



**W**hen in 1969 Apollo 11 landed on the moon and Neil Armstrong said the landing “was one small step for man and one giant leap for mankind” many of us thought that by now Star Trek and/or Star Wars would have become a reality. Although this has not happened an array of unmanned space missions have proved to be extremely successful and informative. I am sure you have all heard in the news of the James Webb Space Telescope which has very recently been launched. Once it

reaches its destination it will hopefully advance our knowledge of the universe. In addition there are various rovers exploring the surface of Mars and the Parker probe that is flying closer to the Sun than any Earth object has done previously. Now seems an appropriate time to start up a U3A Astronomy group. If anyone is interested in joining (on 3rd Wednesday of the month at 10.30), please contact me.

**Helen Strotton**

email: see handbook

# A job of a laughtime



*This month Brad Ashton will be giving our monthly talk. Kindly note this talk will only be available by Zoom*

Brad is a Journalist and Scriptwriter and so far he has given his talk to more than a hundred u3a, Probus and Rotary Clubs, and we are fortunate to welcome him as he is retiring in the middle of this year.

He entertains his audience with humorous backstage stories about the many star-name comedians for whom he has written comedy.

They include Ken Dodd, Tommy Cooper, Les Dawson, Dick Emery, Bruce Forsyth, Frankie Howerd, David Frost, Bob Monkhouse, and even the great Groucho Marx. It may not be educational (or it might!), but it will certainly be entertaining.

**A Job of a Laughtime with Brad Ashton**

**Zoom only Talk: 25 January at 2pm. Joining details to follow.**

# The Short view



**Y**our committee has been monitoring the current levels of covid in the population and government guidance and weighing up the risks of meeting face to face against the wish of members to be able to meet face to face and socialise. Regrettably, the feeling of the committee is that the risks at this time are too great and so our January meeting will be via zoom only. I hope that by the time we come to our February meeting the covid rates have reduced to a level whereby we can resume face to face meetings

*Chrys Short Chair, Malling u3a*



## Treble in paradise

We had a very good first session with Joe Shepherd. It was fun and I think everyone enjoyed it. We could do with a few more

singers though, particularly men! Nick feels lonely!

Our next meeting is on 28 January and thereafter on the second & fourth Fridays of each month at 10am, Davison Room, Ryarsh Village Hall.

**Anne Sargent**



**Hitting the right note:** Organ player Joe pumps up the volume with the new Malling u3a Singing Group at their inaugural meeting.

## In brief

### Coffee morning

We have started up our twice monthly coffee mornings and will continue these while things look a bit uncertain about covid. All are welcome, the meetings are informal and work on a drop in basis – so if you are interested in joining email Chrys Short, Dianne White or Christine Barrett to be added to the mailing list.

### u3a Anniversary

Just a reminder that the u3a movement has been going for 40 years this year. There are national events planned to mark this. More details to follow.

Do any of our members remember this happening?

**Chrys Short**

### Malling u3a short break

Bookings are starting to come in for the September Kynren & The North East holiday. We've got 21 confirmed. Minimum number is 30, so a little way to go yet. There are still single rooms available at present. **WHAT'S INCLUDED:** 5 days/4 nights' duration. Departure: Thurs 1st Sep. 2022. Executive Coach Travel Departures from selected local pick-up points. 4 nights half board. 3\* BW Plus Gibside Hotel. Booking form and Included excursion package as per attached.

**Dianne White**

### SE Region Summer School

This will be held in Chichester between 20th–23rd June – cost is £360 which includes accommodation – food and all activities and events. Booking is via the SE Forum website and opens next month. Click the link for more info:

[u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/events](http://u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/events)

**Chrys Short**

### Monthly meeting Tea Rota

**Jan:** Caroline & Adrian Bouwens + She-lagh & Mike Jones. **Feb:** Norma & Eric Diston + Pat Bell & Ann Underdown

**Christine Barrett**

**e: check handbook**







## Platinum Jubilee

Queen Elizabeth II's accession day is on 6th February and this year we look forward to the Platinum Jubilee celebrations later in June. Ten years ago BBC South East commissioned a unique photo mosaic entitled The People's Monarch to commemorate the Queen's Dia-

mond Jubilee; the mosaic features two images of the Queen – a 2012 view and one from 1952 – and comprises more than five thousand pictures submitted by viewers of family celebrations for the Silver Jubilee earlier in 1977.

Mike Rowe sent in a snapshot of a family group taken in the summer of 1977 when his elder son had made a crown at play group to celebrate the Silver Jubilee.

The picture was accepted and is included in the right hand image of the Queen just below the bright glint in her left eye; Mike and his family went to see the mosaic when it went on display in Rochester Cathedral.

The mosaic is now on permanent display at Gatwick airport where arriving

travellers can see it on their way to the baggage hall. So, if any of you are venturing abroad this year, keep a watch out for it on your return. Were any other of our U3A members lucky enough to have their own pictures included in the mosaic? I wonder – let us know.

A short BBC News video can be viewed at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-22663342>

**Mike Rowe**

*Not a lot to report on nice stories last year apart from a wonderful escape to Shetland, cold seas and lots of puffins! Maybe this year....*

**Issy Macdonald**

Last year I volunteered to give a talk on Zoom for our U3A Poetry Group on poets who have been inspired by Cambridge and its College gardens. I had been given for my birthday in May a wonderfully illustrated book on the gardens of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges – almost 90 in total. I wanted to see them for myself and survey where Thomas Gray, Ted Hughes, Milton, Byron, Coleridge had their youthful poetic walks. So on the 5th July 2021, a fine summer's day, my daughter and granddaughter and I set off. Outside the hotel where we parked was a life size ceramic cow called 'MOORE Gin Please'. It was coloured blue and had a pattern of the botanical elements that go into gin making – lemon, dandelion, thyme, juniper etc. We had come during the first week of the 'Cows at Cambridge' Open Air exhibition. We were diverted in more ways than one. There were 50 cows dotted about the city and we tried to see all the ones closest to the centre. One was 'Hey Diddle Diddle' with the picture of a

## Udders & rudders



a delightful profuse wild garden and is the home of the budleia named after Revd Buddle sometime chaplain there. In September the cows were auctioned for charity, raising over £250,000. I had hoped to bid for the cow called 'Buttercup' which was a merry mixture of yellow and green but did not remember in time. The lowing herd has wound slowly o'er the lea but they have left the gardens immaculate.

**Brian Stevenson**

## Between the covers

If you have finished all the books you were given at Christmas you might like to try one of these. Do send me details of any book you have enjoyed recently and I will include it next month.

### On the Cusp by David Kynaston

We all lived through the 1960s and this book, which is the latest title in Kynaston's social history of post-war Britain, looks back at 1962. The author suggests that the '60s really began on 5th October 1962, the day which saw

both the release of the Beatles's first single, Love Me Do, and the premiere of Dr. No, the first Bond film. He provides a snapshot of life in that pivotal year using diaries, social surveys, anecdotes, newspapers and commentary.

### The Heron's Cry by Ann Cleeves

You may have watched The Long Call on television recently and The Heron's Cry is the second book in Ann Cleeves's new detective series set in North Devon. Here Detective Matthew

Venn investigates a murder at a local craft centre.

### Song of Achilles by Madeline Miller

Like Pat Barker's The Silence of the Girls this novel is set at the time of the Trojan Wars but it is told from the point of view of the young, exiled prince Patroclus who becomes the loyal and devoted friend and lover of Achilles, greatest of all the Greek warriors.

**Valerie Willsher, Book Circle 1**







# Anne's knee slappers

If liars pants  
really did catch on  
fire, watching the  
news would be a  
lot more fun!



New London to Liverpool line



I watch so many  
crime programs  
that when I turn  
off the TV, I wipe  
my fingerprints off  
the remote.

