

Kingston u3a Newsletter

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Winter 2023



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www.kingstonu3a.org.uk

It's encouraging to see some potential new groups in the offing – Home Brewing, MOTO Weekenders and Beginners French – while the Kingston u3a Singers and the Things & Ideas Discussion group are looking to recruit new members.

In this edition our archivist, Jacqui Humphreys, asks members to donate any relevant documents to the Kingston u3a Archive, while Bill Higgins describes the latest activities of the Climate Emergency group.

As ever, our groups have been out and about. Bill and Ingrid Carnaby loved the GAS trip to Guildford and Loseley House and the Roman History group attended an Enactment Day at Butser Ancient Farm in Hampshire.

Jacqui Hine and her team have been busy organising the next round of outings – to a Christmas lunch in Surbiton, to the Postal Museum in central London and to Strawberry Hill House in Twickenham. And Lesley Hodges is wondering if any members who will be on their own on Christmas Day might want to go out to a restaurant with her to celebrate.

We've details of this year's remaining two monthly meetings, along with the proposed schedule of speakers and topics for next year.

As this is our last newsletter of 2023, it only remains for us to wish all our members and their families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

See you all in 2024!

Group News

We have three potential new groups and an appeal for more members for two others.

Do get in touch with any ideas, as new groups are always welcome. Thank you.

shirley.miller4@btinternet.com

020 8940 8573

Shirley Miller

French for Beginners on Zoom

Laila Eletre has been running a Beginners' French group for Elmbridge **u3a** for some years and is now offering a similar one to Kingston **u3a**. Emphasis will be on pronunciation and grammar.

If you are interested in joining, please contact Laila: eletrelaila@gmail.com

Home Brewing

John Lodge is hoping to set up a new group which would provide opportunities to develop home-brewing skills, share experiences and visit breweries.

If you are interested in coming along to this group, please contact John: johnlodge47@gmail.com

MOTO Weekenders

Jacqui Hine is hoping to set up a new social group that would meet up on a Sunday, once a month, in someone's home. They might play board games or cards, watch a video, discuss a topic or plan another get-together on Saturday or Sunday for a pub lunch, cinema or short walk. This group may be suitable for anyone who has difficulties in participating in the more physical

activities offered by the other groups.

If you are interested in joining, please contact Jacqui: jacqui@hine.org.uk

Things & Ideas Discussion Group

This discussion group started off as the Science & Philosophy group many decades ago. Unfortunately a combination of the pandemic and old age means attendance is now perilously low.

Apart from the commitment to take one's turn in leading the discussion with a prepared paper, membership offers the opportunity to participate in a lively discussion at its meetings. The only veto is on the promotion of specific political, religious and racial views.

The group meets the first Wednesday of the month at Jennifer Butterworth's house in Coombe Lane West. The 57 bus stops nearby and Norbiton station is a seven-minute walk away. Unfortunately parking is **not** available.

The group would welcome reinforcements. If you are interested in joining, please contact Jennifer: jenn.butterworth@virginmedia.com
020 8942 7387

Kingston u3a Singers

Come and try the choir. They are a small but friendly group who enjoy singing in four-part harmony. Their music ranges from folk tunes and songs from shows to inspiring pieces from great composers. You'll probably recognise quite a few and may have sung along to them.

Singing in four-part harmony means that you'll be singing with others in your

voice range, which makes it easy. The choir particularly needs more men to add to their tenors and basses, to create a better balance for the choir. So, all you men who like to sing, come and join the other men in the choir.

There are no auditions. The choir uses sheet music but not everyone can sing straight off the page and it's fun learning. In fact, singing is extremely good for both physical and mental health.

The rehearsals are every Thursday morning, 10.30am-12.30pm, with a coffee break half-way, at Glenmore House, 6 The Crescent, Surbiton KT6 4BN. There is ample free parking, several buses stop close by and the railway station is not far away.

For more information and to let them know that you're coming, please ring Helga on 020 8397 8712 or Roger on 07759 029433.

Kingston u3a Archive

We have a small archive of materials which has been in existence for just over 10 years. The collection is held by Kingston Borough Archives, who keep it in off-site storage. There's a catalogue of the archive accessible through the Kingston [u3a](#) website and anyone can refer to the material on request, with advance notice.

Items in the archive include a complete run of our newsletters, certain meeting minutes, AGM reports and materials collected during the celebration of our 10th and 20th anniversaries.

Kingston Borough Archives has limited storage space but we are able to add to our collection. If you have anything you might donate relating to Kingston [u3a](#), I would be pleased to hear about it. Items should be unique and of possible interest to future researchers. For example, it would be useful to have material relating to our 25th anniversary in 2016, as there is very little at present. Please contact me so that I can assess its suitability for the collection or if you would like more information:
jacquihumphreys3@gmail.com
020 8286 3274

Jacqui Humphreys
Kingston u3a Archivist

Climate Emergency Group

We thought members would like to find out more about our group. We hope this activity report gives readers an idea of what we do.

Getting together once a month at Surbiton library, we work to an agenda set up in the weeks leading up to the meeting.

While all attendees have their own concerns about the environment, energy and waste treatment, our overwhelming consideration is always the fact that we are now living in a time of climate crisis.

We share papers, magazines, clippings and articles about the environment and have informal discussions about local societies relevant to our concerns. With this in mind, we



Xob, [CC BY-SA 4.0](#) via Wikimedia Commons

have booked to visit a waste treatment centre for SE London, to help us better appreciate and understand the problems faced by such an organisation.

For one of our meetings we went to the Hive near Kingston station (www.kingstonhive.org.uk). This proved

very useful for us, especially the tutorial about nuclear power as an alternative energy source.

Kingston Hive aims to give residents the skills and support they need to cut carbon emissions and energy costs; reduce, reuse, repair and recycle; eat a greener diet; live a more local, sustainable lifestyle; look after the natural environment; and unite as a resilient and compassionate community.

It has been a busy and enjoyable time and I recommend our group to anyone interested in the environment.

Bill Higgins

bilhiggins@btinternet.com

What Did the Romans Do for Us?

On Saturday 29 July six members of the Roman History group set off for Butser Ancient Farm in Hampshire, as it was hosting a Roman Enactment Day.

On its website Butser is described thus: '... an open-air experimental archaeology museum and active research centre, learning about the past by recreating it. Our experiments are world-renowned, and our buildings include a Roman villa, a Celtic village, a Stone Age farm, and Saxon halls – all reconstructed from real UK archaeology, and open to be explored!'

Shortly after our arrival the enactment began and the centurion marched his troop of six soldiers (all enthusiastic volunteers) to stand in front of the visitors.

The centurion asked us lots of questions in order to involve us all and he invited some of the children in the audience to join the soldiers at the front and participate. This, of course, was very entertaining and kept everyone's attention.

The centurion explained the development of Roman armaments and the importance of the shield in both defending the soldiers and presenting a



formidable and frightening sight when they were marching towards their enemies. He also demonstrated the use of the Roman dagger, the 'pugio'.

Later the six of us visited the Roman villa, where we saw demonstrations of Roman music (playing of the lyre), cooking, crochet and medical implements, many of which looked remarkably similar to those still in use today.

After a picnic lunch we also visited some of the other houses on the site, which ranged from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age periods. A very enthusiastic and knowledgeable 'Stone Age'



volunteer called Mark (left) explained to us the development of houses from very basic small shelters built from vegetation and open along the whole of one side, to the much more weatherproof structures, which we typically think of from those periods. He also explained how the people from these ancient times mined flint and worked it to form the implements they needed to kill animals for food.

All in all, a very interesting and enjoyable day was had by the six of us. As a bonus, the weather was kind, with long periods of sunshine and just a few light showers.

Jane Breach



Back row (l-r) Kevin Breach, Linda Foreman, Christine Housden, Iris Wiggins, Andy Housden. Front row (l-r) Jane Breach and a Roman soldier

GAS Outings and Reports

Christmas Lunch

Glenmore House, with its late Georgian architecture and splendid décor, is associated with the local Freemasons and their Masonic events. It provides an excellent venue for our **u3a** Christmas lunch:

- **Starter:** parsnip soup with crème fraîche and nutmeg
- Glenmore sorbet to clear your palate.
- **Main:** roast turkey with all the traditional accompaniments
- **Dessert:** apple and blackberry crumble with vanilla pod custard

We'll be serenaded by our very own Kingston **u3a** Singers who have agreed to sing for us.

They have been performing together for many years and their repertoire ranges from classical to folk. (Please see p2 for more information about them.)

Time/Date: From 12.30pm onwards for a prompt 1pm start, Thursday, 7 December

Location: Glenmore House, 6 The Crescent (off Claremont Road), Surbiton KT6 4BN. It is only a short walk from Surbiton station. Glenmore House also has free parking for those who wish

to drive there.



Cost: £37.90 for a three-course Christmas lunch, including gratuities and a small donation to the choir's funds. (Drinks are not included but will be available from the bar.)

If you wish to join us, please fill in the booking form in the centre of this newsletter, stating clearly if you have special dietary requirements. The chef will try and serve you a suitable alternative.

Please book early.

If you are joining us, please keep this page for reference.

Jacqui Hine
jacqui@hine.org.uk
020 8549 1924

Postal Museum

Join us for a fascinating day discovering how our postal service has developed over the past 100 years.

We start our visit at the museum with a 15-minute ride on the Mail Train, travelling through the original tunnels and station platforms of London's 100-year-old postal railway. En route we'll hear about the postal service's subterranean world beneath the streets of London, delivering the mail bags

directly to the major London stations.

We'll then cross the road to the Postal Museum itself, where refreshments are available (not included), before visiting the exhibition and museum where you can walk round at your own pace. Here, audio-visual, interactive displays and exhibits will complete our experience.

Accessibility

The Postal Museum is accessible to all, with lifts to each floor.

For the Mail Train, although there are lifts to the lower level to board the train, restrictions apply to the train itself, which has a minimum height and width because of the narrowness of the tunnels. Some of you may have difficulty in boarding.

The train travels at a maximum 7mph through sometimes dark sections with flash lighting. (For more information please contact Jacqui Hine: 020 8549 1924, jacqui@hine.org.uk)

If you wish to skip this ride, you may watch the Mail Rail film in a room next to the ride itself.

Date: Thursday, 18 January

Meeting Time/Place: 10am at Waterloo station, opposite platforms 1-4. We'll walk to bus stop F on Waterloo Road to take bus 341 towards Meridian Water station. We'll get off in Rosebery Avenue, Mount Pleasant, stop CM (about 25 minutes).

It is a short walk to the Postal Museum and Mail Train entrance on Phoenix Place, WC1X 0DA.

Return journey: You'll retrace your steps back along Mount Pleasant and left into Rosebery Avenue to stop CJ for the 341 bus back to Waterloo.

Cost: £13.90 per person

If you wish to join us, please fill in the form in the centre of this newsletter.

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

Dawn Sillett

dawn@dawnsillett.co.uk

07970 974999

Strawberry Hill House

We have organised a guided tour of Strawberry Hill House in Twickenham next February.

The house is an impressive example of Gothic Revival architecture. It dates back to 1747 when Horace Walpole (writer, historian and politician) bought one of the last sites along the river in Twickenham. He converted a couple of existing cottages into the Gothic 'castle' that it is today, becoming a tourist attraction in Walpole's lifetime.

The café is open from 10am and you are free to wander round the gardens. At 11am our private tour will give us a general guide to the house, its contents and its history.

Date: 11am Thursday, 29 February



Cost: £17 per person, provided we have a group of at least 15 people. Coffee or tea will be extra.

If you wish to join us, please fill in the form in the centre of this newsletter

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

Pamela Crisp

pamelacrisp50@hotmail.com, 07846 722278

Home Alone on Christmas Day?

If you are and would like to meet up and to go out for lunch, I have found a suitable restaurant. Here are the details:

Time/Place: 2pm at Hawkers Bar and Brasserie, 1 Skerne Road, Kingston KT2 5FJ

Christmas Lunch: Includes a glass of sparkling wine on arrival, a starter, carvery for the main course and then dessert, followed by tea or coffee

Cost: £89.95 per head

If you would like to come along, please contact me, Lesley Hodges:

07768 643663 or

lesleyhodges12@gmail.com



RSVP
by 9 November

Location: Strawberry Hill House,
268 Waldegrave Road,
Twickenham TW1 4ST

Meeting Time/Place:

9.45am: Meet at Kingston train station in the booking hall. We'll catch the 9.58am train towards Richmond, get off at Strawberry Hill station and walk to Strawberry Hill House (5-10 minutes).

If you prefer to drive, there is a car park with five Blue Badge parking spaces.

10.30am: Strawberry Hill

Please let us know whether you intend to meet us at Kingston station or make your own way to the venue.

An Outing to Guildford

A cathedral, a museum, a castle and a stately home – all in one day. When we saw the advertisement in the newsletter, my wife Ingrid and I thought it sounded an interesting day out, so we signed up immediately.

We met the bus in Kingston at 9.30am and off we went, with the first stop Guildford Cathedral. Modern in its design, it was built to serve the new diocese of Guildford created in 1927. Started in 1933, its construction was badly interrupted by World War II and the subsequent shortage of building materials but, thanks to a 'buy a brick' campaign and massive help by the local community, it was consecrated by the late Queen in 1971. The brick building is simple but impressive. It differs from other cathedrals we've visited because of its wonderfully light and airy interior and its uncluttered feeling of space and peacefulness. We enjoyed looking round, with a lovely organ accompaniment as a bonus.

Back to the bus and a quick drive further into Guildford to the museum and castle. The museum itself forms part of the gatehouse to the castle and is an impressive collection of artefacts from Roman to modern times, revealing the everyday lives of Guildford inhabitants through the centuries. There's a special section covering the Wey navigation canal, a collection of Victorian children's toys and an exquisite display of beautiful needlework, especially of Surrey workmen's smocks.

A short walk and through an arch took us to the immaculate Castle Cliffe Gardens leading up to Guildford Castle. The castle itself crowns the hill and has an impressive Norman tower, variously used as a palace, a prison and a private residence. There's an interesting display inside and steps up to the top where there are lovely views of the city and the surrounding countryside.

Back to the bus and off to our final treat – Loseley Park house and gardens and what a treat it is!



Although listed in the Domesday Book, the present house was built in the 16th century before a visit by Queen Elizabeth I, the previous house having been considered inadequate for her. Built largely from stone from Waverley Abbey, dissolved by Henry VIII, it's much more homely than many stately homes, as the same family, the More-Molyneux, have lived there ever since. Much use has been made of artefacts from other palaces and houses and there is some wonderful wood panelling from Nonsuch Palace, some fine Grinling Gibbons carvings, some painted panels from Henry VIII's banqueting tents and a rare portrait of Anne Boleyn. The guided tour was very interesting, covering the history



Loseley House, taken by Derek Strathearn, shown in action p9 (photo by Jacqui Hine)

of the house and all the beautiful rooms with their contents.

Finally we had the beautiful gardens to explore. These were quite a contrast to the Castle Gardens in Guildford – much less formal and in the style of a traditional English country garden. Sumptuous borders of different coloured hollyhocks and huge cream geraniums were particularly impressive.

Unfortunately, time was pressing and

we were looking forward to a cream tea in the café, delightfully situated in the middle of the garden, before boarding the coach back to Kingston.

Thanks to Nanette Gray and Jacqui Hine for their great work organising the outing. Ingrid and I had a wonderful day out and we'll be going back to Loseley Park to see the rest of the garden and perhaps have another cream tea!

Bill Carnaby

Monthly Meetings 2023: Dates and Speakers

- 6 Nov Annual General Meeting (1.30pm)**
A Schoolgirl's War – Mary Smith (2pm)
 During Mary's time as the 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.
- 4 Dec Walking into Grandmother's Kitchen in 1940 Madras – Jenny Mallin**
 Jenny, winner of the Best in World 2017, shares part of her family history and tells how the festive season was celebrated by those living under the British Raj, from Christmas Eve to Twelfth Night. She uncovers family recipes from a family book dating back to 1844.

Monthly Meetings 2024

Meetings are held at the United Reformed Church in Kingston on the first Monday of each month unless it is a bank holiday. 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
8 Jan	Annual Quiz
5 Feb	Where Do Novelists Get Their Ideas From? – Bobbie Derbyshire
4 Mar	Nelson Mandela: The Triumph of Warmth, Humanity, Generosity – Andrew Barker
8 Apr	Traversa: A Solo Walk across Africa – Fran Sandham
13 May	Aviation's Greatest Pioneers – Andy Richardson
3 Jun	Grace Darling and the Fine Art of Saving Lives at Sea – Dr James Taylor
1 Jul	Inn and Out at the Top: Running the Highest Inn in England – Neil Hanson
5 Aug	Gandhi v Churchill: Triumph and Disaster at the End of the Raj – Peter Popham
2 Sep	The Legend of Nancy Wake, the White Mouse – Paul Barwick
7 Oct	The Anti-Vaxxers – Tony Cartwright
4 Nov	Annual General Meeting To Journey's End: The Life of R C Sherriff – Pete Allen
2 Dec	TBA

Kingston u3a Executive Committee 2022/2023

Registered Charity No. 1011295

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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.