

U3a Bridport Newsletter October 2020

WELCOME & VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY

Welcome to the Bridport u3a Newsletter for October 2020. It is hoped to produce these monthly in future, to keep us all in touch with what is going on in and around our local u3a.

If you have anything you would like to be included in future Newsletters, please send your submissions to newsletterbridportu3a@gmail.com and we will do our best to use as many as possible.

This email is sent as text, because I have no skills or software to create anything more 'pretty'. If any of our members has appropriate skills, and would be happy to spend an hour or two each month making this look more professional, please get in touch, I am certain our members would appreciate your efforts.

MEMBER RENEWALS

Firstly a big Thank You to all our members who have paid their annual £15 subscriptions promptly this year. If you have not paid, your subscription for 20/21 is now overdue. If you go to our website you will see the various payment methods available, and we would invite you to consider renewing as soon as possible. Please ensure your membership number is on your payment. For any queries, please contact our Membership Secretary Diana Coleridge on 01308 424431.

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 quick 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, our 'At Home' groups, which include:

Art History

Birdwatching

Board Games

Broadcasting

Classical Music

Creative Writing

Exploring Art

History

Limerick Club

Dorset Museum

Non-Fiction Club

Opera

Political Discussion

Puzzles for Fun

Thomas Hardy Poetry

World Service Archive

Please see our website for further information

OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING

Our October monthly meeting is as originally scheduled, as the speaker has agreed to do their talk over Zoom for us. This will be by Philip Browne entitled "The Wreck of the Halsewell" at 2pm on 27th October. The Halsewell was an Indiaman that was wrecked near St. Albans Head in 1786. The talks are to be live on Zoom with the opportunity at the end to ask questions. The ID and passcode will be on the website, there is no need to pre-register. Participants will be muted until question time.

Advance notice; the 24th November scheduled speaker Francis Burroughes similarly agreed to do his presentation for us using Zoom, entitled "Don't put your daughter on the Stage" which is a humorous presentation about the many amateur productions he's presented; 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. Can we point you to the latest advice, which you will find on u3a.org.uk, clicking on the Covid-19 Advice link (which is at the foot of every page) which takes you to the latest advice for groups and the date on which it was last changed, so keep checking back. Alternatively a direct link to the current advice is <https://mailchi.mp/u3a/em-09-21-20-u3a-updated-covid-guidance?e=a8d470b47b> where changes since the last advice are highlighted in red, so it is easy to check for updates.

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 newsletterbridportu3a@gmail.com.

NATIONAL u3a

Many of you receive Third Age Matters, the magazine of the u3a movement. Did you know the Trust also publishes a monthly online newsletter? The sign-up link for this is currently on the front page of the national website, u3s.org.uk. It is full of interesting stories from around the u3a network, together with a range of national online groups, such as

World Histories

Poetry Reading

Maths & Puzzles

Amateur Radio

Virtual Choir

There is also a dedicated YouTube channel and they have just started radio podcasts. Please visit the u3a national website u3a.org.uk for further information and to participate. There is also a national u3a Facebook group, Keeping in Touch, with postings from members around the country.

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.

Did you know 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

In these unprecedented times your committee has endeavoured to provide and support new and alternative ways so our U3A can offer something for everybody, albeit in a very different way to those we are used to.

It had been hoped, back at the end of March when we went into Lockdown, that this would all be over in a few months, but the months go by it becomes more apparent that this will be with us for some time to come, indeed the World Health Organisation suggest we are looking at two years.

Whilst we still hope that it is not this long, we now need to plan ahead, and it is timely to look at what additional changes we can make, and how, if any, of these can be sustained to increase our reach even after the pandemic is behind us. We also need to plan for how we can return to the face-to-face meetings when it is safe to do so again, without compromising the service for Members needing different levels of support.

To this end we are setting up a small short-term working group to co-ordinate this work and take it forward. Members of this group are effectively a 'think tank', they will not be tasked with delivering all of the options, but will be looking at both the needs of our Members and the skills and experience required for delivery, hoping to find willing participants as we go forward.

The key areas we have identified to work on initially are:

Establishing and maintaining connections without the ability to meet face-to-face

Use of online tools and social media

Accessibility issues, both physical and online

Diversity: how do we reach everybody

Communication, and the ways to keep our Members informed and involved

If you are interested in being part of this working group, which will probably hold most of its meetings by Zoom because of the current constraints, please get in touch, with a brief outline of your areas of interest and expertise. Deadline for responses from anybody wanting to participate is 26th October 2020.

If you do not want to become part of this group, but have ideas for consideration, please also put these forward. We will be asking Members for input as the group takes this work forward, but feel free to let us know your thoughts now.

Contact details: groups@bridportu3a.org.uk Deadline: 26th October 2020

OUTSIDE u3A

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

Visit a museum (virtually) artsandculture.google.com, including:

Natural History Museum

J Paul Getty Museum LA
Vatican Museums, Rome
Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
National Museum of Modern & Contemporary Art, South Korea
Musée D'Orsay, Paris
MASP, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Shakespeare

Learn loads with the Shakespeare Trust Shakespeare.org.uk

Bridport Library Service

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

Until next month

Stay safe

Bridport U3A Committee