



u3a in Ludlow March 2021

Joyce Brand 1935-2021: founder member of Ludlow u3a

'One of the most important things in life is to be able to cope with having nothing to do.'

Elvis Presley

This was one of Joyce's favourite sayings, which she included in *A Commonplace Book*, a collection of sayings and quotations which she published and gave to her friends, including Nancy Keig-Shevlin. Joyce and Nancy were two of the founder members of Ludlow u3a, along with Maureen Furniss, and others who are no longer with us. Both Nancy and Maureen remember the early planning meetings in 1997, held in The Green Dragon in Old Street, where Joyce was living.

Joyce's love of literature (she had won a place at Oxford, but turned it down because she 'fell in love') led to her establishing the Modern Literature study group, one of the first seven groups to open in 1997. Nancy and Maureen were both members of this group and Maureen believes that it was Joyce's energy and enthusiasm that helped this group become one of the most long-lasting and stable groups in Ludlow u3a. The Modern Literature group is still active under its new name of Modern Fiction.

Joyce was not someone with 'nothing to do'. Right up to her death she continued to be a member of u3a study groups, and to be involved in her lifelong campaigning for the NHS and for social justice. She involved herself in many different Ludlow activities. She was at the first meeting about the foundation of Helping Hands; and when the Ludlow Fringe Festival was struggling to get off the ground, Joyce got her daughter Jo Brand to come and speak at Ludlow Library.

Joyce will be remembered by her many friends and colleagues as a passionate, challenging and energetic person, who contributed so much to life in Ludlow.

Barbara Ball

A message from the Chairman

Sophie Matthews' talk on 'Music in Art' on 22 February was welcomed by a large number of those who attended the Zoom meeting. It was entertaining and informative and, judging by the emails, brightened up the day and the week for many. That positive feeling was enhanced by milder weather and the announcement that we have all been waiting for – there may be a way out of lockdown.

These last eleven months have been difficult for everyone, but for some it has been terrible. Still, there is a glimmer of light on the horizon and we have to hope that the government will keep its word and not succumb to a difference of opinion between the 'science' and the 'politics'.

u3a in Ludlow has managed well through the lockdown. A substantial number of groups has managed to find ways of maintaining contact and continuing to 'learn, laugh and live'. Once we are able to meet up in the same physical location we can start to reconnect, and I can't wait.

In late May, we will be writing to everyone asking you to renew your membership at the reduced rate of £6 to the end of 2021. I do hope that you will. u3a in Ludlow has so much to offer and the committee is working hard on thinking of ways to offer more.

By the time restrictions are eased, we will be into the summer (or at least that's what it is called) and there will be no monthly meetings in July and August. The first opportunity for us all to get together will be at the end of September, when we plan to hold the AGM followed by a talk. I am looking forward to being able to meet everyone again and plan to mark the occasion by ensuring there is very good cake to accompany the tea and coffee. Now cake, as we all know, is a big draw. So, though it is a long way off, put a note in your diary for 27 September and make it the best attended AGM and talk we have had.

Walking for health

I had been going on short Walking for Health walks once or twice a week for around three years, but walking was getting more difficult because of a very worn left hip. Very luckily, I had a hip replacement at Oswestry on 7th March last year, just before lockdown. For recovery, I was told to walk, so within a week I was walking a hundred yards on crutches, and I built up to five miles a day by September. Since then I've cut back a bit to three miles a day.

I've enjoyed many lovely country walks around Ludlow and now have the OS Explorer 203 (Ludlow, Tenbury Wells and Cleobury Mortimer) on my mobile phone. My favourite walks have been in Mortimer Forest, Clee Hill, Greete and Bircher Common. My longest walks were across Clee Hill from Cornbrook to Cleeton St Mary, then along the Jack Mytton Way to Hill-Houses and back to Cornbrook (17th July, nine miles) and from Bromfield to Downton Castle and Downton on the Rock and back (13th Sept, eight miles). I've found it advisable to carry my OS map as I've had trouble getting a signal, particularly around Greete, Luston and parts of Clee. My principal annoyance has been farmers locking gates on public rights of way - I've reported some, but have got used to climbing over gates as well as stiles. Now that it is winter I mostly walk around Ludlow, but I try to vary my routes as much as possible.

It has given me great health benefits. I've probably lost a stone in weight and as a diabetes sufferer, I've been able to almost halve my insulin intake. My walking speed has improved greatly from around 30 min/mile in July to 19 min/mile now.

Peter Law

u3a Bridge group

Our Bridge group was well established before Covid 19 changed our lives. We were meeting fortnightly at Steve's for a convivial session, followed by chat about the play and more over a cuppa. Then Covid came, but we had got the bridge bug and we missed our games. Steve introduced us to Bernard McGee's YouTube free channel, and to Bridge Base Online (BBO), a free website where we have the facility to play each other or international players we have never met. We tentatively felt our way in, practising the set hands, playing solitaire with robots, and are now an established and growing group. Through the joys and frustrations of bridge we have maintained our friendships and established new connections. I like to think our play and bidding have improved too. It's certainly provided a good way to get through the isolation and winter days. If you think you would like to take up or return to the game, contact Steve.Binns@gmail.com

Helena Hale

Committee

The current committee is composed as follows:

Chairman – Dr Robert HODGE (01299 270047 – u3a@rjhodge.com)

Vice-chair – Janice HAINES (01584 878974 – janhaines@clara.co.uk)

Secretary – Barbara BALL (01584 879180 – barbara@ludlowballs.forec9.co.uk)

Treasurer/Membership Secretary – Grace WILKINS (07990 526203 – gracewilkins@aol.com)

Study Group Adviser – Peony CARPENTER (01584 872872 – peonycarpenter@hotmail.co.uk)

Monthly Meeting Organiser – Sue BILLING (07710 756093 – sueatmill84@yahoo.com)

U3A Network – Stuart McLAREN (01584 874622 – themclarens@me.com)

U3A Plus – Peter LAW (01584 877012 – peter.peterwlaw@gmail.com)

Member – Suzanne TAYLOR (07455 367554 - suzannecaroltaylor@gmail.com)

The next committee meeting is on 15 March. If you have anything you would like to be raised at the committee meeting, please get in touch: info@u3ainludlow.org.uk

Get to know your committee

Each month, a profile of one or more of the members of the committee will appear in the monthly News. This month, the chairman, Dr Robert Hodge.



I retired early in 2009 before moving to Shropshire after living in Surrey for the previous forty-five years. It's quite a change, and here in Hopton Wafers I am surrounded by more sheep than people. Most of my working career was spent with large US multinationals in the technology sector, travelling the world extensively, doing people and organizational development. I am now a historian, specialising in eighteenth and nineteenth century social history, though with an interest in aspects of medieval history. I joined u3a in Ludlow in 2016 and, while my attention was distracted, was co-opted onto the committee. I was elected vice-chairman in 2018 and chairman in 2019.

u3a has a lot to offer and I have gotten to know many members and enjoy working with the committee which is proving to be a very strong team. I was coordinator of a philosophy group and now lead Latin groups both in Ludlow and for the national Trust u3a, which provides virtual groups all across the country.

National u3a news from the chairman

u3a online events

u3a is running a diverse programme of events in March.

- 2 – 23 March – The Art of the Album Cover (a 4-week course)
- 4 March – The Wonders of the World: Old and New
- 4 March – The Drifting Continents: A lesson in Geology
- 4 March – Cyber Security: Staying Safe Online
- 11 March – Wellbeing in Nature
- 8 March – Leonardo da Vinci: Would he have made a good u3a member?
- 8 March – Egyptology: Women in Ancient Egypt
- 17 March – FIRE! – A century of the Volunteer Fire Brigade
- 22 March – Springtime Treats
- 24 March – A Taste of Japan
- 25 March – The Paradigm of Plate Tectonics
- 31 March – Where did our favourite Plants Come From?
- 11 April – Maths on the Back of an Envelope

All are Zoom talks unless otherwise mentioned. For more information and to book a place go to <https://u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

The National Newsletter

The National Newsletter is a useful source of information about events and what is going on in the wider u3a. Sign up [here](#).

King Lear Prizes – creative arts competition

u3a members may be interested in hearing about the King Lear Prizes, a national creative arts competition for older people during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is specifically for amateurs and beginners who are over the age of 65. The latest round of the competition is open to entries, with a closing date of **19 March 2021**.

The competition accepts entries in poetry, real stories (short stories from people's lives), art and musical performance, and there are over £2,000 of prizes on offer. The winners will be picked by a panel of expert judges including Gyles Brandreth and Julian Lloyd Webber.

For more information and how to enter, visit the website: www.kinglearprizes.org.uk

If you have any questions or would like more information, please get in touch with Chris Bland, chris@kinglearprizes.org

Keeping connected

u3a National Office has compiled the following information and asked that it is shared with members. Here are some ideas for keeping us all connected, active and learning together.

Connecting offline

Telephone trees – One-to-one phone calls from dedicated members. You can see how Newcastle u3a used telephone trees to support its members on the u3a blog [Sources](#)

Phone-In conferencing – You don't have to be online to join in Zoom – you can call in using your telephone. Ask your group coordinator for the telephone number and access code.

WhatsApp - Talk on the phone with other members using WhatsApp groups. [Find out more](#)

WhyPay? – Offers a free telephone conference service for the price of a telephone call. [Visit our how to guidance](#)

Penfriends – Write regularly to other members by post in your u3a or across u3as.

Round robin letters – Write a letter and send it to a member, who will add a bit and pass it to a member, who will do the same. The chain will grow.

Print and post – A newsletter to someone not online. [Sign up](#) to National Newsletter which has a bitesize version to print and post.

ClickSilver - Provides telephone mentors to support people to get online. The project is organised by the Prince's Trust and Capital One. To be referred to ClickSilver, please contact [u3a national office](#).

Connecting online

National learning programme - Join one of many u3a initiatives, competitions or challenges – creative, history, maths, crafts and so much more. [Find out more](#)

Events and talks – u3a has so many interesting [Talks and Events](#)

Find out about online platforms Online workshops and tutorials. [Sign up](#) here.

Digital Eagles – Access to [Barclays Digital Wings](#) tutorials for 'How to session on digital skills and information'. Use code 'U3A'

Sources - Our u3a blog has interesting articles to read from across the movement. Why not send us an article about what you are doing and learning in lockdown? [Sources](#)

Trust u3a – Trust u3a is a national u3a where the groups only meet online. Join [Trust u3a](#) for access to online learning groups.

Research and Shared Learning - [Find out more](#) including the High Street Project

Time on your hands

Join in the conversation on our Social Media – Join us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) and find out what the movement and wider community are talking about.

Or why not join Keeping In Touch or our forums? – Join the conversation on our closed Facebook group [Keeping In Touch](#) or the [digital forums](#)

u3a Radio Podcast – Listen to our [radio podcast every](#) month to hear stories from across the movement.

Volunteer to give a Talk? – Why not volunteer to be a speaker and give a talk?

info@u3ainludlow.org.uk

Monday Meetings 2021

It has been quite difficult to plan for the 2021 programme not knowing whether we would be in full lockdown, living under tier and travel restrictions or whether we would be 'free'. I am grateful, therefore, to all of our 2021 speakers for agreeing to be flexible and deliver their talks either in person or via Zoom if necessary.

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held in September. Any changes to this meetings programme and details of how or where the talks will be delivered will be announced in monthly News.

Sue Billing

29 March at 11 am on Zoom The Best of British Ian and Hilary Templeton

Ian and Hilary join us to give another of their well received audio visual presentations - this time a virtual tour of Britain to discover the secret of Wensleydale, find the Lake District's black gold, sample the devil's porridge, meet the prince who never smiled again, visit an Italian chapel in Orkney and a trip to (the) Looe, and much more!

26 April at 11 am on Zoom My Death, My Decision Phil Cheadle

MDMD (My Death, My Decision) is a group which campaigns for a change in the law that currently prevents assisted dying in the UK. Phil is their Lead Campaign Commentator. He will explore some of the complex ethical questions regarding how much choice we should have in deciding the manner and timing of our death. This will be an interactive session so bring along your questions.

Zoom presentations

To join the meeting click:

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

Alternatively, go to www.zoom.us/join (or use the Zoom app to join) and enter

Meeting ID: 935 0866 2192

Passcode: 327034

If you are unable to use Zoom, you can listen in by telephone. Call one of the following numbers and enter the meeting ID and passcode above.

0330 088 5830

0131 460 1196

0203 481 5237

0203 481 5240

0203 901 7895

Monday meetings later in the year

24 May The Work of a Practising Homeopath:

Jeremy Derrick will talk about his personal and professional experience of homeopathy, explaining how its approach may help and why it is valid in the 21st century.

28 June Rolls of Rolls Royce:

Bruce Lawson, the biographer of Charles Rolls, will speak enthusiastically about Mr Rolls – ‘a brilliant man’; ‘the Richard Branson and James Dyson of the Edwardian Age’.

27 September Annual General Meeting followed by Bessie Blount, of Kinlet

Bessie was the teenage mistress of Henry VIII and mother of his son Henry. Who was she and what happened to their son? Dr Robert Hodge will reveal all.

25 October Canals and Crime Fiction

The backdrop of author Andy Griffiee’s talk is our 2200 miles of canals and how they can be the perfect setting for the crime novel.

29 November Albania – cut off from the world for 41 years

John Butterworth will give an illustrated talk on the amazing history of this isolated state and compare life under a dictator to the freedoms of today.

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

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

Telephone Contact: 01584 879180

Email Contact: derek@ludlowballs.force9.co.uk