

Update



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National U3A

The Third Age Trust, to which we are affiliated, has a wealth of information and guidance, constantly being updated, on their website: www.u3a.org.uk

Interest Groups

Details of Groups can be found on the Charnwood U3A website: www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk
Contact details of group leaders can be found in the Members' area.

Welcome

A warm welcome to our **new members**. We hope you will soon be involved in U3A activities and making new friends. To access the members' area of our **website** www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk you will need the user name and password which have been supplied to you.

A Message from the Chairman



It is 8.50 Monday morning as I start writing this article. In the 'Old Normal' I would have just started taking my yoga class and then, my diary tells me, Eleanor and I would have been heading off to mid-Wales for a four day stay with some very dear friends.

Instead, we started the day with our (now regular) early morning walk. Later we will read the newspaper, do the crossword and sudoku puzzles (got to keep the brain working!) and maybe have a look at the incredibly fiendish jigsaw that we have been tackling.

My goodness, how times have changed during the past few weeks. Thankfully it is not all change. If the weather is kind I will maybe find a few things to do in the garden (which probably means hunting out and uprooting bindweed) or give the allotment a checkover.

We seem to be coping reasonably well with this 'New Normal'; I do hope the same goes for all of you. These past few weeks will have been especially difficult for some of our older, more frail, members, but I am sure that many of you 'youngsters' will be doing all you can to minimise their sense of isolation. Please keep up the good work - we will get through this.

Charnwood Chat (CC)

The Bulletin Board has now been renamed Charnwood Chat. A name that much better reflects what it is all about - and also one that I understand will be familiar with some of our longer standing members. If you have given it a look, I hope you have logged-in and added your contribution(s) to the various fora. If you haven't visited it yet, I do urge you to do so.

This is an area for ALL members to share their thoughts and ideas, on really any (U3A related) subject you like. Several fora have already been set up, including highly topical areas such as Video Conferencing, Nature during lockdown, and On-line resources to beat boredom.

Should you want to contribute, but the appropriate forum is not available - no problem, just ask for it to be added. Simply contact the administrator using the 'contact us' tab at the bottom of any CC page.

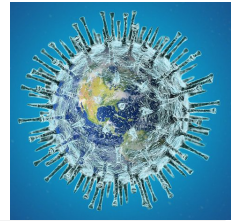
They need your input - see next page...

And finally, I'm delighted to announce that, while Pam Upton becomes our new Business Secretary, Bev Gillman has volunteered to be our Minutes Secretary. Welcome, Pam and Bev!

Keep Well and Keep Safe.
Mike Hood
Chairman

They Need Your Input...

The Chairman has recently found out about some good work being carried out by a team of scientists, led by an epidemiologist at Kings College. They have set up a **COVID Symptom Tracking app**, and are particularly keen to receive data for those of us over the age of 70. At most, it takes 1 minute a day to input your data - do please have a look at their website: <https://covid.joinzoe.com/>



The Return of our Monthly Meetings - Online!

Fearon's Legacy and the Story of Water Supplies to Loughborough

In last month's Update, Martyn Speight introduced us to it being 150 years since Fearon got a piped water supply into Loughborough. When he submitted his article, Martyn envisaged being able to give his talk to any who are interested in the history of Loughborough's water supply and how the supply system to the town, and neighbouring Leicester, has since evolved. Given the current situation, Martyn has offered his talk for our first virtual monthly meeting. This will be through **Zoom Conferencing on the afternoon of Wednesday 13th May (our usual 2nd Wednesday afternoon slot) starting around 2.30.**



Before 1870 Loughborough was not the nice town we enjoy today. There were cholera and typhoid outbreaks and the population was actually falling. Fearon, although an academic, knew that a decent water supply was vital but it took him nearly 25 years to convince the townsfolk of what needed to be put in place. Since then water demand everywhere has increased significantly so local supply sources quickly proved inadequate and pipes from further and further away have had to be laid.

Martyn, who is a retired water engineer, will guide us through the history of water into Loughborough, which is commemorated by the fountain provided by Fearon himself in the Market Place. He will then discuss the history of the various Charnwood reservoirs and close with information about where our water comes from today. Even if the supply of water is taken for granted, knowing more about the features in our neighbouring countryside should make this a fascinating talk.

This is our first attempt at holding a Zoom session and whilst many of you may have now used Zoom (on your computer, tablet or phone) it could be a new experience. So please ask for assistance should you not be familiar with Zoom. There is guidance on Virtual Meetings on our website at www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk

IMPORTANT: Zoom sessions are limited to 100 participants and, as this is our first Virtual Monthly meeting, we do not know how many members will want to 'attend'. To help us, **pre-registration is required, by email to chairman@charnwoodu3a.org.uk, by FRIDAY 8th MAY.** Details of how to join the meeting will be sent out a few days beforehand to those who have pre-registered.

Looking Ahead to June...

We plan to hold another meeting - again via Zoom - in June, when Tony Westaway, our Webmaster, will present a talk which despite his current CU3A role is not about the fascinating **World Wide Web** but about the

Weird, Wonderful and Wild

Tony is an amateur wildlife photographer who will take you around the world from the comfort of Lockdown to look at weird and wonderful wildlife and anything else that begins with W.



*Black Mandibilled Toucan
photo © Tony Westaway*

Group News

Textile Art Group

In January 2016 we had the first meeting of our group, and since then we have evolved into a vibrant group of textile artists, meeting once a month. There are 14 of us, the maximum our meeting room can hold, and the maximum we can manage, as we have regular workshops, with different members taking the lead in demonstrating a new or interesting technique, or sometimes we have a professional workshop.

We all have sewing machines, and some of us enjoy using them to draw, with the needle being our pen or pencil. We use other machinery too, including embellishers and soldering irons. Our members have different expertise in various aspects of textile art, and we share information about how we have created any work we have done at home. We have embroiderers, both hand and machine, wet and dry felters, patchworkers, and those who love mixed media. We add paint, dyes, beads, metal, and of course a huge variety of lovely threads to our work. Some like realistic pictures, some prefer abstract.



Piece by Lorraine Ellison, already exhibited at West Bridgford Library



Piece by Janet Donnell, founder member and organiser of exhibition group

A number of the group recently decided that we were ready to branch out into having an exhibition group, named after our meeting place, “Wymeswold Threads”, and we put together a wonderful collection of work which was due to be exhibited at our first national exhibition, a three day event in mid April, the British Quilt and Stitch Village. We were very proud to be accepted as having a high enough standard. Of course, it is now postponed, but we are ready to exhibit as soon as we have a new date. We are on the list of exhibitors on their website.



Piece by Cath Tyler, also a founder member of the group.

Our group is successful thanks to our wonderful members, a number of whom help in the development and organisation of the group.

We are currently meeting on Zoom every two weeks to “Show and Tell” about our work done at home.

More Group News

On-Line Group Meetings

Following the request in last month's Update Extra to send in your experiences of holding 'virtual' meetings, it turns out that several more groups are successfully staying in contact on-line:

The **Textile Art group** are making regular use of Zoom (see article, previous page).

The **Mac Users Forum** met via Zoom on 24 April, with nine members attending, using screen sharing for a presentation on scanning.

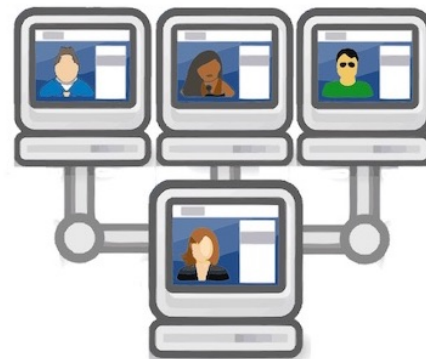
The **Creative Writing group** have continued to hold conversations in their small group using Zoom.

The new **Singing Pop group** booked a Zoom meeting for an introductory chat to get to know each other. I was pleased to hear that 29 people have already signed up for this new group.

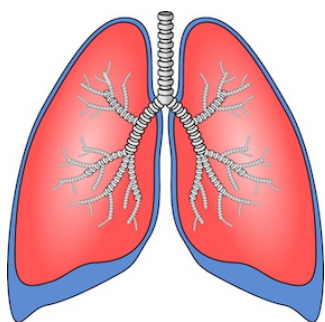
The **Classics group** and the **Latin group** enjoyed virtual lessons on 3rd and 6th April respectively, under the same Group Leader, who set optional homework. Extremely lively, witty and informative discussions took place over ordinary email and most members joined in. It was reportedly great fun, and the group are grateful for the hard work and firm encouragement of the Group Leader during the suspension of ordinary meetings. I understand they are also looking at Zoom for future meetings.

The **Advanced German group** have been holding twice-monthly meetings via Zoom, typically with nine participants. The group has also kept in touch by email or phone with two members unable to use Zoom.

It seems that other groups are considering holding virtual meetings in the coming weeks and months, especially if the continuing restrictions make normal meetings impossible for a long time ahead. Please continue to send your experiences of such activities to newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk



Maintaining and improving your lung health



Jo Greene, a Pilates teacher and physiotherapist experienced in respiratory care, gave a really interesting talk via Zoom in early April (as advertised in last month's Update). She explained how the whole of our respiratory system works, suggested some exercises that we can do to keep our lungs in good condition and stressed the importance of good hydration. During the talk, she recommended a **Youtube video**, "Clearing Your Chest with Breathing Exercises" presented by an NHS physiotherapist specialising in chest conditions.

This video - at <https://youtu.be/kC-H8fFzZes> - is well worth a look, as it demonstrates breathing exercises that anyone could find useful for their lung health and is highly recommended. It is clearly relevant at the present time to boost our chances against the Covid-19 virus, but is useful at any time for our general health and wellbeing, especially as we get older.

Charnwood Community Action

Are you unable to carry out your usual voluntary work due to the coronavirus crisis? Would you be willing to telephone vulnerable people about once a week for a chat?

Charnwood Community Action (John Storer House in collaboration with Charnwood Borough Council) are looking for volunteers who would be willing to telephone vulnerable people for a chat once a week or so. You could ring one person - or more if you are confident.

If you would like to volunteer, please email Joanne Clarke on joanne@jscharnwood.org.uk giving your phone number, so Joanne can call you back to discuss.



Life in Lockdown

As we continue with life in lockdown, it is good to exchange our experiences in this 'new normal', sharing stories, anecdotes and even including a little humour to cheer us up in these strange times. Hilary Knowles has contributed this article, recounting an amusing (if somewhat frustrating) recent episode...

As our usual social and cultural activities fell prey to lockdown, a wealth of music, art and literature became available online and via the media. Opera, ballet and theatre productions from around the world, virtual tours of museums and galleries, the choice was endless. Faced with such a surfeit of riches, what would my husband and I choose to brighten our stuck-at-home evenings?

We fixed on a tale of dark deeds, exploring themes of morality and redemption.

"Aha, Shakespeare!" I hear you cry. Not quite, although I've a feeling Shakespeare would have thoroughly enjoyed it. No, we decided to catch up with the thriller *Giri/Haji*, broadcast last year on BBC2.

Set in London and Tokyo, the drama follows an escalating cycle of intrigue and violence, set in motion by a single murder. Rather than binge watch the whole series, we opted for the more civilised approach of an occasional episode to accompany our after-dinner coffee. We were soon hooked. As we reached the final episode, the tension ratcheted and we still couldn't predict the outcome, although a happy ending seemed distinctly unlikely.



At this point, let me pose a question? Who amongst you remembers Hancock's Half Hour? More specifically, the episode entitled *The Missing Page*? To boost his cultural credentials, Tony Hancock claims to be reading weighty works of literature, whilst actually borrowing a gripping murder mystery from his local library. He immerses himself in the plot, convinced that the identity of the killer will be revealed on the last page. Disaster! The last page is missing and all his attempts to locate a copy fail, so the mystery remains unsolved.

Cut back to *Giri/Haji* and yes, you've got it. The final episode was no more. Disappeared, gone, obliterated. Tony Hancock, how we sympathised! Yet somewhere out there the ghost of Episode 8 lives on, no doubt eventually to be resurrected by the BBC in a series re-run, so please don't tell me how it ends.

Our coffee that evening was accompanied by Matthew Bourne's sublime interpretation of *Swan Lake* (at least we already knew how that ended.)

Hilary Knowles

Do you have a story - or even a short comment - to share with our fellow U3A members? All contributions very welcome, to newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk If you'd prefer your name doesn't appear in Update, we can preserve your anonymity, as in the following contribution... which is a poem written by the nine-year-old granddaughter of a CU3A member:

**All I see on telly is, all the shops have no meat.
One day I was at school, learning Egyptians with my friend,
The next I'm at home, we don't know when it will end.
Mummy said not to panic, it will all be OK,
As long as we stay inside, the germ will go away.
I'm not scared about this germ, I don't know what it means,
I think we have to be careful, and keep extra clean.
I just want to see my friend, but don't worry everyone,
Mummy said one day it will end, and the germ will be gone.**

...A refreshing change from all the doom and gloom, I think you'll agree.



Third Age Trust Writing Competition

Are you a budding writer? A Jane Austen, JK Rowling, a John Steinbeck or a John Grisham in the making? If so, the Third Age Trust invite you to enter their creative writing competition, launched in a UK-wide initiative to find the best short story penned by a U3A member. The winning story will be published in Third Age Matters magazine, and the winner will receive a framed copy of their story as it appears in the magazine, with a bespoke illustration. Obviously, this may appeal to the Creative Writing group especially, but it could potentially be of interest to any Charnwood U3A member.

How it works:

- In summary, your story must be your own, individual, original work, in English, a maximum of 1500 words, and not submitted anywhere else.
- Your submission must be on the theme of: **TIME**
- Please read the Creative Writing Competition Rules carefully. Any submission not meeting these will not be considered. See <https://www.u3a.org.uk/component/edocman/creative-writing-competition-rules>
- All submissions will be judged by regional panels and the best story from each region / devolved country will be compared to decide on an overall winner.
- The submission portal will open on 18th May on the Third Age Trust website at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/creative-writing-2020> (all entries will need to be submitted via the link on this page to be accepted). The deadline for submission is **12 noon on 19th June 2020**.

Answers to Last Month's Quiz:

- 1) The Speenhamland system was a system of supplementing rural wage payments from local taxes first used in England in the latter part of the 18th century. Where is Speenhamland?
Newbury, Berkshire
- 2) In the 1966 World Cup Final Hurst scored 3 of England's 4 goals. Who scored the other?
Martin Peters
- 3) Who sang the 1959 British entry in the Eurovision Song Contest, which finished second?
Pearl Carr and Teddy Johnson
- 4) Who was Minister for Health, 1995 -1997? **Stephen Dorrell**
- 5) Who made his début in A Study in Scarlet? **Sherlock Holmes**
- 6) In what year did Princess Diana die? **1997**
- 7) Which British Prime Minister was born in Blenheim Palace? **Winston Churchill**
- 8) In which monastery did the Venerable Bede live? **St. Peter and St. Paul, Jarrow**
- 9) From which musical does the song *You'll never walk alone* come? **Carousel**
- 10) Which singers first invited people to *Ferry Cross the Mersey*? **Gerry and the Pacemakers**
- 11) Which planet was discovered in December 1846? **Neptune**
- 12) Which French singer 'regretted nothing'? **Edith Piaf**
- 13) Why should you never marry in Greece on 29th February? **It's considered bad luck**
- 14) In the nursery rhyme, who saw Cock Robin die? **The fly**
- 15) In 1957 where did the spaghetti trees shown on the BBC grow? **Ticino, Switzerland**
- 16) Who performed the first human-to-human heart transplant? **Christiaan Barnard (in 1967)**
- 17) Where is the easternmost point in England? **Lowestoft**
- 18) Who composed the Neue Pizzicato Polka in 1892? **Johann Strauss II**
- 19) By what name is the flower *Primula vulgaris* better known? **Primrose or first rose**
- 20) In 1620 the Mayflower with the Pilgrim Fathers arrived at Plymouth Massachusetts. Where was the boat's home port? **Harwich**



Items for Update

The deadline for publishing is normally the last day of the previous month. The deadline for the June issue of **Update** will be **Sunday 31 May (12 noon)**.

Please send your contributions to:
newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk or to Update Editor Helen Reid.

Please make sure you include your contact details with your item, and try not to leave it until the last minute if at all possible.



Items for Update Extra

The next issue of **Update Extra** will be published in July and the deadline for items is **Monday 29 June**. There is a limit of around 500 words per item, and photos are very welcome.

The Editor reserves full editorial rights as to length and suitability and the Editor's decision is final. Update Extra is published quarterly.

Update/Update Extra is sent to all Charnwood U3A members by e-mail (or by post in normal circumstances) before the monthly meeting. It is also available to read on the Charnwood U3A website each month at: www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk

(you will need the user name and password which have been supplied to you).

Thank you!

Contact Details

Please note that for data protection reasons all Charnwood U3A members' personal contact details have been removed from this version of Update Extra.

Visit the password controlled Members Area of our website and click on Update to get access to these contact details, including a list of the Charnwood U3A Committee and their contact details.

www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk

The username and password will have been supplied to you at the same time as your membership card (either via e-mail or by post, as appropriate).

Some other useful U3A web addresses:

Third Age Trust Newsletter: www.u3a.org.uk/email

The Association of East Midlands U3As: www.eastmidlandsu3as.org.uk

Leicestershire and Rutland Network: www.landru3a.org.uk

Beacon system: <https://beacon.u3a.org.uk>