



Learn, laugh, live

Dorking & District U3A Newsletter May/June 2020

This is our second Isolation Newsletter and we continue to engage with you our members and our communities. Hail to all of you who have set up your own 'buddy bubbles' within your groups and keep contact via the telephone or Zoom.

We hear that **German Conversation** continues to meet on the first and third Mondays of the month at 2.15pm. New members with O-level standard German or higher are welcome to join by contacting Robert Crooks at robertcrooks@rocketmail.com

Quilting Groups: Deanne Rhodes hosts meetings twice a week with fellow quilters who are working hard on new and existing projects – Deanne is making a table runner and Elizabeth Shaw is in the middle of making a 'dinosaur' quilt for her grandson. Di Ivings has been making scrubs in response to a request from the WI and Deanne has been making face masks to be distributed throughout Brockham and local villages. They were being given away but now a donation to BERT (Brockham Emergency Relief Team) is requested for buying items for Food Aid and other local worthy causes. We look forward to seeing photos of finished projects in future Newsletters and applaud everyone's support of key workers and services.

Keeping fit doesn't seem to be too much of a problem – with the fine weather people are out and about gardening, walking or cycling. The **U3A Pilates** group is back online with 10+ members meeting weekly on Tuesdays at 3.30pm under the guidance of Tina Westover (contact Mary Cranston on 01306 883372 for more information). The Leatherhead **Zumba** groups are also meeting twice a week on Zoom with Tessa Rolfe at the helm. Contact jandbsinclairuk@gmail.com for more information

On 8th May, Capel Villagers took the **VE celebrations** to their front gardens and streets, all the while respecting distancing guidelines. It was an opportunity to talk to new neighbours and share wartime memories. As Vera Lynn songs blasted down the street, people lifted their glasses and cheered and put up bunting. The **U3A Wine Tasting** group also met on VE day via Zoom celebrating with a glass or two, choosing a variety of wines from all over Europe to mark the event. The British spirit rides high in times of tempest!



Photo Group 2 set themselves a challenge – strange views of everyday objects. See how many you can recognise (and we don't mind if you have a giggle!).



Photo 1



Photo 2

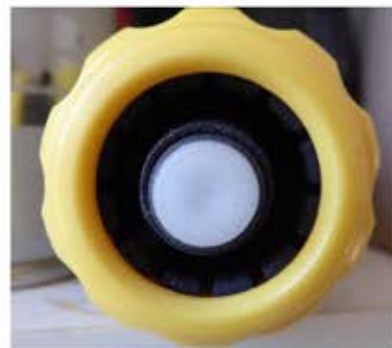


Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6

Book title dingbats

And for the literary minded, Rosemary Harbridge of the **Latin** group has a quiz for all book lovers. Guess the title of the books illustrated below. Answers are at the end of the Newsletter.

GATSBY

3.45 pm Mrs. Gulliver

Dr. Do

THE
WMILISLOTRWALS

Catch Catch Catch Catch
Catch Catch Catch Catch
Catch Catch Catch Catch
Catch Catch Catch Catch
Catch Catch Catch
↑

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**MILK
TEAK**

Difficult
2.00am 4.00pm
mid-night

HCAATT

Mrs Green, Mrs White

**SABRINA
SAMANTHA
HECATE**

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der der
der der
der der
= Sir Galahad

D&D Monthly Meetings

Behind the scenes the D&D Committee continues to work on your behalf and on Wednesday 13th May Geoff Saunders was our Monthly Meeting speaker on **'To a Mountain in Tibet'**. Geoff travelled extensively in China and Tibet in 2002 and 2014 but his U3A talk focused on a trip he made in 2014 and his presentation was illustrated throughout with a series of maps and photographs. For those of you who were unable to join us here is a quick recap of the main points and you can access the talk on Geoff's YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wAYgYct6AX4>

A Brief History of Tibet

Tibet once occupied a large part of what is now China, almost as far as Beijing and although supposedly autonomous, the Chinese have always had a claim on Tibet, considering it part of China.

The Tibetan Plateau in the centre of Tibet occupies an area with an average height of 4,500 metres (15,000 feet). It gives rise to all the major rivers in Asia: Yellow, Yangtse, Mekong, Irrawaddy, Ganges, Indus. Four of them start around Mount Kailash which is viewed as a sacred mountain in Tibet.

Geoff provided some details of Tibetan history – he described how it began with the Buddhist religion in the area and went on to describe the invasion by the British from India, the trade wars and treaties, revolutions, the *'peaceful liberation'* of 1951 and finally he explained that in spite of attempts to accept Chinese views, ultimately the desire to remain 'autonomous' led to the flight of the Dalai Lama in 1959.

The Journey

Geoff made his first two-month journey along the silk route in China in 2002 with his wife and friend Ray travelling mostly by bus and rail; at that time they discovered that there were plans to build a railway to Lhasa and this engineering feat prompted plans to make a second journey. However, because of political and religious unrest Tibet remained closed to foreigners for a number of years and it was only in 2014 that Geoff was able to return to Tibet, this time with friend Ray.

Entry into Tibet was still severely restricted to foreigners, who could enter only as a group (luckily two constitutes a group!) with a guide and driver (both monks). Visas for Tibet could only be obtained from Kathmandu or Hong Kong; and once in Kathmandu, they found the visa office was only open on Thursdays; and visas could only be collected on Friday! Flying from London to Kathmandu, they went overland to Lhasa in Tibet and then undertook a 48-hour train journey to Chengdu in Sichuan province in China. From there they made their way by train and whatever other means to Hong Kong and then home. Geoff described the interesting train journey from the Tibetan plateau into China through a series of spiral tunnels as truly magnificent.

The journey from Kathmandu involved crossing the border into Tibet at Zungmhu, through Nyelam and onto Tingri where they took a southerly side trip to Everest North Camp, where displays of prayer flags left by travellers bedeck the roadside. Geoff highlighted the possible route taken by Mallory and Irvine in 1924, and described the agricultural methods and traditional crafts, and the religious fervour that still prevails in Tibet. Geoff and Ray then carried on to Shigatse, Gyanntse and finally to Lhasa which is divided into the old Tibetan and modern Chinese quarters and is still a pilgrimage site, where security is very tight, but which boasts the glorious Potala Palace. From Lhasa they took a specially adapted train to Chengdu, a large city with a statue of Chairman Mao and a giant panda breeding centre.



North Face of Everest



Potala Palace

Note for your diary

If you enjoyed Geoff's presentation either on Zoom or YouTube, please make a note for our next Monthly Meeting on 10th June at 2.30pm, when we hope to present 'The Man who Sank the Titanic' with Sally Nielson. An invitation will be emailed to members nearer the time.

A Lockdown Lament - What I miss in isolation ... by Beryl Sinclair

In the absence of suggestions from members, here are some of my favourite things!

The smell of brewed coffee,
hot crumpets and tea,
in cafés with friends
and close family.
The chiming of church bells,
that fills summer air.
The browsing in shops
with coins to spare.
The bustle and hustle
of markets and stores.
Not queuing for eggs,
for victuals or meds.
The choosing of paint
in a DIY store.
The comfort of footcare,
the cutting of hair.

The kisses of grandkids,
casual chats in the street.
strolls in museums,
appointments to keep.
The shouting of infants
in parks and at play.
The listening to people
with something to say.
Real items of news
not statistics or views.
Planning vacations
you know you can go on.
My list keeps on growing
and I know that it's lame -
the waking and knowing
that days aren't the same!



In April, John and I joined a team of volunteers, including other U3A members, to help out with **Mid Surrey Community Fridges**.

A small team of dedicated people arrange for surplus food to be distributed to local families and shelters. In normal times the group run the Food Bank from the Christian Centre but with the current crisis, a team of 30+ volunteer drivers collect and distribute some 75 tonnes of food, 1000 bags or around 187,500 meals a week! Supplies mainly come from supermarkets and wholesalers, manufacturers and other sources such as airlines.

Organisers Clare Davies and Tony White made the national headlines a couple of weeks ago and were interviewed about the work they do helping hard-hit families with parcels during these turbulent times. If you know someone who might need to be referred or if you can support the work the team does please contact Clare or Tony on www.midsurreycommunityfridges.co.uk.

Answers

Photo quiz: (1) knob on wood burner; (2) egg box; (3) water hose; (4) sink plunger; (5) sheets of paper viewed on end; (6) spaghetti viewed on end.
Book quiz: (1) Great Gatsby; (2) Time Traveler's Wife; (3) Dr Dolittle; (4) Wind in the Willows; (5) Catch 22; (7) Emma; (8) Under Milk Wood; (9) Hard Times; (10) The Cat in the Hat; (11) Little Women; (12) The Witches; (13) Tender is the Night.