



SHERWOOD U3A

Learn Laugh Live NEWSLETTER December 2020

Hello to all Sherwood U3A members,

The December issue includes an item encouraging you to embrace technology, a committee profile, the winners of the monthly photography group competition and the chance to vote for your favourite photo to be the 2020 winner. This is followed by thoughts and ideas for both Christmas 2020 and Christmas Past.

Next month will be the first edition for 2021! A New Year, with new horizons. What will your New Year resolutions be? Please let me know.

Sue Robb (Editor)

Contributions before Christmas 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 whose contact details are in this newsletter.
Financial/General	Margaret Taylor
Newsletter/General	Sue Robb

NOTICES

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT –Liz Wilson

Yet another example of how different this year has been! Normally this Report would have lots of pictures of members in Christmas jumpers and be talking about the Christmas meals that I was attending --- but it isn't!!! To think that I used to complain about having to go to eleven Christmas meals in December and how it would take until Easter before I lost the weight that I had put on!! I vow that I will never complain again but just enjoy the company and the food!

Instead of the joyousness of Christmas, I have the sad news that one of our ex members has died – Maureen Cullen. She was one of our earliest members and supported us at many social events and participated in some of the holidays and visits. Though I could not attend her funeral because of previous commitments I was pleased to hear that some Sherwood members went and paid their respects – Eileen Reavill, Irene Braybrooke, Sandra Rogers, Jean Hobson, Joan and Les Hobson.

I did attend Elaine’s funeral and was pleased to see that her good friends, Angela Forster and Sandy Lake were part of the congregation. Another six of us, Pat Thomsett, Sandra Rogers, Claire Wilkie, Ann Madden, Denise Whitsed and myself, stood on the drive and held U3A banners to show our sorrow and respect.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sandra Rogers for keeping me informed about these sad occasions as well as sending cards, on Sherwood U3A’s behalf, to all those who have been ill, had accidents or who have suffered loss.

Looking forward to next year, hopefully in January we will have a new website and will be holding our first ZOOM Monthly Meeting. If you haven’t got zoom please download the App and make sure that you have a camera either built into your computer or added to it. All those who receive their Newsletter via the internet will, in the first week of January, receive an email from Claire Wilkie, inviting you to join a Zoom meeting on the 14th January at the normal time of 10am. We won’t be having a speaker for that meeting but hope to have one in February. However, all the usual Sherwood U3A members who speak from the front at Meetings will be there to inform and entertain you. I know I avoided zoom for ages but, eventually, I succumbed because it was the only way that we could have

Committee Meetings! If I can manage it so can you! Please have a go so that we can see as many as possible of you to start the New Year with a bang (computers and their cameras could be on Santa's list)!

All that remains is for me to WISH YOU All a very Merry Christmas and a hopefully "UNLOCKED" Happy New Year --- see you on ZOOM!

"ARE YOU MOVING FORWARD WITH TECHNOLOGY?"

Technology is becoming a necessary part of our everyday lives – to communicate with our loved ones, order our groceries on line or to download the various apps that will help us get through these difficult days.

We are encouraging those members who may be contemplating asking for some form of technology for Christmas - computer, Laptop, iPad or iPhone - to do so, as this could be the answer to feeling less isolated.

To help in your decision, we have put together a couple of articles to feature in this and next month's newsletter exploring what is being offered nationally and locally within the U3A organisation.

Sherwood's Own Web Site

At the present time this is being given a bit of a face-lift and hopefully when the "new look" is launched early in the New Year you will see a new modern and interesting web site ready for the future. More news on this in our next report.

National Office

- You can register to receive a regular newsletter which gives the latest news on U3As nationally and locally. Simply go to the site of the National Office, Third Age Trust and register your details.
- They offer a web site where you can join:-
 - virtual groups from a watercolour class to having an overview of yoga practices
 - speakers who give varied and interesting talks
 - a future Summer School
 - meetings and conferences
- There are many "How To" guides offering online tutorials

Each article has a "link" to make booking easier. Check out their Winter Learning Programme and perhaps you will be interested in what is currently on offer.

Notts. Network

The Notts. Network of over 30 U3As in Nottinghamshire, operate very similarly to the National Office but have more County based programmes, from speakers to learning opportunities.

We don't have to be "computer nerds" to make our lives more fulfilling, but be willing to be part of this technical world. Nothing is beyond us!!



NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER PROFILE - DENISE WHITSED

I was born in Mansfield Woodhouse and have lived here all my life.

After leaving school, I went to work in the cash office at Littlewood's store in Mansfield and then for two years I worked for A G Barr before leaving to work for TSB at Shirebrook. I moved to Kirkby in Ashfield as a sales manager when we were amalgamated as Lloyds TSB ending my working life at Mansfield Branch.

After twenty years I retired at a young age of 47 to the best job of being a mamma.

I am married to Bill and have two children and four grandchildren and we are lucky that we all live locally in Mansfield Woodhouse.

My husband worked at Rufford Pit and then Mines Rescue Woodhouse for twenty years.

We have been involved in local football for over thirty years, my husband ran Woodhouse Colts and I was secretary and treasurer when our son played, moving onto the adult Woodhouse team, through this we have met many

lovely people and had a fantastic social life.

Now our son runs Sherwood colliery children's team where we enjoy watching our grandson play.

We also go to cheerleading events where our granddaughter is involved with Scorpions. I have been on the committee at Forest Town U3A as social secretary enjoying many events and day trips, my term finishing in August.

I am a social butterfly and in "normal times" I enjoy meeting people most days for lunch.

The U3A came at the right time for me after losing my parents. I had a fabulous retirement with them, eating out most days, going to garden centres and travelling abroad with them three times a year. A lot of people would have known my mum from Woodhouse as the Tupperware lady; again this gave us many good times.

GROUP NEWS



HOLIDAYS

Friday 2nd July 2021 to Friday 9th July 2021 Isle of Wight

The Isle of Wight Holiday is going ahead next year (hopefully) at the same price as this year £739 pp. I have Single, Twin and Double Rooms available. If you are interested please let me know as soon as possible. I will need a £50 deposit by March 2021.

The programme is as follows:-

Sunday Morning visit to Cowes then we continue to Carisbrooke Castle best known for the imprisonment of King Charles 1, then we travel to Godshill, the prettiest village on the island.

Monday Full day tour to Whippingham Church, Osborne House

Wednesday Morning Alum Bay, where it is possible to Visit National Trust The Needles, Old & New Battery. (Free to NT Members). Farringford House and Gardens , owned by Lord Tennyson from 1853 until his death in 1892.

Thursday Morning visit to Ventnor Botanical Gardens.

Premier Chalet Upgrade - £53pp for full duration

Norton Grange is a Chalet Village with stunning views of the Solent, it is moments from a maritime museum, underwater Archaeology Centre, a Planetarium and a model railway. The site was occupied by the Royal Navy during WW2.

Rita Foulkes

PHOTOGRAPHY

Each December the membership has the chance to vote for the photo they consider the best from the year.

Please choose your favourite and email/phone your choice of month to the editor, Sue Robb (07484215295

sarobb@btinternet.com). Results in January!



January winner: Eileen Wass

Theme: Transport

Title: Romany Caravan



February winner: Ian Thomson

Theme: Bridges

Title: Reflection



March winner: Molly Wright

Theme: Architecture

Title: Liverpool Museum



April Winner: Kathy Butler
Theme: Spring
Title: Spring Butterflies



May winner: Molly Wright
Theme: Gardens
Title: A walk in the garden



June winner: Trevor Hughes
Theme: Clouds and Skies
Title: Cottam Power Station



July winner Eileen Wass
Theme: Making Face Masks
Theme: What I Did In Lockdown



August winner: Sue Robb
Title: Stalagmites and Stalactites
Theme: Miscellaneous Masterpieces



September: Dave Stanford
Title: Eye Eye
Theme: Shapes



October Winner: Roger Wood
Theme: Families and grandchildren
Title: Dennis the Menace



November winner: Pat Collins
Theme: Autumn
Title: Idyllic Autumn Evening

DECEMBER'S
WINNER WILL BE
IN THE NEXT ISSUE
AND NOT
COUNTED IN THE
VOTE THIS MONTH

PAINTING FOR PLEASURE

This group like most of the others, has been 'resting' since March so unfortunately there is nothing much to report on. One or two of our members have been doing some painting and putting the rest of us to shame and congratulations to them. I am hoping that we can all regroup with renewed enthusiasm when we are allowed, in the not too distant future I hope. Speaking for myself, I have been suffering from a great lack of motivation but will keep taking the tablets and hope it will get better!!

Take care of yourselves, keep safe, and carry on.

Marlene Limb

CHRISTMAS 2020

No Nativity this year because the 3 Wise Men face a travel ban.

The Shepherds have been furloughed.

The Inn Keeper has shut under Tier 3 Regulations and had a slump in bookings.

Santa won't be working as he would break the rule of six with Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donner and Blitzen.

As for Rudolph, with that red nose, he should be isolating and taking a test.

Make something New for Christmas

A Craft That Is Surprisingly Easy To Do

1. Materials - Glass bottle or jar - White gesso, PVA glue, Small Paint brush (These can all be bought from The Works) Paper serviettes. I got mine from Tesco's.

2. Paint the bottle with two coats of gesso. Make sure the first coat is completely dry before applying the second.

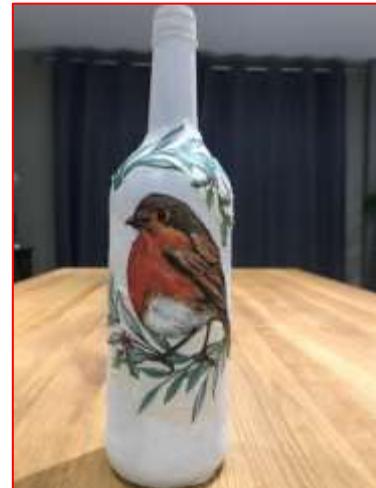
3. If your serviette is made of layers of tissue separate the layers retaining the layer with the image on. Decide what images you want from the serviette. Leaving a dry margin around the image gently apply a fine line of water around the image.

Tease the tissue apart along the water line to release the image. Do not be tempted to cut out the images with scissors because it will leave a hard line along the edge.

4. Place the image where you want it and attach it to the bottle by lightly brushing PVA glue(diluted 50/50 with water) over it. Do not apply the glue first as it will cause bubbles to form. Allow to dry thoroughly. You can pop a string of small battery lights inside for a festive touch if you like. It does not have to be a Christmas theme.

It is not difficult to do and so effective but you need to take your time. Why not have a go. Happy crafting.

Eileen Reavill



Christmas dinner with the family (pre Government guidelines)!!



CHRISTMAS PAST!

THE TEA DANCE

It's the Saturday tea dance and they'll all be here today.
Aches and pains forgotten, dance the afternoon away.
Foxtrots, quicksteps, waltzes, some are slow but some are nifty.
With memories of how it was way back in 1950.

Norman's in the toilet and he's struggling to pee,
He's got trouble with his prostate, and he'll likely miss his tea.
Eddy's got a new love that he met in Thornton Heath,
She does a lovely tango, but she hasn't any teeth.

She mistook his outside swivel for a travelling contra check.
Ida's had her hair done and she's ready for the saunter,
She had a vindaloo last night and it's coming back to haunt her.

Florry's mini skirt's revealing when she's spinning in the jive,
She really shouldn't wear a thong approaching 85.
They've had their tea and cake and chat and had a little laugh,
And gamely rise with creaking knees to face the second half.

Norman's made it back in time for rumba number one,
His cucaracha's very neat, but he's left his flies undone.
Vera's fallen over in a massive crimplene heap,
Bert's got indigestion and Mabel's fast asleep.

It's last waltz time and up they get for Humperdinck's old tune,
And then: 'Goodbye, good luck, take care, God willing see you soon.

Writer Unknown



In 2018 we took our grandson to a Garden Centre hoping to see Father Christmas. Sadly the grotto was closed! This was the nearest thing we could find. We bought him a small present and I don't think he minded too much!!

Terry Dillon

Plain, Crazy, Part 2: Getting Back

We were off.....Climbing away from the airport and through the clouds I hoped that Debs would manage her phobia, so I could opt out of being her shrink. I wasn't feeling benevolent, and when the seat-belt sign stayed on, my worst fears surfaced ---Then the intercom crackled, and the Captain cleared his throat to update his captive audience.

Why is it, when bad news is communicated to the passengers, the pilot speaks without a trace of emotion in his voice? Are they robots? The 'bad news' was a warning regarding head-winds that I knew would mean a very bumpy ride! I watched as Debs went rigid, before turning to me open-mouthed, eyes popping. Her husband had 'retired' behind his boys' mag. I was 'it'. She focused on me, just as the spider transfixes its prey.

Her panic threatened to break loose. I didn't want to lie to her, because she trusted me; but I didn't want to exaggerate either. As it turned out; I didn't. I needed her to face her fears in order to help her.

"We're in for a rocky ride home. Can't be helped it's down to head-winds. The pilot would prefer winds behind, but unfortunately, they're in front." Debs started whimpering. I stayed po-faced, trying to keep my voice level, explaining forthcoming events in a matter-of-fact way.

"Head-winds mean turbulence, and it'll last for about an hour." My voice sounded casual. Even for me, it was a good performance. Debs had picked up on the word 'turbulence'.

"Oh! My God! We're all going to die!" Her panic was irritating me now. This pathetic creature was totally self-obsessed. I decided, perhaps unfairly, on shock tactics.

"It won't happen. You and everyone else will live through it. You won't like it, but, believe me, I've got shares in the company, and we WILL *walk away!*" She was still whimpering, and some of the other passengers were getting restless. I tried again. I had to be cruel to be kind.

"Debbie! Listen to me. You'll live to be an even bigger pain in the posterior, and a more totally self-absorbed, control-freak than you are already." Debs stopped whimpering as someone applauded. She looked cow-eyed at her husband who winked, before retreating behind page three of his paper.

"You're cruel." She blubbered. Then the plane started rocking violently just to prove me right, and I wondered why everything happened to me.

Unfortunately, I know quite a lot about aircraft. A good friend of ours was a senior training pilot for many years. They say knowledge is power. If you're the one flying the plane, yes! If not, believe me it doesn't help! You're not in control, right? Debs started again.

"I'm so sorry. I can't help it." I came out with the only answer that made sense, telling her to deal with her phobia or stop flying altogether. She looked quite shocked at my logical suggestion. She had to fly because her husband and the children loved Majorca. Taking a cruise proved to be an unacceptable option! You've guessed it. The ship might sink. Flying, she said, was much quicker!

Later on, I admitted to myself, the turbulence was the worst I had ever experienced. Debs had resorted to unpicking the hem of the ridiculous mini. I guessed she had OCD problems too. And if she carried on shredding there would be decency issues getting off the aircraft. So we tried some meditation, and visualizations, which eventually calmed her. I had earlier thrown in a few positive, practical observations:

"The wings are still on. The cabin-crew are still smiling and serving drinks." (And she had already knocked back two gin and tonics, and so had I and everyone around us.) She was resentful of my black humour and not that drunk. I suggested a bottle of champagne.

"It won't mix with the diazepam." She snapped back.

"It won't matter, if we crash," I reasoned. I ordered the champagne, smiling wickedly at a shocked Debs. At least she was no longer panicking and shredding the dress, and I soon found out why!

"I want to use the loo!" Was this a new attention-seeking act?

"You can't go, yet! The seat-belt lights are on," I reminded her. Debs ignored me, unbuckled, and teetered along the aisle. Considering the amount of alcohol and pills she'd swallowed, it was quite an achievement.

"I'll have to ask the Captain." The steward informed a desperate Debs.

"You can ask Captain Kirk of the U.S.S. Enterprise," shrieked a mortified Debs, "but I *am* using the loo!" She did, returning to her seat with a smug grin. Just then, the seat-belt lights went out. Finally, the plane had ceased its violent rocking. Debs hugged me, and I secretly, praised the plane's makers.

"You were so much better this time," I said. She was equally generous, and *she* meant it.

"Even when you were being horrible, it helped. It took my mind off all that shaking."

"It's called distraction tactics." I smiled. I was feeling rather pleased with myself.

"You're so 'in tune' with my issues --- Isn't she Max?" Debs was seeking her husband's opinion for once. He responded enthusiastically.

"It's down to you that Debs has come through this in one piece!" He saluted me. I indicated Debs's dress:

"That didn't fare so well!" We all laughed, then, Max suddenly became serious.

"We're going to Egypt in eight weeks. (Max named the resort.) I gasped! Fate loved me after all! Max continued: "Why don't you and hubby come too? Debs will arrive in better shape... Don't worry; I'll pay for everything!" (I wasn't even tempted.)

"And you can do your writing stuff," she pleaded. "You don't have to put up with us!" Debs grabbed my bruised hand. "Say you will?" It was my turn to stare cow-eyed. Debs and her flying issues filled me with horror. Max was still going on about his successful business. I tried to focus. Fate had dealt me a get-out-of-jail-card. I played mine. Gently, I explained that we had other commitments --- Though, no doubt, we would have adored the fabulous hotel and resort. Then, I played my ace!

"I have a cousin who has a villa in the same area! She is married to a well-known phobia therapist. He could help you to sort out your issues." I took a card from my bag and handed it to Max, thanking the gods, my cousin had married a renowned phobia therapist! Who knew that would come in handy!?

"If you telephone first, mention my name, I know he'll make time for you, and won't charge you the astronomical fees his rich, clients pay." I paused, watching Debs for a favourable response.

"Is he *famous*?" Bingo!

"Very. And his success rate is enviable." I said glibly. "I don't want to brag, but my cousin's husband knows his stuff. Some of his clients are royals!" Debs batted her eyelashes, her self-obsessed thought processes in overdrive. I knew I'd scored a hit. She even forgot to panic when we came in to land! Max thanked me at least ten times as we disembarked to passport control. My husband, one of nature's innocents commented:

"She'll no doubt be in a good mood now?" I shrugged my shoulders, not convinced. I just hoped Debs phoned Abdul, and hopefully, he would help her deal with her phobia.

As we moved toward the exit we overheard:

"I don't *do* waiting." My husband looked at me as Debs exploded. Max did his best; kind of:

"Cab's late Debs; it's the traffic you silly cow!" I made to intervene; Norm stopped me, explaining:

"Debs needs to deal with her control issues. It's not just about flying!" I knew that, only too well! But did he? I explained:

"Distraction tactics work *both* ways, it helped me too. But thanks to Abdul, I chose to face my demons; take flying lessons!"

Copyright © Mary Lou Windsor 2020.



