

## Issue 141

June / July 2021



### u3a PROMOTIONAL DAYS

FRIDAY 25 JUNE

SATURDAY 26 JUNE

**WALNUTS SHOPPING CENTRE 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

Come and visit our stall and find out about group vacancies, enjoy a chat with other members and be part of our relaunch!

Please come along and help us to promote our wonderful organisation.

If you can spare an hour to assist with running the stall, please contact Pauline .

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### Orpington U3A website

Please check our website regularly for updates about meetings re-starting

**[www.u3aorpington.org.uk](http://www.u3aorpington.org.uk)**

Please share the information with other members who don't have online access.

ALL TELEPHONE NUMBERS quoted in the newsletter are as dialled from the Orpington (01689) Exchange

**THE LAST DAY FOR RECEIPT OF COPY FOR NEWSLETTER No 142 is TUESDAY 20TH JULY 2021**

Please send your contributions to  
email: [newseditor@u3aorpington.org.uk](mailto:newseditor@u3aorpington.org.uk)

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## Chairman's Letter

It's a great pleasure to be in contact with you when things are returning to some normality and in particular our u3a.

There may be some of you who remember the tune 'June is busting out all over' - in this case it's the u3a. Nationally there are events to promote and publicise the u3a and bring it to the notice of the wider public.

We have decided, for our local u3a, to wait until anticipated easing of mobility and so on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June, we hope to have a stall and display in the Walnuts Market.

This will be from 10am until 3pm and our Committee members and some Group leaders will be on hand. We cordially invite all our members to visit and support us on these days; if you can offer an hour or two to help on our stall display please contact **Pauline** at **meetingssecretary@u3aorpington.org.uk**

In closing I wish you well; enjoy our Zoom speakers and I look forward to meeting you on the 25/26<sup>th</sup> or sooner.

*William*

## Monthly Zoom Meetings

- 21 June** *The Inside Story of the Human Body*  
**19 July** Geoff Harris - *Folklore Tales and Funny Folk*  
**16 Aug** Graham Harrison - *Poisons for Medicine*  
**20 Sept** *The Maturing of Mankind*

**Details on how to join** our monthly zoom meetings are sent to members by email a few days before the meeting.

If you have not been receiving these notifications please send your name, membership number and email address to **webmaster@u3aOrpington.org.uk**

## Solution to Cryptic Crossword No. 75

**Across**  
 1 Null, 3 Farical, 9 Graphic, 10 Naive, 11 Transporting, 13 Arrows, 15 Tunnel, 17 Accidentally, 20 Revue, 21 Novella, 22 Derisory,  
 23 Ache.  
**Down**  
 1 Nightcap, 2 Llama, 4 Anchor, 5 Constructive, 6 Chignon, 7 Leek, 8 Ghost writers, 12 Playmate, 14 Recover, 16 Leaner, 18 Lilac,  
 19 Grid.

## GROUP REPORTS



### Handbells

On 14 April, Handbell group members presented Terry and Barbara Rayfield with a gift to say thank you for their 23 years of running the Handbell group.

Pictured with Terry and Barbara are:- Joan Fabb and Dorothy Weller, both founder members of the group.

The group will start again on 10 September at St John's church.

### Art Appreciation

As you will notice from the newsletter articles, Sylvia, our leader, has been very diligent in keeping the group active by providing quizzes about various art themed subjects and then calling each member to find out their answers.

We recently met in Sylvia's back garden, in two groups of 6, to respond to her earlier quiz and discuss how we go forward.

We are due to meet next month (again in 2 x 6) to start a new project of discussion about the art in specific rooms at the National Gallery and then visit the gallery the following month to view the selected paintings.

As a group we are determined to continue.

### Android

Our group, while supporting those with new phones and looking at new apps, has also looked at the many photo opportunities available with smart phones.

We recently organised a competition based on something moving and something static and the winner is below (from personal experience I can vouch the dog is mostly static).

If you wish to join us or would like more knowledge or help please join us on the 3rd Wednesday of every month. You will be most welcome.

After much deliberation and mouse clicking... the panel of one (Joyce), has chosen the best pictures.. one subject that is still and one subject that moves.



### OUR GROUPS ARE RESTARTING!

After what seems like an eternity in lockdown, many of our groups are beginning to hold face to face meetings. Please have a look at our updated Interest Group List for relaunch dates and vacancies. This is your ideal chance to snap up a place in our existing groups and get in at the beginning of pending new groups, some of which are close to starting.

We would like to thank all our fabulous Group Leaders, who have worked so hard to keep the organisation going through these troubled times.

We look forward to seeing you all in the not too distant future.

### Golf



We are now back in full swing (pun) and have played a round of each of our two competitions, Magpie Masters and 18 hole Stableford.

We also have several new members and the group is growing in numbers. Our main playing days are Monday at Cray Valley and Thursday at Magpie Hall Lane. Our monthly Stableford competition is usually on a Tuesday at a variety of courses.

Answers to Book Quiz  
1. 19 2. Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy 3. Flowers 4. Vogons 5. London and Paris 6. Wilbur 7. George Wickham 8. James Gatz 9. Margaret Atwood and Bernardine Evaristo 10. Go Set a Watchman 11. Othello 12. Laestrygians 13. Conversations with Friends 14. Jane 15. Sir Winston Churchill

## Enlightenment / Romanticism History

In recent Zoom meetings we have discussed how, from the 17thC through to the 19thC, meeting places for men, where they could discuss politics, finance and Eastenders, changed from tavern to coffee houses, some of which became gentlemen's clubs like Whites. Many included gambling facilities like Crockfords.

You may be surprised to know that this high class establishment, which is still operating today, was created by a fishmonger William Crockford. He had an amazing talent for gambling; many of course have the talent to gamble money away at an alarming rate, but William's ability was to win at an equally alarming rate. He built up such a large amount of cash, supplemented also by selling a lot of haddock at his shop, that he was able to purchase, in 1828, four adjoining houses in Mayfair, demolish them and build a gambling hall. So successful was this enterprise that by 1840 he was able to retire as a millionaire. You will appreciate that two hundred years ago a million pounds would buy a great number of oysters.

But, however flush Mr Crockford was feeling at that time, his eyes would have popped open wide like a startled cod to learn of the salary Ms Denise Coates CBE from Stoke earned last year. She is the daughter of a betting shop family and as CEO of Bet 365 has built up the business considerably and been paid £421million with dividends of £48 million. This is more than the total of all CEO salaries in the FT100.

As my only gamble every year is 50p each way on the Grand National, if I was her only customer it would take 469million years for that amount to accrue. Plus there is the very outside chance of me winning in that time. The closest I've come was when my horse went storming past the winning post in first place, but apparently there is some crazy rule that it only counts if there is a jockey still in the saddle.

## Philosophy

Our May presentation was by John Darlington on Artificial Intelligence and Eternal Life: a Speculation.

Five concepts: Artificial Intelligence; Human Intelligence; Consciousness; The Soul and Eternal Life

How are they related? Can they be synthesised? Several modern Artificial Intelligence implementation technologies mimic the structure of the human brain, e.g. neural networks. In many areas artificially intelligent systems can outperform human intelligence, e.g. Chess and GO.

*If AI can fully mimic human intelligence and consciousness is simply a property of human intelligence then artificial artifacts can become conscious.*

*If the soul equates to consciousness then eternal life can be achieved if consciousness can be made to persist.*

*If artificial artifacts can become conscious then my consciousness and existence, can be loaded into some physical entity.*

*Physical entities can persist eternally. Can be renewed and consciousness uploaded to future versions. I can live forever.*

If you would like to join this vibrant group please contact:



## Book 3

Our first meeting after lockdown is on the second Tuesday in June at 10.30 where we will be discussing "Captain Correlli's Mandolin". Any prospective new members may contact me and then I can give them the address where we are holding the meeting.

Books are supplied by St. Paul's Cray Library and cover a wide range of authors from classics to modern. Members take it in turn to return books and pick up the next selection.

## Science and Technology (Zoom meetings)

**1 April** we joined the Knole Science Group for a fascinating and quirky talk about '**Poison**' by Kathryn Harkup, a chemist and author. She discussed the history of the uses of strychnine, phosphorus and arsenic and illustrated her talk with interesting (often gruesome) anecdotes.

**13 April** we had 3 short presentations: John Cook explained the '**Hoyle State of Carbon-12**' and why our existence depends on it. From an energy point of view the creation of C12 (the building block of life on Earth) seems highly improbable. However, Fred Hoyle predicted an excited state of carbon, essential for the nucleosynthesis of C12 in stars. John also gave an interesting summary of Hoyle's career and his controversial views.

John Mangold described the '**Science of Singing**'. The lungs and diaphragm generate airflow through the larynx and vocal folds, causing the vibration we perceive as sound. Resonance in the oral cavity and throat amplifies the sound. Modestly, John declined to give a demonstration, so vocal perfection was illustrated with a short video clip of Pavarotti!

Martin Zissell posed the question '**What Causes an Aurora?**' This phenomenon depends on charged particles originating from the sun, some of which are captured by the Earth's magnetic field. The colours come from different gases in the atmosphere as they interact with the solar particles. This was an interactive talk with members of the group sharing their past experiences of witnessing the Northern Lights.

**5 May** Alan Heyes, from the Knole Group, presented an interesting talk '**How plants (and fungi) save lives and keep us healthy**' describing how they provide a significant source of compounds for modern therapeutics. He also highlighted the importance of plants collected from the countryside, by the public, for medicines during WWII.

**11 May** Anthony Bradburne gave a brilliant presentation entitled '**Bats - should we Love, Hate or Emulate?**' Bats, the only flying mammals, have adapted perfectly to their ecological niches. They are long-lived and have numerous 'encounters' with viruses. He explained how bats have modified their immune responses to allow them to co-exist with viruses (such as SARS-CoV-2) and not get sick. This makes bats ideal reservoirs for virus mutation and spillover to other species. Anthony warned that future pandemics, in both Man and domestic animals, can be predicted to occur if we continue to disturb the natural environment of bats. This led to a lively discussion about the possible origin of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Quiz for Book Lovers



1. How many novels did Roald Dahl write ?
2. What are the names of the sisters in Little Women ?
3. In Mrs. Dalloway, the reader is told the title character is setting out to buy what in the first line of the novel ?
4. Which species in The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy are described as not actually evil, but bad-tempered, bureaucratic, officious and callous?
5. Which two cities are the setting for Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities ?
6. What is the name of the pig in Charlotte's Web by E B White ?
7. In Pride and Prejudice, who does the youngest Bennet daughter, Lydia, marry ?
8. What is Jay Gatsby's real name ?
9. Which two authors won the Booker prize in 2019 ?
10. What is the name of Harper Lee's second novel which was published in 2015 ?
11. Which Shakespearean play features the characters Bianca, Roderigo and Ludovico ?
12. What is the name of the tribe of man-eating giants in Homer's Odyssey ?
13. Sally Rooney's novel Normal People has been adapted into a BBC Three drama but what is the name of her first novel published in 2017 ?
14. What was the first name of Agatha Christie's Miss Marple ?
15. Which British Prime Minister was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature ?

Answers on Page 3

## The Truth About Exercise



I have to exercise early in the morning, before my brain works out what I'm doing.

I don't exercise at all. If God meant us to touch our toes, he would have put them further up our body.

I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.

I have flabby thighs; fortunately, my stomach covers them.

The advantage of exercising every day is that you die healthier.

If you are going to try cross-country skiing, start with a small country.

My grandmother started walking five miles a day when she was 60. She's 97 now, and we don't know where in the world she is.

The only reason I would take up jogging is so that I could hear heavy breathing again.

I joined a health club last year - spent about £400. Haven't lost a pound. Apparently, you have to show up.

### A History of Shopping in Orpington

Last September, between the first and second lockdowns, a group of us walked our local shopping areas, recording what we saw and photographing each premise. This information forms part of the u3a national High street project. What changes will we find when we come to resurvey them in September 2021?

All sorts of thoughts and reminiscences came to mind and some members have already given us their memories of shopping.

We want to find out more about the shops and community areas we have probably just taken for granted over the years.

Where is the oldest shop in Orpington? Who built our shopping parades and why? What do we really value? So many questions.

If you have questions or better still, information and answers, please get in touch.

Let's see what we can discover together.



## u3a London Region of U3AS

### 'THE TWENTIES'

#### Summer Talks on Zoom from June - August 2021

To register for any of the talks, please see our Orpington website.  
The talks last for 1 hour each from 5.30pm to 6.30pm.

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Mon 7 June  | <b>Wallpapers in the 1920s and '30s Designing and Decorating for the Suburban Dream</b><br>Lucy Ellis |
| Mon 21 June | <b>F Scott Fitzgerald and the 1920s</b><br>Kevin McCarron   |
| Mon 5 July  | <b>Strangers when they met</b><br>Stan Clingman   |
| Mon 19 July | <b>No COP out @ COP26</b><br>Alan Morton  |
| Mon 2 Aug   | <b>Paris in the 1920s: Art, Culture, Fashion and Society</b><br>Martin Heard                          |
| Mon 23 Aug  | <b>Classical Swing in the Roaring Twenties</b><br>Herbie Goldberg                                     |

## BACK TO SCHOOL

'Miss! Miss! Can I ask a question?'

Without waiting for permission the student asks their question, followed by another and then one more. Eyes shining above the mask, they have waited SO long to be back in the classroom and have quite a sizeable collection of unasked questions. It always seems easier to ask them face to face rather than through a computer screen.

The students are not the only ones smiling behind their masks. Teaching pupils using Zoom or Teams is not what most teachers signed up for. It is difficult to see the pupils' reactions through a screen and gauge how much understanding they have. Getting a reluctant student to engage with their least favourite subject via a computer screen is next to impossible. Actually being in the classroom, albeit masked up and socially distanced, is a huge step forward. Getting a word in edgeways when the children haven't seen their friends in person for months is another problem entirely!

The classroom is still a strange place at the moment; desks pushed as far apart as possible and faces obscured by masks but it is still filled with familiar noise and bustle and is, for the most part, where the children want to be to learn. To be able to exchange ideas with their friends face to face, to 'debate' in person, or just be silly together, is a joy once again; something they didn't realize they would miss until it was taken away.

Children need the social interaction with their peers to begin to find their place in the world, using the subtle signals everyone gives off to learn to 'get along' with other people. They also, sometimes, just need to run around being silly making as much noise as possible – yes, even sixth formers!

The teachers, too, are enjoying being back in school, talking to colleagues and enjoying the atmosphere. Discussing pupils progress (or lack of it), their behaviour, how the exams are going to run in the summer.....it all seems a lot easier when done face to face.

'Sir, I really enjoyed that practical' is a phrase not heard for quite some time. Teaching can take place via a screen but those subjects with a practical, hands-on element have suffered more than most. The sense of accomplishment for a student in doing even the simplest of practical tasks has been missing. It still poses a few problems when social distancing has to be maintained – they do like to 'help' each other and exchange methods for achieving a result, but with a bit of extra vigilance it is possible.

There are some children who have had an even more difficult time of lockdown and their education has suffered badly. The lack of laptops, iPads and reliable WiFi for some families has meant that education has not really happened and their children will have fallen badly behind. There will be a legacy for this generation of children that will take a long time to overcome. It may also have given some parents a better appreciation of a teacher's standing in their child's life and how difficult it is to engage a child in a subject they don't really understand – the role of teacher is not suited to everyone and home-schooling has proved a step too far for some parents! Here's hoping the 'Best Teacher Ever' accolades reflect the relief felt in some households, that education can go back to the professionals.

School is not yet back to normal, masks, social distancing, twice weekly Covid tests and segregated break times make sure of that but it is getting there. Students and teachers alike are creating their own new, 'normal' but at least they are getting to do it in school alongside each other. You can see the smiles in the students' eyes and in some cases you know the cheeky grin is there too!

## CHUCKLE TIME

**A young lad goes to his grandmother and asks:**

**"Granny, have you seen my pills, they've got LSD written on them?"**

**Granny replies: "I haven't got time for that now dear, there's a huge dragon in the kitchen."**



## CRYPTIC CROSSWORD no 75

*Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1*

1		2			3	4		5		6		7
				8								
9								10				
11												
												12
13		14					15					
						16						
	17									18		
19												
20						21						
22									23			

### Memories of Orpington High Street

I have lived in Orpington since 1963. More or less within living memory there were fields behind both sides of the High Street. It runs from the War Memorial to Carlton Parade where there is a small park and ponds, the source of the river Cray. The High Street used to flood regularly as there are springs underneath and I had to take my shoes and stockings off to wade across.

I remember two men being killed in the High Street, one by accident, the result of a drunken fight; and the other murdered because he looked peculiar and was of Asian origin. I also remember when we had an Orpington Council and an Orpington Festival. There was a big procession through the High Street with the Orpington and other May Queens and a fair in Goddington Park.

There were independent shops - Stanley Woods the bakers, where you could get Easter eggs with your name in icing, Stapleys where you could get loose screws and nails by weight, Mr Hughes the greengrocer who had a parrot which squawked "Hello Charlie," Bernard Pinnock the high class men's outfitters and shops like Woolworths, Timothy Whites and the Commodore Cinema.

### NEW GROUP

I am willing to commence a fairly basic German conversation group, perhaps for people wishing to 'brush up' on an earlier course in their life.

If you are interested please contact our Group Co-ordinators Sue or Janet.

## SUDOKU

2				8	1			
				3				5
	8	3	7	9	5			1
				2	9	1	6	
			1		6			
	9						7	
		8						
	2	9				5		6
	6						8	9

### Across

- Initially nothing under two lines is invalid (4)
- Distant hand-operated cutter heard to be ludicrous (8)
- Pictorial representation of Greek with a character of his to note (7)
- I visit the church centre, being simple and guileless (5)
- Starting porn off could be enrapturing (12)
- Take the first of all ranks with lines for missiles (6)
- Loaned back taking an international organization in to see an underground passage (6)
- Maybe take a trip with a friend, but not deliberately (12)
- At all times regret holding university up for light entertainment (5)
- A publication obtained from a new city (7)
- The way Roy rides is ludicrous (8)
- Desire that is found during each exercise (4)

### Down

- May be taken in or worn by those retiring folk (8)
- Wool producer found backing a shopping complex (5)
- In the main it is weighed (6)
- Contrive cuts to be advantageous (12)
- Chinese character with good negative hairstyle (7)
- Maybe one would keel over when seeing a national symbol (4)
- The authors of phantom works may be so described? (5,7)
- Having a companion at recreation changes my palate (8)
- Apply another coat and convalesce? (7)
- Thinner pupil loses heart (6)
- One plant is detailed to account for another bloomer (5)
- Lattice discovered by bigger minds regularly (4)

Solution on page 2

Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.

**Mark Twain**

## The Jukebox



Most of us fondly remember the TV programme JUKE BOX JURY which ran from 1959 – 1967 which was compèred by David Jacobs and had a panel of four celebrities reviewing new releases and giving their verdict of 'hit or miss'. The real star of that show was of course the jukebox. Not any old jukebox but a true classic: a Rock-Ola Tempo II, which was manufactured from 1959 – 60; this was the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary model and the first stereo jukebox that the Rock-Ola company manufactured.

The jukebox had had quite a long chequered career, which started long before that programme was broadcast on BBC television. J P Seeberg, a Swedish immigrant to the US, invented a coin operated gramophone that played a selection of records. In 1927 the first jukeboxes were made by Automated Musical Instruments (AMI). These new machines had electronic amplification using a speaker system loud enough to fill most large halls, and for a few cents it could play up to 8 record selections. The Prohibition era was in full swing when the first jukeboxes were manufactured and they were controlled by the "Mafia" who ran the illegal speakeasy establishments selling illegal alcohol. Not only did they make a lot of money from the customers that fed the machines, but also bribes from the record companies for putting their records into the jukeboxes. After prohibition ended in 1933 the jukebox industry really took off in a big way; tens of thousands of bars selling legal alcohol opened across the US and demand for the jukebox increased. Two rival companies also started manufacturing jukeboxes in the early 1930s, Wurlitzer and Rock-Ola, and together with AMI they became the main manufacturers of jukeboxes in the US.

When the USA got involved in the war with Europe and Japan in December 1941, all manufacturing was turned over to supplying equipment for the US military forces. Consequently all the jukeboxes produced from 1942 – 1945 were supplied for entertainment to military bases in far away locations (including American Airforce bases in the UK), so that the young American troops (army, navy and air force) could enjoy listening to American records. The jukeboxes were supplied with all the latest records and this must have been a major boost to keep up morale during the long war.

Soon after the war vinyl records took over from the old 78rpm records. There were two new formats: the long player (LP) manufactured by Columbia in 1948, a 12 inch record playing up to 7 songs per side at 33rpm, and in 1949 a 7 inch single at 45rpm manufactured by RCA which replaced the old 78rpm record. It didn't take very long for the other record companies to start production on the new vinyl formats as they were virtually unbreakable and had a silent groove surface as opposed to the old shellac 78rpm record that was easily broken and had an inherent crackle. The new 7 inch 45rpm record was basically designed for the jukebox as it enabled more records to be loaded into the machines. The record capacity went up from a maximum of 24 old 78rpm records to up to 100 new 45rpm records during the 1950s and it was estimated that 75% of single record sales in the US went into jukeboxes.

The record charts began in the early 1950s in the US and these were compiled from the number of times the records had been played on the jukeboxes from a set number of key venues, unlike the British charts that were compiled from record sales from a selected number of retail shops. At this time there was a lot of corruption in the record industry; a lot depended on the record charts as the radio stations only played records that were in the charts. Consequently a lot of "bribes" took place in the US to determine which records were put into the jukeboxes, and large sums of money exchanged hands between the jukebox distributors and record companies. The US didn't have a national broadcasting corporation but every State had its own commercial radio stations and this boosted the sales of single records during the 1950s to mid 1960s. The jukebox in the UK didn't have as much control of the charts as the US, and consequently the BBC, who controlled the radio broadcasting, mainly played records from established artists. This meant that many very good records were never played on the radio and therefore had low record sales and didn't get into the charts. The pirate radio stations forced the BBC to review their attitude and in 1967 reformed the old Light Programme into Radio 2 and created a new programme Radio 1 which played the latest pop records (aimed for the teenage audience).

The jukebox heyday was from the 1950s to the late 1960s - its decline in popularity was overtaken by the advance in hi-fi sound systems for discos and the CDs which ultimately led to the end of the single 45rpm record. Although the jukebox went over to playing CDs and the sound was vastly improved, it had lost that magic of watching the record being lifted from the revolving carousel, turned 90 degrees and placed onto the turntable. Although the commercial side of the jukebox is virtually dead, there is a lot of nostalgia attached to the old jukebox. There are companies today that specialise in renovating original jukeboxes, which are bought by private collectors and installed into their own homes. The value of jukeboxes varies considerably, depending on the model and condition, with the classic jukeboxes demanding a high price.

# NOTICE BOARD

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Saxon Day Centre in Orpington is a Centre for older adults, a number of whom have complex needs due to general frailty or Dementia. This is a sociable, vibrant place where loneliness and isolation are banished, if only for a short while.

The day to day running of the Centre is organised by a team of trained carers who in turn are supported by regular volunteers.

We could not run the Centre without the support offered to us by our dedicated volunteers. They help to run the daily activities, support care staff with the lunch service, play board games, help with any creative activities, sit and chat with clients and many more activities. We also have a dedicated group of volunteers who drive our minibuses, collecting our clients from home in the morning and taking them home in the afternoon (driving licence D1 classification required).

If you feel that you are able to offer a few hours a week to improve the wellbeing of older adults, please do get in touch as we'd love to hear from you.

Please call the Centre anytime between 9am and 4pm on

## NEW GROUP

### Members On Their Own (MOTO)

We would like to set up a new Group for Members On Their Own.

Are you interested in becoming part of this group? The aim is to provide friendship to Members who live on their own and may have found life difficult during these past months during Lockdown. It could be a get together in a Member's garden; a local walk; trip to London; or something to be decided month by month.

We would like to meet on the last Wednesday of the month, the first being 30 June.

If you are interested in joining this group, please email

Woodwork    Embroidery    Drawing  
Painting    Crochet    Sewing    Cookery  
Pottery    Jewellery    Knitting  
Gardening    Card making

### CALLING ALL ARTISTS AND ARTISANS

Have you been working on your hobby during lockdown or maybe taken up a new one?

Have you now found yourself with an excess of goods?

I am proposing a stall at a Monthly Meeting once we return to Crofton Hall to sell the results of our work for charity.

At the moment I am just floating the idea to see whether anyone is interested.

If so, please contact me with your possible contributions;

### What is a Court Dressmaker?

It is someone who has been trained in one of the top ten Haute Couture Houses in London and I am privileged to be one.

My House was Mattli. It is a passion of mine and has given me the opportunity to make for people who were well known at the time; for example. Moira Shearer and Katie Boyle, the actresses; and Princess Lilian of Sweden.

I was also able to make the wedding dresses for my two daughters and recently a sports jacket for Colin, my husband. If you believe what he says, he saw the jacket in making and was amazed at the detail required.

I don't think we really give much thought to what is involved when we buy quality clothing. Sadly, there is little demand nowadays, but I still have a room set up with everything that is required, so should anyone like to try their hand at making something special please get in touch.

I am offering help on a one to one basis at mutually convenient times.

As an aside, I don't do alterations, so please don't ask.