



February  
2021



Dear Members

As we welcome 2021, MKu3a still remains closed for most of our groups. The Trustees would like to thank all members who are continuing to support us by renewing their membership.

The Trustees meet remotely monthly to deal with any outstanding matters and our wonderful admin teams are working from home to ensure we have a viable organisation once we can resume our activities.

Our Open Meetings are well supported, and Lynne continues to book a varied programme of speakers which we hope will appeal to us all. A list of upcoming speakers is shown in the Diary area of the website and the information is also sent out by email. Places are booked by replying to the email and the access code is sent out the day before the event. Dave, our webmaster, is available to support any member who requires assistance with Zoom.

Our AGM is scheduled for March and to ensure our constitution complies with the Charity Commission Guidelines we held a Special General Meeting before the 27<sup>th</sup> January Open Meeting where for the first time we voted online. The amendment to our constitution which will allow us to hold the AGM either virtually or as a hybrid meeting, where some members are present in the hall and others join in online, was presented to the attendees, and I am pleased to announce that the motion was passed unanimously. 99 members voted online, and 7 proxy votes were received, these were all in favour of the amendment and therefore the total votes cast was 106. Our constitution will now be updated to reflect the change.

It is likely that under the present circumstances the MKu3a AGM will be held online via Zoom. The details of this meeting will be notified in due course.

We have received several enquiries from members following the message about our requirement for trustees to join the committee and those members were invited to attend our last committee meeting as observers. A further meeting has been organised to discuss the specific posts which we need to fill following the AGM in March and shadowing the roles

which will become vacant from March 2022. We would like to thank those of you are considering joining us.

The council continue to send me updates and are very appreciative that we let our members know as soon as possible. I have many replies with thanks for the timely information and I will continue to send them out as soon as possible.

We are also receiving notifications of events being run by our local u3a network, Thames Valley Network, which we send to all our members. The organisers are incredibly pleased with the number of attendees from MKu3a. These are a welcome addition to our own meetings and are also on a wide variety of subjects.

Best wishes to you all. Please stay safe.

Best wishes

**Lesley Sparks** on behalf of the Trustees

### MK u3a Life Membership

Do you know that life membership is awarded to MKu3a members who have completed 25 years continuous membership? Currently we have 46 Life Members.

We are delighted that seven members have reached this milestone at the beginning of 2021. We send our warmest congratulations to them.

Gwendoline Dawes  
Sandy Henry  
Sinclair Holm  
Robert Moore  
Brian Race-Stubb  
Vera Roper  
Ann Thomas

Life members receive a Life Membership card, and there will also be a Certificate to be presented to them. Normally the presentation of the Certificates takes place at our AGM in March. The Certificates may have to be posted to them if the AGM is a virtual meeting this year!

We hope they continue enjoying their u3a activities.

## New Members Induction Meeting – 15 February 2021

We are holding an Induction meeting on Monday 15 February for our new members. It will be a Zoom meeting starting at 2.00 pm and will be about an hour.

The session will outline the background to the u3a movement, explain how to get the best out of your membership with MKu3a and show you how to navigate around the website and join interest groups. If you have not used Zoom before this will be a good opportunity to gain some experience.

If you joined in the last few months and want to find out more about your MKu3a and 'meet' some fellow members at the meeting please send an email to me, Yvonne Ashmore, Membership Secretary, using the email address: [membersec@mku3a.org](mailto:membersec@mku3a.org). You will receive further information nearer the time.

**Yvonne Ashmore**

## Virtual Talks to Members

Restarting the talks in January there was always a query as to whether or not interest in these talks via ZOOM would be sustained. So far so good, for the first time we have had over 100 logs in to the talks, with many people watching in couples. I would estimate that over 150 members have watched each of the talks and in January the talks have been both exceptional and varied.

Our first talk was by Mark Dawson. Using his research into the Willoughby family and their household account records from 1522, Mark took us on a food themed journey of how people (gentry, servants and tenants) used the seasons to inform their eating and drinking habits. A fascinating talk, well supported by archive materials and relevant artwork and photographs. Who knew that cabbages were once a luxury item costing 5d and that after the reformation Lenten Fare was put in place to make sure fasting regulations stayed in place to support the fishing industry? I couldn't help reflecting though that my ancestors would have been eating salted herring and cheese.

This next talk was by John Fieldsend. It is very hard to give this talk the justice it deserves. John, who as a child was rescued from Nazi Germany with his brother via Richard Winton's kinder transport, shared with us some of his memories from a long, inspiring and humbling life. From having his playmates turn on him following the rise of the Hitler Youth Movement, to escape first to Czechoslovakia returning to Dresden to

embark on the train journey to England, to his life with his adoptive family, to finding out what happened to his family who could not escape, to his work as an ordained minister in the C of E and so much more. A modest man who underplayed his achievements, not even mentioning his award of MBE. John finished his talk with the reading of a letter to him and his brother which his parents arranged to be sent to them after the end of the war, heartrending. The talk and images evoked will live long in the memory.

We finished the month with a talk on Trinity House, which is often referred to as London's Hidden secret. Karl Lumbers provided it us with a fascinating insight into the work of Trinity House in protecting and supporting our mariners and sea-farers. We learned that Henry VIII awarded them with a royal charter in 1514 but that they can trace roots back to Deptford in 1115. Karl gave so many insights and information into changes over the centuries. Just one small example; we now know why requirements changed in 1801 from having two people on a lighthouse to three - a story of mystery and intrigue. From just a few of the photographs shared we could see what a beautiful and historic building Trinity House is and hopefully when things normalise we can arrange for members to have a guided talk through the building.

### **Talks booked for February 2021:**

**Talk16 - Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>** "Alan Turing the Real Imitation Game" speaker Michael Kushner

**Talk 17 - Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>** "Jewels of London's Museums and Art Galleries" speaker AnnaMaria Dall'Anese who some of you may remember from her talk on London Street Art

**Talk 18 - Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>** "Herbaceous Gardens, the perennial clematis" Speaker Richard Hodson – a well renowned speaker and Clematis expert

**Talk 19 - Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>** "Dark Light - the Flannan Island Mystery". Another welcome return, this time for acoustic duo Foolsgold with their show of songs and accompanying stories

If you wish to book a place then please email me at [vicechair@mku3a.org](mailto:vicechair@mku3a.org). Other future talks can be seen on the diary page of our website.

**Lynne Button**

## A Plea from NHS Staff

Please, please, please make sure you and your family all dig out your NHS number and have a copy of it immediately to hand for when you or are called for the COVID jab. From my colleagues on the front line this is far and away the biggest bottleneck when it comes to administering the vaccine to as many people as quickly as possible.

You can find your NHS number on any NHS correspondence or through the app. An NHS number is a 10-digit number, like **485 777 3456**.

Your NHS number is unique to you. It helps healthcare staff and service providers identify you correctly and match your details to your health records.

It would also be really helpful if you can share this message with everyone you know. Thank you.

Best wishes to you all and a very happy and healthy 2021.  
Stay safe.

**Martin Pollard**  
**Monday Sequence Dancing Group**

A HUGE 'thank you' is due to Lesley for the updates on Covid. They are so very much appreciated.

The emails are often ahead of notifications from elsewhere - and ALWAYS helpful. The green bin suspension is just one example. Enabled me to alert neighbours etc.

**Myra White**

I have found this group (joy club) on line and it has a good selection of activities for over 65s including fitness, crafts and interests. It offers 1 month trial free.

<https://www.members.thejoyclub.com/referralCode/aVekEpG2x0>

**Veronica Rowe**

## Thames Valley Network TVN Quiz

We are holding another Quiz for TVN members! Wednesday, 3rd February, 2021 at 2 pm on Zoom. Quizmaster: Avis Furness

Participants will be randomly divided into teams.

This event is free of charge for members. If you would like to take part, please send an email to tvnquiz@gmail.com giving your name(s) and the TVN u3a to which you belong. Closing date for applications: Saturday, 30th January. Your application will be acknowledged by email and you will receive your Zoom link a few days prior to the event.

**Neill Dewar**

## **MUSIC FROM THE MUSICALS**

**Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 10.30 am on Zoom**

Clive Aronson will be giving a unique insight into the musicals we all know and love. He has had his own radio programme (which he started purely as a charity one-off event during lockdown last year) which has proved so successful that he now runs it weekly with a different slant each session.

Clive will illustrate the music with clips, both visual and on audio. The session will be divided as follows:

10.15-10.30 Entry to the meeting

10.30-11.15 Music from the Musicals

11.15-11.30 Short break

11.30-12.15 Hooray for Hollywood!

The fee for the event is £3.00 per device. To attend please email a completed application form and make an online banking transfer, or send a printed application form together with a cheque to the address on the application form.

**Closing date Monday, 15th February 2021 (No further applications after this date)**

Confirmation of applications will be by email unless a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed. The Zoom link will be circulated a few days prior to the event. As we have had some problems with the Zoom link being received, please reply to the confirmation so that we can

be sure you are receiving the messages.

Further information from: Fay Sinai email: [fay.sinai@icloud.com](mailto:fay.sinai@icloud.com) To receive details of future TVN events, please send your name and preferred email address to [events\\_info@u3atvnetwork.org.uk](mailto:events_info@u3atvnetwork.org.uk).

## APPLICATION FORM

Please type or complete in block capitals – one form per device. Where two or more members intend to share a computer/tablet we only require one application but would appreciate all the names.

I/we would like to attend this event: .....

Full Name(s) .....

Email .....

Telephone number.....

I certify that I / we belong to ..... U3A

Date.....

*(NB forms sent from a personal email address do not require a signature)*

**Payment of £3.00 per device should, if possible, be made by bank transfer**

**Sort code: 20-85-73**

**Account number: 63159434**

**Account name: Susan Berry TVN Events Please use reference: MUS**

**NB: There may be problems with the transaction due to banks' own security rules. If so, please send a cheque**

I have paid by Bank Transfer YES / NO

**Please return your completed form to [fay.sinai@icloud.com](mailto:fay.sinai@icloud.com)**

OR return to Fay Sinai, 18 Mill Stream Court, Abingdon OX14 5XA

with a cheque made out to: U3A Thames Valley Network. Cheque enclosed YES / NO

**Closing date Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

Confirmation of applications will be by email unless a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed. The Zoom link will be circulated a few days prior to the event. **As we have had some problems with the Zoom link being received, please reply to the confirmation so that we can be sure you are receiving the messages.**

**Neill Dewar**

## On-line Quiz

If you wish to take part in a 20 questions on-line quiz every few days send your email address to [missquiz@sky.com](mailto:missquiz@sky.com).

## **Pat Hodges**

### **PILATES GROUPS 1 AND 3 ARE LOOKING FOR PILATES MEMBERS WITH PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WHO WISH TO IMPROVE THEIR CORE STRENGTH, FLEXIBILITY AND MOBILITY**

We are looking for new members who have had previous Pilates experience to join our friendly Pilates Group which meets every Wednesday at 09.30 am via Zoom. Unfortunately it is not possible for our instructor to teach new members via Zoom. So if you have done Pilates previously and want to keep up your fitness regime in the coming months you would be most welcome to join us.

Our professionally qualified tutor ensures we have the appropriate exercise and are doing it correctly.

Payments are made in advance for the term and are variable depending on the number of people committing to those terms, approximately £5.00-£7.00 per week.

Once we are back to normal, we hope to resume Pilates at the Kents Hill Community Centre.

If our weekly Pilates class sounds like something you would like to be involved with please contact one of the group leaders: Yvonne Ashmore, email [pilates@mku3a.org](mailto:pilates@mku3a.org) or Jane Gibbs [pilates3@mku3a.org](mailto:pilates3@mku3a.org).

## **Yvonne Ashmore**

## Ukulele Group

Towards the end of the first lockdown, we decided to try out Zoom to see how we can keep the group active. Although Zoom is not ideal for music, it at least was a means to communicate and try out some songs. This continued fortnightly over the rest of 2020 with a group averaging 10 participants singing a range of songs from our songbook.

This year we have decided to revert to our earlier format of combining some practice to extend our technical abilities and also take more time to learn new songs. We have extended



the session to 2 hours and also have several members willing to lead us through a new selection of songs.

Whilst it is frustrating not to meet together to hear the ukuleles and singing in a group, we are thriving and getting the motivation to progress.

## **Ronald Spalding**

### Laughter Yoga

We all know laughter is the best medicine and I have recently found a way to laugh even in these difficult times. A lovely lady called Suzy Harvey hosts on-line laughter yoga classes via Zoom, Monday – Friday 10.00-10.25 am. You don't need to be fit or agile, it's not actual yoga but it does use some of the breathing techniques. You can drop in as often as you like, each session is a stand-alone one. If you are up for being a bit silly and having a laugh, it will be for you. It certainly gets my day off to a good start.

For more information go to [www.everybodylaughtogether.com](http://www.everybodylaughtogether.com).

## **Eve Tigano**

### Winter Fun

It is a cold winters night, stars in the sky shine so bright,  
Whilst a silvery frost in the trees sparkle in the moon light.  
No wind, no breeze in the leaves, no chance of a storm,  
the first of the winter's flakes, each a miniature ghostly form,  
now float in the air, drifting softly to the ground, not a sound.

Slowly, a virgin white carpet creates then blurs smooth edges,  
drifts collect more height, eventually covering prickly hedges.  
Increasing in volume and intensity, each crystal unique to make,  
how deep will it be by morning when we finally emerge fully awake,  
Pathways to sweep, windcreens to scrape, find boots and gloves.

By afternoon the snow will have deepened, enough for a playground,  
children will build snowmen, throw snowballs, enjoy every sound  
Pure and innocent, laughing and screaming with their new mates,  
Sledges speeding dangerously, adults gliding on their old skates.  
Fingers and noses frozen, boots filled with melting snow, time to go.

Tomorrow the sun will rise above the horizon, warmth for a new day,  
The temperature will increase, melting, signalling the end of horseplay.  
As the snow reverts to its liquid state, small rivers will start to appear,  
landscape will change from snow white to green, there is nothing to fear.  
Short-lived, the Winter adventure is over! But it was great family fun...

### **Martine Guest**

#### Recommendation

I would like to recommend Gary who runs Help at Hand. He is a retired fireman who is now offering handyman work especially for the older person. He painted the outside of my house and did some gardening work. He has public liability insurance and qualifies as a Suitable Person. His contact number is 07932 745 662.

### **Stephanie Warren**

And finally, a last chance for some Trump jokes.....

On coronavirus: "We have it totally under control. It's one person coming in from China. It's going to be just fine."

Why is Trump unable to be hanged for treason?  
Fake noose.

Abraham Lincoln couldn't tell a lie.  
Richard Nixon couldn't tell the truth.  
Donald Trump can't tell the difference.

Last night there was an accident and Trump's personal library burnt down. This is a huge catastrophe because BOTH of his books were lost, and he had only coloured in one of them so far.

**Joan Harris, courtesy of Gloucester u3a**

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Please refer to the website: **[www.mku3a.org](http://www.mku3a.org)** for statements concerning **MKU3A Policies and Guidance** on all aspects of our administration **including Data Privacy, Disclaimers and Copyright**

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