

Kingston u3a Newsletter

Autumn 2021 Volume 11 Issue 3



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www.kingstonu3a.org.uk

It's excellent news that more groups can now restart but we still need to be cautious and understanding of those who cannot be hosts or do the things they used to.

We're going to try out a hybrid monthly meeting in September, partly in the United Reformed Church, partly on Zoom. Please read the details (p3) carefully if you wish to attend in person as numbers have to be limited. I'll be in the hall and look forward to meeting some of you there.

There's a reminder that subscriptions are due, at the same level as last year, and there is a renewal form in the centre of this edition.

We're keen to recruit more volunteers to help Kingston **u3a** (on the Committee or in other ways) and there's a form inside for Committee nominations.

Gisela has arranged a Christmas outing but will need extra volunteers if there are to be more trips.

There's news from existing groups and suggestions for some new ones. We've a maths quiz, too, so good luck with that, everyone!

Linda Foreman
Chair



Annual General Meeting

In accordance with the constitution of the **u3a**, notice is hereby given that the 30th Annual General Meeting of Kingston **u3a** will take place, online via Zoom, at 1.30pm on Monday, 1 November 2021.

Lorraine Hellen
Secretary

We'll send a Zoom invitation to all members who've given us their email address. Up to 500 members can participate. This went quite well last year and the advice of the **u3a** National Office is to run our AGM in this way again.

If you would like to raise a particular subject at the AGM or have any comments or suggestions, please contact:

Lorraine Hellen
12 Park Road
Surbiton
KT5 8QD

or you can email her at secretary@kingstonu3a.org.uk by noon on Monday, 18 October. We will take questions on the day but advance notice would be useful.

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM 2 November 2020 *
3. Chair's Report *
4. Treasurer's Report *
5. Approval of the Examiner *
6. Election of the Executive Committee 2021/2022 *
7. Any other business
8. Date of the next AGM

* Items requiring a vote

Nomination of Members of the Executive Committee

We are looking to recruit some new members. They would attend six committee meetings a year and can choose to help with aspects of administration, finance, the database, communications, groups, outings and holidays, membership, the website, or

monthly meetings. Help of this kind would be most welcome. Please detach the nomination form from the centre of this newsletter or download one from the Kingston [u3a](#) website and send it to the address below by noon on Monday, 18 October:

Lorraine Hellen
Kingston u3a Secretary
12 Park Road
Surbiton
KT5 8QD

Subscriptions

We're keeping subscriptions for 2021/22 at the current level of £13 for a single member and £20 a year for two members at the same address.

Renewals

Please detach and fill in the form at the centre of your newsletter and post it with a cheque as soon as possible. We'll assume those not renewing by 31 December no longer wish to remain in Kingston [u3a](#).

Those members renewing by standing order do **not** need to submit a form. If you wish to start paying your membership this way, just follow the instructions on the form.

Monthly Meeting Monday, 6 September: How to book a place

Now that Covid restrictions have eased, and following successful technical tests, we intend to have a hybrid meeting on 6 September at 2pm.

The speaker, Dave Allen, will give a talk on the Weird and Wonderful World of Law (see details p11).

We'll be able to have some members in the United Reformed Church hall. The speaker and other members will be on Zoom. We're not sure at the time of going to press how many people will be allowed in the hall but it will probably be fewer than the previous 150. So, we need to have a booking system.

If you wish to attend the meeting in person on 6 September, please email Chris Johns at u3achrisj@gmail.com or write to him at :

3 Wolsey Close
Kingston
KT2 7ER

If writing, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. Chris will advise everyone who applies whether or not they have a place in the hall, by email or letter. We'll have a list at the door and can admit only members who have places. Please do not apply on behalf of other people unless you have joint membership with them.

If you have a place and later find that

you cannot attend, please advise Chris so that he can allocate it to someone else.

Linda will send a Zoom invitation to all members with an email on our database. You do not need to book or send apologies if you are participating via Zoom.

There will be no charge for September attendees at the hall but Gill O'Donnell has kindly volunteered to organise tea there and a contribution would be appreciated.

We will see how this goes, then plan for future meetings.

Group News

Update from Shirley Miller, Groups Coordinator

Congratulations to all groups who have kept going throughout lockdown. We have had very few closures and now 'normal service' can be resumed, in accordance with government guidelines.

Kingston u3a Train Group

If you enjoy days out by train, this could be for you. Perhaps a trip to the coast, a historic town, an interesting property, or a heritage railway? In fact, several well known, preserved railways can now be reached by train from London. Day return tickets, when coupled with a Freedom Pass and a Senior Railcard,



can be very good value.

The plan is to arrange monthly trips during the summer months, starting from an agreed meet-up station. The advantage of train travel is that, unlike coach outings (I organise these for local Civil Service pensioners), there is no pressure to reach a minimum number. I'm hoping to hold an initial get-together in Kingston in August to listen to your ideas and suggestions.

I'm a member of the Heritage Railway Association and the Association of Group Travel Organisers. I also founded the Metropolitan Water Board Railway Society back in 2003.

If you are interested in joining me, feel free to ring me (or leave a message) on 020 8979 3148. Thank you.

Lionel Beer

Chess

We are very keen to see a Chess group in Kingston u3a and feel sure that there must be some chess players out there

who would be willing to give some thought to this idea.



In September a nationwide **u3a** Chess League will be set up which will be available to members of all abilities, from learners to experts. Its objectives are to:

- help and encourage new local chess clubs
- collect, and make readily available, information relevant to **u3a** chess players and clubs
- encourage Zoom or online **u3a** chess groups or leagues.

Join the **u3a** Chess Network

If you would like to start a chess club in Kingston **u3a**, please contact groups coordinator, Shirley Miller, at groupcoordinator@kingstonu3a.org.uk or on 020 8940 8573.

Go to www.u3achessnetwork.org.uk if you want to register for the **u3a** Chess League starting in September.

Climate Change and the Environment

It seems we are one of the few **u3as** in the country that does not have a group on this topic. There's certainly plenty of scope for a discussion group at the very least and there would be plenty of help from **u3a's** subject advisers.

If anyone is interested in pursuing this topic or could start a new group, please contact Shirley Miller: 020 8940 8573, groupcoordinator@kingstonu3a.org.uk



Meeting up Again

A special plea to be extra careful and considerate now that we can meet up again in greater numbers, both indoors and out. It's up to individual group leaders and hosts to decide how many guests they are willing to receive into their homes. Please respect their requests on social distancing and the wearing of masks. We'll track all future government and **u3a** advice and keep you all posted as to any further changes.

Many thanks and keep safe!

A Gentle Walk to Teddington Lock



delightful little island in the middle of the Lock, where we enjoyed an excellent coffee and a chat, sheltering from the rain in the garden of a nearby riverside pub.

Sadly two of our members had to abandon their efforts to get across grid-locked Kingston by bus and some of us were stuck on buses in the traffic for a long time. We hadn't realised that our walk was going to be on the same day

as the opening of the Hampton Court Flower Show.

The Gentle Walks group met at an agreed bus stop in July and set off to investigate the Teddington Lock area.

Those of us who managed to get to the meeting point eventually enjoyed a short walk down to the river. We explored the

One thing we did learn from this experience was that, on our journey to meet up for a walk, those of us who have got mobile phones must bring them and have them switched on!



Maureen Fitch, Jan Goodyear,
Joan Hall and Maureen Kiddell

Studying Social History

The Kingston **u3a** Social History group has now been meeting for many years, has survived the pandemic and is now looking to the future. Members tend to be long-standing and some have been attending meetings for more than 10 years and, more recently, sharing their studies via email.

You may wonder what a social history group studies that is different from any other type of history group. Social history looks at how the people, at any given time, lived their lives and how historical events affected them, rather than perhaps studying dates, kings and queens, and the political landscape.

In recent years we have studied a

range of periods including the Anglo-Saxons and, before that, the Georgians. Both periods have been very interesting and group members feel they have learned a lot.

The Anglo-Saxon period used to be called the Dark Ages, because it was felt that there was little documentary or other evidence to illustrate what had happened and how people had lived. With advances in archaeology and revived interest in the period, however, this has all changed. To supplement their studies some group members have recently been on visits to Sutton Hoo, to see where the Anglo-Saxon Hoard originates, and to the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, near Chichester, to see, amongst many other buildings, a



Jane, Kevin, Sue, Mary, Jeanette and Jill

General Activities A Dixieland Christmas

reconstructed Anglo-Saxon dwelling.

Within our studies we look at different aspects of how people lived – their houses, dress and jewellery; how they communicated; how they traded; how world and more local events affected them; how they practised religion and their beliefs; and their medicine and how they treated illness.

In 'normal' times we try to have at least one visit per year to a relevant museum or place of interest. Such visits over the years have been to places such as the Museum of London, the Old Operating Theatre, the Foundling Museum, Sir John Soane's Museum and the Florence Nightingale Museum.

During the past 15 months we have carried out our research independently and shared it on email, and this has worked well for the group. We are now meeting in person again, primarily on a social basis for the next couple of months, and to share details of any visits we have made to places and exhibitions of historic interest.

As we have already covered all the main periods in history from 400AD onwards, at our July meeting we discussed how we might tackle our studies in the future.

We are now working on ideas for a more topic-based approach, for example studying developments through the ages in communications, transport, science, medicine and energy. We remain enthusiastic and can't wait to get started.

After all these long months of waiting until we can meet up again, come and join Paul Higgs and his Jazz Band for a joyous afternoon of song and dance with an added Christmas flavour.

This great band, with a wonderful vocalist, captures that Dixieland vibe with the sounds of Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and Jelly Roll Morton.

Included in the price is a Christmas lunch with all the trimmings. The desserts and coffee/tea will taste extra special.

Where? On the Tereza Joanne, a boat moored in King George V Dock, Royal Docks, London. This venue offers spectacular views across the water to the City skyline.

We hope to arrive by 11.30am and aim to leave by 3.30pm in order to arrive back in Kingston/Surbiton before it gets too dark.



Design and photograph courtesy of Heather Mortimer

Date: Thursday, 18 November 2021

Meeting Times/Points:

- 10am Kingston, Kingston High Street, opposite the Rose Theatre
- 10.15am Surbiton, Claremont Road, Bus stop 'Surbiton Station'

Price: £50.60 per person

If you would like to join this Christmas party, please detach and complete the application form which you'll find in the centre of this newsletter and send it, together with your cheque for £50.60 per person payable to **Kingston u3a GAS**, to:

Gisela Zürcher-Feiß,
37 The Byeways
Surbiton
KT5 8HT

If you do not give an email address please include a stamped addressed envelope for a reply.

If you have any questions, please contact Gisela on 020 8399 4990 or via email:

generalactivities@kingstonu3a.org.uk

Do You Remember Your Junior School (Imperial) Arithmetic?

Elinor Parker has devised the following questions to see how well you can recall all those imperial weights and measures,

and our old currency. If you want to see how far you can get without help, cover up the table below (taken from the back of a 1960s school exercise book — remember those?). Answers on p11.

Area.			
144 Square Inches	=	1 Square Foot	
9 Square Feet	=	1 Square Yard	
30 1/2 Square Yards	=	1 Square Pole or Perch	
40 Square Poles	=	1 Rood	
4 Roods or 10 Square Chains	=	1 Acre	
640 Acres ..	=	1 Square Mile	

Capacity.			
2 Pints	--	--	= 1 Quart
4 Quarts	..	--	= 1 Gallon
2 Gallons	..	--	= 1 Peck
4 Pecks	..	--	= 1 Bushel
8 Bushels	..	--	= 1 Quarter

- 1 Add one guinea, 10 bob, half-a-crown and a florin. Give your answer in £sd.
- 2 How many inches in nine yards?
- 3 How many furlongs in half a mile?
- 4 Three pints. How many quarts?
- 5 How many chains in 1,760 yards?
- 6 On a very cold day 2° below equals how many degrees Fahrenheit?
- 7 How many pecks in one and a half bushels?
- 8 How many pints in two gallons?
- 9 You weigh 1½ cwt, how many pounds must you lose to weigh eight stone?
- 10 How many feet in a quarter of a mile?
- 11 How many rods in two chains?
- 12 How many ounces in three pounds?
- 13 If you give three friends a gill of milk each, what is left of your original pint? Give your answer in fluid ounces.
- 14 What measures one chain by one furlong?

Namaste! Greetings

नमस्ते

Before coronavirus came along and upset all our lives, I was about to fulfil a lifetime's ambition of going to India. Then the dreaded news arrived: India was suspending all visas issued to UK residents. So I decided to learn Hindi instead, in the hope that my dream of going to India might yet be realised.

It turned out I already knew a lot of Hindi words. 'I've just shampooed my hair and am now sitting in my pyjamas on the chintz cushions on the veranda of my bungalow, sipping punch and tucking into a pukka tiffin. My little boy, still in his khaki dungarees, lies asleep in his cot, so I'll have a quick dekko at the newspaper. I lead such a cushy lifestyle and things are just tickety-boo.' English has adopted all those underlined words, either directly from or via Hindi.

I graduated in and taught French and German many years ago and later dabbled in other foreign languages. European languages share so many words and linguistic roots, which gives you a head start as a beginner. And the alphabet they have in common makes it easy to check meanings in a dictionary.

Hindi is, however, a whole new challenge, especially as it doesn't use the Roman alphabet. Hindi characters are completely different and aren't written in a cursive style. They're all the same size with no distinct upper-case letters used. A page of Hindi script, a phrase, even a single word, is indecipherable at

first. But once you learn the letter and the sound it represents, Hindi is at least consistent, unlike the guessing game English spelling and pronunciation can be for foreign learners.

Along with a new language comes a glimpse into a different culture. Take the words for family members, for example. Mother is 'mātā' and father 'pitā' but move back a generation and things are more specific. Grandmother and grandfather are 'nānī' and 'nānā' but only if they are your mum's parents. If they are your dad's, then it's 'dādī' and 'dādā'.

I've been learning Hindi for a year now. I can recognise most of the letters and the sounds they represent but still get muddled up because some look similar. I can read a paragraph or hear spoken Hindi and understand most of it, as long as the vocabulary has been taught and I have some idea of the context. My written Hindi is getting more accurate, even if it does look like a five-year-old's early efforts – huge, uneven letters and a bit on the messy side.

Frustratingly I look up a word I don't know and include it in my homework, only for the tutor to tell me that although it is the 'correct' word in Hindi, it sounds too formal, too 'learned', and Indians just use the English word instead. Well, fair enough. We appropriated enough of their words so can't complain when they now adopt a few of ours.

Learning Hindi is proving a difficult yet fascinating task but I still can't wait to get to India.



Susan Hinchsliffe

Monthly Meetings

Here are the dates for the next few monthly meetings. Until we can resume our meetings at the United Reformed Church, the talks will take place online via Zoom. Please note, however, that for September's meeting we are hoping that some members will be able to attend in person. See details below and on p3.

Date	Topics/Speakers
6 Sep	The Weird and Wonderful World of Law – Dave Allen A romp through the legal world as Dave draws on 25+ years as a locum solicitor travelling around the country, encountering raging judges, dotty clients, weird cases, daft old laws and political correctness gone raving mad. Please note: This will be the first of our hybrid meetings, with most members joining in online via Zoom but some able to come along to the United Reformed Church. See p3 for details of how to book a place in the church if you would like to attend in person.
4 Oct	The Antarctic Adventures of Sir Ernest Shackleton – Rodney Paul This presentation is about the heroic adventures of one of the world's greatest explorers and the various expeditions he undertook to the Antarctic.
1 Nov	Please note: this talk follows the AGM, which will begin at 1.30pm. Codes and Ciphers in the Second World War – Mark Baldwin Mark, a military historian specialising in intelligence and related subjects, gives a condensed history of codes and ciphers over the two World Wars.
6 Dec	A History of Pantomime – Peter Allen What is it about pantomime that attracts us to this strange concoction of fairy tales, dance, jokes, songs and cross-dressing? And what is it really like to play the back end of a pantomime cow? All this, and the answer to whether something is really behind you will be answered in this festive talk about what has become one of the great British Christmas traditions.

Answers to quiz:

1 £1 15s 6d 2 324 3 4 4 One and a half 5 80 6 30° Fahrenheit 7 6 8 16
9 56 10 1,320 11 8 12 48 13 5 fl oz 14 1 acre

Kingston u3a Executive Committee 2020/2021

Registered Charity No. 1011295

Chair	Linda Foreman	020 8390 0109 chair@kingstonu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Lorraine Hellen	020 8390 5718 secretary@kingstonu3a.org.uk
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Change of Address

Please send updates to:

Chris Cheek, Database Manager,
32 Howard Road, New Malden
KT53 4DP or email him at:
database@kingstonu3a.org.uk

Newsletter Contributions

Tell us what your group has been doing or the visits and holidays you've enjoyed. We'd also like to receive stories, poems or short reviews of books, plays, films or exhibitions. Contributions should be no more than 500 words but there's always room for

smaller items too. Photos (in .JPG format, please) help illustrate your contribution but don't forget to send the names of people shown in them. Send photos as separate files and not embedded in a Word document to:
communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk

Distribution

The newsletter is posted out in early February, May, August and November. If there are any problems concerning the newsletter, please contact Susan Hinchsliffe at:
communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk