



milton keynes

university of the third age



May
2016



Message from the Chairman

To start – a final note on the AGM. I wrote a thank you letter to our speaker, Francesca Skelton, High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, and I have, unexpectedly, received a very pleasant reply.

I thought I would just quote a section:

‘Your members were a delightful, engaged audience so it was a very pleasurable engagement for me. They were clearly interested in both the heritage and modern role of the High Sheriff in our county so it was great to be able to have a wide ranging exchange’.

So please, all who attended, take a pat on the back and note that U3A membership clearly produces sparkling intellect!

The new U3A year continues with the challenge of team building – critically, we are still looking for a new treasurer. We may have to engage our sparkling minds and come up with an imaginative alternative solution (or close down MK U3A). In the meantime, Geraldine Cannell has started her role, looking after Group Financial Returns. Please look on her as a helping friend, so if you have any difficulties (such as getting in returns late, for whatever reason), do contact her. If Group Returns are passed on correctly, the treasurer’s brow would be much less furrowed.

This edition of ‘The Third Way’ is the first to be produced by our new Communications Co-ordinator, Lesley Sparks. I clearly will have to be on my toes – my first reminder has already arrived for the May edition and, as I’m bashing this out on the lap top, it’s still the first half of April! We wish Lesley well. Please be forthcoming with news, views, diary dates, pictures and other information. Please do not follow my example – keep things as brief and punchy as possible – Lesley has full editorial control and her scissors are sharp!

(That bit may possibly be cut out!).

Yesterday (13th April) saw no. 2 of Prof. Bill Prescott’s four part series on Exploring Oxford. I missed no. 1 (in a hailstorm in Wharfedale) but was pleased to be able to listen in on no. 2 – ‘Religion’ – a presentation that took a sideways, but fascinating, look at the religious sites around the St. Giles area. Time, methinks, to go for a stroll, back in that ancient city. Congratulations to those MK U3A members who are presenting their own bits

of interesting research. More 'sparkling minds!'

I continue my quest to visit all Groups during my three years and await invitations from Group Leaders (apologies to Transport Group – I will try again). In May, the Poetry Group will suffer my presentation on Yorkshire Poetry (Eh ba gum – I'm 'avin' fun!). You have been warned!

Sithee!, Nigel

Message from the Communications Co-ordinator

My name is Lesley Sparks and as you will have already read in the message from the chairman I have taken on the role of Communications Co-ordinator.

One of the aspects of this role is that I am responsible for gathering information for and producing your newsletter.

If you have something you think will be of interest to other members please send it to me at the following email address comms@mku3a.org – it may be an article about a trip you have been on with the Outings or Theatre Groups, a short story you have written, a recommendation for good service or a tip you may have learnt that you think will be of help to our members.

I cannot produce the Newsletter without your help. Next month I would like to have a section dealing with travel so if you have any travel tips you would like to share please pass them to me.

If you are planning to visit or pass through the US please check out the ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation) information printed later in the Newsletter. There were some rule changes on 1st April.

Travel Tips

Changes to the ESTA Rules

From the 1st April the rules concerning ESTAS have changed. You need an ESTA if you are entering or even passing through the US by air or sea.

ESTA's are normally valid for 2 years BUT

1. If you have applied for a new passport and still have an old but valid ESTA you will have to apply for a new one as the expiry date on your passport will have changed and the expiry dates on both documents have to be the same.
2. If you do not hold an e-passport, (e-passports have this logo on the front) you will be denied entry to the US under the ESTA scheme even if you have a valid ESTA.



Please check out this article for further information covering all aspects of ESTAS, It is very good and answers numerous questions about the scheme <http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/travel/esta-usa-visa>

News from the Groups

Do you enjoy playing Bridge?

The Rubber Bridge Group meet in Great Linford on Monday afternoons and would be happy for you to join in. You do not need a partner. Please contact the Group Leader, Jackie Warren on bridgerubber@mku3a.org for more details or visit the Group Page on the MKU3A.org website for further contact details

The Bridge Intermediate 1 Group are also looking for new members to join them in Wolverton on Friday afternoons. Scoring using the Chicago system. You do not need a partner to join in. Please contact the Group Leader, Wiebke Maclennan on bridgeint1@mku3a.org for more details or visit the Group Page on the MKU3A.org website for further contact details.

These groups are not suitable for beginners.

Transport Topics Group

From May to August the Transport Topics Group has four planned visits. The visits in May and June to the Mini-Car Factory and Severn Valley Railway are fully reserved but for any new members wishing to join the group there are currently places available on July 20th to RAF Hendon and August 17th to the Vauxhall Heritage Centre.

The regular monthly meetings at Carpenter Court, Neath Hill will recommence on Wednesday September 28 at 2pm when Hilary

Collett will give a talk on 'British Military Railways'.

New members are always welcome to come and join us. The venue and meeting day may be subject to change so please check the web-site.

MKU3A Choir Concert – Celebrations

Friday 27 May at 7.30 pm

at Newport Pagnell United Reformed Church

Tickets £7 including refreshments

available from Janice Miles - 07762 178379

The Gardening 2 Group has been renamed **Garden and Environment** to reflect a change of emphasis within the group. Now the members do not concentrate on the practical side of gardening in their meetings but often look at the whole environment in the wider world. They sometimes arrange speakers and visit gardens and nurseries. There are vacancies in this group. If you would like more information, please contact the group leader **Mike Jenner** on **01908 210310** or gardening2@mku3a.org

The Playpals

Our group of musicians continues to grow, but we still have a few vacancies. Do get in touch with me if you are interested.

Until Tuesday 19 April, we were rehearsing at two different venues on alternate weeks, the Synagogue at Giffard Park and the Shenley Wood Retirement Village. After a few years at Shenley, we had our final rehearsal

there. We gave a very informal performance to the residents, as a farewell gesture and a 'thank you' for their hospitality. We had a most enjoyable time, and it seemed that our audience did too! Lots of foot tapping and singing along with us.

So now we are rehearsing every Tuesday from 10.00 until 12.00 at the Synagogue, which means that anyone who wants to visit will not need to check in advance where we will be.

We are looking for opportunities to perform, maybe in conjunction with another U3A group or at a U3A occasion. If anyone is interested, do get in touch with me via the group's email address musicians@mku3a.org.

CONGRATULATIONS to our MKU3A Third Age Players. TAP, who have made the front page of the national Third Age Matters Magazine after their success in gaining a Distinction at the MK Arts Festival for the second year in a row.

Their production at the festival was a 15 minute comic drama entitled 'Murder in Milton Keynes Village' written by Pip Parry.

Please see more information about the awards in the article which can be found in the Latest News section of our website. (Only three items can be seen on screen initially so please select 'View More News' to read further news items)

If you would like to place your Group news in the Newsletter please contact Lesley Sparks on comms@mku3a.org

PROPOSED NEW GROUPS

Cribbage

Any current or potential cribbage players out there? MK U3A crib board and match stick keepers are needed for fun (and a pint?)

Desert Island Discs – Biography

The BBC 'D I D' archive is extensive, holding over 1,500 'victims' there within. Listen in during gentle mornings over a glass of . . .

Ukelele

The Ukelele is the current "in" instrument and you don't even have to be able to read music to play. The musically inclined, but frustrated, needed. And lamp posts to lean on!!

Spanish for Beginners

New Group, and new tutor, needed. Get in touch, *por favor!*

Italian for Beginners

New Group, and new tutor, needed. Get in touch, *per favore!*

Italian Improvers

So popular that Group 2 is proposed – are you game for *una lezione o due?*

Chess

New kings, queens (bishops, knights , castles, pawns) needed. Come grapple with the intricacies of a black and white board!

Family History Group

Potentially Group No.5! So many families, so many records! How is your great-great-grandfather, by the way?

Books

Now is the time for a third book group! Share your interest under the covers (book covers, that is!)

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ANY OF THE ABOVE?

Please contact newgroups@mku3a.org or write/ phone 'New Groups' at the MK U3A Kingston Office

Free or subsidised swimming and other facilities for those over 60/65

The following offer from Freedom First at Willen Lake has been forwarded to me from Public Health at Milton Keynes Council. It is a great offer – especially as you also get access to the steam room, sauna or spa.

From April 1 2016 the centre will provide free swimming for people over 65. Sessions are Tuesday and Thursday 9.30am – 11.00am. Outside of this casual swimming will be just £2.50. All we ask people to do is come ready to enjoy the pool, we may ask for some form of ID if you look too youthful. The session includes steam, spa and sauna.

However, there are other swimming offers. If you live in the area covered by West Bletchley Council or Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Council and are over 60 you can swim free of charge at Bletchley Leisure Centre. If you live elsewhere and are age 60 or over you can swim for just £1.80 [off peak] and £2.00 [peak] and if you are a regular swimmer and join a payment plan you can bring this cost down to just £1.20 per session

Personal Recommendations by Members

Accountant

I would like to recommend Gilly Norris, Accountant and Taxation Advisor,

[01908 639762](tel:01908639762)

gilly_norris@btinternet.com

She is a pleasure to meet, to talk to, to rely on and she works efficiently and quickly. She has also been of valued help to me with Probate.

Recommendation by Shiela MacLean

If you have had good service from tradesmen or the professions and would like to recommend them to others please let me know on comms@mku3a.org

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Upcoming Theatre Trip

12th May	Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
1st June	Annie
16th July	Guys and Dolls
22nd June	Rehearsal For Murder
29th July	The Rocky Horror Show
6th August	Fame
1st Sept	The Kinks—Sunny Afternoon
2nd Nov	The Commitments

Please refer to the website for further details or contact the organiser on theatre@mku3s.org

Upcoming Outings

5th May	Lincoln Castle and Cathedral
19th May	Kelmscott Manor and Buscot Park
2nd June	Greenwich Ahoy!
16th June	Blenheim Palace
30 th June	Coughton Court
10th July	Duxford Flying Legends
21 st July	Birdsworld

Please refer to the website for further details or contact the organiser on outings@mku3a.org

Booking Forms for both these groups can be found on the relevant page of the website

Open Meetings - *2pm MKCC, Oldbrook*

25 th May	The Last Naval Hero
22 nd June	Enjoying Music
24 th August	What a Dump!
28 th Sept	History of Rock and Alpine Gardens

Group Leaders Meeting

Wednesday June 15th - Option, morning or afternoon session at
The Wilberforce Hall, The Ridgeway Centre, MK12 5TH

Are you taking advantage of Datum – our new management administration system?

If you haven't already established your own Login, then by doing this you will have access to much more detailed information in the Diary and Latest News tabs on our website, and to the Members Only area.

To set your login details you will need two things

1. A Username - This is your membership number
2. A Password of your choice - this must be at least 8 characters long and contain a number, an Upper Case Letter, a Lower Case Letter and a Special Character

Then if you go to mku3a.org and click on the Login tab you will find instructions on how to create your personal Login. If you need help, please email datum@mku3a.org.

Around half of our Group Leaders have now received individual training on using Datum. They will have 'populated' their group with its members, and if you are a member of these groups you will see your group membership recorded on your Personal Profile – which you can access once you are logged in by clicking the Admin button at the top right of the screen. You can also check and change your personal details when viewing your Personal Profile.

Key Contact Details—more on the web site

Chair: Nigel Wright email: chair@mku3a.org Tel: 01908 667007

Secretary : Janice Miles email: secretary@mku3a.org Tel: 01908 397944

Groups Co-ordinator: Christine Behrendt email: currentgroups@mku3a.org

Datum Project: Phil Mountford/Dave Barratt email: datum@mku3a.org

Web Master : Dave Barratt email : webmaster@mku3a.org

Acting Treasurer: Brian Baldwin email: treasurer@mku3a.org Tel: 01908 670579

Membership Secretary: Denise Messenger email: membersec@mku3a.org

Communications Co-ordinator: Lesley Sparks 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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