

SEASONS GREETINGS



WELCOME

Welcome to the Bridport u3a Newsletter for December 2020. You can now find this and all previous Newsletters on our website under News.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to comment on our Newsletters, and we welcome all suggestions. If you have anything you would like to be included in future Newsletters, please send your submissions to newsletter@bridportu3a.org.uk and we will do our best to use as many as possible.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

The Think Tank and the committee have identified a number of opportunities for skilled or experienced individuals to help improve Bridport u3a for all our members.

These include:

1. PR and Marketing
2. Social Media (particularly setting up and running a closed Facebook group)
3. Data Protection
4. Project Co-ordinator

5. Dementia, Sight, Hearing, Mobility issues – we need people with experience living with or supporting anybody with any of the above issues that prevent them participating fully in u3a activities (now and when we can meet again) to provide input to the Think Tank so we can improve their experience.

We can provide outline role descriptions for each of these, but invite the individuals concerned to help develop those further to suit personal skills and interests. You will have the option to join the Bridport u3a committee, but it is not compulsory.

If you are interested in any of the above opportunities, please email groups@bridportu3a.org.uk in the first instance to discuss further.

Thank you for helping improve your u3a.

MEMBER RENEWALS

Thank you to all the members who have paid their subscription for the current year, and for continuing to support us in these difficult times. Your membership subscription is our only source of income, and without that we would not be able to offer any groups, now or in the future.

JUST FOR FUN

(answers are at the end of this Newsletter)

1. Who delivers presents to dogs?
2. Who is Santa's favourite singer?
3. What would you get if you crossed Santa with a duck?
4. Why did the Powerpoint presentation cross the road?
5. What do you get if you eat yeast and shoe polish?
6. What do you call a fake noodle?
7. What do you call an alligator in a vest?
8. What do reindeer hang on their Christmas tree?
9. What do you call a deer with no eyes?
10. What do you call a fish with no eyes?

(apologies for the cracker jokes, it is that time of year!)

AT HOME GROUPS

As I am sure you understand, it is difficult for your committee and Group Leaders to keep activities running at the moment, but we all hope that 'normal service will be resumed as soon as possible'. Meantime, many groups have been meeting online (often via Zoom) and a wide range of new groups have been set up specifically to run online, such as our 'At Home' groups, which include:

- Art History
- Birdwatching
- Board Games
- Broadcasting
- Classical Music
- Coffee Time Discussion Group *
- Creative Writing
- Exploring Art
- Family History Group*
- Haiku
- History

- IT Self Help Group *
- Limerick Club
- Dorset Museum
- Non-Fiction Club
- Opera
- Political Discussion
- Puzzles for Fun
- Thomas Hardy Poetry
- World Service Archive
- Monday Coffee time Chat

Please see our website for further information

* Recently started

NEW ONLINE GROUP



This month we launch the new Knit and natter online group.

For experienced knitters and beginners. Bring your own piece of knitting, or a simple pat-tern

can be provided for the less experienced. We will start each session with a show-and-tell, where each participant can ask for any help they need, then we will continue to knit and chat on any topic that is of interest to the group. If you prefer to crochet you are also welcome, but the range of help available may be more limited. Initially these sessions will be on Zoom, but it is intended that we will continue using both zoom and meetings together when possible next year. Meetings will be on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, from 10am to 12noon. The first meeting will be on Wednesday 16th December.

If you are interested in joining this group, please email newsletter@bridportu3a.org.uk

in the first instance so the zoom link can be sent out to you.

SEASONAL AT HOME GROUPS

There will be 2 Chat groups especially for seasonal online discussions.

The first is on 25th December at 4pm, to discuss the Queen's Speech and anything about Christmas.

The second will be on 31st December discussing hopes for the New Year and any resolutions or plans for 2021.

These will be hosted by John Grantham on Zoom. Please email John in the first instance if you are interested in joining either or both of the discussions

john.grantham4@btinternet.com. If you are not already a Zoom user, John will be happy to talk you through it and test it out before the event, so you do not have to worry about it on the day.

DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

Unfortunately we are unable to run our normal quiz this year, and our efforts to find a suitable alternative that would suit all our members have failed. However, before Christmas we will be emailing or posting out a 'just for fun' quiz to everybody, which we trust entertains you for a while. The answers will be posted on our new website and in the January newsletter. We regret there will be no prizes awarded this year.

Our January talk is as advertised in your booklet, Wildflower Grasslands in West Dorset at 2pm on 26th January, via Zoom. More information in next month's Newsletter.

GROUP NEWS

Our At Home Groups are identified separately above.

Some of our other groups are managing to continue online, or, when possible, with reduced numbers. Please see our Groups page for information on how to contact Group Leaders and for information on groups that have vacancies, and the latest information available.

Please note, the advice from government is changing all the time, so it is important that you each keep up to date with regulations as they apply to you. As part of the wider u3a movement, we must take our guidance on what we can do from the Third Age Trust, not least because not complying with their advice means our insurance is invalid. The latest update was received on 27th November, following the Government and NHS announcement that Dorset will be in Tier 2.

The Third Age Trust has a link to Covid-19 advice on u3a activities. A direct link to the most recent advice is available here:

Covid 19 Advice – Click here

Tier 2 guidance:

Small interest groups of up to 6 people meeting outdoors where appropriate measures are taken;

No indoor meetings can take place;

People can participate in a single indoor organised sport activity, such as an exercise class, if they can stay separate and distinct from any other households and avoid physical contact and proximity

SHORT COURSES

Following the success of the recent short course we are looking to run other short courses (one off events) for a range of other topics. So far suggestions include: taking better photos with your phone; the history of Bridport; astrology. If you are interested in any of these and/or have other suggestions, please let us know by emailing groups@bridportu3a.org.uk. Running any of these is dependent on us finding a speaker, so suggestions for speakers would also be appreciated. If there is enough interest we would like to run these bi-monthly.

NEW WEBSITE

Our new website (bridportu3a.org.uk) will launch in early January 2021, where you will find significant changes, including a new look and feel, together with improved content and navigation. This has been tested on a range of technologies so should give a better user experience for anybody who previously had display and navigation issues.

An enhanced area is our Groups page, where it is easier to find current information

Note to Group Leaders: if you have not responded to the various contacts we have made about your group, you will find it is no longer listed as we have assumed it is closed. If your group is not in our listing you are not covered by the u3a insurance so must not op-erate as a u3a group.

GROUP SPOTLIGHT

Each month we would like to run a more detailed story on one of our groups. If you would like your group featured here please send information to newsletter@bridportu3a.org.uk

This month we look at 2 groups.

First up the Women’s History Group.

Although the group is not meeting at the moment, they are featured in the Winter edition of Third Age Matters, on page 69, in a piece about secretaries in the 1970s, with contributions from 3 of our members.



The second group to feature is the Limerick Club. This is an At Home online group who write limericks for fun and amusement. Each week a first line is suggested and members can use that, or one of their own choosing, to create a limerick. Each Saturday the previous week’s contributions are posted on the At Home Limerick Club webpage and a new first line is suggested. There is no pressure to submit a limerick every week, nor are they critiqued or ranked in any way, this is for fun.

To view the limericks for last week or to find out more about limericks go to the At Home Limerick Club’s webpage

[Limerick Club webpage – Click here](#)

NEW MONTHLY LIMERICK CHALLENGE

Each month the Newsletter will bring you a suggested first line for a limerick, and publish some of those submitted from the previous month (using contributors initials only). E.g.

*There was an old man with a beard,
Who said it was just as I feared!
Two owls and a hen,
Four larks and a wren
Have all built their nests in my beard
(Edward Lear)*

If you want to participate, please create a limerick with the following first line:

'He sat on a bench in Bucky Doo square'

Please send your contributions to limerickclub@bridportu3a.org.uk by 28th December, and a selection will be printed in the next Newsletter.

If we get a positive response we will make this a regular feature.

NATIONAL u3a

Did you know that Third Age Matters is also available as a text-only download that can be read by text-readers, so anybody with a visual impairment can still enjoy the national magazine? The link is available here.

www.u3a.org.uk/about/newsletter

At the recent national AGM the new u3a branding was launched, designed to be more 'vibrant' and appealing. We are using it at the head of this Newsletter. If you read Third Age Matters, you will know that for several years there has been a debate about whether the use of 'University' in our name is deterring some people from joining the movement. You will not be surprised that there is no change. It is hoped that by being 'just' u3a (like the BBC not being the British Broadcasting Corporation anymore) the debate will just go away. We will wait and see.

More information about the AGM, rebranding, national online groups, the latest u3a Covid guidance, research and much more can be found in the national u3a Newsletter, which you can sign up to here.

www.u3a.org.uk/about/newsletter

ZOOM & OTHER TECHNOLOGY

Love it or hate it (and many of us feel both in the course of a Zoom session!) it is a free, advert-free, safe and accessible way to keep in touch with friends and family, and with our own social groups while we cannot meet face to face.

NEW In addition to local support, Zoom offer a number of short helpful online video tutorials to show you how a number of different aspects of the software work, which are ideal to familiarise yourself with the product before you try to use it.

[Zoom tutorials – Click here](#)

NEW Also you can contact our new At Home group, IT Self Help Group, and our own members will be able to give you whatever assistance you need.

There is a wealth of information to help you get to grips with Zoom, available from both the Trust (u3a.org.uk) and Bridport u3a, including online tutorials, and one-to-one help. If you are struggling with Zoom or just don't know where to start, there is help available for you. If you need help contact us for signposting to the right sources of help for you.

There is also help available with a range of technologies, either from the above sources or from Dorset Digital Champions helpline on 01305 221048 (select option 2).

FUTURE-PROOFING BRIDPORT u3a HAVE YOUR SAY

If you want to contribute your thoughts and ideas to this group, please send your comments to newsletter@bridportu3a.org.uk. Progress updates will be published in future editions of the Newsletter.

Initially we are looking for members with a range of skills and experience to help us move forward, which you will find advertised in our Volunteers Needed section above.

This is your u3a, and without additional help the committee are unable to take forward the range of improvements needed to make us better for all our members. Please help us if you can.

OUTSIDE u3a

Many global institutions have provided free online content during the ongoing pandemic. Some that you might be interested in are:

chatterpack.net is an amazing resource created by an NHS employee that has links to hundreds of free resources, sorted by themes. Definitely something for everyone.

The BBC's 10 Today

www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/p087wddm is a collection of 10 sessions each 10-15 minutes of physical activity specifically for older people

If you want a bit more **indoor exercise**, try searching for Joe Wicks on Youtube. In addition to his more ambitious exercises, there are several for mobility restricted and armchair sessions too.

The Wessex Area Arts Society has a range of links to free online resources at arts institutions locally and around the world. This

was published in their April 2020 newsletter which you can link to from a side bar on their website

Shetland Amenity Trust have a YouTube channel where you can find videos of many aspects of Shetland life, plus a range of talks and demos on Shetland Knitting which have been made available for free as the annual Shetland Wool Week had to be cancelled this year.

If you are unable to escape to **Rosemoor** to see the Christmas lights, you can virtually visit other seasonal illuminations on YouTube. The 2 best I have found of 2019 events are the Enchanted Forest (Perthshire) which is about 10 minutes long, from Braemar Media, and the Rosemoor Glow of 2019 by Ben Embury, also about 10 minutes. Nearly as good as being there and not as cold!

For Artists and Crafters, Search Books are celebrating 50 years by giving away a maximum of 5 ebooks to anybody who wants them. You just use the link here, sign in and pick your titles, which you can download immediately. They are scanned pdfs of the original pages. Of those I downloaded the smallest was 19 pages and the largest 144 pages, from a random selection of things that interested me.

[Search Books webpage – Click here](#)

Bridport Library Service

has free e-books, audio e-books, e-magazines, e-newspapers and ancestry resources that library members can access from their own devices. Membership is free too.

TRADITIONAL GAMES FOR A SINGLE PLAYER

We have had a request for traditional games that people can play alone. It should be noted that many of these suggestions also include options to alternatively play with persons of your choosing, or match with anybody with similar skills to your own, selected by the computer.

Scrabble from Scrabble.Go, available free on your app store, or you can pay to have a version with no adverts. I find the standard version too blingy with all sorts of extraneous add-ons, but there is an option to play in Classic mode, where all the flash-bangs are turned off. I play as a 'guest' each time rather than sign in, so it also doesn't send me unwanted emails all the time. You can choose from Easy to Master mode.

Sudoku from sudoku.com also in your app store. Free, but you can pay for an advert free version. A new puzzle every day, but you cannot select the level expertise, it is random, which can be quite fun. They also run Sudoku and Killer Sudoku events over a number of days, which tend to increase in complexity as you progress. Beware, if you make 3 mistakes in a single puzzle it will make you go back and start again.

Patience/Solitaire from Brainium, also from your app store, and also available without adverts for a fee. This is easier from a touch-screen like a tablet, to move the cards around. Just like playing with cards but more portable!

There are also versions of Cluedo (called Clue) and Draughts (called Checkers), plus a great many versions of Chess.

If anybody has any other suggestions, please send them to Newsletter@bridportu3a.org.uk and we will publish them in a future edition.

ANSWERS TO JUST FOR FUN QUIZ

- 1 Santa paws
- 2 Elfis Presley
- 3 A Christmas Quacker
- 4 To get to the other slide
- 5 Every morning you will rise and shine
- 6 An impasta
- 7 An investigator
- 8 Hornaments
- 9 No idea
- 10 A fish

Wishing you all the compliments of the season

Until next month

Stay safe

Bridport U3A Committee

Charity Number 1165000