



## The Third Way eNewsletter

April 2024

### News from the Chair – Lesley Sparks

Dear Members,

Many of you will have been helping families through the Easter holidays. I am one of the many grandparents who do so happily, however I come back slightly more tired than I went!

You will see later in the newsletter that the Third Age Trust is launching a new benefits and services area which you might find interesting. All details are in the article below and although I have signed up for this newsletter, I have no more information than is given in the article.

There are also several free online events on the main u3a website <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>. If you sign in, you will receive notification of future events straight into your inbox. They are many and varied so there might be one which interests you.

We are busy planning our u3a day in August so watch this space as we will be advertising this as soon as all the details have been finalised. There will be one change to last year, where the Mad Hatters Tea Party was a free event, this year there will be a charge as we had several no shows last year. This resulted in overspending and having food left after on the day. We feel if we have a financial commitment members will attend or let us know in plenty of time so we can adjust the amount we require. We will need some helpers on the day, but we will ask for these nearer the time.

Best wishes as always,  
Lesley

## Extra benefits for u3a supporters

We are delighted to announce a new range of services to those who sign-up to receive the u3a Friends newsletter.

u3a Friends Extra is a benefits website developed exclusively for members of the u3a Friends newsletter community. The website provides access to a wide range of offers, discounts and additional services.

Friends Extra is completely free to access. Anyone signed up to the u3a Friends newsletter can now also make savings on well-known brands, shopping, travel, days out and more.

Offers and services on Friends Extra include:

- ✓ Health and wellbeing
- ✓ Shopping savings on major brands and retail discounts
- ✓ Travel and holidays
- ✓ Leisure offers, like family days out, trips to the cinema and theatre
- ✓ Insurance offers on car, travel and medical insurance
- ✓ Access to financial advice and a legal helpline.

To become a 'Friend', simply sign up to receive the Friends Newsletter on the u3a website: <https://www.u3a.org.uk>

Each issue of the Friends Newsletter will include a link to the Friends Extra benefits website and highlight one of the offers.

This is just one element of the u3a Friends newsletter, which brings together stories from local u3a groups, learning opportunities and news of upcoming events to highlight the fun and learning within the u3a community.

## Open Meetings – Wendy Barrett

Our meeting on **Wednesday 24th April at 2:30** features a talk by Janine Kilroe on:

### **British Piers – An illustrated Story of Their History and Future**

Janine a Fine Art Photographer is passionate about capturing photographically and aerial filming (*she's also a lady drone pilot*) "her" piers. She discusses the part they play in our history and what is to become of them. The talk is illustrated throughout with historical as well as Janine's own images and films.



**Brighton Pier**



**Eastbourne Pier Before the Fire**

Sign up in the diary section of the MKu3a web site.



**A heads up for the  
May Open Meeting:**

**THEIR HEROES  
AND THEIR MUSIC**

A fun talk about how  
the Beatles put the  
'beat' into pop music!  
Our guest speaker

Martin Orkin will look at the music of the 50s and 60s: the artists who influenced the Fab Four and those who were influenced by them. We will hear snippets of some of the great records of that period and Martin may also use the occasion to test our musical memories of the era! **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 at 2.30pm**

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

### Exploring World Faiths Group

Did you know that there's a Temple situated in the same building as the MK u3a office? If you've visited the office then you probably did! Perhaps you'd like to visit this Temple with a u3a group at 2pm on 3rd May and if so please look at our group page, then contact me - Linda Morris [ewf@mku3a.org](mailto:ewf@mku3a.org).

### KEEP FIT TUESDAY MORNING 9.30-10.30 – Anne Davies

We recently started a Tuesday morning keep fit group at the Mead Centre Newport Pagnell.

We need a few more members to make the group viable. It is a very friendly group who thoroughly enjoy the exercises which are geared for the 55+ age group (even men allowed!).

Come and try it - maybe even enjoy a cup of coffee with new friends afterwards!

If you are interested and want to join. please contact Anne Davis 07703 190904.

### Ukulele Group – Ronald Spalding

The ukulele group has progressed with some enthusiasm over recent months. Our numbers are now static as we have closed the membership list for now, and we regularly have more than 20 members at our bi-weekly meetings. Our newcomers are getting up to speed and enjoying singing and playing alongside our longer serving members. Tuition continues as and when required and when members wish to expand their skills.

We have been invited to perform at several events. The attached photos give an indication of some of these.



Willen Church at a Tuesday Concert



Baden Powell Guild AGM



Entertaining Bucks Vision at Age UK

We have a few more gigs in the calendar over the coming months. Although we do not have vacancies at present, we will be reviewing our numbers at the anniversary of our move to the Synagogue in June/July. We still have a waiting list for when we can take on new budding strummers.

### **Third Age Players (TAP) – Greta Langdale**

The Third Age Players are well into rehearsals for their next production: "Secrets, Scandals and Gossip". In due course you, the plebian public, will be invited to the Royal Courts of King Henry V111, Kings George 111 and 1V, and their Queens. As the Minstrel says, "save the date" (September 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> at 3pm) for there will be at least one wedding and a funeral and lots of intrigue in between. You will find Wavendon Community Centre much transformed; the portrayal of Queen Caroline of Brunswick which you see here is one of many portraits which you will be able to enjoy at the Palaces.



Meanwhile, the Royal Courts find themselves rather short staffed, and are looking for anyone who might be willing to help make their household run smoothly;



as John Heywood documented in his 1546 book of proverbs: “many hands make light work”. Furthermore, Greta Langdale, the TAP co-ordinator, is in danger of losing her head if she does not ensure that their Majesties are fully – ahem – serviced. So, if you would like to be (temporarily) a courtier, footman, lady’s maid or just an underling\*, please contact Greta by sending a horse and rider with a message. Or just text her: 07905 247870 or email her [TAP@mku3a.com](mailto:TAP@mku3a.com) – they are presently

little-known methods of communication but Gertrude the Soothsayer says they are very reliable. \*Uniform provided.

### **Croquet Group – Jackie Berry**

Do you fancy learning how to play Croquet with the Thursday morning Group which meets at the Stony Stratford Croquet club? The group has been full for two years but due to many of the U3a members having joined the club so that they can play as often as they wish, we have just a few vacancies.

If you are interested you can get in touch with Jackie Berry, Tel. 01908 677565 or 07954588238.

### **Choir Group – Pat Mountford**

Rehearsals are now well under way for our summer concert on **Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>** which this year is at **Lovat Hall in Newport Pagnell**. Tickets are available now from any of the members of the choir or from 01908 613088 – they cost £10 each which includes a cream tea, and all the proceeds will go to Willen Hospice. We really hope you’ll be able to join us at 2.30pm for the concert, which we’re calling ‘Memories’ and is a trip down Memory Lane with all your favourite music from stage and screen.

**MKU3A Choir presents.**

***Memories***

***Music from Stage & Screen***



**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June at 2.30pm**

**Lovat Hall, Newport Pagnell**

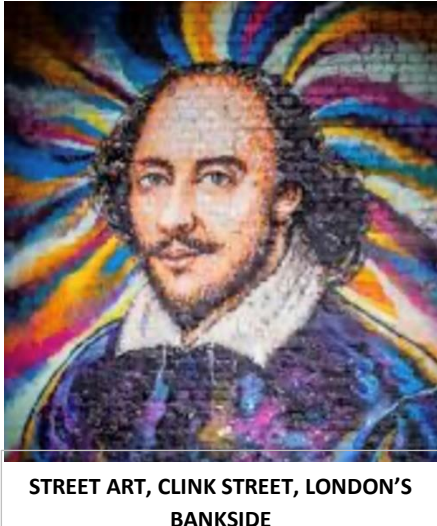
**Tickets £10 incl. a cream tea**

**01908 613088**



**All proceeds to Willen Hospice**

## OUR SHAKESPEARE GROUP WOULD LIKE MORE MEMBERS



Just think where we'd be without him!

We couldn't ever:

- Go on about ladies protesting too much.
- Play fast and loose.
- Remark that we have seen better days.
- Have too much of a good thing.
- Budge an inch.
- Bid someone good riddance ...  
and then send them packing or
- Perceive an eyesore.

For goodness' sake! Shall there be no more cakes and ale? (I'm still quoting).

Join us and discover how your own insights are matched by those of Shakespeare. Life's journeys take us all through young love, ambition, jealousy, friendships, grief, rashness, generosity, being misunderstood, manipulation - to say nothing of witchcraft, handwashing and madness.

His language might be a bit challenging to read to oneself, but it leaps into life when spoken. We also look at the times and culture Shakespeare lived in.

Our group is not made up of experts. We are just groundlings, although, Master Shakespeare, I will take issue with your description of us as "for the most part ... capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise." That was merely a joke - wasn't it?



## Outings Group 2024 Summary – Chris Behrendt

Meetings are held the **SECOND** Thursday of the month. Meeting dates 23 May, 13 June, 11 July, 8 August, 12 September, 10 October, 14 November

The next meeting will be on **23 May** from 2.15pm for a 2.30pm start for the people attending. *Please note the change of date to allow an **Outing to Living Crafts at Hatfield House on 9 May.***

The venue for the meetings is:

**Hérons Lodge Guide Centre, Bradwell Road, Loughton Lodge MK8 9AA**

*All members of MKU3A are welcome on any of the outings* and the Outings monthly meeting and will be able to 'sign up' for the Outings also at the monthly Open meetings, by postal application or by paying by bank transfer, and now by card reader – further information on the flyers. Flyers for each outing will be circulated to all members through the website, with details in the monthly newsletter and hard copies available at the monthly meetings.

**25 April French Brothers Windsor, River Cruise with lunch then a visit to Bekonscot Model Village with cream tea. – full, including a waiting list**

**Cost: £50**

**Pick up Point:** Milton Keynes Coachway, Coachway Road MK16 0AA  
**8.30am Coach Company:** Marshalls Coaches

**Arrive:** The Clewer Boat House Windsor approx. 10.30am. **Depart: Bekonscot 17.00 hours** **Arrive:** Milton Keynes 19.00 hrs. approx.

**Drop off at Clewer Boat House for a 2 hour cruise with live commentary with Ploughman's Lunch. Then board the coach and travel 30 min to the Bekonscot Model Village with a voucher for a cream Tea.**

For many years, groups have chosen to combine a river trip with French Brothers and visit the nearby Bekonscot Model Village. Both are half day attractions that complement each other. Start the day with relaxing 2 hour cruise from Windsor during which you will be served a delicious Ham & Cheese ploughman's lunch. On the cruise we will pass Windsor Castle, and Eton College. After passing Windsor Race Course,

the boat goes through Boveney Lock and past Sutherland Grange, The Willows and Bray Film Studios then to Monkey Island where the boat turns round for the journey back to Windsor. Re-join the coach and head off to spend the afternoon at the world's oldest model village. Become a giant in a miniature world and wonder at the buildings portraying rural England as it was in the 1930's. A cream tea will be provided.

**Contact on the Day: Anne Davis 07703 190904**

### **Living Craft Fair – Hatfield House 9 May**

**Closing date for booking 24 April**

*To enable us to visit this craft fair we have swapped the meeting and outing date for May.*

Depart MK Coachway: 8.45am Arrive Hatfield House: 10.00am approx.

Depart: Hatfield House: 5.00pm Arrive Milton Keynes approx. 6.15pm

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Living Crafts.

A festival of art, craft and design that has supported outstanding contemporary design makers and artisans across the UK since 1974. Immerse yourself in the creative world with live demonstrations, workshops and activities.

**Cost:** £21 includes entry, coach cost and drivers tip. All food and drink at own expense.

**Lead on the day:** Deb Hodges Mobile: 07769 720233

### **Brooklands Museum 27 June**

**Closing date for booking 1 June**

Last visited in April 2017 – so much to see and explore, including a 'flight' on Concorde' A McLaren Experience, planes buses and automobiles. *And so much more*

**Cost:** £45 including Concorde experience, one hour guided tour, tea and coffee on arrival, coach hire and driver's tip. Please note flight of steps to board and disembark Concorde.

**Cost:** £38.50 excluding Concorde Experience, one hour guided tour, tea and coffee on arrival, coach hire and drivers tip.

one hour guided tour, tea and coffee on arrival, coach hire and driver's tip.

**The Concorde experience** – Take the Brooklands Concorde Experience and see inside the world's most famous aircraft. Re-live the excitement of the supersonic age in this fascinating 25-minute tour. Included in the Concorde Experience

- Complimentary Concorde Boarding Pass
- Pre-Flight Briefing under Concorde
- Gallery of Concorde History
- Short Film on the Restoration Project
- Sit in Real Concorde Passenger Seats
- Take-Off for your Virtual Concorde Flight
- Complimentary Concorde Flight Certificate
- Maximum of 16 people per tour. Timed tickets generally available if more than 16 wish to travel.

Three wheelchairs and a mobility scooter are available for visitors to borrow. Please call personally to their Visitor Services team to reserve a wheelchair or mobility scooter on 01932 857381 once you have booked your place.

**Lead on the Day:** Jennie Savage Mobile Number: 07885 857270

**Update on How to Pay:** *The Outings Group now has access to a card reader for people to pay at the Outings meeting and Open Meeting. Page 2 of the flyer for an Outing will be updated to reflect this.*

### **Help Required**

*The Outings Committee would welcome an additional member to join and take the Lead on at least two Outings a year. However the Committee members are always there for each other, working as a team to produce the Outings. If interested please contact Chris Behrendt at [outingsmku3a.org](http://outingsmku3a.org) or by telephone on 07766 026357*

## HOLIDAYS AND SHORT BREAKS

*I have a new title when organising this Group – Tour Organiser and whilst able to promote the short breaks to MKu3a members, relatives and friends who may not be members, no monies for these short breaks will go through MKu3a accounts.*

### **Potters Resort Hopton-on-Sea**

What a short break that was – a new experience for many of us. Sutton Hoo visited on the way to Potters Resort was interesting.. Arrive at Potters, itinerary for the week and keys to Bungalows allocated, dinner Monday night and the week continued at a hectic pace as people took part in so many activities, some even winning medals for the highest score at the time they were participating.

Wednesday was our day out to Norwich and Wroxham – the only time it rained was on the way to Norwich. The Blue Badge Guide and Coach Driver planned a guided coach tour of Norwich to see the many attractions before some went to the Cathedral and explored the market and shops. Others visited Norwich Castle. Wroxham – chill out on the coach or visit so many Roy's of Wroxham shops it could be called Roysham. Thursday we had a 'Special Birthday' a cake had been organised and prosecco available to toast Jan as we and the waiters all sang Happy Birthday

Thursday evening – our last night, evening entertainment that had been on each evening, was again brilliant and to a West End standard. Friday – to Aldeburgh, known for Benjamin Britten, renowned for its fish and chips shops and cabins selling fresh and smoked fish on the beach. A hiccup with the pick-up point resolved on my feet by sending a recce party to establish where the coach was and one of the Linda's and I being rear gunners for stragglers at the original pick up point.

Would we do this type of short break again – the travellers from u3a gave a resounding YES, should opportunity occur again.

I have written to Potters Resort and City and Village Tours thanking them for the hospitality and welcome that was made to all and noted to Potters I shall be giving them my vote on behalf of Holidays and Short Breaks for the Group Leisure and Travel Awards.

## Second Short Break of the Year

### Visit Kent Sunday 6 October for 4 nights/5 days.

A much slower short break with Tuesday the busiest day visiting the Battle of Britain Memorial, Walmer Castle and Gardens then a journey on the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway along the Kent coast. Other days include Canterbury Cathedral and Whitstable, Rochester for Eastgate House, a Grade 1 listed 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century townhouse – one of the most impressive and distinctive buildings on the High Street with free time to look round the town before returning to the hotel for some time at Leisure. Homeward on the Thursday we stop at Macknade Farm Shop and Food Hall.

Minimum number of 25 people from £599pp sharing. Eight double/twin rooms still available and six double for sole use.

The flyer giving details of the itinerary and costs will be circulated to all members. For further details please contact Chris Behrendt on [h.and.sb@mku3a.org](mailto:h.and.sb@mku3a.org) or telephone 07766 026357.

## OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

### Otis and the Tiger – John Conneely

Having lived in four continents working on eco-sustainable projects, my quest since retirement is to educate the next generation and engage them in helping Planet Earth.

I was spurred on to complete the eco-sustainable book for my grandchildren after receiving a letter from Lise Grande of UNICEF when based in Yemen, where I worked in the 1980's. Lise is now President at the US Institute for Peace. Also, the Roald Dahl Foundation who kindly allowed me to quote from 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'.

During 'Lockdown' my grandchildren asked many eco-climate questions including "why is Greta angry at the UN Climate Action Summit"? My printed book was given away to children and schools.

'Otis and the Tiger's Den' – the twenty-page eco book is in two parts:

PART ONE – 'Natural Materials' – The story starts with grandson Otis asking, "Grandad can you help me build an animal den for a school project...."



PART TWO – ‘Apres Ozone’ With support from UN we explain greenhouse emissions, fossil fuels and the ozone layer.

As explained, rather than reprint the above with major sponsors I decided to upload and make it FREELY available on-line. Please view: [www.otisandthetigersden.com](http://www.otisandthetigersden.com)

It is an important story for children and parents to share or as Esther Rantzen, points out; us Third Agers are not just there for school collection and babysitting. It will surprise many grandchildren when we help to explain a few important issues that affect our planet. Therefore I have created a SPECIAL u3a pdf version that includes two extra pages explaining about our organisation, u3a, a PowerPoint of Otis and the Tiger’s Den (This presentation can be found in the Members area of our website and can be downloaded from there).

### Third Tuesday Twelve Thirty – Marilyn Ridsdale

TT@TT at Willen on Tuesday 21st May is Playpals, the musicians' group. Everyone is invited to be entertained at the free lunch time concert.



### Walk and Glide – May Walking Festival

The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust has teamed-up with The Parks Trust to offer five Walk & Glide events on 11th & 12th May as part of their annual Walking Festival. Designed for different levels of fitness, each one explores a different aspect of canal side parkland between Campbell Wharf and Great Linford Wharf, followed by a relaxing return cruise on Electra.

“Electra is the all-electric community boat, based on the Grand Union Canal, run by a dedicated team of volunteers from the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust”, explained Denise Taylor, Volunteer Chair.

“Each walk is led by an experienced walk leader who will highlight points of interest on the walk and the cruise. Please come dressed for the weather on the day and wear sturdy footwear” she added.

David Lewis, The Parks Trust’s Recreation and Volunteer Engagement Co-Ordinator said, “These walks are a wonderful way to let you explore more of Milton Keynes’ wonderful parkland, because you can walk one way and then glide quietly back to your starting point on MK Community Boat Electra.”

Booking is online on the Electra website Walk & Glide Events on 11/12 May, where full details of each route, together with the facilities on Electra can be found. Please note: Child tickets are available on the short events, which are recommended for over-fives. The walks involve towpath pick up/drop off and all ticket-holders must be able to manage the five steps on board.

### **Chiswick House and Gardens – Martin Woodman**

Our Kitchen Garden has just re-opened to visitors as we begin another harvesting season. Every year, this 2-acre walled garden seems to produce an even greater abundance of flowers, fruit and vegetables than ever and we are currently enjoying a stunning show of blossom and tulips. You can now visit the Kitchen Garden free of charge from Thursday to Sunday 10.30am until 3.30pm and our produce is available for sale on Thursdays and Saturdays, from 11.00am. We also offer beautiful bouquets for sale outside our cafe on Wednesdays and Fridays.

We were recently featured on the BBC news, their report covering our plans to develop a creative campus for local artists, a new community learning centre and to revive a historic walled fruit garden.

Chiswick House will re-open to the public on Friday 24 May, opening every week from Thursday to Sunday from 10.30am until 3.30pm until 29 September. <https://chiswickhouseandgardens.org.uk/plan-your-visit/opening-times-and-prices/>

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

**Vice Chair** – Wendy Barrett email [vicechair@mku3a.org](mailto:vicechair@mku3a.org)

**Secretary** – Deb Hodges email: [secretary@mku3a.org](mailto:secretary@mku3a.org)

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

**Groups Team** – Chris Costello/Hazel Spencer email  
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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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