

Kingston u3a Newsletter

Volume 13 Issue 3

Autumn 2023



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www.kingstonu3a.org.uk

Welcome to the Autumn copy of our newsletter. Thank you first of all to Valerie Milnes who has kindly allowed us to use her photograph of 'Gourds and Pumpkins at RHS Wisley, 2022'.

Jacqui Hine and her team have two excursions on offer – one to the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, the other to the Foundling Museum. Elsewhere the Train Group has been exploring the Canal Museum, the Gardening group identifying plants at the White House, Esher and Walking Group 1 taking a rest in the Isabella Plantation in Richmond Park.

It's the time of year to renew your subscriptions. You'll find the necessary instructions on pages 2-3. If you don't already do so, please consider paying your dues by standing order or electronic bank transfer. We're always keen to recruit new members on to the Executive Committee and encourage you to stand and/or nominate another member.

In the middle of this newsletter you'll find a short questionnaire. Please take a few moments to complete it as the committee would like to find out from you how well Kingston **u3a** is serving your needs.

Thank you and take care!

Annual General Meeting

In accordance with the constitution of the **u3a**, notice is hereby given that the 32nd Annual General Meeting of Kingston **u3a** will take place at the United Reformed Church at 1.30pm on Monday, 6 November 2023.

Lorraine Hellen, Secretary

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM 7 November 2022 *
3. Chair's Report *
4. Treasurer's Report *
5. Approval of the Examiner *
6. Election of the Executive Committee 2023/24 *
8. Any other business
9. Date of the next AGM

* Items requiring a vote

We look forward to seeing you at our Annual General Meeting, which will precede our usual monthly meeting in November. 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, 16 October. We will take

questions on the day but advance notice would be useful.

Subscriptions

As agreed at last year's AGM, your subscriptions will increase this October.

The single annual membership fee goes up from £13 to **£15**, and the joint fee from £20 to **£24**.

Renewals

As each cheque costs us 40p to process, we'd prefer you to pay your renewal by standing order or online bank transfer.

Our bank account details are:

HSBC Clarence Street, Kingston
Sort code: 40 26 12
Account number: 11441027 (Please
note the new account number.)
Account name: Kingston u3a

Ask your bank to use your membership
number and (if space) your
surname and initial as the reference.

If you need to pay by cheque, use the
form in the centre of the newsletter. If
you haven't renewed by 31 December
this year, we'll assume you don't wish to
remain a member.

Executive Committee: Nomination of Members

We are looking to recruit some new
members on to the committee. Some of
our serving members are standing down
in November and it is essential we find
replacements.

Members 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 and
training will be given.

Please complete the nomination form
on page 4 and send it to the Secretary at
the address below by noon on Monday,
16 October:

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

Goodbye to the Speaker Secretary

We are sorry to say that Mary Hodgson
is giving up her role as speaker
secretary. Mary has done an excellent
job organising a varied programme of
speakers over the past two years. Many
thanks for all your work, Mary.

We now need someone to take over
her role. Mary has already organised all
the talks for 2024 so her successor will
have time to assume her responsibilities
and, of course, help will be given. Here's
an idea of what's involved:

- Book the hall at the United Reformed
Church for the 12 meeting dates.
- Find and book speakers for eleven of
the meetings (January is always the
annual quiz). Put together a varied
programme for the year.
- Contact and liaise with the speakers
(dates, fees, equipment needed).
- Meet and greet and introduce the
speaker on the day and arrange for
payment.

A more detailed breakdown of the
responsibilities is available for those who
might like to take on this role, either on
their own or with a friend. If you're
interested in getting involved or helping
to organise the speakers for our monthly
meetings, please contact:

speakers@kingstonu3a.org.uk

Kingston u3a Executive Committee

Nomination Form for Members 2023/24

Up to 12 members can be elected at the AGM on Monday, 6 November 2023. Some of the existing Committee members are standing down, others are willing to stand again.

We welcome new recruits. Members serve for at least a year, renewable each year for a maximum of six years to ensure a healthy turnover.

If you wish to stand for election at the AGM, please complete this form and return it by noon, Monday, 16 October 2023 to the Secretary: Lorraine Hellen, 12 Park Road, Surbiton KT5 8QD.

Nominees, proposers and seconders must be paid-up members of Kingston u3a.

Please note: You can also email your nominations to Lorraine Hellen at secretary@kingstonu3a.org.uk but please make sure that you have the permission of your proposer and seconder and their membership numbers.

	Name of Member (Block capitals)	Member Number	Signature
Nominee			
Proposer			
Seconder			

Group News

Thank you to all those leaders who gave us the name of someone within the group who could deputise to keep us informed of developments. There are still some gaps, however, and we'd like to complete our list. If you can, please tell the coordinator, the next time she phones, the name of someone you think could fulfil this role.

Coordinator Vacancy

There is a vacancy for a groups' coordinator and we are looking for a volunteer. It's an interesting job, dealing with the groups, and can be done from the comfort of your own home. New or younger members are especially welcome. If you are interested, please contact Shirley Miller: 020 8940 8573 or shirley.miller4@btinternet.com

New Groups

MOTO 6

Elizabeth Ellis has offered to start another MOTO group, which will meet in central Kingston. These groups are proving to be extremely popular. If you are interested in joining, please contact: elizabethellis998@gmail.com

Family History

This new group will meet once every two months in the south of the borough. If you are interested in joining, please contact Byron Turner: 07717 224409 or byron.turner@btinternet.com

Spanish Conversation

This is the group previously named Spanish Conversation Advanced. It will meet fortnightly on Zoom at 2.30pm on Tuesdays. If you are interested in joining, please contact Irene Dalmedo: 020 8549 6716 or ildalmedo@hotmail.com

Train Group: Visit to the Canal Museum

Ten of us took the Thameslink train from Wimbledon to St Pancras, where we stopped for a coffee in the station before walking to the museum via Goods Way, which overlooks the Regent's Canal.

The museum is in a side street with no access from the towpath, so look out for the signs! It uses the site of two huge 1850/60s ice wells. The ice came in blocks from Norway and was used for food storage and for making ice cream.

On the two floors you can see the canal crafts (painting roses and castles on boats); equipment and artefacts; the narrowboat *Coronis* with its cramped living quarters, which you can walk round; the use of horses (the mainstay of canal and local transport until the 1920s); loading equipment; and a detailed London canal map. Black and white archive film from the 1920s and 30s was well worth watching.

Overall I found the museum more interesting than I expected and noted that the canals predated the Victorian railway system.

Lionel Beer

Climate Crisis and Some Solutions: Online Talk

Kingston **u3a** Climate Change group organised this online talk and threw it open to the wider **u3a**.

The speaker, Brenda Ainsley from the **u3a** Climate Change and Environment Network, talked us through what had caused and was accelerating the crisis, and what we could do to make a better world for our grandchildren. Thirty-eight people joined in the talk.

It was very interesting and was followed by plenty of thought-provoking questions and informed comment. Unfortunately we don't run the government but, in our small way, we can all do things that make a difference. Changing our behaviour in modest ways is not difficult and has benefits, for example lower domestic energy bills.

The guiding principle is:

Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle

And here are some suggestions you might not have thought of before:

- Switch to the Ecosia search engine – www.ecosia.org/ – which works with organisations to plant trees in many countries.
- Find out if your bank or investment company has any climate-change policies. Or is it still investing in fossil fuels?
- Find out more about Fairtrade and its work on climate change:

www.fairtrade.net/issue/climate-change

- Improve your insulation to reduce energy consumption: see useful hints at: energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/reducing-home-heat-loss/
- Visit the Ethical Consumer website www.ethicalconsumer.org for advice on buying goods and services more ethically: clothing, food and drink, health and beauty, home and garden, finance, travel and technology.

And you could always come along and join our Climate Emergency group: see www.kingstonu3a.org.uk/groups_list/climate-emergency/

Christine Thompson

Gardening Group: Visit to the White House, Esher

For our June meeting the Gardening group visited the White House in Esher. This is a part of the National Garden Scheme, which benefits the Princess Alice Hospice.

This garden is owned by Lady Anne Hunt and Mr David John. They told us they had had the garden since 1990 and parts of it were then a wilderness. In fact, they thought there was a war-time Anderson shelter hidden under one side.

On entering the garden there was a magnificent display of hanging baskets full of fuchsia and petunias. Behind a



Margaret Stroud, Jeanette Hobson, Doreen Chambers and Diana Pirgon having great fun trying to identify the plants and where they are on the plan.

slightly raised terrace there was a bespoke water feature as well as some other sculptures.

We were handed a garden plan showing all the plants and did our best to identify them.

After a comprehensive tour of the garden, admiring the plants on the way, we were served an excellent afternoon tea with a selection of cakes.

Denise Dobbs

Walking Group 1: A Silent Reflection by the Still Pond in the Isabella Plantation



Photograph courtesy of Janet Forsyth

GAS Outings and Reports

Royal Pavilion Brighton



Royal Pavilion Brighton, Qmin,
[CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons

Join us for a day trip to Brighton and enjoy a guided tour of the Royal Pavilion before spending the rest of the day at leisure visiting the many nearby attractions.

The Royal Pavilion, a Grade I listed building and former royal residence, was started in 1787. Its design was influenced by contemporary visits to India. It became the seaside retreat and playground for the Prince Regent, later crowned King George IV. The current building with its domes and minarets is attributed to the architect John Nash who extended the building in 1815. There is an exhibition on at the moment contrasting the opulence of George IV's coronation with that of our own new king.

Access to the pavilion is on a level and the guided tour is round the ground floor only. You are then welcome to visit the remaining rooms upstairs at your leisure but no lift is available.

The beautiful gardens around the pavilion are said to be the only fully restored Regency gardens in the UK and

are maintained using organic methods.

On arrival in Brighton there'll be time for coffee (not included in the price) before we assemble outside the pavilion at 11.20am for our timed entry at 11.30am. The tour begins at 12 noon.

Next door to the pavilion is Brighton Museum and Art Gallery. The seafront and pier are only five minutes' walk away and close by are the Lanes, famous for the antique shops, and nearby district North Laine with its art studios. The British Airways i360 moving observation tower on the seafront offers spectacular views along the coast and over to the Isle of Wight. And there's always the beach and a chance to have a paddle! The coach leaves for Kingston at 4pm.

Date: Thursday, 7 September

MeetingTime/Pick-up Points:

- 9am Kingston: opposite the Rose Theatre
- 9.15am Surbiton: opposite Waitrose, Claremont Road

Cost: £44.30 per person (includes coach, entry to and guided tour of the Royal Pavilion, and Gardens)

If you usually come on visits by yourself, why not come on this one with a friend (a [u3a](#) member) to enjoy your leisure time?

If you are coming on this visit, please keep this page for reference.

Foundling Museum: Visit with Guided Tour

Following John Caldicott's talk at our recent monthly meeting we have planned a visit to the Foundling Museum to learn more about its history.

The Foundling Hospital, established in 1739 by philanthropist Thomas Coram, was the first children's charity to care for babies at risk of abandonment.

Artist William Hogarth and composer George Frederick Handel were very supportive of Thomas Coram and his hospital. With their help it became the first public art gallery in the UK. The charity continues today as the children's charity Coram.

The Foundling Museum opened in 2004 and on our visit we'll learn the story of the hospital and of the children who lived there. We'll also see the galleries where the work of present-day artists is exhibited and musicians perform.

Our one-hour guided tour starts at 12pm and you'll have time to look round the museum afterwards at your leisure.

Date: Wednesday, 18 October

Meeting Time/Place: 10.15am at Waterloo Station, opposite platforms 1-4.

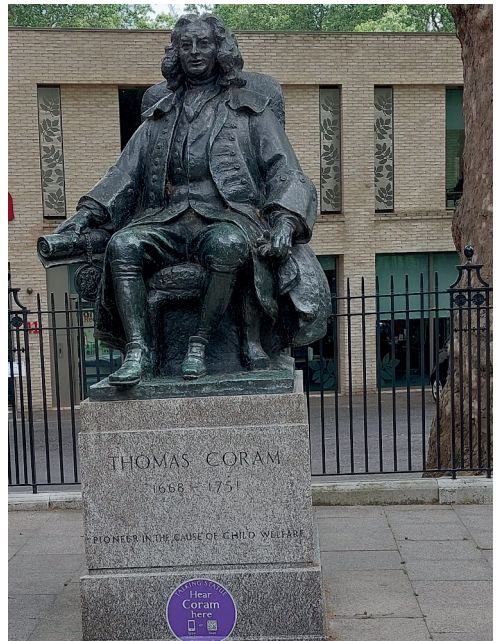
We'll walk to Tenison Way (10 minutes), where we'll catch bus 188 to Russell Square (six stops), get off at stop D and walk across the gardens in Russell Square to Caffè Tropea for refreshments (not included).

From here we'll make our way to the

Foundling Museum (10-15 minutes), crossing Southampton Row to walk up Bernard Street, left into Brunswick Square, then right to the museum (No 40) at the end of the road.

For the return journey to Waterloo you'll need to retrace your steps to Southampton Row to stop B for bus 188 (towards North Greenwich) to Waterloo.

Cost: £12.60 per person (includes entry to museum and guided tour)



Statue of Thomas Coram outside the Foundling Museum

Please note: The journey to the museum involves up to 30 minutes' walking.

If you are coming on this visit, please keep this page for reference and bring it with you on the day.

Visit to the Royal College of Music

On Friday, 12 May twelve of us from Kingston **u3a** visited the college, tucked away behind the Royal Albert Hall.

The college was established by royal charter in 1882 and, following a £3.6 million investment from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, has undergone a complete redevelopment. It has trained some of the most important figures in British and international music, including composers such as Holst, Vaughan Williams, Turnage and Britten; conductors such as Leopold Stokowski, Sir Colin Davis and Sir Roger Norrington; singers such as Dame Joan Sutherland, Sir Thomas Allen and Alfie Boe; and instrumentalists such as Sir James Galway, John Lill, Gervase de Peyer and Natalie Clein.

The college has an airy atmosphere with many steps down to the museum – and many steps back up to the higher

levels and the café. Our visit was in two parts. The first part took us down to the lower level of the college where the museum is located. It doubles up as a small performance hall for the



Statue of the young Mozart

music students to perform to the public. For the next hour we were treated to a wide variety of chamber music. The students proved themselves musically accomplished and dressed in black, as if they were performing on a major stage.

Once the concert ended we all made



Dedicated area within the museum where students perform to the public

Monthly Meetings

Meetings are held at the United Reformed Church (URC) in Kingston on the first Monday of each month unless it is a bank holiday. There is room for 120 people and you do not need to book in advance. Doors open at 1.30pm for a prompt 2pm start. Entrance fee is £1. Tea/Coffee and biscuits are available at the end of the meeting.

Date	Topics/Speakers
7 Aug	Simply Gershwin: The Music of George and Ira – Howard Slater The life story and music of Ira, lyricist, and his brother George, composer, who created some of the most memorable songs of the Jazz Age.
4 Sep	The Story of Marie Stein – Gabriel Stein Gabriel tells the story of his mother and of how she and her family survived the Holocaust in Poland, mainly in the Łódź Ghetto.
2 Oct	The Job of a Laughtime – Brad Ashton Journalist and TV comedy writer Brad tells us the backstage stories of many star comedians he has worked with, including Tommy Cooper, Les Dawson, Dick Emery, Hattie Jacques, Groucho Marx and Bob Monkhouse.
6 Nov	Annual General Meeting (1.30pm) A Schoolgirl's War – Mary Smith (2pm) During Mary's time as a headteacher of a secondary school, two discoveries revealed a vivid insight into school life in WW2: an extensive set of underground tunnels used as classrooms, and a set of paintings of wartime schooling made by an art teacher.

our way to the modern café filled with the buzz of student chatter. After a welcome lunch and all refreshed, we went down to the museum again for the guided tour by Henriette Poos, the Welcome Desk assistant. Henriette had a detailed knowledge of the collection and displayed the technical ability to demonstrate the techniques to produce the exact sound required from an instrument.

The museum is divided into three areas: Creation, Craft and Performance. The collection of musical instruments

dates from the late 15th to the mid-20th century. Amongst them we saw the earliest dated guitar. The 17th century harpsichord is still maintained in playing condition and we heard it during the student concert.

Thank you to Jacqui Hine for organising such an enjoyable day, spent rubbing shoulders with the next generation of talented musicians to be seen on the world stage.

Elizabeth Ellis

Kingston u3a Executive Committee 2022/2023

Registered Charity No. 1011295

Secretary	Lorraine Hellen	020 8390 5718 secretary@kingstonu3a.org.uk
Deputy Secretary	Francesca Cura	deputysecretary@kingstonu3a.org.uk
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Deputy Treasurer	Fiona Tolmie	020 3565 8994 deputytreasurer@kingstonu3a.org.uk
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Groups Coordinator/ Co-Chair	Shirley Miller	020 8940 8573 groupcoordinator@kingstonu3a.org.uk
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Speaker Secretary	Mary Hodgson	07985 337219 speakers@kingstonu3a.org.uk
Newsletter & Bulletin Editor	Susan Hinchsliffe	07814 487727 newsletter@kingstonu3a.org.uk

Change of Address

Please email updates to:

Chris Cheek, database manager at
database@kingstonu3a.org.uk

Newsletter Contributions

We welcome reports on your group's activities, **u3a** outings or on your personal interests and experiences. Contributions should be about 500 words but there's room for smaller items, too.

Photos (in .JPG format, please) help illustrate your contribution but please

include the names of any people shown. Send photos as separate files and not embedded in an email or a Word document to:
communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk

Distribution

Newsletters are posted out in early February, May, August and November.

Please contact Susan Hinchsliffe at:
communications@kingstonu3a.org.uk
if you have any problems in receiving these publications.

Thank you.