

Will wishing be enough?

I wish you all a Happy New Year. As I write these few lines I have just found out that Jan and I will be receiving our first Covid injections next week. I spoke to Ann Atkins yesterday who told me that her and Bob's appointment next week for their second jab had been cancelled.

So 2021 is already an exciting year for some of us and it's only a few days old!

The vaccine breakthrough and roll-out certainly was/is welcome news but getting back to normality may I suspect take a good deal longer than a jab in the arm.

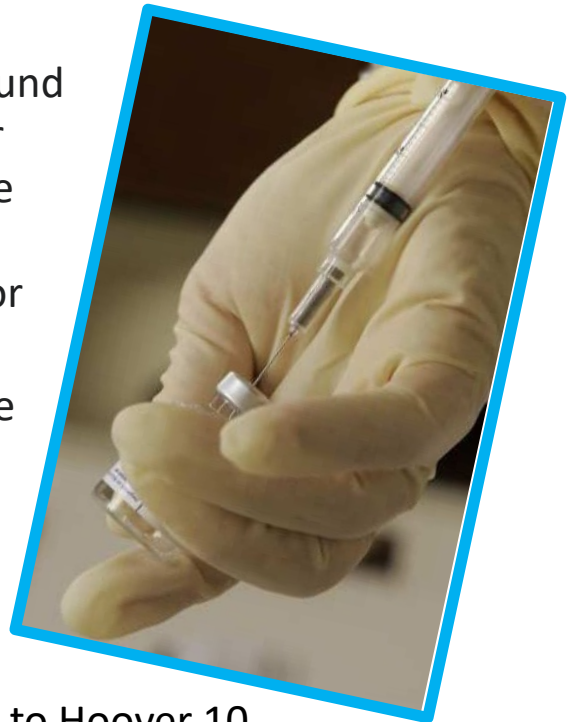
Smart money was right and we are through to Hoover 10. Little did I suspect that this temporary newsletter would last for so long.

I expect that this sentiment goes for some of our very faithful contributors who have come up with the goods month after month; poetry and quizzes, cartoons and humour. Photographs and oddities. Just a bright reminder that within our ranks we have some very talented people brought together under the banner of the Blackwater Valley U3A.

Not unexpectedly most of our Groups remain in lockdown and that glimmer of hope just before Christmas was extinguished by the new onslaught of Covid 19.

Smart money now says we shall have an Anniversary edition DV.

EDITOR



Chairman's New Year Message

I am sure Phil will have created a headline heralding the New Year in, but I would just like to add my own Very Best Wishes to each and every member for 2021. Hopefully things can only get better for us all.

Thank you for your support I hope we will all be able to meet again, sooner rather than later.

Obviously we are all disappointed to learn that lockdown must continue for the immediate future, while the NHS start up the biggest vaccination programme that this country has ever seen, and hopefully this will be the start of the end of this Pandemic. I previously wrote about the Street Party that took place to Celebrate VE Day last year and the sense of community that this produced. We have lived here for forty years now and obviously many of the original neighbours have moved on. However, lockdown has meant that many of the new families are working from home and have been helping some of the those who are less mobile by getting shopping for them. Just before Christmas those who organised the street party put notices through everyone's letter box to invite us to join them for "Carols on the Door Step". Pat and I went along and joined in the singing with a very good gather-



JO MARCHANT

"It is with deep sadness that we heard that Jo Marchant passed away on 14th December. Her funeral at Aldershot on 11th January at 12.15 will be streamed and is available on line at www.obitus.com/ [User name Fiqi9580 and the password 781748] for the following 28 days.

Her family has asked that donations be made to Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice.

Donation Page: www.fordmears.uk/funding-page?fp_id=66384

ing of neighbours, all maintaining social distancing. One of the topics of conversation was that it appeared that many had put up the Christmas lights earlier than usual, perhaps to lift spirits, certainly we thought there were more lights on display than in previous years. It was definitely great to be able to join in together with our neighbours in this way to wish them a Merry Christmas and a better New Year. I think it is fantastic to see the community coming together and supporting each other in these difficult times.

Our son came over from Holland to pick up our grandson and visit us for Christmas. As he arrived in the UK the rules changed and he had to isolate for five days and arrange a Covid Test which was negative. However, before he could return to Holland he was required to get another test 72 hours before departure showing he was still negative. With the majority of test centres closed over Christmas this was a challenge, but he went to Heathrow and got the all clear and flew back on 29th December, bit of a drama though.

I trust all of you will be able to keep safe during the coming months.

DAVID DICKINSON

Wendy and David Sparkes say it all!



Just with a Mobile



Both pictures from the phone of June Turner. On the left we have a rare sighting in the vicinity of Willowford of Mr and Mrs Editor venturing abroad. The second picture shows June herself surrounded by a barrier of presents on Christmas Day that's part of her family's vain attempt to stop her getting into the kitchen. [My words not hers —Ed.]

Reminder Membership Fees

Another reminder from our Treasurer Meg that the membership fees were due by 1st January.

Please pay by BACS if at all possible or by cheque to Blackwater Valley U3A.

Your renewal will be extended up to the end of March 2021, in recognition of the fact that Covid 19 restrictions have impacted on our normal activities during this year, but these will be resumed as soon as circumstances allow.

Fees are again £12 for the year

How about a Quiz?

"Some for the New Year,
the first in the year!"

General knowledge

- 1) Where in the body will you find the pituitary gland?
- 2) Which hymn is sung before the FA Cup Final?
- 3) What nationality was John Paul 11?
- 4) Who was Diana Moran was known as in the 1980's
- 5) When did the BBC start covering Glastonbury?
- 6) If you suffer from cryophobia, what scares you?
- 7) How many of Henry V11's wives were called Catherine?
- 8) What sum do 7 times 7 times 7 equal?
- 9) What is the postcode of the Houses of Parliament?
- 10) When did the Beatles split up?
- 11) What is the name of the cowboy in Toy Story?
- 12) How many keys are on a piano?"
- 13) What is the bestselling novel of all time?
- 14) Where is the smallest human bone located?
- 15) What band was Rev. Richard Cole part of?

Arranged by the Blackwater Bloggers

Answers to December's Quiz

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1) What creature proved faster than a horse in a 1927 race in Sydney Australia? | Kangaroo |
| 2) What is the longest river in the world? | Nile |
| 3) Which was the first city to have a population of over 10 million? | New York |
| 4) In Chinese mythology, which tree is "The Tree of Life"? | Peach Tree |
| 5) What did a South Korean theatre owner edit out of "The Sound of Music" to shorten it? | The songs |
| 6) What is produced from bauxite? | Aluminium |
| 7) Which Rudyard Kipling poem greets competitors before they enter Centre Court at Wimbledon? | If |
| 8) Who wrote the "Discworld" series of fantasy novels? | Terry Pratchett |
| 9) The Kiwi fruit is native to which country? | China |
| 10) What is the southernmost capital city in the world? | Wellington NZ |
| 11) Where is St Basil's Cathedral? | Red Square, Moscow |
| 12) In which year was the country name of "Siam" first replaced by "Thailand"? | 1939 |
| 13) What planet has a day two-thirds as long as it's year? | Mercury |
| 14) What does a spremologer collect? | Trivia |
| 15) What comes after the lines "Yesterday, love was an easy game to play"? | "Now I need a place to stay". |

Christmas Past Revisited

Without any Christmas Party pictures this year to look back to, we thought we would show a few of past occasions starting with the incredible 3Daves in 2013



Not exactly Wilson, Keppel and Betty but near as damn it



These pictures and the following pages are recent events and somewhat Dave-less



Well perhaps for one! — He's on the top table, where else?

It'll be alright on the night!

Back to 2013 and the Christmas Show featuring all home-grown BVU3A talent with Jackie Barkaway and Sue Puxley, along with Ann Atkins, Phil Rowling and the Incredible 3Daves — Messrs Dickinson, Sparkes and Turner. Now read the Journal entry by Phil following their performance.

We got to the hall at 12.50 to find that the group in front of us had asked and been granted an extension to 13.30. This made a mockery of our wish for an early start. I did not get on to the stage area until 13.25 and started to set up the sound system. Horror of horrors I couldn't get any sound through the speaker. I expect I was panicking but who wouldn't in the circumstances. I got help from Dave Sparkes [apt name!] and he checked the connections and found a fault that he rectified and we were ready to go.

Our members were all in by 14.00 and were soon eating and doing the competitions.

Gil Puxley had some swift instruction on using the video mode of the borrowed camera set up on a tripod in front of the stage. He will, hopefully, be taking a recording of our performances this afternoon.

Jackie and Sue took to the stage at 15.00 for their poetry contribution. Their Pam Ayres' style reading delighted their audience.

Meanwhile, The 3Daves and Ann got changed behind a curtain at one end of the stage whilst I changed and worked the computer at the other and suddenly we were ready for the off.

It was another bad moment as the girls finished their performance when the connection to the computer failed momentarily but Dave S. once again came to the rescue.

Then, and as they say: "Without further ado..." the 3Daves along with Ann and me gave our rendition of: *The Maharajah of Magador*. The fanfare was tremendous; the previously recorded spoof caught everyone's attention and the opening bars of *Streets of Old Cairo* coincided with the curtains opening and the entrance stage left of the 3Daves in all their glory. The audience went mad. Ann and I aided and abetted and the whole performance ended to a tumultuous round of clapping and cheering. Well that went well! To cries of: *More!* We did our second number *The Thing* and again had the audience laughing at our antics.

The afternoon passed swiftly and all too soon we were clearing up and heading home. I felt a little off but put that down to an overdose of adrenalin.

Diane and Ken entertain

Diane and Ken Middleton thought this might be a good one for our U3A .
We're sure you will agree and will try to pit your wits against them.

	Clue	Answer
1	Sly giggles	
2	High class thoroughfare	
3	Money making royalty	
4	Dark occult	
5	Mother's local	
6	Clever folk	
7	Various black items	
8	Sport for Princes	
9	Frankie Vaughan wanted it	
10	Good children get these	
11	Feline equipment	
12	Garden flowers	
13	Assorted girls	
14	Dairy holder	
15	Arrange marriage partners	
16	Edible fasteners	
17	Wobbly infants	
18	Talk quietly	
19	Big bus	
20	Gem orchard	
21	Spin around	
22	Capital granite	
23	Lorry driver's snack	
24	100% Au	
25	Istanbul harem	
26	Up out there	
27	Even more up out there	
28	Big cat's pub	
29	Noisy insect	
30	One who wanders	
31	Musical bard	
32	It's a party	
33	Outside meal	
34	Easily blown	
35	Locals from Malta	
36	Reward	
37	Ten cent pub	
38	Toothless drink	
39	Lost them.....?	
40	Sweet tooth	

[Answers in February's edition]

A bit for Book Worms

No Z is for Zero for Kinsey

With lots of time on my hands during the Lockdown I decided to revisit one of my favourite authors reading again the Alphabet Series of detective stories by Sue Grafton who sadly died three years ago.

I first read and perhaps fell a little in love with the character of Kinsey Millhone whilst reading *A is for Alibi* in 1982. Kinsey was then 32 years old and over the next twenty-four novels aged but seven years whilst her author born like me in 1940 progressed throughout life towards old age. The time span of the stories stay within the 1980's with just some flashbacks to earlier decades.

When first published Kinsey Millhone was very unusual as a female private investigator with only Sara Paretsky's V.I. Warshawski, who also arrived in our bookshops in 1982, to keep her company on the shelves.

The last Kinsey Millhone novel *Y is for Yesterday* was published a few months before the author's death in December 2017. The next book, *Z is for Zero*, the 26th and obviously the last in the series, was never written, leaving me and a million or so other fans at a loss without a final report from our favourite heroine.

Sue Grafton was adamant that her books would never be turned into films or TV shows, and in that same vein, she would never allow a ghost writer to write in her name. That is something of a blessing as the picture I keep of Kinsey with her short, dark hair that she trimmed with nail scissors, wearing her one and only black dress will always remain with me.

A new year, a new series and I'm thinking of re-reading Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga*. Because of TV, I already have an image to the front of my mind. Who could forget the 1967 BBC series with Nyree Dawn Porter as Irene or if you're a little younger Gina McKee playing against Damian Lewis's Soames in Granada's 2002 production.



Sue Grafton

P.R.

Beware Man in the Kitchen

Following my increasing bold attempts at cooking over the past few month of the lockdown, I had assumed an imagined state of *Chef De Cuisine* instinctively knowing that men are better cooks than women— and that anything served up by a wife even with a lifetime of experience can be easily re-created by a man with little more than a wok and an iPad.

I heard my wife, who unfortunately suffers with many ailments, speaking to her friend June on the telephone last week.

When asked by June how she was, she replied: “Now on top of all my other problems I’ve got Culinary Thrombosis.”

“What’s that then?” said June.

“A bloody clot in the kitchen!”

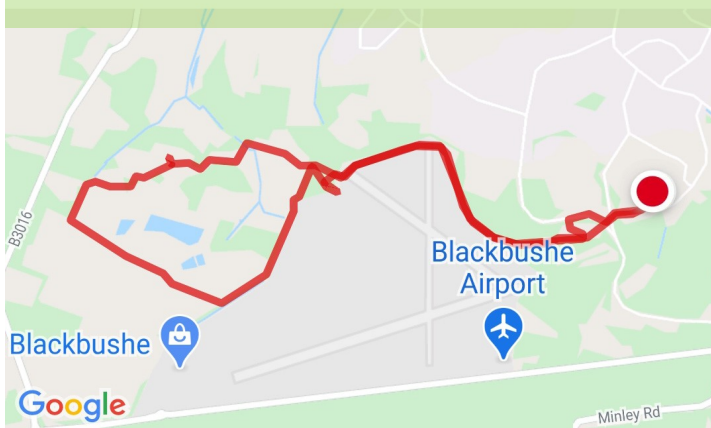


“Jan, dinner’s ready! I just have to find it.”

"Walking Routes for Two"

Min Gardiner writes: “Since the Walking Group can no longer meet I’m planning to share short local routes and encourage members to maybe connect with a walking chum to try them out. No. 1 Castle Bottom and the new lakes. <https://www.mapmyrun.com/workout/527288678>

Activity: Walk



More from Barbara and Martin

On TV we have a regular friend,
Exciting meals they do pretend.
On 'MASTERCHEF' on a weekday night,
just prepared for our delight.

Amateurs, Celebs, Professionals too,
Create a meal, plus a starter who,
For your pleasure they do hard labour
to let you imagine the taste and flavour.

Delicious ingredients, all is fair,
Worldwide produce, everything's there.
These cooks they have no limiting bounds,
They create such art, we have found.

Veg. and meats, beans and cream,
Sauces called Jus, emulsions green.
Deconstruct a dish from our Mum
All will fill and please your tum.

But why I ask must they spoil it all
And let nuts into these dishes fall.
Allergies, and foul tastes these pellets bring
to such a fantastic offering?

Coco, Almond and Pecan too
Walnut, Chestnut, it seems any will do
To turn a dish, so carefully created
Fit for the bin, all effort wasted.

Trendy yes, I've been told
But surely now this fad is old
Pack it in you trendy cook
Find something else from your cookery book.

Swellings and rashes are nut's result
Why continue with this foolish cult
Of being "so clever", but it's a Lemming's race.
What's wrong with cooking a cleaner taste?

I HATE NUTS!!