

September 2020

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u3a.org.uk



Introduction from Sam Mauger

This newsletter is a testament to how u3as are beating Covid-19 and keeping the u3a spirit alive. We are working through all of the guidance from governments and assemblies to keep members safe and u3a active whether meeting in person or virtually.

Together we are all determined to continue to build our u3a community and we need each member and each u3a as never before. We will use the experiences of lockdown to make the autumn and winter months the best they can be. All of us in the movement, u3as and the Trust, have learned to adapt to keep the "u3a-way" alive.

As we look to the months ahead we will make use of what we have learned this year to make the most of our restricted covid-secure "in person meeting time", and use our new skills to meet virtually, or by phone or through pen-pals too. Here at the Trust (as well as our regular services) we are working with volunteers across the movement to plan autumn and winter programmes for u3a's and their members.

Keep sending us your ideas and what you are enjoying and planning locally too. Nothing will stop the u3as from thriving, neither Covid-19 nor winter time. The u3as will continue Learning, laughing and living wherever they are and whatever they do.

Yours
Sam

News from The Trust

u3a Brand Refresh is almost here

Over the last year we have embarked together on a process of refreshing our u3a brand so that it better reflects the vibrancy, connection, and learning that takes place every day in this amazing movement.

We have spoken to many u3a members over this time, not just in the UK wide focus groups but also in many more informal conversations by email, phone and social media. Your input and support has been so appreciated and means we are now in a position to launch a new refreshed look at this year's AGM on 29th September.

The strengthened look, feel and language reflects what the u3a movement is all about and we hope will position the movement to challenge some of the preconceptions around what ageing means.

u3a News

Bolton u3a's Craft and Stitch group have been working with Bolton University on the 'Worktown Project.'

Inspired by photographs of Bolton in the 1930s taken by Humphrey Spender, they created a washing line and toy box filled with handmade objects based off the photos and from their own memories.



Learning Initiatives



Creative Covid Collaboration

After first publicising the Creative Covid Collaboration in the newsletter a few months ago, we've had some amazing submissions.

Some people have submitted squares individually whilst others have worked in their interest groups, such as this square (left) from Rutland u3a's wine tasting group.

Make a square and ask a friend to upload a photo through our online form on the learning pages of the u3a website.

News from the Board

Chair of the Board, Ian McCannah

“One of the Trust’s first COVID initiatives was the national Creative Writing 2020 Competition in collaboration with Bloomsbury Publishing. The theme was “Time”. At the online award ceremony last week thirteen regional winners were announced out of 342 entries, and the three selected winners read out their stories to an audience of u3a members.

First prize went to Rosemary Burton of Oxford u3a with “The Clock”. You too can enjoy reading it in the November issue of TAM. The entries show the depth of creative writing skills across the movement.

Plans are in place for the Trust’s virtual AGM on 29th September.

It will certainly be a very different experience for all those involved. I am sure that there will be lessons to be learnt for future Trust AGM’s leading to broader member involvement in the workings of the Trust.”

u3as in the media

A quilt created by Plymstock & District u3a’s Craft Group featured in Songs of Praise on Sunday 13th September.

The quilt, which commemorates the voyage of the Mayflower, featured in the Mayflower 400 Quilt exhibition in Plymouth and was one of seven to be featured on Songs of Praise, at 16 minutes in.



Congratulations and thank you

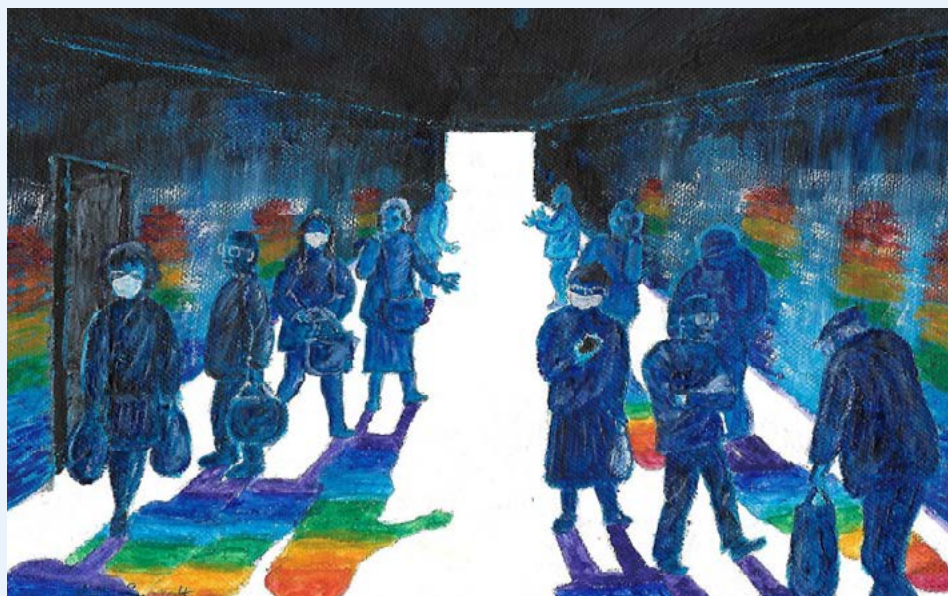
After asking in the August National Newsletter if any u3a members wanted to say thank you to other u3a members, we were inundated with responses.

Thank you from North Norfolk u3a to Jean, who has stepped down after almost 30 years as Group contact for the Social History group which she started in 1991.

Rosemary from Maidstone u3a wants to thank Stephen Bush for not only publishing more than 43 Coronavirus Newsletters but also for sending a printed copy to those not on email.

In Focus

John Suggett, Calverton and District u3a



I became a member of Calverton u3a a year ago and joined two groups, 'Heraldry' and 'Song and Story.' The latter has continued through lockdown, with us initially meeting on Zoom and, for the last couple of months, meeting outside.

The first year of u3a has been a wonderful experience, I have met some incredible people.

Through lockdown, I've been creating 'pandemic paintings' in watercolours and acrylics. This started when I had to pick medication up from the pharmacy. I knew I would have to queue and so I took my sketchbook.

The sketch of the queue turned into the first of a massive burst of paintings, including the one above. There are 17 in total. I wasn't painting anything else. Ideas came in early hours of the morning and I was inspired by current events, adding newspaper cuttings to the paintings.

A friend of mine suggested that these pictures be put together into a video. I'm not very technical myself but I said yes and it's now up on YouTube. I've had really positive responses.

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Credit for headline photos:

Toybox, Bolton u3a Craft and Stitch group as part of the Worktown project

Dronfield and District u3a's dry walling group.

Crouch End Felt Making group.