

MEMBERS' EDITION



It is sad that we have to cancel or postpone so many events. Subject to restrictions being lifted we are intending to resume our activities with an open afternoon at the Hollybush Indoor Bowls Centre on 23rd September. The AGM, originally scheduled for 24th June, has been rescheduled for 28th

October at St. Nicholas Church. We are hoping to move to the renovated Community Centre in January, but that will

depend on the progress of the construction works.

If you are looking for things to do during the lockdown there are several websites that may be of interest – see the article from the Communications Team below, and suggestions from members and groups throughout this newsletter.

I hope you are keeping well in these difficult times and look forward to better times ahead.

Nick White chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

Sevenoaks U3A Group Activities during the current Covid-19 crisis

As a necessary precaution and in accordance with Government guidelines, Sevenoaks U3A has suspended all meetings and group activities for the remainder of the current season. As our membership falls into the 'most at risk' category isolation will probably continue for some time. We hope to commence the next season's events programme in the autumn. These will, of course, be subject to Government advice and guidance from the Third Age Trust. We will endeavour to keep members informed of future plans through the Newsletter, Beacon and the Sevenoaks U3A Website: www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk as the situation evolves. The Third Age Trust is currently running regular bulletins in addition to the National Newsletter. One feature of interest is the 'Keep Learning' page. This can be accessed from the Home Page on our Website and offers a range of suggestions to U3As about maintaining activities in a virtual environment whilst we are in isolation. We now need to think creatively to find ways of communicating with each other remotely instead of face to face meetings. The U3A motto "Learn, Laugh, Live" takes on a whole new meaning when confronted with the current crisis.

Here are a few ideas. Go to our website for more details and further ideas. Perhaps some of you have other suggestions that can be posted on our Website.

Video Conferencing eg Skype and FaceTime

Zoom – for Groups

Online games

If you venture into this virtual world make sure your computer security is up to date.

The Tech Support Team can help on downloads and advice: techsupport@sevenaksu3a.org.uk

On Line Education and Entertainment:

There is a massive amount of on line material directed towards education and learning. Most Institutions and Universities have access to such material. Some that may appeal are:

Gresham Talks <https://www.gresham.ac.uk/>

Courses Futurelearn.com

Ted Talks <https://www.ted.com/topics/education>

YouTube You Tube covers a wide range of subjects – just use the search facility for a topic of interest <https://www.youtube.com/>

The London Theatres are closed but many are now streaming performances on line

<https://www.whatsonstage.com/london-theatre/news/stage-shows-musicals-opera-free-stream-online-51198.html>

Royal Opera House offer free access to some performances

<https://www.roh.org.uk/news/the-royal-opera-house-launches-a-programme-of-free-online-content-for-the-culturally-curious-at-home>

Good Luck! Your Communications Team

Webteam@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

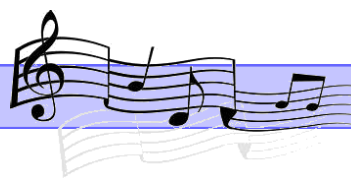
Greysnet

This site has just been launched with the support of the National Lottery Community Fund to help older people all over the country to stay connected and keep mind and body active during

the current Coronavirus lockdown. <https://greysnet.com/> was created as a dedicated space for people at all stages of greyness (even those who dye their hair) can read, chat and find out about things that interest them. It has

categories on Entertainment, Hobbies, Health, Travel and "That's Life". There's plenty of interest there for U3A members.

David Taylor



“Music, music, music...”

Locked down as we are, here are some classical music sources and pieces which might reflect your preferences and moods. If you have them on CD, fine. Radio 3 and Classic FM are good in their different ways. With a computer, smartphone, or tablet, the musical world is yours. For example, type in composer, title word(s) and “Youtube”. Use headphones with phone/tablet if you can, for better sound. Simple!

Other online offerings are

the London Symphony Orchestra concerts twice a week at <https://lso.co.uk/whats-on/2019-20-season/alwaysplaying.html> ;

the Royal Opera and the Royal Ballet performs at <https://www.roh.org.uk/news/the-royal-opera-house-launches-a-programme-of-free-online-content-for-the-culturally-curious-at-home>;

the New York Metropolitan Opera’s live stream broadcasts are at <https://www.metopera.org/season/radio/free-live-audio-streams/>.

You may need to hunt around on these sites but it may be worth it!

So – some suggestions for your listening. Just the composer and a key title word are given below to simplify your searches. All these are orchestral pieces, but more styles and suggestions on request from musicb@sevenoaksu3a.org

STIRRING

Sibelius – Karelia; Symphony 2; **Walton** – Spitfire; **Ravel** – Bolero; **Copland** – Fanfare; **Elgar** - Marches

SOOTHING

Grieg – Morning; **Vaughan Williams** – Lark; **Mozart** – Flute and Harp; **Debussy** – Prelude; **Elgar** – Serenade; Introduction/allegro; Cello; **Finzi** – Eclogue

STORIES AND PICTURES

Kodaly - Hary Janos; **Dukas** – Sorcerer’s Apprentice; **Mussorgsky** – Pictures; **Handel** – Water, Fireworks; **Stravinsky** – Firebird; **Elgar** – Enigma; **Bax** - Tintagel

RHYTHMIC AND DANCING

Bach - Orchestral suites; **Mozart** – Nachtmusik; **Beethoven** – Symphony 7; **Dvorak** – Slavonic; **Brahms** – Hungarian; **Delibes** – Coppelia; **Tchaikovsky** – Swan Lake, Nutcracker; **Ginastera** – Malambo; **Piazzola** - Libertango

ROMANTIC

Rimsky-Korsakov – Schererazade; **Berlioz** – Symphonie Fantastique; **Chopin** – Sylphides; **Bizet** – Carmen; **Brahms** – Symphony 3

AROUND THE WORLD

Delius – Florida; **Dvorak** – New World; **Canteloube** – Auvergne; **Lalo** – Sinfonie espagnole; **Arnold** – Dances; **Borodin** – Polovtsian; Steppes; **Copland** – Rodeo;

Jeff Lee

APPLE



Learn Something New

Last month the U3A ran a seminar on how to buy and use an iPad. All this information taught by a local expert was recorded. A DVD of the entire seminar has been made, and we have copies available for £5. Now that we are all marooned at home for some time this DVD is a great way to discover how you can find more ways in full enjoyment of this wonderful Apple device that Steve Jobs invented. To get the DVD send an email to dgsimmons7@gmail.com with your name, address and post code.

The topics on the DVD are:

Which iPad should I buy? - How to set up an iPad - Learning all about Settings - Find out all the gestures you can use - Setting up your Contacts in one convenient place - Organising your life with Calendars - Finding and using Apps from the App Store.

TRANSPORT



From Tuesday April 14th GO have suspended their current timetable and introduced a new bookable service called “go2”. This will cover most of the SDC area, Tonbridge Town. Also Pembury, Orpington, Queen Mary’s and Princess Royal hospitals. You can book a ride by phone 01732 463964 or via the go2 mobile app. This service will be available M-F 6.00 to 18.00 and 8.00 to 18.00 Saturdays. You can pay by cash or credit card if you are linked to the app. Current fare structure applies including concessionary, with a fixed cost of £5 per journey to the hospitals.

You should be able to be picked up within 30 minutes after you have booked. You will be picked up and put down at agreed points near you. Social Distancing and thorough cleaning of buses will be enforced. This service is for all who have to make essential journeys.

For further information check go-coach.co.uk or call 01732 463964 or email office@go2now.co.uk

The July trip booked to Stonor Park and Henley-on-Thames has been postponed.

Hopefully we will be able to re-arrange it for 2021
Many thanks, Joyce Allen Organiser (Social Committee)

KEEPING A RECORD



Keeping a record of these extraordinary times: The Corona Chronicles – a personal view

Like many U3A members, during this isolation I am hoping to start on a number of activities and projects that I never seem to have time for. One of the most important is to keep a record of what has been happening - globally, in the UK, and in this small isolating household in Sevenoaks. This will be an important social history. So in the middle of March I started a daily diary highlighting some of the very rapid changes which have come over all our lives. Things are changing so very, very fast and the UK is becoming quite unrecognizable, with so many shops and businesses closed. On the other hand, some businesses are being very enterprising, and setting up mail order and other services. So many people are

volunteering to help in whatever way they can, and some retired NHS employees have decided to go back to work to help out.

The National U3A has started a Diary project, and is encouraging all members to contribute. The more who do so the more useful such a document will be. We are currently living through an unprecedented period, and everyone's daily lives are being affected. The situation is impacting on people in lots of different ways and we will all have our own experiences, thoughts and reflections on what this time is like for us and how it is affecting us, both on a practical and on a psychological level. U3A says that they would really like to capture all of this as part of a UK-wide living history project.

See more at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>

Celia Smith

ZOOM

See your friends today!

A lot of my U3A groups and exercise classes have gone online and I am loving the fact I get to see other people! It's a taste of normality in this strange time. We are meeting both via Skype and Zoom. Both are free and easy to set up, perhaps with a bit of technical assistance from another group member, or, failing that, from the Tech Support team. techsupport@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk.

So far, I have French, Science Discussion group and exercise classes on Zoom and Spanish on Skype. With Skype, the picture and sound quality are perhaps not as good but there is no time limit, although we do pause half way through for a quick coffee break and then carry on as normal for the full two hours. For free use of Zoom there is a 40 minutes maximum, but sometimes the app will allow us to go on. We get round that by setting up 2 or 3 x 40 minutes meetings for a two hour session. It's useful for a coffee or a quick move around.

For groups, I think it works better with a clear 'Master of Ceremonies' who might be your designated group leader or the leader for that week. For interactive groups, 6-8 people works better than 10-12, both doable, but with the larger groups, members have to be careful not to talk over each other, perhaps raising a hand when they want to speak. For groups where one member presents to the rest of the group, Zoom has the facility of sharing a PowerPoint presentation while the speaker talks.

For those of you out there feeling a bit wary of having online meetings, I would say 'Embrace it!' It's worth some time and a bit of tech fiddliness for the contact with the outside world and for the feeling that some things at least are going on as normal. And you will be

proud of yourself for doing it!

Once you have done that, you can use it for friends and family too. There is nothing nicer than seeing friends you are chatting to and it is great to have some continuity in our lives.

Simple Instructions for starting Zoom

To load Zoom you want the [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us) website. (My instructions are for a Microsoft laptop rather than an Apple device)

- Type in **Zoom.us** in a new Google Chrome page
- Sign up as new member and activate the account in your email
- Create a password etc
- Download the Zoom programme and run it
- Go to the 4 little squares image, at the bottom left of the computer, put up the menu and go to Z to find Zoom
- Click on that and it will open in the front page of the **Zoom App** which is where you want to be.
- **No more logging on the Zoom website for the actual meetings**, only if you want to change your profile or add contacts' email addresses.

- You can drag on the Zoom app and pull it to the bar along the bottom of your screen. You'll get a blue circle with a video camera in it. Then in future you just click on that to run Zoom.

Invite a friend who has it to a 'meeting', aka 'chat', to practise and off you go!

Sue Christy



← Your newsletter team at work putting together this May issue

READING



Book Group - Comparing Novels

Our book group has chosen some novels you might like to read. Pairing books gives us the opportunity to consider how different authors approach a shared theme so that each book enhances our understanding and enjoyment of the other. .

The Plot against America by **Philip Roth**
1984 by **George Orwell**

A Fascist government suspends civil liberties
Exploring the theme of totalitarianism.

Secret Scripture by **Sebastian Barry**
Brooklyn by **Colm Toibin**

Both movingly tell of young Irishwomen asserting their individuality in the New World

Suite Francaise by **Irene Nemirovski**
Empire of the Sun by **J.G. Ballard**

Experiences of war. French Society during occupation
A child in a Japanese internment camp.

The Tenant of Wildfell Hall by **Anne Bronte**
The Woman Who Ran by **Sam Baker**

Heroines go into hiding. Bronte's feminist heroine reimagined as fearless war photographer.

We are sending everyone our good wishes that we all keep healthy and look forward to meeting soon
Ann Matthews

HUMAN CONTACT

Psychology Group - A different way to keep in contact

The Coronavirus has shaken the world to its core and as I write this every day brings sadder and sadder news. Many people are trying to help others by keeping contact by phone or digitally. Many of our members are self isolating.

I wrote our members a group email suggesting that we support each other by contributions, keeping it vague so that it left it open for people to steer the waters the way they wanted.

People responded to this message and we have been learning from each other. Members sent snippets of joy like the family who sang Les Mis from their front room after two of the children had a little argument. We supported each other by reading about Dee Caffari who sailed for six months without meeting another person, sent poems, photos and much more. I am unable to write about every entry as there are so many and each one quite priceless, and they keep coming!

We have learnt new skills like SKYPE, Zoom, Facetime etc as a way of interacting with our families and friends. We are teaching our grandchildren on-line and "The Wheels on the Bus" more times than I care to remember. It is comforting to hear when one person has got their head around this new digital learning that they inspire others by saying 'just have a go'.

Human contact is important for our mental wellbeing and connecting in this way is an avenue hopefully to soften the load at this time. The U3A is even more important in this current climate for reasons the founders would have never have guessed. Thank you founders and for people at U3A Sevenoaks for all your hard work.

Vivian Marriott

POETRY

Poetry

Judy Hebert is a member of the Joint Sevenoaks/Knoles Poetry Group, and she has sent the following love poem by Seamus Heaney (1939-2013) which members may enjoy:

Scaffolding

Masons, when they start upon a building,
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;
Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.
And yet all this comes down when the job's done
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.
So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be
Old bridges breaking between you and me
Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall
Confident that we have built our wall.

And here is a link to a good biography of Heaney and several poems written by him and other poets: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/seamus-heaney>

