



Great Glen Newsletter

December 2020

Registered Charity No.1099411

www.greatglenu3a.co.uk

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.

Our 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)

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Committee News

We are very sorry that those of you who do not have access to the Internet are unable to join in with the activities we are enjoying through Zoom. Unfortunately this is the only way at present that we have to continue to provide meetings.

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

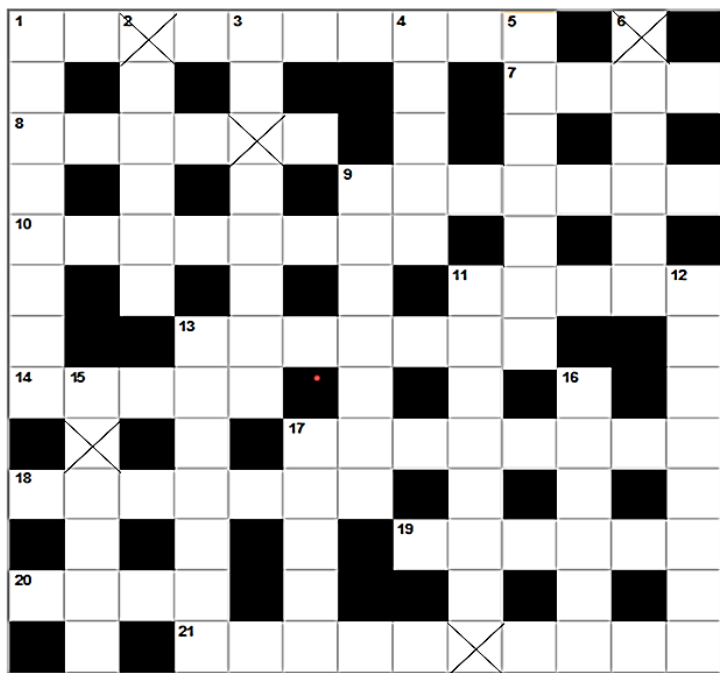
GROUP NEWS

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. Zoom meetings are

open to all members of our u3a – just contact the Group Leader if you would like to join in.

LEARN SOMETHING NEW

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!

Across: 7 Femur, 8 Rooftop, 9 Eyesore, 10 Peter, 12 Benevolent, 15 Serviettes, 18 Extra, 19 Poacher, 21 Heckler, 22 Ruled

cross

- 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

Last Month's Solution

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.

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

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

For email replace / at / with @

12 Least distance or duration

13 Ghost

15 Make known, divulge

16 Group of lines in a poem

17 Adjust, modify

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@greatglenu3a.co.uk)
279 3600

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