

# The Third Way

The Magazine of MKU3A



December 2014 – January 2015

*MKU3A Christmas Party  
Wednesday 10 December 2014*

*2pm till 4pm*

*at*







*Lovat Hall, Silver Street*

*Newport Pagnell*

*alternative parking available  
in Station Road, Silver Street  
St John's Terrace, Queens Street*



## Milton Keynes U3A Trustees and Team Members

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### Team Members (not Trustees, but very much a part of the Team)

Maggie Dormer, <i>membersec@mku3a.org</i>	Membership administration
Alison Judd, <i>treasurerdes@mku3a.org</i>	Treasurer Designate
Phil Mountford, <i>data@mku3a.org</i>	Database project
Sue Giordino, <i>hallsadmin@mku3a.org</i>	Halls administration
Elizabeth McMillan, <i>pr@mku3a.org</i>	Public Relations

### Current vacancies

- Chair (Trustee)
- Vice Chair (Trustee)
- Open Meetings Coordinator (Team Member)

***Please note that the copy date for the next issue is 10 January***

**You can see this magazine, and previous issues, on our website in full colour**

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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

## Chairman's message

I attended the U3A Eastern Region 'Gathering' at the Science Park in Cambridge recently. Just to clarify, the U3A has a National Executive made up of regional representatives. Within the 12 regions there are local networks or clusters of U3As that do things together. In our case, the local network is called the Beds Plus Forum covering Bedford, Milton Keynes, Buckingham, Luton, Linslade/Leighton Buzzard and others.

The purpose of the meeting in Cambridge was to have a first look at the regional implications of the national strategy, 'Going Forward 2014–2016' which was launched at the national AGM in September. A copy can be made available to you upon request. The Vision, Mission and Principles of the U3A are shown on page 18. I was surprised and very pleased to find that the Eastern Region of the U3A has a strong team of Regional Volunteers. Typically these are experienced U3A members, ex Group Leaders, past Committee members, etc, who are available to help set up new U3As, run study days and provide support as necessary. Our local network and the MKU3A do not make any contribution to the regional volunteers or make use of the facility. Food for thought!

I have previously announced our intention to seek the views of members, through a survey, on a wide range of issues to do with growth, the range of interest groups, our financial and other policies. The objective is to seek the views of members on our way forward. We are putting together a first draft of the questions to be included in the survey and you are invited, indeed encouraged, to let us know what questions you would like to see in the survey. Do we look after new members effectively? Do the magazine and the web site meet your needs for information? Are the Open Meeting speakers right for you? Your ideas on getting the questions right would be most welcome. It is the intention to publish the results of the survey to all members in summary form.

As you can see the page opposite is a little different this month. The shape of the team is changing. We are recognising that not everybody wishes to be a Trustee and attend meetings, receive lots of e-mails etc. However, thankfully, there are people that wish to help, sometimes a one off task, or simply to offer their time and skills without the legal and administrative package. As a registered charity, we do need to meet the requirements of our constitution for the basic Trustee positions of Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and one or two other key positions. The members of the current team are shown opposite and we will get together socially and communicate using electronic means to keep in touch. The basic ethos of the U3A is a self-help organisation. We know the membership has a myriad of skills. Please step forward and join the team on a basis that suits you.

I would like to take this opportunity for thanking Penny Jamieson for her hard work over the last three years in the organisation of our Open Meetings. Penny has stepped down as a Trustee with immediate effect having secured a speakers list for 2015. I also welcome Dr Elizabeth McMillan who is joining us 'without portfolio' with a strong emphasis on public relations, perhaps internally as well as externally.

Very best wishes, please keep warm and safe as the colder weather approaches. I hope to see many of you at the Christmas Party.

*Brian Baldwin, Acting Chair*

## Advance Notice – MKU3A 2015 AGM

*All members are invited to attend*

14.00 Wednesday 25 March 2015

MKCC, Strudwick Drive, Oldbrook, Milton Keynes, MK6 2TG



Refreshments are included

*The meeting is followed by a talk given by Craig Fisher titled, 'Stranded in Gambo' a pilot's experience at the time of 9/11*

The afternoon will finish by 4.15 pm.

Nominations are sought for committee positions that will become vacant at the AGM. These include **Chair, Vice Chair, Open Meetings Coordinator** and **New Groups Coordinator**. Please contact Brian Baldwin if you would like an informal chat about the roles. The nomination form is available on our website (click on the AGMs menu button) or, if you do not have internet access, from the office, tel: 01908 281 717. The deadline for receipt of nomination forms is 11 March 2015, however it would be appreciated if completed nomination forms were returned to the office to arrive by 31 January 2015.

If you would like to put a motion to the meeting or you have a question to ask about the business of the meeting, please send it to the Secretary: [secretary@mku3a.org](mailto:secretary@mku3a.org) or by post to the Office to arrive no later than 25 February 2015. Motions received after 25 February will be deemed invalid. Meeting papers will be available on the website by 4 March 2015.

*Janice Miles, secretary*

## 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 4 December, 5 February, 5 March, 2 April, 7 May, 4 June, 6 August, 3 September, 1 October, 5 November and 3 December.

All U3A members are welcome.



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

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 **Czesia Eales-Johnson** at [outings2@mku3a.org](mailto:outings2@mku3a.org) or tel: 01908 506 706. 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, please supply a stamped and addressed envelope to Czesia Eales-Johnson.

### *Outings Group*

**Thursday 19 March: Tour of the Mini plant at Cowley, Oxford and Oxford City.**

#### **Bookings by 6 December 2014**

A two and a half hour tour of the Mini car plant. Oxford is the birthplace and heart of Mini production. Manufactured to individual customer specifications, hundreds of Minis leave the plant's assembly lines each day, off to meet new owners in 108 countries around the world. Three UK plants have had a part to play in Mini production: Hams Hall Plant makes engines. The Swindon plant produces body pressings and sub-assemblies. This all comes together at the Oxford plant with body shell production, paint and final assembly.

Depart from the Mini plant for Oxford City for lunch (at own expense) and free time for some sightseeing, such as at the university, the Bodleian Library, Ashmolean Museum, Pitt Rivers Museum, etc. **The cost is £28.00** and the outing departs from Bletchley at 07.45 or from John Lewis at 08.00. Return at 17.30 approx.

## News from the Groups

### *Outings Group*

Tentative future dates and venues for your diaries (to be confirmed)

16 April – Polesden Lacey

21 May – Trentham Gardens and Wedgewood

18 June – Dudley Canal Tunnel and Ruskin Glass Centre at Stourbridge

2 July – Hampton Court Flower Show - CONFIRMED

20 August – Sezincote

11 September – Ludlow Food Festival

15 October – BBC Tour and Tower Bridge Exhibition

19 November – Choc and Steam: Cadbury's World

The outings contact is Czesia Eales-Johnson, [outings2@mku3a.org](mailto:outings2@mku3a.org) or tel: 01908 506 706.

Please make all cheques payable to 'MKU3A'.

### *Art Appreciation Group*

The Art Appreciation group has now entered its fourth year and continues to flourish with a full complement of members. We held an open meeting at the MK Gallery Project Space in March looking at the topic, 'Art is Everywhere'. Our meetings have looked at the works of Charles Tunnicliffe who was a water colourist and book illustrator with the help of Margaret Young. We have compared the works of Hogarth from the Eighteenth Century with the contemporary work of Grayson Perry. Some members of the group visited the Fitzwilliam Museum and Art Gallery in Cambridge in July and enjoyed looking at the varied art collection on display. Presentations have been given by group members and we continue to look at a wide variety of artists and styles. Our November meeting looked at the art from World War I and we look forward to 2015 when another mixed bag of topics will be presented.

*Yve Morris, Group Leader*

### *Introduction to Economics Group*

"What are they really doing with our money?" Members of the Introduction to Economics Group aim to try to answer that question from both a national and an international perspective. Originating in one member's frustration in trying to understand a letter from her M.P. on an economic issue, group members bring topics from the internet, The Economist or other topical articles and then endeavour to understand them! Our conversation is light hearted and relaxed. It's fine to say, "we don't know!". Nobody is an expert, we just enjoy learning a bit more together. We have a few vacancies.

The group meets on the last Wednesday of the month in the morning at Kingston. Please contact the Group Leader, tel: 01908 564 870 if you want to join in.

*Jan Brunwin*

## News from the Groups

### *Musicians Group*

The players in the music group led by Sylvia McMath would like to thank her for all the work she has done. Sylvia left recently after 13 years and for many of those years she was the Group Leader. As her last activity with the group, Sylvia played with us at our latest performance, a concert of singing and instrumental music for Bucks Vision, at Heron Lodge. We welcome enquiries from any potential new members. We encourage anyone who has not played their instrument for a long time, or is trying out a second instrument or has not played with others before to get in touch. And if you have done all of these, we welcome you too.

### *Gardening Group 3*

The new Group Leader for Gardening Group 3 is Shona Hall, tel: 01908 616 465 or e-mail: [gardening3@mku3a.org](mailto:gardening3@mku3a.org)

### *Cycling Group*

Our cycling group, the Free Wheelers, now regularly rides between 20 and 30 miles with a nice break for refreshments. We have been riding in and around MK for a couple of years and visited places such as Stowe Gardens, Leighton Buzzard, Carlton, Stewartby and Winslow. It has however become clear that for several members this would be too much to start with, after several years of not riding. We will therefore be starting a subgroup of the Free Wheelers that will start with 3 to 6 miles, slowly increasing to riding the millennium route round MK using Redways only.

The subgroup will meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month and the first meet will be on 9 December at Granville Square, Willen. This is next to The Ship Ashore pub, or very close to the V10 roundabout with the H4. There is plenty of parking space for those who come by car. We will start at 10.30 and ride round Willen Lake to the café near the children's play area. Please let Marcel know that you are coming so he can look out for you. His number is 07711 475 261. The ride will be cancelled if the weather is bad.

### *Quilting and Needlecraft Group*

The Group Leader for the new group, Quilting and Needlecraft, is Sarah Friedman, tel: 01908 560 714, e-mail: [quilting@mku3a.org](mailto:quilting@mku3a.org). Meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month in the morning at Giffard Park. No prior knowledge required but please bring your own machine and materials.

### *Painters Progress Group*

The new Group Leader for Painters' Progress is Sandra Oxley: [paintersprogress@mku3a.org](mailto:paintersprogress@mku3a.org).

## News from the Groups

### *Shakespeare Group*

"All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players."

Do you know how many plays Shakespeare wrote? Did he write them at all? From where did his amazing knowledge of human nature emerge? What about the sonnets, all one hundred and fifty-four of them? What was his target audience? How on earth did he fit so much into his adult life of around 25 years? How did he get to know about the Elizabethan court? What did he and his friends eat, wear and sit on?

*Interested?*

The aim of our new group is to broaden our knowledge of Shakespeare through the plays and poems and what we know of his life. We are also interested in a wider exploration of what it was like to live in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. This was a period of great change and growth for England. At 25 years old, Elizabeth took over an ailing and poverty-ridden nation. In her forty-five years on the throne, the country was transformed until it was considered to be one of the most peaceful and prosperous reigns in history. It was also a time of plots and conspiracies and we plan to look at both the personal and the political in Shakespeare's work.

We are full of ideas and enthusiasm and hope to spend time on some or all of the following: Play reading, play watching, talking about the plays and their characters, delight in the language (including working out what the words are actually saying), the clothes, architecture, travel, social customs, politics of the time, food and drink (no tea!) and Shakespeare's contemporaries, group visits to theatre/cinema and music.

These are the ideas we have come up with initially. You don't have to be well acquainted with the plays already. We are all hoping to increase our knowledge, love and enjoyment of his work, whatever our starting points.

If you would like to sample our wares, we meet in Newport Pagnell in the morning on the fourth Monday of the month, except December. A hearty welcome from us all. Please contact the Group Leader, Patricia Harris, tel: 01908 666 117 or e-mail: [shakespeare@mku3a.org](mailto:shakespeare@mku3a.org).

### *Choir Group Christmas Concert*

This year the MKU3A Choir Christmas Concert is on Friday 19 December at 19.30 at the United Reformed Church in Newport Pagnell. We are raising funds for the Milton Keynes Hospital Charity, with a special focus on children's A&E services. Tickets are £6 including refreshments. There will also be a raffle on the night. It is always best to buy tickets in advance as we usually sell out before the night itself.

Tickets can be obtained from Janice Miles, tel: 07762 178 379.



## News from the Groups

### *Book Group 2*

Book group 2 is seeking additional members. The selection of books is wide ranging and each invariably provokes a relaxed and convivial discussion. The monthly meetings are hosted by members in their homes. If you are interested in joining us, in the first instance please contact the Group Leader, Keith Tipping, tel: 01908 290 422.

### *Card Making Group*

After a gap of several years, we again have a group with the title, 'Card Making'. We all enjoy making cards, and at the moment are sharing what knowledge we have with each other. However, we are hoping to find someone with more expertise in the many aspects and techniques of card making to give us more guidance. We meet on the first and third Mondays of the month in the afternoon at Kingston and would welcome new members, whether or not you have made cards before. For more information, please contact the Group Leader, Pat Mountford, by e-mail: [cards@mku3a.org](mailto:cards@mku3a.org). There is also a sub-group which meets on the second and fourth Mondays in the afternoon at Coffee Hall.

### *Climate Change Group*

This group meets on the second Thursday of the month in the morning at Campbell Park. No prior knowledge is required, but an interest in the climate and what we humans are doing to it, will help. Please contact the Group Leader, Hilarie Bowman, tel: 01908 232 557.

### *Spanish for Beginners*

As mentioned in the last issue of our magazine, we are forming a new group, 'Spanish for Beginners'. We have a tutor and a Group Leader as well as a venue. The first three sessions are booked for 3, 10 and 17 December in the afternoon at Bow Brickhill. There are still some places left, so you can start from the beginning with the other members. Please contact Marcel or check on the website for the contact details of this new group.

### *Transport Topics Group*

On 2 November Mike Allen gave a talk on Gas Turbines as applied to non-aviation transport. This will be followed at the same venue by our usual pre-Christmas films and raffle party at our December meeting. Every attendee should bring a raffle prize. We start 2015 with our annual lunch at the Toby Carvery, Shenley Church End on 28 January at 12 for 12:30pm. The full programme for 2015 will be posted on the Transport Topics Group page of our website at [www.mku3a.org/](http://www.mku3a.org/), as soon as it is finalised.

## 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.*

The walks programme is as follows:

**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 members and their friends.

**7 January 2015** Leader: Graham Jones, tel: 01908 606 135 (to be confirmed).

Old Beams, Paxton Crescent MK5 7AE.

**14 January** Leader: Barbara Fothergill, tel: 01908 866 522.

The Prince Albert, 17 Vicarage Road, Bradwell Village MK13 9AG.

**21 January** Leader: Alan Perry, tel: 07873 161 586.

The Talbot, 3 London Road, Loughton MK5 8AB.

**28 January** Leader: Alan Clarke, tel: 01908 510 504.

The Nut and Squirrel, 1 Barnsdale Drive, Westcroft MK4 4DD.

**4 February** Leader: David Bowler, tel: 01908 282 535.

Caldecotte Arms, Bletcham Way, Caldecotte MK7 8HP.

**11 February** Leader: Alan Perry, tel: 07873 161 586.

The Barge Inn, 15 Newport Road, Woolstone MK15 0AE.

**18 February** Leader: Sue Dormer (to be confirmed).

Ye Olde Swan, Newport Road, Woughton on the Green MK6 3BS.

## Proposed New Groups

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

### *Chess Group*

Chess is a two-player strategy board game played on a chequered gameboard, with 64 squares arranged in an eight-by-eight grid. It is one of the world's most popular games, played by millions of people worldwide. We used to have a chess group but it ceased. We are looking at restarting it so please inform Marcel of your interest.

### *Italian for beginners*

The two Italian groups are no longer suitable for beginners and are also fully subscribed, so we should start a new group more suited for novices. Please inform Marcel of your interest, as a student or as a teacher. The latter is needed mainly for pronunciation as the group will follow a book for content.



### *Scrapbooking Group*

If making a scrapbook is something you would like to learn about, or if you already do this, now is your chance to join a new group.

### *Whist Group*

Whist is a classic English trick-taking card game played for centuries. Are you interested in playing this game? if so you should contact Marcel. If sufficient members come forward a new group can be formed. The minimum number is four but the more the merrier.

## Forthcoming Open Meetings

### *28 January – Introduction to Beekeeping*



Wally Thrale, known as the Honey Man, is Secretary of Bedfordshire Beekeepers. He will talk to us about everything there is to know about bees, their life cycle, swarming, pollinating and collecting the delicious honey. One of his accolades is supplying Paris House, but you won't have to go to Paris House to taste his honey as he will be bringing some along for us to buy.

### *25 February – The Training and Use of Police Dogs*

Today we welcome an operational Police Dog Handler who's been with Hertfordshire Constabulary for 17 years. Not only has Len Little served in Hertfordshire but has also been Honorary Inspector of Dog Training for the German Customs Service.



### *25 March: AGM – followed by Stranded in Gambo*



On a routine business trip to the USA, pilot Craig Fisher and the rest of his flight were unaware of what had happened in New York on 11 September 2001 – until they landed in Gander. Within 20 minutes, the local population was almost doubled by the arrival of airliners from around the world, who were to be stranded in the Canadian backwater for a week.

### *22 April – Medical Records In A Digital Age*

Dr Rupert Fawdry, a retired obstetrician with MK Hospital, who qualified over 50 years ago, intends to stimulate our thinking about the advantages and dangers of current IT within the healthcare sector. A thought-provoking afternoon on a subject which affects us all.



### *Open Meeting Charges*

We have had a very successful first year at MKCC and received many compliments about the new venue. We decreased the price a year ago to attract more members. We have now reviewed this and the Trustees have agreed that the entrance fee from January 2015 should be £1 for members and £2 for non members. We look forward to your continued support at the Open Meetings and hope you still feel they are extremely good value.

*Penny Jamieson*

### *Thank you*

A Big Thank You to the Advanced Photography Group. Those of you who attended the Open Meeting on 22 October, would have seen the wonderful photographs taken by members of the Advanced Photography Group. Special thanks go to Dave Barratt for putting the display together. The standard was amazing, there is such a wealth of talent in MKU3A!

If any of the Groups would like Dave to arrange for photographs to be taken, he is more than pleased to do so. You can contact him on [dave@bubblor.co.uk](mailto:dave@bubblor.co.uk) or tel: 01908 569 553.

*Penny Jamieson*

## **Other News**

### *Future Learn*

If you have a computer, you also have access to a wide range of free online courses under the title, 'Future Learn'. This high quality project, now more than a year in existence, is offered by 40 universities worldwide (mostly British) and other cultural institutions such as the British Museum. At present there are 133 courses lasting typically between three and ten weeks, covering topics as diverse as arts, business, law, leisure, politics and many more. A lot of the courses take up no more than three hours of your time per week. The programme requires no entrance qualifications. There are no essays to write, no exams to take. If you wish to study alone that is fine but there is also a facility to share your experiences, comments and questions online with other students and with the tutors. The subjects can be studied in as shallow or great a depth as suits your needs. Signing on is simple and straightforward. Just go to [www.futurelearn.com](http://www.futurelearn.com) and make your choice.

### *Milton Keynes Aviation Society*

The Society meets monthly at Kents Hill on the second Tuesday at 19.30. On 9 December the topic will be The Air France Concorde Crash. Their website at [www.mkas.co.uk](http://www.mkas.co.uk) gives more information, including visits to RAF and USAF bases, special events, manufacturers, museums, etc. Membership costs £22 a year and donations are welcome at the monthly meetings. Visitors are welcome at individual lectures for £3. For more information, please contact the Chairman, Andy Cornwell, tel: 01296 720 793.

## Other News

### *WEA Course*

The Workers' Educational Association is running a course titled, **Lost to Art History Part 2: The story of Caravaggio**. The tutor will be Kate Phillips and the cost is £40. The course runs on Mondays from 23 February till 23 March 2015 from 10.30 to 12.30. The venue is Stony Stratford Library, 5-7 Church Street, Stony Stratford MK11 1BD.

To register, contact Jeannine Golding, 7 Latimer, Stony Stratford MK11 1HP. Contact her by phone, tel: 01908 567 869 or by e-mail: [jeannine.golding@btinternet.com](mailto:jeannine.golding@btinternet.com).

### *Denbigh School STEM Lectures*

Lectures take place at the SF Block in Denbigh School on Thursday afternoons, starting at 15.15. They last about 45 minutes, with some time for questions at the end. If you wish to go to one of these lectures, you need to book a place by phone, tel: 01908 330 529 or by e-mail: [makkia@denbigh.net](mailto:makkia@denbigh.net).

**11 December 2014** – *From Signals to Perception: The Science of the Senses* by Dr Ellie Dommert of The Open University. Have you ever wondered how we really perceive the world around us and interact with it successfully? This lecture will describe how our sensory systems enable us to perceive our environment using information from sensory stimuli, cues and expectations.

**18 December 2014** – *Molecules and Murder* by Prof John Nicholson of St Mary's University. This lecture covers the subject of chemistry poisons and also the use of poisons by criminals. It begins by considering the general topic of poisons, including their most frequent mode of action. It goes on to consider specific poisons, and cases in which they appeared, and also how the murderer was brought to justice.

**8 January 2015** – *Nanotechnology for Delivering Therapeutic Agents Into the Brain* by Prof David Male of The Open University. More than 95% of the drugs that could potentially be used for treating neurological disorders and brain tumours do not pass from the blood into the brain. A physiological system that protects the brain from foreign or toxic molecules prevents their transport.

**15 January 2015** – *The STEM of Music* by Dr Paul Ganney of University College, London. "I don't know anything about music. In my line, you don't have to." — Elvis Presley! Music is art and not science. Sort of. Well, not at all, really. It's really set theory. Boyle's Law, Fleming's Rule, Fourier transforms, hot electrons; and it almost got ruined completely by Pythagoras.

## Open Meeting 24 September – Life in the Music

What a lovely, melodious afternoon we had on 24 September. Andy Smith serenaded us with a dozen or so songs, some he had written himself and some were familiar. He used a myriad of guitars which he displayed on the stage, each with its unique sound.



He took the journey of his life for the theme of the afternoon and started with an amusing melody about a baby. He then took us to the circus and sang a song called Big Top which he played on a boat mandolin. This was followed by his ovation guitar, which he referred to as his work horse and he sang a song about a little girl of six who lived next door when he was four, all very sweet. *Leaving On A Jet Plane* was played on his tenor guitar and we all had a go at singing along with this one.

We joined him in memories from his teenage years, from the time he discovered alcohol through to when he started going to Folk Clubs. At a folk club at the Dun Cow public house in Daventry, he met Jake Thackray who asked him to sing.

In 1983 he caught the eye of a pretty young waitress at a Barn Dance. Much to his surprise she agreed to visit him in Rugby and 31 years later she is his wife, shopping in Milton Keynes while he is singing to us! Their courtship suffered times of separation when he wrote "Wish You Were With Me Tonight" - another song he included in his repertoire for us. He concluded the afternoon where he began, with a song for babies, this one was a lullaby written for his two children. We didn't know the words but we joined him in singing lots of La La La La's.....

Andy has a relative who suffers with Cystic Fibrosis. He asked me to pass on his thanks to our members for raising just over £60 (from the CD sales and donations) for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust – which he described as excellent.

*Penny Jamieson*

## Open Meeting 22 October – Unmasking the Cock Lane Ghost



At the Open Meeting in October, we listened eagerly as Ian Keable unfolded the tale of the Cock Lane Ghost. A true story of a haunting that attracted mass public attention in 1762. The location was an apartment in Cock Lane, a short road adjacent to Smithfield market. The event centred on three people: William Kent, a usurer from Norfolk; Richard Parsons, a parish clerk, and the daughter of Richard Parsons called Elizabeth.

Following the death during childbirth of William Kent's wife, he became romantically involved with her sister, Fanny. In those days, the law prevented the couple from marrying as they were brother and sister in-law, but they nevertheless moved to London and lodged at the property in Cock Lane, owned by Parsons. Several accounts of strange knocking sounds and ghostly apparitions were reported, although for the most part they stopped after the couple moved out, but following Fanny's death from smallpox and William Kent's successful legal action against Richard Parsons over an outstanding debt, they resumed. Parsons claimed that Fanny's ghost haunted his property. Regular séances were held to determine the motives of 'Scratching Fanny' and Cock Lane was often made impassable by the throngs of interested bystanders.

The ghost appeared to claim that Fanny had been poisoned with arsenic and Kent was publicly suspected of being her murderer. But a commission whose members included Samuel Johnson concluded that the supposed haunting was a fraud. Further investigations proved the scam was perpetrated by Elizabeth Parsons, under duress from her father. Those responsible were prosecuted and found guilty. Richard Parsons was pilloried and sentenced to two years in prison. Even after leaving prison he protested his innocence.

Charles Dickens is one of several Victorian authors whose work alluded to the story and the pictorial satirist William Hogarth referenced the ghost in two of his prints – which Ian included in his presentation alongside his talk. Quite intriguing!



*Penny Jamieson*



## Short Courses

I have organised quite a few short courses over the last few years and would like to run some more. Sharing of knowledge among members is fully in line with the U3A's ethos. For this I need members with a deep knowledge and/or passion for a topic to contact me and together we can run some additional classes. This can be a single class or a series of classes. It can be a big class or restricted to just a few.

This is an alternative to the normal groups we have and may appeal to some GLs or tutors to further share their knowledge. It could be '*an introduction to .....*'. I can not do this on my own so please let me know if you would like to put yourself forward as a tutor with a topic for a short course. Together we can make it happen.

As an example, a course on '*How to buy and sell using eBay*' would be an interesting topic for the next course. Anybody able to help? I look forward to hearing from you. Contact me, Marcel, at [shortcourses@mku3a.org](mailto:shortcourses@mku3a.org).

### *Microsoft Excel, a short course*

With Marlis Rodio (the GL of our computer group) as tutor we will run a short course early next year covering the software package Microsoft Excel for your laptop. It will be held at The Quaker Centre, 1 Oakley Gardens, Downhead Park MK15 9BH from 14.30 to 16.30.

A beginners and intermediate course will run on 14 and 21 January, 4, 11 and 18 February with a reserve date of 4 March in case bad weather causes an earlier cancellation.

An advanced course will run on 11 and 18 March, 1, 8 and 15 April. You will need to bring your own fully charged laptop and a notepad. These courses are to be booked as blocks, i.e. beginners and intermediate and/or advanced. It is not essential to have attended the first block before attending the second and it is not necessary to continue with the advanced course after the first block.

The costs are £30.00 per block of 5 classes, payable in cash at the first session. No refunds will be given for missed classes. For booking your place/s please contact Marcel at [newgroups@mku3a.org](mailto:newgroups@mku3a.org), clearly stating which block you wish to attend as well as your telephone number (in case of bad weather postponement). All places are on a first come first served basis and are restricted to 12 people. If insufficient members are interested we will cancel some or all of the blocks. After this course we plan to run a similar one for Microsoft Word in spring next year. Details will be in the next issue of *The Third Way*.

### *Series Talks by Bill Prescott*

Bill Returns again to give us yet another series of his ever popular talks. The subject this year is: Knowing You – Knowing Me, portraits and self-portraits in art, literature and music. The talks will be held on Tuesdays: 3, 10, 17 and 24 March at the Quaker Centre, Oakley Gardens, Downhead Park, MK15 9BH at 10.00. The cost is £3 per member and £4 for non members.

## The Vision, Mission and Principles of the U3A

### *Our Vision*

Our Vision is to make lifelong learning, through the experience of U3A, a reality for all third agers.

### *Our Mission*

Our Mission declares our purpose as an organisation and serves as the standard against which we weigh our actions and decisions. It is to:

- \* Facilitate the growth of the U3A movement.*
- \* Provide support for management and learning in U3As.*
- \* Raise the profile of the U3A movement.*
- \* Promote the benefits of learning in later life through self-help learning.*

### *The Principles of the U3A Movement*

The U3A Movement is non-religious and non-political and has three main principles:

#### **The Third Age Principle**

- \* Membership of a U3A is open to all in the third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full-time employment has ceased.*
- \* Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a U3A.*
- \* Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a U3A can do so.*

#### **The Self-help Learning Principle**

- \* Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; by the members, for the members.*
- \* No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.*
- \* There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all U3A members.*

#### **The Mutual Aid Principle**

- \* Each U3A is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of the Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the U3A movement.*
- \* No payments are made to members for services rendered to any U3A.*
- \* Each U3A is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.*
- \* Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the U3A movement.*

## Recommendations

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

### *– a recommendation from John Greenall*

I would like to recommend FSG Energy of Bletchley who installed our solar panelling about 18 months ago and handled all the official paperwork to obtain the Feed In Tariff. They worked well, efficiently and pleasantly. The price was competitive. Contact John Allen, tel: 01908 276 927 or visit their website at [www.fsenergy.co.uk/](http://www.fsenergy.co.uk/).

### *– a recommendation from Celia Hart*

As a regular customer at Milton Keynes Country Market (formerly the W.I.) in Wolverton I would like to recommend this market which runs every Friday between 08.00 and 12.00. It's easy to find beside Wolverton Tesco. They sell knitted baby and toddler clothes to fit all sizes, or made to order, hand made toys and dolls clothes, scarves, bags and aprons. Not forgetting the home-made cakes, pickles and jams, honey, fresh eggs, cards for all occasions, jewellery and quilts. They are hand-crafted by local women – all mums and grandmums who need to keep this special market going. They are closed in January.

### *– a recommendation from John Greenall*

Alan Lever of A. S. Fencing has constructed two tall garden fences for us in the past year. We are very pleased with them. Alan is prompt in attending, works quickly, expertly and meticulously. Contact Alan, tel: 01694 862 520 or mobile, tel: 07770 964 374.

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