



Dec
2020



Dear Members,

We are nearing the end of lockdown 2 but we have been placed in Tier 2 from December 3rd with the number of cases of Covid-19 in Milton Keynes rising as are hospital admissions. The news of a vaccine is positive but the roll out will take many months and so unfortunately Milton Keynes u3a remains closed and at the November meeting the Trustees decided that the decision to follow the Government Guidelines notified in the last letter will continue for the foreseeable future. Outdoor meetings must follow the Rule of 6 from different households with Zoom Meetings continuing as before. We need to work together and follow the guidelines and attempt to get the infection rate down before Christmas.

We know that some members do not agree with our decision about the rule of 6 but we do not make the decision lightly and we are genuinely concerned about the safety of all our members. Please note our Code of Conduct states 'Members are expected to reflect the current organisational policy of Milton Keynes u3a regardless of whether it conflicts with their personal views'.

Membership Extension

Thank you to all who have replied to the news of the membership extension by 3 months. Several have enquired why we made this decision when MKu3a offers great value for money, under 30p per week. The Trustees received a few enquiries from March about a reduction in subscriptions as we were closed. In earlier letters we explained that our outgoings had not changed and in fact we were offering extra virtual Open Meetings at no cost to the attendees and that the Membership subscriptions were not used to run groups. In October the Trustees discussed the impact of the crisis at length and decided that in the interest of keeping the organisation viable once we were out of the current crisis and the reserves of funds available this would be a 'thank you' to all of you who continued to support the association by remaining members. By continuing your membership, you will be able to join groups and try out new activities and keep yourself active during these winter months.

Virtual Open Meetings

These meetings have been a great success and more members attend them than came along to The Oak Tree Centre monthly. The speakers are varied to cater for all tastes, (hopefully) and with very few problems along the way. Thanks once again to Dave and Lynne for continuing to work for us all to bring the speakers into our living rooms.

The details of these meetings have been moved from the list of Interest Groups to the Diary area of the website. We are now able to use a further feature of our splendid website to cater for events, cutting the administration down considerably.

Our choir will be performing virtually for us on 16th December. Well done to all choir members; I hear it is no easy feat coordinating the practices and a run through with Dave is planned shortly! We are in the process of organising a festive quiz to be played after the concert. No prizes but hopefully a bit of fun in these dreary times and get our grey cells working. So, add it to your diary, sign in to attend when the details are announced and pour a cheery drink and join in. Feel free to don a festive jumper and Santa hat. Again, no prize – sorry.

Committee Positions and AGM

Plans are in place to review our Constitution to allow the AGM to be held either as a virtual or hybrid meeting, when necessary. Once the review has taken place, we will ask the membership to vote on the changes. These amendments will give us the flexibility to hold the most appropriate meeting for the stage we are at in the pandemic. Many suitable venues are closed and may not be available for hire in March and we are aware that some members may still be hesitant in attending gatherings and we fully understand this.

We are lurching towards March when several places will become vacant. The current Trustees were planning to have a face to face meeting to discuss the way forward, but this is now not possible so please consider joining us on the committee by emailing to find out what it involves.

chair@mku3a.org

Knitting

I now have in my possession over 250 hats for refugees and the homeless as the knitters amongst you continue to keep busy knitting. Thank you. I will send these to the relevant distributors as soon as I feel confident to visit a post office. There are safely stored but space is running out here so please can you change to something different.

With Christmas looming and hands happy to continue knitting to while away the many boring hours I have checked out free Christmas patterns from the web. In fact, there are lots of free knitting patterns to choose from.

Christmas Patterns for crochet or knitting can be found on

www.gathered.how/knitting-and-crochet/knitting/christmas-knits-to-cast-on-now/

Amanda Barry also has free patterns online

www.thebigknit.co.uk/knitting-patterns has patterns to raise funds for Age UK. These cute bottle toppers can be delivered to any Age UK charity shop and will be popped on Innocent Smoothie bottles in October 2021. Each sale of a 'topped bottle' raises 25p for the charity. A great use for the small amount of wool left over from earlier projects.

Knit for Peace has a pattern for a rather fetching dressing gown made up from knitted squares

<https://knitforpeace.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Dressing-gown-pattern.pdf>

Thanks to Volunteers

MKu3a would not exist without the commitment of all our volunteers. These include the Group Leaders, the administrative and website team and the Trustees and our thanks are extended to them all. The Trustees meet monthly via Zoom and the others are working from home. How times have changed!

Best wishes to you all, stay safe, and we are looking forward to seeing you all as soon as possible.

Lesley Sparks

on behalf of the Trustees



Hats for the Homeless

Lesley has now taken all the hats I had for redistribution - around 175 this time as well as all the many others I have passed on to her over the time we have been knitting them and the scarves.

Thank you very much for your valiant efforts. I have been so impressed with the way they have been knitted and sewn together so beautifully.

If you have any more you have finished or are in the process of knitting please do finish them off and contact me on 01908 616465 and I will be happy to find a home for them.

Stay safe and well and have a good Christmas.

Shona Hall

Group Co-ordinator's Report

Dear Members

I hope I find you all fit and well. During the past very difficult months there have been quite a few changes to our Groups and Group Leaders and also prior to the Lockdown. I would normally update you on the year's activities in my Annual Report but I thought you would appreciate an update about this earlier than March 2021. Unfortunately, some Groups have closed as the Group Leaders have decided to step down for various reasons and no Group members have put themselves forward to take over the role – although not always the case I am incredibly pleased to say that some members are very happy to take over the challenge. We have also been able to start new Groups - Book Group with a Difference!, Keep-fit with a Difference! and Computer MacOS.

At the beginning of the year Gardening 3 was without a Group Leader and I was very grateful that Robert Sorrell and his wife Sarah stepped forward to run the Group. I was extremely sorry to learn in the Summer that Robert had suddenly passed away – our thoughts are with Sarah and his family at this extremely difficult time.

| Group | Group Leader |
|-------|--------------|
|-------|--------------|

Group Closures

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Current Affairs | David Harding |
| Modern Sequence Dancing & Line Dancing | Margaret Atherton |
| Poetry | Pat Hodges |
| Ageing Hippies | Roger Sanders |
| Economics | Brian Fairbairn |

Music Appreciation
Keep Fit

Sally Saunders
Pam Wright

The Group Leaders have left these Groups but I am very pleased to say that the Groups will continue as there was another GL in place or members have taken on the GL role.

Water Colour Workshop
Countryside Ramblers
Play Reading
Freewheelers
Bridge Boost
Spanish Beginners

John Beazley
Jenny Greatbatch & Len Barrows
Ann Price
Angela Whittington
Sian Harrison
Maria Bourne

Left the MKU3A

Spanish Improvers

This Group is still meeting although no longer a member of the U3A

On behalf of the Trustees and myself, personally, I would like to give our grateful thanks to the Group Leaders for the commitment to their Group, Group Members and to MKU3A – it has been thoroughly appreciated by all. We wish them all the very best for the future. I am sure you know that without the Commitment of members like these Group Leaders there would be no MKU3A. Being a Group Leader is a wonderful way to meet new friends whilst giving something back to the Community. Before Lockdown, I was working to start some new Groups – Sewing, Cartoons (short course), Art Appreciation 3 and Motoring – I very much hope that these will be able to start in the not too distant future.

It is of course still very unclear when we will be able to “open as normal” and you can meet friends and family. I recently asked all the Group Leaders to let me know if they were “open” and I am very pleased to say that about a third of our Groups are meeting via social platforms and outside in groups of 6 – the latter having to change due to Lockdown 2 but I am sure they will be looking forward to meeting up again depending on what restrictions are in place when Lockdown 2 finishes.

I am sure there will be more changes to come as far as Groups are concerned as members review their interests and hobbies. I will, of course, keep you posted but in the meantime, I hope you stay safe and well.

Best wishes

Shirley Dewar

Groups Co-ordinator

Food4Thought Group

After the Food4Thought monthly meetings were cancelled back in March, I kept in touch via group emails. Keen to come up with alternative ideas for meetings, I set the group the challenge to find as many songs as they could with an item of food (or drink) in the song title! You'll probably be surprised to learn that between us we found 85 different songs! Some of the more obvious and popular choices were American Pie by Don McLean and Strawberry Fields Forever by The Beatles; some choices were less well known and more unusual, such as Spam Song by Monty Python, Cold Turkey by John Lennon, and Glass Onion by The Beatles. The most popular song that included a drink in the title, was Red Red Wine by Neil Diamond, also sung by UB40, and Lilac Wine by Elkie Brooks. Other "drink" songs included Champagne Supernova by Oasis and Soda Pop by Michael Buble. My boy Lollipop, by Millie, Spice up your Life by the Spice Girls, and Little Green Apples by Roger Miller, also appeared on the list. If you have nothing better to do one day, then make your own list and see how many song titles you can think of!

The Food4Thought group began to meet again, via Zoom, in July when we discussed how we were managing to do our food shopping during lock down. Those members who had been lucky enough to find delivery slots available were shopping on-line; others, like myself, unable to find a slot, were still shopping at the store, and had to get used to queueing at the entrance, one-way systems throughout the shop, and social distancing. Our discussions moved on to food shortages, including pasta, rice, and flour, and if and how they were affecting the meals we were cooking. Most members were managing very well and some were even trying new recipes and doing more baking than before.

At subsequent Zoom meetings, we held a number of food and drink quizzes, and talked about our favourite celebrity chefs and why we liked them. The Hairy Bikers, Rick Stein, and Nigella Lawson were all mentioned. I also asked if members had taken advantage of the Government's Eat Out to Help Out offer, which seemed quite popular. I for one, had used it whilst visiting Millers and Carter at Shenley Church End, where I enjoyed an 8oz fillet steak with a Porcini Mushroom and Black Garlic sauce.

In September I asked members to choose one item of food or drink starting with each letter of the alphabet, and we then compared lists to find out what the most popular and unusual items for each letter were. Choices included Battenburg, Dhansak, Jumbalaya, Kiwi, Lemon curd, Marzipan, Plantain, Qumquat, Umbles (edible entrails of a deer), Violet Gin, Walnuts, Yoghurt and Zest!

We concluded that meeting with an alphabet themed food and drink quiz, beginning with “What is Aquavit? (A Scandinavian liqueur made from potatoes) and ending with “What is Zabaglione?” (An Italian dessert or beverage made with sweet Marsala wine).

Our October meeting, was, not surprisingly, themed around Halloween, whose traditions have strong roots in the Celtic festival of Samhain, (pronounced Sow-in, meaning Summer’s End), the Roman festival of Pomona (the Goddess of orchards and the harvest) and the Christian celebrations of All Saints Day and All Souls Day.

The night of October 31st was known in parts of the British Isles as Snap Apple Night, when traditional games were played such as apple dunking or apple bobbing. Another tradition at this time of year, dating back to the Medieval times, was known as “Souling”, when on All Hallows’ Eve, Soul cakes, (small round spiced cakes), were handed out to the poor, who went door to door saying prayers for the dead. I have included a recipe for Soul cakes which you may wish to try.

Other food traditionally eaten by the Irish at Halloween included Barmbrack, often shortened to Brack, (a quick bread made with sultanas and raisins, and often baked with a charm inside, the recipient supposedly receiving good luck). In parts of Ulster, an old tradition was to leave a plate of Champ, (mashed potato with sweet milk and chives or onions), at the foot of the nearest hawthorn tree for the fairies!

At Halloween, pumpkins are traditionally used by children to carve out lanterns. Pumpkins are a member of the squash family, provide an excellent source of vitamins, minerals and fibre, and the average pumpkin takes up to 5 months to grow. They are a type of fruit, and come in various shades of orange, yellow and red, but did you know there is even a blue pumpkin?



At our November meeting I set the group another challenge to “Go Bananas” and find as many sayings with food or drink (or something relating to cooking) in them. So, “Cool as a Cucumber” off they went, and “Easy as Pie” the sayings started to pour in, but, “Not for all the tea in China” did I think we would find so many different sayings. Between us, we came up with a total of over 130! See how many you can come up with!

That just leaves me to wish you all a very Happy Christmas, and here’s to better things in 2021!

Tina Griffiths (Group Leader – Food4Thought)

Soul cakes Makes 12–15 cakes

175g butter
175g caster sugar
3 egg yolks
450g plain flour
2 teaspoons mixed spice
100g currants
a little milk to mix

1 Pre-heat the oven to 190C/Fan 170/375F. Cream the butter with the sugar until it's light and fluffy and then beat in the egg yolks one at a time.

2 In a separate bowl, sieve the flour and the spices together and add to the wet mixture along with the currants (reserving a small handful to decorate the tops later).

3 Mix with a wooden spoon and then add some milk to pull everything together into a dough.

4 Roll out to a thickness of around 1cm and cut out rounds with a biscuit cutter. Use a straight-sided knife to make a slight cross indent in the top of each cake and then push in raisins along it.

5 Place on a piece of baking parchment on a baking tray and bake for 10 to 15 mins until golden. Allow to cool before eating.





KEEP-FIT ZOOM!

An update on the Keep-Fit Groups – apart from the original Keep-Fit Community Fitness another Group started back in the original lockdown – Keep-Fit with a Difference! Keep-Fit with a Difference! was suggested by our Instructor Julie and was aimed at the less mobile members of MKU3A. I am very pleased to say that those members are now very much more mobile and the two Groups have now combined into Keep-Fit Zoom! The Group meets twice a week via zoom – Mondays and Fridays at 9.30 – most members take part in the two sessions but with some happy with one session. Julie offers an enthusiastic hour of exercise but members take part at their own level.

Below are some comments from members:

I have enjoyed every session and feel that my balance and coordination has improved greatly. I so look forward to Mondays and Fridays. Taking part in my house and not having to travel is a big benefit to me. Julie explains and demonstrates our movements so clearly with an encouraging smile. The result is success for everyone. After the class I feel very positive about the day ahead. We are fortunate to have Julie as our keep fit instructor.

Julie's enthusiasm and encouragement throughout each class is very motivating. She gives you different options for each exercise so that that you can work at a level that suits your fitness level and how you are feeling that day. Each week is a bit different in structure to maintain interest, but you quickly become familiar with the exercises. You just need about a square metre of floor space to work in. The only equipment you need are household items we all have like a broom, tea towel or tins from the cupboard. Above all the classes are fun and a very motivating way to keep up with regular exercise.

I would say that Julie is a very good motivator and keep fit instructor, thoughtful of our differing abilities along with giving us good advice. I feel so much better after I have done the exercises and they make me feel more energetic afterwards.

Preconceived ideas are rarely right and none more so than mine about MKU3A keepfitting at home via Zoom. I have been retired for 10 years (early retirement I might add) and certainly do not class myself as old so when a friend mentioned she was doing keep fit with the U3A via Zoom I had an immediate thought of lots of 'old' people doing stretches but as I had nothing better to do with my mornings through lockdown thought I would give it a go. How wrong was I? It has been wonderful 😊 the classes are well structured and well attended and Julie, the very talented and supple instructor, encourages everyone to keep going and keep fit 😊

I find the classes invigorating & my ageing muscles are really benefitting. It's amazing what you can achieve using a broom, two tins of tomatoes & a tea towel!

Using zoom means that the Group can take more members so if you are interested in joining or would like more information, please get in touch.

Shirley Dewar, Group Leader – email shirleygroups@mku3a.org or 07879007513. If you are interested I look forward to hearing from you!!

Countryside Ramblers

Jennifer Greatbatch has a love of walking and expert knowledge of local paths. In 2007 she set up a new group 'Countryside Ramblers' with the aim of organising walks of about ten miles 'whatever the weather'. The Group has flourished with members taking it in turn to lead walks on alternate Thursdays. As joint leader, Len Burrows has played a crucial role in making sure that the programme is posted and that members receive up to date information.

Jenny and Len are now retiring from their Leadership roles. On behalf of the U3A and the Countryside Ramblers we would like to thank them for their inspiration and hard work. Phil and I are taking over leadership of the Countryside Ramblers Group.

Barbara Potts

Still Green Cohousing – come and meet us

The design for Still Green's cohousing scheme within the Love Wolverton regeneration programme is now ready to submit for planning permission. At our next Zoom Open Meeting, visitors will be able to see some great images of what the scheme will look like and outline plans for the apartments and shared facilities. We'll tell enquirers about the 'lifetime home' standards and the high eco standards to which the scheme is being built. We'll talk about some of the benefits that cohousing can offer as we grow older in terms of good neighbourliness, sharing occasional meals and activities with others as we choose, sharing a beautiful garden that residents will develop together rather than struggling to maintain our own gardens, maybe sharing an electric car with others, and much more!

We have welcomed three new members in recent months. They have quickly become involved in helping shape our scheme and in preparations for when we begin work with the architects on more detailed design of the homes, including the kitchens and bathrooms, windows and doors and the aspects where choices can be made available for individual homes.

As we move towards the expected start of construction in 2021, the choice of homes is likely to decrease for those then joining us, but currently there is a good range of apartments of different sizes available for sale. We also intend to have some apartments available for rent as affordable homes so welcome enquirers interested in these too.

If you might be considering a move in two or three years' time and would like to explore cohousing as an option, you can find more information on our website <https://stillgreenweb.org/> and if you would like to join our Zoom session at 12 noon on Saturday, 16 January 2021, please contact us at stillgreenweb@gmail.com.

Margaret Newens

MKU3A CHOIR



As many of you know, the MK U3A choir has given a Christmas Concert for many years and usually raises a significant amount of money for local charities thanks to your generous support on the night. As we cannot give a performance in person this year we are using Zoom to provide an event for MKU3A members on Wednesday 16th December at 2.30pm. This will enable you to both hear the choir and also join in and sing Christmas Carols with the words provided for you on screen. There will also be appropriate readings as per the usual concert format. (upon registering interest, the zoom link will be sent out in the usual way by Lynne). We feel it is very important to support local charities especially since we had to cancel our Summer concert this year and with the Food Bank needing even more funds than usual in order to continue providing a service to the people of Milton Keynes, we have set up a web page on localgiving where, if you wish, you can donate to the charity in lieu perhaps of the ticket price. I attach the link below.

<https://localgiving.org/fundraising/mku3a-choir-virtual-christmas-concert/>

We hope to see you all on zoom on December 16th.

Sheila Staincliffe, Joint group leader

A View of Milton Keynes in the Late 1940s

J. H. B. Peel (1949) *Buckinghamshire Footpaths*. London. Chaterson.

In mid-April, soon after the introduction of the first national lockdown, members of the Wednesday Rambling Group and the Redway Walkers were sent a mail that included an interesting extract from a book called 'Buckinghamshire Footpaths'. Mike Clarke, who had supplied the extract, thought that it would be of interest to other members of these groups, as it described some parts of what is now Milton Keynes.

I found the small extract very interesting as an historic record. However, I was also fascinated because the author of the book, John Hugh Brignal Peel, appears in my family history records. The relationship is fairly distant and by marriage, but it was enough to motivate me to seek out and purchase a copy of the book from an online seller. What a fascinating find!

The author was a journalist, poet and travel writer with many books to his name, although this was one the early ones he wrote. As a child he had connections with this area because his grandfather spent the last years of his life in Fenny Stratford, having been raised in a mining village in County Durham and later becoming a much-travelled Wesleyan Methodist Minister. In 'Buckinghamshire Footpaths' the author recalls the lane from Watling Street at Denbigh to Simpson village:

"the way is no more than a reinforced cart-track; indeed, when we were children, we christened it Blackberry Lane, from many such expeditions there with our grandfather. I have an especial affection for this lane, since the best part of my boyhood was spent at Staple Hall, not far away from it; a pleasant country house that once had its orchard and fruit-garden and a fine sweep of lawn I see no change in this lane as the years flow quietly by ..."

The seven walks described in the book are in Central and North Buckinghamshire and are illustrated with photographs taken by the author. Some scenes now look quaint, but many are easily recognisable today. The first chapter sets the scene by describing what the author finds so appealing about the area, particularly the northern part of the county:

"I believe that its remoteness will seem to many visitors to be its principal charm. Sussex is lovely, Kent is lovely, even Surrey and Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire have their homely charms, but nowhere within them will the wayfarer experience that sense of peace, which is an Absolute of life, more securely than in the deepest countryside of north Buckinghamshire. In Surrey and Sussex and Kent an electric train has brought London to the Downs and amid hop-fields; but in north Buckinghamshire there is no such system of rapid railways"

In other Home Counties, moreover, most of the villages are linked to the towns by motor omnibus, but large tracts of north Buckinghamshire are even today isolated from the towns – indeed, Newport Pagnell and Olney are scarcely towns at all

North Buckinghamshire is wholly an unsophisticated county And the beauty of it is, I see no threat to this state of affairs. Who, after all, would benefit from a motor-bus between Milton Keynes [village] and Woughton-on-the-Green?"

[Extracts from Chapter 1 – Getting to Know Buckinghamshire]

Just ten years after this book was published, on 1 November 1959, the first section of the M1 motorway – between Junction 5 ([Watford](#)) and Junction 18 ([Crick/Rugby](#)) – was opened. This initial section enabled traffic on the motorway to cut through “*wholly unsophisticated*” north Buckinghamshire, while the service station at Newport Pagnell was the first in the country open to all traffic.

After a further eight years, on 23 January 1967, the formal 'new town designation order' was made, paving the way for the development of Milton Keynes on largely agricultural land around many existing settlements – 3 towns and 15 villages. I can remember using, in the 1970s, the west end of 'Blackberry Lane' to Simpson, but most of it soon disappeared beneath the A5 roundabout at Redmoor and the Ashlands developments.

Two of his routes are almost wholly within what is now Milton Keynes. His descriptions provide a rather romantic view of the people and places encountered along the way:

“Pass through Woughton-on-the-Green, bearing slightly rightward, towards a trio of delightful hamlets, each “a one-eyed, blinking sort of place”, Great Woolstone, Little Woolstone, and Willen

‘The Barge Inn’, along this lane, bears testimony to the hey-day of canal transport. I suppose that I have entered this place not less than fifty times, yet I have never seen a man there who did not carry a scythe, or wear leggings, or smoke a clay pipe, or talk of London as though it were a distant phantom thousands of miles away upon a faint horizon.”

“Milton Keynes [Village] is a homely place. Fields encroach upon the dusty by-lane, and brim over the scattered cottages. There is nothing here of a conventional beauty spot, for indeed nobody seems to have heard of the place, save the handful of its inhabitants; and these think so well of it that they rarely leave it I have known and loved Milton Keynes [Village] since I was a boy, but at no time in my legion pilgrimages thither have I met a stranger. It takes longer to travel from London to Milton Keynes [Village] than it does to travel from London to Bath – a fact for which some men will be profoundly thankful.”

[Extracts from Chapter 3 – From Newport Pagnell to Great Linford]

I've attempted to identify some remnants of the local routes that were described by JHB Peel. Many parts have now been obliterated by new developments in MK, but there's one conclusion to a walk that was rendered impossible to undertake even before the 'new city' was designated. In his words:

"Your sojourn at Great Linford may be prolonged to coincide with the arrival (and subsequent departure) of the single line railway into Newport Pagnell." [Closed to all rail traffic in 1967]

Many thanks again to Mike Clarke for bringing this little book to my attention. It has given me hours of enjoyment.

Adrian Kirkwood

The Reading Group is looking for new members. We read a wide variety of books. Currently, on the first Tuesday of each month we are exchanging our thoughts about the selected book by email. In normal times, we meet in members' homes for our relaxed discussions. If you are interested, email Keith at artdkt25@gmail.com.

Keith Tipping

Virtual Talks for Members

November was certainly a busy month for us, with two talks from external speakers and two performance by our Third Age Players (TAP). All were so enjoyable, contrasting and well supported by our members.

Following what was obviously a lot of rehearsal, TAP entertained us with music, props and witty dialogue and due to the wonders of ZOOM we saw each of the players centre stage as they spoke. Most of the works were written by members of TAP, very age appropriate for us with nostalgic looks back to our younger days. Excellent. I am really pleased to say that audit recordings of these performances are available. The feedback from the audience was excellent and I sure our appetites have been whetted for when TAP goes live again, and who know perhaps another virtual performance in the Spring.

Our first external speaker this month was Adrian Boynton who shared with us an insight into the music of War and Peace, very appropriate for the 11th November. At times uplifting and at other times particularly moving, not least the stories behind and the music of Oliver Messiaer and Henryk Gorecki. Luckily we finished with some uplifting and well known music from William Walton and Gustav Holst which I am sure many of us were singing or humming along to.

Our second speaker was Tom Preston, who gave us an insight into the comedians of Lancashire. My goodness what an impressive list and who knew this is the area of the UK with the most comedians after the greater London area. Much humour and insight and even some impressions from Tom. Some fascinating facts emerged, for example that one of the first comedic Lancashire Lads was George Formby – no not the famous singing one but his equally talented father - and the unusual personal life of Hylda Baker. An impressive heritage which is continuing with many of our modern day comedians and well covered within Tom's talk.

Talks and events which are happening in December

It really is hard to believe that we are now up to 12 talks to members via ZOOM, I hope that our final talk is going to raise our spirits and generate a laugh or two. We will then finish the year with a Christmas Carol Concert organised and led by mku3a group choir, further information about this can be found in a separate piece in this newsletter. Following the carol concert there will be a Christmas Quiz for those members who would like a little fun and challenge at the end of the year!

Wednesday 2nd December: Tom Way – Wild Life Photography

Wednesday 9th December: James Taylor – the forgotten art and humour of the British picture postcard.

Wednesday 16th December: MKu3a choir group followed by a Christmas Quiz!

If you haven't booked yet but are interested then please email vicechair@mku3a.org.

Future booked events which have been booked through to April 2021, these can now be found on our website <https://mku3a.org/events>.

I hope at least one of these will be of interest to you and I most admit I remain particularly privileged to have booked John Fieldsend in January.

Who knows what 2021 will bring in terms of virus and vaccines. As a Committee MKu3a has made the decision to continue with virtual meetings through to Spring 2021 and once live meetings and talks are possible again we will continue with the occasional additional virtual meeting for the foreseeable future.

MKu3a Facebook Page - this continues to be a popular and well visited page. A quick reminder that the page is for mku3a members only so I am afraid any recommendations for your friends to join will be declined unless they are a member.

Lynne Button

I wonder how many of us are missing the Great British Pub at the moment? I recently remembered this encounter.

I am glad to say that this C16 pub is still trading in 2020.

Back in the 1980s my boyfriend and I had a weekend away, travelling in his Morris Minor, and packing a tent. Starting off on a Friday evening after work, we stopped early evening at the Fountain at Ashurst in West Sussex, and after ordering our beers, asked if we could camp for the night in the pub's adjacent field.

The answer was in the affirmative, so after our first drink, whilst it was still light, we pitched our tent, then went back into the bar to spend the evening there.

The pub, presumably, did not have the luxury of a cellar, so the magnificent barrels of beer were kept on the back counter behind the bar.

The landlord was somewhat of a buffoon of a mine host, and, when a barrel "went" (was empty) we were treated to a wonderful pantomime:- He left the bar, only to return wearing a long oilskin mac, wellies and a sou'wester, and proceeded to tap the new barrel, safe from any jets of ale that sometimes spurt on those occasions.

At the end of a very pleasant evening, we bade goodnight, and repaired to our tent. The ensuing night was foul, with torrential rain, and in the morning, we were just awakening when we heard the unmistakable sound of fast approaching wellies through long grass.

A gruff voice said, "I thought you might need this!", and through the tent flap a hand emerged, proffering a miniature bottle of brandy!

Janette Taylor

Zoom Yoga

'If you don't take care of this, the most magnificent machine that you will ever be given....where are you going to live' - K. Calabrese

Mon – Fri 9.30 – 10.30 am

£6 per week (term book, 2 classes a week) – first two classes free.

Improve flexibility, balance and vagal tone. Build muscle strength, maintain your nervous system, boost immunity, release tension, regulate your adrenal glands & RELAX with mindful

yoga, connecting breath and movement. Yoga accessible to all, variations are offered for all poses. Suitable for beginners and those that already have a love of yoga.

Contact Karen to book a space at karenmnoon@gmail.com or 07989 024390.

Karen Noon

And finally, a joke

Lockdown no 2

I'm so bored I went outside to knock on my own door then went inside and said "who's there?".

Bruna Wheatcroft

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