



NEWSLETTER

Issue August 2020

Web Address: www.hucknallu3a.org.uk

Message from our Chair

Several months later than planned I now find myself writing my final "Message from the Chair".

It has been a totally unprecedented year for all of us and one which will certainly go down in the History books!!

I would like to reflect on the past two years, prior to the Covid-19 situation arising and extend my very sincere thanks to the very many people who have not just given me personal support but have contributed so much to Hucknall and District U3A.

My first thank you goes to all those who have served on the Executive Committee. Much of their work goes unseen on occasions but their hard work and great togetherness is at the heart of the U3A. It has been a pleasure to work alongside such a great team.

The Social Committee likewise have worked so hard to provide a rich variety of activities for members.

One member who does go "Unseen" much of the time is Steve Lawrence, our Newsletter Editor. Steve works very hard each month to produce an excellent Newsletter, which I know from comments made to me has been particularly appreciated during the recent months, since it has been our one way of reaching all members.

Interest Group Leaders are also at the heart of the U3A and again I cannot thank you enough for your efforts.

Also thanks go to all members who attend our various Interest Groups, Social events and monthly meetings.

Going forward, every U3A is going to face previously unknown challenges in the foreseeable future. These will obviously centre around how the Covid -19 situation evolves, Social Distancing issues, availability of venues, limits on numbers allowed to meet together, finance and probably most significantly the confidence of Members' to return to activities. However, I am certain that working together we can hopefully restore our U3A to a strong organisation once more.

Barrie Saunders, Chairman

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COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting held by Zoom on Wednesday August 5th

Siobhan, Groups' Coordinator reported that some groups were using Zoom to hold sessions, while some other group leaders had been keeping in touch with their members in a variety of other ways.

It was reported that all the Speakers' previously booked for the monthly meetings had now been cancelled for the rest of the year.

The Social Committee had cancelled all events planned for the rest of the year but were busy arranging events for 2021.

David Rose had updated the Committee on the latest advice from the U3A with regards to the latest Covid -19 advice.

There was little to report from the Treasurer, the Webmaster or the Equipment Manager because of the Lockdown.

David Rose informed the committee with regards to a recent Zoom meeting held by the Notts U3A group.

Mark Jackson spoke about the virtual AGM which had received a voting return of fifty percent which was highly satisfactory. Please see full details in this section of the Newsletter.

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Hucknall & District U3A - Minutes of the 12th Annual General Meeting (in lock-down)

Background

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic it has not been possible for the U3A to meet to hold the 2020 AGM. At the virtual (Zoom) Committee meeting on 1st July 2020, it was decided that, in the interests of good governance, the business usually conducted at an AGM would be carried out by way of a poll of all the membership.

Members were able to vote on the proposed resolutions from 7th July to 31st July, either on-line or by post and votes were received from 50% of the members. The constitution dictates a 20% threshold for a quorum at an AGM so, given the circumstances, the poll results were accepted as valid by the Committee at the virtual (Zoom) meeting on 5th August 2020.

Decisions of the Members

Resolution	Decision
Approval of the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 10th April 2019	Accepted
Proposal to approve the Accounts for the year to 31st December 2019	Accepted
Proposal to appoint Geoff Cree as the Examiner of Accounts for the year to 31st December 2020	Accepted
Proposal to appoint David Rose as Chairman	Accepted
Proposal to appoint Melvyn Francis as Vice-Chairman	Accepted
Proposal to appoint Greg Umney to the Committee	Accepted
Proposal to re-appoint the other 9 Committee Members who have agreed to continue: Christine Berrill, Angela Cornish, Sandra Green, Diane Heenan, Siobhan Lee, Dianne White, Philip Attenborough, Mark Jackson and Barrie Saunders	Accepted

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Do You Enjoy Eating Haggis?

Due to Coronavirus (Covid 19) and the lockdown the

Burn's Night – Revisited

which was planned for 28th March was cancelled. This social event was to include a 'Traditional Scottish Supper' of 'Haggis', which the H&D U3A purchased, some have been sold and we still have plenty left.

If you would like to purchase a 'Haggis' from our local butcher, Johnathan Severn, who has them in his safe keeping in his freezer, his shop can be located on the High Street, next door to Birds the Bakers. The price will be £3.79 each (serves 2/3).



Also, just for your information, serving a Haggis with Neeps & Tatties is not the only way to serve it, there are many recipes (on the internet) including Haggis Scotch Eggs, Haggis Sausage Rolls, Haggis Shepherds Pie, Haggis Toasties, Haggis Fritters and many, many more.

NEW GROUPS, WORKSHOPS & OTHER NEWS

FRAUD WARNING

Scam Alert

This is active now so please be aware. If you receive a call claiming to be from 'Test and Trace' and they ask for payment it is a SCAM



'Good afternoon I'm calling from the NHS track and trace service. According to our system, you are likely to have been in close proximity to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This means that you now need to self-isolate for 7 days and take a COVID-19 test.'

'OK. Can you tell me who that person was?'

'I'm not able to tell you that. That is confidential information.'

'Right Um... so'

'But you do need to be tested within the next 72 hours. So can I just get the best mailing address so that we can send a kit to you?'

'Ok (gives address)'

'Thank you - and I just need to take a payment card so that we can finalize this and send the kit to you.'

'Sorry a payment card I thought this was all free?'

'No - I'm afraid not. There is a one-off fee of £50 for the kit and test results. Could you read off the long card number for me, please, when you're ready'

'No - that's not right. This is part of the NHS so there's no charge.'

'I'm afraid there is. Can you give me the card number please - this is very important, and there are penalties for not complying.'

Puts the phone down

This is how scammers work. And vulnerable people will fall for it.

Don't fall for it.

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Crisp packet collection update

Most of you will be aware that as a U3A we collect empty crisp packets that are taken to Rumbletums Charity Cafe in Kimberley to be forwarded for recycling. They receive a payment for this.

We collect at the monthly meeting (remember them?)

Currently we can't collect at the meeting and also they cannot forward the used packets as the pickups are suspended due to Covid.

However the process will restart so in the meantime, if you can, please hang on to your crisp packet mountain and we will arrange to pick them up from you as soon as the situation changes.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

ARTS & FILMS INFORMATION GROUP

If you wish to be included with the 150 other members in the circulation of the ongoing Arts Information Calendar each month, please drop an e-mail to alansnape@Hotmail.co.uk or ring me on 07940146542.

CHOIR GROUP

Would anyone like a sung birthday, or other, greeting over the 'phone for anyone? A group of choir members are willing to 'Ring and Sing' a greeting, in response to requests. The initiative is in response to our awareness that many lockdown birthdays have passed without much acknowledgement or celebration, some in solitude. As our outings are still restricted, and may be for some time, a call may still be appreciated, or it may be appreciated at any time. The knowledge that someone is thinking of us is usually welcome. If you would like to request a greeting for someone, or yourself, please contact me in writing, to avoid errors. The best way is via the website form, (under 'News' select 'Choir' and the form is within the text on the left) if you don't have email perhaps someone would send the email for you, or a note could be handed to me at a meeting. We should need the name and 'phone number to ring, the date and description of the event and, in case of a query, your name and contact details. On the day someone will ring and sing a simple greeting, 'Happy Birthday to You' or similar, and could pass on a short goodwill message. To all those members who have had a quiet lockdown birthday, we send belated good wishes, and if Ring and Sing proves popular perhaps you can catch us next year! (Please remember, we are choir members, not soloists, but prepared to have a go)

During this month we had a small music test, to recognize lyrics from songs in our repertoire. If you'd like to test yourselves the list is below, and as you don't have our music you can have the extra information the choir weren't given, there are seven songs featured. Only one member who responded got them all, so well done, Marilyn, that was brilliant, as even Google wasn't a help with the one that proved a problem. Here are the lyrics, I hope they encourage you to sing along: 'Far, far away someone was weeping, never've I once looked back to sigh over the romance behind me so I made up my mind it must come to an end. Near, far, wherever you are, when you're chewing on life's gristle, don't grumble, give a whistle, lie warm in thy nest, by moonbeams caressed. I know

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such enchantment can be, 'cause it happened one evening to me.' (If you have a go and are stuck and would like to know any, you could email me via the website, now that I've belatedly become aware of it!) Take care.

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

Once again, even though the Creative Writing Group has now closed, I thought you might be interested in the following which was first written in October, 2017.

Dining Out

The five elderly ladies sitting down for their bi-annual dinner glanced sidelong at their unexpected guest until the eldest, but not necessarily the bravest, cracked and asked timidly "Can we help you at all?". The person (whether man or woman could not be identified as he/she was wearing a long coat with a hood pulled well over the eyes) sat down in the remaining sixth chair. It moved its head slowly side to side and turned to glance over its shoulder at the rest of the room. It was early evening at Luigi's Restaurant, even the pre-theatre customers had not yet arrived and Luigi had placed the group in the furthest corner of the restaurant, away from the window tables and the central prominent tables. He had then taken their meal orders and disappeared into the kitchen at the other end of the restaurant where a furious argument seemed to be taking place, with much crashing down of pots and pans and raised Italian voices. The ladies looked at one another in fear and trepidation as the creature extended a gloved hand towards Agatha, handing her a rolled up piece of paper. Agatha took it and unrolled it, glancing at her companions, silently begging for their support, but they simply just sat there with confusion in their eyes. She looked down at the thick parchment-type paper and read the following words out loud to her friends:

"Just do as you are instructed and do not attempt to identify me. I shall be standing just inside the washroom door. When Luigi returns with your orders, just eat it without commenting on my presence. Then when you have all finished, come into the washroom one by one where I will be waiting. Do not attempt to alert Luigi or things will get difficult. You have been warned."

Agatha looked at the others to see how they were reacting. Timid Mabel did not look up from examining her hands in her lap whilst Florrie looked worried and shifted closer to Beattie, who was the biggest and boldest of the group. Beattie opened her mouth to protest but the figure rose from its seat and swiftly went around the table, pressing a gloved hand in warning on Elsie's shoulder. She gasped in fright and clutched her napkin to her mouth in fear.

The creature moved swiftly into the Washroom but kept the door slightly ajar so that they were still able to be aware of its presence. Just then Luigi came out of the kitchen, beaming at the ladies and bearing three plates of steaming food which he placed in front of them. He then rushed back into the kitchen and soon re-emerged with two more steaming plates. "Enjoy, signorinas, enjoy!". He disappeared back into the kitchen, as still no new customers had arrived. The ladies looked at one another and then at the figure hidden in the washroom doorway. "Well" said Beattie "we may as well eat our meals whilst they are hot" and she tucked her napkin under her chin and began to eat. The others slowly followed her actions but at the same time kept glancing at the figure in the washroom doorway.

The food was so tasty and they tucked in with relish as they didn't want to let it go cold. Then as they each finished their meal about the same time, they looked at one another in enquiry. Slowly Agatha picked up her knife and walked towards the washroom door. The creature opened it wider and she went inside. After a few minutes the others decided they couldn't leave Agatha to her fate so they too picked up their knives and went into the washroom. There they found Agatha chatting

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amiably with a portly figure, bald headed and wearing rimless spectacles. There was the cloak on the floor.

"Sorry about that, ladies" said the man "but it gets more and more difficult for food critics to get honest opinions from customers if the restaurant owners know a food critic is on the premises. Now what did you think about your meals?"



FUN WITH LANGUAGES GROUP

Our meeting today took the form of Kim's game in Italian. This was followed by a short passage read out and questions asked on it. Everyone did very well especially as this was the first of our group of sessions in Italian. And we were pleased to welcome a new group member also.

Zooming is a challenge but we are rising to the new way in order to keep everyone together, and it is so lovely to actually see folks and interact.

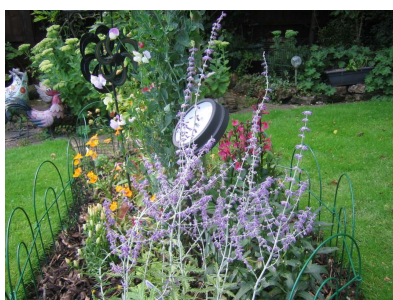
Our next meetings will be 23rd July and then 13th August all at 10.30. Zooming instructions will be sent out in due course by Email to group members. At present there are no instructions about things being any different. So keep safe everyone and practise Italian ready for the advert challenge on 23rd July.

Ann Murray and Liz Attenborough

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GARDENING GROUP

The recent rain has certainly helped the borders and pots to fill out and everything is looking good in the garden. But if you have gaps there are some good bargains to be had from nurseries and garden centres, and from online too. They are advertising late summer plantings and also ideas for autumn planting.



Now that gardens are opening up there are some lovely places to visit, but you have to book in advance. Some of the NGS gardens are definitely worth visiting.

Back in the old days there was a habit of hanging strings of onions in houses to keep it free of infectious diseases because it was believed that onions absorbed poisons. Now we know that onion and garlic have the power to prevent blood clotting and the build-up of cholesterol, so a very useful family to add to your plot. In the garden their pungent smell acts as a repellent to greenfly, rabbits (!) and raspberry pests. Having boiled the leaves of garlic or onion, you can use this water as a spray to repel scale insects and aphids, and to prevent tomato blight, bean rust and mildew in cucumbers. Carrots and onions grown together mutually repel carrot fly and onion fly, however for some reason peas and beans do not like having a member of the onion family anywhere near them!

Here are the answers to last month's little teasers: The nine letter words were

Shrubbery Dandelion Topiarist

The flower fans were

Don Prows - Snowdrop Liam Lace - Camelia Anita Corn - Carnation

Owen Furls - Sun flower Lisa Gould - Gladioli Ian Potties - Poinsettia

Lewis Seed - Edelweiss Russ Incas - Narcissus Lance Laud - Calendula

Pansy Louth - Polyanthus Geri Mature - Margeurite Sandra Pong - Snapdragon

Enjoy your gardening until we can meet again to share our successes and adventures.

Anne

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HISTORY GROUP

The History Group always welcomes all U3A members. Our indoor meetings are held at Central Methodist Church on the 3rd Wednesday of the month commencing at 2pm. Money paid for the trip to Richard III will be safe in the U3A bank until we can re-arrange later on. We are starting fresh in September (X fingers). Watch this space! I look forward to seeing everyone but in the meantime please take care and stay safe.

HUCKNALL BUSINESS ADVERTS 1887

Enoch Reynolds, Bill Poster and Tripe Dresser, Albert Street. Attends Market on Fridays.

William Thompson, Family Grocer and Provision Dealer, Boot and Shoe Manufacturer, Leather Cutter, Etc. High Street and Chapel Street. Established 1880.

The Gospel Temperance Prize Band is open for engagements. Terms on application to the secretary W. Belcher, Brickyard Road, Butlers Hill.

Peter Howis, Ironmonger, Watnall Road.

William Mellows, News Agent and General Dealer, George Street

Thomas Foster, Tobacconist and Stationer, Baker Street.

Clement Buckland, Family Chemist, High Street and Annesley Road.

The G. N. M. Bakery, High Street. Emigration Agents Office.

E. M. Walker, Hucknall & Nottingham, Carrier & General Dealer, Carlingford Road.

Joseph Watson, Sewing Machine Agent, Annesley Road.

W. Burton, Agent for Caldwells Oil Paintings and Photographs, Watnall Road.

J. Davidge, the Cheapest and Best Saddlery and Shoe Leather Depot in town.

G. Rhodes, the Noted Millinery Shop, High Street.

R. F. Jones, the Drapery Stores, High Street.

W. Evans, Chimney Sweep and Carpet Beater, Betts Street, Butlers Hill.

Go to Musson's for Drapery, High Street, Hucknall.

Musson's for Wools, Direct from Spinners.

Croft's the Clothier and Peoples Outfitter, High Street.

A. C. Andrews, Late Haslam. The Cheap Grocery Store, Portland Road.

H. J. Laycock, Watnall Road, Watchmaker, Jeweller and Tobacconist. Clocks, Watches and Jewellery Repaired.

Mrs. Benniston, Dress and Mantle Maker, Beardall Street.

J. Watson, Annesley Road, gives private Lessons in Shorthand. Terms on Application.

Rickett & Brown, Family Grocers and Provision Dealers, Watnall Road. Good Dividends Paid.

H. Mounteney, Wholesale and Retail Pork Butcher, Watnall Road.

W. Holiday, Saddler and Harness Maker, High Street. Repairs Promptly Executed.

Price Jones, Byron Street, begs to announce that he has commenced business as a Ready Made Clothier. Clothes made to order in the London Style, on very easy terms. Come and see!

This list of adverts is from The Nottinghamshire Free Press 21st January 1887

Do any of these people belong in your family tree?

What a wonderful surprise it was to discover the Command Tower was a grade II listed building.

T.T.F.N. Maureen Newton

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LUNCH GROUP

At long last I had my fish & chips brought to me by my son but do you know, I was ill afterwards, due, I think, to not having had any deep-fried food for nearly five months! Unfortunately I am beginning to think there won't be any Lunch Group activities for the rest of the year. I will let you know later about a Christmas lunch but obviously we have to be guided by government recommendations along with National U3A guidelines from the point of view of insurance etc.

NATIONAL TRUST GROUP

As you will be very aware the situation with Covid -19 is still so uncertain that making progress towards selecting dates for our planned trips is impossible at the moment.

The National Trust is very slowly opening up some sites, but at present bookings are only being taken on a Friday for the following week with very limited availability.

We will make a decision on the way forward in September but sadly it may be 2021 before we can resume our visits.

When we do eventually restart then we will still make Fountains Abbey our first visit.

As previously stated the cheques for the visit to Nostell Priory will be SHREDDDED but those of you who have paid your cheques will, of course, have your places reserved for the eventual rearranged date.

Thank you all for your understanding and patience at what is an unprecedented time in our history!!

If you need to contact Sue or myself at anytime please ring on 0115 9559842 or contact us by email at barriensaunders@yahoo.co.uk. Barrie Saunders

PUB QUIZ & LUNCH GROUP

Thanks again to David Rose who keeps us supplied with a good quiz on line each month.

The answers to last month's Crossword puzzle are given below.



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SCIENCE GROUP 2

The group met via Zoom on Friday 17th July and on Friday 31st July

The first meeting was rather disappointing as despite a practice session the screen sharing went awry. That could be the fault of the operator (me) or a technical hitch...Despite that Christine Vincent managed to tell us something about Rachel Carson who spent four years gathering research and writing a book. She named it Silent Spring referring to birds dying due to pesticides and the spring being silent without their song. The book was published in 1962. The book became very popular and brought the environmental issues of pesticides to the general public. Rachel didn't call for a ban on all pesticides. She advocated more research into the dangers of some pesticides and a lower volume of spraying. In 1973, DDT was banned in the United States. It is still used more sparingly in some countries to kill mosquitoes.

Alan Ratcliffe then spoke about hydrogen which is the lightest element in the periodic table. Hydrogen is the most abundant chemical substance in the universe, constituting roughly 75% of all normal matter.

On the 31st Bob Gow wowed us with the history and technology behind the Bestwood Winding House, a topic that deserves to be explored more and which will feature as a future article.

To finish Sue Tedstone shared some facts about the 3 species: African bush elephant, African forest elephant and the Asian elephant.

Elephants eat all types of vegetation, from grass and fruit to leaves and bark—about 165 to 330 pounds (75 to 150 kilograms) each day, which is about 4 to 6 percent of their body weight. They spend an average of 16 hours per day eating!

Thanks to all contributors. David Rose

WEEKENDERS' GROUP

No Weekender group activities again this month of course but we had truncated Coffee Club self-distancing get togethers at 2 pm on Friday, 24th July with four or five of us meeting in four different members' gardens, bringing our own fold up chairs and drinks. This was changed from Saturday, 25th because of the weather forecast. We have all kept in touch with one another and I have sent out a Weekenders July Newsletter to those on email, with a request for copies to be run off and posted through the doors of those not on email; thanks to the walkers amongst us who delivered the newsletter.

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HUCKNALL & DISTRICT U3A INTEREST GROUPS August 2020

For further details contact check the website at www.hucknallu3a.org.uk from there you can email the respective Group Leader

ARTS

ACOUSTIC GUITAR	1 st &3 rd Thursday 10:00
CHOIR	1 st Wednesday 13:20
	3 rd Wednesday 11:20
DISCUSSION	1 st Monday 13:45
DRAMA	4 th Friday 10:00
FILM CLUB	Thursday 12:30
HISTORY	3 rd Wednesday 14:00
NATIONAL TRUST	Various dates ×
READING (BOOKS)*	1 st Wednesday 14:00
SINGALONGA	3 rd Tuesday 10:30
THEATRE	various dates
UKULELE	2 nd &4 th Monday 10:00

ACTIVE WELLBEING

CYCLING	Every Wednesday 9:00
EASIER CYCLE	Every Friday 9:00
GROWING OLD DISGRACEFULLY*	Various
GRUMPY OLD MEN	Various
NOT SO GRUMPY OLD MEN	Various
KURLING	2 nd Sunday 3-5pm
MOVEMENT TO MUSIC	Thursday 10:00
PICKLEBALL	Thursday 14:00
SEATED EXERCISE	4 th Monday 14:00
WALKING (LONG)	1 st Tuesday 10:00
WALKING (MID)*	3 rd Monday 10:00
WALKING (SHORT)	3 rd Thursday 10:00

FOOD & DRINK

BREWERY SCIENCE & HISTORY	Various
GINOLOGY	3 rd Thursday 19:00
INTERNATIONAL DINING	As Arranged
LATE BREAKFAST	1 st Friday 09:15
LUNCH GROUP	4 th Wednesday 12:00
PUB QUIZ & LUNCH	2 nd Monday 12:00
WINE APPRECIATION*	3 rd Monday 19:30
WINE TASTING *	3 rd Wednesday 19:30

HOBBIES & PASTIMES

CANASTA	1 st & 4 th Friday 19:00
CRAFT 1 *	3 rd Monday 13.45
CRAFT 2	2 nd Tuesday 14:00
GARDENING	3 rd Tuesday 14:00
HOLIDAYS	various dates
KNITTING & CROCHET	4 th Tuesday 14:00
MAH JONG	2 nd Friday 19:00
POT LUCK *	1 st Wednesday 19:30
RUMMIKUB1	1 st Monday 14:00
RUMMIKUB2	Thursday 13.00
SCRABBLE	4 th Thursday 14:00
TABLE GAMES	3 rd Friday 19:00
WATER COLOUR	1 st Monday 14:00

WEEKENDERS various Sat & Sun.

LANGUAGES

FRENCH CONVERSATION*	3 rd Tuesday 10:00
FUN WITH LANGUAGES	2 nd Thursday 10:30

SCIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

SCIENCE 1	4 th Thursday 10:00
SCIENCE 2	3 rd Friday 10:00

*Indicates group full. If you are interested then contact Siobhan who will happy to help you set up a further group. Please be aware that some Interest Groups have a limited number of places due to activity, venue etc.

Group Leaders are normally available in the Board Room at the monthly U3A meetings to answer any questions that you may have about their group. Their contact details are displayed on the Interest Group Information Board.

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QUIZ TIME & A CHILDHOOD MEMORY

Last Month's Find the Name

Many of us like to feed the birds in the garden. Can you name the birds from the clues shown in the picture?



- 1) Pheasant
- 2) Curlew
- 3) Corn Bunting

- 4) Nightingale
- 5) Spoonbill
- 6) Kittiwake

- 7) Toucan
- 8) Kingfisher
- 9) Nightjar

- 10) Waxwing
- 11) Nuthatch
- 12) Magpie

THIS MONTHS QUIZ

THESE ARE THE FIRST LINES OF SONGS, WHAT'S THE TITLE OF THE SONG AND WHO SANG IT?

If there are several versions just put the most popular one or the others if you know them.

1. You don't like crazy music, you don't like rocking bands
2. The taxman's taken all my dough and left me in my stately home

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3. I see trees of green, red roses too, I see them grow for me and for you
4. Nothing you can say can tear me away
5. Everybody's doing a brand new dance now
6. You shake my nerves and you rattle my brain
7. Friday night and everything's right
8. Oh you railway station, oh you Pullman train
9. When I see my baby what do I see?
10. As I walk along I wonder what went wrong with our love, a love that was so strong
11. I want to be your lover but your friend is all I stay
12. Come on everybody clap your hands, oh you're looking good
13. Well he walked up to me and he asked me if I wanted to dance
14. When I find myself in times of trouble
15. You can dance, you can jive
16. Well baby used to stay out night long.
17. The moment I wake up, before I put on my make up
18. People try to put us down
19. We skipped the light fandango
20. It's one for the money, two for the show

Answers in next month's Newsletter.

Some personal research prompted by memories of a childhood visit to RAF Scampton, Lincolnshire

In the late 1950's my dad took me to RAF Scampton, just outside Lincoln. Him being from Lincoln with five brothers and a sister

He was drafted into the RAF into what he always called "The Last Lot".

There were two large hangers just inside the main gate; (This being the home of 617 Squadron {The Dambusters} that used Barnes Wallace's Bouncing Bomb)

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The hangers were named: LEAROYD and HANNAH

He said their titles were:

Wing Commander Roderick Alastair Brook Learoyd VC. And W/O Sgt. John Hannah VC

I have always remembered this and recently decided to do a little 'lockdown' research about these two men.

The RAF's Youngest VC John Hannah (18 Glasgow's first VC for Aerial Operations)

Many men and women were awarded honours and medals for heroic acts during WW11. A name that was synonymous with the word courageous was that of Sergeant John Hannah.

This honour was for his part in a raid on enemy shipping at Antwerp in 1940, He was attached to 83 Squadron (Hampden bombers) as a wireless operator and gunner.

With the Battle of Britain spitfires continuing to maintain their vigil in the skies over Britain, the Fighter Command was stretched to the limit.

On the night of the 15th September 1940, 83 Squadron left their base with a force of 15 Hampden Bombers, heading for a concentration of German barges at the Port of Antwerp as part of an armada to invade Britain.

As the bombers approached their objective, they were caught in the piercing beams of light from the searchlights, followed with a barrage of anti-aircraft fire.

Shortly after Hannah's plane had released its bombs; it was hit with shrapnel and bullets and rear fuselage exploded into a blazing furnace of fire and searing heat which quickly spread. The rear gunner had no option but to bale out, as the floor of the gunner's cockpit melted beneath his feet.

Hannah should have followed him out but stayed and fought the fire with two fire extinguishers which he rapidly discharged their contents, then continued to beat out the flames with his log book. Finally having brought the fire under control he joined the pilot to help him navigate back to Scampton.

The pilot, Officer C. A. Conner, was shocked to see the extent of his burns to his face and hands.

On arriving back he was quickly transferred to a Service Hospital in Lincolnshire.

At Buckingham Palace on the 10th October 1940, John Hannah attended the investiture for his award of the Victoria Cross at age of 18, the youngest recipient for aerial operations.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Roderick Alastair Brook Learoyd VC

As first pilot of a Hampden aircraft, he had repeatedly shown the highest conception of his duty and complete indifference to personal danger in making attacks at the lowest altitudes regardless of opposition.

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On the night of August 12th, 1940, he was detailed to attack a special objective on the Dortmund-Ems Canal. He had attacked this objective on a previous occasion and was well aware of the risks entailed.

To achieve success it was necessary to approach from a direction well known to the enemy, through a lane of especially disposed anti-aircraft defences, and in the face of the most intense point blank fire from guns of all calibres.

The reception of the preceding aircraft might well have deterred the stoutest heart, all being hit and two lost. Flight Lieutenant Learoyd nevertheless made his attack at 150 feet, his aircraft being repeatedly hit and large pieces of the main plane torn away

He was almost blinded by the glare of many searchlights at close range but pressed home this attack with the greatest resolution and skill.

He subsequently brought his wrecked aircraft home and, as the landing flaps were inoperative and the undercarriage indicators out of action waited for dawn in the vicinity of his aerodrome without causing injury to his crew or further damage to his aircraft.

His citation included this comment:

The high courage, skill and determination which he invariably displayed on many occasion in the face of the enemy, sets an example which is unsurpassed.

Albert Briggs

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