

Suburb U3A – learning online

In the last edition we wrote about how our U3A had faced the challenges of the lockdown with an incredible response from our Group Leaders and members to ensure that we continued with our Summer Programme.

We are delighted to report that we have now progressed from 26 online groups to almost 40. A remarkable achievement given the size our U3A. Some groups that could only hold a limited number of members in their homes now have a much higher proportion of members that attend, especially Current Affairs. Play reading has increased their 'cast' having great fun acting in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Divine Laughter* and *Pygmalion*. Crafting has taken on a new impetus with our talented and dedicated group leaders. Liz has made masks and is making scrubs. Ellen has also made masks, as well as Toni. The

crafters are also busy knitting, crocheting, sewing, and sharing what we have achieved.

In recognition of the incredible work and dedication, all our Group Leaders have been awarded a 'Certificate of Recognition'. Although we were not able to enjoy our usual Group Leaders tea, we had a virtual awards ceremony.

We were also extremely fortunate to invite Baroness Altmann, CBE to talk to our members about 'The Future of Social Care'. This again had a high attendance with a very pertinent and thought-provoking topic for our members. Further talks have been arranged which link in with our 'Crime Club' (nothing criminal I hasten to add).

Online learning is not impeding the continuation of our U3A. Indeed, it is in many ways enhancing the opportunity to have larger group meetings

and develop groups with a diverse range of topics. Many U3As have successfully transferred to Online learning and we are part of that cohort. Members have acknowledged that this is the new norm. We do hope that at some point in the future we will be able to meet in a more personal way, rather than just virtually. Nevertheless, we are filling the void by staying connected, which is the most important aspect. At its heart, the U3A believes that continuing to learn, developing your interests, making friends and trying something new, is a life-long passion, and we are doing our very best to ensure that we are fulfilling this for our members.

We also welcome new members and new ideas. A virtual Open Day is planned for the Autumn, so please do check us out at hgsu3a.uk/.

DAPHNE BERKOVI

Allotments update

Fears that the emergency measures introduced to cope with the virus crisis would have a restrictive impact on the use of the allotments turned out to be unfounded. Instead of closure, the Trust, following indications from the Government that allotments could remain open, prepared a list of guidelines for the 100 or so plot holders.

As well as reiterating the general requirement of social distancing, this list of do's and don'ts introduced such cautions as those needed in the shared use of tools, the washing of hands in water tanks and the application of sanitisers on metal parts such as gate locks.

The impact of these directions has led to the sites as a whole becoming not just safe retreats but more productive and more ordered. Examples of reported comments are "the site has never looked better", "the plots

are being worked more intensely than for a long time" and "everyone has relished getting out and tending their plants."

There has also been a steady flow of inquiries from potential tenants and most locations are either fully occupied or have waiting lists. The general social restrictions have prompted an interest in home-growing by those with no previous experience of horticultural matters.

While one might assume that the allotments themselves are in fine shape, the more formal affairs of the Allotments Committee have become victim of the times. The spring and summer walkabouts, when members of the committee visit the various sites to make recommendations to the Trust about maintenance, have been cancelled; arrangements for choosing the two annual awards for best allotment and best newcomer, have yet to be made; and no meetings have taken place since the beginning of the year. However, there is optimism that the prevailing conditions will permit the harvest supper to be held on September 26 and an open-air informal meeting of the committee members is to

be called to arrange the reinstatement of its activities.

Other points:

- A number of street sales of allotment produce have been held, in one case raising £370 for the Royal Free charity appeal.
- The Fellowship and Chatham Close sites have new site secretaries, Adrienne Letay and Nancy Hadden respectively.
- Seating areas are being provided at Big Site.
- Rents in future are to be charged according to plot sizes.

PETER HODGSON, CHAIRMAN



Record numbers visit HGS heritage online

As we were all locked down, unable to visit anywhere, HGS Heritage launched its new WW2 Collection just in time for the VE 75th Anniversary.

This Collection is packed full of the unique history of the Suburb during WW2 and also proves to be a popular local collection point for residents' WW2 memories.

The Personal Memories Collection, which is still open for new memories, received many different contributions which are now stored for posterity in our Virtual Museum. New contributions can be sent to info@hgsheritage.org.uk.

Our hard working HBS Interns, Lia Joffe and Zaynab Khan, created a wonderful collection of WW2 history as it relates to the young people of the Suburb, drawing on many

different sources, including the archives of Garden Suburb School, Henrietta Barnett School and written memoirs of residents. They were also able to draw parallels between the lives of young people during the War and the current situation of uncertainty during Covid.

Visitor numbers shot up during May to more than 1,500 unique users.

In the coming months the Museum is planning several new projects, including HGS Heritage Bitesize for kids under 12 and also a 1911 Census Collection looking into the lives of the Suburb's first residents.

So, do come and visit – any time, any day, any hour – there's just so much to see and learn.

You will always find us open at hgsheritage.org.uk.

JUDY SMITH

Suburb Library

We want to keep you reading!



Although we will not be opening yet, we have been operating a very successful 'Click & Collect' scheme which has been providing books to our readers throughout lockdown and beyond.

The Click & Collect service is open to everyone, even if you are not currently a library member and all our books are available to borrow. As well as an up-to-date adult fiction section, we have a comprehensive non-fiction section including lots of biographies and a well-stocked travel section. We also have a very comprehensive selection of children's books for all ages. New books are bought every week.

Full details, including a list of all our books can be found at: gardensuburblibrary.org.uk/gsc/

or pick up a form from the library porch.

And finally, the nationwide Summer Reading Challenge which started in mid-July, will run until the end of September with lots of prizes to be won, so you can still join up online at: summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/.

JEREMY CLYNES



King Alfred School

Like all schools, King Alfred's School in North End Road had to make huge adjustments for the Covid-19 lockdown and swiftly took teaching at lower and upper school levels onto online platforms with great success. Children from Reception right through to Year 6 (and their parents!) were delighted to return full-time to the campus over the last half-term. The classes were split into two groups or 'pods' using the facilities available across the entire site, which was fortunately very feasible given the spacious accommodation. From September, the school is

looking forward to running at full capacity making all adjustments to meet new Government requirements.

In the meantime, construction of a fabulous new Sixth Form Centre is progressing well, needed to house the ever expanding numbers joining to take A Levels at the school. Parents and children interested in viewing the school are welcome to visit the site and see the farm and all the other wonderful facilities on various dates, depending on the age of entry. Please visit: kingalfred.org.uk/admissions/open-days/ for details.

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