



October
2021



Dear Members

A warm welcome to all current, returning, and new members as Mku3a is now open for face-to-face group activities for the first time for 18 months. Many members have taken the opportunity to attend groups and it has been good to meet friends again after the enforced break.

Thanks must go to our volunteer Group Coordinators who have contacted their members with news of group meetings. Out of courtesy please take the time to respond with an indication of your wish to attend.

Our popular Open Meetings held at the Oak Tree Centre in Shenley Brook End resumed last week and the website Diary booking system ensured we didn't exceed the maximum number for the venue. We are continuing to offer two speakers a month for the remainder of the year and beyond, one online and one in person so please keep your eyes open for the information emails sent to all members by Lynne.

We are looking for a volunteer or two to serve our refreshments following the Oak Tree Centre meetings as Libby Culshaw who has taken on this role for several years is now no longer able to continue. Please consider stepping forward – many hands make light work. Please contact vicechair@mku3a.org to volunteer. Our thanks go to Libby.

Hazel Spencer has volunteered to join the Groups Team and will now be the point of contact for discussing any proposals for starting new groups. We are always happy to investigate the possibility of establishing different group activities but anyone suggesting a new group activity will be considered the proposer of the group with the expectation they will work with the team to progress and promote the idea to the wider membership. Welcome to the Team, Hazel.

The change of name from Group Leader to Group Coordinator has been welcomed by many but unfortunately there have been several communications which have been less than complimentary over the change of title. All Group Leaders, as they were known before the change, were asked for suggestions and comments before we made the decision but only a minority responded to our request. Please remember all Trustees, Team Members, Group Coordinators, and Volunteers on the Day are all ordinary members of MKu3a who give of their time and areas of expertise freely to keep our organisation running and should be always treated with respect.

The Third Age Trust, our national body, is 40 years old in 2022 and has launched an initiative to plant a u3a 40th Anniversary Woodland on the borders between Wales and England in the Brecon Beacons. The target is to plant 5,000 saplings before the spring and are looking for members, groups and u3a's to purchase trees to achieve their goal. As soon as we have further details on how to purchase a tree, individually or as a group we will let you know. Individual trees are priced at £7.50 with a discount for larger purchases.

For new members, and for those of us who may have forgotten during the last 18th months MKu3a is part of The Thames Valley Network which is an organisation in addition to our association which promotes events, study days and training days. The address for their website to find out more is <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/>

The Thames Valley Online Events are very popular, and information is emailed to members as they arrive with us, but they are now listed on the latest news page too – so have a look to see if any of the online lectures are of interest to you. All details to book a place are given on the relevant page.

Unfortunately, during Covid several groups have closed, and others are now seeking new Group Coordinators to continue running. If you are asked by your Group Coordinator or contacted by the Groups Team asking if you will consider taking over the role, please give it some thought and contact groups@mku3a.org to ask for further information. The team are on hand to offer help.

Please remember MKu3a is your organisation, run on the self-help principle of, 'run by the members for the benefit of the members' and without volunteers we may cease to exist.

Best wishes

Lesley Sparks on behalf of the Trustees

Members Meeting and Talks

September saw our first return to a face to face talk to members which is part of our monthly members meetings held at the Oaktree Centre, Shenley Brook End. It was so lovely to see members again and with some a chance to put names and faces to email addresses.

But first in September we had a talk on ZOOM from Andy Smith with the title "Prosthetic Perils". Reviews I had read identified how entertaining and amusing the talk was but I will admit I did not expect to laugh quite as much as I did during the talk. An entertainer and a poet Andy shared with us some of his experiences since becoming a double amputee in his early thirties. A humble and inspiring man.

Our live talk was from Michael Brown who whilst sharing with us tales of medieval pilgrimage also highlighted tales from his experiences as a modern day pilgrim. A fascinating talk which Michael delivered dressed in replica medieval garb as worn by pilgrims, enlightened by him playing traditional tunes from replica instruments used at the time. Afterwards we were able to browse through relics Michael had on show, um not sure I was too keen about the relic relating to the execution of St Albans (if you are unaware can I dare mention popping eyes) and it was interesting to have an insight into the Pilgrims Way which runs from Bradwell, past the Abbey to Hanslope. A well received opener to our face to face meetings

Talks in October all starting at 2.30pm:

Talk 41: Wednesday 13th October: "Humanitarian Vision" by Jim Holmes, a documentary photographer who specialises in worldwide humanitarian and environmental assignments, Jim will share with us some of his experiences. This talk is via ZOOM.

Talk 42: Wednesday 27th October: "Walking the beat to Nirvana" by Mervyn Edwards, a retired Chief Constable who will share with us some of experiences from serving over 30 years with Thames Valley Police.

This talk will be held at our usual meeting place of The Oaktree Centre, Shenley Brook End. Doors open at 2.00pm for a 2.30 pm start. Please book a place for this talk as numbers are restricted. There will be a charge of £1 for members, £2 guests and coffee, tea and biscuits will be available afterwards.

As always talks can be booked directly by members by logging onto our website and going to the diary page or by emailing me at vicechair@mku3a.org. Please remember that if you book for a talk on ZOOM, I send out the codes on the Tuesday evening, if you book later then please let me know so I can send codes through to you.



Lynne Button
Vice Chair

u3a Thames Valley Network Events - By Zoom

A REMINDER of events in October 2021

Day/Date	Time	Event	Cost	Book By
Thurs 7/10	10.30am	Harvest Flowers	£1.00	4 th Oct

Tues 12/10	2.00pm	Everything Blue (Ashmoleum)	Free	7 th Oct
Thurs 21/10	2.30pm	Little Men in Red Hats	£2.00	18 th Oct
Thurs 28/10	tbc	The Music of Carol King	tbc	tbc

Please book electronically using the 'TICKET SOURCE' icon immediately below the event on the TVN website <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/> This is by far the best and easiest option. You will receive an acknowledgement immediately and the Zoom link two days before the event. More detailed flyers are available from the above website.

Always happy to hear from you about TVN events. Having these excellent opportunities via Zoom has been of great value to mku3a members. You can contact me at: tvn@mku3a.org

Brian Baldwin

Cycling – Up to 10 Miles

Now the summer vacations are coming to an end, our cycling group numbers are growing and enjoying rides out in the Autumn sunshine.

During the last ride we even managed to fit in a coffee stop at Camp Hill Café, which is still using Covid precautions.

On the ride we had a discussion about the format and regularity of the rides. Following the discussion I sent an email to the existing members of the whole cycling group with the suggestion we meet weekly, twice in the North and twice in the South of Milton Keynes. This will broaden the range of rides and give those wanting a short ride and who live in the South, the opportunity to get out on their bikes.

The response has been very positive, so we will try this format starting in October to judge its success.

If you are interested in a gentle cycle ride in the fresh air, why not get in touch.

Martin Woodman

Art Therapy

It is well known that doing some form of art is very good for our mental health. At Safari Health Hub in Bletchley there is a new session aimed at all levels; complete beginners, dabblers in art, those that are more confident etc. It is less about painting pictures and more about just having a go at trying out some shapes, colours, designs etc. I have found it really absorbing and a distraction from all the depressing news we have at the moment!

Below are a couple of examples of my early efforts! It is early days yet as you can see! All materials plus help and inspiration are provided by the excellent teacher.

For a free taster session contact info@safarihealthhub.com or call 07880 550011.



Eve Tigano

The Foodforthought group will be resuming face to face meetings on the third Wednesday of the month between 10.00am and midday at Carpenter Court, Neath Hill, commencing Wednesday 20th October, when we will be having a presentation on Ethical Eating!

Please note that seating will be spaced appropriately and windows will be open to allow fresh air to circulate (so please wear something warm). Masks will not be compulsory, but if you feel more comfortable wearing one that is perfectly fine, and please bring your own hand sanitizer.

Refreshments will not be provided at this first meeting so feel free to bring a flask of tea or coffee, or a bottle of water.

If you are interested in food and would like to join our group, please email Tina at foodforthought@mku3a.org.

Tina Griffith

MKU3A CHOIR



The U3A choir finally got back together “face to face” on Tuesday 7th September at the Cross and Stable Church in Downs Barn at 2pm. There was a modest turn out for the first meeting but over the last three weeks the numbers, which included a few new members, have risen as confidence has increased. We will be observing the covid protocols of the venue as well as sensible sanitisation of common areas and will ask you to either use the NHS test and trace app or give us a contact number in case the need arises and of course masks can be worn if members feel more comfortable wearing them indoors. According to the U3A guidelines “the register of attendees is members’ acceptance of their risk when attending”.

Obviously please do not attend if you have any covid symptoms or have been asked to isolate and we respectfully ask that only those having had two jabs should attend and we will ask for proof of the double jabs on your first visit OR show weekly proof of a negative flow test. Please feel free to enquire about joining us, via the website, as we start to prepare for our Christmas concert which will hopefully take place this year on Friday 10th December at 7.30pm at the United Reform Church in Newport Pagnell. More details will follow.

Hope to see you there.

Sheila Staincliffe (joint group coordinator)

AFTERNOON AMBLERS!



After many years as Group Leader, Ray Cockram is standing down. I am sure all the members are very thankful to Ray for his commitment to the Group and to MKu3a! Afternoon Amblers therefore find themselves without a Group Leader.

Afternoon Amblers is a fun, sociable walking group who often stop when they see interesting things. They walk for up to two hours on firm ground and redways. They start at various locations and their ambles are usually circular.

If you think you would like to wander round the redways of Milton Keynes and are interested in becoming the Group Leader, please contact the Groups Co-ordinator Team on groups@mku3a.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

Shirley Dewar

Willen Hospice Talk

Ever wondered about what the chaplain does at Willen Hospice? Maybe you would like to know more about the new cafe being built there.

Come along to Willen Church on Wednesday 3rd November to find out. 2pm start. Rev Steve Barnes who was chaplain for almost 20 years will speak to us and is willing to answer all your questions. The new chaplain for the hospice will also attend the meeting. Please make contact via the Exploring World Faiths group page if you wish to attend.

Linda Morris

Milton Keynes National Trust Association

The next meeting of the Milton Keynes National Trust Association will be at the Oak Tree Centre, Wallinger Drive, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes MK5 7GZ on 7 October from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. The talk will be the postponed talk by David Squibb on Malta. £2 for members of the MKNTA and £4 for non-members. The Oak Tree Centre is a well ventilated, light and airy place, hand sanitation facilities are provided and the use of face masks is a personal choice.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

David Romine

The former Line Dancing Group, led by Margaret Atherton, met for a reunion Afternoon Tea in September. The Group met on-line throughout the Pandemic to keep up their dancing skills. Using a WhatsApp account, appropriately called 'Our New Life'. They will continue to keep in touch and meet socially to maintain the friendships formed during their years of dancing.'

Pamela Coyne

A Recommendation

Any car problems whatsoever, MOTs, dents, all makes - my friends and I go to Andy Oil, 15 Barton Road, Bletchley. 01908 378008.

Really nice people, prompt, hardworking and reasonable pricing.

Libby Culshaw

Key Contact Details—more on the web site

Chair: Lesley Sparks email chair@mku3a.org

Vice Chair: Lynne Button openmtgs@mku3a.org

Secretary: Fred Bass email secretary@mku3a.org

Treasurer: Diana Sears: email treasurer@mku3a.org

Groups Facilitators: Chris Costello/Hazel Baxter: email: groups@mku3a.org

Web Master: Dave Barratt email: webmaster@mku3a.org

Membership Secretary: Yvonne Ashmore email: membersec@mku3a.org

Communications Co-ordinator: Simon Wong email comms@mku3a.org

Thames Valley Network Coordinator: Brian Baldwin email: tvn@mku3a.org

Please refer to the website: **www.mku3a.org** for statements concerning **MKu3a Policies and Guidance** on all aspects of our administration **including Data Privacy, Disclaimers and Copyright**

Office: 11 Winchester Circle, Kingston, Milton Keynes MK10 0BA.

Telephone: 01908 281717. **E-mail:** info@mku3a.org

Registered charity number **298693**