

Kingston u3a Newsletter

Volume 12 Issue 2

Summer 2022



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www.kingstonu3a.org.uk

How good it is to see our groups meeting regularly again. Even better, we have some new groups, too – Climate Emergency, Ukulele and Tai Chi for Beginners, all of whom are on the lookout for new recruits. And there's a chance to play croquet again. You can read, too, a more detailed account of what some of our groups have been up to recently.

Good news, too, that Gisela and her team have planned a couple of outings – a coach tour of Midsomer Murders Country and a more local trip to Pitzhanger Manor in Ealing. You'll find details and application forms inside.

Throughout lockdown we weren't able to hold meetings for new members. Now we have access to a room in Surbiton Library on Wednesdays again, I'll be sending out invitations. Please bear with me, if you have joined us recently: I can invite only a few members at a time and will contact you in time.

Booking for the London Region Summer School is now open (see p10) and there's a request for your ideas and help to hold a Picnic in the Park to celebrate **u3a's** 40th anniversary and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Have a good summer!

Linda Foreman
Chair



Group News

Croquet

There will be a free Taster Day again this summer at Surbiton Croquet Club, Alexandra Drive, Surbiton KT5 9AA.

This introductory session, complete with coaching, will take place on Friday, 6 May, 1-3 pm.

There will be a further six sessions on Friday afternoons, 13/20/27 May and 3/17/24 June (please note: **not** 10 June). There are 16 places and the cost is £36, payable in advance, for the six weeks.

If you would like to come along, please contact Lorraine Hellen: 07986 851959 lorrainehellen55@gmail.com

Climate Emergency

This discussion group has now started. If you'd like to join the conversation, please contact Christine Thompson: chris.cpt3@tiscali.co.uk

Drama Group

As the ceiling in the room where we used to meet has now been repaired, we can return to Surbiton Library.

We meet twice a month on Wednesday mornings.

If you are interested in joining, please contact Clare Gollop: 07855 757388 claregollop@googlemail.com



Let's Sing the Great American Song Book

We're a small, friendly group who meet to sing the wonderful songs of Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, George Gershwin and many others.

We are not a choir. There are no rehearsals or performances. Members choose the songs and come along ready to sing their hearts out.

We meet at my home in Surbiton on the second Tuesday of every month, 2-4pm.

If you would like to know more, please contact Maureen Hasirci: 020 8241 4421

Uke can do it!

I wonder if there are any ukulele players out there who might be interested in joining a new **u3a** group which I'm hoping to set up. The focus wouldn't be on teaching, although I hope we may learn from one another as we go along. Rather, this would be an activity for those who might enjoy singing and strumming in a small group.

I started playing the ukulele in the first lockdown, two years ago. I play



enthusiastically but am no George Formby. I have gathered hundreds of songs of all types, including folk and gospel songs, and children's nursery rhymes, Christmas carols, and rock 'n' roll numbers.

All the songs have simple chords (there are no actual music scores). Even if you only know three chords (C, F, G or G7), you will be able to play and sing many of the songs. The other chords I routinely use are A, Am, A7, C7, D, Dm, D7 (a simplified version) and E7. Some of these are very simple, needing only one finger on a string.

I'd be happy to email you the songs, if you have a printer. I have some duplicates for us to share if you can't print them. My own ukulele is a concert uke, with four strings – G, C, E, A.

If anyone would like to sit in the living room of my home near Kingston Hospital, singing and strumming away over a cup of tea, you would be most welcome. I guess we might meet fortnightly for an hour or so, possibly on Monday or Tuesday afternoons, but this could be decided by the group.

Do let me know if you're interested or would like more information. Please contact me, Natalia Power: 020 8942 8106/07773 603093 n_s_power@hotmail.com

Subject Advisers

Group leaders should get in touch with their relevant subject advisers. These are listed in the **u3a** magazine, *Third Age Matters*, and under Subject Advice

(www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects) on the national **u3a** website. They have a wealth of expertise and resources to help with groups. They can arrange contacts and even visits with similar groups around the country, and have organised writing and poetry competitions.

If you are interested in setting up a new group, please contact Shirley Miller at: 020 8940 8573 shirley.miller4@btinternet.com

Cinema Group

We meet at the Odeon in the Kingston Rotunda on Thursday afternoons.

Our first film of 2022 was *Belfast*, a semi-autobiographical film written, produced and directed by Kenneth Branagh. We all thought it was a brilliant film, even if we had tears in our eyes at the end.

As is our custom we discussed it over a cup of tea in the café afterwards.

Lesley Hodges



MOTO4 ...

... is alive and kicking!

I think we can congratulate ourselves. All through the pandemic we have stayed very much in touch with each other to give support and comfort to those of us who have struggled with the lockdowns. We've 'zoomed' every week without fail, proud of ourselves for all having mastered the technology.



L-r: Prema Netto, Pauline Dobbie, Stella Allison, Judy Caddy, Gretta White, Molly Simmonds, Penny Airs, Pat Evans

In November 2021 some of us ventured out for a visit to the Postal Museum in Clerkenwell. We learned the history of the service from its start to today. A bonus was a ride on Mail Rail, the underground train like the one which used to transport the post around London.

So we are now back on track and thinking about future outings. We've been to RHS Wisley and plan to go on a regular basis as it is so accessible to us.

We've also been meeting up locally for coffee and a chat.

We have booked a trip to Battersea Power Station and have also planned a weekend in York in May. Our next visit is to the Crossness Sewage Works in East London.

There is no stopping us. Bring it on!

Pauline Dobbie

Poetry Group 1

Two members of our group, Anne Ely and I, spent a very pleasant hour recently reading our favourite poems to the New Malden Social Club for the Blind.

David Robson, their secretary, had contacted Kingston [u3a](#) for advice and was given our contact number. Hence our presence in Christchurch Social Club on a Wednesday afternoon reading poetry to a very receptive group and enjoying tea and sandwiches.

Our club meets fortnightly and is always looking for speakers. If you are interested in joining us, please see the details in the Groups & Contacts section of this newsletter.

Carol Richards

Breaking News

Surbiton Library has now reopened, its ceiling repaired, and we can again use one of the rooms there on Wednesdays, free of charge.

If you would like to make use of this room for your meetings, please contact Linda Foreman:

chair@kingstonu3a.org.uk

Climate Emergency

To Be or Not to Be a Vegetarian

When I became a vegetarian 40 or so years ago, it was easy because I felt it was right, and hard because, in those days, you were definitely 'a weirdo', 'a bit of a nuisance' at dinner parties (which were a thing then) and 'difficult' when eating out and trying to find something suitable on the menu. It was especially difficult abroad. Soup would have chicken stock in it but 'there's no actual chicken in it'. A carefully chosen pizza would have bacon bits sprinkled on, because '... it didn't look much'. Meals sent back to the kitchen would be brought back to the table with the meat bits removed.

If I were not a vegetarian already, I would have to become one now. I've never preached vegetarianism – I've cooked meat for my family – but there isn't enough land for everyone to consume meat at the same rate as we in the West do without harming the earth. There isn't enough of anything for everyone in the world to live as we do. Cows and other farm animals produce methane from their burps and manure. The effect of methane emissions on the climate alone, never mind the vast tracts of land cleared and given over to producing feedstuff, makes the case. Methane is a vastly more potent greenhouse gas than carbon and that is seen as both the biggest concern and best opportunity for tackling global heating (*The Guardian*, 27 October 2021).

At a guess, I would say that **u3a**

members are overwhelmingly responsible, caring human beings. We wore masks and self-isolated. We're turning our lights off and our heating down, cutting back on plastic and looking where food is produced. We must do what we can and giving up or cutting back on meat and dairy are not the only things we can do but they are the least.

Stopping or drastically reducing meat consumption, and consequently methane production, is a quick win. The Committee on Climate Change's most recent report confirms that a shift towards a diet that's less reliant on carbon-intensive animal products could enable you as an individual to reduce your dietary emissions by 35%.

'A single kilo of beef produces 70kg emissions' and '14% of all emissions come from meat and dairy production' (*The Guardian*, 21 September 2021). The figures are scary and verifiable. While 'carbon hangs around in the atmosphere for 300 to 1,000 years' (NASA, 9 October 2019), 'during its first 20 years ... methane's warming effect is more than 80 times greater' (*The New Scientist*, 5 March 2022). That's without bringing nitrous oxide into the mix. The meat, egg and dairy industries produce 65% of worldwide nitrous oxide emissions, which, I read, is 300 times more powerful at trapping heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide. The question for me is, 'Is that a lot?' I'm pretty sure it is. It requires up to 16kg grain to produce 1kg meat.

If you haven't seen it already, I strongly recommend the powerful documentary film *Cowspiracy*, available widely and on Netflix. It details the particular contributions of modern agriculture to climate change. There's something in it for almost everyone. It's a disaster movie – it includes politics, there is science (not science fiction) but no comedy. Please watch it and make up your own mind.

I agree that dairy production is a massive problem and a vegan diet is hard. I haven't yet given up cheese completely and I'm trying goat's milk butter, because I believe goats live on marginal land and eat all sorts. And if you haven't tried Alpro Barista Oat Milk, I recommend that you give that a go. Guests have liked it, or not commented, but I enjoy it and have it on cereal.

The climate emergency is just that – an emergency. The meat and dairy industry is a major factor in global warming and we have a small window in which to act. Our children and grandchildren face a hellish future if we don't get this right. And the question we should ask ourselves is, 'Am I one of the good guys? Or not?'

Carole Hegedüs

If you are interested in the issues Carole discusses, why not join the Climate Emergency discussion group? We meet once a month.

You'll find details of this discussion group on page 2 and in the Groups & Contacts section of this newsletter.

Artichoke Crumble

Here's a vegetarian dish traditionally served in Spain around Christmas. Serves 4, more if you aren't as greedy as us!

Ingredients

4 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed or grated
400g tin globe artichoke hearts (you can use those in oil in a jar but will need to drain them well first)
3 eggs, beaten
50g green olives, chopped
100g Gran Padano cheese, grated
2 tablespoons milk
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh basil, torn
Black pepper
Breadcrumbs

Pre-heat the oven to 190°C/170°C fan/Gas 5. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large frying pan and add the onion. Cook over a low heat for 10 minutes until soft. Add garlic and continue cooking for another 5 minutes. Drain the artichokes and cut into quarters. In a large bowl, place the beaten eggs and add the onion and garlic mixture, artichoke quarters, olives, 75g of the cheese, herbs, milk and pepper. Grease an ovenproof dish with a little oil and pour in the mixture. Sprinkle with breadcrumbs and the remaining cheese and drizzle the rest of the olive oil over the top. Cook for 35-40 minutes until the top is golden. Serve with a green salad.

Christine Thompson

Welcome to The Poppy Factory

On Thursday, 10 February, 37 Kingston **u3a** members met up to visit the Poppy Factory, established in 1922 and located in what was the Old Lansdown Brewery site, Petersham Road, Richmond.

We had a warm welcome from Blue Badge Guide Minna Andersen who, after a short introductory video, told us more about the factory's history and founder, Major George Arthur Howson MC, a WW1 British Army officer.

But it was Moina Belle Michael, an American teacher, who first suggested the idea of using the red Flanders poppy as a symbol of remembrance. And Madame E Guérin, a French teacher and fund raiser, was the person who introduced the Remembrance Poppy Day.

It was interesting to note that all the wreaths for members of the royal family and dignitaries are still hand made at this site, whilst some 40 million of the smaller



poppies sold each year are ordered by The Royal British Legion in Aylesford, Kent and then machine made.

The work of the organisation continues to support the Armed Forces Community past and present. We are pleased to think that our being there has contributed to this. After an enjoyable coffee and a specially made stylised cup cake with a red poppy decoration on top, together with our own hand-made souvenir poppy, we all came away with a lasting, grateful memory of what sacrifices had been made for us all.

Elizabeth Ellis & Jacqui Hine (photos)



GAS Outings

Midsomer Murders Country

On this tour we'll explore a beautiful part of Oxfordshire.

We start the day with a two-course lunch and coffee in the lovely village of Dorchester on Thames. There we'll visit the enormous old abbey that towers above a jumble of ancient houses.



Colin Smith, [CC BY-SA 2.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons

Our coach tour then takes us to the picture-postcard villages of Midsomer Murders Country, including the attractive market town of Wallingford, established by Alfred the Great. It is laid out around a central square and is the setting for DCI Barnaby's Causton in the TV detective series. After a little stroll with the guide we'll have time to browse in the market square area or take the five-minute walk down to the river where there's a pub with a big waterside terrace.

We're planning to leave Midsomer Murders Country about 4.30pm and hope to arrive back in Kingston by 6.30pm.

The walking on this tour is kept to a minimum, which makes it suitable for **u3a** members of all walking abilities, including those of you who use two sticks or a rollator.

Date: Thursday, 16 June

Cost: £50.40 per person. This includes a two-course lunch and coffee, a donation to Dorchester Abbey, the services of a Blue Badge Tour Guide and a tip for the driver.

Meeting times/points:

- 9.30am: Kingston, High Street, opposite the Rose Theatre
- 9.45am: Surbiton, Claremont Road, opposite Waitrose
- 10am: Tolworth, Ewell Road, bus stop 'Princes Avenue'

If you would like to join this outing, please complete the application form in the centre of this newsletter and send it, together with your cheque made payable to 'Kingston u3a GAS' to:

Margaret Harold
6 Michelham Gardens
Twickenham TW1 4SB

Tel: 020 8892 2280

Email: m.harold@live.co.uk

Pitzhanger Manor and Gallery House Tour

Address: Mattock Lane, Ealing W5 5EQ

Pitzhanger Manor was designed and built by Sir John Soane (1753-1837), the influential British neoclassical architect. He lived at the Manor after its completion in 1804 and enjoyed a high-society social life.

The house is in Walpole Park and the gallery in the library building holds a series of contemporary exhibitions by artists, architects and designers.

Spaces on each one-hour house tour are limited to 15 people. Your ticket enables you to return to the house afterwards and explore on your own and also enter the gallery, the tiltyard and parkland.

Travel Arrangements

You will need to make your own way to Pitzhanger Manor.

Please leave Kingston by 9.30am to make sure you arrive in good time.

- Take the 65 bus from Kingston to Ealing. The journey takes about 50 minutes. Buses are approximately every 6 minutes. See: <https://tfl.gov.uk/bus/route/65/>
- In Ealing, alight at Bond Street, bus stop N.
- Walk back up the road for one minute and you'll see Pitzhanger Manor across the green on your right.
- Enter the grounds on the left by Soane's Kitchen where you can get

coffees/teas (card payment only) and use the toilet.

We will meet behind Soane's Kitchen at 10.45am when you'll be allocated your house tour time, 11am or 12 noon.

Return journey

Bond Street is one way, so you will need to board the 65 bus back to Kingston in the adjacent road, stop A 'Grange Road'.

Date: Wednesday, 6 July

Cost: £17.60 per person

If you would like to join this outing, please complete the application form in the centre of this newsletter and send it, together with your cheque for £17.60 per person, payable to 'Kingston, u3a GAS' to: Jacqui Hine, 85 Richmond Park Road, Kingston KT2 6AF.

Tel: 020 8549 1924

Email: jacqui@hine.org.uk

Please note: If you do not give an email address on your application form, please also send a stamped addressed envelope.



Photo courtesy of Jacqui Hine

London Region Summer School: 26-27 July

Booking has now opened for this event, to be held at St. Bride's Institute, off Fleet Street.

Cost:

£39 per day including refreshments and lunch.

Programme:

Activities include talks, workshops and guided walks. There'll be a wide range of subjects to choose from – Art, Current Affairs, History, Literature, Music, Sciences and Social Studies, with Discovering London – Past, Present and Future as a general theme throughout.

Booking:

Go to the London Region website at: www.u3asites.org.uk/london-region/events to see links to the:

- full programme of events
- online application form
- postal application form.

Picnic in the Park

National HQ is encouraging all local **u3a**s across the UK to organise and take part in a Picnic in the Park on Wednesday, 1 June, to celebrate **u3a**'s 40th anniversary and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

We haven't planned anything locally so far. Your group could arrange a picnic in a local park or even invite some of the other groups to celebrate with you. It would be a great opportunity to advertise our organisation and its activities to the wider public, so perhaps bring along some bunting or posters as decoration. You could record the event and send us some photos that we can use in our newsletter ... and maybe even send to a local newspaper or to HQ for the website. You'll find more details of all events on the national **u3a** website at:

<https://u3a.org.uk/events/40th-anniversary>

Monthly Meetings

The meetings listed below will be online via Zoom. We'll send out invitations to all those members for whom we have email addresses. Up to 100 people can now participate in an online meeting. (We did not renew our licence for 500 as the numbers joining us online did not warrant this.) You are also welcome to come along to the United Reformed Church in person but we are restricted to 75 attendees. You do not need to book in advance. The meetings all begin at 2pm.

Date	Topics/Speakers
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9 May	Charles Darwin and the Voyage of <i>HMS Beagle</i>, 1831-1836 – James Taylor
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This talk focuses on the family and influences on Charles Darwin and Captain Robert FitzRoy, the commander of *HMS Beagle*, and their participation in the celebrated second voyage of the ship that has shaped our lives. It enabled Darwin to collect vital evidence for his ground-breaking publication, *On the Origin of Species*. FitzRoy paid for two artists, Augustus Earle and Conrad Martens, to paint the people and places encountered. These images underpin the seafaring stories.

6 Jun	Family History for Beginners – David Eniffe
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This talk aims to encourage people to get involved in researching their ancestors for the first time. It explains how to use the basic tools to build a family tree and takes them through a virtual journey back in time, with illustrations of census returns and other documents. It shows how to illustrate your research with photographs, stories and newspaper reports. It covers up-to-date guidance on accessing new documents and information on the ever-changing internet sites.

4 Jul	Prosthetic Perils – Andy Smith
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Andy is a double-amputee who suggests that life with a disability, whilst often challenging, can have its lighter side. Since losing his lower right arm and leg in an accident three decades ago, he has had many adventures at home and abroad, though some adventures are best avoided. During this presentation of pithy, entertaining poetry and commentary, Andy talks about childhood years when, in an extraordinary way, wartime recollections of a WW1 soldier and a WW2 fighter pilot helped to prepare him for the personal trials to come.

Kingston u3a Executive Committee 2021/2022

Registered Charity No. 1011295

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Change of Address

Please send updates to:

Chris Cheek, Database Manager,
32 Howard Road, New Malden
KT3 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