



# u3a in Ludlow February 2021

## The printed Newsletter and the monthly News

At the Ludlow u3a January Committee meeting (see below) the decision was made to discontinue the biannual printed Newsletter. As you will know, the Newsletter included contributions from members about what they do in u3a or about things of interest to them that other members of u3a might enjoy or value hearing about. In future, such items will be included in the online monthly News. So if you anything you want to say, or a picture or a poem you want to share, or a puzzle with which you would like to bamboozle or entertain members, do please send them to the editor of monthly News, [derek@ludlowballs.force9.co.uk](mailto:derek@ludlowballs.force9.co.uk). The contributions from Rosie Bristow and from Judith Payne in this month's News are getting this started.

## Update from the Committee

The new Committee, which was elected just before Christmas at the AGM, met for the first time on 19 January. You can find out who is on the Committee, and their roles, on the Committee page of our website (click [here](#)). There were three main issues discussed at the meeting.

**Managing your membership:** The Committee unanimously agreed that Ludlow u3a would purchase the Beacon membership management system provided through National u3a. This will cost £1 per year per member. Grace Wilkins, the new Treasurer and Membership Secretary hopes to have this up and running by the end of March. Beacon also has other features which could be helpful. These will be considered by the Committee at their next meeting.

**Membership 2021:** The Committee announced earlier that membership for 2020 would be extended until the end of June 2021. In making a decision how to proceed after that, the Committee considered different cashflow projections and decided that the financially prudent option was to ask all members to pay a membership fee of £6 in July which will provide membership until 31st December 2021.

**Biannual printed Newsletter:** The Committee had a long discussion about the need for a printed newsletter and what its function might be, taking into account the monthly News which is emailed to almost all Ludlow u3a members. Their discussion was informed by a paper from the current editor that outlined the different options. The biannual printed Newsletter has been sent out with membership reminders and AGM papers. These postal mailings to all members are unlikely to be needed when Beacon is managing membership, although a mailing will still be needed for those without email. In the light of these changing circumstances, the Committee unanimously decided it would be sensible to discontinue the printed Newsletter. If enough members feel that they would like the printed Newsletter to

continue and are willing to contribute, the committee may reconsider. Please let the Chairman have your views ([info@u3ainludlow.org.uk](mailto:info@u3ainludlow.org.uk)).

At every Committee meeting, reports are received about the current financial situation, membership, study groups, monthly meetings, the website, u3a Plus and the Shropshire u3a Network.

The next meeting of the committee is on Monday 15 March. If you have any questions you can contact the Chairman ([info@u3ainludlow.org.uk](mailto:info@u3ainludlow.org.uk)).

### **Study Groups Update**

Although we have been in and out of lockdown, with restrictions placed on group activities for eleven months now, it appears that many groups are still managing to function in some form or other. Almost a third of groups are meeting regularly by Zoom with some group coordinators reporting unexpected benefits. The use of video-conferencing technology has improved the experience of some members who would otherwise find it difficult to hear contributions in face-to-face meetings, and is much appreciated by those who would otherwise have little contact with other people. Another advantage of using Zoom has been that groups no longer have to limit their numbers because of the constraints of physical space. Consequently, some groups have taken on additional 'Zoom members' and, when we get back to normal, plan to form a second group. Many other groups have opted to use email to set work and receive contributions; several of these have been very active and their members have been able to develop their skills as a result of the focus on the written word. There are also a number of groups who are unable or prefer not to use Zoom or email for their activities, but whose members support each other through regular email or phone contact. This is, of course, just as important, indeed more important, for some people. Whichever way groups have responded, it seems that many have adapted to 'the times' and 'are in it for the long haul' (as one group coordinator put it).

For more information about study groups contact the study group advisor [peomycarpenter@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:peomycarpenter@hotmail.co.uk).

### **u3a lockdown Cinema 2020**

When Covid-19 lockdown began in March 2020, we in the Cinema group were no longer able to meet in person at the Blue Boar in Ludlow to watch our schedule of films together before discussing them. Instead we instituted a procedure whereby members took turns to scour the pages of Radio Times for suitable films for us to watch at home on our own TV screens. We limited ourselves to free-to-air films, as not everyone had access to subscription channels. Being able to record films to watch later was a great help, because quite a few of the more interesting films were screened in the wee hours of the night. As group coordinator, I circulated details of the film selected to watch and the screening time.

The procedure involved watching the film, giving it a score out of ten and writing some notes on our response to it. This sometimes led respondents to check out professional film critics, Wikipedia or other sources for background. As group coordinator I forwarded the written reactions received from

the group to the film's nominator. That person had the task of summarising the reviews of everyone to produce an overall report.

Around eighteen people took part, often frequently, of whom fourteen chose the films and prepared summaries which were then circulated. We did our best, and our best seemed to improve as the season went on. It was not necessary for participants to write a polished response; just a score out of ten plus a few words would suffice. However, the reports often read like professional criticism. We covered 37 films between March and December. There was quite a variety of genres: dramas, thrillers, musicals, westerns, war, comedies (zany to very black), documentaries, biopics. Even one horror film! Most were from this century; only seven were released between 1935 and 1999. Almost all were English-language, with just six foreign films, mainly reflecting what was available to us. The average scores ranged from 5.7 for the under-appreciated 1944 US comedy, *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* to 9.1 for the Polish film *Cold War* (2018).

These are our top eleven films: *Cold War*; *Leviatan*; *The Book Thief*; *Carol*; *The Sting*; *True Grit*; *I Am Not Your Negro*; *Two Days, One Night*; *Apostasy*; *God's Own Country*; *Nebraska*. We even had a ditty of titles sung to *These Are a Few of our Favourite Things*! Sometimes, given the anxiety produced by our awareness of rising Covid cases, we were reluctant to watch films of a hard-hitting nature. On the other hand, other unfamiliar movies were much appreciated. Some people said they found our 'film of the week' a lifeline and we enjoyed getting to know each other better. However, it doesn't match meeting up together as before!

*Rosie Bristow*

## My Indian connection

Jenny Malin's talk about 'British Raj Families' aroused memories of my own grandparents, who married in India in about 1909. This photograph, part of the photograph which I have over my piano, is of their wedding. It is like a school photo, immensely long; there must have been hundreds of guests. Unfortunately I don't have a copy of their marriage certificate, and so I don't know where it took place, but looking at the large trees, it was possibly up in 'the hills'. I have heard talk of Darjeeling, which had a nice cool climate.



I want to respond to the question asked in the talk about what happened to the children. You can see that there are some children in my grandparents' wedding picture: the two little bridesmaids were the bride's little sisters; *her* mother had remarried. She herself was only nineteen at her wedding. There are three other children in the picture, who were Indian, and there are a few Indian gentlemen, but no Indian ladies to be seen. All the rest of the guests seem to be white adults. As for the colonists' children, they were mostly, and sadly, taken 'home' and sent to boarding schools, sometimes as young as four, and often didn't see their parents again for many years. The school fees, incidentally, tended to be paid by the parents' employers; in many cases this was the British Government. This practice was common in all what were then the 'colonies'. My own in-laws, living in Burma, and also my daughter-in-law, the child of missionaries in Africa, all suffered this fate. During the school holidays they lived in 'holiday homes' if they had no relatives to stay with in the home country.

This was because India, Africa, and the Far East were considered unhealthy for children - and were indeed so. Many of you will have read *The Secret Garden* and will remember the cholera epidemic at the beginning. Also I have seen the many graves of very small children in the cemetery of the 'English' church, St Stephens, in Ootacamund, as it was then known. This was my mother's birthplace in 1915, which I visited not so long ago.

*Judith Payne*

## **National talks and events**

You may not be aware of the details of national programmes, organised by u3a. Details of all national talks, activities and events can be found on the national u3a website under Learning/National Programmes <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>. The winter learning includes cookery demonstrations, talks and lots of other events. There are many of different activities to engage with. For information about forthcoming events and talks and to register for a place, follow the link to the Events page here <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events> on the national website:

Don't forget to listen to the latest u3a Radio podcast. All episodes are available on YouTube – you can subscribe so that you don't miss an episode.

Episode 4 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xGi67wrGls>

Episode 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gf9fZs1QuVo>

Episode 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2eNL--6kSc>

Episode 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zGNxpUSUAc>

Some areas of the national website require you to log in so you will need to register. You can do that here, <https://www.u3a.org.uk/> scroll to the bottom of the page to the Login link, follow it and choose the option: Don't have an account.

While you are on the national website, why not sign up for the National Newsletter. It will keep you up to date with things that are happening across the movement.

## **Monday Meetings**

### **February 22 Music in Art**

Drawing on the works of great painters such as Brueghel, Hogarth and Bosch, Sophie will explore the links between the visual and the aural. A variety of images of historical woodwind instruments in their original social context will be considered and the symbolism of music in Mediaeval and Renaissance art will be explored. Sophie will also play replicas of the instruments depicted. Sophie Matthews is a professional musician working in the early music and folk genres who tours nationally and throughout Europe.

**This will be a Zoom presentation (see below)**

**March 29            The Best of British**

The Secret of Wensleydale, Black Gold in the Lake District, the Devil's Porridge, and a Trip to (the) Looe and Much More! Join Ian and Hilary Templeton on their entertaining and informative trip round Britain. **Details of where/how this talk will be delivered will be provided nearer the time.**

**Zoom presentations**

Here is the Zoom link

<https://zoom.us/j/93508662192?pwd=eC9McjVrRkcxc3BETUNjWmtuZlV5dz09>

Alternatively – go to <https://zoom.us/join> and enter the following information:

Meeting ID: 935 0866 2192

Passcode: 327034

**NB The link is permanent and the same link is used each month. If you inadvertently deleted the newsletter from your email, you can find the link on the home page of the website:**

[www.u3ainludlow.org.uk](http://www.u3ainludlow.org.uk)

**If you change your email address please remember to let us know, so that you can continue to receive the *u3a in Ludlow* monthly news.**

**Further Information about *u3a in Ludlow* is always available on our website: [www.u3ainludlow.org.uk](http://www.u3ainludlow.org.uk)**

**If you would like to submit an item for the next monthly news please contact us.**

**Telephone Contact: 01584 879180**

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