



Extra Bulletin 6

SEWING BAGS FOR THE NHS

This is a community project but MU3A members have been pleased to get involved. The idea is to make a drawstring bag so that NHS front line staff can place their uniform inside the bag at the end of their shift and take it home without the need to unpack the bag inside their home...just loosen the drawstring ..in order to launder the clothes. All well and good so far until you realise that DVH alone asked for 1500 of these bages and that is just the start.

Di Parker, Edina Geering and Helen Pearce amongst many others are stitching away and yesterday 846 bags were distributed to DVH, local doctor's surgeries, The Chestnuts Nursing Home and other NHS settings. By the end of the weekend DVH should have their full requirement. The ambulance service have also now asked for bags but theirs need to be larger as they have more items of uniform.

If you have any suitable material please contact hwpearce6@gmail.com or sewbowls@yahoo.co.uk who can give you more information and arrange collection.

The material must be capable of being washed at 60 degrees so unwanted sheets, duvet covers and pillow cases are ideal. Please wash and iron the items before passing them onto the sewers.

Thank you for your support.

MR MOTIVATOR

Mr Motivator has joined forces with U3A for a weeklong series of exercises. Mr Motivator - famous for his brightly coloured outfits and enthusiastic TV workouts- has compiled a workout aimed at specifically at Third Agers. It starts on Monday 20 April at 10 AM and will run every day through the week. Each sessions lasts about eight minutes and promises to be working on every muscle in your body.

You will find the sessions at <https://www.youtube.com/user/TheU3a>

Release the Pressure

Kent County Council have launched a mobile texting service if you are feeling the need to talk to someone. It is a 24/7 service staffed by trained and experienced people who will provide support no matter what you are going through. The service is called **Release the Pressure**. Text the word Kent to 85258 or visit www.releasethepressure.uk

Opportunity Knocks!

Having been a full time secondary school geography teacher for 38 years and in the decade preceding my retirement, visiting elderly parents at weekends, I rarely spent time in my own home; it was a place for planning lessons, marking books and sleeping. In the school holidays I was also not often at home, as I ran residential school trips and stayed with my parents to help care for them. Since retirement nearly two years ago, I was also rarely at home, as I joined several U3A groups and started a part-time job as a Tour Manager with the travel company "Great Rail Journeys". So "Lockdown" has now provided me with the opportunity to enjoy my own home and garden, as well as exploring the village in which I live and the Area of Outstanding Beauty (the North Downs) on my doorstep!

My daily walks have made me appreciate the beauty of Spring (I think the Lockdown would have been far worse in winter!); nearly every garden has been full of Primroses which have now been replaced by Bluebells, which are also abundant in the nearby woods, along with Violets, Celandine and Wood Anemones. As I walk past gardens I try to look out for flowers I haven't noticed previously as well as blossoming trees. The views too are astounding; the forested steep slopes, giving way to cultivated land, some showing the bright yellow of the Oil Seed Rape. I see many dog walkers on my daily exercise sessions and often a few comments and even conversation happens with strangers, at a safe distance on opposite sides of a street, or in open countryside. As a single lady living alone, this can "make my day" – a smile, a friendly comment on the weather or in admiration of the dog! Sheep, horses, pheasants, squirrels, butterflies, not to forget the Alpacas also make my walks memorable.

I do not think I have ever heard so much bird song – is it because there is less road and air traffic, so they are more audible? Or is it because the air is cleaner? Bird spotting in the garden has also become an enjoyable pastime, as I watch small birds flock to my feeding station, whilst the Collar Doves forage for seeds on the ground below.

Having joined two modern language U3A groups (French and Italian), there is plenty of revision and embedding to do, as I rarely got round to doing "the homework" before Lockdown! We communicate in the foreign language weekly by text and email, and I sent the groups additional resources by email, so nobody can get bored! I had also been a member of the Family History U3A group and signed up to "Ancestry"; I have made significant progress, but now I have a real opportunity to delve further into different branches of the family tree! The other U3A group I belong to is a choir; so while that is not meeting, I am keeping up the vocal exercises with Gareth Malone's "Great British Home Choir" on Youtube!

I have kept a Journal since I was 15, but on holiday, I write my Journal in pocket-sized notebooks; I discovered that I had four years of holidays to transcribe into my "proper" Journals – a great opportunity to re-live those holidays (and then reach for the photo album to imagine I am in that place again!!). I decided that now would be the perfect opportunity to begin a Jigsaw Puzzle! I sent off for three and having not attempted one for years, I have discovered how compulsive they can become! I have to set myself a time limit, as otherwise the day can fly by... but does it matter?! The cross-stich kit I was given as a forgotten birthday present, has now seen the light of day and I am gearing myself up to start it; I hope to complete it by the time the pandemic is over. I also must not omit the wealth of domestic opportunities: de-cluttering (sorting out items to take to Charity Shops once this is over!); reorganising cupboards and drawers; gardening, not forgetting Spring Cleaning!

The greatest opportunity of all, I think, of being in Lockdown is to reconnect with friends and family. I have learnt how to use "Zoom" and "Skype", plus text and email daily. As well as my close circle of friends and family, I have been communicating with "Christmas Card" contacts across the world by email and within the UK, by sending postcards (I have a stash of art ones from numerous exhibitions!) as if I was on holiday!!

Despite the uncertainty, anxiety and social distancing restrictions, this is an opportunity to: press the "pause" button; slow down our pace of life; begin or re-visit hobbies; enjoy more "R&R" and to "smell the roses". I used to feel that sitting down with a cuppa and a good book was a luxury and a waste of time, but I am re-training myself to realise I have all the time in the world – so Embrace and Enjoy!

Art Appreciation group

The Art Appreciation group are meeting on Zoom. They decided to look at artists they had heard of but knew little about.

They started off with Tamara de Lempicka who proved to be quite an interesting character! Born in 1898, she put herself across as a glamorous art celebrity, led a smart life and had numerous affairs with both men and women. She is an excellent example of the Art Deco style which prevailed in Paris around 1925.

They are meeting again in two weeks and this time they will be looking at Sorolla. Some of us went to the wonderful exhibition held at the National Gallery last year and are looking forward to revisiting his work and finding out a bit more about the artist.

The Arts Society have launched a website - The Arts Society Connected - which offers online enrichment through the arts. www.connected.theartsociety.org/ You may be interested in a series of on line talks they have planned .The next one is Sarah Dunant at 7pm on 21 April 2020 and after that there will be a new talk each fortnight until /June.

Garden visits

Garden Visits is a very popular groups at MU3A but the only garden you are probably visiting at the moment is your own. Here are a couple of ideas for some virtual tours.

Sally thought we might like to see the Keukenhof gardens in Holland. You may have visited Keukenhof in the past and Sally was there with some friends last April. It is almost impossible to resist buying bulbs if you visits and sure enough Sally is currently on tulip watch in her garden waiting for the buds to open on the tulip bulbs she bought at Keukenhof last year. This made her wonder what it looks like this year as all the planting work would have taken place during the winter and yet no visitors are going to be able to see it.

She went online and found this video taken a few days ago and it really is beautiful. Go to <https://youtu.be/8iomUN9o4r0I> to see the video and you will see several other videos taken at Keukenhof in 2020.

Visit info@enews.kew.org and you can travel to the tropics, desert and mountains without leaving the house as they bring the gardens to you. Get a sneak peek at the glasshouses and see what's bursting into bloom across Kew Gardens and Wakehurst. There are lots of other ideas too.

2 for 1 Garden Entry card

From **Thu 16 Apr**, if you buy the May 2020 issue of *BBC Gardeners' World* magazine, you'll get the card that gives 2for1 adult entry to 460+ UK gardens. Currently these are, of course, closed but the card is valid for a year until 9 Apr 2021, so it'll be usable at places such as Eden Project and Kew Gardens when they do reopen. The magazine will be £6.99 at supermarkets/newsagents, or if you are self-isolating you can order it to be delivered by post for £7.99 delivered online at Mags Direct website until Wed 27 May. You will also get six packets of seeds with your magazine.

Maths Questions Week 2

Question 1

If the cold tap alone would fill a bath in 20 minutes and the hot tap alone would fill a bath in 30 minutes, how many minutes would it take to fill the bath with both the cold and hot taps on?

Question 2

The six angles of two different triangles are listed in decreasing order. The list starts with 115° , 85° , 75° and 35° . What is the last angle in the list?

Question 3

Eight pens cost £10 and some pence while eleven more cost £26 and some pence. What is the cost of a pen?

Question 4

An octahedron is drawn by connecting the centres of the faces of a cube. What is the ratio of the volume of the octahedron to that of the cube?

Tai Chi

Many members have expressed an interest in Tai Chi. It is an exercise regime that need to be taught slowly and carefully .This 5 minutes a day online course is a great start to learning the tai chi movements gradually.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEOS2zoyQw4&feature=youtu.be>

BEE WATCH

You will recently have received your copy of the spring edition of Third Age Matters. On page 49 is a very interesting whole page article about Meopham U3As Bee Watch group. Group contact Chris Haigh –Smith explains all about the group and if you look closely at the phot you can see Beryl, Judith, Janet and Linda.

How lovely to have national recognition for our pretty unique group who do such valuable work .

U3A STORY WRITING COMPETITION

Are you a budding writer? A Jane Austin, JK Rowling, a John Steinbeck or a John Grisham in the making? If so, we are looking for you to enter our Third Age Trust, creative writing competition.

U3Ae are launching a UK-wide initiative to find the best short story penned by one of our members. The winning story will be published in Third Age Matters magazine, which reaches over a quarter of a million households. We will also commission at least one illustration to accompany it.

The winner will see their story in print and will receive a framed copy of their story as it appears in the magazine, with the bespoke illustration.

How it works

- In summary, your story must be your own, individual, original work, in English, a maximum of 1500 words, and not submitted anywhere else.
- Your submission must be on the theme of: **TIME**
- Please read the Creative Writing Competition Rules carefully. They can be found at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/component/edocman/creative-writing-competition-rules> Any submission which does not meet these will not be considered.
- All submissions will be judged by regional panels and the best story from each region/ devolved country will be compared to decide on an overall winner.
- We will open the submission portal on 18th May, with a link on this page (all entries will need to be submitted via this to be accepted). The deadline for submission is 12 noon on 19th June 2020.

Happy writing!

IN HOUSE IT SUPPORT

Don't forget Gus and Andrew have offered support with IT queries. Don't sit and ponder ...drop them an email and they will try to help.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The theme chosen to launch of this national photographic project was **Yellow** but that theme will change every fortnight. This is not a competition and it is not just about your photographic skill – what the U3A want from you are interesting photos, possibly different ways of viewing things, anything which has captured your imagination or caught your eye.

They are looking for photos of objects or concepts (not people) that interpret the theme and only new photos please. It is expected that these are photos you have taken recently or during these times of lockdown but besides that – please be as creative as you wish.

Details of how to upload you photograph are on the national website .At the end of every fortnight the U3A will choose and publish up to 15 photos as an online gallery for each theme that all of members can enjoy the images. The gallery for Yellow is now ready for you to visit at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/component/content/article/197-covid-19/585-u3a-eye-2?Itemid=490>.

If this has inspired you to take part in the project visit the U3A Eye page in our Learning area <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/u3a-eye> where you can upload your photo for the new theme '**3**'.

