



## Summer 2024 Magazine



## The Third Age Trust

(Operating as the University of the Third Age)

Croydon u3a Registered Charity Number 1029466

[www.u3asites.org.uk/croydon](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/croydon)

Face Book: Croydon u3a

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Committee Member	<b>Andy Beaumont</b>	

**To see photos of your Committee members visit the Governance tab on our website <https://u3asites.org.uk/croydon/page/109995>**

where you can also see relevant documents.

**Croydon u3a** has an army of volunteers apart from the twelve members above, who have taken on various roles to make our u3a run well. See some of them on the Off-Committee Volunteers page on the website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/croydon/page/108531> look on the right hand side at the Links.

We must include our Group Leaders and their assistants, for without them we would literally fall apart.

We are always looking for volunteers to discuss starting a new group or offering a taster session or a short course. Please contact Maggie Chan (above) if you would like to discuss this. The guiding principle of the u3a is:

## **Run by the Members for the Members**

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### ***Foreword***

**Hello** and Welcome to the latest edition of the Croydon u3a magazine.

After what seemed like weeks of torrential rain, at last we have had some sunny days (when everyone complains about the heat).

The Olympics are over, having provided us with two weeks of hectic activities from the seemingly ever-expanding list of sports, including break-dancing (or breaking as it is known), if you can believe it! I found myself sucked into watching all sorts of odd sports, like speed-climbing, where climbers race up a 30metre climbing wall, like spider monkeys.

There were some fantastic performances from British athletes, and although they won fewer golds than in any Olympics since Athens in 2004, Team GB won 65 medals in total, one more than 2020 and within target. The Paralympics are about to start, (Aug 28) which gives us another chance to cheer on Team GB.

For those of us who aren't interested in sport we have the magazine instead! In this issue we have more lovely contributions from members, including a quiz, plus our usual puzzle pages.

I hope you enjoy it.

All contributions for the next edition will be gratefully received. Please send to: [Magazineeditor@croydonu3a.org.uk](mailto:Magazineeditor@croydonu3a.org.uk)

Editor – Tess Smith

## Letter from the Chair

Dear u3a members,

I am recovering from such mixed emotions – reports of mindless thuggery and thieving, attacks, setting vehicles and buildings alight, desecrating graves and widespread fear; and then to last night's (as I write this) overwhelming response from the huge majority of good, kind people who came out to say this is not our Great Britain.

We have to be able to get out and about, walk the streets, get a bus, meet for a coffee or attend an Interest Group Meeting. Once we become socially isolated the rot sets in. Quite literally. Recent publications have linked deteriorating brain function amongst older adults (aka dementia) to social isolation.

The research conducted by our two visiting Dutch students, Tess and Sherida, involved ten weeks of participant observation, recording the effects of u3a membership. Their thesis is called *The Power of Connection: u3a's Innovative Activities against Social Isolation in the UK*.

It details the benefits of belonging to something; how social isolation is alleviated, giving structure to the week, increasing our quality of life and feelings of wellbeing. Members reported the importance of the mental stimulation they gained, the enjoyment and happiness and the exercise they were able to participate in with others.

Quite clearly membership of the u3a is good for your health!

Tess and Sherida's personal message to us concluded,

**'It was an absolute pleasure to do our research with Croydon u3a, and to spend time with all the lovely members. A special thanks to you for welcoming us with open arms.'**

P.S. If you haven't renewed your annual membership yet, please see to it asap.

Best wishes and happy membership,  
*Jenny* Chair of Croydon u3a



***News from the Groups:***

**Environment & Climate Crisis Group**

**Restore Nature Now**

It is easy to be disheartened by the news, statistics, articles and books about the effect that human activity is having on our planet. The evidence is relentless about pollution, floods, droughts, seriously high temperatures, loss of biodiversity and spreading pests and diseases. Scientists have come up with some answers to the problems but action seems desperately, frustratingly slow.

However, on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, (midsummer, when those so inclined celebrate Mother Earth's birthday) more than 350 organisations and tens of thousands of people marched from Park Lane to Westminster to raise awareness and demand that those in power act to RESTORE NATURE. I found this very heartening. The event was very well organised and the marchers were a good-natured lot, who had made great efforts to dress in appropriate style and devise beautiful, meaningful banners with punchy messages about the urgency to allow nature to heal our environment.

I could not think of wording for a witty or meaningful sign, so decided to decorate our sunhats with symbolic foliage from our garden. The message might be subtle but nevertheless heartfelt:

\*sage/salvia with its blue flower and purple/green leaves for wisdom and healing

\*winter jasmine stem for grace and future hope with its golden flower in winter

\*ox-eye daisy flowers (day's eye) for rebirth, new beginnings, innocence.

\*red heuchera/coral bells flower mainly for a splash of colour but in the language of flowers means joy and happiness and a spiritual inner wisdom. We hope these values will prevail to restore nature.



On the journey up to London several people commented on the hats and that was an easy way to begin a conversation about the environment. It was a contact point with a young woman on our tram holding a placard illustrated with a woodpecker. She was with Surrey Wildlife Trust.



There were more people at Victoria, including families with children dressed as animals all going to the event. We decided to eat our lunch sandwich in Hyde Park before joining Jenny Wilson and Brenda Ainsley at our allotted meeting point on Park Lane at 11.45. The blue

and yellow striped Bella the Umbrella helped us find them and gradually others including Camilla joined our U3A group.

I found it very interesting talking to other marchers about their special interests. We were in the AIR subgroup and so there was lots of bee support, people sporting wings of various designs also cardboard beaks and puffin masks. The RSPB banner was held high leading this colourful mass of people and flying gracefully ahead were three huge beautifully fashioned puppet avocets. It was fascinating to see the wings and heads move. You can see Jenny's butterflies and flowers adorning her hat and green dress.



I got chatting to a woman with golden wings made from the pleated skirt of a second-hand dance costume. She needed both hands to manage her wings so asked me to take her scarlet silk flag.







Now we have the message flying in the front garden which is gradually changing from grass to colourful flowers for pollinating insects.

The mass of marchers was so numerous we didn't see the front of the procession where famous faces such as Miranda Richardson, Iwan Rheon, Chris Packham and Emma Thompson later had the chance to speak on the news.



There were bands and singing, chanting too of course and the feeling that every voice counted. In the crowd we lost sight of our Croydon friends as it was easiest just to go with the flow.

Emma voiced the hope and demands of the 60,000+ people marching, that politicians should prioritize nature and take the necessary political action to tackle the nature and climate crisis.

Last week I had rashly decided to do some housework and tripped over the bucket, I think probably cracking a small bone in my foot. At three o'clock we decided to stop to sit and have a cup of tea as by that time we had reached Trafalgar Square, my foot was very sore and swollen. We came home from Embankment and so we missed the final stretch to Westminster for the speeches. We met another marcher from Seaford on the train. She was passionate about swifts and house martins and was promoting nest boxes for them. She has influenced the council to incorporate boxes in new build houses. It is inspiring to learn about the many and varied successes passion and perseverance can achieve.

The march brought together many organisations e.g. JUST STOP OIL were peacefully involved, along with the various Wildlife Trusts, so many different caring organisations and individuals, together demanding urgent action before it is too late to restore Nature and heal our planet Earth.

One marcher had the 1877 quote from Chief Seattle on her back: "Only when the last tree has died and the last river has been poisoned and the last fish caught, will we realise that we cannot EAT MONEY." Nearly one hundred and fifty years later, when will we realise?

Sheila Kemble June 2024

## **Singing for Pleasure**

I was amazed to discover recently that my group began as long ago as 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009. In 2008 at a Grandparents' Christmas carol concert at Whyteleafe School, which two of my grandsons attended, the "other Grandmother" of my grandsons asked me how I felt about starting up a Choir. This was Mary Randell, (the chair of Croydon u3a at that time) who told me that she had been approached by a u3a member pointing out that there was no singing group within the Croydon u3a programme and wondering if anyone could be found to start one. Mary asked me to think about starting some singing activity as she knew that I had had years of experience coaching and directing music throughout my life. I agreed to run one if there was a minimum of 12 people.

In fact, we started with only 11 but within no time the word got around and our numbers increased. The membership has fluctuated naturally over such a long time. The repertoire has had to be adapted accordingly, singing songs from musicals (which is very popular), folk songs, and classical pieces. A lot of the music is in unison, but the singers are always up to the challenge of singing some pieces in three parts, the men singing in a baritone range. Over the years we've entertained at the monthly meetings, have performed at some care homes and participated in a competitive music festival.

At present we meet twice monthly in the Vestry at St Matthew's church, Chichester Road on Wednesday mornings. Throughout all this time I have been blessed with having Hazel Marsden undertaking the role of secretary. She wonderfully supportive. She keeps the register, collects the monies and contacts members about any notifications. Without her I would not have taken on being the leader. She gives me the freedom to research for music and to make arrangements of songs suitable for our singers as the balance of shifting voices changes over the years.



The photos, taken last Autumn by Jenny Wilson, are from the group entertaining the residents at Whitgift Care Home in South Croydon. Only half of the Choir members were available to perform that Sunday afternoon, but even so everyone gave of their all and it was very apparent that the audience thoroughly enjoyed the choice of songs and have asked us to make a return visit.



In The Times I found a very interesting article by Peta Bee where she listed 7 ways in which singing boosts your health.

- 1. Singing boosts memory and brain power. Joining a choir could lead to better brain health in older age. Regular singing was linked to better brain health through improving memory and the ability to solve complex tasks. And continuing to sing later in life brings ever greater benefits.*
- 2. It increases levels of stress-busting hormones. “Countless studies have shown that it impacts our hormonal balance and decreases stress more effectively than any medication”. Provided that you are singing in a relaxed environment, it was shown to reduce levels of the hormone cortisol, which is released in response to stress. Music and singing are an enormous stimulation for our brain says Dr Julia Christensen, a neuroscientist.*
- 3. Regular singing can stop you snoring. Exeter Medical School showed that 20 minutes of simple singing exercise performed daily for 3 months helped to strengthen throat muscles, reducing the frequency and severity of snoring, and improving quality of sleep compared with those who didn’t sing.*
- 4. Singing fights anxiety and depression. Social singing as part of a choir or community singing group helps to alleviate low mood, partly by promoting a feeling of belonging, security and wellbeing, according to researchers at the Norwich Medical School.*
- 5. When it comes to breathing, singing has similar benefits to yoga. If you sing in a choir your heartbeat will be synchronised with other members, rising and falling in time with the tempo of the music and as your exhale occurs during some phrases and inhale between them, singing is also a form of controlled breathing. These effects were shown to “impose” a calm and regular breathing pattern that has a positive effect on hear rate and on general health.*

*6. Singing can boost immunity. If you want to boost your immune system and help to ward off illness, try singing along to our favourite tunes rather than just listening to them. In a study of cancer patients in 2016, researchers from the Royal College of Music found that singing in a choir for just one hour a week led to increases in levels of cytokines, immune system proteins that help the body to fight serious illness.*

*7. Want to learn a foreign language? Sing it! Try singing words or short phrases in a foreign language. Researchers from the University of Edinburgh found that people who adopted this approach while learning Hungarian, chosen because it is particularly difficult to learn, were twice as good at speaking the new language later on than those who repeated the same phrases by speaking them. Singing words to music creates stronger links in the brain, with the melody providing an extra cue to jog the memory.*



Gillian Bibby

*Singing for Pleasure Group*

*We often receive contributions from members of u3a in the form of anecdotes about their life or family. Here is a selection of them.*

### ***The girl and the snake.***

At the age of 50 I was made redundant, in April, from Croydon Council and decided to go back to teaching. However, the post I was offered did not start until the new school year in September and I needed to find a temporary position for the summer term.

I got a job immediately, but there were two snags in that it was in a girls' school {I had never taught girls before} and was in a Secondary Modern school in an awkward location to drive to.

An additional difficulty was that in the class I was to teach most often, I noticed a girl who was often sitting in the corridor outside other teachers' classrooms. I was determined that this would not happen to me but soon regretted this, as she was obviously disruptive. One day at the end of my lesson she plonked herself on my desk with a fairly large cardboard box.

"Would you like to see my snake, sir?" she said.

I could think of nothing which I would like less, but I reluctantly agreed, and the box was opened to reveal its wiggling occupant. I had no idea how she had managed to bring it to school.

Although I was not looking forward to my next encounter with her, with or without her boxed friend, to my surprise she behaved perfectly in the next lesson and for the rest of the term.

David Talbot



### ***Rabbit Pie Anyone?***

Over the years, my wife has amassed a collection of soft toy animals, mainly bears, which occupy one of our best armchairs. One, I confess, I bought several years ago in a second-hand shop is a small furry rabbit, which goes by the name of 'Bumper'.

We were recently watching a travelogue programme, on Sweden I recall, which included the preparation of rabbit pie so, naturally, we had to 'warn' the rabbit to put his paws over his ears. You can imagine our hilarity when the presenter said something like, "with all this lovely food on display, we'll now sit down to a *bumper* feast!"

Colin Read



*That reminds me of my pet rabbit, Sugar, who was a consummate escape artist. One day he got out, again, but this time could not be found. My dad made a facetious comment about him sweetening someone's Sunday dinner, which horrified me. I have never eaten rabbit since! Ed.*



### ***The Third Funniest Dog***

When my grandparents retired to Llandudno after the war they bought a large house, so that members of their family could sometimes come to stay with them.



On one occasion my Aunt Dilys was staying with her smooth haired fox terrier, Michael, of whom she was very fond, even though he suffered from a condition that seemed to give him a permanent shaking. When I told her that there was a dog contest in Happy Valley she was very keen to enter him. She gave him a special wash and brush up, which he did not enjoy.

There were actually two contests, with three prizes for each. One was to find the smartest animal, the other the most amusing one. The organisers had no trouble finding three of the smartest dogs, but only two had been entered for the other contest – dressed in clown costumes. Suddenly they saw poor shivering Michael, whom my aunt had entered (unsuccessfully) for the other contest.

He looked so pathetic to me that I understood why the judges then gave him the prize as Third Funniest Dog. My aunt was of course absolutely mortified, and I was under orders not to tell anyone. Of course, it was a story which I could not resist telling the rest of the family.

David Talbot



## **Maggie's cancer support**

Maggie's is a charity entirely funded by the kindness of our donors and gifts in wills and has launched a campaign to raise awareness of their centres, which includes Maggie's at The Royal Marsden Hospital in Sutton. The campaign features real-life people who have been supported by the charity, so keep an eye out for it on the Tube, bus shelters, Facebook and Instagram.

Maggie's is here for anyone with cancer, their families and friends. They have cancer support specialists who are qualified in oncology and have expert knowledge to help people better understand treatment. There are psychologists who provide group or 1-2-1 support, and benefits advisors who can advise you on how much extra money you may be entitled to claim. They also work with experts who run sessions on nutrition, yoga, relaxation and more.

Maggie's is a space for expert cancer support, for someone to just listen and for family and friends too.

You can find Maggie's at the Marsden in Sutton - it's the red building on Cotswold Road.

All of their support is completely free, there's no need to make an appointment or referral, just come in on Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm.

Call: 020 3982 3141

Email: [maggies.royalmarsden@maggies.org](mailto:maggies.royalmarsden@maggies.org)

Maggie Keswick Jencks Cancer Caring Centres Trust (Maggie's) is a registered charity, No. SC024414

## **Weetabix™ Cake**

**4 wheat breakfast biscuits**

**1lb mixed dried fruit**

**8 oz sugar**

**1 pint of milk**

Stir all of these ingredients together and soak overnight in the fridge.

Next Morning, Add:

**2 eggs**

**1lb self-raising flour to the mixture and stir well.**

Halve the mixture between two loaf tins and place in the centre of the oven for approximately one hour, gas mark 4 or 180c

This is an almost fat free, rich, moist fruit cake.

For a real treat, try a piece spread with butter and/or your favourite jam

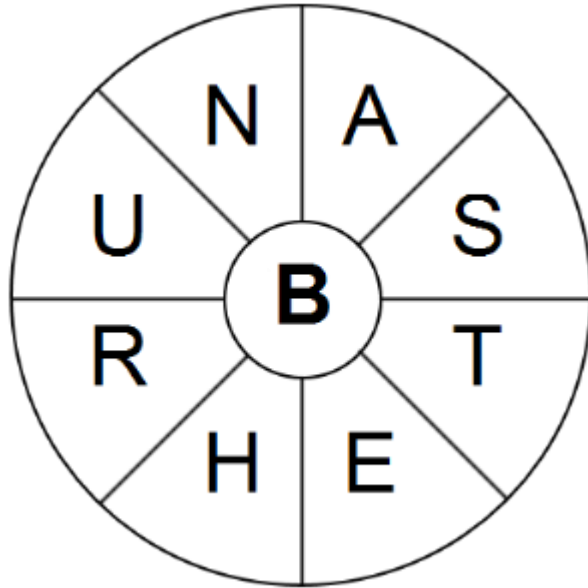


Dawn Barrett

## Puzzle Pages

### Summer Word Wheel

Summer is the hottest season of the year. The Eiffel Tower grows in summer. On a hot day the iron from which it is constructed expands so much that the tower can rise by 17cm!!



This Summer themed word wheel is made from a 9 letter Summer themed word. Try and find that word, then make as many words of any length as you can from these letters. You can only use each letter once, and each word must include the letter **B**. Plurals and proper nouns are not allowed!

## Sudoku

Each row, column and small 3x3 square must contain the numbers 1-9

<b>8</b>						<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>4</b>					<b>6</b>	
<b>2</b>			<b>9</b>				
<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>1</b>
<b>6</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>			<b>9</b>
<b>4</b>			<b>8</b>				
	<b>1</b>						<b>2</b>
<b>9</b>						<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>

				<b>3</b>			
<b>1</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>
							<b>3</b>
<b>5</b>		<b>9</b>					<b>4</b>
	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>7</b>		<b>1</b>					<b>6</b>
							<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
				<b>6</b>			

## Word Sudoku

It's Olympics Sudoku - fill in the grid with the letters

D.E.C.A.T.H.L.O.N

				o				
		o				e		c
		n	e			a	o	
o				t		n		
e	n			c	a	d		
l				n		c		
		h	c			t	e	
		l				h		n
				l				

Normal sudoku rules apply, but with letters instead of numbers, so, each row, column and small square must include the letters above.

## **Quiz**

### **By Dawn Barrett**

#### Questions.

1. What was the first major Premium Bond prize worth?
2. Which London street was the scene of a famous siege in 1911?
3. Which part of a bull are you eating if the menu calls them ANIMELLES?
4. Which royal princess married in a dress from MGM film studios?
5. Who wrote Love In A Cold Climate?
6. Where are epidural injections given?
7. Which is the only Chinese year named after a feline?
8. Which county could the King survey if he sat on top of the flagpole at Windsor Castle?
9. To how many killings did the Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe plead guilty?
10. Which Scottish bridge cost three million pounds and the lives of 57 men?



11. And in which year did it celebrate its 100-year anniversary?
12. To which Greek goddess was the Parthenon dedicated?
13. What does an ergophobic layabout fear?
14. For what do the letters UDI stand?
15. How many claws does a normal house cat have?
16. Which way round does a record player turntable revolve?
17. Which resort hosted the 1984 Tory Party Conference?
18. In which fictional suburb of Manchester would you find Coronation Street
19. And what is the post code for Albert Square?
20. Which ballet features a prince who falls in love with a bird (of the feathered variety)?

(Answers on page 31)



## **My Croydon, Hub of the Universe**

When I arrived as an incomer to Croydon nearly 33 years ago, the place struck me as eminently fit for human habitation. It offered excellent mobility both social and physical. You could be in London in the time it took to read a morning paper or out in the open countryside even sooner. From this famously derided dormitory suburb, so many had stirred from dreamy back bedrooms to surprise the world: R.F.Delderfield, D.H.Lawrence, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, David Lean, Peggy Ashcroft, Amy Johnson, Kate Moss and C.B.Fry. There were birds in the trees, foxes on the lawns, pheasants in the allotments, the occasional deer in Lloyd Park and engagingly batty dog-walkers in the streets, which rang as they still do with those lyrical Sarf London refrains, 'Y'know wha' I mean?' and 'Vis is doin' my 'ead in!' This was the hardening underbelly of a great capital and a resurgent England, the old market town with greatness thrust upon it by the relocation of much of the insurance industry in the '60s and '70s and the ever-rolling stream of foreigners, the parade of nations passing by to Lunar House lured by a British dream so powerful that nothing could check the beacon beam of its momentum.

The environs of the town are no longer the rural idyll which Betjeman's Uncle Dick left "Once for all". The menace of change and decay now prompt an urgent move to action to transform the place into the magnet for new businesses and jobs and modern living which it must become. Straining after city status, it yet falls short of claiming that crown. Too long the plaything of architects and town planners, Croydon now faces a radical reconstruction. With no more ski jumps set to adorn the roofs of multi-storey car parks nor flutterings of coloured lights to waken early morning commuters, the city centre is about to have its heart ripped out, much like Glasgow's Sauchiehall Street in the '70s.

The ghosts of Grants and Alders and the old variety theatres linger in the mind's eye. The dead urban spaces of St George's Walk and College Green cry out for animation. The Fairfield Hall is undergoing a revival of sorts and there is now promise too of a new 'civic square' for a 'Fairfield Cultural Complex' between Queen's Gardens and Surrey Street Market. The promised £18.5m. 'levelling up' boost from central government will go a little way towards offsetting the stalled regeneration of the Whitgift Centre. The Warehouse Theatre is much missed - we still await a proper replacement. With the closure of Solutions health club, there's a need for a swimming pool more accessible than Portland Road, Fiveways or New Addington. An indoor running circuit would be a welcome addition to one of the new buildings on Wellesley Road. Meanwhile, who will rid the place of its pockets of urban squalor and the blight of litter, graffiti, strident swearing, feet on tram seats, e-scooting on pavements, suburban speeding and dog mess?

This whole initiative – the re-birth of this place where we live – is a colossal gamble, but it seems imperative if Croydon is to accommodate all incomers. The fate of the borough hangs in the balance, but the scales are tipped by the sheer onward influx – some 35,000 over the coming years – all of whom will seek a home and a community of shared recreations and amenities. The Mayors of London and Croydon may wave their wands, but who will magic this into being, unless we ourselves can get our act together to define and encourage the creation of conditions for a life that we all should continue to enjoy?

Barnaby Powell

In Jenny's letter to members, she mentions the work of two Dutch students, Tess and Sherida, who came to Croydon to study the effects of social isolation and loneliness and how these can be alleviated by joining activities such as those offered by the u3a.

They found that u3a offered great inclusion at a modest price. The members benefited from the social aspects of our activities and much laughter. It was described as a youth club for older people.

Recent research in America has shown that loneliness can actually increase one's risk of dementia, so this research is very timely.

In case you missed it, I reproduce below Jenny's excellent article from the May Bulletin.

IMAGINE.....

No, I'm not going to reminisce about John (Lennon in case you were wondering). Imagine you are in your early twenties and for some reason have decided to investigate 'The Power of Connection: Reducing Loneliness through u3a's Innovative Programmes' for your B.A. Thesis in a foreign country! Being a student in The Netherlands at Utrecht University you somehow end up being recommended to contact Croydon. I must point out that there are no u3as in The Netherlands so exploring how another nation and culture operates provided opportunities.

Two students, Tess and Sherida, came to GB for 10 weeks being completely self-funded. I asked them on their last day, if they had been nervous – two young women coming for an extended stay to meet a load of 'oldies'. Well, you would be, wouldn't you? The first time we met on February 5th, 2024, they were obviously quite nervous to start with. Coming into the hall full of retired yogis, being given mats and incorporated into the session and then after a short break joining a Tai Chi group!

Their first introduction dispelled their fears and many myths. Our members had been informed about the purpose of the research visits – to find out how being a member of the u3a promotes well-being and enhances the quality of life. Discussions have continued throughout the ten weeks with the students taking part in many Interest Groups face to face or on-line, attending General Meetings, talking to small focus groups and members on an individual basis.

The original concept was to listen to people's stories rather than read about the lives of older people written by third parties. Their background had involved lots of research on ageing but not with aged people, so their aim was focused on participant observation to gather a greater understanding of loneliness and the effect of that on health and how u3a membership and involvement mitigates against those.

One member said, 'I thought that Tess & Sherida's research was very interesting and important.- not least because ultimately it was about the quality of human life. At the core of this work was the concept of 'culture' and the recognition that this feeds into understanding of people, which consequently helps when considering future developments, to create an even more positive environment.'

After participating in many physical Interest Group activities – yoga, Tai Chi, Line Dancing, Table Tennis, Walking, Darts, Dance Exercise, International Dance and even Belly Dancing, as well as the more sedentary groups from Wine Admiration, Book, Poetry and Writing Groups to Art Appreciation, Painting and Drawing, China Group and MOTO they were well and truly hooked. They also joined a number on Interest Groups On-Line meetings to explore the different connections members make compared with face-to-face meetings.

'They expressed both interest and enjoyment, meeting everyone and learning about how the u3a played a very important part in addressing issues for an older population. I very much enjoyed their company and am looking forward to being able to read about what was learnt from this sustained and thorough research. They were both an absolute credit to their university and will be missed', was another comment.

Here are some other comments from members.

'It was wonderful to have 2 such lovely 'young' ladies take such an in-depth interest in us 'oldies'.

'Tess and Sherida were always very friendly and keen to talk to us about how the u3a enriches our retirement. They joined in all the exercise classes with enthusiasm and were impressed with how hard we worked at keeping fit. We will miss them.'

'It's been a pleasure and privilege to meet and speak with Tess and Sherida, their interest, enthusiasm and involvement with so many groups and members has been amazing.'

'We will miss them and their lovely smiles and I will look forward to seeing the result of their hard work.'

'As Tess and Sherida proved to us, the young can learn from the past and the elders embrace the future. By becoming each other's strengths, we can chart a course towards a more fulfilling and enriching future, ensuring that the road ahead is not just walked quickly but walked wisely.'

And a final comment from the students themselves. "Croydon u3a is full of wonderful, friendly people whom we are grateful to have met, because their energy, positive mindset, and warmth towards Tess & me has truly inspired me as a young adult. I will miss all of them, and the fun activities ;)!"



*Sherida, Jenny and Tess*

So as I see it there have been huge benefits on both sides – The opportunity for some solid intergenerational conversations; u3a members' opinions and life experiences listened to and valued; members actively helping young people and vice versa; pushing the boundaries for all readers of the finished documents about what life is like for some people who are no longer working fulltime; raising some questions such as the gender imbalance; providing a positive experience for students working in a foreign country.

I am personally very pleased that Croydon u3a was identified as a 'good bet' by staff in the Trust office. I am delighted that the meetings and contacts worked well and feel so proud of our members who welcomed the students with open arms and hearts, many sharing very personal stories. We wish them well and look forward to reading the finished work.

Jenny Wilson

## Quiz Answers.

1. Five thousand pounds
2. Sidney Street
3. Its testicles.
4. Princess Grace of Monaco
5. Nancy Mitford
6. In the spine.
7. The year of the Tiger
8. Royal Berkshire
9. Thirteen
10. The Forth Bridge
11. 1990
12. Athena
13. Work
14. Unilateral Declaration of Independence
15. Eighteen
16. Clockwise
17. Brighton
18. Weatherfield
19. E20
20. Swan Lake.

How many did you get right?