

# LEARN, LAUGH & LIVE

on the Isle of Wight

Welcome to the IoW U3A Newsletter

No 6 - June 2020



The U3A is an educational and social charity which encourages people in their third age to carry on learning. It encourages social interaction and combats loneliness.

[www.iowu3a.uk](http://www.iowu3a.uk)

[info@iowu3a.uk](mailto:info@iowu3a.uk)

[www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a](https://www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a)

## Chairman's Notes

As I reported last month's Newsletter, we had been given the go-ahead, and had applied for full membership of the Third Age Trust (TAT). This is the national body that looks after all U3As in the UK providing educational and administrative support.

I am delighted to report that our application has been accepted and the IoW U3A has now been officially registered as a member. This is an important step forward for our organisation. Thank you to Sally for providing all of the data that was needed to accompany the application.

We are closely following the U3A guidelines with regard to the lockdown and hope that by this time next month we will be able at least to start planning some face-to-face activities for us all.

*Stay safe and well.*

## Carol Bradshaw

## Index

Chairman's Notes	Page 1
Speaker Meetings	Page 2
Members in Lockdown	Page 3
South-East Notes	Page 3
Group Meetings	Page 4
	Page 5
Chickens in Lockdown	Page 6
Film Studies	Page 7
Carpet Fitting in Lockdown	Page 8

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Please check for errors and omissions.  
News, articles and updates always welcome.

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1



## Future Speaker Meetings

**The June talk is definitely postponed. The AGM has tentatively moved to October 8th**

**We will be planning to restart Speaker Meetings as soon as it is safe to do so.**

We are thinking that something may be possible on **July 9th** if the rules have changed and St John's church hall has reopened and it can be managed safely - possibly including a plant swap. Let us know if that would interest you and if you would have any plants to bring?

The core of our U3A usually comprises a monthly speaker meeting when everyone has the opportunity to get together for a social and interesting afternoon, also an ongoing program of special interest groups which meet frequently either in members' homes or other accessible venues (and this monthly newsletter).

We hope from time to time to organise other group activities, visits, etc... which will develop as we move on.

We rely on Internet access for contact and updates (see above).

This newsletter is distributed electronically. If you know someone who would like a printed copy could you print one out for them?

## Facebook page

Check out our Facebook page  
[www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a](http://www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a)



## Membership Survey

**If you have read this far, please email [membership@iowu3a.uk](mailto:membership@iowu3a.uk) with answers to the following questions three questions:**

- 1) Do you read the newsletter online or do you download it and print it?
- 2) Would you prefer a printed copy to arrive by post?
- 3) Do you think the newsletter is too long/too short/just right?

**If you have ideas then please also answer these 2 supplementary questions.**

S1) If we were to start a new group or a new location for a group which group(s) would you choose and where would you like it(them) to meet?

S2) When we restart speaker meetings what subject(s) would you like a talk on?

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**On-line shopping tip** - if you are having difficulty getting a home delivery slot, try very early in the morning when a new tranche of slots is added. Your editor has done well with Asda just after midnight!



## IOWU3A Members in Lockdown

Wondering how members were faring in social isolation I made a few random phone calls to check in with people – a miniature survey. I asked people how they were feeling? What they were impatient with? What was keeping them sane?

The conversations revealed that, on the whole, the members of IOWU3A were doing quite well, many actually quite content to be in Lockdown, “lovely to have the excuse to spend so much time in the garden” was the frequent refrain. One or two promised me photos – for which I am still looking forward. One member, frustratingly in lockdown off the Island, was left pining for her garden and fearful that when she was finally able to return she would be shamed by the beautiful neighbourhood gardens contrasted with her sadly neglected weed patch!

Many felt sad at the closed and dejected high streets and water fronts, wondering how they would weather the financial fall out. The island economy, dependent on tourists is very vulnerable – at the same time the overriding consensus was that the Island should not be open for tourists yet – we may be behind the curve on infections but an influx of visitors would quickly reverse that until there is effective testing and contact tracing.

I realized that as a group, members of the IOWU3A, are in a very privileged position, not primarily dependent on work for an income, living

in a beautiful place, used to finding creative ways to enjoy our free time and blessed with the curiosity for life long learning.

If you have an experience of lockdown that you would like to share with our membership please do write for the next newsletter.

**Sally Forster**  
**Membership Secretary.**

### U3A Short Story Competition

Word count maximum = 1500;  
Deadline = noon 19 June  
Theme = “**Time**”; Story must be your own, individual, original work, in English and not submitted anywhere else. The winning story will be published in Third Age Matters magazine.

If looking for ideas, you might try this web article on Time in Literature:  
[www.exactlywhatistime.com/other-aspects-of-time/time-in-literature/](http://www.exactlywhatistime.com/other-aspects-of-time/time-in-literature/)

[www.u3a.org.uk/learning/creative-writing-](http://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/creative-writing-)

Please find enclosed a link to the National Newsletter for May: <https://mailchi.mp/u3a/your-u3a-national-newsletter-may>

## Notes from U3A South East Region (no change from last month):

The U3A National Website has all sorts going on from Quizzes to Mr. Motivator and Mindfulness to Photography competitions and painting competitions. See [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)  
The S E Region website [www.u3asites.org.uk/south-east](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/south-east) has a page called Isolation with good ideas on it.

Try exploring the national Third Age Trust (TAT) website [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)  
And this one: [www.u3a.org.uk/how-to-guidance](http://www.u3a.org.uk/how-to-guidance)  
Back to school: [www.u3a.org.uk/learning](http://www.u3a.org.uk/learning)

Or when all else fails why not: **Phone a friend** - they will probably be glad to hear from you!  
Or in desperation, **try the radio!**

And if you're on-line then try **BBC Sounds** - for catch-up radio.

And... **stay active any way you can.** Get up for even the most insignificant tasks if you can. As Michelle Obama says - “Keep moving!”



## Group Meetings

All Groups are listed on the web site at [www.iowu3a.uk](http://www.iowu3a.uk) with up to date details.  
Email: [groups@iowu3a.uk](mailto:groups@iowu3a.uk)

Because of the **Coronavirus** problem none of these groups will be held in person for the time being, but we will begin to look at ways that face to face meetings can resume with appropriate social distancing as soon as the rules allow.

*At time of going to press:*

### Books, Topics & Chat - Tuesday p.m.

This Group takes it in turns to suggest Books, TED talks, newspaper articles, etc., to discuss. We also look for appropriate trips to literary festivals, etc., to go to. The aim is to cover a wide variety of subjects to achieve variety and hopefully widen horizons.

### Film Studies Next Meeting - June Virtual

To develop an understanding of the language of cinema and a deeper appreciation of film through group viewings and discussions of films' apparent and underlying meanings and significance.



Discussions at 5pm on 10 June, 24 June. The films are yet to be decided. Members can contact Jim Moody for further info - [groups@iowu3a.uk](mailto:groups@iowu3a.uk)

### Gardening Cooperative June Report

The group continues to communicate by email and photos but alas no cooperative gardening is possible yet.

We are all successfully growing and eating our vegetables. The lovely weather has helped to produce some early crops. The bragging rights

definitely go to Alison who has so many strawberries that she is sharing them with her neighbours! She is also eating new potatoes and broccoli from her vegetable patch. However, Sally is the only one to have washed out all of her pots – a tedious job that none of us enjoys.

We are all happily working in our own gardens and allotments on our own projects but look forward to meeting up and planning some cooperative gardening projects over a cup of tea sometime soon.

The idea of 'cooperative' gardening may have to wait a while. Anyone who has not signed up for Garden Cooperative but who would like to be involved in monthly, or more frequent, emails about garden hints, tips, successes or failures, successes or failures email me, Carol, through [groups@iowu3a.uk](mailto:groups@iowu3a.uk).

*All welcome. - from Carol*



**Rummikub** -  
Contact Sally by email - [groups@iowu3a.uk](mailto:groups@iowu3a.uk)

**Scrabble** -  
Contact Sally by email - [groups@iowu3a.uk](mailto:groups@iowu3a.uk)



## Walk and Talk about Gardens - Wednesday p.m. - Beryl

Contact by email - [groups@iowu3a.uk](mailto:groups@iowu3a.uk)

This group was formed by a few friends with a mutual love of gardens, gardening and plants and who wished to share their enjoyment and enthusiasm with others. We meet twice a month, from April to October on a Wednesday afternoon to visit one of our gardens, exchange plants, cuttings, seeds ideas and occasionally knowledge. These visits always finish with tea, cake and more talk.

This Group is still continuing and a flourishing email and photoswapping system has sprung up which is motivating, informative and supportive. Sorry no cake at the moment.

## Writing Group - Christine

In the short time our group has been going, we have met some interesting and sympathetic people and have read some very good contributions - what's not to like?! In spite of the present restrictions, we manage to swap texts and meet in the virtual world - shame the virtual cup of tea and virtual cakes are not as satisfying as the real ones. It has also forced us to write and share our writing, something we had not done for a very long time, if ever for some.

Present times are fertile in writing possibilities but we can choose our subjects. A member can suggest a challenge for all to attempt: a haiku, a cleriheh, a letter.

You could join us. Or write about anything - or just how you are managing.

### Planned:

(these are listed on the web site but some are awaiting "adoption")

DIY & Tool Knowledge;  
French; Mah Jong;  
Medical Matters;  
Photography;  
Posh Dining/ Theatre;  
Spanish;  
Using Technology;  
Walking; Cycling;  
Genealogy - starting November - Alison;  
Local History - in the Autumn - Sally

All queries re Groups to [groups@iowu3a.uk](mailto:groups@iowu3a.uk) please.

**Starting a Group** - if your group isn't listed here then it probably could be!

Contact Sally or Dina (usual email address) and we could get one started.

You don't have to be an expert to start a group - just show an interest.

U3A subject advisers cover a wide range of subjects from American Archaeology to Yoga, with a real mix of academic, practical and leisure activities in between.

<https://u3a.org.uk/resources/subjects>

## Cycling Group

Lockdown has encouraged more people to venture out on their bikes as there is far less traffic about. We have started to become the "Green Island" which we regularly promote .

People are now concerned about returning to the polluting ways of travel pre-coronavirus as with the easing up of lockdown there will be an increase in car use and we will go back to the health and environmental dangers we had before. It will also dissuade potential cyclists from using our roads and the development of more dedicated cycle routes.



I wondered if anyone would be interested in starting up an Isle of Wight U3A Cycling Group to take advantage of this moment in time. Please let the Groups Co-ordinator know via our website if you are interested in doing this. It would be a safe way of socialising, of giving courage to anyone reluctant to start cycling by themselves and in my case, of losing the weight I have gained recently!

This is an interesting website to have a look at <https://bikemunk.com/cycling-ageing/>

## Dina Jung

**Note from editor** - team up with another member at Internet Scrabble Club - <https://isc.ro> for online scrabble.

## Chickens in Lockdown

Apparently Battersea Dogs Home has run out of dogs that need re-homing and have now changed their slogan to “Dogs are not just for Lockdown!”

My own response to lockdown was not to get a dog but to get chickens. Chickens had long been sitting clucking on the edge of my mind but the practicalities of combining chicken care and travelling had so far deterred me. There will come a time, I had comforted my self.

Locked down on the Island, my semi-retirement abruptly brought forward by the arrival of Covid-19 and with no prospect of foreign holidays in sight, I decided that the time was now. I made enquiries and it quickly became apparent that many others had had the same idea – there were no chickens to be had, although some were promised in a few weeks time. Determined and impatient, as always once set upon an idea, I acquired some Cuckoo Maran hatching eggs and found a friendly neighbour with an incubator, and, to my delight, 21 days later was the proud owner of two beautiful chicks.

In the same way that, while pregnant, I had superstitiously not bought or prepared anything for my unseen, un-imaginable baby, my two chicks arrived and found me delighted and completely unprepared!

Once assured that my chicks were real and alive, I rustled up an impromptu brooder that just managed to achieve the 90°F required for 1 week old chicks.



I was prepared for how much chicks would eat, and how much they would poo, what I was not prepared for was how much they would grow! At just two weeks old it was clear that they needed more space and I created an outdoor

covered playpen where they could safely run about and begin to savour the great outdoors. By the time they were three weeks old they were spending all day outside – thanks to the glorious weather - and were soon moved to their own out-door coop where they had plenty of wing-room.

I was very lucky, in this day of limitless online information, I found lots of clues about what to do and not to do with chicks. Including, it has to be said, strong advice not to let them free range so young without a mother hen. The most useful though was that they are addicted to sweet-corn. Although you have to be careful not to replace too much of their sensible balanced chick feed with sweet corn it is the best training device. By two weeks old my chicks could recognise the sweet corn box. Whenever I approached they would come running to see if I were carrying it and quickly disperse if I were not. They would persistently dog my heels if I were and stay underfoot until either they got some or I put it out of sight.

So with the aid of sweet corn I was able to be confident that they would come to my call and go safely to bed each evening.

And here they are at 4 weeks old competing for the last speck of sweet corn.



The chick on the left looks likely to be a cockerel – I think to be named Road-Runner, he is always rushing to catch up and clearly lives in Fear of Missing Out. I am keeping my fingers crossed that the one on the right is a hen - possibly to be named Eve - they say that you cannot be sure until they either lay an egg or crow – cock-a-doodle-dooo.

**Sally Forster**

## IoW U3A Film Studies Group

Our Film Studies Group has carried on enthusiastically during lockdown, meeting online fortnightly as mentioned in the last newsletter. At the start of May, we watched *Lost in Translation* (2003) and then discussed it together collectively using Zoom. As usual, a variety of views were expressed: some still enthralled by the film after first viewing it 17 years ago, some not so endeared. At the end of May it was the turn of *Spotlight* (2015) to come under our collective ... well, spotlight. Based on a local newspaper exposure of child sex abuse and cover-up within a church diocese in Boston (USA) 13 years before, *Spotlight* provides difficult and harsh truths to consider, including if and how they are brought to light.

June will continue to hold no fears for the Group, despite continuing necessary restrictions. As before, we shall view each film beforehand, followed by 5pm discussion meetings online on Wednesday 10 June and Wednesday 24 June; each meeting lasts up to one hour. Films have yet to be decided, however, though they are likely to be from among those listed as available on Netflix, to which all current Group members have subscriptions. Any IW U3A member interested in joining us in viewing/discussions is very welcome: contact Jim Moody for further info - [groups@iowu3a.uk](mailto:groups@iowu3a.uk)

### Special treat for all – early June

Films are for all, of course, and the British Film Institute is aiming to make that more of a reality from the end of May and into early June. Bringing together 20 major international film festivals, **We Are One: A Global Film Festival** presents a free, online extravaganza of film via YouTube. *We Are One* will showcase feature films, shorts,

documentaries, music, comedy, and panel discussions. It runs from Friday 29 May to Sunday 7 June.

All will be able to view “We Are One” here: <https://www.youtube.com/weareone>

Cannes Film Festival executives said in a statement, “We are proud to join with our partner festivals to spotlight truly extraordinary films and talent, allowing audiences to experience both the nuances of storytelling from around the world and the artistic personalities of each festival,”

The festival will feature programming curated by the Berlin International Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival, Cannes Film Festival, New York Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, Sydney Film Festival, Tokyo International Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, Tribeca Film Festival, Venice Film Festival, among others.

*See you there!*

*Jim Moody*



**Film Club Films which are available on Netflix - suggestions welcome**

**Check out** <https://uk.newonnetflix.info/>

## Carpet Fitting in The Time of Covid-19

Sometime, long ago, in a previous era, (February) we ordered new carpets for the four main rooms, the stairs and the hallway of our house. The measuring man came and measured and the estimating man gave us a price. In early March, we paid for the carpets and were told that delivery would be about three weeks. Once they had arrived the company would phone us to arrange the fitting. At home at we agree that we would decorate before the carpets were delivered and fitted. We guessed that we would have about a month to do it. No problem. I was enthusiastic and began straight away.

The house is small, an extended cottage really, and the woodwork and the walls are painted white. I have played with colour over the years as fashions have changed. The worst mistake was the 'Victorian' yellow on the chimney breast. I thought it would be appropriate since the cottage is Victorian but the colour, in reality, was Coleman's mustard. It didn't last long. So, white it would be again. A quick refresh. Famous last words.

The dining room went smoothly, in spite of the fact that the woodwork needed three coats. It was obviously some time since we had done any decorating. I had forgotten how boring it is painting radiators, especially when they need so many coats. However, the room looked fresh and clean. We decided not to put the pictures back up until all of the rooms were finished as our plan was to move the pictures around. So, bare clean walls, clean windows, washed blinds, sparkling woodwork, lovely. I received a phone call to say that the carpets had arrived and we agreed that the fitters would start on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April. Loads of time.

We started the living room, enthusiasm only slightly dimmed by this being the second room. We plodded on. As I painted I realised that there was quite a lot to do. Not only did we have two upstairs rooms to go but also

the door frames into the hallway and landing, the stairs and the skirting boards. Hmm, we might have to up the pace. I finished the living room without quite the same sense of pleasure as the first but nevertheless, it was another one finished, and it did look clean!

Then, on March 26<sup>th</sup> we received the Covid-19 lockdown phone call. 'Sorry, but we can't fit your carpets.' It was one week before they were due to be fitted.

It was not unexpected. Rather selfish relief was my first emotion. At least we could take our time with the painting. We could have a break and do it more slowly.

The glorious weather persuaded us out of the house and into the garden and allotments. One long sunny day followed another. We sowed and planted, dug and hoed, watered and admired. We gave no thought to painting or carpets. Occasionally, on the odd rainy day, I spent an hour or two decorating. At least some progress was made. One bedroom is almost done. Not completely done but almost. The house is in complete disarray but the garden and the allotments look beautiful.

Today we received the next phone call. "We are starting work again and can fit your carpets. Is June 3<sup>rd</sup> OK?" Two months later than expected and we are still not ready. Best go and get our paintbrushes.

### Carol Bradshaw

