



ACTIVE RETIREMENT NEWSLETTER March 2021



Website: Streetu3a.org National (website): www.u3a.org.uk

THE EDITOR'S SAY

This NL is again a month later than usual and although very little has happened in the last three months, it does look as if there may be hope for the resumption of something approaching normal. Please note the fee structure for the year 2021/22. A Nomination Form is included with this NL: a loose sheet for printed issues and on the website for the online version. The agenda for the AGM on 27th May is also included. There are five job vacancies; for details see over. We have had a volunteer from the membership, Gill Donkin, to take over the job of Treasurer so thank you for that. Anyone interested in any of the other vacancies please contact either the present holder or any member of the committee.

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**AGM on Thursday, 27th May via Zoom.
Log on from 10.00 for a 10.30 start.**

Go to the website to register by 24th May.

**Deadline for the
next edition:
20 June**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT SPRING 2021

Here we are again still in lockdown but now with a little window we are beginning to look forward to a brighter future. Hopefully by September we will be fully operational. This is my last Newsletter as your Chairman. I would like to thank all members for their support and in particular the committee whose members have had a difficult time. I wish my successor all the best and I hope to see some of you at table tennis, and at Reading Shakespeare.

MIKE ELLINGTON

DATES FOR SEPTEMBER 2021

Week One will start on Monday, 13th September 2021 and Week Two on Monday, 20th September 2021. Week One will end in the week beginning 22nd November and Week Two in the week beginning 29th November.

AGM

The AGM will be held on Thursday, 27th May 2021, again via Zoom. You can log on from 10.00 for a 10.30 start. Please Note: You must Register before 24th May. Go to the website, click on the REGISTER box and enter your name. This will allow you to be admitted to the AGM on the day. You will also have the opportunity to enter questions to be put to the committee which will be answered on the day. ALL Reports, including the accounts, will be available to view on the website well in advance of the date.



LOTTERY FUNDED



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Hello all 309 members of Street and Glastonbury U3A. I hope you are recovering from any effects of your Covid jab. Personally, I had a very bad headache, but glad to have some protection from the virus.

No doubt you have missed our usual program of activities. However, our Group Leaders and members have done a great job embracing Zoom and other internet sources to keep some courses going. I have missed the table tennis but have enjoyed the online Line Dancing. Elaine Robertson has kept the Line Dance course great fun and a good source of exercise, though my co-ordination is not as good as it could be.

Hopefully, by the start of the new U3A year we will be able to meet up and enjoy each other's company in person. Your committee is continually checking on the lockdown situation and we will let you know if there are any changes in the current restrictions that have a bearing on our autumn programme.

If you have any query relating to your membership please don't hesitate to contact me by using the contact details at the back of our newsletter. Best wishes for the summer,

PAUL VERNOUM

ACCIDENTAL EXPERIMENT

When I first took over the job of Editor, I inherited an established way of doing things which has worked well, with minor tweaks as time has gone by and things have changed. The biggest change, of course, is that the NL is now available online which means in colour and without limit on its number of pages. In the last NL (December), we carried out an inadvertent experiment. For unplanned, technical reasons, the printed NL was eight pages long and the online one was ten. I have great sympathy for those who do not have, and do not want, a computer (I was one such once) but I have to say there are compensations. One of the greatest of these is being able to see your S&G Newsletter in colour. (Some images just do not convert well to squashed black-and-white.) In (my) early days, the committee did discuss other possible formats, and the question of colour photographs, glossy paper and so forth but this has fallen victim to the times. No one will want to pay such an increase in costs for so few printed issues when we can have whatever we like, for free, on our website. So: If you receive a printed copy (these will NOT stop – not until we are down to the last half-dozen) – If you have the printed, b&w, copy and you have the chance, perhaps with a friend who does have a computer (when it is permitted!) to look at the online version, take the opportunity to compare the two 'outcomes' is what they're called; the two versions, and examine the possibilities. This is not a nag but since we managed to have two different layouts and set-ups, you might as well take the opportunity to have a look and compare your printed copy with the online version. It may be the last straw that prompts a new decision. Or not, as the case may be. NB There was a delay in the appearing of the printed version in December because the firm of printers was only working part-time. While I wouldn't wish any firm to cease trading, not even under a pandemic, it does show another advantage to having the NL online, where it can be posted online as soon as it has been Laid Out

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

SECRETARY, whose main job is to take the minutes and keep records of our decisions and actions.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR This is my 25th Newsletter over eight years and it is time for some new blood. I will step down from both the NL and the committee at the AGM on 27th May. Anyone who is interested in taking over from me don't hesitate to get in touch. NB The job is for the Editor; that is, to collect the words and sort out some illustrations. You do not produce the Newsletter. The words and pictures are sent to the Layout Expert whose job is to arrange everything in a tidy state and printable format. One copy is sent to the printer (for postal issues) and one to the web manager to go on our website. So don't panic if you don't know how to set things out; that is not your job. Yours is to gather the material and correct typing errors in anything sent to you.

MEMBER-WITHOUT-PORTFOLIO One committee member has decided to step down after many years of faithful service so we have a vacancy for a 'general' committee member as well.

There are two other vacancies: for the Chairman, and for one other task. Details are not yet finalised so please consult the website if you are interested.

PS FOR ALL VACANCIES: At our February committee meeting it was suggested that we hold ALL our committee meetings in future via Zoom, even after Covid. This seemed a good idea to all of us. So don't worry if you live out in the wilds: Zoom will reach you and you only have to be ready five minutes before the start; then as soon as it's finished, you are home. No wandering the streets in the dark and the cold of December; just stay in your nice warm house and work from there. And we don't have to hire the room (depending on when they have a free session) and pay for it.

GROUP LIAISON REPORT

I hope everyone is keeping well and finding lots to do. Very little has happened from my December report. We have had a few groups operating via Zoom: Ukulele Improvers, Ukulele Band, Beginners French, Music Appreciation, British History, French Conversation, Greek Tragedy, Music Jamming and one via the internet, Line Dancing. Some are continuing into the summer. These have been mainly successful, although nothing beats meeting in person. Please get in touch with the GLs if you are interested in joining any of the groups.

We have been contacted by Paul Bradley, who is again offering lawn bowls to u3a members, at Wyrrol Park Bowls Club, for taster sessions for £1, on a Monday afternoon, hopefully to start in April. Please complete the form on the website if you are interested. Dates to be confirmed.

We are hoping to start the programme in September, all being well. Any different information, concerning any different start times, will be on the website. Unfortunately the croquet is unable to start this summer as there is work on the grounds in the Victoria Club. We will be notified when this is completed. We are now in spring and heading to summer so hopefully the good weather is ahead.

CYNTHIA RAYES

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

This was held via Zoom on Friday, 11th December. Twenty-seven persons took part including the Quiz-master, Andy. I do hope more members had a look at the Quiz on our website when it was posted there. It was divided into sections, each of them concerned with Christmas and including (the very last question): What is the Canadian post code for Santa's letters? You won't guess the answer! Each subject (there were only five questions in most sections) brought forth knowledge from different players and some who got 100% in one section did not do so well in others. I knew all the Christmas carol answers but was a bit rubbish with the films. The picture section had ten questions and I didn't do too well there, either. Probably didn't play enough games when I was young. Can I claim deprivation on the grounds that I've never played 'Cluedo'? I did recognize Bath and Oxford but not Glastonbury! It was a good excuse to have some interplay between people which (as ever) Is Better Than Nothing. Andy had to mute us all when he was reading the questions to stop the eager-beavers from blurting out the answer for us all to hear. The only problem was that his Mute-All button wasn't working too well: sometimes we were 'muted' and sometimes we weren't, which added to the atmosphere. Thanks to everybody who Zoomed-in (some dressed up); and thanks most of all to Andy for taking the trouble to find the questions, get dressed up in his Christmas togs, with hat. The view out of his window was fascinating; I saw Santa and his sleigh go past about a hundred times.

SMALL ADVERT

Just to say that I have now received my copy of the U3A Diary of Corona and a very good read it is too. A4 size and 116 pages, you do get value for money. (The £10 cost includes p+p). I know that we are now in the third lockdown and by now people have got the hang of the restrictions and how we can work within them (hand gel, masks, one-way systems) for those traders who are allowed to function. But the Diary is not intended to give you ideas NOW. It is a record of what it was like (among U3A-members) at the beginning. Those of you interested in history, especially social history, may find it interesting, if only in a few years' time – when we are through it and beginning to forget what it was like. There are those who have no interest whatsoever in the Diary and what it records; it all depends on your interests and your outlook. I merely point out that it is available at the moment, though in five years, if you should wish to consult it then, it may not be. Ed.

PS March. There is to be a 'follow-up', short items, online-only supplement which should be available in the summer. These pieces will be overall views of the entire period of the lockdown as seen by U3A members.

FEES FOR THE COMING YEAR 2021/22

Following discussion, the committee feels that some recognition should be made for those members who have signed up for the pandemic year 2020/21 but most of whom did not enjoy any sort of return for their membership fee. For the year beginning in September 2021 (academic year 2021/22), all those who are fully paid-up members of the Street and Glastonbury U3A in this current, pandemic year (Sept 2020 - Aug 2021) will pay only £5 membership fee for the year 2021/22. Anyone who was NOT a member for the pandemic year will have to pay the normal £10 annual fee. Associate members will pay the usual £5 Associate fee.

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