



SHERWOOD U3A

Learn Laugh Live NEWSLETTER October 2020

Hello to all Sherwood U3A members,

The October issue includes U3A news and updates including the survey results from earlier in the year. There are more stories about life at present from members, including outgoing speaker seeker Judy Openshaw and a profile from her successor Dave Clark. Thank you for all the positive comments I have received about the newsletter, please send me something for the November issue - as yet I have nothing!!!

Sue Robb (Editor)

Contributions by Monday 26th October at latest please.

If you have any questions about specific things please contact the following who will find out the answers to your concerns and try to come back to you with the answers:

Membership	Rita Foulkes
Groups and Postal Members	Terry Dillon
Welfare	Sandra Rogers
Holidays	Contact the holiday organizer.
Financial/General	Margaret Taylor
Newsletter/General	Sue Robb

U3A NOTICES

GROUP NEWS



WE HAVE THE CHEQUES FOR THE KENT AND ISLE OF WIGHT HOLIDAYS!!

Yes at long last and many phone calls and emails later we have your money back!!

Rita and I will be in Morrison's Car Park, Mansfield Woodhouse between 10am and 12am on Monday 5th October for you to collect your cheque and sign to say that you have received it. If you cannot get there at that time we will ring and make alternative arrangements.

Several members have already offered or given me deposits for the Kent Holiday in 2021 (see details in last month's Newsletter). If you wish to pay this at the same time I will be happy to put you on the list, ditto for Rita and the Isle of Wight holiday in 2021.

Isle of Wight Holiday - 8 Days, £789, Half Board 2nd to 9th July 2021 Liz Wilson 07837 710386

Staying at Warner's Norton Grange chalet village with stunning views of the Solent and close to many places of interest: maritime museum, underwater Archaeology Centre, Planetarium, Model Railway.

As well as the excellent food and entertainment of Warners the price includes 4 full day excursions.

Day 1 Cowes, Carisbrooke Castle and Godshill. Day 2 Whippingham Church and Osbourne House

Day 3 Alum Bay and The Needles and Farringford House and Gardens, once the home of Alfred lord Tennyson

Day 4 Ventnor Botanical Gardens.

We will keep the coach with us, so if we wish to visit other places or walk down the Chines, we will be able to do so.

Deposits for both of the above are £50 Cheques made payable to "Just For Groups". Balances for both holidays will not be required until March 2021.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Cheques for the Afternoon Tea (£10) which cannot be carried over to November as hoped, and for the Bowling Evening (£12) and for the Coffee Morning (£5) have been written and will be returned to you by Margaret Taylor. We were going to save on postage by giving some out at the AGM Meetings but now all will be by post or person.

WALKING GROUP

Since my last report in October 2019, we have only managed two walks. Our walk at Laxton in November was cancelled due to the route being flooded. Then our January walk was cancelled due to heavy rain – however we did all arrange to meet for lunch at the Star Public House instead – which was enjoyed by all. Ann and Roger Wood did arrange a December walk ending with a Christmas meal at the Young Vanish. The February walk did take place – 5 miles at Vicar Water and Spa Ponds. After the walk all 20 members then had lunch at the Fillets Fish Bar. Then the dreaded Coronavirus struck and the March walk was cancelled and we have not been able to meet as a group since. However, I am pleased to say that once the restrictions were lifted slightly groups of six and less have been meeting up and doing different walks – social distancing of course! I hope that we can soon start up again but looks as if it may be not until next year. Meanwhile keep well and stay safe.

Colin Rolle

VIRTUAL MUSIC GROUP

When lock-down was announced I thought that “music” had gone out of my life as this was my favourite U3A activity with good music, good friends, and good refreshments. But how wrong was !!!

Chris Robb decided that we would try to do a virtual group, sending in our choices of music for specific themes and short explanations on why we had chosen them. We started off with Desert Island Discs taking 8 records, 1 book and 1 luxury item to our “Home” where we all had to be at the end of March. From “The Spiritual Teachings of Seneca” to a long wave radio tuned into football, from “Marcus Aurelius, His Meditations” to a caravan complete with all mod cons. And food. One even wanted a large supply of Marmite. Urrggghhhh!!!

However this led us into picking music about animals, places where we lived, favourite musicals and non-musical films, water, time, Love & War and holidays. At present we are working on Employment and Hobbies. As well as giving our choices of music – we now have to put a limit on the number sent – we are also set homework e.g. what items did we bring back from our “holidays” and why. No stuffed donkeys were mentioned thank goodness as I can remember the days we all had to bring one back from Spain, tucked under our arms, holding onto those heavy suitcases filled with other useless memorabilia.

Thanks to Claire we have even had the odd musical quiz as well.

Having now had to take over as temporary leader I am now wondering if any more members would like to benefit and be included in our small but dedicated eclectic group. Unfortunately once we get back to normality places would not be available within our current group but if enough members showed an interest Chris or I would be willing to help set up a second or even a third group in the future. If you do just get in touch with me by email or phone – details in the newsletter under Financial.

I am looking forward to us all meeting up again when we can actually listen to our favourite music and perhaps even go through some of the music that we listened to previously on our own. I am keeping a record of everything.

To quote from Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night – ‘If Music be the Food of Love, play on’.

Margaret Taylor

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT –Liz Wilson

I am absolutely devastated!! Just when I thought we had worked out a way for some of us to meet up again and actually feel as though we still belonged to a U3A --- Third Age Trust tell us that, even though we have Charitable Status, we are not exempt from the rule of six!! The Committee put lots of work into doing risk assessments at various venues, finding one in Woodhouse that had space, facilities including THREE toilets that could be used, Margaret into contacting the membership and allocating slots, Jenny buying cleansing stuff and everyone planning for the Meeting. We had even planned what we were going to do at a November set of gatherings and the Christmas one in December!! One announcement and all to no avail!!!! Thanks to all of you who responded to the call. I was really looking forward to meeting up and catching up with you --- only to be knocked down at the last hurdle.

Our Committee has two new members, Denise Whitsed and Dave Clarke so we have a full team again. Because of the only six restrictions, only Dave has so far been able to attend a Committee Meeting but he did also come along for a meeting with Jeremy because they are going to be our Speaker Seekers. Denise, though she has not yet been able to attend a Committee Meeting, did come along to a Social Committee Meeting and is keen to be involved --- when we have a need for a SOCIAL committee again!

Claire, as well as being Business Secretary, is temporarily taking on Sue Haywood's role as Health and Safety Officer. Sue is unwell and at this time with Covid 19 we must keep up to date with National recommendations and advice from National Office. Thanks Claire – get well soon Sue!

Sue Robb has revamped our Newsletter and today we had a meeting with a view to revamping our Website. Marilyn, Robert, Jenny and myself met Sarah Humphreys who is Sherwood IT = Web design and Computer support. We want to make our website, more straight forward, more user friendly, more informative and more exciting! We hope to work hard on it up to Christmas and then launch it in the New Year, on the date which would have been our first Meeting, Thursday, 14th January 2021.

Some of you have asked about a refund of your Membership fee as we have not had any Main Meetings but we have had extra costs: printing and postal costs for those who cannot get their Newsletter online, likewise for the information re the AGM Meetings (okay so they were scuppered at the last minute but still the info had gone out), the latest project of upgrading the Website and we still have to pay £3.50 per member to the Third Age Trust to continue as a U3A. Hence it is unlikely that there will be refunds but we will extend the period and will not be collecting more membership fees until after we have had our first full meeting in 2021.

I have still been meeting up with several members of Sherwood both social meals at my house and also with the Ramblers. We had a lovely walk down Pleasley Vale led by Denise and gained a few new members. Afterwards we had a delicious meal at Sid and the Spoon, in Woodhouse, sitting altogether, 12 of us, socially distanced, outside in glorious sunshine!! We are planning another for next Tuesday, down Maunside and round the Sutton Res. Though this time it has to be formal with lists, risk assessments and, though Sue Van Pelt is leading it, I have to be responsible for making and carrying their lists of contact numbers, filling in all the Risk Assessment documentation, checking everyone is adhering to the rules, have sanitizer, masks, only sit in sixes and do not share food. Small price to pay for great company!!

SHERWOOD U3A SURVEY – July 2020

156 Responses Received

1	When did you join Sherwood U3A?	2008-11 43% (67)	2012-15 26% (41)	2016-19 17% (26)	Unsure 15% (23)		
2	Do you belong to another U3A?	Yes 26% (40)	No 76% (116)	Of those responding yes, the majority 83% (33) belonged to one other U3A			
3	Are you a postal member	Yes 8% (13)	No 92% (143)				
4	Do you stay to hear the Speaker?	Usually 78% (121)	Occasionally 12% (18)	Never 2% (4)	No response 8% (13)		
5	How many Sherwood U3A interest groups do you belong to?	None 19% (29)	One 19% (29)	Two 24% (37)	Three 13% (21)	Four 13% (21)	Five + 11% (17)
6	How easy did you find it to join an interest group?	Easy 87% (136)		Difficult 2% (3)		No response 11% (17)	
	If difficult what were the problems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting time • Mobility issues 					
7	Which groups have you had difficulty joining?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine group – on waiting list since 2015 					
8	Do you attend the Social Events?	Usually 35% (55)		Occasionally 49% (77)		Never 17% (26)	
	If never please give reason						

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other commitments (3) • Transport • Health reasons • Lack of confidence to mix • Too expensive • Not yet (4) 					
9	Do you go on Sherwood U3A Holidays? If never please give reason	Usually 17% (27)	Occasionally 33% (52)			Never 53% (83)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not good at coach travel (2) • Too expensive (8) • Go with family, friends or on own (18) • Husband not a member and have a dog • Health issues of self or partner (5) • Not enough single rooms (2) • Other commitments at time of the holidays 					
10	Do you go on days out? If never please give reason	Usually 36% (56)	Occasionally 41% (64)			Never 24% (37)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave places for those without transport (2) • Health/Mobility (4) • Too expensive (2) • Work / child mind grandchildren/ other commitments • Not good at coach travel (2) • Have a dog (2) • Not yet (4) 					
11	If you have attended New Members Coffee Morning, did you find it useful	Yes 38% (60)	No 7% (11)			N/A 55% (86)	
12	Do you use Sherwood U3AS website? If yes, how often?	Yes 57% (89)			No 38% (62)		
		Weekly 9% (8) Monthly 42% (37) less than monthly 43% (38)					
13	Do you attend interest groups or activities organised by other U3As?	Yes 47% (73)			No 54% (84)		
14	Please indicate your age group	Under 50 0% (0)	50/60 1% (2)	61/70 26%(41)	71/80 57%(89)	81/90 16%(25)	Over 90 0.6%(1)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- It would be helpful if holiday and day trip information gave details of access arrangements available at venues to support those with mobility / access difficulties.
- Grateful to be a postal member so that can join activities and groups.
- Good idea to ask full members if they would like to transfer to postal membership if they do not attend monthly meetings.
- Is there a way to use modern technology to indicate attendance at monthly meetings so that if there were spare places available postal members could be invited?
- Would it be possible to have a new members / postal members coffee morning earlier as subs are paid by April time?
- Congratulations on providing the Diary of Events – found it most useful.
- Would still prefer a printed newsletter and am willing to pay a fee.
- Would like to see more people helping with heavy work at meetings.
- If communications are sent by email could a notification be sent for important information/newsletter.

The committee would like to thank all the members who completed and returned their surveys. Thank you very much for all the above suggestions which the committee have taken on board and will try to implement over the coming months.

More “New Normal” activities from our members

Lockdown Laugh!

One good thing about lockdown, which can be lonely and boring, is that I am able to take my little dog for walks in the park and fields and greet many other dog walkers with a "Hello" "Good morning" etc.

One day the dustbin man had left my bin on the pavement and as I went to drag it on to my drive, a man came by with his little pooch. I did not know him but had greeted him occasionally in the park. He stopped to chat, but his little dog became a nuisance, yapping, jumping up at me. So the man got down apologetically to calm the little tyke. Then a car went by and the driver tooted his horn and waved, so I waved back, then "Oh my goodness I don't think I know him".

The man on his knees before me said "Oh no! I'm on my knees, they must think I am asking you to marry me!" Boy, did we both laugh, the best laugh for weeks. Josie Earnshaw

TAI CHI INSPIRES ME

There's no doubt in my mind; you have to be selfish to write. Constant interruptions, even welcome ones give rise to resentment and frustration. And, as we all know: cheques do not appear through the letterbox as if by magic.

Sadly, I am as guilty as are most dreamers, of staring at a blank computer screen. Writer's block is not a myth! And it has to be said, that at home and available, there are other demands on my time too. The cat doesn't text, collect the mail, make tea or ping the microwave. He will however, position his considerable bulk on my desk, whilst hubby, not particularly interested in my latest project, hearing a mumbled curse from my corner, will disappear in the direction of his shed, faster than a rat up a drain-pipe. His 'projects', of course: off limits to me (and the cat.)

So, these are a few of the reasons why I decided to try Tai Chi. I have a great deal of respect for the Chinese. They are a productive nation, and now I know why. Many of them start their day with an hour of structured movement that helps life-balance, relaxation and mental strength. I need all these attributes in order to flourish, in the crowded world of literary prowess. However, rising just after dawn has always been a challenge for me; but the cat will get breakfast earlier. See! A definite positive! I must keep focused!

I practice every day at home, and I have de-cluttered my life, ousting negative 'friends' who are not tuned in to what I need. So, once again, life has taken a turn for the better. And while it may not have contributed to my 'in-progress' seduction epic: 'Filthy Shades of Pink,' my concentration has improved immensely. I can hold a fairly intelligent conversation with the cat, while deflecting hubby's attention from my salmon sandwich---- *should* that be the other way round? And more of my scribbling appears to be getting the attention of difficult to please, editors.

Hubby likes the 'new', calmer me. And in celebration, he has volunteered to do all of the cooking. This, I won't bother to explain, for obvious reasons, is a mixed blessing. But I can, yes, I am determined to get used to curried rabbit. Even the cat seems to like it. I am delighted to say that hubby thinks Tai Chi has improved my ability to compartmentalise --- And here was I believing that I'd got that sussed years ago. Anyway, we're both agreed that Tai Chi has improved my temperament. I was apparently a hyper-critical, short-fused, impatient, not very often published writer. Only the last bit is true now. Temporary, I assure you!

Hubby, however, still disappears to his shed to catch-up with a 'special project.' No change there. His cooking, however, is becoming more imaginative. It's taken me a while to get used to his Cornish pasties. I haven't quite plucked up the courage to ask how he makes pastry which in texture resembles house-bricks. But, as long as I can keep to my own more relaxed schedule, I won't rock hubby's newly discovered, culinary boat. And, we have come to a life-enhancing decision; we're going to re-discover Vietnam and Malaya.

My imagination can be given free reign! I have already thought of a story about a river-dwelling dragon. There must be many exciting subjects to write about. And, maybe hubby will enjoy our planned visits to the many old and new buildings deemed worthy of tourist's time? Perhaps, he will create, in miniature one that particularly appeals? I do hope so. Some of the extremely tall, modern structures took years to build! I doubt whether they were 'time sensitive'!! A similar, miniature project would keep hubby busy indefinitely! He will need a larger shed, of course --- I have a brochure, somewhere..... Mary Lou Windsor 2020

Speaker Seekers - Old



Judy Openshaw Gardening.....

I decided to grow some tomatoes for the first time in 28 years. This is a tumbling tomato which only grows two feet high. If you look closely there is one tomato growing. Yippee!

Rhubarb growing after the man who fixed the guttering trod on it and squashed it, he came back a week later and trod on it again, it was just in bits. However I watered the bits and it came back to life!!! So I put the dog's cage on it (she doesn't need it any more) to protect it. As you can see a miracle has happened.



Baking.....

This **Fruit Cake** is a brilliant recipe made without fat or sugar

No fat, no added sugar fruit cake

from Marcia Kempston

'The recipe has been passed down from my grandmother, to my mother, to me and then to my two daughters. Visitors never guess that there's no fat or added sugar in it. My family all love fruit cake, therefore one that is low in calories and a healthy option is a dream come true for us.'

Ingredients:

- 1lb mixed fruit
- 1 mug black tea
- 1 egg, beaten
- 6oz self raising flour
- 1 tsp mixed spice

Method: Overnight soak 1lb mixed fruit, covered with the black tea. Add the egg, self raising flour and spice. Place in a 2lb loaf tin and bake for 1 hour at 180°C.

Banana loaf is delicious and so easy to make. You can add other ingredients if you wish like walnuts, cherries or sultanas.

- 140g butter
- 140g caster sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 140g SR flour
- 1teasp. baking powder
- 2 very ripe bananas
- 50g icing sugar
- Handful dried banana chips for decoration

Heat oven 180C/160c fan, gas 4

Butter 2lb loaf tin, line base and sides baking parchment slowly add beaten eggs.

Cream butter sugar until light and fluffy.

Fold in flour and baking powder and mashed bananas.

Pour into pan bake 30mins or till skewer comes out clean.

Cool in tin 10 mins then remove.

Mix icing sugar with 2-3 tabbsp. water to make runny icing

Drizzle over cake and decorate with banana chips.



And knitting.....

I knitted 3 hats for charity, here are 2 of them.

And new.....



COMMITTEE PROFILE

Dave Clarke MBE - Speaker seeker (shared role)

I was born and raised in Mansfield Woodhouse where I attended the then Robin Hood Schools on both Cox's Lane and Oxclose Lane as well as the Manor Grammar School.

Leaving School in 1969 I began work at the Trustee Savings Bank before in 1971 joining the then National Coal Board, a career spanning 43 years was to follow. I began as an Apprentice/Qualified Surveyor working at Bentinck, New Hucknall, Newstead and Hucknall Collieries in the old South Notts Area. Then in 1982 I was appointed to put together a National Mining Records Office at Burton-on-Trent, which took 2 years to achieve, and which involved obtaining Parliamentary approval to bring the records out of both Scotland and Wales. Once assembled this was an extremely large collection which later in 2002, we had to transfer to the Coal Authority's Headquarters on Berry Hill.

In my latter working years with the Coal Industry in decline the Coal Authority were approached by a number of local Schools with a view to them introducing Coal Mining into the Local history section of the National Curriculum. I would visit the Schools giving them a very pictorial talk on the Coal Mining Industry from Children working in the Mines through to the present day. Also, I would also take in coal carvings and clothes to dress the children up in and getting them to crawl under desks to give an idea of what it was like working underground!!

On the home front, I married Marjorie in 1975 at Warsop Parish Church. Initially we went to live at Kirkby-in-Ashfield but it wasn't long before we moved back to Mansfield Woodhouse. We have been blessed with 2 sons, Stuart (born 1981) and Jonathan (1987) and subsequently have 5 Grandchildren, Harrison (12), Miley (10), Jude (6), Poppy (2) and Francesca (6 months), the latter arriving earlier this year an astonishing 10 weeks early. After the lads left home, we moved to Forest Town where we have lived for the last 17 years.

Marjorie and I joined actually the U3A in July 2018 after waiting some 18 months for a vacancy to arise. She had heard about it through the Nifty Fifties and then it being recommended by many friends. I am a Member of the Photographic Club whilst Marjorie is a Member of the Craft group. We have been on several day trips and last year went on the holiday to South London.

Before Lockdown, beside the U3A, Marjorie and I were also members of the Mansfield CHA Rambling Club, the Carr Bank Petanque group and the Old Mansfield Woodhouse Society. I have also played a part in the Community over the years both in managing teams at various age groups and then being Chairman of Woodhouse Imps Football Club. Also, I have served as Secretary of Woodhouse Colts Football Club and on various PTA's at local Schools.

I have 2 claims to fame, these being:-

1. I share my birthday with the more famous Dave Clarke (of Dave Clarke 5 fame) but the good news is that I am 10 years younger.
2. In March 2003 I was introduced to and awarded an MBE by Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace. The MBE having been awarded for 'Services to the Coal Mining Industry' in the New Year's Honours List of 2003.



KNITTED HEARTS

A very big thank you to Gina Smith, Margaret Shooter, and Linda Dean for knitting hearts for Covid 19 patients and their families. These have been sent off to a hospital in London where they will be much appreciated. Once again thank you ladies. Terry Dillon

Is this the “New Normal” for Interest Group meetings?



The following explanation of Zoom, by Paul Martinez, was sent to the U3As in the Nottinghamshire Network for distribution. Anyone can use Zoom if they have a smartphone, tablet or I Pad. Your laptop or stand alone computer needs to have a camera to be able to use it.

I am using Zoom frequently at present with Mapperley U3A groups and representing Sherwood at Zoom meetings with other U3As.

Claire Wilkie

Zoom has quickly become the go-to video-conferencing technology for groups, largely because it's simple to use and versatile. As it has become more popular, more and more interest groups have tried out ways of using Zoom to resume or continue their group activities, (I've been running my Supper Group by Zoom) and even as restrictions are eased, Zoom is likely to remain an integral part of group and U3A communication. 800 members have attended tutorial sessions on *Running large meetings and AGMs by Zoom* and there are ongoing tutorials on *Introduction to Zoom* and *Hosting a Zoom meeting* which run regularly – check out at <https://u3a.org.uk/events/online-events>

How Zoom works

Zoom works at 3 levels and for the majority, there is no need to download the Zoom app to participate:

1. Administrator Level

Zoom can be used at Administrator level (particularly with Zoom Pro for which a licence is necessary) where there are numerous features and complexities that you need to master but this option is for the more experienced and only essential if you need a longer meeting, high numbers of participants or technical wizardry.

2. Hosting a Meeting

Where members want to use Zoom just to set up (or host) a meeting, they need to download and sign in to Zoom - fairly easy to manage - and use the standard Zoom package **FREE** for 45 minute meetings. *Tutorials as indicated above are readily available.*

3. Attending a Meeting

Crucially, most members only need to use Zoom passively - joining a meeting rather than hosting or managing any complexities. This can be done without downloading or owning a Zoom account. Members are sent an invitation by email and only need to click on a link and the device will set up a temporary link to Zoom and patch the user into the meeting. Members only need to know how to switch their video and audio on and off. Zoom will do the rest. At the end of the meeting Zoom will terminate the connection and disappear from your device.

