

## SUMMER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the quarterly edition of the Cheswick Green and District u3a Newsletter. Please forward any news items to Sue Winwood [suewin2002@gmail.com](mailto:suewin2002@gmail.com).

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Hello. My name is RUTH HUBBLE.

I was voted in as the new Chair of CG & D u3a last month at the AGM. So, I thought, for those of you who don't know me, I had better introduce myself.

I have been a member of our u3a since it started and over the years and I got many of our interest groups up and running. I still lead the Theatre and Curry groups which are both original interest groups. I have lived in Cheswick Green for 40 years and raised my family here. I do still work (about 1 ½ days a week), in Fostering and Adoption but I consider myself "retired but doing paid voluntary work!"

If we haven't met, PLEASE come up to me and introduce yourself (but maybe not all at once!).

If you have any ideas for new interest groups or suggestions of any sort about things you would like to happen or could be done better, please come and chat to me or email me on [rhubble8@gmail.com](mailto:rhubble8@gmail.com)

We have an enthusiastic committee with several new members this year and I hope that we can keep things running smoothly and meet your needs. But the ethos of u3a is that EVERYONE contributes to the running of our group, events, and activities, so we will be asking you to help out in small and simple ways, even if a bigger role is not your thing.

I hope we can keep our friendly, sociable, fun, active, interesting, and lively atmosphere going, but this needs your participation too.

Before I sign off, I want to THANK Di Howe for four years of impressive leadership as our outgoing Chair, and for taking on the extra year, post Covid whilst we took those tentative steps back to socialising again. Big shoes to fill. But I cannot tell you how fast she handed the bag over to me!!!



Ruth

## AGM

The 2023 AGM , held on 18th May, was well attended and went off without a hitch.

Your new Chair and committee were agreed, and the outgoing committee members were thanked. A tribute to Di Howe, our outgoing Chair was given. Di has led us through the Covid years and stayed on to do an extra year to see us into the post apocalyptic era!

Your 2023/24 committee are;

CHAIR: RUTH HUBBLE always contactable on [RHUBBLE8@GMAIL.COM](mailto:RHUBBLE8@GMAIL.COM)

VICE CHAIR : BARBARA HANCOCK

SECRETARY; SUE HURST

TREASURER ; TRUDIE COOPER

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY; JACKY NOLAN

GROUPS CO ORDINATOR ; HILDA BURNETT

NEWSLETTER AND WEB EDITOR : SUE WINWOOD

REFRESHMENTS ORGANISER: MARGARET THOMPSON

NEW MEMBERS BEFRIENDER: WENDY BALL

AND THE WORKER BEES ! All new to the committee and we thank them for volunteering:

JACKY TIMMS, MARGARET DANIELS, ANITA BATES, SALLY GITTINGS will also be New Member Befrienders.

## KING'S CORONATION CELEBRATION AFTERNOON TEA

Well, what a wonderful afternoon that was!

Firstly, I want to thank the committee members who worked so hard to pull this event together.

On the day, the teamwork was a delight to see, and we were show ready within an hour of starting to set up.



The charming crockery was one of the stars of the show, but the real centrepiece was, without doubt, the incredible celebration cake, (see photos) made by Trudie (thank you)



The fizz to toast the King set the afternoon off in style

The chatter and chomping made for a really enjoyable atmosphere

I want to thank everyone who helped pile up the crockery, took rubbish home, dismantled tables, stacked chairs and took goody bags home.!



It was all done in the true spirit and ethos of u3a where everyone contributed.

I hope you all enjoyed the afternoon

*The Coronation Tea Party was made all the more special by the use of lovely china crockery. This was hired from "TEACUPS AND TIARAS" and the contact email for this company is: [deborahlawlor@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:deborahlawlor@hotmail.co.uk).*



*They deliver and pick up the crockery to suit the client and don't require it to be washed up!*

Do you ever wonder where your fellow Cheswick Green & DISTRICT u3a-ers come from. Well,

75 of our members come from Cheswick Green.

48 live in Shirley,

20 in Earlswood and

13, in Wythall or Hollywood.

The others cover a wide area including addresses in Hall Green, Hockley Heath, Kings Norton, Dorridge, Hall Green, Sheldon, Illshaw Heath, Olton, Wootton Wawen, Tidbury Green, Monkspath and Hillfield, Highters Heath and Longbridge.

So, you can see we truly are "AND DISTRICT".

### **DID YOU KNOW.....**

That the u3a actually started in France in 1973 when **Prof. Pierre Vellas** was exploring the availability of learning opportunities for people who were retired but still keen to learn. He created a more academic model than we have here in the UK, but this model has been replicated throughout Europe where today they are still more academic learning led.

In the UK, u3a was founded in 1981 by three friends, embarking on the "third age" of their lives. Peter Lazlett, Eric Midwinter and Michael Young. They met in Cambridge to discuss the intellectual and cultural prospects for older people. They felt that a more informal shared learning, which had a fun and active base, would work better here. And it seems they got it right because today in the UK, there are more than 1,035 u3as with around 400,000 members.

U3a is open to everyone who is not working full-time. The original UK u3a ethos was that members draw upon their knowledge and experience, to teach and learn from each other - just for pleasure - No exams!!!

Each u3a has its own unique personality and I like to think ours is sociable, fun, friendly, active, and interesting; whilst we learn things along the way.

U3a exists around the world, in central, southern and eastern Europe, Australia, Canada and the USA. Look out for groups on your travels and maybe pop along and see how they compare. Let us know what you find.

## **CORE MEETINGS**

### **Third Thursday each month**

June: Blood Bikes Speaker Martin Williams

July: From the Gods to the Gutter Speaker Kevin Reynolds

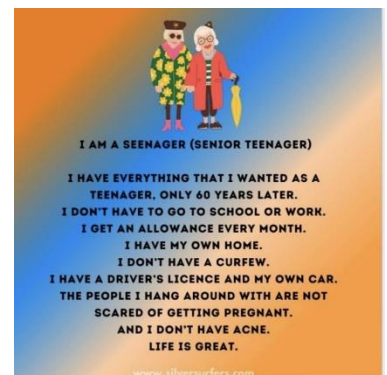
August: Rogues, Villains, Murderers and Thieves Speaker Vanessa Morgan

September: Cakes and Chat

October: Haunted Warwickshire. Tales of Mystery, Murder and Misdeeds

November: Through the Decades 1920 to 2020 Speaker Maggy Farmer

December: Christmas Party



# GROUP FOCUS

## LINE DANCING

We are in need of a few new line dancers! Join us for a fun weekly line dancing class!

With step-by-step instructions we learn new dances each week, we dance to modern chart music and music across the decades, not just country. We are a friendly group who welcome new dancers. No experience or equipment required, just a pair of trainers and a love of dancing!

Cheswick Green Village Hall every Tuesday 2.30 to 3.30pm £6 pay as you go. For further details contact Janice on 07865 999541

## DINING OUT



We continue to meet up monthly. The last meet up was a curry evening at Monsoon in Hollywood. Previous to that we have had Italian, St David's day was celebrated with a Welsh menu and next month we will be attending the college of food for a Black Tie evening.

July we will be celebrating 4th July American Independence in Stratford. So, all is good, and we are trying hard not to expand the waist too much.



## GAMES

**RUMMIKUB** will start again from 4th September at 2.00pm on the first Monday of the months at The Saxon. We will teach anyone who wishes to join us. You must be a u3a member.

**CANNASTA** We play on the second and fourth Monday monthly at the Saxon Inn 2pm until 4.30pm

**CRIBBAGE** is held on the SECOND Thursday monthly again at the Saxon Inn at 2pm til 4.30pm

As with all three games they are for u3a members only. There is no charge but we do ask that everyone who attends buys a drink from the bar (tea and coffee or any normal bar drink) This is because the Saxon allow us to play for free and should be the same for any group who uses the Saxons facilities . It's a small price to pay and we don't have to pay room charges as we would if hiring a different venue.

## CURRY CLUB

So, we are halfway through the year, and we have had 6 enjoyable meals. The 2nd half of the year includes some new venues and that always takes our evenings up a notch.

Do you have any favourite curry venues? Please let us know and if they are new to us, we will be sure to try them.

## THEATRE

So, when you read this, several of us will have been to see The Railway Children at Hall Green Little Theatre. We also have several other shows lined up to see over the summer.

Theatre Group is active, and we are beginning to be more comfortable sitting in audiences, although we are still preferring to support the smaller venues rather than the big commercial venues because they are more expensive. But big shows like Hamilton are heading to Birmingham next year, so watch this space.

## TABLE TENNIS CLUB

The U3A table tennis club is run by Roy Holloway – email royholloway@btinternet.com

The club is held on Tuesday afternoons from 2pm until 4pm. The venue is Wythall Village Hall (Close to Becketts Island) We have two tables, and at present 13 members, which, following discussions with the members, is the maximum we can cope with otherwise the wait to play becomes too long, so unfortunately at present we are not looking for new members. Should any members of the U3A wish to start another table tennis club, the tables and venue are available, and I will gladly help them.

## BADMINTON



Badmintoners enjoyed Earlswood Village Hall's coronation balloon displays

We are open to new players joining us on Thursdays 9.45-12 at Earlswood Village Hall but you need to have played before as we cannot coach newbies and we have been paying for several years so whilst not olympic level we are not beginners.

Fun and fitness are our main ethos. If you are interested, pop along to a session. £5 per session and you need your own racket.

## STRIDERS

The Striders Group continue to stride out every month. There's been mud and puddles to avoid on our March and April walks but always done with a cheery smile. We had all sorts of weather in March - ridiculously windy at the start, glorious sunshine at times and then driving rain towards the end. At last month's 4 mile walk we passed big posh houses, walked along a canal towpath, across fields and through Brueton Park at the end so it was a very varied walk for the 9 walkers, some of whom we hadn't seen for a while.



## BOOK GROUP



The book group meet on the first Thursday of each month. We currently have 10 members and we have very lively discussions concerning the book of the month, which leads to other topics. If anyone is interested in setting up another group, please get in touch, Marian

## CHAIR YOGA

### Benefits

Yoga has been shown to improve overall health when practiced regularly.

Chair yoga is a gentle form of yoga that can be done sitting on a chair or standing on the ground while using the chair for support. It is beneficial if you have limited mobility or if you want a gentle exercise.

**Improved flexibility.** Flexibility allows you to do the activities you need and love to do, from twisting while driving to bending over to play with your children or grandchildren.

**Better concentration.** Incorporating breath work with the poses can help clear your brain of unwanted thoughts, improve your mood and decrease stress.

**Increased strength.** Body strength enables you to withstand falls and injury, and helps with balance.

**Reduced joint strain.** Chair yoga reduces strain on your joints and muscles. If you are unable to stand for traditional yoga it gives you an opportunity to practice yoga too.

**Portability and convenience.** You can do chair yoga nearly anywhere you can find a place to sit. *We also have members that do conventional yoga – you just need to bring a mat.*

**When / Where do we meet.** Weekly on Wednesday afternoons from 2:15 – 3:15 pm.in the Village Hall

**Cost.** £7.50 per week.

**Not sure if it's for you?** Come and find out, we are a friendly group, there's lots of chat and laughter and no one is expected to do more than they are comfortable with. Lisa our teacher is great fun and chats as much as we do!

Group\_Leader. Jacky Nolan. [jacky.inolan@gmail.com](mailto:jacky.inolan@gmail.com) 01564 702753

## **FAMILY HISTORY GROUP**

The Family History Group was started in 2013 by Hazel Law just after Cheswick Green u3a was formed. There were two groups to begin with, Beginners and Intermediate. I did not join immediately but there are still members of the original group.

Hazel sadly died in 2017 and after a short break in meetings Margaret Daniels suggested a coffee morning to discuss taking the group forward. I offered to become coordinator with Pat Jackson and Linda Matson taking on the joint role of lesson-planners.

We are now a group of 9 regulars (one male who seems quite happy amongst us ladies!) who meet in each other's homes in the afternoon of the third Monday in the month. We are all experienced researchers, genealogists, call us what you will but it's safe to say that no-one ever 'finishes' their family history unless they choose to put it aside. There are actually three of us who still have 'missing' grandfathers! Our areas of interest are throughout the country.

Some of us began our research years ago when access to records was only through the libraries or local record offices, handling delicate documents or trawling through microfilms; others came to it via digitisation as many records throughout the world are computerised. When used correctly and verified from other sources, this is a great boom especially if the research is not local.

Each month we cover a different topic or specific ancestor, decided in advance so we can do our homework or come to the meeting with information to share. It's a rare month we don't learn something new despite our years of experience. Sharing our own family histories is always interesting and often the cause of astonishment or amusement.

We try to have at least one outing a year related to family history or history in general and we have had a behind-the-scenes tour at Warwickshire Record Office. Last year we visited Shakespeare's School Room and Guildhall in Stratford on Avon, highly recommended. This summer we are planning to go to The Commandery in Worcester; we usually car-share or use public transport.

There is always coffee and a cake involved of course! I think it's fair to say we take our subject seriously but not so much ourselves!

Pauline Pedersen Co-ordinator

## **GARDEN GROUP**

After a couple of years of intermittent get togethers in March a group of 10 of us met at Ambleside Garden Centre to arrange a programme of visits for 2023. Our first outing, later in the month, was to Winterbourne Gardens in Edgbaston. Despite being early in the year we were blessed with lovely mild, almost spring-like weather and, following coffee on the terrace (a regular feature of all garden group visits!) we enjoyed a very pleasant walk around the grounds.

In April we visited the wonderful Morton Hall in Worcestershire where we enjoyed a guided tour of the garden before a lovely lunch in the Garden Room. We visited just prior to their annual Tulip Festival and, despite some concerns about whether the tulips would be ready for the big day, we saw some beautiful flowers, especially the fritillaries.

Our May visit to the Secret Quarry Garden in Baginton, Coventry was sadly a little disappointing. We have been before and been delighted with the very colourful displays of rhododendrons and azaleas but this year, probably because of the cold Spring weather, the display was nowhere near as good. However, the garden is situated in Russells Garden Centre which also houses Avondale Nursery, with its display garden, and David Cheshire Nursery so we had plenty of interest to enjoy, as well as a very nice lunch at the Potting Shed Café.

Our June visit will be to Spetchley Park between Evesham and Worcester. The gardens are home to a very fine collection of peonies so we are hoping we have chosen just the right time to visit.

The Garden Group generally meets monthly to visit gardens or garden centres in the (reasonably) local area (so no actual gardening involved!) As a rule we meet up at the Village Hall and car-share to our venues where we usually enjoy visits to the café as much as to the gardens! If anyone would like more information about our activities, please e-mail me [bevprater@virginmedia.com](mailto:bevprater@virginmedia.com).

We encourage members to sign up for the u3a National Newsletter which is filled with information, stories and advice from across the u3a movement. Please see the link below on how to sign up to receive the Newsletter by email

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter>

Last month (May) was Mental Health Awareness month.

If you are not feeling 100% today, then this is for you.

I hope brighter days are just around the corner for you.

Please talk to someone.

There are lots of organisations out there who can support you.

It really does help to talk about it.

### **Just Know Tough Times Do Pass**

If life's journey feels too tough today  
And the skies above feel always grey  
If you feel like there is no way out  
And you're doubting what life's all about  
Just know tough times do pass

If you feel alone, unloved and scared  
For the future, you feel unprepared  
If you're tired of wearing a painted smile  
Whilst fighting your demons for such a long while  
Just know tough times do pass

If your waking hours fill you with dread  
So, to shut the world out, you retreat to your bed  
If you've lost the will and rarely eat  
And you shy away from the people you meet  
Just know tough times do pass

Nothing is permanent in life my dear friend  
Even the worst of times will come to an end  
Please don't give up when the skies are grey  
For a better tomorrow will come your way  
Just know tough times do pass

© Maxine Bailey  
3rd May 2023