

The Third Way

The Magazine of MKU3A



October – November 2014

Open Meetings

Open Meetings are held at MKCC, Strudwick Drive, Oldbrook MK6 2TG starting at 14.00.

Last orders at the café are at 14.00.

22 October – Unmasking The Cock Lane Ghost by Ian Keable

As we approach Halloween, we have a speaker who will tell us about an 18th century ghost who made an accusation of poisoning by arsenic. This led to a media sensation at the time, resulting in the Mayor of London setting up a committee to investigate. Because the ghost communicated by rappings or knockings, she became the forerunner to the Victorian fascination in communicating with the dead through séance. However, one very famous man, Charles Dickens, was a vehement non-believer. Come along and hear more from our speaker Ian Keable and see whether you believe or not!

26 November – A Lifetime of Entertaining Children

Ernie Almond has been a children's entertainer since the 1970s. He's worked with various Royals, trained new entertainers and will give us a light-hearted talk about some of the funny situations he's



encountered. He says his talk ends with a bit of a twist – I wonder what that means? Whatever – I am sure he will make us laugh.

Milton Keynes U3A Trustees and Office Information from AGM 2014

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Please note that the copy date for the next issue is 8 November

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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Chairman's message

The inclusion of a picture, which will appear black and white in the magazine, will have provided our Editor with an opportunity to remind me he would like more colour. You can see this magazine, and previous issues, all in colour, with longer reports on the group pages, at our website, www.mku3a.org.

Autumn. It is nearly 200 years since John Keats wrote his famous Ode to Autumn. This is an opportunity to remind ourselves that behind the obvious quote there are many other words and images to reflect on at this time.

*Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too.
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue.*



How was your summer? Busy? You know those tasks are not over. The garden is still brimming. Autumn is a fine time to consider our gifts. Let us celebrate our lives, most of us have reaped many more years than Keats who died at the tender age of 25.

It is back to 'school' for all of us and back to work for your Trustees who have taken a major decision at their early September meeting to take another step forward in the development of our membership database by the introduction of *Wild Apricot* a cloud based membership system that will integrate, in time, all the data we hold about members, groups, halls, the web site content and our mailing system. We are following in the footsteps of a Yorkshire U3A, about the same size as us, who have been using this system for over a year now.

On 6 October, at our monthly committee meeting, Barbara Lewis, the National Chair of the Third Age Trust, will be joining us to bring us up to date with all the events at the AGM. We have asked for this opportunity to discuss some of the key issues where your Trustees are looking for guidance and the experience of other U3As, e.g. on future growth and the support and benefits offered to members. Christine Behrendt, our Groups Co-ordinator, represented us at the AGM which was held in Cirencester in September. It is my intention to make sure that all MKU3A members have a full feedback on all these issues by the middle of October.

Please, please read my note to you all over the page, on page 4, concerning Trustees Succession. To achieve all our objectives we need a strong team.

Thanks for your help.

Brian Baldwin, Acting Chair

MKU3A Trustees Succession

Every Charity needs an effective team to meet legal requirements, direct and manage the organisation, but most importantly look after the interests of its members. Our Constitution requires us to have a minimum of five and a maximum of 13 members. Call it a Committee or a Board of Trustees, they are the same people and the current team are as set out below with their service details and intentions, subject to many factors, at the 2015 AGM. Every year, on average, four of these people will step down having completed their three year term, or offer themselves for a further year to a maximum of five years' service. In the first instance we must turn to our Members to find the right people. Please fill my inbox with offers and if you think you can help in any way, Trustee or not, please just let me know or speak to any one of the Trustees below.

Chair – Vacant

Brian Baldwin is Acting Chair. It is vital that we find the right Chair for the next three years. Vision, direction and ensuring that we meet our goals, are the requirements.

Vice Chair – Vacant

Brian will offer himself as Vice Chair for a fifth and final year.

Secretary – Janice Miles*

Janice will continue for a third year.

Treasurer – Brian Baldwin

Brian will step down after four years. Alison Judd joined us on 1 September this year as Treasurer Designate.

Current Groups Coordinator – Christine Behrendt*

Christine will offer herself for a fourth year to support new systems. Then she will need a break.

New Groups Coordinator – Marcel Mallens

Marcel will be stepping down after three years. This post is essential to help new groups get started.

Webmaster – Mike Ballance

Mike will continue for a second year.

Magazine editor – Mike Ballance

Mike will continue for a second year.

Membership Secretary – Maggie Dormer

Maggie will continue for a second year.

Office Manager – Hilary Beckett

Hilary will continue for a second year.

Open Meetings Coordinator – Penny Jamieson*

Penny will be stepping down. Arrangements for the 2015 Open meetings are in place.

Publicity Officer – Vacant

We need to be a key part of the provision of social and educational opportunities in MK. Let's get creative and communicate.

Short Courses Coordinator – Tim Lee

Tim is designate until the 2015 AGM. There is a definite trend towards this form of learning activity.

**Those with an asterisk have experience of the GL role.*

I know you would wish me to point out that it is not just the Trustees who are important to the future success of the MKU3A. Several individuals are already supporting the Committee in a variety of ways and the GLs and their support teams at Group level are equally, if not even more, important.

We are a self help organisation. Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a U3A. Come and help us, please.

Please phone me on 01908 670 579 or write to me: chair@mku3a.org.

Brian Baldwin, Acting Chair

News from the Groups

Bancroft Park Musicians

The band of the U3A (The Bancroft Park Musicians) is now looking for a Trumpeter, an oboist, a drummer and a conductor. We play easy listening music, such as: *The Rose*, *Basin Street Blues* and a selection from *The Phantom of the Opera* to name just a few.

Please contact the Group Leader by e-mail: musicians@mku3a.org.

From 14 October there will be a new group leader, Marilyn Ridsdale.

News from the Groups

Theatre Group 2

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at Fulwell Court, St Ledger Drive, Great Linford at 10.00 on 2 October, 6 November and 4 December. All U3A members are welcome.



Milton Keynes Theatre Performances 2014 - 2015 are reserved as follows:

13 Nov	14.00	English National Ballet: <i>Swan Lake</i>	£26.00 (pay by 02/10/14)
20 Nov	14.00	Glyndebourne: <i>La Finta Giardiniera</i> (Mozart)	£25.00 (pay by 18/09/14)
26 Nov	14.30	<i>Calamity Jane</i>	£18.00 (pay by 11/09/14)
7 Jan	14.30	<i>Peter Pan</i>	£15.00 (pay by 24/09/14)
21 Jan	14.30	<i>The Full Monty</i>	£24.00 (pay by 07/11/14)
11 Feb	14.30	<i>Jersey Boys</i>	£24.50 (pay by 13/11/14)
27 Feb	17.00	<i>Saturday Night Fever</i>	£15.00 (pay by 04/12/14)
11 Mar	14.30	<i>To Kill A Mockingbird</i>	£15.00 (pay by 20/01/15)
25 Mar	14.30	<i>Woman in Black</i>	£15.00 (pay by 15/01/15)
1 Apr	14.30	<i>The Producers</i> (based on Mel Brooks' film)	£15.00 (pay by 15/01/15)
15 Apr	14.30	<i>Dance Til Dawn</i> (Vincent Simone/Flavia Cacece)	£15.00 (pay by 25/01/15)
13 May	14.30	<i>Barnum</i>	£22.50 (pay by 22/01/15)
10 June	14.30	<i>Dead Simple</i> (adaptation of Peter James' novel)	£16.00 (pay be 05/03/15)
17 Jun	14.30	<i>Spamalot</i>	£25.00 (pay by 12/02/15)
4 Nov	14.30	<i>Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time</i>	£15.00 (pay by 08/05/15)

Milton Keynes Theatre now offers hot and cold food which is served from 13.00 on matinee days and from 18.00 in the evenings. Orders are taken until half an hour before the show starts. Tables can be pre-booked by phone, tel: 01908 547 500.

For theatre outings, please contact **Jean Caley** at outings3@mku3a.org or tel: 01908 250 942. Please make all cheques payable to 'MKU3A'. Please note that tickets must be paid for by the dates given to us by MK Theatre, as shown above. If you want tickets sent to you, you must supply a stamped addressed envelope to Jean Caley.

Outings Group

The outings contact is Czesia Eales-Johnson, outings2@mku3a.org or tel: 01908 506 706. Please make all cheques payable to 'MKU3A'.

News from the Groups

Outings Group

Thursday 27 November: Salisbury Cathedral and Christmas Market

Bookings by 26 September.

'Salisbury Cathedral is the most beautiful structure in England and The Close around it, the most beautiful space'. A quote from *Notes from a Small Island* by Bill Bryson.

Discover over 750 years of history, including Britain's tallest spire, the world's best preserved Magna Carta of 1215 and Europe's oldest working clock, on tour with one of the volunteer guides. Built between 1220 and 1258, in one architectural style, Salisbury is Britain's finest 13th Century Gothic cathedral.

After lunch (at your own cost) explore The Close and surrounding area or indulge in some Christmas Shopping at the Christmas Market, which was rated as one of the top five markets in the country. **The cost will be £32.70.** The outing departs from Bletchley at 08.15 or John Lewis at 08.30. Return at 19.30 approx.

Thursday 4 December: Christmas lunch at The Cross Keys, Newport Road, Great Woolstone MK15 0AA. A £10 deposit is required by 2 October. Please contact the Group Leader for full details of the menu.

Thursday 19 February 2015: BBC Broadcasting House tour and Tower Bridge exhibition. A tour of the BBC's new London facility and the exciting world of broadcasting. Peek behind the scenes of the BBC's dynamic live broadcasting hub and hear what goes on at the beating heart of the BBC. Experience a camera's eye view via their big screen into some of the studios broadcasting to the nation, including TV and radio news studios. Learn how BBC radio drama is made. Hear about the rich history of the building and the BBC.

A visit to Tower Bridge Exhibition is the most exciting way to explore and experience the most famous bridge in the world. Watch a new animated video that shows why Tower Bridge was built, then walk into the high level walkways, 42 metres above the River Thames. The East Walkway houses the exhibition, 'Great Bridges of the World'. This photographic exhibition features over 20 bridges, each of which represents a breathtaking feat of engineering. In the South Tower, a short video shows the construction of the bridge, before proceeding to the West Walkway to view the new stylish exhibition, 'The Sixties'.

Continue on to the original lifting machinery in the Victorian Engine Rooms, complete with sounds and smells that transport you back in time to the Bridge's origins. You will also experience a virtual Bridge Lift, providing you with a unique view of the Bascules being raised. **The cost will be £35.70.** The outing departs from Bletchley at 08.00 or John Lewis at 08.15. Return at 18.30 approx.

News from the Groups

Countryside Ramblers Group

For those who like to walk further and faster in all conditions. All walks start at **10.00** unless otherwise stated. For safety, walkers should wear footwear with non slip soles, preferably walking boots, and bring waterproof clothing for all walks in view of our changeable weather. Denim is not recommended. Please bring water and refreshments for a mid morning stop and a lunch break (and sometimes an afternoon stop). Newcomers are very welcome. Please contact the walk leader for further information about each walk.

The walks programme is below:

2 October Leader: Adelheid Raque-Nuttall, tel: 01908 670 973. Meet in Harrold Odell Country Park GR SP956566. Distance: 9.5 miles via Pavenham and Sharnbrook.

16 October Leaders: Barbara and Phil Potts, tel: 01234 391 331. Meet in Ampthill car park off A507 GR TL024382. Distance: 8 miles.

30 October Leaders: Marilyn and Bill Ridsdale, tel: 01908 316 240. Meet at Cranfield by the church in Court Road GR SP956240. Distance: 7 miles.

13 November Leader: Jenny Greatbatch, tel: 01908 607 215. Meet in Sherington by The Knoll GR SP888465. Distance: 8 miles.

27 November Leader: Ian Turnbull, tel: 01908 667 404. Meet in Woolstone car park by the church on Newport Road GR SP875386. Distance: 7 miles.

11 December Leader: Jenny Greatbatch, tel: 01908 607 215. Christmas walk followed by a pub lunch, details later.

Transport Topics Group

Following the conclusion of the planned summer visits for 2014, the group will be meeting at Neath Hill on the fourth Wednesday of the month (except December) in the afternoon. Work is progressing on putting together a programme of talks and visits for 2015 and all members are asked for their input and ideas. The programme for the remainder of 2014 is as follows:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
24 Sep	The History of Airships	Neath Hill	Bernard Schooley
22 Oct	The Routemaster	Neath Hill	Ian Boden
26 Nov	Non-Aviation Gas Turbines	Neath Hill	Mike Allen
10 Dec	Films and Christmas Raffle	Neath Hill	

News from the Groups

Rambling Group

All MKU3A members are welcome to join the Rambling Group which starts a ramble at **10.00 prompt** every Wednesday morning with a brisk walk lasting about two hours. This is often followed by an optional lunch at the end of the walk.

Please respect our understanding that parking in a car park (CP) when we start at a pub with limited car parking space should be kept for those who intend to use the pub after the walk.

** indicates that food should be ordered before the start of the walk.*

The walks programme is below:

24 September leader: Alan Clarke, tel: 01908 510 504. The Barley Mow*, Cosgrove MK19 7JD. Park at the far end of the car park.

1 October leader: Michael Graves-Morris, tel: 01908 584 920. The Swan*, Court Road, Cranfield MK43 0DR. Use the pub CP only if dining, otherwise park nearby in the village.

8 October leader: Michael Graves-Morris, tel: 01908 584 920. The Wheatsheaf*, Main Street, Maids Moreton MK18 1QR. Park at the pub or in nearby streets.

15 October leaders: Barbara and Graham Fothergill, tel: 01908 866 522. The Lowndes Arms, Whaddon MK17 0NA. Park at the pub.

22 October leader: Michael Graves-Morris, tel: 01908 584 920. The Wheatsheaf*, 21 Station Road, Bow Brickhill MK17 9JU. Park at the pub.

29 October leaders: Barbara and Graham Fothergill, tel: 01908 866 522. The Three Horseshoes*, Drayton Parslow MK17 0JS. Park at or near the pub. **Note that we are welcome at the pub but they are no longer cooking food.**

5 November leader: Alan Clarke, tel: 01908 510 504. The Greyhound*, Haversham MK19 7DT. There is limited parking at the pub.

We will switch to our Winter Rambles on 12 November. Last year, we chose the theme of 'The canal' and this idea seemed very welcome. This year we have decided to continue to relate part of each Winter Ramble to a water item within Milton Keynes, such as a lake, pond, brook, lock, etc. Often this will form part of the ramble and occasionally rambles may overlap.

12 November leader: Michael Graves-Morris, tel: 01908 584 920. The Cock Hotel*, 72–74 High Street, Stony Stratford MK11 1AH. There are car parks in the area. Meet in the hotel.

19 November leader: Graham Jones, tel: 01908 606 315. Dobbies Garden World, Watling Street, Fenny Stratford MK17 9JH. Meet in the car park.

26 November leader: Michael Graves-Morris, tel: 01908 584 920. Broughton Hotel, Broughton MK10 9AA. Park at the hotel.

3 December leader: Barbara Fothergill, tel: 01908 866 522. The Tawny Owl*, Walnut Tree MK7 7AN. Park at the left side of the car park.

10 December leader: Graham Jones, tel: 01908 606 315. The Ship Ashore, Granville Square, Willen MK15 9JL. Park by the pub.

17 December leader: Michael Graves-Morris, tel: 01908 584 920. Toby Carvery, Burchard Crescent, Shenley Church End MK5 6HQ. Use the hotel car park. This ramble will be followed by a festive lunch for those who have reserved and paid for a place in advance.

31 December Informal, free walk from Caldecotte car park, for group members and their friends.

Please note that if you want to come to the Rambling Group Festive Meal after the ramble on 17 December, please register with a walk leader and pay your £5 deposit as soon as possible as there are only a few places left.

Tablet Computing for Novices (Androids) Group

Towards the end of June, about a dozen people agreed that an MKU3A group for learning how to use our (various) Tablet Computers would be a jolly good idea! Somehow, despite being a novice myself, I volunteered to be the Group Leader. I must be the first ever Group Leader who probably knew less about his subject than anyone else in the group!

The start of that first 'Tablet Computing for Novices' group meeting in July were probably the scariest minutes of my life so far! All these faces were sat round the room, and all looking at me as if I was a teacher, when all the time, I knew I was still the pupil. I just knew I had to try to satisfy many of their computing fears and tablet questions...

The original Group has now split into two groups, both meet at the Kingston Meeting Room, with one group specifically for iPads, and excellently run by Libby Culshaw, and the other, run by me, Richard Hubbard, for most of the other operating systems, and nominally called TC4N (Androids) – as the Android operating system is used by far the greater number of members in this group.

If you've recently bought, or been gifted, a Tablet Computer, and wonder how to use it, and think that TC4N may help you, then please e-mail either tablet@mku3a.org (for Androids) or tablet2@mku3a.org for iPads. Both groups are already near capacity, but tell us what you have and we'll see if there's a vacancy for you.

Richard Hubbard, Group Leader, Tablet Computing for Novices (Androids)

New groups page

If you are interested in any of the following, please contact The New Groups Coordinator, Marcel Mallens, newgroups@mku3a.org (preferred) or tel: 01908 618 609.

New Spanish Group

Is it time to start a new Spanish group for beginners? Are there any members with sufficient knowledge of Spanish to help a new group on its way with pronunciation and basic grammar?

Card Making Group

After a gap of several years, we again have a group with the title Card Making. We are hoping to find someone with expertise in the many aspects and techniques of card making to give guidance to the group.

New Family History Group

Is there enough interest to start another group? If so, we will launch Group 5. This new group will not compete with the existing Groups 1 to 4. If you like to research your family's past but have no knowledge of how, learning together will be fun.

New Quilting Group

Sarah Friedman, the Group Leader for our Dressmaking and Needlework group, is considering starting a Quilting group for quilters and anybody who sews. This group would meet for extended sessions of four to five hours so it is worthwhile to bring all the materials that are needed. No previous knowledge is required.

New Book Group

Is it now time for a third book group? If you are interested in forming or joining an additional Book Reading group, help is at hand.

New Climate Change Group

Are you interested or worried about Global Warming and Climate Change? Would you like to study and discuss the topic in more detail? We are checking to see if there is sufficient interest to start a new group.

New Bridge Group

We already have several bridge groups at different levels and locations across MK but all take place during the morning or afternoon. Is there sufficient interest in a bridge group that plays in the evening? I assume the group will meet once or twice a month and play 'duplicate and social' bridge at intermediate level. It is not intended that the group will compete with the many bridge clubs in MK (some quite serious).

Agatha had the answer

Record attendances enjoy TAP's latest production

The newest production of the Third Age Players (TAP) was generally acclaimed as one of its best ever. Across the three performances a record 300 plus people were in the audience, many of whom were first-time attenders. The large numbers took the group by surprise and almost caused a shortage of programmes. The play – Agatha Crusty and the Village Hall Murders, a comedy whodunit by Derek Webb, was presented in the Chrysalis Theatre from 31 July to 2 August. The play called for seven women and four men (plus a dummy corpse) and the group had a mixed cast of experienced actors and newcomers to the stage. The play was directed by John Greenall.

One interesting aspect of this production was a cooperation between TAP and another part of the MKU3A – the Advanced Photography group, some of whom attended several rehearsals and took some striking action pictures that contributed to wide media exposure in advance of the play. Apart from coverage in the MKU3A's own media – *The Third Way*, the MKU3A website and the national *U3A Matters* – there were pictures and reports in *MK Pulse*, *The Citizen* and *MK News*, and an interview with the director of a local radio station in MK, *Secklow Sounds*.

TAP took part in the MKU3A's showcase exhibition at the MK Gallery in March and also presented short extracts from the play in advance at two MKU3A open meetings in Oldbrook, as well as at a meeting of the Rotary Club of Bletchley.

John Greenall, the play's director, paid tribute to all who contributed to the play's success. "The cast were totally committed throughout the whole rehearsal process and there were excellent performances by all the actors, not least by the two leading characters played by Brenda Richardson and TAP newcomer Steve Martin, who both had to learn many pages of script. However, 'Team Agatha' consisted of more than 30 people, of whom only 11 were in the cast. Others playing vital rôles were handling such factors as stage management, sound and lighting, prompting, box office, front-of-house, scene shifting, obtaining props, costumes, photography, design, front-of-house duties and publicity.

TAP is not only for people who want to go on stage. There are many openings for others to offer their skills and time. Often they need not be involved until a few weeks before productions or even, in the case of front-of-house volunteers, until the production week itself. If you would like to join in the fun, camaraderie and satisfaction of future productions in any way, please contact our group leader, Frank Tynan, on 01908 368 436. At present we would particularly like to hear from people with an eye for stage design, an ability to construct and/or paint scenery, strategic marketing and publicity. An archivist who can draw together, from various existing documents and photographs, a record of TAP's 17 year history would be a great asset.

Open Meeting 30 July – Over By Christmas

Since our speaker, Ian Waller, came and gave us a talk about the lead up to WW1, there has been much on television and written about this period of world unrest. It was a time of great patriotism and the Britain Needs You campaign soon attracted volunteers who signed up thinking it would be Over by Christmas. Volunteers were mostly male in those days – they were influenced by peer pressure and by their women folk who encouraged them to join and made to feel guilty if they didn't enlist. It was also an escape from the high unemployment at the time resulting from the economic slump of the early years of the 20th century.

The country was coming out of the Victorian period and things were beginning to improve. Britain had the largest Navy and it wanted to protect its colonies and world trade. New technologies were starting to make life easier. The aeroplane was new, pilots would have only 30 hours training! Tanks, motion picture cameras, sonar and radar were all in their infancy but beginning to play a part in post Victorian life. The tea bag made its debut – what a great invention!

Against this background in Britain, Europe's borders were becoming vulnerable but Britain had links with many European countries through the Royal Family. It is common knowledge that the start of the conflict was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a young teenage Bosnian Serb called Gavrilo Princip. Between 28 July and 4 August 1914 when Britain declared war on Germany, Austria declared war on Serbia and Germany, France declared war on Russia and Germany declared war on France. On 5 August, the front page of The Times said 'Britain At War'. Even Kaiser Wilhelm II said to Germany's recruits "You will be home before the leaves have fallen from the trees". He too thought it would be over by Christmas!

Penny Jamieson

Open Meeting 27 August – Medieval Dunstable

Dunstable - who'd have believed there was so much historical interest attached to this rather unassuming crossroads of a town? Its impact on medieval times stretched far beyond Bedfordshire.

Jean Yates, who worked as Town Centre Manager for some years before retirement, gave us a fascinating and informative talk on her work on the lottery funded project she has been heading up, researching Medieval Dunstable.

The town has many surviving records including the Priory Annals. These are diaries which had never before been fully translated from start to finish. Written in Medieval Latin, they were kept by the Priory in the 1200s and are now kept in the British Library. Once translated by David Preest, the Annals revealed a huge amount of information, much of which was confirmed by discoveries of foundations of various buildings. They are not only the history of the Priory, but a most absorbing chronicle of the doings of the priors and townsfolk, local gossip and lawsuits, and of events in England and in Europe as seen from the standpoint of the Dunstable cloister. From the building of Kingsbury Palace by Henry I, where the Old Palace Lodge now stands, to the annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, Dunstable played host to kings and queens.

An Augustinian Priory managed the town and also owned property and land across seven counties. One of England's main centres for knightly tournaments, Dunstable, situated on the busiest of crossroads, was at the heart of Medieval England.

Dunstable Priory, founded in 1125, was initially a daughter house of Holy Trinity, an Augustinian priory in Aldgate, London. There is evidence of a school in Dunstable as early as 1110–1115 which eventually became part of the Priory. In 1131 the king endowed the priory with the quarry at Totternhoe and the lordship of the town, with all the privileges he had himself enjoyed when he held it in his own right. The Prior was thus the lord of the manor and responsible for collecting the taxes, which caused bitter quarrels between townsfolk and the Prior. Most of this money went to pay for the wars in France and Wales and sometimes payments to the Pope in Rome.

Dunstable was licensed for medieval tournaments and it is thought these took place on the lower Downs between Caddington and Kensworth. Tournaments, which were held as practice for wars and, as well as being attended by kings and queens, would have attracted many hundreds of spectators, much like our present day football matches. Jousting, which came later, was between two men on horseback. This is what we often see today at re-enactments.

Fascinatingly, the history of Dunstable extended into the counties of Beds, Bucks, Herts, Northants, Leicestershire, Oxfordshire and all the way to Derbyshire. The Priory owned land, churches, vineyards, farms and granges, and in Derbyshire, many lead mines as well. The mines were part of a gift which had to be confirmed by the Bishop of Coventry and the Archbishop of Canterbury, a sign of the importance of the gift. Peak district mines sent hundreds of tons of smelted lead to build Windsor Castle, the Great Hall of Westminster and the Tower of London. But how did they transport all this lead? The answer was the use of rivers and short canals all the way to the River Ouzel at Eaton Bray.

There is so much more to Dunstable's history as can be found in Jean's excellent book which will keep you absorbed for hours. Details on how to purchase the book are on their website at <http://medievaldunstable.org.uk>.

If this has whetted your appetite, you can take a trip to Dunstable and visit the Priory House Heritage Centre, Tourist Information and Tea Rooms which are at 33 High Street South, Dunstable LU6 3RZ. You can contact them by e-mail: prioryhouse@dunstable.gov.uk or tel: 01582 891 420.

Dunstable Town Guides offer guided heritage walks during the summer, and take private group bookings throughout the year. A popular walk is Ghosts of Dunstable which takes place at Halloween, Christmas and Midsummer, or at any time for groups. The Priory Church has a full history with a Church Guide.

Penny Jamieson

Recommendation

Recommendations in this magazine are personal and do not have MKU3A endorsement.

– a couple of recommendations from Lavinia Culshaw

1. If you need computer repairs, trouble- shooting, hardware upgrades, virus removal or any other amount of computer based issues, Leon at www.club-tech.co.uk is your man. There is nothing on my computer that he has not been able to correct. He is prompt, knowledgeable and can even build a computer to suit you. He explains things in a way that is clear and easily understood. Contact him on 01908 378 447 .
2. My garden is quite big and over the years I have had the assistance of Andrew Lucas and his son John. They come at the same time every week and they work solidly until they leave. Having cut the lawns and trimmed them they then complete any gardening job I ask them to do. They are totally trustworthy and reliable. I am often away for weeks at a time and I know that Andrew will not let me down. My garden is in good hands whether I am there or not. Call Lucas Landscapes on 01908 609 665 or 07802 828 703.

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Diary from October to December 2014

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15 October	Rambling Group: <i>The Lowndes Arms, Whaddon</i>	9
16 October	Countryside Ramblers: <i>Ampthill car park</i>	8
22 October	Rambling Group: <i>The Wheatsheaf, Bow Brickhill</i>	9
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22 October	Transport Topics Group: <i>The Routemaster</i>	8
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13 November	Countryside Ramblers: <i>Sherington</i>	8
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19 November	Rambling Group: <i>Dobbies Garden World, Fenny Stratford</i>	9
20 November	Theatre visit: <i>La Finta Giardiniera</i>	6
26 November	Rambling Group: <i>Broughton Hotel, Broughton</i>	10
26 November	Open Meeting: <i>A Lifetime of Entertaining Children</i>	1
26 November	Theatre visit: <i>Calamity Jane</i>	6
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27 November	Outing: <i>Salisbury Cathedral and Christmas Market</i>	7
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3 December	Rambling Group: <i>The Tawny Owl, Walnut Tree</i>	10
4 December	Outing: <i>Christmas Lunch</i>	7
10 December	Rambling Group: <i>The Ship Ashore, Willen</i>	10
10 December	Transport Topics Group: <i>Films and Christmas raffle</i>	8
11 December	Countryside Ramblers: <i>Christmas walk</i>	8
17 December	Rambling Group: <i>Toby Carvery, Shenley Church End</i>	10
19 December	MKU3A Choir concert, <i>see website for details.</i>	