

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

UPDATE AND CURFEW CHRONICLE No 7

Dear Member

Unfortunately all our U3A outings, general meetings and group activities remain suspended until further notice. As I advised last time, many groups and the main meeting are dependent upon public venues so these are unlikely to restart anytime soon. Additionally, our U3A insurance would not yet cover us. More information as soon as we can. Also, I will post details on the homepage of our website for those who use internet.

Most of you have already renewed your membership – thank you very much. If not, please don't forget to do this – full details have been shown in the last few Chronicles, so I won't repeat them all here. If you have internet access, you can also look this up on our website. See the 'membership' item featured on the right-hand side of the homepage. (Remember, it is now £15 or £8 for Associates, and you don't need to fill in a form! Cheques payable to Countesthorpe U3A, send to Barry Hillyard, 35 Station Road, Countesthorpe, Leicester LE8 5TA))

A reminder that, if you are online, you might wish to browse the national U3A website – there's lots to do and enjoy. Visit: www.u3a.org.uk You won't need to log in, or anything complicated – only necessary if you want the specific advice sections. The range of possibilities is wide, and you will surely find something to interest or amuse you for a while.

So now, relax and enjoy our next selection of items in the Chronicle which follows after the AGM information. Keep safe, keep smiling and keep remembering the good times we had, and will have again, in our U3A! And - don't forget to send your contributions for Chronicle No 8!

June Hawkins
Information and Publicity Officer

Contributions not later than 24 August, please, to me at:
jhawkins45@talktalk.net
or by post to
28 Mulberry Court, Enderby Rd, Blaby. LE8 4BU

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Minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting of Countesthorpe U3A Held at Countesthorpe Village Hall on Tuesday May 14th 2019

1 Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting to Approve and sign.

The Secretary read the minutes to the meeting. Barry Hillyard proposed that they be approved as an accurate record and Mikki Wilde seconded.

2 Chairman's Report followed by questions

The Chairman's report was delivered to the meeting verbally. He said that his second 12 months had gone by equally rapidly with a wonderful variety of activities, trips and short holidays to remember. He congratulated the Outings and Holidays team on the splendid job which they are doing.

He reminded us that we have over forty activity groups and he paid tribute to the people who put themselves out to lead these groups. He also thanked the Committee for their work, in particular the retiring members who have given so generously of their time over the past years. He especially thanked Sue Wyllie who after retiring from the role of Treasurer last year returned to the position when the new Treasurer relinquished the post. He also thanked Barry and June for all the work they have done for the U3A.

He looked forward to the next few months when our current membership system will be computerised onto the Beacon system, details of which can be found in our forthcoming Newsletter and in the latest edition of the U3A's magazine 'Third Age Matters'. Finally he hoped that U3A members would take full advantage of the activities that the U3A has to offer now and in the years to come.

3 Treasurer's Report

A shorter copy of the audited accounts was placed on the members' chairs - a full copy being available for anyone who would like one.

The Treasurer began by saying that she had not expected to be here again this year but had filled in after the resignation of David Fagg. She explained that, as she was now fulfilling the role of Treasurer, she could not be the independent examiner and thanked Robert Metcalfe for fulfilling that role in 2019.

She asked if anyone would be willing to act as an external examiner in 2020 and was delighted when Gill Brown offered – who was then applauded by the members.

Sue explained that full accounts could be found on the website after the meeting. She also explained that as a result of an agreement between the Charity Commissioners and the Third Age Trust (TAT) group activities now need to be included with the annual accounts. As our income is now much higher we now need to produce more detailed accounts. As a U3A we are expected to comply with TAT recommendations.

Sue said that it was not necessary for the membership fees to be raised and they would remain at £13.

She thanked the members who gift-aided and thinks that the number is increasing as people become more aware of its benefits.

Questions were then invited from the floor. A member asked who the trustees were. Sue replied that they were members of the Committee. Another member pointed out that numbers had risen but capitation had gone down. It was explained that this was because there were more associate members.

4 Adoption of accounts

Janet Easey proposed that the accounts be adopted, Ruth Westley seconded. This was passed unanimously.

5 Appointment of Examiner for the accounts

June Hawkins proposed that the Treasurer be given the authority to appoint a new independent Examiner for the 2020 accounts and Mikki Wilde seconded this proposal. This was accepted unanimously

6 Election of Executive Committee Members

Three members of the Committee were leaving at the end of service (Helen Bull, Christine Claricoates and David Wilde), another (Joan Berry) had resigned on health grounds.

Seven members were eligible and willing to continue (Paula Wollaston, Jenny Mills, Susan Wyllie, June Hawkins, Barry Hillyard, Beryl Lishman and Peter Bradbury) and five new nominees have been duly nominated and seconded (Janine Tibbles, Robert Metcalf, Teresa Morgan, Dusty Durham, and Isobel McDonald). Jill Clayton was co-opted as Holidays account administrator.

Mikki Wilde proposed that the new committee be elected en-bloc, Ursula Wilde seconded. This was accepted unanimously.

The Chairman closed the Annual General Meeting at 2.40 pm.

Notes on the procedure employed for the 2020 'virtual' AGM:

- 1. Due to the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the trustees (the Committee) of Countesthorpe U3A, acted as representatives of the general membership for the purposes of the 2020 AGM as provided for in guidance from Third Age Trust and the Charities Commission.*
- 2. Minutes of the previous AGM (2019), the Chairman's report for 2020, the signed accounts (2019-20) and Treasurer's report (2020) were circulated electronically on 26 July 2020 to all Committee members, together with a voting paper.*
- 3. The voting paper required a response against each item as minuted below, and offered a final opportunity for questions for the Chairman and Treasurer.*
- 4. Every completed voting paper has been electronically stored, and forwarded to the Secretary, along with a printed copy for future reference.*

The minutes of the virtual AGM follow

Minutes of the 20th Annual General Meeting (Adjourned) of Countesthorpe U3A conducted by email with the Committee on 26 July 2020.

SPECIAL NOTE

Due to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the usual AGM could not be held. Notice was given to the membership, and subsequently displayed on the website as follows:

AGM - IMPORTANT STATEMENT

Notice of our AGM, due on 12 May 2020, was officially called in our December 2019 Newsletter. However, due to the Covid-19 situation, this cannot take place. Neither is it likely that the maximum three months' postponement would be practicable. Therefore, taking guidance from both the Third Age Trust and the Charities Commission, your committee has deemed it necessary to adjourn this meeting. This allows for the trustees only to meet (if/when government guidance allows smaller gatherings, or electronically) to sign off the accounts, which still have to be submitted in a timely fashion to the Charities Commission. Full details of the accounts would then be circulated to all members as part of the now regular Update and Chronicle mailings. The annual Chairman's report, normally presented at the AGM, is contained within the Update and Chronicle No 4 - available to download from the column on the right. Due to the unprecedented circumstances, both Peter Bradbury and Sue Wyllie have very kindly agreed to continue in their respective posts until the next formal AGM in 2021. Thus the committee will remain unchanged until that date.

What follows is a record of the Virtual AGM conducted by email with the committee, prior to circulation to all members – either by email or in hard copy by post, as appropriate.

1 Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting to Approve and Sign.

The Minutes of the 2019 AGM had been circulated electronically to members of the committee. Barry Hillyard proposed that they be approved as an accurate record and Jenny Mills seconded. The motion was carried unanimously. (Peter Bradbury will sign the 2019 AGM Minutes at the first available actual committee meeting.)

2 Chairman's Report

“Let's not dwell on the depressing situation we are currently experiencing when we can look back over the year since our last AGM, for there is much to remember and to celebrate. As usual, the year since our last AGM has been a very full one for our U3A. The number of activity groups remain buoyant, with the relatively newer ones (such as Ukulele, Talking of Death, Pilates) currently establishing themselves very well. Video conferencing platforms such as Zoom and Skype are now being utilised by a number of groups to ensure that members continue to enjoy themselves and to ensure their groups continue to function.

There have been many outings and holidays to enjoy, too. Speaking from first-hand experience I thoroughly enjoyed two great holidays to Bournemouth (October) and Weston-Super-Mare (March) which provided everyone with excellent food and accommodation and which included varied excursions to interesting places.

As someone who has always been interested in Egyptology, I must single out the day visit to the Tutankhamun exhibition at the Saatchi Museum. One could not fail to be overawed by the beauty and complexity of the craftsmanship produced some three thousand years ago. Furthermore, it was the impressive way that the museum displayed these artefacts in order to enhance each item's individual characteristics to its very best advantage; something that the Cairo Museum singularly failed to do.

We must also take time to reflect on the special nature of our U3A. I hope that many of you have experienced, as we have, many phone calls received from other members just to check that all is OK, or just for a simple chat. This connection is so important in these times of

imposed isolation, particularly for those living on their own. It is a fact that women are much better than men at maintaining this type of social contact. I wonder to what extent men engage in this social activity because it is just as important for men's well-being; even if it is to share how one's shed is organised, or the discovery of new laser extractor tool for Torx fixings! Once again, I must pay tribute to the committee of 2019/20. It has been my privilege to chair such a committed body of people, for every member has contributed so effectively for the good of our membership – which has continued to increase to well over 500 members last year. In these unprecedented times, which currently require more in the way of remote communications, we hope that this level of membership can still be maintained. Until these difficult times are over – as they surely will be, I wish everyone a safe passage through it all until such time we can get back together again to fully enjoy what our excellent U3A has to offer.”
There were no questions for the Chairman

3 Treasurer's Report

A copy of the examined and signed accounts had been circulated by email to the committee.

“The results for the year ended 31 March can be found on Page 7 of the Accounts. It is helpful to read this in conjunction with the Trustees' Report as this gives an explanation about the U3A as a whole.

The Surplus for the year is £811 which is very satisfactory. Our subscriptions were very similar to the previous year and as I mentioned at last year's AGM more members had gift-aided which has increased our ability to reclaim more tax from HMRC. Group Support costs have been much lower again this year and I would like to remind Group Leaders that funds are available to help with Group equipment and start-up financial help. Our membership fee has been increased for the 2021 financial year to £15 full membership and £8 Associate fee as we need to cover extra costs for the support for a new Treasurer. This fee was set prior to COVID-19 turning our lives upside down. However the Committee are still incurring costs for our excellent Chronicle. My thanks also to Gill Brown for acting as our Independent Examiner for this year. I would like to thank all my fellow Committee members for all their help and support over the past year.”
There were no questions for the Treasurer.

4 Adoption of Accounts

June Hawkins proposed that the accounts be adopted, Jill Clayton seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

5 Appointment of Examiner for the Accounts

Peter Bradbury proposed that Gillian Brown be appointed independent Examiner for the 2021 accounts and Janine Tibbles seconded this proposal. The motion was carried unanimously.

6 Election of Executive Committee Members

Both Peter Bradbury and Susan Wyllie had kindly agreed to continue for another year in post, despite their intention to stand down. This is for the sake of continuity to cover the Covid-19 disruption and subsequent resumption of activities when possible. Isobel McDonald had resigned during the year. All other committee members agreed to stand again during this unprecedented period for the sake of continuity. Jenny Mills proposed that the committee be re-elected en-bloc, Beryl Lishman seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

COUNTSTHORPE U3A REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1084302

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS: 4 Mawby Close
Whetstone
LE8 6XA

WEBSITE: www.countesthorpeu3a.co.uk

CONTACT TELEPHONE: 07901 548576

TRUSTEES:	Peter Bradbury	Chair	Appointed 9 May 2017
2018	Susan Wyllie	Treasurer	Appointed 9 November
	Christine Claricoates	Secretary	Retired 14 May 2019
	Janine Tibbles	Secretary	Appointed 14 May 2019
	June Hawkins	Information & Publicity Officer	Appointed 31 October 2018
	David Wild	Membership Secretary	Retired 14 May 2019
	Barry Hillyard	Membership Secretary	Appointed 9 May 2017
	Helen Bull	Speaker Secretary	Retired 14 May 2019
	Jenny Mills	Group Co-ordinator	Appointed 8 May 2018
	Joan Berry		Retired 14 May 2019
	Jill Clayton		Co-opted 14 May 2019
	Beryl Lishman		Appointed 9 May 2017
	Isobel McDonald		Appointed 14 May 2019
		Paula Wollaston	Appointed 9 May 2017
		Teresa Morgan	Appointed 14 May 2019
	Rudolph Durham	Appointed 14 May 2019 Resigned 6 September 2019	

GOVERNING DOCUMENT:

Constitution adopted on 11 November 2000 with amendments on 9 May 2017 and 8 May 2018

BANKS:	HSBC	Lloyds Bank
	1 Forge Corner	7 High Street
	Enderby Road	Leicester
	Blaby	LE1 9FS
	LE8 4FZ	

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Gillian Brown

Independent examiners report to the Trustees of Countesthorpe U3A

I report to the trustees on my examination of the Countesthorpe U3A (U3A) for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the U3A, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the U3A's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5) (b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the U3A as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination

I have no concerns and i have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: *G Brown*

Name: MRS GILLIAN BROWN

Address: 23, CAMBRIDGE ROAD

Date: COSBY
LEICS LE9 1SH

8/7/2020.

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2020.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting policies as set out by charity law. The report includes the information given in the Reference and Administration section, see page 2.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Countesthorpe U3A is controlled by its governing document which was adopted on 11 November 2000 with its various revisions. The latest version of the Constitution, dated 8 May 2018, which was adopted at the AGM on that date and constitutes an unincorporated charity. The elected Executive Committee Officers shall be the governing body of the U3A and its board of trustees.

RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

Trustees are recruited from the general membership to be appointed at an Annual General Meeting.

Non-Officer members retire after their period of two years to assure a degree of rotation of membership whilst providing continuity. Executive Officers retire at the end of the period specified in the constitution.

OBJECTIVES, AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

The objectives of the U3A as stated in its constitution are:

“The advancement of education and in particular the education of older people and those who are retired from full-time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.”

Public Benefit

The Trustees have reviewed the outcomes and achievements of the objectives and activities for the year to ensure they remain focused on the U3A's goals and continue to deliver benefits to the public.

Countesthorpe U3A is dedicated to providing a supportive learning and development environment for those people in the locality who are no longer in full-time employment. We are conscious of the need to do what we can to alleviate the issues faced by those living alone, who have suffered life-changing events such as loss of employment or bereavement.

We publicise the health and wellbeing benefits of U3A membership to the community by themed articles in the local newspaper (The Countesthorpe Herald). We advertise widely, having our own website (www.countesthorpeu3a.co.uk), as well as an entry on the local parish website. In previous years we have undertaken an 'outreach' campaign to raise awareness of the U3A and its many benefits. We have also approached the local Health Centre where referrals might be forthcoming for those people who could benefit from our offerings.

The Trustees are satisfied that the charity's activities provide a wide public benefit.

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities

Membership is open to individuals who are in their Third Age and are interested in participating in and helping to further the work of the U3A. Membership has increased steadily over the last year attracting members from a wide area.

The ethos of the U3A has continued to benefit from the work of those members who act as Group Leaders and are prepared to share their skills and knowledge with other members to encourage everyone to personally develop. We have a range of more than thirty six different activity groups covering creative activities/the arts, learning, music, physical activities, games and outings - all with the focus on personal development and supportive companionship.

Monthly meetings are held in the local village hall to enable members to meet together, to listen to a wide range of speakers and to access information on current activities. A monthly bulletin informs members of "What's On" and a twice yearly newsletter gives an overall update on the Countesthorpe U3A. These are supported by a widely used website.

The coronavirus impacted on all group and monthly meetings, which had to be cancelled from the end of February 2020. Some groups were able to continue by using on-line video conferencing facilities. To keep in touch with all our members we published an "Update and Chronicle" which is circulated by email or hard copy as appropriate. This is designed to keep members in touch with the U3A, inform them of what is happening and to provide interesting and entertaining items contributed by members. This is important in helping our members to feel part of the organisation whilst normal meetings are not possible, and to help alleviate isolation at this difficult time.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of the year

The U3A has had a successful year with increased membership numbers. Overall costs have been maintained at manageable levels although group support costs have reduced significantly. These costs are dependent on group's requirements year by year.

Reserves policy

In 2019 the basis of the preparation of the accounts was changed by an agreement between the Third Age Trust and the Charity Commission. The financial activities of groups are now being incorporated as their finances are all part of the U3A. The groups continue to be self-financing but with assistance from the main U3A for specialised equipment and start-up costs if required.

The U3A's policy on reserves is to maintain these at a level equal to twelve months of outgoings. Although only a small surplus has been recorded in 2020, the reserves remain at around twelve months normal expenditure and as there are no known contingent liabilities, the trustees are satisfied that the Countesthorpe U3A is in a stable financial position and can continue operating for at least twelve months from the signature date on the Balance Sheet.

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

FINANCIAL REVIEW (continued)

Reserves policy (continued)

The Countesthorpe U3A maintains a current bank account for general income and expenditure, with separate bank accounts for group activities. Surplus funds are invested in a COIF Charities Deposit Fund.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The trustees will keep this risk under review on a regular basis.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees:



Mr P Bradbury, Chairman

Date 8 July 2020



Mrs S V Wyllie, Treasurer

Date 8 July 2020

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

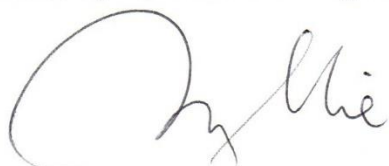
	Note s	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Incoming Resources			
Direct charitable income			
Membership	2	7,280	6,814
Groups	3	64,774	75,854
Donations		100	210
Investment Income		12	8
Total incoming resources		72,166	82,886
Resources expended			
Direct charitable expenditure			
Groups	4	64,791	75,930
Capitation fee		1,519	1,368
Monthly meetings		1,996	1,808
Magazines and newsletters		1,435	1,166
Group support costs		768	1,783
Beacon Licence		423	0
Miscellaneous		423	568
Total Resources expended		71,355	82,623
Net incoming resources		811	263
Fund balance 1 April 2019		15,764	5,183
Group funds 1 April 2018		0	10,318
Fund balance 31 March 2020		16,575	15,764

COUNTSTHORPE U3A

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2020

	Notes	2020	2019
		£	£
Tangible Assets			
Website at cost		3,015	3,015
Depreciation to date		<u>3,010</u>	<u>3,010</u>
		<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
Current Assets			
Bank accounts	5	20,012	17,702
Cash		<u>612</u>	<u>769</u>
		<u>20,624</u>	<u>18,471</u>
Debtors and prepayments		1,863	729
Group funds paid in advance		<u>4,341</u>	<u>1,991</u>
		<u>6,204</u>	<u>2,720</u>
Total current assets		26,828	21,191
Creditors-amount falling due within one year			
Accruals		743	1,195
Group funds received in advance		<u>9,515</u>	<u>4,237</u>
		<u>10,258</u>	<u>5,432</u>
Net Current Assets		<u>16,570</u>	<u>15,759</u>
		<u>16,575</u>	<u>15,764</u>
Funds			
Unrestricted funds		<u>16,575</u>	<u>15,764</u>
		<u>16,575</u>	<u>15,764</u>

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf:



Mrs S V Wyllie, Treasurer

Date 8 July 2020

COUNTSTHORPE U3A

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

1 Accounting policies

- a) The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention. The accounts are in accordance with the Charities SORP 2005 (Accounting and Reporting by Charities) and comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2005 issued under the Charities Act 2011.
- b) The financial statements are prepared on an accruals basis.
- c) Tangible fixed assets are capitalised where expenditure exceeds £500 and are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Any assets over £500 are depreciated on a straight line basis over three years.
- d) Fund accounting - unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the trustees.

2 Membership

	£ 2020	£ 2019
Subscriptions	6,180	5,957
Gift Aid	1,062	836
Monthly visitors	38	21
	<u>7,280</u>	<u>6,814</u>

3 Groups' income

	£ 2020	£ 2019
Learning	20,185	30,003
Activity	10,581	12,451
Personal Development	34,008	33,400
	<u>64,774</u>	<u>75,854</u>

4 Groups' expenses

	£ 2020	£ 2019
Learning	19,660	29,530
Activity	10,129	11,912
Personal Development	35,002	34,448
	<u>64,791</u>	<u>75,890</u>

COUNTSTHORPE U3A

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020 (continued)

5 Group bank balances

	£	£
	2020	2019
General Bank Account	3,936	3,590
COIF Investment Fund	1,925	1,913
Group Bank Accounts	14,151	12,199
	<u>20,012</u>	<u>17,702</u>

6 Payments to trustees and related parties

Out of pocket expenses are refunded to trustees for costs incurred on behalf of the U3A which have been allocated to group support, membership and miscellaneous costs. During the year D. Tibbles was paid £120 to assist the Committee with the chairs at the monthly meetings.

A total of £1,178 was refunded to six trustees in the current year.

No other remuneration was paid to any trustees.

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THE COUNTESTHORPE U3A CURFEW CHRONICLE

No 7

August 2020

I know that many of you have enjoyed the nostalgic pieces from a number of our members. Here is the first instalment of one from Shirley Wilding. It will be continued in Chronicle No 8 in September.

Memories of World War II - by Shirley Wilding

I am a genuine Cockney, born in Southwark, next to the Thames in London. My father was a uniformed police officer with the Metropolitan Police and my first three years were spent in a police flat in Borough High Street, not far from Tower Bridge. When I was three he transferred to Scotland Yard as a plain-clothes officer in the famous 'flying squad' and we moved to Teddington a small town on the Thames in Middlesex.

The following year the threat of war loomed and my parents became concerned for my safety. One of my mother's younger sisters had recently married and moved from the family home in Hampton (also on the Thames near Teddington) to Worthing on the south coast. This was my favourite aunt and because she was rather lonely and I was very attached to her I was sent to stay with her just before the war broke out. This was where I started school, quite traumatic since I was new to the area and had no friends there. However after a couple of months nothing much was happening, the 'phoney war' I believe they called it, so it was back to Teddington for me and another new school.

With the dawn of 1940 came rumours of alarming things to come and then of course 'the blitz'. My father was having a harrowing time in London, often not getting home for several days at a time because of the bombing and disruption to transport. Much of central London was in flames for days at a time but I wasn't aware of his terrible experiences at the time. Even in later years he talked very little about the awful things he had seen and been involved with. My mother was naturally very worried. When our next door neighbours told her they were sending their daughter, a couple of years older than me, to friends in Derbyshire and would she like me to go too my little suitcase was dusted down once more and this time the journey was north instead of south.

I was barely five years old, had no idea where I was going or what was happening, no explanation as to how long I would be away, always supposing anyone knew, which of course they didn't. I stayed in Buxton for about a year and all credit to the family I lived with, my memories of that time

are happy ones. It must have been difficult for them too, having two little girl evacuees thrust upon them when their own family were just about grown up. There was a daughter of fifteen and a son of seventeen. As soon as the son was eighteen he joined the air force and I can still remember the excitement when this handsome young RAF officer came home on leave for the first time in his smart new uniform.

My mother came to see me whenever she could. She did manage a visit when I had whooping cough and I can remember spending days out in the surrounding hills with her, to breathe in the wonderful fresh Derbyshire air, which was going to cure my cough. I only saw my father once during that year. He managed to visit me just before the Christmas of 1940 and just after he arrived the weather turned extremely cold. It snowed non-stop for a couple of days, I had never seen anything like it before. My father was taken out walking and afterwards often talked about the day he walked over the top of five-barred gates because the snow was so deep. Walking was a great hobby of all the Buxton family and I learnt to love it too. I often went back for holidays after the war and still have a love of the Derbyshire countryside. Incidentally that handsome young RAF officer is now in his nineties, we still keep in touch.

The following year things became a little quieter so it was back to Teddington again. This time I went to yet another school – my fourth and I wasn't quite six. My mother was working for my grandfather who had a public house at Hampton. Part of his war effort was to provide lunches for workers at a local factory so mother's culinary skills were put to good use or perhaps it was only moderate use, considering the rationing. All her ingenuity was taxed to the limit providing appetising meals from very meagre ingredients. There are only so many ways of using spam and corned beef. Every morning she and I cycled from Teddington to Hampton where I was now going to school.

One of many memories of this period was of air-raid shelters. My grandfather had a Morrison shelter in 'the clubroom' at the pub. This was like a huge iron table, which you crawled underneath when the siren went and there was the threat of an air raid. He also had an Anderson shelter outside which was half underground, covered by corrugated iron and looked like a miniature aeroplane hangar. Customers used it when there was a raid on. This shelter remained in situ for several years after the war and my cousins and I spent many hours making up games centred on it. Teddington was then home to the National Physical Laboratory where much secret war work was carried out. It included the testing of Barnes Wallace's bouncing bomb of 'dam busters' fame though of course the locals did not know this at the time. Because of the war work the area was a prime target for German bombs. Brick shelters were built in the streets around the lab one being just outside our house.

Up until then it had been ‘under the stairs’ when you heard the siren so it was quite exciting to go outside with a blanket and some refreshment and meet one’s friends. The shelter had bunk beds along each side and we young ones were put on the top bunks supposedly to sleep while the grown-ups discussed the current state of the war at great length. There was much whispering and giggling among us, also sharing of goodies but not a lot of sleep. The noise of bombs falling, guns firing and the bells of fire engines racing to put out fires or rescue people trapped in bombed buildings became quite commonplace. We also got used to the earth shaking when a bomb fell nearby. I can vividly remember going back into our house early one morning when the ‘all clear’ had sounded after a particularly bad night to find that the French windows, from the dining room at the back of the house, had been completely blown out. They were lying in state in the middle of the lawn surrounded by broken glass from every window in the house. This of course happened at a time when my father was stranded in London.

. . . to be continued!



MISSING LINK QUIZ

The three words in the clue have a fourth word in common. Answers later!
Eg: Gold, Finger, Pond. Answer: Fish (goldFISH, FISHfinger, FISHpond)

1. Room, Net, Cricket
2. Hog, Fair, Play
3. Axe, Pocket, Tooth
4. Dart, Card, Room
5. Spotter, Wagon, Freight
6. Fore, Away, Broad
7. Scare, Bar, Ned
8. Ball, Table, Court
9. Cookie, Good, Teller
10. Whistle, Were, Cub
11. Keeper, Post, Own
12. Box, Last, Man

Sent in by Tricia Brown



LOCKDOWN LIGHTENER

If you’ve gained a little weight during our enforced relative inactivity, why not try a new diet: the Face Mask Diet. *(Sent in by Ruth Westley)*

A LIGHTER SIDE OF THE VIRUS

sent in by David Hebblewhite

Now, let me get this straight: There's no cure for a virus that can be KILLED by sanitizer and hand soap?

Is it too early to put up the Christmas tree – I've run out of things to do!

When this virus thing is over . . . I still want *some* people to stay away from me

If these last few weeks have taught us anything, it's that stupidity travels faster than any virus on the planet.

So, wait a second – you're telling me that my chance of surviving all this is directly linked to the *common sense* of others?

People are scared of getting fined for congregating in crowds. As if catching a deadly disease and dying a horrible death wasn't deterrent enough!

If you believe all this will end and we will get back to normal once we re-open everything – raise your hand. Now slap yourself with it.

Another Saturday night in the house, and I realise that even the trash goes out more than I do!

Remember when you were little and your underwear had the days of the week on them? Those would be useful right now.

The spread of Covid-19 is based on two facts: (1) How dense the population is, and (2) How dense the population is.

Remember all those times when you wished the weekend would last forever? Well - wish granted! Happy now?



I never thought I would see the day when I would put on a mask, walk into a bank and ask for money – and get away with it!

From 'The Oldie' cartoons

ANOTHER QUIZ FOR YOU TO TRY

For example: 24 H in a D = 24 hours in a day. Answers later.

1. 13 is UFS
2. 26 L of the A
3. 7 D of the W
4. 12 S of the Z
5. 3 C in a F
6. 13 S on the USF
7. 18 H on a GC
8. 3 BM (S H T R)
9. 32 is the T in F at which W F
10. 100 P in a P
11. 12 M in a Y
12. 8 S on an O
13. 29 D in F in a LY
14. 13 L in a B D
15. 9 L of a C
16. 60 M in an H
17. 64 S on a C B
18. 1000 Y in a M
19. 15 M on a D M C
20. 90 D in a R A



ADDITIONS TO THE READING/PODCAST LIST:

- Paul Theroux - The Kingdom by the Sea - A journey around Great Britain. (An old book published 1983 but still interesting)
- Simon Barnes - On the Marsh. (A year in the Norfolk Broads)
- Google: OMEGATAU and you will find a massive archive of about 500 hours of science and technology podcasts. Some are very technical but some of general interest. Particularly recommended is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Nc7yfZ14V8> (Follow a civilian flying in one of the US Air Force Thunderbirds display team training flights)



ANSWERS TO MISSING LINK QUIZ

1. Ball, 2. Ground, 3. Pick, 4. Board, 5. Train, 6. Cast, 7. Crow, 8. Tennis, 9. Fortune, 10. Wolf, 11. Goal, 12. Post

WHAT BAILIE DID!

Today Bailie nibbled the cable,
The one for the Internet.
Of course she got the blame
Although Bailie is everyone's pet.

Comments of "I told you so"
And "why didn't you take more care?"
Came tumbling onto her
Whose feeling was one of despair.

It was annoying, too, as she knew about this.
Years ago, her rabbit did the same.
But with so many things to think about
Why should she take the blame?

Now they are without Internet.
For her no working from home.
Her daughter cannot get her homework
All because Bailie was allowed to roam.

Three days before it can be mended.
Three days without Internet.
It's the price you sometimes pay
When you have a rabbit for a pet!

Written by Anne Tester



A SUMMER ACROSTIC

Sapphire skies and sunshine, strawberries for tea
Umpires on the village green, umbrellas by the tree.
Myriads of marigolds, mazes made of maize.
Meadows in the moonlight, murmuring lovers gaze.
Elder, elm and English oak in gowns of emerald lace
Ramblers roam romantically, refreshed by nature's grace.

Written by Shirley Wilding

(This first appeared in Kaleidoscope, our second miscellany, in 2011)

REFLECTIONS

All the work's done, so I'm inspecting the new bathroom; new vanity unit, new shower, new down-lighters, new mirror - good lord, is that really me!

"Mike, there's something wrong with these lights."

Beloved belts upstairs . . . to see nothing amiss.

"What's the panic?"

"LOOK!" I point to the mirrored bathroom cabinet.

"I thought it was the lights," he says while nearly blinding himself looking skywards.

"Look at the mirror - my face looks odd. It must be these blue daylight LED thingies"

"It's not," he shakes his head, "your face is like that."

"What? . . . All these wrinkles - they can't have just appeared overnight."

"They didn't."

"They what?" I glare at him, but he's inspecting the shower tray.

"You've had them for years," he said nonchalantly, straightening up. Then he turned and saw my face. "Yes, well, think of them as laughter lines," he chortled.

"Laughter lines???? And what's so funny?"

"Well, you've obviously had an exceptionally hilarious life!"

He ran for his!



*Written by Tricia Brown
(This first appeared in Mosaic, our fourth miscellany, in 2016)*

BLOSSOM

Finding a name is a minefield. How does one know what the grown-up version of this baby one will be like – in terms of appearance or personality? We can all think of people whose names don't appear to fit them very well. Do you ever wonder if it has been a handicap to be called something unusual? Names come and go with the fashion of the time of course – with offspring named after some celebrity or other.

So, when the newborn lay there peacefully next to Mother, the question arose. Without much hesitation they settled on 'Blossom'. Blossom was born in the cold, as winter was struggling to morph into spring. The name was intended to bring thoughts of spring morphing into summer, of flowering trees with their pink and white petals making the world a happy, peaceful and sunny place. Quite something to live up to, then, for little Blossom.

Blossom grew rapidly, with long legs and shiny hair – admired by everyone who saw her. With seemingly boundless energy she would skip about in the fields, and was not a shy, retiring type, but always happy to make friends.

Blossom grew steadily, learning new things everyday as youngsters do, and succumbing with good grace to the essentials of life. A happy and sunny nature indeed. She continued to grow, becoming steadily bigger and stronger, though still retaining her good looks and glossy hair, until the day when her destiny became apparent. She was taken into the farmyard and backed gently between the shafts of the cart, and harnessed in. She was then gently led forward. Her sunny and placid nature meant that she was not discomforted with the notion of hauling the weight of the cart for the first time.

Over the years Blossom became a firm favourite with all the visitors to the farm park, hauling the gaily painted cart around the site, and truly living up to her name. Blossom isn't such a bad name for a cart horse, is it?

Written by June Hawkins, 2015

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 13 is unlucky for some
2. 26 letters of the alphabet
3. 7 days of the week
4. 12 signs of the Zodiac
5. 3 coins in a fountain
6. 13 stars on the US flag
7. 18 holes on a golf course
8. 3 blind mice (see how they run)
9. 32 degrees is the temperature in Fahrenheit at which water freezes
10. 100 pence in a pound
11. 12 months in a year
12. 8 sides on an octagon
13. 29 days in February in a leap year
14. 9 lives of a cat
15. 13 loaves in a baker's dozen
16. 60 minutes in an hour
17. 64 squares on a chess/checkers board
18. 1000 years in a millennium
19. 15 men on a dead man's chest
20. 90 degrees in a right angle



UNDECIDED

In solitary sunshine, seated on the stile,
I muse, "Am I for them, or 'agin' them?"
Glistening gently against the gin-clear sky,
Four in a file, they flank the farmland.
I'm in two minds here – I really don't know.

Shimmering, soaring, silent sentinels?
Magnificent, man-made monstrosities?
Perpendicular producers of power?
Statuesque, slender, soundless soldiers?
Yet - even now I am undecided.

From my bedroom window I see just two.
Piercing, pearly pillars peering over trees,
Gleaming against scudding gun-metal clouds.
When the blades finally turn - *then* I'll know!
Time will tell if it's my wind turbine hell.

Written when wind turbines first began to appear.

And finally, something we all know! Draw your own conclusions!

(Sent in by Ruth Westley)

The countries most affected by the coronavirus are the USA, Brazil, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom, Italy, and France.
India



Here are the images of their leaders.

The countries that are recognized as having managed the crisis best are Germany, Taiwan, New Zealand, Iceland, Finland, Norway, and Denmark.



Please don't forget to send in your contributions! I live in fear that we may 'run dry' before this is all over! If you have even just a vague idea – why not ring me to discuss possibilities, and I will be very happy to help! No contributions = no Chronicle!

Keep safe, and stay cheerful!