



Learn, laugh, live

Dorking & District U3A Newsletter September 2020

Meet our new U3A Committee

The D&D U3A held their AGM by Zoom on 12th August. We say goodbye to Chairman and Webmaster **Bob Brown** and Publicity Officer / Speakers Coordinator **Caroline Brown**, and Minutes Secretary **Judy Perry**. We thank them for their commitment and hard work that has helped our U3A to move through some difficult times.

We welcome the following members who will take up the baton and help us manoeuvre through the autumn and winter towards a more optimistic future:



Beryl Sinclair
Chairman / Editor



Tony Parker
Vice Chairman



Geoff Saunders
Secretary



Ianthe Cox
Treasurer



John Sinclair
Membership
Secretary



Deanne Rhodes
Day Trips /
Speakers
Coordinator



Linda Wilmott
Committee:
Speakers
Coordinator



Hilda Burden
Committee:
Member Contact



Gareth Balle
Committee:
Groups
Coordinator



Mike Docker
Webmaster

I am grateful that Geoff, Ianthe, John and Deanne have agreed to continue in their present posts; Tony has agreed to work with me to promote inclusivity in D&D U3A and form closer links with other organisations to develop shared learning projects. We welcome back Mike Docker to the role of

Webmaster – in just a few weeks, he as upgraded the information on the website. We also welcome newcomers Linda Wilmott, Gareth Balle, Hilda Burden to join our Committee. Gareth has already contacted group leaders to review how activities might continue once Government guidelines are lifted.

Hilda takes on the job of liaising with new members to ensure they feel welcome in the U3A family. Linda and Deanne will be working together to ensure continuity in the excellent provision of monthly meetings.

We are off to a strong start and have an enthusiastic Committee with a wealth of professional experience. However, we continue to depend on you our members to support and guide us in our endeavours. We are still looking to fill two positions on the Committee, namely Publicity Officer and Minutes Secretary. If you are interested in either role, please do not hesitate to contact me Beryl Sinclair, on jandbsinclairuk@gmail.com.

Restarting groups – National office COVID / risk assessment guidelines

The Committee is grateful for all the energy and enthusiasm that has kept D&D U3A alive over the past months. Group Leaders and members have worked hard to maintain contact and continue with activities during lockdown.

With the lifting of Government restrictions in July and August, groups such as Plant Lovers and Reading for Pleasure have been meeting mostly in gardens. Sadly, autumn and winter weather may make such meetings difficult. We understand the frustration of members who wish to continue meeting and are compiling a list of suitable venues that group leaders might use for future meetings and advice on safety measures that need to be in place. Guidance on how to restart groups safely can also be found on the U3A National website.

Because of the latest Government guidelines (14th September) relating to organised activities in COVID-19 secure facilities, the Committee has decided to continue running Monthly Meetings on ZOOM at least until the new year. We are aware access to these talks is difficult, even impossible for some, but we hope you will appreciate the summaries we give in the regular Newsletters.

Forthcoming Monthly Meetings

October 14th : A Light-hearted Look at Opera with Jennifer Parker-Lummis

Graduate of the Royal Welsh College of music and Drama in Classical Voice, Jennifer Parker-Lummis has spent many years learning four languages and perfecting her vocal ability to perform songs from Opera to Musical theatre. This year, on Mother's Day, care home residents in Fareham were treated to a special performance from the opera star. Next month, Jennifer regales us with amusing anecdotes to accompany her song choices.

November 11th : Shakespeare's London with Blue Guide Annamaria Dall'Anese

In a virtual tour of Shakespeare's London, we discover the places where the Bard lived and worked, including the Blackfriars Playhouse and the Globe Theatre. We will also get a taste of what going to the theatre and living in the British capital was like in his time.

December 9th : Local Surrey Ghosts with Rupert Matthews

Rupert Matthews is a professional historian who has written over 100 published books and numerous magazine articles as well as appearing on TV and radio. He talks on many subjects and this time it is about local Ghosts. Drawing on historical and contemporary sources, the speaker tells of the ghostly monks at Newark Priory, the spirit riders of a horse and carriage at Hog's Back, the ghost of a naked woman in the Silent Pool, apparitions in 1930s clothing at Kenley railway station, and the notorious old rake Field Marshal Ligonier at Cobham and many more!

Reading for Pleasure

The Reading for Pleasure group has been meeting regularly in Joyce's garden. Members bring their own drinks, I provide biscuits. This year, the group has been encouraged to read choices by non-English authors: *Little Women*, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Tulip Fever*, *The Leopard*, *The Summer Book* and *Life of Pi*.

Joyce Kingsley-Jones

Connecting with People – Walking for Health



Friday 14th August and a band of 9 walkers, hand sanitisers in pockets, braved the muddy tracks and deep puddles of Shere Heath to walk the 4.5 miles across Blackheath and Albury Heath.

Our leaders Michael and Jane had spent quite some time over lockdown researching walks which had very few stiles and gates to make the walk as accessible as possible to all. They had completed a risk assessment to ensure that the group complied with Government guidelines. Suitably socially distanced, we chatted about this and that.

The walk took us along railway crossings, past pretty flowered cottages, rolling fields and gurgling streams. Our merry band strolled at a leisurely pace stopping to admire the lilies in the pond at Shamley Green and savour the blackberries along the way. The weather was kind – balmy and dry. Our final stop was the Albury Green memorial where Field Marshall Montgomery addressed Canadian troops before the D-Day landing. *(Report and photos by Beryl Sinclair)*



Pat's Walk for SHELTER!

At the end of August, one-time Committee Member and Publicity Officer, now leader of Scribblers and member of History and Archaeology groups, Pat Smith attempted a four-day 70 mile walk to the beach in aid of Shelter.

More details of her sponsored walk are on

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Pat-Smith10>

Weather quiz: July and August had extreme weather with the hottest day for years to monsoon type downpours. Rosemary Harbridge offers us a diversion in kind. Try your hand at finding the weather expressions, e.g. What the Queen does? Answer: *reign/rain*

(solutions are at the end of the Newsletter).

1. Hello and welcome!
2. Found in the month of August
3. Married in reverse
4. Shakespeare play
5. Wet and cold steel rearranged
6. Second-rate reptile
7. Make paler
8. Hot ripple?
9. Ruth and Ned make a noise
10. Vertical descent with some force



Little Joys of Lockdown – A Waist of Time!

I stare at the mirror and what do I see
In recent years there's a lot more of me
The size of my thighs brings tears to my eyes
And I look in disgust at my saggy bust
A strict diet is the thing for me
To recycle my body as it used to be
I'll join a health club, get fit once more
Then my partner comes through the door
"Hi love had a good day?"
I talk of the pounds that won't go away
His arms go around, there's a comforting kiss
He lifts up my chin " Now listen to this,
so, you're a bit heavier than you once were,
it's still the same girl I see in there "
His reassurance works as a treat.
I won't feel so guilty next time that I eat.
Who cares if I can't get thinner -
I head for the kitchen and put out our dinner!

Rosemary Dudley, Scribblers Group



Parlez-vous COVID? Extracted from the Buckland Parish Magazine (August 2020)

- Covidiot* – people who panic buy loo paper while all around are staying calm!
- Exponential growth* – putting on weight during lockdown
- Flattening the curve* – going on a diet after Lockdown
- Face masks* – not effective if you can't get one!
- Key workers* – locksmiths
- Testing* – listening to endless political broadcasts



We all have stories of pressure selling and scams and I for one have been taken in a couple of times - accepting work or a product that with hindsight I wished I had not. These are tough times and we are it seems not immune to unsolicited phone calls or cold calls ostensibly offering services we don't need. However, the following really took wind out my sails.

One August afternoon, we got a call from a person alleging that the Government suspected that COVID 19 was being carried in the water system and that someone would be coming round to test our water. When a suited gentleman with an official looking badge appeared at our door one hour later, I was happy to let him in to do the testing he required. Within minutes, I realised this gentleman was a sales representative for a reputable water softening company. Sure enough, after 30 minutes of statistics and waffle about soft water systems, he suggested we consider a water filtration system at over £1680.

Although no crime or fraud was committed as such, the visit left us quite shaken as we had allowed someone we did not know into our home at a time when shielding and care are so important. So I reported the incident to *Help the Aged* and the *Action Fraud Team*. Within a week we got an apology from the company saying that they were reviewing their sales technique! We weren't fooled on this occasion, but we felt that this personal experience was worth sharing as a timely warning to others.

If you have any concerns about any phone call, please remember that Help the Aged (0800 678 1602) and the Action Fraud Team (0300 123 2040) are there to advise.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/scams-fraud/>

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/contact-us>

Beryl Sinclair

What did grandfather really do in The Great War?

Barrie Friend, Leader Dorking U3A Military History Group, is a member of Western Front Association and of the Guild of Battlefield Guides. His talk to members on 8th August used several case studies to illustrate how a variety of sources can be used to research the war history of relatives. Barrie's talk was illustrated by a superb presentation going through all the steps he had taken to research the war history of his own grandfather, Lionel Henry Friend and the discoveries he had made.

His first step was to go back to the family stories generations tell their children. Using the full name, date of birth, home addresses, he referred to the 1911 Census to find out about people's jobs and where they lived in 1911.

When researching ranks of infantry soldiers, Barrie suggested starting with Google, TNA website catalogue, FWR, then War Records (Military Index Cards – The National Archives then Ancestry website, Medal Rolls for Battalions, Service Records, Pension Records, Great War Forum, Absent Voters Lists, National Roll of the Great War, London Gazette, Police Gazette for British Army Deserters, UGLE / Lodge Registers, British Jewry Book of Honour).



The International Committee of the Red Cross can often help with soldiers who were Prisoners of War.

Scanning items such as local newspapers as well as regimental histories and war diaries; army lists; casualty lists and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission archives would often give details of their war activities.

Barrie used a variety of French Maps (held in National Archives) to show how the progression of recorded battles and advances could underpin the histories. Although many records are not digitised, Officers' Records often provide much detail, mentioned by name in war diary (or intelligence summary), (Public) school records, Army Lists, de Ruvigny Roll of Honour, Bond of Sacrifice.

In all, 37,104 Military Crosses were awarded in WWI to 1st and 2nd Lieutenants, Majors and Warrant Officers and were generally accompanied with a citation that was





MHIG Covid meeting in Brockham

conferred by the King; these citations would provide more information on more senior ranking officers. You can contact Barrie Friend on 07796 633516 or find more information on

www.bf-battlefieldtours.co.uk/soldiersrecords

Barrie's Military History Group has been meeting regularly over the summer by Zoom and in gardens. The fifteen members have decided to produce their own regular Newsletter outlining visits/meetings and recommending books and websites to any member who is interested.

The Life and Times of Edith Cavell – a talk by Melanie Gibson-Barton



Melanie's talk explored the story of the British heroine who was shot in Brussels in 1915. Born 4 December 1865 into a religious family, Edith's childhood in Norfolk and schooling was strict. She first worked as a governess in Essex and Brussels then trained as a nurse at the Royal London Hospital. Her work during the typhoid outbreak in 1897 earned her the Maidstone Medal. In 1907, after nursing in London and Manchester, she was appointed matron at a new training school for nurses in Brussels. Inspired by the innovative work of Belgian physician Antoine Depage, she pioneered home care visits and holidays for sick children.

The Great War interrupted Edith's nursing career and drew her into a world of helping Allied soldiers escape to neutral Holland to avoid imprisonment. The Germans arrested her and 35 others. After a mock trial, Edith was charged with treason and executed at dawn on 12 October 1915. Edith's remains were returned to Britain after the war. As the ship bearing the coffin arrived in Dover, the bells of the parish church rang out and Cavell, was buried at Norwich Cathedral. Memorials in Brussels and England, such as the statue near Trafalgar Square, ensure that her name is not forgotten: *"This I would say standing as I do in view of God and eternity, I realise that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone."*



Her devoted pet dog Jack survived her by another seven years and enjoyed life with other dogs. He was eventually stuffed and sits in pride of place at the Nightingale Museum.

www.toonstelling.com

No Sour Grapes!!



Rosemary Harbridge has a good crop of grapes just waiting to be picked and turned into premium wine or juice. If anyone is interested in helping Rosemary out, please contact her on: rharbridge@sky.com



Answers to weather quiz: (1) Hail; (2) Gust; (3) Dew; (4) Tempest; (5) Sleet; (6) Blizzard; (7) Lightning; (8) Heatwave; (9) Thunder; (10) Downpour