



milton keynes



June  
2021



Dear Members,

I am sure we have all had at least one vaccination against Covid-19 and are feeling slightly more confident in venturing out into the world.

The 'not before' date for the easing of the restrictions is getting nearer but with the increase in the new variant spreading no one can make any firm plans.

I would like to take this opportunity of reminding everyone the principles of the u3a movement. Please contribute to the running of your groups. We may not all have a burning desire to share our knowledge or passion with others and take on the responsibility to run a group, but we can all help in small ways like helping to make the refreshments or clearing up the room after a meeting, when we do finally resume meetings!! These small gestures are always welcome. There are groups who share the organisation for the content of each meeting, if a group has twelve members and meet monthly then each member will plan one meeting a year. Eleven meetings learning from others and one month helping others learn. A fantastic principle.

Several groups are looking for new group leaders and you may have been contacted by your current group leader or the groups coordinator with this news, please consider taking on the role or sharing it with another member of the group. Unfortunately, if no one steps into the breach then the group will cease to exist. We are always unhappy when established groups fold.

### **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 their 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.

### **Committee Activities**

We are actively looking for new members for the committee, especially to help our new Groups Coordinator, Marie Stanley, and a member to shadow our Treasurer Diana Sears, with a view to taking over the role once her term on the committee is completed. Please consider joining us and contact me by phone on 07850113449 or by email [chair@mku3a.org](mailto:chair@mku3a.org) if you would like more information. I would love to hear from you.

The committee have been contacting the venues for start date information, but many cannot give an actual date saying as soon as the restrictions have been eased. We will keep you all posted. It will be your personal decision when to resume attending your preferred groups once they commence, so please keep your group leader informed.

The review of each group information page is under way and group leaders may be contacted shortly to ask if more relevant details for their group activities can be added. You may like to check now and lighten the load for the committee.

During the time we have been operating on a reduced scale we have understandably lost some members. Once we have a definite start date for the resumption of activities, we will be contacting these members to welcome them back.

The Third Age Trust, the National u3a, have rebranded their website, u3a.org.uk and are encouraging all u3as to update their websites in line with the new vibrant format. We are in the process of developing a new Homepage and will implement the new design on completion. Please keep your eyes open for the change. The first small change, the u3a logo, was implemented earlier this year and this will be incorporated in the new design.

Our weekly Zoom Open Meetings are now at an end but we will continue with two meetings a month. They are well attended so please continue to support us. Thanks once again to Lynne and Dave who organise and attend each one.

Keep your eyes open for an opportunity to receive a free link for a Kindle publication which we have been offered by a local author. We will be giving more information in early June. It is Sarah Sheriden's first book, a psychological crime thriller, entitled The Convent. How many opportunities do we get for something free? We will have a limited number so they will be issued on a 'first come first served' basis'. So be quick!

I have my fingers crossed that the final step on the lockdown recovery plan will be taken soon and we can begin to resume all meetings.

Best wishes to you all

**Lesley Sparks** on behalf of the Trustees.

### Virtual Talks to Members

May sees the end of our weekly talks to members via ZOOM. Here on in we are reducing frequency to fortnightly. One of our members has kindly said she thinks of the talks as her Wednesday afternoon treat and were certainly blessed with some delights in May.

We started in May with an interesting and well researched talk by David Allen on the Life of Agatha Christie. What a fascinating and adventurous life she led and it was insightful to see how her life experiences influenced some of her novels and well known characters. I think we were all expecting some comment about her infamous disappearance but who knew, I certainly didn't, that she was the first female to surfboard standing up!

This was followed by a talk by one of our members, Brian Pollock, who gave us a talk themed around the 1923 General Election which also included events and characters leading up to and subsequent to this election. In some ways a look into a bygone age but in other ways some very noticeable parallels to present day events. One of the more bizarre facts that emerged was of women, such as Ursula Williams, being able to stand for election at the age of 27 but actually being too young to vote. Fascinating and as always special thanks to our members who volunteer to provide a talk on areas of interest.

We went further back in time for our next talk by Peter Carney who gave an overview of the history of Hadrian's Wall, how and why was it built, what was its purpose. Certainly a number of myths were debunked not least being that one of its main purposes was to be able to raise taxes by charging a 10% levy on goods passing through one of the 80 gates within the wall; it was not built as a barrier to keep out marauding Celts! One of Peter's special interests is the Roman period and following a number of requests I will be trying to rebook him for another well researched and interesting talk.

Our final talk was by Sarah Slater, with the theme the "Ghosts of Hampton Court". Sarah started her talk with highlighting the garment she was wearing for the talk, one actually made by herself and explaining to us why she would wear this during one of her talks at the Palace during pre lock-down days. The talk, which just flew by, gave both a brief overview of the history of this Palace and a focus on stories relating to both Ghosts, the lost souls, and Hauntings associated with this famous landmark. I am sure I was not the only person to feel a shiver listening to the tales and to make a promise to visit in person when there is further easing of restrictions.

As always talks can be booked directly by members by logging onto our website and going to the diary page or by emailing me at [vicechair@mku3a.org](mailto:vicechair@mku3a.org).

Talks in June:

Talk no 33: Wednesday June 9<sup>th</sup> An insider look into the making of the iconic comedy series "Dads Army" by Charles Garland – former assistant director to David Croft OBE.

Talk no 34: Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June "Pilgrimage" - what was meant by medieval pilgrimage, what did it involve? A return by one of our first speakers on ZOOM, Michael Brown, who had previously delivered the talk on poisonous plants in the garden.

**Lynne Button**

News from the Groups Co-Ordinators

**New Groups**

**Badminton**

We emailed all members with an email address about a proposed badminton group. We are pleased to say that we have a very big response.

This is an opportunity for members who did not see this email and may be interested to express their interest. Once all restrictions on meeting are lifted we plan to hold a meeting of all those interested to plan the group and its activities. You should contact the Groups Co-

Ordinator Marie Stanley on Tel: 01908 501360.

## **Recorder**

We emailed all members with an email address about a proposed recorder group. We are pleased to say that we have a very big response.

This is an opportunity for members who did not see this email and may be interested to express their interest. Once all restrictions on meeting are lifted we plan to hold a meeting of all those interested to plan the group and its activities. You should contact the Groups Co-Ordinator Marie Stanley on Tel: 01908 501360

## **Groups Closing**

### **Biographies of the Eminent**

Nigel Wright, Group Leader advises that this group has, for the moment, exhausted all the eminent biographies of interest. He thanks the stalwarts of the group for their input over the last 5 years and lists their most interesting 'reads':

*Princess Grace of Monaco, Prof. Brian Cox, Sir Dirk Bogarde, Baroness Joan Bakewell, Spike Milligan, Kate Adie, Peter Ustinov, Freddie Trueman, Dame Judi Dench, Sir Jackie Stewart, Dame Shirley Williams, Daniel Kahneman, Archbishop Justin Welby, Dame Moura Lympany, Monty Don, Ken Dodd, Warwick Davis, Roy Plomley, Sir Richard Branson, Nigel Slater, Sue Townsend, Sir Tony Robinson, Dame June Whitfield, Bill Gates, Clive James, Murray Walker, Sir Wilfred Thesiger, Judy Murray OBE, Jean Alys Barker aka Baroness Trumpington, Tracy Emin, Clare Hollingworth*

### **Speaking Out Loud**

Colin Williams has advised this this Group will not be continuing. Colin, very kindly has agreed that he can make himself available to help members on a one-to-one basis, as required. Should you find you have to give a speech, make an address or give a response Colin would be happy to coach you.

### **Family History 3**

The Group Leader Roger Hancock has stepped down. Interest has been sought among the group but nobody has stepped forward. Roger has advised that he wishes to stay with the group and will help a new group leader if someone volunteers. We will update on this next month.

### **Spanish Beginners**

This group has been without a leader for some time. Nobody has stepped forward as leader. This group will now close.

### **Relaxation and Wellbeing**

This group has been without a leader for some time. Nobody has stepped forward as leader. This group will now close.

### Gardening 3

This group has been without a leader for some time. Nobody has stepped forward as leader. This group will now close.

### Needlework and Quilting

The group leader has stepped down. We are waiting to see if another member will step forward. We will update on this next month.

**Marie Stanley, Group Co-Ordinator**

### u3a Thames Valley Network Events

#### A REMINDER of events in JUNE 2021

Day/Date	Time	Event	Cost	Book By
Friday 4th	10.30am	The British Prime Minister	Free	31/5
Thurs 10th	10.30am	The Lady and The Generals	Free	6/6
Wed 16th	10.30am	Fighting Franco	£1	13/6
<i>Wed 23rd</i>		<i>Visit to RHS Wisley**</i>		
Thurs 24th	10.30am	Coventry Cathedral	£2	21/6
<i>Tues 29th</i>		<i>Repeat -The Thames &amp; Its Boats**</i>		
<i>Wed 30th</i>		<i>Black Holes &amp; The Transient Universe**</i>		

*\*\*Please note – No details for these events available at present.*

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

*Special Notice from TVN, asking for your help. Increasingly, our TVN events are becoming fully booked well before the actual date. Nevertheless, we are disappointed to find that something like 20% of those who have booked places, fail to join on the day. This is not fair to those who wish to take part but find the event fully booked. If you find that you are unable to join an event for which you have booked, please inform the organiser as soon as possible so that your place can be offered to someone else. NB: Zoom licence currently held is for 500 devices.*

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

**Brian Baldwin**



**Exploring World Faiths group**

We hope to have our first group meeting of the year at **Bradwell Abbey** which is a 14th century chapel in Milton Keynes. This is to take place on July 7th in the afternoon. The visit involves a strolling tour of the site. If interested, please contact me on email via the group information the website.

**Linda Morris**

Your museum needs you!

Do you have time on your hands? Milton Keynes museum (located near Wolverton) is looking for volunteers to help keep this wonderful local attraction open for the people of MK to



enjoy.

Volunteers are needed in a variety of areas - welcoming visitors in reception, room guiding, admin, maintenance, serving in the cafe, helping at special events etc. Full training will be given.

The amount of time you give is up to you. For more information see the website [www.miltonkeynesmuseum.org.uk](http://www.miltonkeynesmuseum.org.uk) and to apply email [volunteer@mkmuseum.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@mkmuseum.org.uk).

**Eve Tigano**

### VENUES FOR HIRE

I have received details of two venues being offered to the u3a for hire. Possibly ideal for large groups as they could be expensive for a small group to use.

If anyone knows of any smaller venues for hire please send me details to [ccostello01@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ccostello01@hotmail.co.uk)

#### Loughton

**Herons Lodge Guide Centre in Loughton** has been refurbished during lockdown and is a covid secure venue. There are 2 large halls, kitchen, plenty of parking and grounds outside.

The venue has availability every day.

Cost for community and charity groups is £15 per hour.

Website: [www.heronlodge.co.uk](http://www.heronlodge.co.uk)

Bookings email: [bkgs.heronlodge@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bkgs.heronlodge@yahoo.co.uk)

#### Great Linford

Marsh Drive Community Hall is located at the Marsh Drive Sports Ground, this modern wheelchair friendly building provides the perfect setting for social events.

Main hall is 106.1m<sup>2</sup> and maximum capacity is 85 people. Kitchen, changing rooms and showers. Free parking.

Charity/not for profit group rate is £12 per hour (inc VAT)

Contact Sally Jessop on 07751 039209 for a visit to the hall.

Email for more information [glpc@great-linford.gov.uk](mailto:glpc@great-linford.gov.uk)

Make a booking please visit website [www.great-linford.gov.uk/facilities-we-manage/](http://www.great-linford.gov.uk/facilities-we-manage/)

**Chris Costello**

Group Team Member



## **MK trails app**

I was introduced to the **MK trails** app whilst on a guided walk last summer and having found fellow members of the Photography for Fun group were unaware of this, whilst we were on a photoshoot this week I thought it might help other members add interest to their exercise. This is a free app, it is about the history, heritage and landscape of Milton Keynes and brings trails to life including recordings of interviews with residents as well as clear directions and background information. The routes include both cycling and walking giving distance and approximate time to allow, ranging from 1 mile to 8.5 miles.

## **Sandra Oxley**

### MK Conect Public Transport Service

A new 'demand responsive transport system' has been launched in Milton Keynes. It's a faster and greener way of travelling on public transport in MK.

MK Connect is different to a traditional bus service as it runs on minibuses that don't follow a fixed route or bus stops. Instead, local people can book a trip using a mobile app or over the phone to be collected at a nearby safe location. Passengers are dropped off at their destination, picking up other people along the way who are travelling to the same area of the city.

Passengers using a wheelchair or who have a disability will be matched with a fully accessible vehicle. The service is delivered by Via in partnership with MK Council. MK Connect has replaced some underused bus routes. For full details and links to download the app, visit [www.ridewithvia.com/mk-connect](http://www.ridewithvia.com/mk-connect). If you need additional support, please call 01908 252526.

## **Linda Morris**

### Zoom Yoga

Monday – Friday 9.30-10.30 am  
£6 per week (term book 2 classes per week)  
First 2 classes free

*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*

Improve mobility, 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, 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

### **3 day Mini Yoga Retreat Oxford**

**10th-12th August 2021 - £315**

We have booked a small yoga retreat over 3 days/ 2 nights in Oxfordshire from Tuesday 10th August until Thursday lunchtime 12th August this summer. It's a college for training church clergy so very quiet and meditative but they hire out and are welcoming to all. (See attached photos).

The retreat will include 7/8 sessions of slow, nurturing yoga suitable for beginners.

It is a stunning location, just over an hour's drive from Milton Keynes, 20 minutes from the centre of Oxford.

Check in from 1pm on the first day with afternoon tea/coffee and cake at 3.30pm and then all meals up to and including lunch on the final day.

There are a few circular walks from the college from 20 minutes to 2 hours or you could spend spare time relaxing in the grounds.

All rooms available are single with en-suite bathroom. There is one en-suite flat for 2 people if you would like to bring a partner.

After the last year's lockdowns it would be a beautiful change of scenery.

**Price is £315 for 3 days/2 nights full board.**

#### **example of yoga timetable**

Day 1

Check in from 1pm.

Afternoon tea and cake 3.30pm

Slow gentle unwind Yoga 5-6pm

Dinner 6.30pm

Restorative yoga 8.15-9.15pm. Come in your pyjamas if you like.

## Day 2

7-8am yoga gentle vinyasa movement and breath

Breakfast 8.30am

Morning free time for walks, relaxation in grounds.

Tea/coffee mid morning

yin yoga 11.45-12.45pm

Lunch 1pm

Afternoon free time

Evening Grounding restorative yoga with Yoga nidra 5-6pm

Dinner 6.30pm

## Day 3

7.15- 8.10am yoga gentle flow movement and pranayama

Breakfast 8.30am

Freetime

Mid morning tea/coffee

Noon Pre-lunch meditation/ relaxation

1pm Lunch

All yoga sessions optional, do as little or as much as you want.

Take care and keep safe and hopefully see you on your mats soon!

Any questions please email [karenmnoon@gmail.com](mailto:karenmnoon@gmail.com).

<https://karennoonyoga.com/events-and-workshops/>

## Karen Noon





## **Key Contact Details—more on the web site**

Chair: Lesley Sparks email [chair@mku3a.org](mailto:chair@mku3a.org)

Vice Chair: Lynne Button [openmtgs@mku3a.org](mailto:openmtgs@mku3a.org)

Secretary: Fred Bass email [secretary@mku3a.org](mailto:secretary@mku3a.org)

Treasurer: Diana Sears: email [treasurer@mku3a.org](mailto:treasurer@mku3a.org)

Groups Co-ordinator: Marie Stanley email: [groups@mku3a.org](mailto:groups@mku3a.org)

Web Master: Dave Barratt email: [webmaster@mku3a.org](mailto:webmaster@mku3a.org)

Membership Secretary: Yvonne Ashmore email: [membersec@mku3a.org](mailto:membersec@mku3a.org)

Communications Co-ordinator: Simon Wong email [comms@mku3a.org](mailto:comms@mku3a.org)

Thames Valley Network Coordinator: Brian Baldwin email: [tvn@mku3a.org](mailto:tvn@mku3a.org)

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

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