



Dawlish and District U3A Newsletter

May 2020

Chair's Chatter

Dear fellow members,

Before anything else, I would like to place on record our thanks to Patricia, who is doing a wonderful job in compiling a weekly newsletter.

For the moment, life as we knew it has changed and we now live in a very surreal world. Many of you I know have had to self isolate whilst some can go out for a daily walk. It was good to hear the range of things that people are doing and many of you have said that you have been able to accomplish things you had not got round to finishing off before. Gardening, cleaning, decorating to name but a few. We are privileged to live in Dawlish as life in other parts of the UK is not nearly as good especially for those with children living in flats in the cities. Our thoughts are with everyone now for good health and a positive future. I read a quote recently which said 'Every day may not be good but there's something good in every day.' How true that is.

After a period of panic buying in our supermarkets, things appear to have settled down. However following on from what a certain person said recently, the shelves may now be short of disinfectant..! With the continuing crisis the majority of our usual activities have come to a temporary halt. This said, our U3A members are trying to keep in touch with each other.

The next few months are going to be so difficult for everyone worldwide. Our NHS and all the other essential workers are doing a magnificent job bravely carrying on in very difficult situations. Ahead of attacks on our cities during World War II, the British government issued and displayed three posters with messages written to boost morale and mentally prepare its civilians. One of them, "**Keep calm and carry on**," has grown in popularity over the years because its message is applicable beyond its original intent and especially during these days.



There is light and hope at the end of the tunnel.

Take care, please keep in touch and here's to meeting up once this ordeal has passed.

With kind regards - Graham

Missing Badminton

I am just fine and keeping very healthy. However am resigned to staying in isolation for as long as it might take - until safe again.

As I am living alone you might think that could be difficult - but I am finding the opposite. A kind neighbour generously includes my shopping on their supermarket deliveries and then is able to drop off my items on the driveway here with no human presence. And because they have 4 or so supermarket accounts, the slots for placing orders are coming around thick and fast.

On top of this am making good use of "Home Kitchen" deliveries plus Tibbs* greengrocers of Teignmouth (offering volunteer deliveries plus they will add items from the Wee bakery). So am certainly not lacking in any creature comforts.

Then there is an instant messaging App called "Telegram" which is proving a boon (when keeping in touch with daughter and granddaughter in Exeter etc.). This is an App which I have discovered will work on my desktop computer. So no need for any new-fangled SMART device thank heavens. My mobile is a DUMB one and I just use it for texting and voice calls.

So, *correction*, I am not resigned to being house and garden bound. It is a grand opportunity to catch up with half finished projects and to use my fertile brain to dream up new ones.

Never been so busy. Do hope that lock down for me doesn't end prematurely.

I do miss our badminton - but wouldn't have the time for it presently anyway ;-)

Gerald

* Tibbs delivery is only for the truly self-isolating (and explaining this on phone when ordering).

Here, There and Everywhere

HTE is spreading its wings:

1. Choose a Country beginning with the letter "A".
2. Choose a region within that country and do a virtual tour.
3. Continue until you either get bored, or complete an alphabetical tour of planet earth.

Regards Andrew

Answers to last week's travel quiz

1. **Prefectures**
2. **Lake Como**
3. **Formentera**
4. **Grenada**
5. **Polish Zloty**
6. **10**
7. **Barcelona**
8. **Lichtenstein**
9. **Greece**
10. **Petra**
11. **Leningrad**
12. **Indonesia**
13. **Ayers Rock**
14. **Turkmenistan**
15. **Portugal**
16. **Venezuela**
17. **Mongolia**
18. **Mount Etna**
19. **Malta**
20. **Italy**

Can you name some of our committee member and convenors?



Living • Laughing • Learning

Bird Migration

At the onset of the Coronavirus lockdown in March 2020 my daughters sent me a generous “Stay at Home Package” which included a jig saw puzzle “Bird Migration Eastern Hemisphere”. However challenging the puzzle was, it was nothing to the interest in the subject and the extraordinary wealth of textual detail contained in it. Graphically, it was a work of art with a map of the ‘Eastern Hemisphere’ showing in four different colours the migration routes of a number of species, plus satellite tracking routes of three individual birds — the whole surrounded by sixty plus images of bird species in flight.



Amongst the wealth of detail in the map, it shows the migration of a tagged Bar Headed goose from Tibet to India in 2000, over the Himalayas, an altitude of 30,000 ft., never exceeded by any other living species. Spectacularly, the map shows the satellite tracking of a Wandering Albatross in 1996 over 20,000 miles, and across both hemispheres. The map also showed the tracking of two

Siberian Cranes: one from North Russia to Iran and the other from Arctic Russia to Central China. Like other identical species, these two groups never meet; but both are endangered, one by oil exploration in Russia and the other by burgeoning human population in China. In both cases it is habitat that is destroyed.

Although the map features the Black and Caspian Terns, it didn't feature the Arctic Tern which I regard as the world's greatest migrant. In 2010 National Geographic reported that the Sooty Shearwater, which is included in the map and has since been recorded as migrating 40,000 Miles, had now been exceeded by the Arctic Tern. This tiny bird, weighing 13 gm and familiar in the UK regularly migrates 44,000 miles.

The map records that 20,000 falcons may kill 10,000,000 smaller birds every season; and actually delay their own breeding season to exploit the bonanza.

The greatest resting place for migrant birds is in Jordan, near the Dead Sea Valley, where as many as 1,000,000,000 migrants rest after crossing deserts. More than half the aircraft accidents in this area are caused by bird strikes.

In spite of its size and because of its isolation only 15% of Australia's bird species migrate.

Perhaps the world's most bizarre migrant is the (Northern) Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*, which in the UK we are familiar with as a summer migrant. This bird breeds not only in the UK & Europe, but in Iceland & Greenland. These birds winter in Africa.

The map states that migration patterns are at least 15,000 years old; and are still evolving. I might add that our understanding is also still evolving. I'm suitably humbled.

George Lipscomb - (This had to be cut to fit but if you would like the whole article, full of more interesting facts about migration, please contact George)