



### Chair's Chat

Hello everyone

Top of my list for Santa this year is of course thermal underwear, a thick jumper and a woolly hat as Patricia and I brace ourselves for a Tier 3 Christmas with windows wide open to facilitate the free flow of fresh air. There will obviously be no point in having the central heating on – indeed all that would achieve is further environmental damage. Maybe thermal pyjamas also then. I trust that members in the better behaved and leafier parts of our Great Glen u3a catchment area, in deservedly less constrained circumstances, will not view these sentiments as sour grapes on my part.

Your Committee has laid on a treasure trove of treats for our Christmas monthly meeting on 8 December at 10.30 a.m. The programme comprises not only an outside speaker – see later in this newsletter – on a seasonal topic, but also opportunities to hear and sing along to Christmas music and carols and to listen to some short Christmas pieces specially written by some of our own gifted members. The meeting will of course be held once again by Zoom. Attendances at monthly meetings have been creeping up, but I should like to see more members there for what should be a rather special occasion. Admission is free and by invitation!

Thanks to everyone who voted on the recent Special Resolution to amend our Articles of Association so that, if necessary, we can hold Annual and other General Meetings virtually after December 2020. The Resolution was passed unanimously with 124 members voting by email or post. (Sadly we also received four other votes in favour too late for inclusion.) The revised constitution is available to read on the website. Of course with the very encouraging news recently about vaccines a virtual AGM next year may not be necessary. We shall have to see what seems to be in the best interests of members nearer the time.

The Book of Memories, just published by the Writing for Pleasure Group, has been selling well. Most copies have now gone, generating a small surplus for our u3a funds, but we still have a few left. Members may have an initial copy at the special price of £8. After that each book costs £9.95. Please contact me if you would like one for yourself or as a Christmas present for a younger relative or a friend.

It just remains for me to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a better 2021. Spare a thought for those on their own for whom Christmas can be very difficult.  
Stay active and stay safe!

*Robert Mansfield*

[chairman/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:chairman@greatglenu3a.co.uk) 0116 270 8284

## Committee News

### Get into Zoom for Group Meetings

It is great to see familiar faces even if you cannot meet in person. The app is available for all PCs, laptops and tablets and it lets you join or virtual meetings with other members who you can see and hear.

Installation of Zoom is usually quite straightforward. If you would like help in setting it up on your device then Sue and I are happy to help on a one-to-one basis over the phone.

**Zoom Meeting Hosts...** We now have two Zoom Pro licences which means that the enforced break after 40 minutes is not necessary. Contact me if you wish to use the Pro licence for your session.

Peter Russell

[webmaster/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@greatglenu3a.co.uk)

01572 822198



Zoom  
hold



### Christmas Day Zoom!!!! Yes, really.



I guess there won't be the usual family gatherings for many of us this year so Sue and I would be happy to see you for a short Christmas Day chat.

If you'd like to join in and see a few more faces then the details are shown below. As these details are being published here, we shall operate a 'Waiting Room' for the meeting so that we know who is arriving.

The meeting will be open from 11am to around mid-day, so drop in any time and we can eat our mince pies together.

Topic: **Christmas Day Zoom**

Time: **Dec 25, 2020 11:00 AM**

Start your Zoom app

Click Join, then enter the details when requested.

Meeting ID: 989 2574 5887 Passcode: 651225

Peter & Sue Russell

[lsn/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:lsn@greatglenu3a.co.uk)

01572 822198

### Country Wide u3a Winter Learning Programme

All initiatives are available at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>. These initiatives are intentionally released on a stagger to keep people's interest and participation over the winter.

For events which require members to book: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

The website will be updated regularly so you are be encouraged to keep checking these pages.

*Have a look and see if there is something that appeals to you*

## Monthly Meetings



**ZOOM MONTHLY MEETING  
08 DECEMBER 2020 AT 10.30 a.m.**



Meeting opens at 10.15 a.m.

## CHRISTMAS THROUGH THE AGES

A 'Zoom' talk by Eddie Smallwood



'A lovely scene in Victorian times, with the family gathered around the Christmas tree.'

"Hear how the festive period is not what it was; how customs date back thousands of years or are wrong"

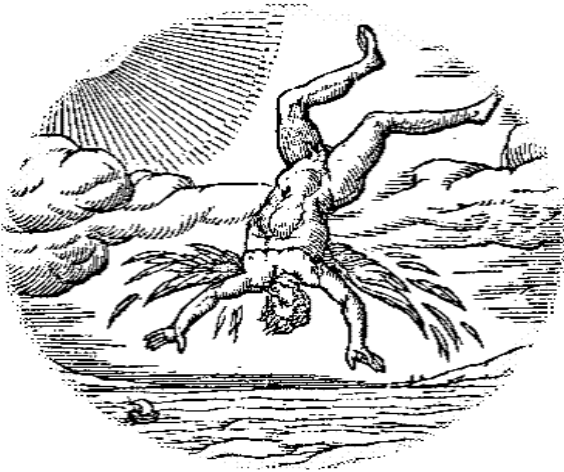
Eddie is a tour guide at Bosworth Battlefield Centre where for the last 18 years he has told the story of the battle where Richard III was killed. Before he became a guide, he was a Police Constable in Leicestershire for 30 years.

During the last 2 years, Eddie has researched and developed a wide range of walks, talks and tours covering 2000 years of History which have proved to be extremely popular. During the 'lock down', Eddie has written a book combining a 42 mile circular walk across the Leicestershire and Warwickshire border, combined with some history about the villages and locations mentioned on the walk. He is now in the process of doing another book detailing the origins of some of our everyday sayings, customs, and traditions.

**We will also be entertained by readings from members of the Writing for Pleasure Group, and music and carols to sing along with to add to the Christmas theme.**

**Do join the meeting on Tuesday 08 December between  
10.15 to 10.30a.m.**

**AND FOR NEXT MONTH ON 12 JANUARY 2021**  
**OUR**  
**ZOOM MONTHLY MEETING**  
**IS...**



**Another Icarus :**  
***The rise and fall of***  
***Percy Pilcher...***  
***and the Art of Flight***

The tale of aviation pioneer **Percy Sinclair Pilcher** and his wonderful sister, **Ella**, whose noble quest for flight ended tragically at Stanford Hall, on the banks of Shakespeare's Avon; the first Englishman to die in the cause of 'the conquest of the air' when on the cusp of becoming the most famous name in aviation history. Roy Smart presents this magnificent man, his flying machines - and the historic, but as yet unheralded achievements, of his wonderful sister, the redoubtable **Ella Sophia Gertrude**, probably *the very first woman to fly!* - in a colourful context of music, poetry, Greek myth, art and the beginnings of flight.

***Profile of the Speaker***

Roy Smart was a Naval Officer, Fleet Air Arm pilot and air director of many great national memorial events including the televised D Day, VE and VJ Day commemorations attended by the Queen and fifty heads of state, together with flying displays and aviation pageants.

With an interest in history and art, he recently contributed to the BBC Radio centenary commemorations of the Battle of Jutland. He lives in East Haddon, Northamptonshire.

***This promises to be a lively talk – so do join us***

## GROUP NEWS

The front page of our website has a link to a list of all activities currently running on zoom, email or in other ways. Go to [www.greatglenu3a.co.uk](http://www.greatglenu3a.co.uk). Zoom meetings are open to all members of our u3a – just contact the Group Leader if you would like to join in.

Our groups keeping in touch through e-mail and/or telephone are:

- **Tabletop Games** who have a weekly quiz and keep in touch by telephone
- **Mini Bridge** who have a daily quiz

Our groups keeping in touch through Zoom are:

- **History, Family History, French for Beginners, Mini Bridge, New Age Kurling, Monday Book Group, Thursday Book Group, Ukuleles, Writing for Pleasure, and Zoom Quiz**

And **Walking without Stiles** hopes to start walking again soon

## LEARN SOMETHING NEW

### Solving Cryptic Crosswords Together (New Zoom meeting)

We have a go at collectively solving the Times Quick Cryptic Crossword for the day.

If you can help or need help then come along and join in. You do not even need the newspaper.

The next session is on Monday 14 December 2.30-4pm

If you have not been before and need joining details let me know and I will email them to you.

*Peter Russell*

[lsn/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:lsn/at/greatglenu3a.co.uk)



### Sing yourself happy Christmas Special!

**Wednesday 16 December 3.30 – 5.00pm**

To spread a bit of Christmas spirit we have planned an afternoon singalong of all the 'best' Christmas songs (but no carols)! There will be a selection of well-known songs from years past, including White Christmas, Rocking Around the Christmas Tree, Winter Wonderland, Mistletoe and Wine and Merry Christmas Everybody!

The Zoom link will be sent out shortly before the meeting to everyone who has given us an email address, so if you receive the newsletter on email you will be included. No

need to register but do put the date in your diary now and note the time!

This Christmas will be unique but we can still have some fun. Here is a chance to sing your heart out, even if you can't sing in tune, so please do join in.

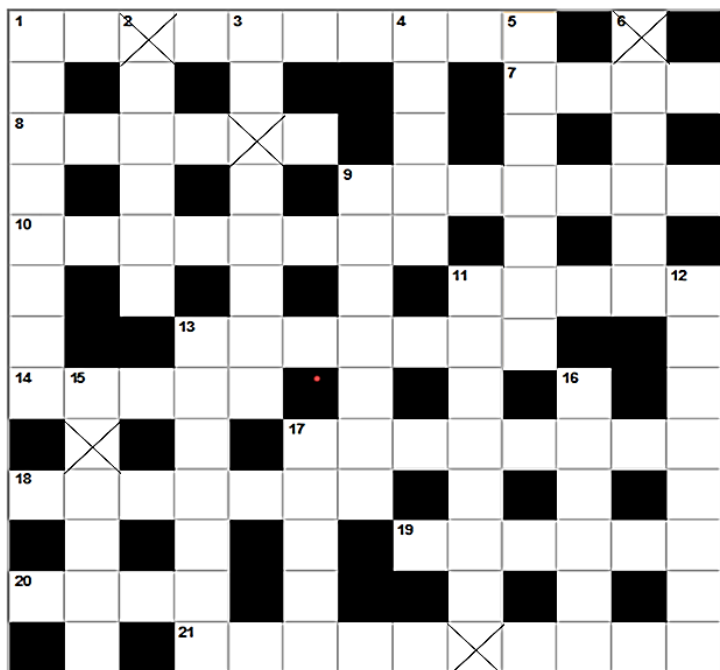
See you there.

*Sue Russell*

[lsn/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:lsn/at/greatglenu3a.co.uk)

07976 263206

# LSN Crossword Challenge



A Crossword Challenge to keep you occupied through the winter days.

Solve the crossword then note down the letters in the 5 squares marked X.

Make them into a word (no plurals) and email it to lsn/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk. Sender of the first correct answer gets a mention next month!

The word was **LEARN**. Congratulations to **Rachel Snashell** who sent in the first correct solution.

## Across

- 1 Credible, convincing
- 7 To cover or conceal the face
- 8 Without payment
- 9 Mythical horned animal
- 10 Cleaning with an abrasive
- 11 Animal three-some
- 13 Church spire
- 14 Fruit of a vine
- 17 One who stirs things up
- 18 Pear shaped fruit with oily flesh
- 19 Possibility, coincidence
- 20 Den of a dangerous animal
- 21 Fan or devotee

## Down

- 1 Causing a contusion or mark
- 2 Portable computer
- 3 Permanently settle elsewhere
- 4 Ostentatious jewellery
- 5 An exile from a place of danger
- 6 Reflective surface
- 9 Be subjected to
- 11 Unsightly marks
- 12 Least distance or duration
- 13 Ghost
- 15 Make known, divulge
- 16 Group of lines in a poem
- 17 Adjust, modify

## Last Month's Solution

**Across:** 7 Femur, 8 Rooftop, 9 Eyesore, 10 Peter, 12 Benevolent, 15 Serviettes, 18 Extra, 19 Poacher, 21 Heckler, 22 Ruled  
**Down:** 1 Aftertaste, 2 Amber, 3 Trio, 4 Breeze, 5 Loophole, 6 Stutter, 11 Retrograde, 13 Editable, 14 Protect, 16 Tapers, 17 Shell, 20 Acre.

## Some special information from groups

### English Country Dancing Group: December 2020



Normally at this time of year the ECD Group would be in full swing ready to celebrate the festive season. Our repertoire would normally include a mix of modern dances to popular sing-along carol tunes (*Jingle Bells*, *Good King Wenceslas*, *Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly*, and *Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer*) as well as the old traditional English dances "Sir Roger De Coverley" (1695), that features in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" when the Ghost of Christmas Past took Scrooge back to Old Fezziwig's Christmas Party, and "In the Fields of Frost and Snow" (1731) which has an accompanying song of a young swain who has to tend the animals on his father's farm - a forerunner of the popular children's song "Old MacDonald had a Farm"!

However this year that is not to be. The Covid-19 pandemic has stopped all social dancing across the UK and world-wide since March: the ECD group last danced on March 10! Let's hope that the recently announced Covid vaccines are effective and are rolled out quickly so that we can all get back to our *Set and Turn Singles*, *Do-si-Dos*, and (flirtatious!) *Gypsy's* within the next few months - will we still remember how to do them?

In the meantime we wish all U3A members **A Merry Christmas** and we hope that 2021 proves to be a much better dancing year. Wassail!

Peter Meacock

[ecd/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:ecd/at/greatglenu3a.co.uk)

279 3600

### Ukuleles

The Ukuleles group continue to meet on the first and third Mondays each month using Zoom. We are all continuing to develop our abilities despite the constraints of Zoom, as well as enjoying the social aspects of the group. Members are also producing their own videos and sharing with the rest of the group.

Alan Mawby

[ukes/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:ukes/at/greatglenu3a.co.uk)



### Military History

The group has resumed using Zoom, the meetings are at 10.30 on the first Wednesday of each month. The topics for future meetings are:

6th January - Colditz

3rd February - Great Glen and the Battle of Naseby

3rd March - Battleships: Dominance and Decline

7th April - Airfields of Leicestershire and Rutland

New members are welcome. For details and Zoom meeting information please contact...

Alan Mawby

[militaryhistory/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:militaryhistory/at/greatglenu3a.co.uk)

For email replace / at / with @

### **Quiz Group**

The next Zoom quiz is on Monday 21 December at 2:30p.m. 50 questions, some simple, others not quite so but a pleasant way to pass an afternoon with lots of GGU3A members. If you have not joined in before please come along and have a go. I can send you the joining details if you contact me.

*Peter Russell/Rachael Snashall* [webmaster/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@greatglenu3a.co.uk)

### **Monday Book Group**

The group had its first Zoom meeting in November. It was very successful and we were all pleased to "see" one another again. As we will not be having our usual Christmas lunch meeting, we decided we would read another book and have another Zoom meeting. This will be on 14 December at 2.00p.m. The book we will be discussing is "Raven Black" by Ann Cleeves. I do hope everyone can join in.

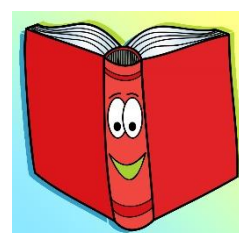
*Liz Adams* [books/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:books@greatglenu3a.co.uk)

### **Thursday Book Group**

We are having a Christmas Break in December with our next Zoom meeting on Thursday 28 January 2021 at 10.00am when our book is The Music Shop by Rachel Joyce.

New members are very welcome. Please contact ...

*Patricia Mansfield* [patriciamansfield/ at /btinternet.com](mailto:patriciamansfield@btinternet.com)



### **History Group**

Meetings are being held on the first Monday 2.30pm, using Zoom. The December meeting is on Monday 07 December. We shall have our annual History Quiz. On January 04 2021 we shall be re-visiting our list of late 19<sup>th</sup> century artists of various genres for some more short member presentations.

Everyone is welcome, but if you are new to the group, please let me know that you want join in so that I can include you in the Zoom invitation.

*Peter Russell* [history/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:history@greatglenu3a.co.uk)

### **Zoom Chat for all – Open to Everyone**

We hold short Zoom meetings for any GGU3A members on alternate Friday mornings at 10:30 to chat and play any games we can manage on Zoom – 'Countdown letters' is our current favourite. If you're not otherwise engaged please come along. The next meetings is on 18<sup>th</sup> December. If you've not been before let me know and I'll email the joining details to you.

*Peter Russell* [kurling/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:kurling@greatglenu3a.co.uk)

### **Family History**

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 9 December 10.00 am. I have put together a quiz. Pens and pencils at the ready, and festive jumpers the order of the day!

See you there

*Toni Smith* [familyhistory/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:familyhistory@greatglenu3a.co.uk)



For email replace / at / with @

### **French for Beginners – Lets Learn Together**

The Zoom French for Beginners is first and third Tuesday in the month. The last meeting before Xmas is on 15 December and we start again on 05 January 2021.

If anyone wishes to join the group they can contact ...

*Jan Johnson*

[frenchbeginners/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:frenchbeginners@greatglenu3a.co.uk)

### **Papercraft**

I should like to wish all my papercrafters a Very Happy Christmas and look forward to meeting you all again in the Spring when hopefully we shall have received that magic jab. Very best wishes to everyone.

*Stella Orbell*

[papercraft/ at /greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:papercraft@greatglenu3a.co.uk)

## **And finally....**

### **The Irish Fisherman**

The rain was pouring down outside O'Connors public house.

There standing in front of a big puddle outside was an old Irishman, drenched, and holding a stick with a piece of string in the puddle.

A passer-by stopped and asked him "What are you doing?"

"Fishing" the old man replied

Feeling for the old man the man says "Come in out of the rain and have a drink with me"

In the warm ambience of the pub, as they sip their whiskies the man, being a bit of a superior type, cannot resist asking "So how many have you caught today?"

"You're the eighth" replied the old man



*TO YOU ALL*