



The Third Way Newsletter September 2024

News from the Chair – Lesley Sparks

Dear Members,

Here is the first of our quarterly newsletters, as promised we will forward any important information between editions to you by email.

Eve is away so I have put together this issue in her absence – we seem to have more Items of Other Interest than news about group meeting which I hope means that the group pages have been reviewed and updated with group news. This is certainly the best and easiest way to keep your group members and new members looking for groups to join informed of your latest news.

On 28th August we held our annual Celebration Day themed 'The Magic of the Seaside'. This year we had numerous groups showcasing their work and ideas for others to see – it certainly was a magnificent display followed by lunch, quiz and entertainment. There is a farther report later in the newsletter.

On the same theme the Trustees are looking for a small subcommittee to take over the organisation of such events. This is an enjoyable activity, but it would be great if we could share the load and maybe have more than one 'social' event a year – we already have ideas in the pipeline for 2025. If helping organise events is something you would like to consider, please let me know. chair@mku3a.org

Best wishes as always

Lesley



"The Magic of the Seaside"

Wed. 28 August 2024



The 80 members present appreciated the huge effort undertaken in order to put on such a great, well-planned show. **THANK YOU!**

It was a very good party with excellent company.

It was a perfect all-round celebration; the welcome cocktail was a lovely idea & the group displays were interesting & very informative. especially the photo group's video of the Keep Fit group & the P4F's on-screen slide show.

Food-wise, very well done; excellent, really hot, fish & chips & good accompanying sauces & we loved the table decorations.

The quizzes were very interesting & the entertainment first class.

The magician was brilliant, both close-up at the tables & the final 'stage' show.

Well done to all the helpers, the 'waiting staff' were great!!

Thank you so much for a thoroughly enjoyable time. Looking forward to August 2025!!!

Diary Dates for Open Meetings to the end of 2024

On Wednesday 25th September – MK Diabetes UK. **DiABETES UK**
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.

Lesley Grassington is going to talk about the work of MK Diabetes UK. We're hoping to cover the following:

- Pre-diabetes – understanding, advice and support
- Different types of diabetes
- Diagnosis – recent or a long time ago
- Living a healthy life and staying well
- Getting the best from your review appointments

Our venue is Oak Tree Centre, Wallinger Drive, Shenley Brook End, MK5 7GZ. Doors open at 2:00pm for a 2.30pm start. Coffee, tea and biscuits are available after the talk. There is a £1 charge for members and £2 for visitors. Sign up on the diary section of the website or if you have difficulty, email openmtgs@mku3a.org

On Wednesday 23rd October – Graham Short "My Life as a Micro-Artist"



Known as the 'Hands of Genius' in the art world for his microscopic masterpieces, Graham has spent over half a century honing his craft, going to both physical and mental extremes to produce some of the highest-quality engravings in the world. Graham is probably best known for engraving The Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin and for carving Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper along the sharp edge of a razor blade.

Graham's PowerPoint presentation is described as 'more theatre than classroom' and is littered with highly amusing tales about the celebrities he has met and worked with. This talk is set to be very popular, so secure your place by signing up on the diary section of the website (or if you have difficulty, email openmtgs@mku3a.org).

On Wednesday 27th November – The history of church building and their repairs over the last 205 years.



Ben Sims is with us from the National Churches Trust to tell us about the history of church building and their repairs over the last 205 years. Every year the charity helps hundreds of churches, chapels and meeting houses to stay open, helping to save precious heritage and keeping churches at the beating heart of local communities.

Working together with churches in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, they help to keep these historic buildings thriving today, and tomorrow.

Keep an eye on the diary section of the website to get information about or book your place for this and future Open Meetings. We're hoping to release details of the first few 2025 talks soon but if you have a suggestion about future subjects and can put us in touch with a speaker, please email openmtgs@mku3a.org.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Yoga for Life – Chris Behrendt

When the group commences again in September there are several vacancies available to join the group.

The group meets on Tuesday morning at Windmill Hill Golf Centre, Tattenhoe Lane Bletchley. Meetings are based around school term times and the Tutors holiday. The recommendation is that people attend two sessions at a cost of £16 to see whether they consider Yoga for Life is suitable for them, if yes, payment for the rest of the term is made, if no – walk away knowing it was not for you.

Terms are usually between 5–7 weeks with payment made at the beginning of each term. People joining the group will be expected to complete a health questionnaire for the Tutor, to enable adaption of Yoga poses to meet individual's needs.

If you are interested and would like more information, please contact Chris Behrendt 07766 026357 or e-mail yoga1@mku3a.org

Yoga helps keep the body moving.

Bring mobility and freedom to your mind, body and breath using a combination of Slow Flow, Restorative and Yin inspired Yoga. We infuse slow, gentle flow yoga with attention to strength and stabilisation of the joints mindful of posture and body anatomy for a moving meditation.

Yoga is a way of finding peace of mind through the meditation of movement and breath. Yoga is not about getting into the pose, but we use yoga postures to gain access to the body. Yoga is how you feel in the body, not how you look and a vehicle in life for more conscious living.

There is no universal alignment that applies to every pose, nor is there a perfect form that applies to each person. Your body is the only one like it, we are all unique. Classes are alignment-influenced moving safely within your body.

World Faiths – Linda Morris

Would you be interested in attending A talk about Humanism? We will hear the Chairman from MK Humanists speak on Wednesday afternoon, 2nd October.

On 6th November our talk is about the MK Council of Faiths. Did you know that MK had such a group? Come along to find out who they are and what they do.

If you would like to join the group for either or both meetings, please look on our group page, then make contact via ewf@mku3a.org

New Football Kickabout group

Would you like a different way to keep yourself fit and active whilst having fun and reliving your youth? If so, we are considering setting up a new gentle Football kickabout group. There will be a tutor to lead the group. However, before we can do so we need somebody who is willing to be the Group Coordinator for the group. If you are interested in setting up this new Football Kickabout group and/or would like to join in the group and would like more information, please contact Hazel Spencer at groups@mku3a.org.

MKU3A choir – Vivienne Shaw (Group leader)

After giving our voices a rest through August, the choir is back rehearsing each Tuesday and it's nice to have welcomed several new members. Much as we don't like to mention the word, we've started preparing for our Christmas concert which is on December 15th, as we also have one or two extra commitments this term. Sadly, this will be Pat and Jennifer's last concert as they are retiring at Christmas (see the advert below).

If any of you would like to consider joining the choir, do get in touch through the web site.



As many of you know, the U3A choir is a well-established group of around 60 singers. Both our current Musical Director, Pat Mountford and accompanist, Jennifer Mazzone are retiring at the end of the year after 12 years with the choir. Pat has said, 'It has been a really difficult decision that we've both had to make, especially because of the commitment and friendship of a lovely group of people.'

The Choir is, therefore, seeking to recruit replacements for these two key roles. Interested persons should contact Vivienne Shaw in the first instance on 07958 796515 or email vivienneshaw@btinternet.com.



Free wheelers – Laurence Holden

Our MK U3A cycling group "Free Wheelers" was delighted to be joined on its 20th August ride by the Mayor for Milton Keynes, Marie Bradburn. One of Marie's Mayoral themes for her year in office is encouraging and promoting cycling in Milton Keynes. So it was



particularly special that she was able to spend a morning with us, cycling a delightful circular route from MK to Wooton and back. Marie was accompanied by a representative of her mayoral charity for the year, Sieve MK Gateway.

Also, on the 1st September a number of members of "Free Wheelers" took part in the Willen Hospice Cycle Sportive event, and successfully helped raise funds for this wonderful charity.



Free Wheelers rides on alternate Tuesdays, usually doing circular routes to places like Stowe, Harrold Country Park and Salcey and covering 20 - 30 miles with a good social stop for coffee, cake and chat!

Details of the Free Wheelers cycling group, and other U3A cycling groups, can be found at mku3a.org/home

Outings – Chris Behrendt

Meetings are held the **SECOND** Thursday of the month. Meeting dates, [17 October, 28 November. Please note the change of date for the Outings meeting in October and November](#)

The next meeting will be on **17 October** from 2.15pm for a 2.30pm start for the people attending. 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 at the Outings monthly meeting will be the first opportunity to 'sign up' for the Outings. Information will also be available at the monthly Open meetings and sent to all members by e-mail. Postal applications are accepted, please contact Diana, outingsmku3a@gmail.com

Payment can be made by contactless Card Reader, cheque and cash at the Outings meeting and Open meeting. Bank transfer is also available, details on the second page of the flyer.

Bookings: Unless paying at the Outings and Open meeting please contact the Outings group 07880 832917 or by e-mailing outings@mku3a.org to ensure there are places available before sending your form and cheque or making any bank transfer payment. This will secure your reservation dependent on availability.

The **Committee members** are Anne Davis, Ray Cockram, Deb Hodges, Jennie Savage, Anni Cowmeadow and Chris Behrendt who is also the Group Coordinator, e-mail outings@mku3a.org.

Diana Sears, manages the booking for Outings and any finance queries, outingsmku3a@gmail.com

Insurance – new guidance on who would be insured at a u3a group has been received from National. Basically, non-members are no longer allowed on Outings as they would not be insured, we must accept this guidance as should said person have an accident the Lead of the Outing could be held liable. Fully paid-up members of other u3a who occasionally accompany an MK member on an Outing are covered by the insurance.

Non-members are welcome to join MKu3a, at a cost of £15 a year, this allows access to not only the various Outings but all other groups within MKu3a, plus a quarterly newsletter, information from groups about 'their happenings' Open meeting and a national quarterly magazine.

Upcoming Outings

Brockley's Pie Experience Thursday 24 October

Sold out within 8 hours

The company gave a maximum of 40 places – exceeded!! With a waiting list. **Lead on the day:** Jennie Savage

Country Living Christmas Craft Fair in conjunction with Good Housekeeping.

Cost: £51 **Depart:** MK Coachway 8.00am **Depart:** Business Design Centre London 5.15pm.

40 tickets have been booked and paid for, although additional tickets are available should they be required.

For the first time Country Living have joined with Good Housekeeping to give those visiting a new experience, food tasting 'try and buy' celebrity from TV chefs, interior designers, actress and historical show presenters, giving talks and available after for book signings, and chats plus the opportunity to celebrate artisan providers of unique and individual gifts for relatives and friends, possibly unavailable on the high street.

Most of those within the Christmas Market are as noted independent artisan with item to purchase that you are unlikely to find on the high street.

From my many previous visits to the craft fair, I have purchased for relatives and friends and myself item that are unique.

All those booking will receive a 12-month digital subscription to either Country Living or Good Housekeeping

Cirque du Soleil Friday 21 February 2025

Depart MK Coachway 10.00am **Depart:** Royal Albert Hall 6.15pm

Another event that sold within 4 hours, with a waiting list.

52 tickets – all sold, for what should be an incredible experience of light, sound and aerobatics.

CB is in the process of compiling a list of restaurants/café in the area that will be circulated to all who have managed to book tickets.

Lead one Day: Chris Behrendt

Short Breaks and Holidays

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.

Second Short Break of the Year

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

Bookings now closed

46 people booked

Contact: Chris Behrendt 07766 026357 h.and.sb@mku3a.org

Kynren and the Auckland Project – Early September 2025

Following various conversations within MKu3a and with *Just for Groups*, our preferred Group Tour Company, the early September 2025 short break will be to the Kynren and Auckland Project with other interesting places within Northumberland and on the departure/return journey to Northumberland.

Details will be provided once the itinerary has been confirmed

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Danesborough Chorus 50th Anniversary Season Autumn Concert

Handel *Messiah*

Saturday 16 November 2024, 7.30 pm

Christ the Cornerstone Church, Milton Keynes MK9 2ES



The poster features a central image of a religious painting of Christ the Cornerstone, with Latin text around the border: 'IN FACTIS PANCHECTOR PANCHECTOR' and 'IN PANCHECTOR PANCHECTOR'. The text on the poster includes: 'DANESBOROUGH CHORUS 50th Anniversary Concert', 'Saturday 16th November 2024 at 7.30 pm Christ the Cornerstone, Milton Keynes', 'Handel's Messiah', 'Carolyn Sampson (soprano) Anna Huntley (mezzo) James Gilchrist (tenor) Benjamin Bevan (baritone) Alina Orchestra Conductor Ian Smith', 'Tickets: £25 (ground level), £15 (balcony), under 18s £5. Book by phoning 01908 583460 or scan the QR code to book online.', and 'Danesborough Chorus reg. charity no. 1188026 www.danesborough.org.uk'.

One of the most famous oratorios ever written and perhaps Handel's best-known work, *Messiah* needs little introduction. Handel completed the work in September 1741 and it was first performed in April 1742 in Dublin to an enraptured audience. It is the most uplifting music ever written, with sublime arias and choruses such as

'Rejoice Greatly O Daughter of Zion',

'For unto Us a Child is Born',

and the ever-popular 'Hallelujah' chorus.

For its inaugural concert in January 1976, Danesborough Chorus gave a performance of *Messiah* in Woburn Parish Church with Bedford Sinfonia and four nationally known soloists. The concert was a sell-out, with an audience of 600 and every possible seat taken. In keeping with that tradition, for this concert we have engaged an internationally renowned quartet of soloists, Carolyn Sampson, soprano, Anna Huntley, mezzo-soprano, James Gilchrist, tenor, Benjamin Bevan, baritone and the very fine Alina Orchestra.

Do join us on this occasion for what promises to be an exciting and moving performance and one that you will certainly not wish to miss!

Tickets (all unreserved): £25 (ground floor) and £15 (balcony), £5 for under 18s (all areas). Tickets available by phoning 01908 583460 or online at <https://www.wegotickets.com/event/625113>.

Rock'n'Roll Choir – submitted by Mary Freeman

Contact Andy Gilbert details below

I'm writing to invite you to Milton Keynes Rock'n'Roll Choir. It isn't like any choir you've ever seen. We sing hits from the 60s; most of our members are old enough to remember them when the songs were in the charts. But what makes it different from other choirs? It's so informal that you don't have to be able to sing well! Like me, the 'boomer' generation challenged convention when we were young, and I'm still doing just that today! There is no sheet music; if you were around in the 60s you'll already know songs like Twist and Shout, Norwegian Wood and Eight Days a Week; you don't need music notation to tell you how it goes, just the lyrics!

The second thing that's different is that the approach is easy going. No one can hear any individual voice in a choir; there are no soloists, so if you go wrong you just listen to the voices around you and get it right next time that chorus or verse comes around, or the time after that!

The third is that we relax when singing, with those who feel inclined to dance doing just that! A singing, dancing choir is something you'll almost never see away from the West End stage. I don't mean formal, choreographed steps, just freestyle bopping once you feel relaxed enough to let go of the British reserve that hold so many of back. As we grow older, we gradually realise that our reserve causes us to miss out on the enjoyment we could have without it. I'm often told that singing in our choir is 'better than therapy.'

The fourth thing is that whilst most choirs have piano accompaniment, we have three guitars and cajon. If you listen to records by The Beatles, Stones, Hollies etc. they used guitars, bass and drums, not just a single pianist. I avoid bass and drums because they can mask the voices, but electric guitars and cajon (a small box drum you sit on to play) are very controllable.

We're open throughout the holidays; I hire a community hall rather than a school; many of our members are retired so avoid holidaying at the most expensive time of year.

It's every Monday except bank holidays at 8.00pm, in Gt. Linford Memorial Hall, Marsh Drive, MK14 5AX.

Is there a charge? A £4 contribution helps pay for the hall and equipment, but it's free the first time, so you can see for yourself whether it's your cup of tea before forking out £4.

Most of all, you must like making new friends, because everyone is super friendly! We finish at 9.30pm but people are often chatting outside afterwards because they don't want to part company for another week! For some it's a social lifeline, which is as important to me as the music. Bringing people together in friendship is incredibly beneficial for mental health, and singing together makes the bonds even stronger.

You can call or message me on 07860 962586 if you'd like a chat.

A Literature Class in Milton Keynes – Autumn Term 2024 – submitted by Joe Clinch

This class should appeal to those who are keen on discussing good literature with a highly experienced tutor and a more structured format that is usually possible in book groups. The tutor, Karen Hewitt, taught regularly for Oxford University Department of Continuing Education in Milton Keynes, but a change of policy by OUCDE and the WEA has meant that she is now running these in Milton Keynes independently with a continuing friendly group of about a dozen students.

Irish Literature from James Joyce to Claire Keegan

The Course The full course covers two terms: in the Autumn Term we look at literature from the Celtic Revival (c.1900) to the Irish Civil War (1922–23) and its aftermath: in the Spring term 2025 we look at the Troubles in Northern Ireland (1969–1999) and at Keegan's quiet revelations of the Irish Republic in recent times.

Autumn Term class

We begin with an overview of the contested history that pervades modern Irish literature. Then we will discuss the following stories, poems, play and novel.

James Joyce 'The Dead' (the last story in the volume *Dubliners*) (Penguin)

W.B.Yeats Poetry of the Celtic revival, the 1st World War, the Easter Rising and the civil war in Ireland (Wordsworth Poetry Library)

J.M.Synge *The Playboy of the Western World* (Nick Hearn Books)

Sebastian Barry *A Long Long Way* (Faber)

An essay chosen from a wide list of topics is expected each term and of a length and style chosen by the student.

Time and Place. The class will be on Mondays from 10.00 to 12.00 noon starting on **30th September 2024**. It will last 11 weeks with a half-term break. The class will be held in the comfortable Methodist Hall, Silver Street, Stony Stratford.

Tutor: Karen Hewitt (karen.hewitt@conted.ox.ac.uk)

Fee £160 for each term – to cover tutor fees, travel, hall hire and insurance.

Sample Session. New students may be uncertain whether they will like this class. They are welcome to sample the first session before they commit themselves to paying the fee.

If you would like to join this class (or have any queries), please send an email to karen.hewitt@conted.ox.ac.uk who will send you a Registration Form. If you want to sample it first, please let her know by sending her an email – or just turn up.

Posted by Karen Hewitt, Tutor, and Joe Clinch (joeclinch@btinternet.com) mku3a member and long-standing Karen Hewitt Literature class member.

You Could Make a Difference in Your Community and Volunteer with BucksVision in Milton Keynes!

BucksVision is a local, friendly, charity providing information, activities, and support to visually impaired and blind members within your community. We rely on a wonderful team of dedicated volunteers, but it has been a struggle to recruit sufficiently to enable our activities to continue. We are in imminent danger of closing some of the social clubs and walking groups which are vital to reducing social isolation and maintaining the well-being of our members.

Do you have some time to give?

Could you continue to utilise skills, remain active, and use them to make a real difference in the lives of others within your community?

Whether you can spare a few hours a week or more, your contribution will have a big impact!

Our rewarding volunteer roles include

Volunteer Drivers: Transport members to and from social activities, but so much more than a taxi ride. Drivers engage with members, may stay and socialise with other drivers or assist with activities. We have 2 social groups, lunch club, art and craft group, tai chi, tandem and reading groups. All held monthly or fortnightly.

Walking Group Guides: Lead members on "gentle pace" walks and help our visually impaired members enjoy the outdoors. Held monthly at weekends.

Organisers for Walking and Social Groups: Work as part of a team to plan and coordinate regular activities and events.

If you're interested or would like to learn more about specific roles, please get in touch with Alison Milligan on 07394 473650 or at amilligan@bucksvision.co.uk , or our volunteer manager Kimmi Gray at volunteering@bucksvision.co.uk.

We'd love to hear from you and welcome you to the BucksVision volunteer team!

Chair – Lesley Sparks email: chair@mku3a.org

Vice Chair – Wendy Barrett email: vicechair@mku3a.org

Secretary – Deb Hodges email: secretary@mku3a.org

Treasurer – Diana Sears email: treasurer@mku3a.org

Groups Team – Chris Costello/Hazel Spencer email:
groups@mku3a.org

Webmaster – Dave Barratt email; webmaster@mku3a.org

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

Communications Coordinator – Martin Woodman email:
comms@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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