

CHESS VALLEY



Registered Charity No. 1126990

NEWSLETTER

June - August 2020

website: www.cvu3a.uk



Our intrepid Pilates Group members are managing to continue their classes via Zoom video conferencing.

Keeping going during the lockdown
Chess Valley U3A goes virtual
First General Meeting via Zoom



(Anti-clockwise from above):

The Ukulele Group at their March performance for Good Companions in Chalfont St Giles, just before lockdown.

Amblers on their walk in Penn in early March.

A ladybird 'spotted' by one Gardening Group member.

Patchwork and Quilting Group Member Margaret Payne tries her latest design of face mask on her husband.

An excellent presentation was given via Zoom conferencing on The Early Roman Emperors, by James Cadle for the History Group's May session.



Speakers for General Meetings



Adam Smith

**NOTE: VIRTUAL MEETING VIA
ZOOM**

Thursday 11th June

Country Houses in World War 2: Requisition and Destruction

Adam worked as a museum curator in Lincolnshire, moved to Hertfordshire and is now a speaker on the history of English country houses and estates. In the late 1930s, the British Government realised that country houses were an important national resource with a major role to play in the forthcoming conflict.

Elizabeth Gowring

**NOTE: VIRTUAL MEETING VIA
ZOOM**

Thursday 9th July

Edith and I: An Edwardian Traveller in Kosovo

Elizabeth is an author and public speaker to a wide range of groups, and she also broadcasts on various BBC services. Her talk draws on the adventures of Edith Durham (1863-1944), an anthropologist, aid worker and feisty Balkan explorer a century ago, an inspiring Woman of Empire.

Michael Cohn is currently working on the programme for the rest of year and we will know in time whether future meetings will be virtual or 'real'. We'll keep you informed of developments via the monthly e-bulletins and the Chess Valley U3A website.

Notes from the Chair

Welcome to our second newsletter of 2020. As you can see, we have decided to distribute this via email, except for a few members who do not have this. We have taken this decision because of the reduced content, which didn't seem to justify the expense of printing and postage. The next one will be due in September and, hopefully, we might be back to something more like normal by then.

We have included the Groups Schedule towards the end of the newsletter as usual, as a little reminder of what normality looks like!

Keeping going

It's been heartening to learn that many of our Groups are managing to keep in touch using various forms of technology, including email and social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp. 14 Groups have also made use of the two Zoom accounts we have set up to stage virtual meetings, including talks. Obviously, Zoom isn't much use for Groups such as the walkers and sailors (although I guess they could meet via Zoom to plan their programmes for later in the year) but with the two accounts we can accommodate more meetings if required. Contact me using zoom@cvu3a.uk to book a session.

Annual General Meeting 2020

This was to have been held before our General Meeting on 11th June. However, although that is going ahead via Zoom (see below), we are limited to 100 participants and, of course, an AGM should be open to all members. The Charity Commission has issued advice that, in the current situation, it is permissible for organisations to postpone their AGMs, so this is what we are doing. We will attach the AGM to the first 'real' General Meeting we can stage after our release from captivity.

U3A Day

Pretty obviously, this event cannot be held on 3rd June as originally planned. The Third Age Trust is now planning for this to take place on Thursday 1st October 2020. We shall see...

Date for your diary – Chess Valley U3A quiz evening, Saturday 7th November

We're still hopeful that this will go ahead and Caroline and Anthony Jenks are beavering away on this year's brain-teasers. More details to follow.

General Meeting, 11th June

This will be our first attempt at staging a General Meeting using Zoom. The speaker is Adam Smith and his topic is *Country Houses in World War 2: Requisition and Destruction*. If you would like to join us for this, the link is given here. We are restricted to 100 attendees so it will be first come, first served and the virtual doors will open at 1:45 on the day. To avoid finding ourselves in the Tower of Babel, attendees will be muted on entry, although you should be able to see each other. Here is the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82038529578?pwd=cGxJQ01aUW5DUjNhaGRqcmQzVE50dz09>

With best wishes – and stay safe



James Cadle
chair@cvu3a.uk

New Members

We offer a warm welcome to our newest members:

Graham Norman
Jane Towers

Amersham
Amersham

Anthony Wilson

Holmer Green

If you know anyone you think might be interested in joining, please ask them to contact the Membership Secretary; contact details on page 5.

Do we have your up-to-date contact details?

If you have moved, changed your phone number or have a new email address, please make sure you update your information via the Chess Valley U3A website (www.cvu3a.uk). Click on 'Membership Login' on the homepage and then use your ID which is your membership number (from your membership card) prefixed by the first two letters of your first name (for example 'Jo9999'). If you don't have internet access, please let the Membership Secretary know (contact details above). We'd hate for you not to be kept up-to-date with the happenings in your U3A or miss out on events and visits.

Membership renewal 2020-2021

The cost of membership for 2020-21 has been set at £26, with a further £3.10 if you would like to have the *Third Age Matters* magazine. We are also introducing permanent membership cards rather than the previous annual cards.

Now that we have the Simple Membership system, members can maintain their own personal details and the renewal process no longer needs an application form. You have three options for renewing:

- a) Send your cheque made payable to Chess Valley U3A (**membership number on the reverse please**) and an SAE to The Membership Secretary, 12 Warrender Road, Chesham HP5 3NE.
- b) Pay by cash or cheque and collect your card/s at General Meetings, once these resume properly.
- c) Pay by bank transfer, and either send an SAE or collect the card/s at a General Meeting. Please ensure that the bank transfer includes your name and membership number, and send the membership secretary an email giving date of payment. The CVU3A bank details are: sort code 401769, account 51458108.

Your new permanent card/s will be sent back to you in the SAE.

If you have any questions regarding renewal, email membership@cvu3a.uk, or call 01494 782081.

Jim Wilkie, Membership Secretary

Members' Noticeboard

This noticeboard is available to members looking for companions for specific outings, assistance with projects or to seek or dispose of items (for free). It is NOT for advertising items for sale or for notices of a 'campaigning' nature. To advertise on our board, please email newsletter@cvu3a.uk. The newsletter appears quarterly and the deadline for the next issue is 22nd May 2020.

Copy date for the next newsletter is 22nd August 2020

From the Groups Coordinators

Due to the current situation, most Groups have stopped completely, although some are keeping going very successfully by starting Zoom sessions. Drop us a line if you would like to start one and we might be able to help.

We send any messages we receive from Central Office to Convenors to forward to their members with information on what is available in the way of future courses and Zoom session taking place centrally. Let us know if you don't receive any or don't want to receive them

If you log into u3a.org.uk you will find details of all of the sessions available to you through Central Office and you can sign up to receive regular updates. Also at the bottom of the page there is a Log In area for access into the advice area:

Login required for Advice area only.

Username

Password

Remember Me

Log in

[Create an account](#) →
[Forgot your username?](#)
[Forgot your password?](#)

Obviously, we had to cancel the April Convenors' Meeting but we still have some hopes of holding the one planned for October:

- Tuesday 27th October 1.00pm -2.30pm (lunch at 1pm)

Best wishes and keep well.

Sue Broad and Helen Barnard
Groups Coordinators
groups@cvu3a.uk

Chess Valley U3A Committee

Chair	James Cadle	chair@cvu3a.uk	01494 716992
Vice-Chair	Helen Barnard	vicechair@cvu3a.uk	01494 715588
Treasurer	John Anderson	treasurer@cvu3a.uk	01753 887463
Business Secretary	Chris Kinsley	secretary@cvu3a.uk	01442 863028
Membership Secretary	Jim Wilkie	membership@cvu3a.uk	01494 782081
Groups Coordinators	Sue Broad	groups@cvu3a.uk	01494 718128
	Helen Barnard		01494 715588
Webmaster	Valerie Garrood	webmaster@cvu3a.uk	01494 433585
Newsletter Editors	John Bunyan	newsletter@cvu3a.uk	01494 778858
	James Cadle		01494 716992
Speaker Organiser	Michael Cohn*	speakers@cvu3a.uk	01494 763542
Events Coordinator	Jackie Cobb	eventscoord@cvu3a.uk	01494 773718
* indicates a non-voting member			

Chess Valley U3A Convenors

(All phone numbers are prefixed by 01494 unless otherwise indicated)

Group	Convenor/s	U3A e-mail
Art	Claire Fallowfield	art@cvu3a.uk
Art Discussion 1	Angela Bishop	artdiscuss@cvu3a.uk
Art Discussion 2	Caroline Jenks	artdiscuss2@cvu3a.uk
Art Discussion 3	Helen Barnard	artdiscuss3@cvu3a.uk
Book Group 1	Mary Saywood	bookgroup1@cvu3a.uk
Book Group 2	Liz Howlett	bookgroup2@cvu3a.uk
	Christine Ross	
Book Group 3	Eileen Overton	bookgroup3@cvu3a.uk
Book Group 4	Jackie Cobb	bookgroup4@cvu3a.uk
Bowls (Short Mat)	Margaret Stickland	bowls@cvu3a.uk
Bridge	John Curtis	bridge@cvu3a.uk
	Patrick Clarke	
Bus Pass Adventures	Anne Muir	buspass@cvu3a.uk
Canasta	Julie Wolstenholme	mahjong@cvu3a.uk
Chess	Peter Schweiger	chess@cvu3a.uk
City of London Churches	Jackie Cobb	londonchurches@cvu3a.uk
Current Affairs	Eileen Overton	currentaffs@cvu3a.uk
Digital Imaging	Liz Stoelker	digimaging@cvu3a.uk
Dinghy Sailing	Wendy Barnes	sailing@cvu3a.uk
	Judith Young	
Eclectic Music	Juliet Crussell	music@cvu3a.uk
	Ron Hartwell	
Family History	Marian Bangs	familyhist@cvu3a.uk
	Sue Broad	
French Conversation	Morag Robertson	frenchcons@cvu3a.uk
French Intermediate	Hilary Alleston	french@cvu3a.uk
Gardening	Janice Cross	garden@cvu3a.uk
German	Jenny Lee	german@cvu3a.uk
History	Claire Paterson	history@cvu3a.uk
	Ian Hutt	
Italian	Joanna Hughes	newitalian@cvu3a.uk
Jazz Appreciation	Danny Robins	jazzmusic@cvu3a.uk
Keep Fit for 60+	Chris Orme	keepfit60@cvu3a.uk
	Diane Bovingdon	
Line Dancing	Lynne Benes	u3alinedance@chiltern-u3a.org.uk
	Linda English	
	Elaine Knowles	
Mah Jong	Julie Wolstenholme	mahjong@cvu3a.uk

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Chess Valley U3A Convenors (continued)

(All phone numbers are prefixed by 01494 unless otherwise indicated)

Group	Convenor/s	U3A e-mail
MOTO	Mo Barnes	moto@cvu3a.uk
MOTO 2	Stephanie Macnair	moto2@cvu3a.uk
	Peter Page	
Opera and Dance	(South Bucks U3A)	agopera@sbu3a.org.uk
Patchwork & Quilting	Mary Thompson	patchquilt@cvu3a.uk
	Angela Bratton	
Photography	Keith Hoffmeister	photography@cvu3a.uk
Pilates (1, 2 and 3)	Christine Ross	pilates@cvu3a.uk
	Liz Howlett	
Play Reading	Claire Paterson	playread@cvu3a.uk
	Linda Hepworth	
Poetry	Christine Ogborne	poetry@cvu3a.uk
Railways	Graham Yellowley	railways@cvu3a.uk
	James Cadle	
Scrabble for Fun	Tony Muir	groups@cvu3a.uk
Science & Technology	Mike Christianson	sciencetech@cvu3a.uk
	Allan Saunders	
	Peter Twist	
Singing for Pleasure	Angela Bratton	singing@cvu3a.uk
	Stephanie Rothwell	
Spanish Conv (Inter)	Hilary Alleston	spanishconv@cvu3a.uk
Stamps	Brian Feakes	stamps@cvu3a.uk
Tai Chi	Marian Bangs	taichi@cvu3a.uk
	Sue Broad	
Theatre	Chris Aylott	theatre@cvu3a.uk
	Diana Aylott	
Ukulele	Alan Bridges	ukulele@cvu3a.uk
Amblers	Susan Osborne	amblers@cvu3a.uk
Walkers 1	Wendy Nimmo	walkers1@cvu3a.uk
Walkers 2	Sue Rawbone	walkers2@cvu3a.uk
Walkers 3	Mick Rothwell	walkers3@cvu3a.uk
Striders 1	Andrew Brown	striders@cvu3a.uk
Striders 2	Ian Lee	striders21@cvu3a.uk
Walks into History: Country	Tony Biddle	walkshist@cvu3a.uk
	Peter Schweiger	
Walks into History: London	Angela Shipley	walkslondon@cvu3a.uk
Wildlife	Harry Howlett	wildlife@cvu3a.uk
	Keith Sonley	

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Chess Valley U3A Convenors (continued)

(All phone numbers are prefixed by 01494 unless otherwise indicated)

Group	Convenor/s	U3A e-mail
Wine Appreciation 1	Pauline & Tom Hohenberg	wine@cvu3a.uk
Wine Appreciation 2	Graham Hitchenor	wine2@cvu3a.uk
Writers	John & Helene Bunyan	writers@cvu3a.uk

Reflections from lockdown

It was only a month or two ago when the mantra of the retired classes was 'I don't know how we managed to do anything when we were working'. That is, I feel, now redundant and a more current thought that 'I don't know how we managed to do anything before coronavirus' prevails.

Before the great lockdown (an expression only previously in general use in HM Prisons), we had very little time for what a previous generation might have called 'retirement'. We now have that status imposed on us in the form of full-time compulsory leisure. We now have time to paint things that didn't really need painting, to clean things that were perfectly OK if not entirely spotless, to plan menus and to organise shopping. In addition to this, we have learnt to Zoom, to go totally cashless (I prudently got £100 from the bank before the lockdown and now still have the original ton). So now the banks have their desired cashless society for real. Amazon is lord of all it surveys and supplies, and we are properly 'retired'.

We are also witnessing the demise (perhaps temporary) of the diary. Once used to see what we were doing on a daily, even hourly basis, it is now only good to find out what date it is, how that day differs from its other six similarly-hued companions and is it and what is, the 'weekend'?

Finally and ironically, generational roles have also been reversed, with children calling us up and telling us not to go out and mix with dangerous undesirables.

'Timewaster'

What Central Office is up to

The Third Age Trust, the parent organisation for most British U3As, has been doing various things to help the movement keep going during the lockdown. Among these is the establishment of 'Trust U3A', which is a way for people to get involved in U3A even if their local one is currently in hibernation. (Ours, of course, is only partially in hibernation.)

The Board of the Third Age Trust has also been beavering away on their development plan, which includes such issues as how to raise the profile of the movement, upgrading the technology and so forth.

The best way of learning about all this is to sign up for the Trust's newsletter, which you can do here:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>

News from the Groups

GROUP MEETINGS

With social restrictions due to the current pandemic, no groups are currently meeting physically but some are carrying on their activities using video conferencing, web resources and social media. All groups that have vacancies, whether active or dormant, are open to enquiries from new members.

LISTINGS OF GROUPS IN THIS NEWSLETTER

Groups that are currently dormant are not listed in this newsletter, but readers are reminded that they have not closed and will resume normal activities when it becomes possible.

Art Discussion 1

Angela Bishop



Our Group met in early March, just before the lockdown. The subject was *The Golden Age of Islam*. As is usual with our Group's choice, it proved to be a much wider subject than we could have imagined. The period ranged over 400 years from 850CE and featured calligraphy; vegetative and arabesque, and geometric and figurative art forms. We looked at examples of Mosques, metalwork, ceramics, miniature paintings and gardens, from across Europe and the Middle East.

Our Group considered using Zoom during this unique period of isolation, but felt our format was not suitable for such sessions. Instead, we have emailed one another to inform the Group of interesting programmes about art appreciation in the media. Prior to the anniversary of VE Day we informed our Group about Andrew Marr's programme on Churchill's personal experience as a painter. We will continue our interest in art in this way until we can meet in our usual format, whenever we all feel safe enough to do so.

Book 3

Eileen Overton



Meetings are normally held in members' homes at 2pm on the third Tuesday of each month. Availability is governed by the ten books we get each month from Chesham Library; we have our full quota at the moment but please contact the Convenor in case a vacancy occurs. Due to the exceptional circumstances we all find ourselves in, we have not been able to meet for two months but we have had a couple of Zoom meetings to enable us to catch up with each other.

We managed to collect our March book, *Birds Without Wings* by Louis de Bernières and we have needed the extra time to read it. We will discuss it at our next Zoom meeting. We await instructions from the Library for future books.

Canasta

Julie Wolstenholme



Members of the Canasta Group are managing to keep their spirits up by staying in touch via WhatsApp with messages and jokes.

Current Affairs

Eileen Overton



Meetings are normally held in members' homes at 2pm on the first Thursday of each month. We give our opinions on how to sort out the world's problems in a spirit of mutual respect and friendship. We have had a couple of Zoom meetings and will meet again, via Zoom, in June. Unfortunately as the news is focused on the coronavirus pandemic, we find that other topics are harder for us to discuss. However we will get through this and look forward to getting back to full discussions. If you would like to join us, please contact the Convenor for the next meeting details.

The Evening News is where they begin with 'Good Evening' and then proceed to tell you why it isn't.
(Paraprozdokians)

Digital Imaging

Liz Stoelker



Fortuitously, member Neil Lynch set us a '2020 Challenge' before we knew there would be no more meetings for some time. This means that the Group is still active and we have a Zoom meeting each month when the more experienced try to put other members out of their misery over things they want to do and have not succeeded. If you have done any photo editing, you will know that there is usually more than one way to do something so discussion, never argument, often results.

Neil has selected 19 unrelated images for us to work with and the objective is to create a composite work of art from the supplied original photo files. The new image/creation should have a title to represent your creative objective. We have until November, are not restricted to only one image and are encouraged to not leave it until the last minute!

If any non-members of the DI Group would like to have a go, you need some photo editing software (most of us use PhotoShop Elements, but not all) and some knowledge of how to use it. I will send you the images and the notes via WeTransfer if you email the Convenor.

French Conversation

Morag Robertson



The French group has continued to meet via Zoom. We have a chat and exchange tips on what we have been watching, reading and doing during 'confinement'.

We have found that it is best to be flexible regarding length of participation, as screen time doesn't suit everyone, but it has been good to touch base and everyone prepares something to say in order to maintain their language skills. We hope that we can use these in the future.

New members who are interested in conversing in French are welcome to join us.

French Intermediate

Hilary Alleston

The French intermediate group has met via Zoom conferencing once, with moderate success, and will again, but not everyone has the right device so not all of us can participate. We look forward to meeting more convivially soon.

Gardening

Janice Cross



The Gardening Group has not been meeting but we have been exchanging photos of our gardens and information on sourcing gardening items. The current situation has really brought home to everyone how important our gardens and balconies are for our physical and mental wellbeing. Members have not been idle, and some of their efforts in their gardens; the joys of spring, are in evidence in photographs featured in this newsletter.

German

Jenny Lee



During these difficult times our German Conversation Group continues to meet via Zoom twice monthly.

Here are three German words that have become popular in Germany over the past month: Geisterspiel (literally 'ghost game'), a football match played behind closed doors without spectators. Hamsterkäufe the German words Hamster (hamster) and Käuf (buying) are joined together to compare supermarket shoppers stockpiling with hamsters who hoard food in their cheeks, and Coronaspeck. The German word Speck means bacon fat (or we could say puppy fat in English) and if placed after the word Corona it means an expression for the weight gained in lockdown!

Take care and stay well everybody.

I read a fascinating book on Anti-Gravity the other day. I couldn't put it down.

(Scorpion)



We all probably remember precisely where we were and what we were doing on the evening of the announcement on the radio that the US President, John F. Kennedy, had been shot. For some of us in our teens and early twenties, it was the first major incident of our peace-time lives. We all listened closely to the details emerging and watched the emotive scenes on television news, of Mrs. Kennedy trying to attend to her husband in a speeding open-topped limousine.

To many, it was a tragedy for the free world. But, as our member, Peter Healy, explained in his March talk, *The Assassination of JFK - Conspiracy Theory*, not necessarily a surprise to all. It is estimated that a total of 42 groups, 82 assassins and 214 people have been implicated in various conspiracies. Peter gave an overview of the main theories involving the Secret Service, the US Government, the military, CIA, Communists, anti-Castro Cubans and organised crime. That Jack Ruby, who shot Lee Harvey Oswald, was associated with the Mafia, was also suspicious.

There were allegations that physical evidence was tampered with, including the third bullet which killed JFK (the magic bullet). Its trajectory was analysed and doubt cast that it had come from the Texas Book Depository and been fired by Lee Harvey Oswald. There was the possibility that there was more than one gunman, and that a fourth shot from the 'grassy knoll' was the one that killed Kennedy. Photographs may have been doctored or confiscated, and autopsy photographs of the back of Kennedy's head forged to hide a wound fired by a second gunman. The list is endless. An extremely complex story was very clearly assembled by Peter of an event which changed America and probably much of the world. We will probably never know the answer, though more documents are due to be released in October 2021, giving fuel for more theories to evolve.

Our April meeting coincided with Easter Bank holiday so we used it as our first Zooming practice, which went really well. Our May talk, by Chairman James Cadle: *The First Roman Emperors*, consequently attracted over 40 participants. James took us through the lives of the Emperors from 27BCE to 69CE with all their deeds, good and bad.

Emperors were empowered to name their successor, and many were adopted children brought up to the role. Assassinations seem to be the name of the game, to make way for another contender, or to maintain control, commencing with Augustus, who maintained a facade of republican rule, through to Vespasian. Claudius was probably poisoned by his wife to favour her son Nero who in turn murdered her, but committed suicide after being declared a public enemy of the state. In all, only two of the nine emperors discussed died of natural causes. Becoming Emperor was certainly a dangerous career move. James's talk provided a fascinating insight into the lives of the rulers of this amazing Roman Empire at that time.

We may be asking for a follow-up as our speaker for June feels that giving his presentation on *Tipu Sultan, the Tiger of Mysore* will not be well-served by Zoom. Because of the restrictions due to Covid 19, our planned programme will have to be adjusted. We will keep you informed.

Italian

Jo Hughes



We haven't met 'digitally' since lockdown but the Group hopefully will have kept up their Italian by watching the Italian opera 'La Traviata' to be found on YouTube, an Ocarina performance by Italians in Budria, a Channel 4 World Drama series such as 'The Mafia only Kills in Summer' and by listening to a song (worth searching out) by Jack Savoretti entitled 'Andra Tutto Bene' – also to be found on YouTube. We have been sharing anything Italian related, often contributed by Italian friends. Who knows – with so much available on-line perhaps we will all return with improved Italian.

I once met a guy who was convinced that there were no words in the English language with more syllables than vowels. I tried to explain to him that he was wrong but he refused to accept criticism.

(upjokes.com)



The Jazz Appreciation Group would normally be meeting during May but this and all future meetings have been suspended until further notice. YouTube clips based on the subjects for the scheduled sessions will be supplied:

Tuesday 26th May: Alan Crussell's 55 Years of Jazz: Jack Hylton, Chris Barber, Ray Ellington and Oscar Peterson.

Tuesday 30th June: The Ladies and Gents who Sang with the Big Bands: Helen Forrest, Bing Crosby, Anita O'Day, Dick Haymes, Peggy Lee, Bob Eberly and Helen O'Connell.

With our annual summer holiday break in July and August there are no activities planned. We await the future outcome as to whether we have a meeting in September and we look forward to seeing you all again later in the year.

Patchwork & Quilting

Mary Thompson & Angela Bratton



Many of our Patchwork and Quilting members have been making themselves busy at home converting pillowcases into laundry bags for the NHS nurses' scrubs. After a long day nursing Covid-19 patients, they can put their scrubs into a bag, which is taken home and then put straight into the washing machine, bag and all, at a high temperature. Most of us are also making facemasks for family members.

With regard to patchwork sewing, this is continuing at home and we are planning to have great 'show and tell' meeting when things get back to normal.

We are happy to welcome new members. Please email or telephone one of us for further information. Experience of sewing, but not necessarily patchwork, is an advantage, as is the possession of and familiarity with a sewing machine.

Photography

Keith Hoffmeister



Because of the current restrictions, we cancelled our March meeting and all meetings until further notice.

We normally meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 2.00 in Little Chalfont Village Hall. We occasionally have an outside speaker during the winter months. From April to October we have a monthly field trip and look at the results at the following meeting. We also intend to cover a range of topics of interest to members who contribute £1 towards the cost of refreshments and speakers. New members are always welcome regardless of experience and ability.

Pilates (Groups 1,2 & 3)

Liz Howlett & Christine Ross



A number of members of all of our Pilates Groups have enjoyed a Zoom class with our excellent teacher, Sue, on Monday mornings. It's been good fun; great to continue with our exercise and, from time to time, a family pet appears on screen, wanting to join in the activity! Not only have we been delighted to master the art of 'Zooming', but it has also been a bit of a relief not to have to fight for car parking spaces at our Old Amersham venue. From the 11th May, we have, so far, had seven virtual sessions, and wonder how long it will be before we get back to having real, live classes. Perhaps by then we might be able to get back to our preferred venue of the Jubilee Scout Hut in Rectory Hill where the building work still seems to be in full swing. In the meantime we'll stay safe and keep zooming!

Play Reading

Claire Paterson & Linda Hepworth



Our Group have not met since February when we read J.B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*; a thought-provoking critique of Victorian values. Sadly, it was the last time we saw our fellow member Martin Osborne who read, very convincingly, the part of the son who has to admit his carnal relationship with the young girl who is the tragic subject of the play. We will miss his quiet presence in the Group.

We are meeting again in May via wonderful Zoom. Beforehand we are watching a BBC play, *Don't Take My Baby*, shown on BBC Three in December 2015. This is an award-winning factual drama telling the story of a disabled couple's agonising struggle to keep their newborn baby. When we link up for our virtual meeting, we will discuss the production and the questions it raises.

Not exactly play reading but, if it proves successful, virtual meetings will be pretty much our plan for the duration. There are plenty of plays and dramas available from the BBC online, so we have picked a few that could be suitable. Watch this space.

Railways

Graham Yellowley & James Cadle



Our February meeting saw a presentation on South American Railways by Jim Ballantyne. Jim is an Amersham U3A Railways Group member and has travelled extensively through South America on their railways. Jim's talk weaved in interesting facts and anecdotes about his travels, and information about the people and culture of South America. It was an excellent presentation, well received by all and followed by a good Q&A session; many thanks Jim.

Due to coronavirus, our planned talk by Chalmers Cursley on *The Ghan* and our trip to the Epping & Ongar Railway were cancelled and will be rescheduled. In the meantime we have been very busy with quizzes about London Underground stations. For example; can you name two London Underground stations that use all five vowels? The quizzes have kept us occupied for weeks!

Our May speaker, Francis Gomme, hosted the first Railways Group Zoom meeting after a successful trial run. This is his third presentation to the Railways Group, which was, as with the first two, excellent.

June 19th Peter Oakden: Sir Nigel Gresley's A4 Pacifics.

July 17th Jeff Rozelaar: *Homeward Bound*, tales and anecdotes about UK Railway Stations.

August There are no activities planned.

The June / July meetings will take place via Zoom on-line conferencing.

Please contact the Convenors if you wish to join the Group, you will be very welcome.

Singing for Pleasure

Stephanie Rothwell & Angela Bratton

It was with great sadness that we learned that our much-loved choirmaster, Keith Pulford, recently passed away. Keith had disclosed to us earlier in the year that he was seriously ill but was determined to carry on as normal and to prepare us for future performances. He held one last rehearsal before the lockdown and was his usual optimistic self.

Leading choirs was Keith's passion and our group certainly benefited from his excellent teaching, dedication, patience and humour. He transformed our choir and made rehearsals fun. He challenged us to attempt more difficult pieces and inspired us to achieve what at times seemed like the impossible. Through Keith, our confidence grew and, as a result, our enjoyment of singing together flourished.

Through Keith's contacts in the church and within the local community, we performed at several venues for disadvantaged groups and raised substantial funds for our chosen charity: Chiltern Music Therapy.

Members of the Group have paid moving tributes to Keith, acknowledging the pleasure and benefits we all gained from our weekly rehearsals. We hope that these will be of some comfort to Pamela, his widow. We are determined to build on Keith's legacy and to continue to improve on the skills he taught us when we're able to reconvene as a group. He will be greatly missed.

Spanish Conversation (Intermediate)

Hilary Alleston



The Spanish Group has met quite successfully on Zoom, with only an occasional glitch, such as the invitation email going into a junk folder. We are enjoying catching up with one another's news, which has ranged from our hunts for flour to an exploding oven door. We are managing to talk Spanish nearly all the time, with a brief diversion now and then. It's not the same as sharing coffee and biscuits all together, but we are grateful that we can keep in such close touch until we are free to meet again in person.



We have started a Zoom group on Tuesday mornings.

Peter, our instructor, is hosting a 45-minute session each Tuesday starting at 1130am, consisting of our usual warm-up then the five element Qi Gong exercise that we are all familiar with. Depending on how long our social distancing lasts, he will start to teach us a new Qi Kung exercise. We decided that it would be too difficult to practice our eight movements due to the lack of space in his home and finding how he could place his laptop so that we could follow all of the movements.

10 of our group decided to give it a go and I'm pleased to say we all managed to connect. With each other's help we found our way around all of the icons on screen; the most important one being that by which individually mute ourselves once the session started.

Our second session was more successful. We completed the whole sequence and discovered how much we had missed our weekly sessions.

Our last session was going well until half-way through. We had just started our new Ba Duan Jin, Eight Treasures Qi Gong, when another group logged into the wrong account and cut us all off. We are still waiting on our bottle of wine as compensation.

Members can still join us. Just drop me an email.

Qigong, (qi Gong, chi Kung or chi Gong) is a centuries-old system of coordinated body-posture and movement, breathing, and meditation used for the purposes of health, spirituality and martial art training. Its roots are in Chinese medicine, philosophy and martial arts.

Ukulele

Alan Bridges



Members of the Ukulele Group are not meeting physically at the moment due to the coronavirus and lockdown, but we are having a virtual rehearsal using CVU3A's Zoom account. If any Group hasn't tried Zoom yet we suggest you give it a go. As a rehearsal, it was a bit chaotic, but it was really nice to make contact with Group members, have a chat and see how they're getting on in these difficult times.

All the engagements we had planned for the summer have now been cancelled, but we were fortunate that we just managed to do our last gig at Little Chalfont for the Good Companions on March 10th, which was a really nice event.

Like everyone else, we're looking forward to the day when we can all meet up again; let's hope it's not too far away.

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

To be sure of hitting your target, shoot first and call whatever you hit, the target.

Always borrow money from a pessimist. He won't expect it back. (Paraprozdokians)

My wife bought me an exercise bike for Christmas. I used it for a bit but have stopped now, as it wasn't getting me anywhere.

I pulled a muscle in my neck today and I'm not sure how. I just can't get my head round it.

Supermarkets say they are doing their best to stop obesity. If that were true they would have only made the biscuit aisle a foot wide. (www.ijokes.eu)

We nearly ran over a peasant in the weekend. It ran out from a framyard.

This holiday we got sum slobbs to make a patyo in the back garden.

(R Benson, Blackboard Blunders)

Walking Groups

Because of current restrictions, none of the Walking Groups are gathering for their activities. Many individuals from the groups are out walking on their own however, and researching new routes for future walks.

Walkers (5 - 7 miles)

Walkers 1

Wendy Nimmo

Although we are not allowed to walk together at present, most of our Group are able to take walks on their own. We are very lucky that most of us live near to possible walks, and have discovered areas, which we hadn't realised were walkable! A lot of very well-used tracks are not on the OS maps. How lucky we have been with the weather and for the last four or five weeks, to have been able to walk among beautiful bluebell woods and, now that they are going over, the foxgloves are getting ready to take their place. However we are all looking forward to being able to walk together again, and chat, but goodness knows when we'll also be able to go to the pub; our reward at the end of a hike.

Striders 1 & 2 (7 - 15 miles)

Andrew Brown & Ian Lee



Our Group striding has ceased with the lockdown, although most members have been walking in their local area as their daily exercise, in some cases discovering new routes that could be used for a group walk. But, before then, the two Groups between them had collectively walked a total of 1,442 miles this year, often through very muddy paths. Our summer outing has had to be put back to 2021. We will be listening to all the Government announcements and getting the walking started as soon as we can.

Walks in London

Angela Shipley

Treasurer: Mick Rothwell



Our June and August walks are cancelled but we are going viral like the rest of the world, as London Walks have offered us the option of a tour, using Zoom. So, as an experiment, 37 of us are going on a 'walk' around Musical Covent Garden on June 10th without moving out of our armchairs, and with a familiar London Walks Guide: Adam Scott. It is all a bit experimental but we will see how it goes. After all, there's no telling when we will be let loose on the streets of London in real time. Given our age group and the dangers that travelling on public transport may bring, it could be some time. So watch this space!

Wildlife

Harry Howlett & Keith Sonley



The schedule listed is dependent on the lifting of current restrictions and may be changed due to the major disruption. (Please check nearer the time with the Convenors - Ed)

September To be arranged.

October 1st Field trip with Bucks Badger Group

November 5th ACVH (Amersham Community Village Hall) 2:00pm - Talk from Bucks Owl & Raptor Group

December 3rd ACVH 7:30pm - Our annual social evening

We have even got a provisional booking for 2021!

We have a membership of around 80, with an average attendance of 29. If you would like to join the Group please email the Convenors on wildlife@cvu3a.uk

Wine Appreciation 1

Pauline & Tom Hohenberg



The Wine Appreciation Group has had a mixed quarter, to say the least. In February we were joined by several members of WAG2 and had an excellent wine tasting at Waitrose in Chesham, where the head of wine at the Beaconsfield branch laid on five of their own-label

wines including a sparkling and a Port for us to taste and learn about. They also provided a lavish supper of fresh sushi, which is made on the premises at the Beaconsfield branch: A very successful evening and a great advert for Waitrose.

The March meeting was unfortunately cancelled, but in April we had an excellent virtual meeting using CVU3A's Zoom account. Each couple described the wine they were drinking and made recommendations. We then organised a wine quiz, which was great fun.

Writers

Helene & John Bunyan



Writers managed one meeting at the Quaker House in early March just before lockdown was announced, and we were successful in conducting our following meetings via Zoom conferencing with five of our number in April and six in May. We had a few technical hitches (mainly with sound) on both occasions. They were solved through a mixture of visual signals and phone calls and everyone was able to contribute. The topics for our meetings were Talismans, The Cupboard and (it had to happen) Personal Perspectives during Lockdown. Our June topic will be Trees In Our Lives.

We welcome new members.



Strider Ian Lee came across an alpaca farm when his wife and he were doing their exercise walk at Little Kingshill, Great Missenden. Normally the herd are wary of visitors but a new baby had been born just a few hours earlier and the farmer was introducing the newcomer to the rest of the herd: A great photo opportunity.

Chess Valley U3A Groups Schedule

FIRST in month				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Art Discussion 2 (pm)	Walkers 1	Walkers 3	Wildlife	Bowls (Short Mat) (pm)
Pilates Classes 1,2 and 3 (am/pm)	Striders 2	Patchwork and Quilting (am)	Current Affairs (pm)	
Singing for Pleasure (eve)	Tai Chi (am)	Spanish Conversation (am)	Italian (pm)	
<i>Monday groups sometimes have their schedules interrupted by public holidays; contact the Convenors for more information</i>	Family History (pm)	German (am)	Keep Fit (pm)	
	Ukulele (pm)	Book 2 (am)	<i>Book 1 meets at irregular intervals throughout the year Jazz Appreciation meets on the last Tuesday of each month (pm) Tai Chi meets in school term-times only</i>	
		Bridge (pm)		
		Wine 2 (eve) (pm)		

SECOND in month				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
History (pm)	Amblers	Walks into History OR Walks into London (alternate months)	Art Discussion 1 (am)	Bowls (Short Mat) (pm)
Mah Jong (pm)	Striders 1		Keep Fit (pm)	<i>The Chess Valley U3A Committee meets on the first or second Tuesday of each month, two days before the General Meeting</i>
Pilates Classes 1, 2 and 3 (pm)	Art (am)	Line Dancing (am)	General Meeting (pm)	
Singing for Pleasure (eve)	Tai Chi (am)	French Conversation (am)		
	Dinghy Sailing (pm)	Bridge (pm)		
	Writers (pm)			

THIRD in month				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Science and Technology (pm)	Walkers 1	Patchwork and Quilting (all day)	Book 4 (am)	Railways (am)
Pilates Classes 1, 2 and 3 (pm)	Striders 2	German (am)	Art Discussion 3 (pm)#	Bows (Short Mat) (pm)
Canasta (pm)	Tai Chi (am)	Spanish Conversation (Intermediate) (am)	Italian (pm)	
Singing for Pleasure (eve)	Book 3 (pm)	Photography (pm)	Keep Fit (pm)	
	Ukulele (pm)	Play Reading (pm)	#Art Discussion 3 is temporarily suspended	
	Scrabble for Fun (pm)	Bridge (pm)	<i>MOTO (Members On Their Own) have an 'anchor meeting' on the first Saturday morning of each month</i>	

FOURTH in month				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Digital Imaging (am)	Striders 1	French Conversation (am)	Bus Pass Adventures	Chess (pm)
Mah Jong (pm)	Art (am)	French Intermediate (am)	Walkers 2	Opera and Dance# (pm)
Pilates Classes 1, 2 and 3 (pm)	Tai Chi (am)	Line Dancing (am)	Eclectic Music (pm)	Bowls (Short Mat) (pm)
Singing for Pleasure (eve)	Jazz Appreciation (pm)	Dinghy Sailing (pm)	Poetry (pm)	<i># Opera and Dance is run by South Bucks U3A and Chess Valley members are welcome to attend</i>
Stamps (odd months only)		Gardening (pm)	Keep Fit (pm)	
		Bridge (pm)	Wine 1 (eve)	



Gardening Group members have been busy during lockdown, working on their own gardens and exchanging pictures of their results with each other on-line.

(Back page): Although not able to meet as groups, individual walkers have been out walking, scouting new routes and coming across swathes of bluebells. This display was near Bellingdon Brick Works.

(Inset): As the bluebells die back, foxgloves begin to emerge. This one noticed by Wendy Nimmo of Walkers 1.



