



Ravensingham Snowdrops

Paul Heinrich (Digital Photography Group)

Thoughts from the Chair

Your u3a (Really) Needs You!

I normally fill this bit of the newsletter with whatever more or less random thoughts have occurred to me recently and I will return to that sort of thing next month. However, this month I want to appeal for some much-needed help to keep our u3a going into the future.

Even though we are not meeting face to face at the moment, there is still lots to do. Much of this work is done (brilliantly) by Group Leaders who have kept groups going on Zoom or by email, by Sonia and Linda on the newsletter and the website and, of course, by the Committee. It was also great to see so many people taking the time to attend our virtual AGM and ensure it was quorate last month.

However, the Committee is the smallest it has been for a long time following the departure of people who came to end of the time they could serve under u3a rules, and more will need to step down for the same reason at the end of this year. We therefore urgently need to recruit some new committee members.

I know you may be busy doing other things or worried that you might not have the right skills to be a committee member, but please consider volunteering. You can be co-opted as soon as you come forward, or stand for election at the next AGM. In either case, you can find out what is involved and get help and advice from current committee members straight away.

Committee meetings are usually only once every two months and never more than monthly, and the work done between meetings will only be what you can cope with.

If you would like to know more without necessarily committing yourself immediately, send us a message through the website at www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us.

I look forward to hearing from you.

THE COPY DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER IS THURSDAY, 25 FEBRUARY at 12.00 noon. As usual, I will acknowledge all copy received, so if you do not receive an acknowledgement within 48 hours, please resend.

If you wish to contact the Newsletter Editor, then please do so via our website www.northwalshamu3a.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE - FEBRUARY 2021

The Third Age Trust and North Walsham u3a Committee are continuing to do all they can to keep u3a activities going as much as possible, but it seems inevitable that face to face meetings will continue to be suspended for some time. This is a real shame, but I am sure you will agree that we need to stay as safe as we can, especially given that older people tend to be affected more severely than others by Covid-19.

The Current National Rules

As you will probably already know, England is again in a national coronavirus lockdown, and the government has brought its message of “Stay home. Protect the NHS. Save lives.” back again. As a result, we are all required to stay at home unless we need to leave for one of the following reasons:

Work: You can only leave home for work purposes where it is not possible to work from home. This includes people who work within critical national infrastructure, construction or manufacturing, which requires in-person attendance. You can also leave home to provide voluntary or charitable services.

Essential activities: People will be allowed to leave home to buy essential items at shops or obtain services. You can also leave your home to help a vulnerable or disabled person, or someone who is self-isolating, to shop for essentials on their behalf.

Education and childcare: You can leave home for education, registered childcare and supervised activities for children where they are eligible to attend. People can also continue with existing arrangements for contact between parents and children if they live apart, as well as with childcare bubbles.

Meeting others and providing care: If you are legally permitted to form a support bubble, you can leave home to visit those in your support bubble and to provide informal childcare for children under 14 as part of a childcare bubble. You can also provide care for disabled and vulnerable people, provide emergency assistance, and attend a support group of up to 15 people. Leaving home for respite care will also be permitted where that care is being provided to a vulnerable or disabled person, or as a short break in respect of a looked after child.

Exercise: Outdoor exercise can continue alone or with one other person, or with your household or support bubble. However, this should be limited to once per day, and the government advises against travelling outside your local area for exercising. It also urges people to maintain social distancing.

Medical reasons: If you need to leave home for a medical reason, including to get a Covid-19 test, for medical appointments and emergencies, you can. You can also leave home to be with someone who is giving birth, or to visit someone who is dying. Visiting someone in a care home, hospice or hospital, or to accompany someone to a medical appointment is also permitted.

Animal welfare reasons, such as to visit the vet for advice or treatment, is also considered a “reasonable excuse” to leave home.

Harm: You can leave home to escape risk of harm, such as domestic abuse.

Communal worship and life events: You can leave home to visit a place of worship for communal worship, funerals and weddings as long as you observe social distancing rules and do not mingle with anyone outside your household or support bubble. Weddings, funerals and other events linked to a death are all subject to limits on the number of people who can attend. Weddings and civil ceremonies can only take place in “exceptional circumstances”.

There is a useful explanation of support bubbles at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-52637354.

Not Sure if You Have a Cold, Flu or Covid-19?

If you are not feeling well, but aren't sure if you have a cold, flu or Covid-19, the following may help:

www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-54182329

www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/21/coronavirus-symptoms-how-to-tell-if-you-have-a-common-cold-flu-or-covid.

There is more information about Covid-19 symptoms and how you can protect yourself at:

www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51048366.

And, of course, you may want to get a Covid test if you think you have the virus.

Vaccination

Like the rest of the country, Covid-19 vaccinations have now begun in and around North Walsham, with priority being given to older people and those who are at the greatest risk for health reasons.

When you become eligible for your vaccination, you will be sent a letter or called by your GP inviting you to make an appointment. Once you have received your invitation, you can either ring up to book, or book an appointment online by going to the web address that is printed on the letter. It is a page on the official www.nhs.uk website.

If you don't make an appointment after a certain length of time, you might be sent a reminder text message or email.

Sadly, there are more and more reports of scams related to Covid vaccinations. These take the form of phone calls or emails asking you to contact the sender to give your details so that you can get vaccinated, and many of the scams ask for a payment to be made up front. **The NHS will never ask you for bank or credit card details and the vaccination is completely free.**

There has also been a lot of misinformation about vaccinations, claiming that it isn't safe or that there is some other reason to avoid it. **Please ignore this and get vaccinated as soon as you are able to.**

If you have any questions or concerns about being vaccinated, ask your GP or another medically qualified person, not social media!

There is also a useful NHS leaflet about Covid vaccination at:

www.ulh.nhs.uk/content/uploads/2020/12/PHE-vaccine-leaflet.pdf



North Walsham u3a Update

Interest Groups Working Together Online

Lots of our interest groups are now meeting virtually online and/or staying in touch by email. It isn't the same as meeting face to face, but it does seem to work well once people get used to it. At the time of writing, groups that are meeting on Zoom or staying in touch by email include:

- Art Appreciation
- Classical Music
- Computing
- Current Affairs
- Digital Photography
- Discussion
- Family History
- Folk Music
- History
- Humour
- Intuition and Beyond
- Jazz Appreciation
- Mac Users
- Philosophy
- Poetry
- Rock 'n' Pop
- Wine Appreciation
- Yoga

If you would like to join one of these groups, please contact the Group Leader whose phone number is on last year's programme card, or send a message at www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us and we will pass your details on to the Group Leader so they can contact you.

If any of your groups aren't yet using technology to keep working together and you think they might be able to, please do the following:

1. Talk to other members of your group about it;
2. Try to identify someone in the group who could act as a Zoom 'host' (who can be the Group Leader, but doesn't need to be);
3. Ask Peter Phillips and/or Richard Nevill for advice if you want to, or send your query through the contact page on our website at www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us.

North Walsham u3a is paying for a number of Zoom subscriptions to support this.

Online General Meetings

We are also still offering a virtual monthly General Meeting on Zoom, normally on the first Friday afternoon of each month. This month's meeting will be at 2.00pm on Friday, 5 February and a Zoom invitation to this will be sent separately.

Virtual Coffee Mornings

Richard Nevill has offered to host virtual coffee mornings on Zoom at 11.00am each Monday. You can contact Richard about this at ricnev@gmail.com.

North Walsham u3a Equipment – Can You Help?

Our u3a has a variety of equipment that needs to be stored and the Committee are looking for somewhere safe, warm and dry to keep it. It includes IT equipment, notice boards and other items, and would fit in a walk-in cupboard or (very) small bedroom. If you would be willing to store these items, or can suggest somewhere that might be suitable, please send us a message via the contact page on North Walsham u3a's website at www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us.

National u3a – The Third Age Trust

There is a vast amount of information for members on the Third Age Trust website, including what other groups are up to and details of upcoming online events that you can book for free.

If you have not yet registered for access to the TAT website, I urge you to do so at:
www.u3a.org.uk/member-login?view=registration.

There are details of a range of u3a learning opportunities at <https://u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>.

You can also subscribe to receive the email Newsletter from the Trust at:
www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter

More Ways to Learn in Lockdown (apart from u3a activities)

Free Ways to Learn New Things

The Money Saving Expert website has an article about **12 free ways to learn something new at home including languages, piano, Open University courses and more.** There are full details at:

www.moneysavingexpert.com/deals/deals-hunter/2020/03/free-ways-to-learn-new-skills-at-home/.

TED Talks – Online and a Possible New u3a Group

TED talks are lectures by world renowned experts in their fields on hundreds of different topics. Many are at www.youtube.com/ and can be watched for free.

If you would be interested in watching and discussing them with other u3a members, send us a message at www.northwalshamu3a.org/contact-us and we will start a new group to do this.

Virtual Tours

If you fancy joining a live, expertly guided tour in Venice, Budapest, Rome, Berlin or any one of many other more wonderful places, try 'Virtual Trips'. You have to sign up and book the tours you want. There is no charge for a tour, but you can leave a tip for the Guide by card or PayPal if you want to. Full details are available at: www.virtualtrips.io/.

Zoom Tutorial Videos

If you are unsure how to use Zoom or how to get the best out of it, there are some useful tutorial videos at:
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials?zcid=1602>.

AND NOW FOR SOME BRILLIANT (OR POSSIBLY EXCRUCIATING) PUNS... Thanks to David Riddle, Chairman of North Norfolk u3a for the following selection of excruciating puns:

Those who jump off a bridge in Paris are in Seine.
A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking.
Dijon vu - The same mustard as before.
Shotgun wedding - A case of wife or death.
A man needs a mistress just to break the monogamy.
A hangover is the wrath of grapes.
Does the name Pavlov ring a bell?
Reading while sunbathing makes you well red.
When two egotists meet, it's an I for an I.
A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tired.
What's the definition of a will? (It's a dead give-away.)
Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana
In democracy your vote counts. In feudalism your count votes.
A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

For further information on any group below, please contact the Group Leader or Groups Co-ordinator via our new website www.northwalshamu3a.org, or by telephone as listed in the 2020 Programme Card.

Art Appreciation

In January we had a quiz from Janet, members sharing their favourite paintings and a discussion on the work of Edward Hopper.

Favourite paintings showed a wide range of likes from our members. We had a Paul Klee; 'An Experiment on a Bird in an Air Pump' by Joseph Wright, capturing scientific experiment and attention to detail in his painting. A Henry Moore sculpture – one of his wonderful family groups. A beautiful Veemer, 'The Little Street', which is an unusual scene for him to paint. A street with houses, one has a old woman sitting in her doorway, a woman washing clothes in an alley showing the courtyard beyond and children playing. A captivating painting. A Turner, 'Rain, Steam and Speed', which everyone loved. A Rembrandt, 'The Polish Rider', a Van Gogh, 'Scheveningen Woman Knitting'. A beautiful painting from his early years when he lived around Scheveningen, and 'Night Hawks' by Edward Hopper, and anything painted by Picasso.

We then discussed the paintings of Edward Hopper, an American artist painting around the 1920s onwards. We all found his paintings very emotional. They nearly all show people living in a city, alone. Even when he shows a group of people, they are not communicating. His paintings of buildings are equally lonely, as in his painting of a lighthouse on the edge of a cliff. His paintings of empty rooms also give the impression of isolation. Yet, he paints using blocks of bright colours and uses the light from windows or lamps effectively. My favourite painting is 'Automat' - a woman sitting alone staring at the cup of coffee on the table in front of her. I find his work very disturbing.

Mave

Discussion Group

Another wide ranging discussion at our January Zoom meeting. The large number of satellites and other ironmongery circulating above us. Back to earth to consider scams and phone and internet security. Is it better to be much taller or much shorter than average? Is a post prandial afternoon nap a good idea?

Bryan

Humour Group

Did you know humour and laughter can improve your health? Laughter strengthens your immune system, boosts mood, diminishes pain, and can help protect you from the damaging effects of stress. Personally, I need all the help I can get while I wait until my projected 'freedom' at the beginning of May. By then I will have been 'house, garden and solitary walks' for fourteen months. So, receiving and sharing entertaining items with the Humour Group is a daily dose of good medicine for me. True, a joke doesn't have the power of a Covid vaccination, but every little helps! Therefore, I hope this joke amuses you.

A rich old man goes for his regular round of golf with his friends, but this time he brings along a gorgeous young lady.

"Guys, meet my new fiancée," he says, full of pride as he introduces her to his pals.

For the rest of the afternoon, his friends can't take their eyes off the stunning beauty. After the round of golf, the rich man goes up to the bar to buy drinks for the group.

One of his friends goes with him and when at the bar asks him, "How on earth did you manage to hook up with such a beautiful young lady? You're 70. She must be at least 40 years younger than you!"

The old rich guy says, "I lied about my age." His friend says, "And she believed you? How old did you say you were?"

"I told her I was 90."

Sheila

Organic Allotment Group

We have had to rearrange things a bit on the allotment, as Steve (Chair of our u3a) has donated a greenhouse! The only place to site it is by the entrance, so the compost bins have been reduced to one and moved to the opposite end of the plot. On the subject of compost, our small pile is looking very healthy, as can be seen in the photo.



The bin does look good at that end of the site, and we are hoping to make the greenhouse productive. I am imagining aubergines, tomatoes and cucumbers next summer.

Something has eaten most of the broad beans that I sowed last month. The evidence can be seen by the holes that have appeared where the seeds were. This means re-sowing in late February to get an early crop. We shall probably put netting over the bed after sowing to give them some protection and hope whatever it is will be put off.



The news that the government has licensed neonicotinoids for use on sugar beet is alarming. There is a great deal of evidence that these pesticides are extremely harmful to bees and they were banned by the EU some years ago. It seems that this government puts the short-term interests of some farmers ahead of environmental factors now we have the freedom to make our own decisions. Considering that farming in North Norfolk is reliant on sugar beet, I worry about the fate of the bees that I want to attract to the plot.

Ralph

Rock 'n Pop Group

Over our last few meetings we have been listening to some artists and tracks we hadn't played before. It was good to hear them again and we intend to continue this theme next month. We also found a jam session video of Johnny B Goode with Chuck Berry, Eric Clapton and Keith Richards – great for the rockers amongst us. By contrast we paid tribute to Gerry Marsden with 'Don't Let The Sun Catch You Crying', a song he co-wrote in 1964.

It was good to be joined by one of our members who was visiting family in South Africa. We looked on enviously as he told us it was 75°F and showed us the view from his window of blue sky, sunshine and Table Mountain. Still, at least it wasn't snowing here then.

If you would like to join us, please contact Richard or me for a Zoom invitation.

Marilyn

Wine Appreciation Group

We tried a different format in January, avoiding the need to visit members with wine deliveries in the current lockdown. We each chose a wine (or wines) ourselves, and shared comments. We were pleased with the outcome – so much so, that we decided to switch to twice-monthly meetings!

As always, a big thank you to Richard for Zooming us.

Our next Tastings will be on Thursday, 11 and 25 February.

Roy

Yoga Group

Goodness me, February already! I will wish you all a very, very belated Happy New Year, as I was unable to submit those sentiments last month due to sickness (not Covid-19 thankfully). I do so hope many of you are continuing with your own yoga sessions and improving on them. However, I am probably more realistic than hopeful, so, I will ask those of you who are doing nothing to try at least to do a couple of poses a day. If you do, you will find that they will help with coping during this very stressful time. As I have mentioned before, just going into mountain pose, being aware of your body, the position of your head and neck, shoulders, limbs, hips, tail bone, your breathing and experiencing the moment, can take you into your own special space, which will revive you.

Remember to totally relax after a few poses. Make enough time to do this, as it is all part of the yoga experience. When you are relaxing try to be aware of your breathing, and when those thoughts inevitably fly into your mind, just allow them to flow away. Don't dwell on them. Focus on your breathing and then you can do some long slow breathing exercises in order to relax yourself fully. 'Salute to the Sun' is a good posture to do if nothing else, as it stretches so many parts of the body. Try to do at least two and build up to more over time. Making yourself do a little every day really can help with the strains of lockdown and anything to ease that is worth doing, surely?

Remember, if you need any help or have questions, contact me via the website or from the information on last year's u3a programme card. Stay safe.

Joy

VALENTINE WORDSEARCH

Can you find the hidden words? They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards or backwards.



ADORE, APPEAL, ARROW, ATTRACTION, BEAU, BEGUILLED, BELOVED, BEWITCHED, BOW, BOYFRIEND, CAPTIVATED, CARD, CARING, CHARM, CHERISH, CRUSH, CUPID, DEAREST, DESIRE, DEVOTION, DOTE, EMOTION, ENCHANTED, ENRaptured, EROS, GIFT, GIRLFRIEND, GREETING, INFATUATION, KISSES, LOVE, LOYALTY, PASSION, ROMANCE, SMITTEN, SWEETHEART, TREASURE, TRUE LOVE, VALENTINE, YEARNING.

Source: www.puzzlechoice.com