

## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the eighth edition of the new style High Lane U3A newsletter. It's sad to report that we have progressed from Tier 3 to a full lockdown once again. However, U3A is still alive and there is lots going on both at National and local level.

Notable items in this edition include a National Office poetry competition and a showcase for artists. As well as these, the monthly photography competition, U3A Eye, continues. We also have some interesting contributions from members about their activities. There's a splash of colour on page 10 from the Photography group's October competition, the topic of which was Red.



Our Limerick theme is thriving! We have a number in this edition; some being inventive with the format! Thanks to the authors. Do send me your limericks to keep this going. It's surprisingly easy to write a limerick! Much easier than you think.

As with the previous edition this edition will be available only by email and on the web. As you know, we have been trying to ensure we have everyone's email address and are now pleased to report that we are reaching nearly 90% of our members in this way. If you know of anyone who is not receiving the newsletter, please ask them to let us have their email address.

I'd like to thank those members who have sent me contributions; please keep them coming. Please feel free to share some of your interests, items you have found that you think would be of interest to other members, places you have visited, books you have read, films you have seen; your photos, poems, recipes, limericks; the list is endless. The next issue will be December when we are all hoping that we will be able to enjoy Christmas in spite of the current situation. I will need your contributions before the end of November. Please send ideas, suggestions and contributions to me at [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

Diane Saxon

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## FROM THE CHAIR

There are the usual signs, which we have sadly got so familiar with in recent months, outside Danny's Deli. They request that we wear face masks and keep our distance with little arrows to help. Underneath are three words, saying "In this together". What a clever logo that is. It sticks in my mind when I think of U3A. We are in it together and we need the help and support of one another as never before.

The Committee has been active since Lockdown started, anxious to keep in touch and to help members. At times it can feel as if the effort is all one way and it's really great to have feedback. If I get a communication from a member, especially if it's positive; it sets me up for the day. Please continue to keep us posted. To use another popular logo, we are "Here to Help".

Warmest wishes

Sheila Harrop

## PROGRAMME SECRETARY REPORT

As we are unable to hold open meetings at the moment, I am continuing to organise on-line sessions

The October speaker was excellent. Her talk was informative and entertaining, as befitted a topic like Chocolate.



Next month there will be a Zoom talk, organised by North West U3A. It is entitled 'Grandma flew spitfires'. Tim Young of Newmarket U3A will explore the roles of the women who supported the air defence of Britain. This takes place on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> November at 10.30 am. Booking early is recommended for this as places are limited. Details are on the North West U3A website.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSco9DxIsSKJO5NtLpA24H2mQ6x0nxa6MBYiF9122nw\\_vK0glw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSco9DxIsSKJO5NtLpA24H2mQ6x0nxa6MBYiF9122nw_vK0glw/viewform)

## December event

The December event is a festive celebration, entitled "Tis the season to be Jolly" and I hope we can be together, with a mince-pie and a seasonal drink in spirit at least. It has been arranged for our Christmas Party date, so there are no excuses for forgetting it. The date is Wednesday Dec 9<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. Enjoy a cracker joke or two, as we reminiscence on our Christmases past!

Registration for this talk is already available. Go to <https://mirthy.co.uk/u3a-highlane/> and click on Register. As before you will receive an email with the link you need to join the talk. You will also get reminders nearer the time.

**Mirthy Talks**  
In Partnership With High Lane U3A

**Tis the Season to be Jolly**  
Wednesday 9 December at 2pm

Starts in:

39	02	12	31
Days	Hours	Minutes	Seconds

**Register for your FREE online talk!**

Christmas time! A look back at some of our Christmas traditions, celebrations and favourite toys! Enjoy a few carols and a look at the films we've watched at Christmas time, with Kath Reynolds. Talk length - 49 minutes.

I sincerely hope that you will enjoy these talks.

Regards  
Sheila Harrop

## A LOVE AFFAIR WITH CHOCOLATE!

The second Wednesday of the month at 2.00 pm was our talk the “Food of the Gods” A History of Our Love Affair with Chocolate” presented by Sandy Leong.

The Mayans and Aztecs believed the cacao bean had magical properties. Spanish explorers took the bean back to Spain in 1528. The bean only grows in regions 10° either side of the equator. The main producers are Brazil, Mexico, West Africa, Malaya and Indonesia.



Sandy told us about the chocolate houses of the late 1600s. Chocolate was a luxury item in this era and the chocolate houses were central to the London gentleman’s social life of the time. The chocolate houses were actually forerunners of the Gentleman’s Clubs. At this time only drinking chocolate was available.

The Quaker and Fry families opened shops during the 1700s but it was not until 1847 that the first chocolate bar was produced by Joseph Fry. Cadbury appeared around 1824 with a warehouse in Birmingham and by 1868 had produced the first box of chocolates. 1875 saw the first chocolate Easter Eggs. Commercial production soon followed led by the Quaker families who built villages for their employees; Fry in York and Cadbury, the Bournville village in Birmingham. Around the same time Lindt was producing chocolate in Switzerland. Rodolphe Lindt invented a conching machine in Berne, Switzerland, in 1879 which produced chocolate with superior aroma and melting characteristics. We heard about how the USA imported their chocolate from England and the tins of chocolate sent to soldiers fighting in various wars. The talk ended with a review of some more recent chocolate bars.

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The talk was very well received; here are a few comments from members.



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We did enjoy the chocolate talk, but I have to say it would probably have been better if there had been free taster samples handed out as well!!!! Perhaps that could be arranged for another talk next time, but I suppose it might be just a little difficult to do it virtually??? Seriously, it's nice to think that others that we know are watching at the same time, 'almost with us'. Thank you for organising these talks, to keep us going until we can all meet up together again, with a coffee, (and Jan says, a biscuit?).

Best regards. Jan and Gerry Chartres

Just spent a lovely (Chocolatey) time with Sandy Leong. Really enjoyable. Not so much a talk as very interesting and amusing case of really good storytelling. Brought back some lovely memories, and I did hear the expression "chocolate is good for you". Apparently one square of dark chocolate per day - but Sandy had not found any research on how big the square should be!!

Thanks again. Doreen Robinson

**FROM U3A NATIONAL OFFICE**

Please note: there are many events listed on the National Office website. A good number of the events (particularly the free ones) are already sold out so you need to be quick if you wish to join these events. The only way to get on some of these events is to keep visiting the national website [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk). The ones I have included here are still available – as I write.

All the talks are on Zoom. There are some training events for Zoom; there are various dates for these. See the National U3A website for details and to book a place. The technology guides are also available at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/how-to-guidance>

**Poetry event**

Thu, Nov 5, 2020, 2:00 PM and Sun, Nov 29, 2020, 3:00 PM GMT

Online via Zoom

A chance for poetry writers across the u3a movement to connect and share their poems. Calling all u3a poets, whether you are a regular member of a poetry group or do not usually have the opportunity to share your verses with others, you are invited! The event will be held over Zoom, offering a small group of members an opportunity to connect and share a poem you have written. No matter where you are based or what your level of writing experience - all are welcome!

The talk is free but you need to register at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/u3a-poetry-reading-tickets-126101473903>

**Artemisia: Artist, icon, entrepreneur**

Discover the art of Artemisia Gentileschi, who challenged conventions and defied expectations as a successful artist of the 17th-century.

24 November, 10.30am - 12pm Cost: £5.50

Online event. This event takes place on Zoom.

u3a members are invited to join the National Gallery to discover the art of Artemisia Gentileschi, who challenged conventions and defied expectations as a successful artist of the 17th-century, tackling subjects that were traditionally the preserve of male artists and for the male gaze.

National Gallery expert Kate Devine discusses the power of Gentileschi's heroines and the artist as heroine of her own life and storyteller Fiona Alderton gives a spellbinding account of Artemisia's extraordinary life.

The first hour of our session will include a lecture and Q&A session. After a short break, sit back and enjoy the drama.

To book your ticket, go to this page <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/artemisia-artist-icon-entrepreneur-tickets-124398283615> and click on Tickets

## **U3A EVENT for Maths week 9-14 November**

Talk by Rob Eastaway. Maths on the Back of an Envelope

Mon, Nov 9, 2020 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm GMT. Zoom talk. Register here

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talk-by-rob-eastaway-maths-on-the-back-of-an-envelope-tickets-121709834391>

## **NATIONAL POETRY COMPETITION**

Calling on all our amazing u3a poets - you are invited to take part in our National Poetry Competition 2020 - an opportunity to get creative and to show off your poetry writing skills.

The Trust is launching a UK-wide initiative to find the best humorous poem penned by one of you. The top three entries will be published in Third Age Matters magazine, which reaches over a quarter of a million households.

The theme for the challenge is 'hobbies or interests'. Given most of us have had more time than usual to engage in our hobbies this year it seems a fitting theme. You can write about a new hobby you have taken up during lockdown, jog your memory by writing about hobbies of the past or use your imagination to write about a hobby you have never quite managed to take up. Or something else related to hobbies or interests - the choice is yours.

You may want to discuss your ideas in your interest groups via phone, email or virtual conference call or this may inspire you to start up your own poetry or poetry reading group. There is information and advice on the Poetry subject adviser's page.

Whatever you decide, we want your poem.

You can submit your entries via this form to be accepted. You have until 12 noon on Friday 20th November to submit your poem. The submission form is at <https://u3auk.wufoo.com/forms/me2bftq0pk5sh6/>

See our Learning Pages for more about how it will work and some of the competition rules to follow.

Good luck!

## **SHOWCASE - PAINT OR DRAW**

The National Office already runs U3A Eye for Photographers; now this is for artists. Send in pictures of your original artwork on a monthly theme to feature in our online gallery. No prizes, just prestige!

Are you a dab hand with a paintbrush or pencil?

Do you want to develop your skills or are you simply interested in the world around you and how to capture it in a piece of artwork?

We are running a monthly challenge to encourage people to paint or draw a piece of artwork, then take a photo of their work and submit their pictures via our online form. We are going to be posting a different theme each month and inviting U3A members to submit photos of their creations on that topic.

This is not a competition and it is not about your artistic ability – what we want from you are interesting pictures, possibly different perspectives on everyday scenes or objects, anything which has inspired you to paint or draw.

At the end of every month, we will choose and publish up to 15 photos of artwork on an online gallery for each theme to share the pictures with all of our members. Just upload your photo using the form below (you will receive an acknowledgement once submitted).

Please only submit one photo per person. Your photo of your artwork should also not include any people.

The theme for this month is: "Plants"

Deadline for submissions: 18th November

Submit your photos by clicking here <https://u3auk.wufoo.com/forms/paint-or-draw-a-monthly-art-challenge>

**U3A Podcast** - Second programme to be released w/b 16th November.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zGNxpUSUAc>

## COVID TIP

Do you wear glasses? I do and when I began wearing a face mask my glasses kept steaming up. Eventually I came across this tip, I tried it and IT WORKS. If you are having the same problem, try it. It's simple and it costs nothing.

Take a paper tissue out of the box, keeping it in its folded position. Fold the two sides in about one and a half inches, then fold bottom to top twice. You should now have a folded tissue measuring approx five inches by one. Place it inside your mask over the nose piece.

Result ----- no more steamy lens.

Dorothy Neillands

At High Lane U3A  
We rued the day  
Coronavirus came to stay  
But have no fear it will disappear  
Here's to a better year!!

Sheila

There was a young man from Disley.  
Who lost taste, and voice became grizzly.  
A test said, you've got it.  
'Twas easy to spot it.  
Thank goodness, just mild, symptoms measley.

Walter

## **CANASTA**

Well it was brief.....our hosts for Canasta, The Royal Oak, were open, then with the recent change in Tier, they were shut. I am pleased to advise Canasta members that Nick and Dot are well and the Royal Oak is looking very nice as they have been busy using the time to have a mass clean and tidy up outside. The rumour is Dot may be decorating in this lockdown and when open we will return to a newly decorated pub. Rosemary and I managed to pop in for a chat and a cup of tea and will return as soon as they are allowed to reopen.

It seems a long time ago since we met however Rosemary and I have been playing Canasta against a computer, iPad and/or phone; programmes you will find on Google Play or Apple Store.

Stay safe and gosh I miss Dot's cheese pie

Les Birks

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## **DINING**

The Dining group is another one of our gatherings which sadly can no longer meet.

Our last lunch was in February when we went to The Kingfisher in Poynton. In April we were booked to visit The Beehive at Combs but of course that had to be cancelled. As we have no idea when we will be able to meet again and we are holding members money which was paid in for The Beehive we would like to return this to the members. Therefore if you have your name on the list and would like your refund please contact me with a self-addressed stamped envelope

Thank you and take care

Dorothy Neillands

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## **THEATRE**

Although the Theatre Group folded last year, I still miss it especially the lovely trips we had to The Theatre on the Lake and Theatr Clwyd. Who knows, maybe when life gets back to normal we can sort something out.

In the meantime, if you are missing your local theatres, why not go online to The Carver Theatre they have produced some really good and amusing snippets under Talking Theatre <https://carvertheatre.co.uk/extracts> and it is all free. Just make yourself comfortable with a cup of tea and a biscuit and listen, my favourite is Breaking The Routine. I know many of our U3A members are season ticket holders so you will know the people performing.  
Enjoy.

Dorothy Neillands

## CINEMA

How do you run a Cinema Club when sadly there are hardly any cinemas open? Good Question. Will we ever go to the Regent or the Plaza again? Another good question. Will we once again be able to meet and enjoy a film and maybe have a bite to eat afterwards? Well we live in hopes.

All is not lost because, as I am sure you know there is a great choice of films on TV, and each week I select a couple of films and give details of transmission times etc and hopefully we enjoy a shared, though detached experience of watching them together.

It's better than nothing and the show must go on!!  
Good viewing

Sheila

## Middlemarch

I have a treasured collection of DVDs ..... remember those!! Fortunately I didn't throw my player out all those years ago, so every winter in the past few years I have enjoyed my own "streaming" sessions. So now I am revisiting "Middlemarch" that wonderful adaptation of the book by George Eliot which was filmed in 1994. It has a stellar cast including Michael Hordern, Robert Hardy and a young, smouldering Rufus Sewell.

In my humble opinion it is one of the most neglected books in English Literature, not only full of tales of passion and unrequited love but also of politics and influence etc. Set at the turn of the century when the country was moving from a largely rural economy towards the Industrial Revolution it has a broad and interesting canvas.

And I have just had an awful thought t.... I've only ever seen the TV adaptation. I've never actually read the book!!! So I have just been on Kindle and spent all of £3.79 on securing a version. I am looking forward to it immensely.  
Enjoy your reading

Regards  
Sheila Harrop

Like Sheila, I've been dipping into my DVD collection. I'm currently enjoying some Hitchcock films, collected in the days when national newspapers gave away DVDs with their papers. In my Hitchcock fest, I have particularly enjoyed To Catch a Thief starring Cary Grant and Grace Kelly, set in the beautiful South of France! My second choice would be North by Northwest also starring Cary Grant.

This week I watched the new remake of Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca, starring Lily James as Mrs De Winter, Arnie Hammer as Max and Kristen Scott Thomas as Mrs Danvers. I really enjoyed this; the sets were beautiful and Manderley was suitably atmospheric. You can watch this on Netflix.



Diane Saxon

## MAHJONG

Sadie sent a Mahjong limerick.

We are all really missing Mahjong  
There's no way we can speed it along  
Until we can all get together  
{in all sorts of weather)  
We will just have to wait  
Until we can make a Chow, Pung, Kong or MAHJONG

Sadie Booth

Chow, Pung and Kong are the three basic sets in Mahjong.

A Pung is a set of three identical tiles e.g. three Red Dragons or three two circles

A Kong is a set of four identical tiles. e.g. four Eight of Bamboos or four North Winds.

A Chow is a run of three tiles in the same suit. A Chow does not score and so is only helpful because it can contribute to a hand that allows a player to call Mah Jong.

Hilary Robinson, the U3A Mah-jong Subject Advisor has posted a book online. A U3A Beginners Guide to Mahjong. The content of this book will help U3A members to start to play Mahjong. The book is based on the British Mahjong Association rules. However, if a group of people are playing together, as long as they agree the rules before they begin, and they are enjoying themselves – this should be the deciding factor.

You can find the book here <https://u3asites.org.uk/files/h/hillingdon/docs/mahjongbookrevision.pdf>

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## QUIZ

We have decided to revert to a monthly quiz more like those of our face to face gatherings. Quizzes for the next few months will be shorter general knowledge type stuff.

Here are a few of this month's questions for you

1. Reed, Marsh, Sedge and Grasshopper are varieties of which bird?
2. Who wrote the children's book Billionaire Boy?
3. The book of Revelation describes the destruction of a great city, whose judgment comes in one hour, and for which the kings of the earth lament. What city is that?
4. Lettuce is a member of which flower family?
5. Who is the current Foreign Secretary?
6. Which birthday has Cliff Richard just celebrated?
7. Where are the Azores?
8. What is Jarlsberg?

We are always open if you wish to join us. It's all done by email and we'd love to have more quizzers.

Diane Saxon

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

The October competition "Red" gave an inventive feast of colour. Diane did particularly well, followed by Jeff, Derek and Walter.

1st Halloween - Diane; 2nd Christmas Reds - Jeff; 3rd Liverpool Docks - Diane; 4th Equals - Red Tree - Diane; A question of Balance - Derek; Dahlia - Walter.



Next month the title is FUNGHI.

Walter Mason

**U3A EYE Photography project**

<https://u3a.org.uk/learning/u3a-eye>.

The subject changes every fortnight. For each subject, 15 photos are selected for displaying on the website. The most recent subject was Autumn. I have just two of the selected photos here. The first photo is of Bidford on Avon taken by a member of Evesham and District U3A; the second is a fine specimen of Fly Agaric taken by a member of Sleaford U3A.



The current theme is Contrasts – you need to send your photo in by 1pm on Thursday, 5 November. You can only submit one photo and it must have been taken during lockdown and should not include any people.

## HOLD STILL

Spearheaded by The Duchess of Cambridge, Patron of the National Portrait Gallery, Hold Still is a community project to create a unique collective portrait of the UK during lockdown. We invited people of all ages to submit a photographic portrait, taken in a six-week period during May and June, focussed on three core themes – Helpers and Heroes, Your New Normal and Acts of Kindness. Over 31,000 submissions were received from across the country, with entrants ranging from 4 to 75 years old. From these, a panel of judges selected 100 portraits, assessing the images on the emotions and experiences they conveyed. You can see the final 100 here <https://www.npg.org.uk/hold-still/hold-still-gallery/>.

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## ONLINE BRIDGE

Our Monday bridge continues and it's never too late to join us. Just let me know if you are interested.

Local clubs continue to extend the tournaments they are offering as discussed in the September edition of the newsletter. I also mentioned a new bridge playing environment, Realbridge in the last edition.

Realbridge allows players to see each other and speak to each other. The person whose turn it is to bid has a bidding box on their screen and they select the bid they want by clicking on it. Manchester Bridge Club is now running some events via Realbridge as is Bramhall and Cheadle Hulme Bridge Centre where the Monday evening duplicate now used Realbridge. Check the club websites for details.

A bridge player from High Lane  
Found lockdown a terrible pain  
He found us online  
And now he is fine  
Confusing his partners again!

Diane Saxon

Carol has tried Realbridge recently. Here's what she made of it.

Like Diane I have tried a Real bridge session and have friends who have played in a duplicate session. There are a few warnings to note I feel.

Over the past 7 months we have been playing bridge online with BBO. There has been no need to dress up, you can play whilst in your PJs. Not a good look on RealBridge where you will be seen. You have been able to play in any part of your home; garage, bath, garden. Now your room will be seen... so perhaps clear the drying washing from the room first.

The idea is that you can see everyone around the table...make sure the camera is such that it shows more than your hair.

And finally, whilst on BBO you have been able to shout at your computer, blame your partner for making the wrong lead, counting your points aloud. You can't continue to do this on Real Bridge. Everyone round the table can hear.

You may have read this thinking how obvious all these points are. I have seen them all happen. So enjoy the return to seeing faces at the bridge table ... but take care!

Carol Traffon

## GARDENING

Pictures circulated within the gardening group this month include garden flowers and photos taken at Norbury Church, Dunham Massey, and Torkington Park.



Walter Mason

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## TOMATO TALK - ADVENTURES OF A LION

Almond the lion cub is a soft toy which stays at our house for the grandchildren to play with when they visit. One of our granddaughters named him Tiger, as a joke! (She has a sense of humour) and the other, who lives further away called him Almond! (She is very imaginative). As we can only FaceTime most days, I send a picture of Almond having all sorts of adventures such as hanging on the washing line, typing on the computer, wearing my glasses, to name but a few. This picture is of Almond in the greenhouse wondering what's happened to Granddad's tomato plants which were cut down recently.



We had a good crop this year. I made the surplus into soup and froze some.

John and Barbara McCartney

## TODAY'S RECIPE

This is totally decadent and gorgeous!

From How to Eat by Nigella Lawson 1998

<https://www.nigella.com/recipes/chocolate-raspberry-pudding-cake>



### INGREDIENTS

Serves: 8

85 grams self-raising flour

30 grams cocoa powder

250 grams unsalted butter (plus more to grease cake tin - I use the butter wrapper)

1 tablespoon Chambord (raspberry liqueur)

95 grams caster sugar

95 grams light brown muscovado sugar

250 grams good dark chocolate - 70% cocoa solids (broken into squares)

185 millilitres black coffee and 185ml /  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water or 2 teaspoons instant coffee made up with 370ml /  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups water

2 large eggs at room temperature (beaten slightly)

250 grams raspberries (plus lots more to serve)

approx.  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon icing sugar (to serve)

### METHOD

You will need: a 22–23cm / 9-inch springform cake tin.

Arrange the oven shelves so that one is in the middle for the cake, and another just below it. Slide a baking sheet onto the lower rack to catch any drips as the cake bakes. Heat the oven to 180°C/160°C Fan/350°F.

Butter a 22–23cm / 9-inch springform cake tin and line the base with baking parchment. Mix the flour and cocoa powder together in a bowl, and set aside.

Put the butter, liqueur, sugars, chocolate, coffee and water in a thick-bottomed saucepan and stir over low heat until everything melts and is thickly, glossily smooth. Remove the pan from the heat and let stand for a couple of minutes.

Stir the flour and cocoa mixture into the pan, and beat well – just with a spatula or wooden spoon – until all is smooth and glossy again, then gradually beat in the eggs. The mixture will be runny: don't panic, and don't add more flour; the chocolate itself sets as it cooks and then cools.

Pour into the prepared tin until you have covered the base with about 2cm of the mixture (which will be about half of it) and then cover with the raspberries and pour the rest of the mixture on top. You may have to push some of the raspberries back under the cake batter by hand.

Put into the preheated oven and bake for 40–45 minutes. Don't try and test by poking in a skewer as you don't want it to come out clean: the gunge is what the cake is about. But when it's cooked, the top will be firm, and slightly cracked. Don't worry about that: a little icing sugar will deflect attention. When it's ready, take the cake out of the oven and put on a rack. Leave in the tin for 15 minutes before removing the sides of the tin; the cake must stay on its base.

When you're just about to eat – and this should be around an hour after the cake's come out of the oven - dust with a little icing sugar pushed through a tea strainer. Serve with lots more fresh raspberries, and Greek yoghurt, whipped double cream or crème fraîche as wished.

## MEMOIRS

### Greengrocers Part 2: The Customers

There were a couple of gay guys who often came into the shop and the first time they came in I was leaning on the counter. One of them looked at me and said "You don't want to stand like that, that's how I started ". He had worked the clubs and if you or anyone else said anything he had an answer before you had finished speaking. He was very very funny.

Another time a lady came in who we had not seen before. She had a very posh voice and asked for a pound of apples. I placed four apples on the scales and said "There are four apples there. It's just over the pound, is that alright? ". She replied that she had asked me for a pound. Without thinking I picked one of the apples up, took a bite out of it and put it back on the scales and said "There you are its exactly a pound". Thankfully she saw the funny side of it and she became one of our best customers.

We had an Asian bus driver who came in, always looking for a bargain, but he always spent a good amount of money. I remember one day looking out of the shop when a bus stopped outside. It was double parked full of passengers. The driver got out. It was our Asian friend, and he left his bus double parked while he came into our shop to do his shopping - never a dull moment.

Other customers that I remember well was a Polish lady who came in every week and always brought me something she had just cooked. Barbara used to come in to help out once in a while. This particular day not knowing who Barbara was, this Polish lady said to her "I think he's lovely. He is my toy boy" to which Barbara replied "Is he. He's my husband". A good laugh was had by all.

There was a gentleman who came in with his wife; she was a good customer and he would buy anything that was going off and wouldn't keep over the weekend. He bought it cheap and would make wine out of it. It could be parsnips, carrots, bananas, cabbage anything. When he had made the wine, he always brought a bottle or two in for us to try and it was always appreciated.

Friday was always a late finish as we had a lot of orders to deliver. Christmas time we never stopped. We were lucky having such a large forecourt to put our display on. I remember one Christmas on a Saturday we sold over 100 Christmas trees. We did very well each Christmas with trees and anyone who came to buy a tree rarely left without buying one.

We had the shop for 10 years from 1973 to 1983. It was Xmas 1982 when a chap came into the shop and asked if I knew of a good green grocer for sale. Jokingly I said you can have this one. He said right. We decided we had had ten good years in the shop and it was time for a change. We sold it at the right time as it was when all the large supermarkets were coming in, all selling fruit and vegetables. That started the demise of the independent greengrocer.

Paul Kenneth

## FAMILY HISTORY

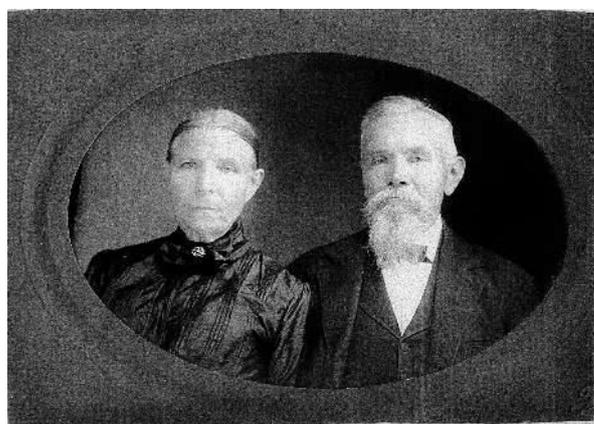
### A blast from the past.

I joined the Family History Group almost four years ago and was immediately transported into a world of research and discovery regarding my ancestors. Free Births, Marriages and Deaths provided initial information but it was my subscription to Ancestry.com that really hooked me in. For the first few months I could hardly tear myself away from the laptop as I found census material that told me where my ancestors had lived, the size of the family (so many living in so few rooms!) and their occupations. All very exciting, particularly the 'interesting anomalies' of dates of marriage followed by subsequent births. There have also been what are termed 'brick walls', very frustrating when the information dries up. However, Sue and Pat (our group leaders) and experts in the field have been on hand to give guidance, for which we are very grateful.

During the lockdown period it has been wonderful to while away a few hours following new paths. My DNA test also unearthed lots more information, including contact from one or two distant relatives with a shared ancestor. There is so much out there to discover and I am looking forward to the time when we can meet as a group again; I'm sure we will have lots to talk about!

I leave you with a recently acquired photograph of my great, great grandparents.....as you can see photography was no laughing matter in those days!

Lynn Arnold.



### Who do you think you were? – In praise of DNA tests

A few years ago the whole family were sitting having a meal and the conversation turned to DNA tests. As I had been researching my family for some time and was interested in my past, I expressed an interest in having one, but I was not prepared to pay the approx. £100 they cost at that time. When my birthday came round, I was thrilled when one of my daughters sent me a test and three months later, Bill received one for his birthday.

Initially I was just interested in my genetic make-up. Where did I come from? I had, through my researches, calculated that I was  $\frac{3}{4}$  Welsh and  $\frac{1}{4}$  English, based on my ancestors since 1700. Imagine my surprise, when I viewed my results online to find that I was 50% Irish. This was something totally unexpected so I did some research online and found out that, after the Romans left Wales around 400AD an Irish tribe invaded Dyfed and colonised the area left by the Romans. As three strands of my family come from that area it was quite feasible that I had Irish DNA in my make-up. I also had a small percentage of Western European DNA which I assumed was German because of the Anglo-Saxon invasions in the east of England, but it turns out to be Flemish. I knew already that Henry I settled Flemings in the southern coastal strip of South Wales in the 12<sup>th</sup> century when they sought refuge from floods in the Netherlands so this was no great surprise. It was more of a shock to find out I had a small percentage of Middle Eastern DNA as do many inhabitants of this isle. Most of the Roman soldiers who were in this country for 400 years were not from Rome but from the Empire, largely from the Middle East and North Africa.

Bill's results were rather boring in comparison, 97% British, but his ancestors came from Leicester, almost as far away from the sea as anyone in the UK. You are more likely to have interesting DNA if you live near the coast because of trading, invasions and more opportunity for encountering people from other countries. The tests are constantly being refined and my Irish percentage has gone down 20% since I received the initial result but I'm still very proud of my mixed heritage. After all, mongrels are usually the healthiest dogs!

An added bonus was a list of possible relatives who had also had a test done who could be contacted to share family information. Many do not give their real names and many do not reply but I have been able to make astonishing discoveries about relatives who simply disappeared from the records – three brothers who emigrated to America in the 1880s. Their descendants have been able to tell me hair-raising tales of travel by stagecoach from Missouri to Montana and most importantly, have been able to identify people in old photographs. I had inherited two photographs of people taken in Butte, Montana (my 2xgreat uncle and his wife) and nobody in the family had any idea who they were until I was able to contact their descendants, most of whom knew nothing about their Welsh ancestors.

Recently I discovered that my 2xgreat grandfather had a second family but that seems to have been quite common when divorce was not an option for most ordinary people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some mysteries, however, will probably never be solved. I have been contacted by two people, asking if I am from St Thomas (Swansea) which I am, but when we compare family trees, we have no names in common. Perhaps, someone was playing away from home? Perhaps, it's best not to know!

Marlene Brookes

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## SCAMS

There are recent reports of a telephone scam where an automated voice says: "Hi, you missed a call from your internet service provider. We have been trying to get in touch with you. It goes on to say that your internet service will be cut off within the next 24-48 hours days due to "illegal activity" on your network. It then directs the victim to press one to be connected to 'speak to a technical executive'.

I have received one of these calls; the recording sounds very professional but it is a scam. Just hang up.

Friends Against Scams is a National Trading Standards Scams Team initiative, which aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams by empowering people to take a stand against scams. They report:

- Scams cost the UK economy £5-£10 Billion a year
- 53% of people over 65 have been targeted by scams
- Only 5% of scams are reported
- Our statistics indicate that the average scam victim has lost over £3000

<https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/>

There is also lots of useful information about scams on Martin Lewis's MoneySavingExpert site.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/shopping/stop-scams/>

## SNIPPETS

### Maths Week 9 – 14 November

This is a grassroots movement to share the joy of mathematics with everyone. It launched in November 2019, with the first Maths Week England. There are already 320,000 people registered to take part this year. There will be daily pages with puzzles and blogs. This year will also include financial literacy resources from the financial charity LifeSavers. The idea is to educate people early before they get into difficulties. There will also be a money puzzle on each of our daily pages.

Details at <https://mathsweekengland.co.uk/>

And a Maths limerick for you. Attributed to Leigh Mercer (Word Way, 1980) a British wordplay and recreational mathematician.

$$\frac{12 + 144 + 20 + 3\sqrt{4}}{7} + (5 \times 11) = 9^2 + 0$$

Doesn't look like a limerick to you? Try this:

A dozen, a gross, and a score  
 Plus three times the square root of four  
 Divided by seven  
 Plus five times eleven  
 Is nine square and not a bit more.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**All Saints Day.** 609AD Pope Boniface IV formally started what would later be known as All Saints Day when he dedicated the Pantheon in Rome as a church in honour of the Virgin Mary and all martyrs. The first evidence for the November 1 date of celebration and of the broadening of the festival to include all saints as well as all martyrs occurred during the reign of Pope Gregory III (731–741), who dedicated a chapel in St. Peter's, Rome, on November 1 in honour of all saints. In 800 All Saints' Day was kept by Alcuin on November 1, and it also appeared in a 9th-century English calendar on that day. In 837 Pope Gregory IV ordered its general observance. In medieval England the festival was known as All Hallows, and its eve is still known as Halloween. The period from October 31 to November 2 (All Souls' Day) is sometimes known as Allhallowtide.

### Samhainophobia – the fear of Halloween

Last night was Halloween and being in Tier 3, there were no trick or treaters this year. Many of us don't like Halloween but fear of it is an actual condition with symptoms just like other phobias. The phobic fear of the traditions, decorations and costumes of Halloween has been named for the ancient Celtic autumn festival of Samhain that was celebrated about 2000 years ago.

Samhain marked the beginning of the dark time of the year. It was thought that during the last days of harvest, the boundary between the real world and the underworld could be easily crossed by the dead. People dressed in costumes to disguise themselves from any of the wandering dead who were intending to do them mischief or harm. They would go door to door in disguise offering stories or song in exchange for food.

For those who like spooky stories, the BBC Radio4 website has eight dark and mysterious tales.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/13S3079mt6dnGyscfqf6jf1/eight-dark-and-mysterious-tales>

On this day, 1 November ....

1700 Charles II of Spain died and was succeeded by Philip V, resulting in the War of Spanish Succession.

1800 John Adams becomes the first US President to live in the White House

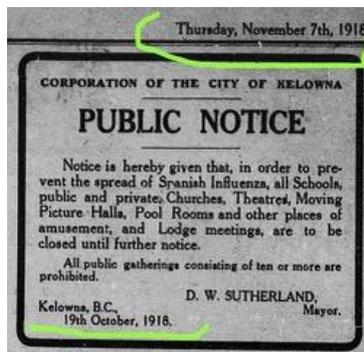
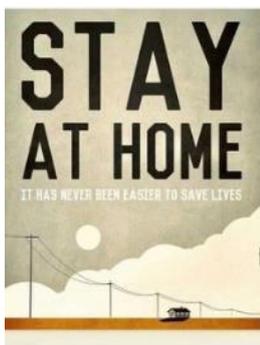
1834 First published reference to poker (as Mississippi riverboat game)

1848 WHSmith opens its 1<sup>st</sup> railway bookstall, at Euston Station in London



And to finish off this edition!

Margaret McDermott wonders if we've been here before?



And some T shirt messages!

