmail.com](mailto:cherryacre@gmail.com).

### **A note from our Chair - Become a group convenor?**

Next month we will be holding a lunch and get together for our wonderful group convenors. Group convenors are vital to the success of our u3a, co-ordinating activities of their interest groups and encouraging the involvement of group members. Without them interest groups could not function. Many of our group convenors originally volunteered when our u3a was established over 7 years ago, and many would now appreciate new volunteers stepping forward to help with, or take over, the running of their groups.

Please consider this, whether you are a brand new u3a member or have been in the organisation for a while. If you are interested, get in touch with your group convenor or contact our group co-ordinator Lesley Bedford at [groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk).

No particular expertise in the subject area is required, just a willingness to volunteer and some basic organisational and people skills. Training and support is provided.

### **Royal Memories**

The death of Queen Elizabeth, the accession of King Charles, the lying-in-state and the State Funeral put all other news into the shade for a while. We instinctively recalled royal sightings, meetings and other occasions. Members have sent in the following selection of their memories and I hope you find them as fascinating, diverse, inspiring and evocative as I did.

#### **From Gurdeep Chadra**

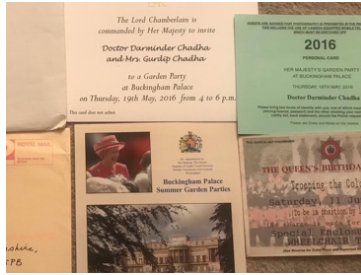
As a family we were lucky.

My husband was awarded an MBE and both our daughters and myself had the privilege to go into the palace where the Queen bestowed the honour to my late husband Darminder and had a few words with him.



As most people who have met her said she was very interested in people and asked the pertinent questions which she did and wanted to know about the water quality in Yorkshire. Darminder, a hydro geologist with the Environment Agency, got an MBE for services to the water industry in Yorkshire.

We had the privilege to be invited to the Garden party.



I had the privilege to be invited to the Palace for a Reception that the late Queen gave when she celebrated her golden Jubilee. She had invited Faith representatives and Faith leaders from across the country. I was then part of the Multi -Faith chaplaincy team at York St John University and Sikh Faith representative at York District Hospital and the open prison for women at Askham Grange near York.

Again, I found the Queen to be very informed as we mingled amongst various Royals.

### From Linda Storey

In 2012, I responded to a local newspaper advert – ‘volunteer required to assist a young man with reading and writing’.

Rupert was severely paralysed and spent most of the day in a supported chair. His speech was affected, but with one word at a time, and a deep breath between words, we would be able to carry on a conversation. He had been diagnosed with MS when he was 21yrs old. He told me MS stood for ‘MINOR SETBACK’. but he lived a life full of achievement woven with memories and stories.

During these visits he taught me basic life qualities:

About joy: Life is good, it is great to be here and to be me.

About humility: Not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less.

About Trust: Life is happening for you, not to you.

About acceptance: Accept the present moment without emotional reaction or agitation.

One of my tasks was to help him write a letter to an old school friend and during my visits over the next few weeks and months he dictated the letter to me. I will recount a small section of the letter.

*“In the 1980’s I was at Reading University reading Soil Science and the Environment, but had to leave as I found it too hard to write. After various visits to Windsor Hospital and doctors I was eventually diagnosed with MS. After leaving University early I was granted a bursary and grant by the Princes Youth Business Trust to make copper roses to my own design. They were then electro-plated with silver or gold or bronze. At that time these were on sale at National Trust shops and also exhibited at the Wallace Collection.*

*I exhibited my roses at the National Exhibition in Birmingham and was met by Prince Charles. I was invited to take part by Prince Charles in the Prince’s Youth Trust.*

*I gave the Queen Mother a rose for her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. I gave the Queen one for her Golden Wedding and also one to Prince Charles. I gave one to Betty Boothroyd when she retired from The Speaker in The House (I think that was the year 2000). I have all the personal letters of thanks from The Queen, The Queen Mother, Prince Charles and Betty Boothroyd. A rose was also presented to the Emperor and Empress of Japan and taken to the British Fair in Tokyo. The roses were then on sale in the Kew Gift Shop in TOBU department store in Tokyo.”*



Sadly, Rupert's life ended earlier this year at 56 years of age. He was a St George's Chapel chorister and a member of the Noble Order of the Garter. A seat in the choir was reserved for him every Sunday to attend Evensong. A place was also allocated for his wheelchair each year allowing him a very central view of the Garter Ceremony Procession, with all dressed in grand blue velvet mantles, red velvet hoods, white ostrich plumes and black velvet hats including Her Majesty the Queen and members of the Royal Family.

His funeral was held in March this year in St George's Chapel Windsor with his coffin positioned in the choir nave as guests filled the surrounding seats for the service. He was a true and loyal supporter of everything royal, despite his very debilitating physical drawbacks.

The Royal letters are all beautifully mounted and framed and even today still take pride of place in Rupert's living room.

### **From Ron McCaskie**

Like many of my generation I remember the coronation on 2nd June 1953 although as a six year old can't say I found it very interesting. TV had only very recently arrived in the central belt of Scotland and TVs were few in number. Neighbours did have one and viewing the Coronation on what was, by today's standard, a tiny screen was a great event, in particular for the local ladies. I seem to recollect that during the ceremony my friend and I were sent to the garden to play in the sandpit with our Dinky toys. Obviously boredom had set in, probably fairly quickly, and we were misbehaving.

The sports day held in the school playing field that afternoon was a different matter with lots of events suitable for six year olds. We may also have been entertained by the local pipe band but I can't be certain.

I still have my Coronation cup which takes pride of place in our display cabinet. Was it presented with other memorabilia on the day? I honestly can't remember.

### **From Paul Graham**

#### **My memories of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and other Royals**

These experiences are all related to my work as a BBC Outside Broadcast Television Cameraman. I joined the BBC on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1960 and transferred to Television Outside Broadcasts on Monday 2nd April 1962.

My first Royal duty was at Windsor Castle to cover the St. George's Day Parade of Scouts as they paraded past Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on Sunday 29th April 1962. My camera position was on top of the Round Tower, which gave me an imposing view of The Quadrangle.

My second Royal duty was at Trooping the Colour on Saturday 2nd June 1962. Although I was then a relatively inexperienced cameraman I was given the camera with an 80 inch lens to get large close-ups of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II riding on her horse Imperial. I was on the same rostrum as the press photographers, who left before the end of the ceremony, to meet their deadlines, exiting like a herd of elephants. How I kept a steady shot I will never know. I later covered the ceremony

of Trooping the Colour many more times including that of 11th June 1977 during Her Majesty's Silver Jubilee year



The Investiture of the Prince of Wales on 1st July 1969 at Caernarfon Castle was a prestigious event and I was inside the castle for the ceremony. Before this I was the cameraman when Prince Charles was interviewed at the BBC Studios in Cardiff on 12th June 1969. At a date around this time Prince Charles was navigating a narrow boat for which there was BBC coverage. What I remember most of this day was when I

was pointing the camera at the water to clear a stuck image on the electronic camera, Prince Charles noticed and said to me with a wonderful sense of humour "Is that more interesting than ...".

I operated a camera on the procession route when Princess Anne, only daughter of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, was married to Captain Mark Phillips at Westminster Abbey on 14th November 1973.

I have covered Royal Ascot many times including that of 11th June 1977 during Her Majesty's Silver Jubilee year. It was always impressive to see Her Majesty The Queen arriving at the entrance of Ascot's straight mile at precisely 2 p.m. Drawn by the famous Windsor Greys, Her Majesty's Landau leading the procession of carriages up the mile, past the Silver Ring, Grandstand and Royal Enclosure before finishing with a circuit of the Parade Ring.

During the Silver Jubilee year I had a camera on the roof of Buckingham Palace from Saturday 4th June to Thursday 9th June 1977. These were very interesting days. On the first day I was escorted to the roof by a Palace employee and as we went up the back stairs we had to step over Prince Andrew who thought my guide was guarding me. (I could easily have got a misguided sense of my own importance!) After a few days it was decided I could find my own way to the roof but on my first attempt to do this I got lost. It was in the evening and my first intuitive feeling that I was not in the right place was when I realised that the lift I was in was very luxurious and that it did not go beyond the first floor. As I got out of the lift a very burly man approached me. He behaved delightfully and after I had explained where I needed to be he gave me directions.

I also operated a camera on the procession route when Charles, Prince of Wales, eldest son of Queen Elizabeth II and heir apparent, was married to Lady Diana Spencer at St Paul's Cathedral on 29th July 1981.

On Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 1982 John Paul II visited Buckingham Palace and I was operating a camera in a vestibule just inside the outer door where John Paul II would enter and as he came in I tried to suppress a sudden unexpected sneeze so as to avoid shaking the shot. Imagine my surprise when he turned to me and said "Bless you". I do know that as he was entering he was blessing Buckingham Palace, not me, but I was still amused by the confluence of the two unconnected acts.

On Tuesday 8th June 1982 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II held a Banquet at Windsor Castle for Ronald Reagan. It was not a State Banquet, but it is very doubtful if anything more could have been offered in the way of pomp and circumstance. I operated a camera just a few feet from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during the dinner. The setting was mind blowing.

I have covered many more Royal occasions where Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has been present; in St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and many in Buckingham Palace itself and some in its grounds but I have never had the opportunity to meet Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It is something I shall always regret.

### **From Sue White**

Having been at the Queen's Coronation, albeit in a pram, I had always felt that I would like to say goodbye to the Queen on her final journey. This is my account of the day I went to see her lying in state.

Friday, and I met my friend Sheila off her train from Brighton and got to Southwark Park to join the queue at 10.22 am. The journey begins and the line moves slowly and then stops. We start chatting to those around us and we are all in good spirits. It takes us until 1.30 to exit the park with rumours going around that they have shut the gates to the entrance to the park. Phew we felt lucky to have timed our start when we did.

However we were pleased to see the back of the park after all that zig zagging. Not so good when we saw notices flash up to say it would take 14 and a half hours from the exit of the park. Decision time, do we continue or give up now?

How will we get home? We can't give up so early on in the day, surely it won't take that long.

Hours of standing and slow walking, chatting and eating and drinking and we have not even got our wristbands yet. The people around us are great fun and time passes. A kind lady has opened her house for us to use her toilet. There is kindness everywhere from helpers and police keeping us going. Lots of toilets on route, absolutely spotless. Amazing cleaning teams all keeping cheerful. A cheer goes up we have reached Tower Bridge at 5.14 hours. We collect our wristbands and we are now officially in the queue.

The route gets more interesting with the lovely river and South Bank to entertain us. Another rumour goes round. David Beckham has been in the queue. Good for him we say. A young lad and his family have set up a table for coffee and teas at only £1.50 a cup. What a bargain. "You have to make money whilst you can he says. It is going to be a good weekend for me"!

Sheila's daughter lives in Dulwich. We text her to ask if we can rest at her house when we finish our journey as we can't get home. People around us are worried about their journeys home but they won't give up now.

10.00 pm. We can see Big Ben and Westminster opposite. What a lovely sight. We are getting close. The restaurants and bars are buzzing so our group decides to

partake in some wine which gives us energy! We don't sit down at all as getting up is now difficult. Sheila and I have been amusing our group as we have been practising our curtsy for the Queen. We try it again but our cold bones won't let us so we now change it to a bow.

Westminster Bridge and we can see the zig zagging that is always being shown on the news. Oh no the notice says 3 hours from here. Surely that can't be true can it? We reach the zig zags and the excitement is mounting. All food and drinks has to be consumed beforehand. All unopened food and drink go to the homeless. We have very little left after queueing for 15 and a half hours. Through the police baggage and scanning machines. The police are so cheerful yet they also must have been there for hours as well.

Silence, we have arrived. The most amazing feeling of love and respect takes over us. Arm in arm Sheila and I bow in front of the coffin. What an experience. What a building, everything around us is spectacular. We exit Westminster Hall in silence, can't believe we have made it. We are stunned by the whole experience. It was worth the 15 and a half-hour wait.

Getting to Dulwich was a nightmare of bus and a kind taxi driver who rescued us from Deptford at 2.30 in the morning. But who cares we got to pay our respects to the Queen.



Thank you to everyone who contributed to this month's newsletter, and in particular to those who sent in their royal memories. It was a sincere privilege to read them.

See you in November, Val.