

The Third Way e-Newsletter

April 2023

News from the Chair

Dear Members,

It doesn't seem two minutes since I wrote my last message as chair of MKu3a in March 2022 but like the proverbial bad penny, here I am again, returning as chair after the required lapse of one year.

I was sorry that Lynne Button decided not to seek a further year in the position as the success of the u3a day in September was mainly due to her enthusiasm to put on a great day showcasing the diversity of our groups. Thank you, Lynne. Unfortunately, I missed the festivities as we were away as a family for a celebration holiday. I am hoping that we can organise a smaller event this year as the Third Age Trust would like to make this an annual event and we will be seeking a team to discuss how we can organise one.

At our AGM we also said goodbye to Yvonne Ashmore, our membership secretary, a vital role in the running of our u3a and Brian Baldwin, who stepped in as secretary last year when we didn't receive a nomination for the role. Thank you, Yvonne, and Brian. These roles have now been filled by Tim Hadden and Deb Hodges. Welcome both.

We also have a new organiser for the Open Meetings, Wendy Barrett, who you may have seen at the AGM a couple of weeks ago but I am sure you will soon recognise if you come along to our monthly meetings. Please come along it is a great opportunity to meet other members and find out information about groups and outings.

If you have any questions or queries about MKu3a please do not hesitate to contact me to ask – I will always be happy to help if I can: chair@mku3a.org.

Best wishes and a Happy Eater

Lesley Sparks (Chair)

Monthly Open Meeting

One of our members, and a very popular speaker, Michael Kushner returns with his talk on "The Life and Times of Winston Churchill" on Wednesday 26 April at the Oak Tree Centre in Shenley Brook End. Doors open at 2.00 pm, the talk starts at 2.30, and tea or coffee is available after.

Please sign up to this talk in the Diary tab on the website. As this is a talk in two parts, do make sure you sign up for the second talk later in September.

Wendy Barret (Open Meetings)

Raising awareness of MKu3a

My name is Julie Hadden and I have recently been tasked by the Trustees to publicise MKu3a as widely as possible. We all know how important our group meetings are to us. Whether we are looking to improve or maintain our skills or interests, enjoy time in the company of like-minded folk or even try something new, it is there for us. But many others are missing out. With all the issues around isolation and loneliness arising from Covid restrictions, now is the time to reach out.

Have you discovered the MKu3a Public Group on Facebook yet?

Surprisingly, out of a membership in excess of 1200, only 41 members have joined this group. I know that some of you don't use or have access to social media, but for those who do it is a quick and easy way of sharing experiences with others. This public group is in its infancy but, to grow and attract attention from the general public, we need to post regularly and show the great things we are doing.

Calling on all Group Co-ordinators!

Let's be proud of what we do in our group sessions. Join in with "Shout out Sunday" and post regular updates on as many Sundays as you can, remembering to include the group name. Add a photo or two (with permission from the subjects!) to add to the fun – and don't forget to encourage your group members to sign in and add their own comments. Keep it all supportive and positive – we are here to "Learn, Laugh, Love".

To find the Facebook group: In Facebook, search Groups and look for MKu3a Public Group and press join. Please log onto the group page so that you can respond to any questions that might be raised.

Julie Hadden

Knitting



We are a new group gets together to knit and chat but also to see whether we can learn new things. We have now had 2 meetings and have started to get to know each other. We have decided to start a project to make a blanket by all knitting squares that we can sew together.

We meet on the second Monday of the month, 10.00-12.00. We are NOT meeting on bank holidays (10 April and 8 May).

There are still spaces if you would be interested in joining us. Even if you can't knit you are welcome to come along and we can teach you how to do it.

Janet Maclean (Group coordinator)

Exploring World Faiths Group

Do you like a discussion? Our subject on Wednesday 5th April, 2.00 pm, is **Religion and Ethics**. Topics will include Crime/Punishment, War/Pacifism and Medical Ethics.

Our May meeting will be a visit to a Green Burial Meadow.

Please see our group page for more information and contact me if you would like to join the group for one or both of these meetings.

Linda Morris (Group Coordinator)

Outings Group – 2023 Programme Summary

Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be on **13 April, 2.15pm for a 2.30pm start** for the people attending. The venue is **Hérons Lodge**, Bradwell Road, Loughton Lodge, MK8 9AA.

All members of MKU3A are welcome on any of the outings and the Group's monthly meeting, and will be able to 'sign up' for the outings either by postal application, at the monthly meetings and paying by bank transfer. Further information on the flyers, and flyers for each outing will be circulated to all members, with details in the monthly Newsletter and hard copies available for those without email access at the monthly Group meetings and Open meetings.

A committee has been set up comprising of Anne Davis, Ray Cockram, Prudence Davies, Erica Thibouville, Deb Hodges, Jennie Savage, Diana Sears (who will deal with the finance, email outingsmku3a@gmail.com), Chris Behrendt as the Group Coordinator (email outings@mku3a.org). All are working on the details of the outings agreed for 2023. Ideas for future excursions are always welcome.

A brief description of the outings is listed below, please ensure that you see full details given in the information flyer including the booking form so you are fully aware of any mobility, access or safety issues.

Once we have paid for the coach and venue (just after the booking closing date) we are sorry we are unable to offer a refund, unless a replacement booking is made for the excursion in question.

- **27 April – St Albans Cathedral Ref: OG01**

Pick up Point: The Coachway, Coachway Road, MK16 0AA at 9.00 am. Coach Company: Bill's Coaches.

Bookings now closed.

Town Maps will be provided on exit of coach.

Lead: Anne Davis. Mobile 07703 190904 for contact on the day of the outing only.

- **25 May – Dudley Canal and Tunnels Tour Ref: OG02**

Pick Up Point: The Coachway, Coachway Road, MK16 0AA at 8.45am. Coach Company: Bill's Coaches.

All places are taken.

Lead: Ray Cockram. Mobile 07899 841553 for contact on the day of the outing only.

- **23 June – Blenheim Palace and Flower Show Ref: OG03**

Pick Up Point: The Coachway, Coachway Road, MK16 0AA at 8.30am, Coach Company: Bill's Coaches.

Cost: £36, includes entry to the palace, gardens and flower show. All refreshments on the day at own cost. This year's flower show features more stands and entertainment, the return of the Grand Flower Pavilion as well as outdoor flower displays and insect trail, talk and demonstrations, fabulous food and drink, homeware and crafts plus live music.

Update: A new exhibition 'Royal Connections Crowns and Coronets' has opened – behind the scenes stories spanning 300 years into Marlborough's relationship with the British Royal Family, with previously unseen artefacts, crowns, coronets and photo albums, including personal effects from royal weddings, coronations and holidays.

Closing Date for booking: 9 June.

Lead: Deb Hodges. Mobile 07769 720233 for contact on the day of the outing only. **Chris**

Behrendt (Group Coordinator)

Choir

Rehearsals are well underway for the choir's performances next term.

As detailed last month, the first will be taking part in a service at Newport Pagnell Parish Church at 4.00pm on Sunday May 7th, to celebrate the coronation.

Our summer Concert, entitled *Summer Celebration*, will be held on Sunday 11th June, 2.30pm at the United Reformed Church in Newport Pagnell. This will be a varied program of songs, followed by a cream tea. Tickets, price £10 are available from 07762 178379 or 07517 439790. All proceeds will go to Willen Hospice.

Then on July 22nd we will be repeating the program at St James Church, Bradwell. More details later.

We hope you'll be able to join us at one of these events, and in the meantime, if you're thinking about joining the choir, do come along to one of our rehearsals – Tuesday afternoons, 2.00– 4.00 pm in the Cross and Stable, Downs Barn. You'd be very welcome.

Pat Mountford (Musical Director)

Art Appreciation 3

From April to July The Art Appreciation 3 group will be doing a special series lasting for four sessions on Rome and the Renaissance. This covers approximately 100 years during which time the best Italian artists were drawn in to remaking and redefining Rome as the centre of the Christianity, and also the centre of Classical authority. At the centre of this sits the Vatican and the Sistine Chapel in particular. From Fra Angelico, through all the late 15th century Florentine artists, in particular Raphael and Michelangelo to Bernini, all made their contribution. It's an unfolding story of the defining of power and authority and the production of some of the Western World's greatest artistic achievements. These reflect the euphoria of Humanism and, following the Reformation, the subsequent sober warnings of Michelangelo's Last Judgement.

For this we are moving back to Gt Linford Parish Room, so there will be a charge for each session to cover the room cost. This will be approximately £3 per session, i.e. £12 for the series.

We have some vacancies, please contact Patsy McCarthy on artapp3@mku3a.org. **Patsy**

McCarthy (Group Coordinator)

Calling all musicians – Playpals needs you!

We are recruiting new members and we have plenty of vacancies. If you or anyone you know has a musical instrument they would like to play together with a very friendly bunch of players, we would love to see you at our Tuesday morning sessions.

The group meets weekly at the Synagogue in Hainault Avenue, Giffard Park, from 10.00 to 12.00 noon with a break for chat and refreshments. Music parts are provided and tailored to individuals – there is a range of abilities in the group and anyone lacking in confidence will receive help and encouragement from more experienced players. The band particularly needs drums/percussion and tenor sax but almost any instruments are welcome. If you are unsure, just get in touch (details below) and come and visit us one Tuesday morning – or come to one of our forthcoming performances.

Our music is arrangements of various styles: old pop songs, swing, jazz, folk, Latin and occasionally classical, depending on what is popular with band members.

We perform at local events to support communities but there is no pressure on anyone to play in front of an audience. We do find it very rewarding to play for others and help charities with their fundraising.



Playpals were delighted to have the opportunity to perform at the u3a 40th Anniversary Event at the Stables, Wavendon, last September. It was a great privilege to share a stage where some very eminent musicians have performed

We have two performances coming up, both with confusingly similar titles!

TT @ TT (Third Thursday at Twelve-thirty) – This is on Thursday 20 April in Stony Stratford at the Church of St Mary and St Giles in Stony High Street from 12.30 to 1.15. More information is available at [Music for All @ SMSG \(musicforallsmg.org\)](http://musicforallsmg.org) . Come and join the audience with or without your sandwiches. There is no charge and refreshments are provided by the church. Donations to the Willis Organ Fund are requested.

T.T.T.T. (THIRD TUESDAY TWELVE THIRTY)

Readers of the March Newsletter will have spotted that the lovely Robert Hooke Church of St Mary Magdalene at Willen are hosting monthly lunchtime concerts and we will be playing for them on Tuesday 20 June at 12.30. Do come and support us and the church at Willen and bring your friends. As with the Stony Stratford concert, entrance is free and refreshments are provided. Donations are requested towards church funds.

If you are interested get in touch with me at musicians@mku3a.org

Marilyn Ridsdale (Group Coordinator)

Videographers

Some of us attended a gig by the Nkiru Arts Drumming Group at the Bucks Star Brewery Tap room recently to video and sound record them playing. It proved to be an interesting and entertaining evening. We will be editing the video and sound recordings at our next meeting in April.

If anybody wishes to join us or want further information about the videographers group please contact me.

Alan Carter (Group Coordinator)

Appeal from Third Age Players (TAP)

TAP is enjoying its 26th year; we've been through thick and thin, highs and lows, hiccups and pandemics and still the shows must go on! (And have done!)

Rehearsals are well under way for our new comedy, **36 Titty-Ho Lane**. Although we have some wonderful new members, some of our cast have had to withdraw for various reasons, so we are looking for new recruits to join us.



We meet every Tuesday from 10.00–12.30 and our current meeting place is Shenley Brook End Village Hall. Our next production is scheduled for mid-September. If you would like to be involved in any capacity, whether acting, backstage or front of house, or would just like to find out more, we would love to hear from you. Beginners or “old hams” are welcome!

Please text me, Greta, on 07905 247870 and I will get back to you, or email TAP@mkU3a.co.uk. **Greta Landale** (Group Coordinator)

Holidays and Short Breaks 2023

Monday 2nd October to Friday 6th October

A late date holiday this year and a mixed bag of visits whilst away. Staying in Bournemouth we finally get to the Isle of Wight, if only for the day – we have been trying unsuccessfully for the last three years, along with various other outings.

Brief Itinerary

- Day 1 – Departure, stopping at Basildon Park (National Trust), arrive and check in before dinner
- Day 2 – New Forest excursion, visit Beaulieu Estate, home of the famous National Motor Museum
- Day 3 – Tour to Isle of Wight including a visit to Osborne House (English Heritage)
- Day 4 – Winchester: visit to the Cathedral and the Bombay Sapphire Gin Distillery
- Day 5 – Depart, visit Greys Court (National Trust) before returning to Milton Keynes

Cost: Sharing: £524 for National Trust/English Heritage Members, £539 for National Trust only members, £554 for English Heritage only members, £569 for non NT or EH members, sole occupancy supplement £100 (sole occupancy rooms are limited with all bookings on a first come first served basis).

The holiday is provided by *Just for Groups*. Booking and insurance forms plus a deposit cheque are sent to me to collate at the address on the booking form. I then forward these to *Just for Groups* who then deal with and manage the bookings on your behalf, sending invoice direct to you for final balance payment.

Closing date for booking 30 April 2023.

For further information, booking and insurance form please contact Chris Behrendt h.and.sb@mku3a.org, mobile number 07766 026357.

Chris Behrendt (Group Coordinator)

Chess – Proposed new group



Do you have an interest in playing or learning to play Chess? If you do you might consider joining a new group that we are proposing to set up for interested people to get together every fortnight on a Wednesday morning at various locations to enjoy a game. Both experienced players and beginners alike are welcome to join the group.

If you are interested in setting up a Chess group please contact Hazel Spencer at groups@mku3a.org for more information.

Backgammon – Proposed new group



Do you play or are you interested in learning how to play Backgammon? If so, you may be interested in joining a new group which will be meeting fortnightly in Olney on a Wednesday morning from 10.30.

Backgammon is in essence a simple game combining both skill and luck which could provide hours of pleasure and keep brains active. Anyone would be welcome whether or not they have played before as beginners would soon learn how to play.

If you are interested in joining the group please send your enquiry to Hazel Spencer, New Groups Facilitator at groups@mku3a.org

Toy/Model Soldiers – Proposed new group



Are you an avid collector of or have an interest in Toy/Model Soldiers? If so you might like to join a new group that we are considering setting up. It is proposed that the group would meet every fortnight on a Tuesday morning at various locations to talk about all aspects of the hobby, view collections and encourage others who may have an interest.

The group would be open to all those who have an interest in plastic, metal or composition Toy/Model Soldier figures.

If you are interested in setting up a Toy/Model Soldiers group please contact Hazel Spencer at groups@mku3a.org for more information.

Residents will need photo ID to vote at local elections in May

Milton Keynes residents will need to show photographic ID to vote at this year's local elections. Milton Keynes City Council is now urging residents to make sure they are ready to vote in May by checking they have an accepted form of ID.

Accepted forms of photo ID include:

- A passport (UK, European Economic Area, or Commonwealth)
- A drivers' licence (UK, European Economic Area, or Commonwealth)
- A concessionary travel pass, such as an older person's bus pass
- Milton Keynes All in One Card

Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo. For a full list of accepted ID along with more information about the change go to electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID.

Residents who do not have one of the accepted forms of ID can apply online for free ID called the 'Voter Authority Certificate' on a new website: voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/. Applicants will need to provide a photo and their full name, date of birth, National Insurance number, and the address at which they are registered to vote.

Register to vote only takes five minutes at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

Anyone unable to use the online form can request a paper version by calling the City Council on 01908 254706 or by emailing elections@milton-keynes.gov.uk (you will still need to be registered to vote

beforehand but the City Council can help to register people unable to do this online themselves).
Lesley Sparks

Milton Keynes Therapy Centre
The base of Milton Keynes Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Group Ltd.



**30
Years**

Open Day
Friday 12th May 2023

You are invited to our 30th Annual Open Day on **Friday 12th May 2023**. Please join us between **11am and 1pm** for tea, coffee and nibbles. Chat to our members and volunteers about what we do here at the centre.

R.S.V.P.

4 Hollin Lane, Stacey Bushes, MK12 6HT Tel: 01908 225907
Email: info@mkmstherapygroup.co.uk
Website: www.mkmstherapygroup.co.uk

Vasco Fernandes

Key Contact Details—more on the web site

Chair Lesley Sparks; email: chair@mku3a.org

Vice Chair email: Martin Woodman; email: vicechair@mku3a.org

Secretary Deb Hodges; email: secretary@mku3a.org

Treasurer David Hall; email: treasurer@mku3a.org

Groups Facilitators Chris Costello, Hazel Spencer, Shirley Dewar; email: groups@mku3a.org

Membership Secretary Tim Hadden; email: membersec@mku3a.org

Webmaster Dave Barratt; email: webmaster@mku3a.org

Communications Coordinator Martin Woodman; email: comms@mku3a.org

Open Meetings Wendy Barrett; email: openmtgs@mku3a.org

Thames Valley Network Coordinator Frank Parisi; email: tvn@mku3a.org

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

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Registered charity number: **298693**