

May 2020



IMPORTANT

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the implementation of social distancing, all U3A meetings are suspended until further notice.

Letter from The Chair

Hello Members

I hope you are managing to cope with the dramatic change in our lifestyles. At first, it wasn't easy to self-isolate but isn't it strange how we gradually adapted to the new restrictions and hopefully are now finding pleasure in our own surroundings.

I can't remember when, if ever I had so much time just to sit in my own garden, listening to the birds, enjoying a cup of coffee whilst soaking up the warm spring sunshine.

How idyllic all this sounds, but is it in reality?

Well, in all honesty - almost - we are still restricted by self-isolation and at times the loneliness that can bring, but that is where we take some consolation knowing there are over 200 of our members in the same situation. So, do not hesitate to pick up your telephone, text or email, and make contact with other members, we are all sharing the same experience of self-isolation.

Unfortunately, the gremlin of GDPR prevents publishing the contact details of our membership but I am willing to act as a 'go between', by passing on your details or messages to fellow members.

Just send an email to: chair@ilkestonu3a.org.uk with the information or message you would like me to forward on for you.

There has been very little new information from the National Office, apart from the details of three new forums, which is included in this newsletter.

For the Members who like to do quizzes and puzzles there are a few on the National website: www.u3a.org.uk, including a weekly quiz (no cheating allowed, the answers are given the following week), a Maths for Fun quiz and an article written by David Martin.

Remember, if you have written a short story, poem, puzzle or quiz, or anything you think would be of interest to other Members and suitable for the newsletter, please contact Janis Henshaw at the email address below.

Please look after yourselves and take care. Keep healthy and stay safe.

Now, I will finish with the sentiments in the Queen's recent address, whilst poignant are very true.

**We will be with our friends again.
We will be with our family again,
We will meet again.**

Ann Riley
Chair Ilkeston U3A 2020/2021



Mailing

New U3A Discussion Forums

To Chairs and Secretaries

Using digital platforms to stay connected

During these unprecedented times, the Third Age Trust has been looking at different ways to support our amazing U3A community. We wanted to enable and support U3As, members and Interest Group leaders, to stay active and connected with each other.

To this end, from today, **Monday 6 April 2020**, we have launched **three online discussion forums** so that you can share ideas and support each other. Thanks to the Beacon users, we are doing this by extending the existing (and successful) Beacon User Forum to all U3As, regardless of whether or not you are using the Beacon management system at your U3A yet.

It is easy to get started. All you need to do is visit the forum website at <https://forum.u3abeacon.org.uk>, click the 'register' button and fill in your details. From there you will be able to explore the forums and get involved in the discussion.

If you are not familiar with online forums, we have prepared a **how-to guide** to help you get started. We welcome your feedback on the guide. Your feedback will help us develop our guide which will be available on the national website in the next few days.

There will be three forums that you can join:

Learning – discussions around subjects and all forms of interest and learning

Our U3A Community – discussions arounds how we support each other

Beacon – discussions around using Beacon, the U3A management system

This is just an outline of what the forums are about because it will be led and developed by you when you join and the conversations that are happening. A volunteer team will moderate the site and support you to use the forums in a safe, positive and productive way.

We will send more details through the week as we have them on our website and in the newsletter.

Please let your members know.

Please join us, sign up and get chatting. Together we will network, share ideas and stay connected.

Groups Round Up

Craft Groups

(My abject apologies to the Craft Groups for omitting their item from the April newsletter.—Janis)

When the two craft groups last met at the end of February and beginning of March, respectively, we all tackled a new idea brought to us by Deb—a piece of hand-embossed pewter work.

Using thin pieces of pewter sheet, firstly we traced and embossed our chosen decorative designs into the metal - and then it all got a bit technical – the Vaseline and baby talcum-powder came out!

As you will see from the photos, between us we achieved some lovely individual pieces in pewter – either a decorative ornament or a topper to put on a special greetings card.



We had two really enjoyable sessions coupled with lots of banter and laughter whilst learning a new crafting skill. Thanks to Deb for introducing this new technique to us all and for supplying all of the necessary “equipment”.

It's such a pity that we can't meet as groups at the moment but there is every reason to “Carry on

Crafting”. I'm glad to hear that some crafters are making the most of their spare time and keeping up with projects.

Barbara has been busy making milk bottle-top Christmas trees and decoupage Christmas cards, ready for the October Groups Fair. I hope the crafters will all be able to contribute something if we are back to normal meetings. Deb is in the process of creating some stunning Silver Wedding Anniversary Party invitations for a friend. And I have received a request for about 100 of the paper flowers that we made recently – now that is keeping me busy. 30 down, 70 more to go!

Let us know what crafty things you have been doing during the extra time that has been gifted to us. Send a brief note, plus a photo if you have one, to Deb on 07795 191 347. Deb has kindly agreed to collate responses, so please let her have your submission by 20 May so that she is able to meet the newsletter deadline. Your name will probably be published, unless you state otherwise. Take care and enjoy spending time on your chosen craft projects.

Val Buxton

French Conversation

We have been continuing to write our short French essays, which have been circulated to the group members by email. The first ones were about how we have been spending our time during the current restrictions. Many of us have appreciated the good weather, which has enabled us to tidy up our gardens. Walks in the countryside which we are fortunate to be able to access without travelling were a favourite too. A certain member has been keeping in shape with Joe Wicks on YouTube and others have been joining in with Gareth Malone's online choir. Family quizzes and movie nights have been arranged via the internet and online church services enjoyed over Easter. One member is also helping her granddaughter learn French during her home schooling time.

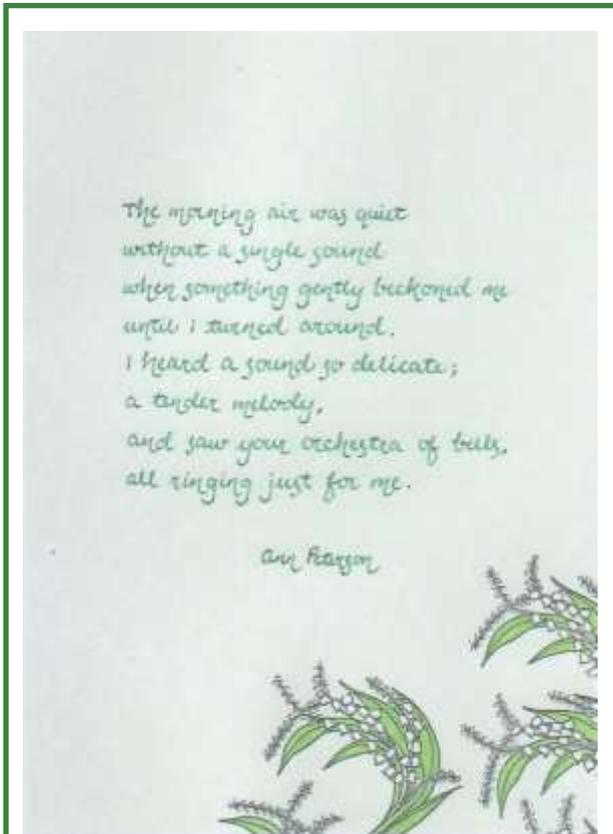
We are now writing about a hobby that we enjoy now or have enjoyed in the past. We have already heard about one member's passion for the German language and another's love of cycling in her younger days. It's good to keep the cogs turning.

Janis Henshaw

Groups Round Up continued

Calligraphy

The calligraphers have been busy creating some beautiful pieces of work.



Lily of the valley (*Convallaria majalis*) usually blooms in the month of May and is also known as the May lily. It has the flower meaning of humility, chastity, sweetness and purity and is said to bring luck in love. It also means "the return of happiness" which is the reason why it is often used as decorations in weddings. Lily of the valley is native to temperate areas of Asia, Europe and North America, where it grows naturally in woodland settings. Lilies of the valley appear in several Christian Bible stories. It is said that lilies of the valley grew from the spot where Mary's tears hit the ground at the foot of the cross.

By Val



By Jill



Linda's first attempt at Scratch Art using a dry calligraphy pen

Linda McKay

Classical music

I hope all of our members are safe and well and are coping with our three months isolation. I hope you are getting your fix of music by listening to Classic FM or Radio Three if you want to be a bit highbrow. You could also sort your music collection picking out some of your favourites so you can come back with loads of interesting titbits for when we are allowed to meet again.

June Harrison

Groups Round Up continued

Classic Books

Our very small group has grown over the last year which leads to a wider sharing of opinions. I hope the shutdown has given you time to read even more. the following is a list of books we have read over the past year:

1. The Remains of the day
2. To kill a Mocking Bird
3. 1984
4. Mrs Dalloway
5. Maurice
6. My Cousin Rachel
7. I Capture the Castle
8. The Crucible
9. Moon Tiger

Can you guess the Authors? Answers at the end of the newsletter.

June Harrison

Quiz Group

We have a regular group of around 16 members who attend sessions but there is plenty of room for any other members of the U3A who wish to join us. We are also missing our visit to the pub afterwards for a meal and a lot of chat. I have written you 10 questions, Have a go and see how many you can answer. Answers at the end of the newsletter.

1. Who sang Bridge over Troubled Waters in the 70s?
2. What was Charles Darwin's book on Evolution called, written in 1859?
3. What is London's oldest football club called?
4. What is the fastest fish in the world called?
5. How long did the 100 years war last?
6. What is the lightest metal?
7. What animal has four knees?
8. What is a mountain avens?
9. Why does the moon shine?
10. What colour is the beak of a Bombay duck?

June Harrison

Science for All

With the absence of our usual meetings, I've put together a few thought provoking articles.

If the human race was wiped out, which species would dominate?

Humans have certainly had a profound effect on their environment, but our current claim to dominance is based on criteria that we have chosen ourselves. Ants outnumber us, trees outlive us, fungi outweigh us.

Bacteria win on all of these counts at once. They existed four billion years before us, and created the oxygen in the atmosphere. Collectively, bacteria outnumber us a thousand, billion, billion to one, and their total mass exceeds the combined mass of all animals.

They have colonised the entire planet, from the stratosphere to the deepest ocean, and despite all our technology, antibiotic-resistant bacteria continue to kill hundreds of thousands of us every year. When humans are gone, other species may take our place, but bacteria will continue to dominate the planet.

Facts about the Moon

- **The dark side of the moon is a myth.** In reality both sides of the Moon see the same amount of sunlight however only one face of the Moon is ever seen from Earth. This is because the Moon rotates around on its own axis in exactly the same time it takes to orbit the Earth, meaning the same side is always facing the Earth. The side facing away from Earth has only been seen by the human eye from spacecraft.

- **The rise and fall of the tides on Earth is caused by the Moon.** There are two bulges in the Earth due to the gravitational pull that the Moon exerts; one on the side facing the Moon, and the other on the opposite side that faces away from the Moon, The bulges move around the oceans as the Earth rotates, causing high and low tides around the globe.

- **The Moon is drifting away from the Earth.** The Moon is moving approximately 3.8 cm away from our planet every year. It is estimated that it will continue to do so for around 50 billion years. By the time that happens, the Moon will be taking around

Groups Round Up continued

47 days to orbit the Earth instead of the current 27.3 days.

- **A person would weigh much less on the Moon.** The Moon has much weaker gravity than Earth, due to its smaller mass, so you would weigh about one sixth (16.5%) of your weight on Earth. This is why the lunar astronauts could leap and bound so high in the air.

- **The Moon has only been walked on by 12 people; all American men.** The first man to set foot on the Moon in 1969 was Neil Armstrong on the Apollo 11 mission, while the last man to walk on the Moon in 1972 was Gene Cernan on the Apollo 17 mission. Since then the Moon has only be visited by unmanned vehicles. Interestingly, out of the dozen people who walked on the Moon, no one ever did it more than once.

- **The Moon has no atmosphere.** This means that the surface of the Moon is unprotected from cosmic rays, meteorites and solar winds, and has huge temperature variations. The lack of atmosphere means no sound can be heard on the Moon, and the sky always appears black.

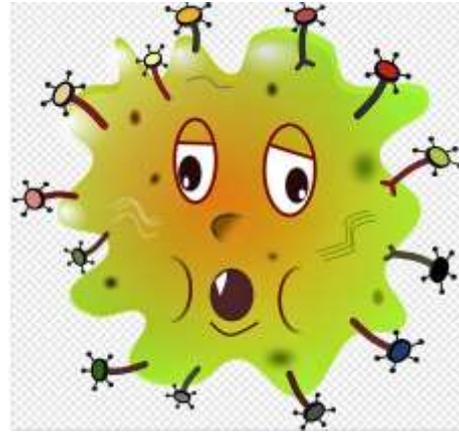
- **The Moon has quakes.** These are caused by the gravitational pull of the Earth. Lunar astronauts used seismographs on their visits to the Moon, and found that small moonquakes occurred several kilometres beneath the surface, causing ruptures and cracks. Scientists think the Moon has a molten core, just like Earth.

- **The first spacecraft to reach the Moon was Luna 1 in 1959.** This was a Soviet craft, which was launched from the USSR. It passed within 5995 km of the surface of the Moon before going into orbit around the Sun.

- **The Moon is the fifth largest natural satellite in the Solar System.** At 3,475 km in diameter, the Moon is much smaller than the major moons of Jupiter and Saturn. Earth is about 80 times the volume of the Moon, but both are about the same age. A prevailing theory is that the Moon was once part of the Earth, and was formed from a chunk that broke away due to a huge object colliding with Earth when it was relatively young.

- **During the 1950's the USA considered detonating a nuclear bomb on the Moon.**

The secret project was during the height of the cold war and was known as "A Study of Lunar Research Flights" or "Project A119" and meant as a show of strength at a time when they were lagging behind in the space race.



Janet Joy

Poetry for Pleasure

Some members have been meeting on Zoom. Our IT skills are taking an upturn and five members out of eight managed to join the meeting. When we have worked out how to control who talks next it will improve, but I think at the first meeting everyone was pleased just to chat, which is so important now we are in lockdown. For those of us who write poetry this has all been a bit of a dubious inspiration! As the situation progresses the group may be able to formalise the session but for now we are all happy to be able to meet online.

Patricia Potter

Groups Round Up continued

Bluebells

As April fades to May
And heightening sun dispels the showers;
The warm sweet breezes stir the baby buds
In woods and fields and garden bowers.

The celandines peep golden eyes from out the
debris of a winter cold
And then I long for flowerings of crocus and the
gilded daffodils,
Their frilly trumpets shaking in the shivering air.

Come with me, now, and step to ancient woods.
A path well know to me, where yearly I have
trod, some fifty years or more,
To see the bluebell mist, where shafts of sunlight
set the hazy scene.

And who am I with stilted words, to say the glory
of this sight ?
What other eyes and hearts have thrilled to know
the bluebells are about ?
Massed in deep woods, their perfume heady in
the warming air;
Now drink it in with every sense for it's a fleeting
scene, their flowering too soon gone.

The heart stores up it's book of mem'ries and we
take a page,
Recalling loved ones, some that are no more.
Or rites and celebrations marking our life's years.
A page to show new birth or joy in pleasures
shared.
A page which tells of special words remembered,
or a kiss.
A page for warming springs and promises of
buds .

And I, with reverential plea, would wish four
seasons more.
New pages to be penned. A record of the sights
that stir the blood.
I should rejoice to live again in wonder of the
world,
To share again with loved ones, and walk in
bluebell woods.

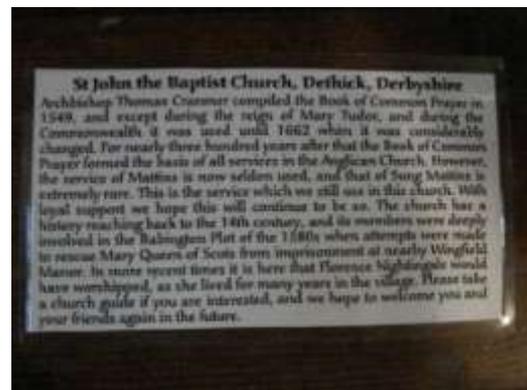
Pat Potter May 2017

History 1

In June 2015 around 16/18 members of the History group 1 made a visit to Manor Farm, Dethick, the home of television presenter Simon Groom, who has lived there since 2008. The property is currently for sale for the first time in its history for £1,125,000.



We were made extremely welcome, provided with tea/coffee and biscuits and given the history of the site and of St John's church nearby . The 16th century manor house was at the centre of the Babington plot in 1586 to rescue the imprisoned Mary Queen of Scots and murder Queen Elizabeth the first. The plot failed and as



a result both Mary and Thomas Babington were executed. We then had a tour of St John's church where not only the Babington's worshiped but also later in history did Florence Nightingale who lived in the tiny village for some time. I would highly recommend that during this time of lock down it would be well worth a look on line at the estate agents site for a full description including photographs, also a look at the history sites it really is very interesting.

Alwyn Holmes

During this time when we cannot meet in our groups, it was felt that it was important to keep the Newsletter going, to keep in touch with our members. We asked you to send in anything you thought might be of interest to share. The following are what we received. Please keep them flowing!

I have recently spent time cleaning the files on my computer and came across this article which I would like to share with you.

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle read the following.....

The Mayonnaise jar and two Beers

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous 'yes.'

The professor then produced two Beers from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

'Now,' said the professor as the laughter subsided, 'I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life.'

The golf balls are the important things—your family, your children, your health, your friends and your favourite passions—and if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car.

The sand is everything else—the small stuff'.

'If you put the sand into the jar first,' he continued, 'there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you.'

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness.

When the lockdown is over . . .

Spend time with your children.

Spend time with your parents.

Visit with grandparents.

Take time to get medical check-ups.

Take your spouse out to dinner.

There will always be time to clean the house and fix the guttering.

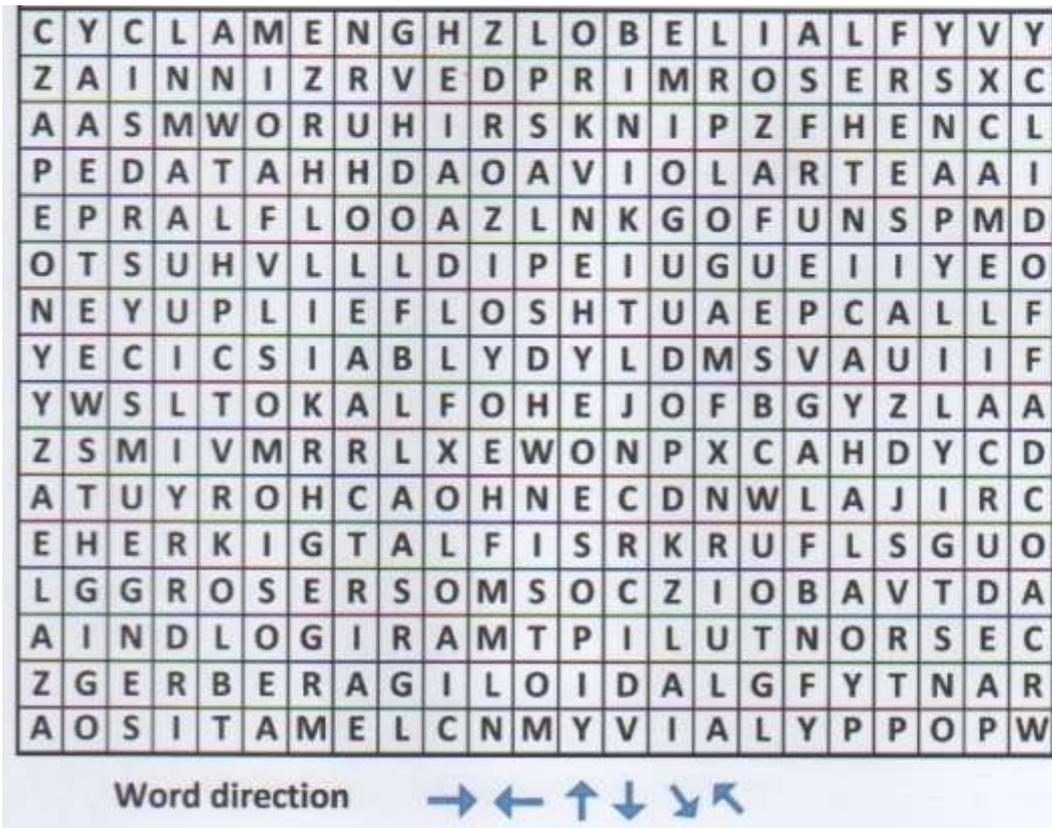
Take care of the golf balls first—the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.'

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the Beer represented. The professor smiled and said, 'I'm glad you asked. 'The Beer just shows you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of Beers with a friend.'



Janet Joy

Wordsearch—Flowers



- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| Azalea | Flag | Larkspur | Rhododendron |
| Aster | Freesia | Lily | Rose |
| Camelia | Geranium | Lobelia | Rue |
| Clematis | Gerbera | Marigold | Salvia |
| Cosmos | Geum | Peony | Sweetpea |
| Crocus | Gladioli | Pansy | Tulip |
| Cyclamen | Hollyhock | Phlox | Viola |
| Daffodil | Hyacinth | Pinks | Violet |
| Dahlia | Iris | Poppy | Wallflower |
| Daisy | Ivy | Primrose | Zinnia |

Answers on p. 13

What you wanted to share



MINI SAGAS

A few years ago, I went on a short Creative Writing Course and one of the projects was writing a Mini Saga. This is a complete story written in fifty words or less, excluding the title. Any subject is acceptable, including amusing, serious or informative. Can you guess from where I found my inspiration?

I'm sure everyone in lockdown has a Mini Saga to write!

RADIO REPORT

A girl wearing a red cape was seen running through Shipley Wood pursued by a grey figure in a nightgown. Also in the vicinity, were reports of a man running amok with an axe.



An elderly woman found wandering has been taken to hospital.

People are warned to avoid the area.

POLICE INCIDENT REPORT

A young girl reported lost has been found safe and well. She claims she was pursued whilst trying to find her way home.

Suspects, named as Bear Growls, wife Winnie and son Teddy are being questioned. They claim she broke in, stole food and damaged furniture.

The investigation is on-going.



Linda McKay



Picture from a scenic walk
By Meryl (Calligraphy Group)



Lest We Forget

At this awful frightening time, it is very warming to see and hear of nations showing such kindred spirit.

I could never have imagined the humanity displayed by everyone. The braveness of NHS staff, store personnel, key workers and volunteers is remarkable.

Once this is all over, I would love to see this kindness continue. I want to see people being considerate, kind and empathetic and not to be complacent and thoughtless.

Lest we forget how fragile Humankind is.

Thank you,

Sue Widdowson



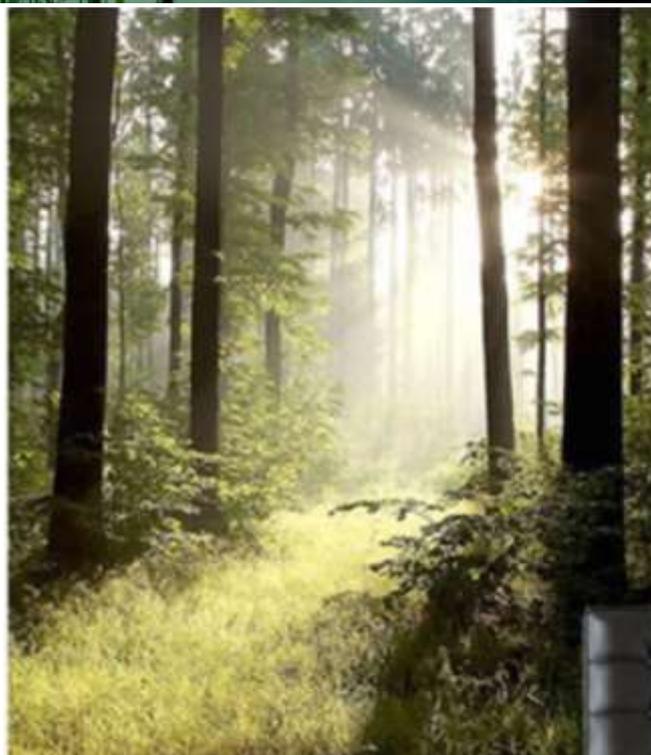
Calligraphy Brain Teaser

The Calligraphers have a quirky Calligraphy project involving the phonetic alphabet. Maybe other U3a members would like to try a different exercise using this list.

ALPHA	JULIET	SIERRA
BRAVO	KILO	TANGO
CHARLIE	LIMA	UNIFORM
DELTA	MIKE	VICTOR
ECHO	NOVEMBER	WHISKY
FOXTROT	OSCA R	X-RAY
GOLF	PAPA	YANKEE
HOTEL	QUEBEC	ZULU
INDIA	ROMEO	

Learn this alphabet off by heart and then when you are finding it hard to sleep during lockdown, recite it silently in your head, in the dark, in bed. It is more interesting and challenging than counting sheep. When it becomes easy, start to recite it backwards. I can recommend it.

Linda McKay



If you can't go to the woods, let the woods come to you. This is our new wallpaper!

Yvonne Muckle

Answers to the quizzes and Wordsearch

No cheating!

Answers: Book Authors:

1. Kazuo Ishiguro
2. Harper Lee
3. George Orwell
4. Virginia Woolf
5. E.M. Forster
6. Daphne du Maurier
7. Dodie Smith who, incidentally, also wrote 101 Dalmatians
8. Arthur Miller
9. Penelope Lively

Quiz Answers

1. Simon and Garfunkel
2. Origin of the Species
3. Fulham
4. Sailfish
5. 116 years
6. Lithium
7. Elephants
8. Alpine flowering plant
9. Because its surface reflects light from the sun
10. Trick question! It doesn't have a beak because it's a fish

Wordsearch Solution

