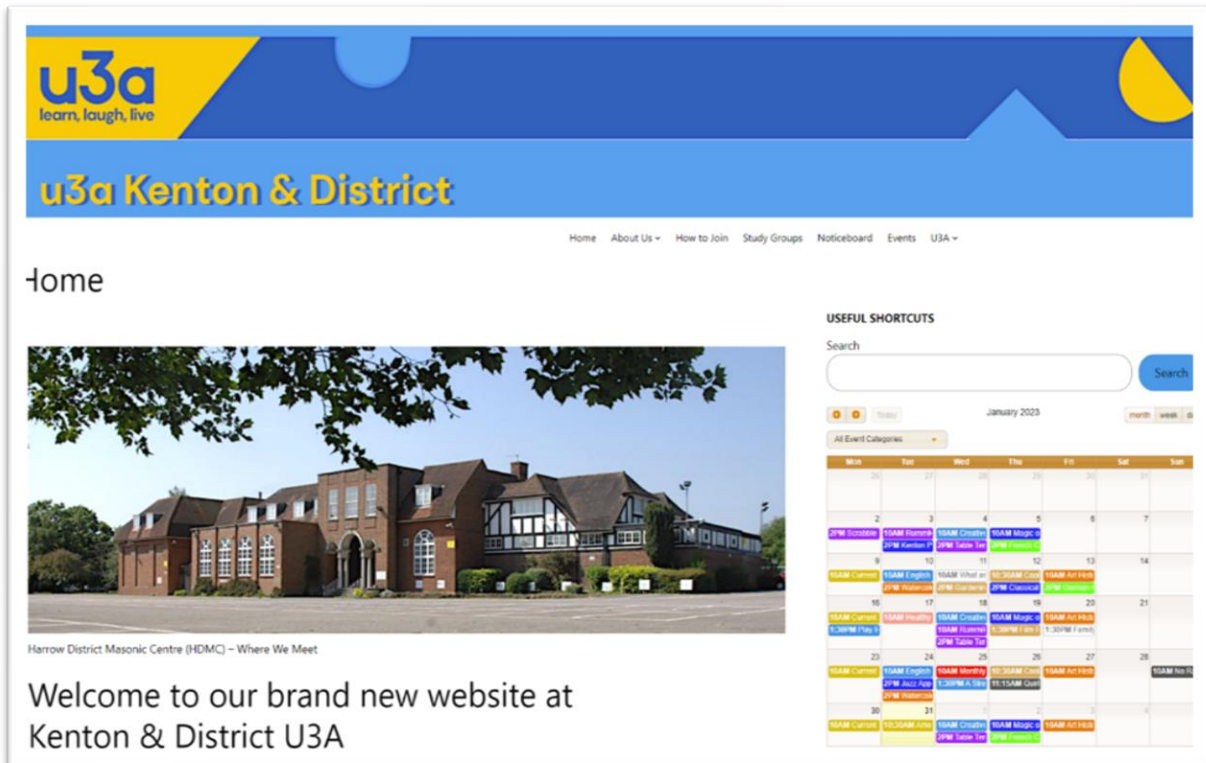


## Our New Website



Launched in January, the new website is designed to show our members, and prospective members, what we get up to.

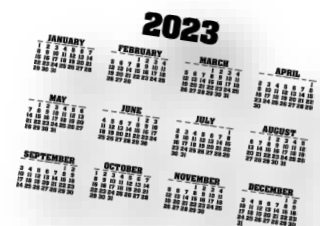
The new format is easy to use, with details about what is on, when, and where. It is compatible with smartphones, tablets and computers.

All the pages have a similar layout, with a selection menu at the top. Below the menu is a calendar (showing events throughout a day, a week, or a month) and a quick search box. Do take a look: [www.kentondistrictu3a.org](http://www.kentondistrictu3a.org).

If you have any difficulties with the website, you can email our webmaster, Dick Nathan, at [webmaster@kentondistrictu3a.org](mailto:webmaster@kentondistrictu3a.org). He would also welcome you sending him photos and brief write-ups of recent events to add to the website.

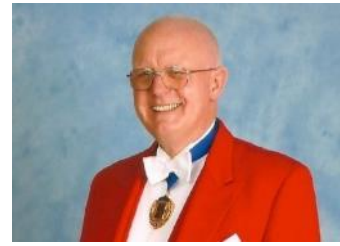
### New and extended diary

The latest diary has the 'when' and 'where' for every group session **through to the end of August 2023**. Significant changes and new groups are highlighted in yellow. Please carefully check the date, start time and location for each of your group sessions. Remember, the diary also has the **contact details** for each interest group. A restricted printable version is available on our website: [www.kentondistrictu3a.org](http://www.kentondistrictu3a.org).



## Monthly Meeting Talks

We welcomed in 2023 with a toast, and in January had an excellent presentation by David Pearson on *Toasting and the English Toastmaster*. This is a subject unknown to many people. We learnt the origins of toasting, going back to ancient civilisations, the role of a toastmaster and their training. The Guild of Professional Toastmasters has exacting standards of training carried out by their Academy. If a function is to run smoothly, protocol and procedure are of the essence, and a toastmaster overseeing proceedings is necessary. As David is Principal Training Officer for the Professional Toastmasters' Academy, it was obvious that he was passionate about passing on his knowledge and skills to newcomers embarking on becoming toastmasters.



Our speaker for **22nd February** at 10am in the Harrow Room is Stewart Goshawk, who will talk about *The Fun of Giving Other People's Money Away*.

On **22nd March**, Paul Barwick will give us a talk on *Eddie Chapman – The Life and Crime of Double Agent Zigzag*.

**If any member would be prepared to deliver a talk, or knows of anyone who would be willing to, please contact Adele Setton.**

## Exploring London Visits

On Thursday 26th January we had a guided tour of the **Freemasons' Hall** in Covent Garden. This imposing Art Deco building is the headquarters of the United Grand Lodge of England. Particular highlights were the huge and beautiful Grand Temple with its vast bronze doors and rich mosaic work and the interesting Museum of Freemasonry where we learned something of the history of freemasonry and its ceremonial rituals.



On Tuesday 7th February we had a guided tour of the **Apothecaries' Hall**, nestled in a back streets north of Blackfriars's Bridge. It is one of the oldest livery



companies of the City of London and its first floor rooms remain as they were after the Hall was rebuilt following the Great Fire of London. As well as being impressed by the key public rooms we learned about the fascinating history of apothecaries. The highlight, though, was that a lunchtime grand meal for 120 was being set up in the Hall, replete with a string quartet in the lobby and a company of pikemen in seventeenth century dress in the courtyard – all rather special.

**Two more visits are planned. Contact Louise Bennett if you would like to go along**

Our next visit will be focused on a private presentation on the history of the Bank of England at the **Bank of England Museum** on the **afternoon of Monday 13th March**. The audio-visual presentation is free, starts at 3pm and will last an hour. It will give us a brief history of the Bank of England since it was founded in 1694 and describe its main role and functions today. There will be an opportunity to

ask questions about what it did in the past and what it does today. Before and after the visit we will be able to explore the Museum's free and extensive displays on the history of the Bank and its current activities. We plan to meet at Preston Road Station at 1.45pm and travel down together on the Met Line to Moorgate Station.



On the **afternoon of Tuesday 18th April** Louise has arranged a private tour of the **Carpenters Hall**, a livery company in the City. The Carpenters' Company has been based on London Wall since its first Hall was built there in 1429. Since that time, there have been three Halls. The current Hall was opened in 1960, built following an air raid in 1941 when the second Hall was completely burnt out, though most of the Company's period furniture, pictures, archives and silver survived and the shell of the old building was used. At least

18 different kinds of wood were used throughout the building, which was intended to act as a showcase for the craft of carpentry. The tour starts at 2.30pm and will last about an hour and a half. Our guide will show us all the ceremonial rooms and tell us about the Company's past and present activity. We can travel down to Liverpool Street Station from Preston Road Station together, catching a Met train at 1.40pm. The cost is just £6.

## Kenton u3a Members' Wish List

We are always interested in starting and developing new groups, and we cannot assume that existing groups and facilitators will carry on indefinitely. As you will probably realise, a new group needs enough interested members, but the key component is often finding someone with the knowledge (where appropriate) and commitment to facilitate a group. Below are some of the new interest group suggestions. Please let Peter or Louise know if you are interested.

### MOTO 'Members On Their Own' group

Some u3as organise special outings and events just for those members who live on their own. Others provide a coffee gathering or a pub lunch. These events typically take place at the weekend when loneliness can be particularly difficult. Would you be willing to arrange a lunch one weekend in the Travellers Rest or the Preston Pub (or somewhere else of your choosing)? What would be involved is collecting names of people who would like to come and making a booking. If members of the group want to repeat the experience or do more than that they could discuss and organise future arrangements themselves.

### Philosophy group

One of our members would be interested in a Philosophy group. Although not sufficiently knowledgeable to run one, they would be very keen to participate if it would cover moral philosophy, ethics, metaphysics, ideologies etc.

### Italian for beginners' group

Another member says "Is there any possibility that at some time, Kenton u3a will bring in Italian for beginners? It is a language I have always loved."

### More one-off sessions

If you, or someone you know, could give us a one or two session talk on something interesting that is not suited to a monthly meeting or full course do let Peter or Louise know.

*Interest group coordinators: Louise Bennett and Peter Rummer, email [ku3aGroups@outlook.com](mailto:ku3aGroups@outlook.com)*

## Interest Group News

### \*\* NEW \*\* American Civil War Talks

We have arranged a short series of three Friday morning talks about the *American Civil War* with guest speaker Harry Goldstein (*no relation to Howard*). Harry holds a post graduate degree in American Politics and, following a career in information technology, has pursued his life-long interest in American history. He is a member of u3a in London and the American History group at North London u3a.



The talks will cover the following elements of the American Civil War:

**Talk 1, 14<sup>th</sup> April – ‘A house divided cannot stand’:** Looks at the roots of the Civil War from the beginnings of the Republic and the emergence of slavery as a dominant issue.

**Talk 2, 28<sup>th</sup> April – ‘And the war came’:** How the war progressed, and the parts that Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant played in the campaigns and battles.

**Talk 3, 26<sup>th</sup> May – ‘A new birth of freedom’:** Focusses on Abraham Lincoln himself. Did he aim to be an enemy of slavery or merely to save the Republic and how did he respond to each successive crisis and opportunity?

*Note: Each of the talk subjects are quotations from Abraham Lincoln’s speeches.*

These talks will be in the Harrow Room at the Masonic Centre, starting at 10am prompt.



### Jazz Appreciation

Ken Sinclair has agreed to take over the running of the Jazz Appreciation group - starting with the next meeting on **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm** in the Wembley Room at the Masonic Centre. Ken will look at jazz from the 1900s to the 1960s. Sessions will encompass the music of New Orleans, Ragtime, Dixieland, Stride Piano, Boogie Woogie and Swing through the period of its development from around 1900 to 1945 and the trad jazz revival in the UK in the 1950s and 1960s. He will look at the development of the big bands and jazz in Europe. All will be presented with copious musical examples, the accent being on the music. Ken is keen to encourage other members to suggest other types of jazz and lead the group on an occasional basis. We may have live performers who can entertain us at future meetings. All members of Kenton & District u3a are very welcome and we look forward to seeing you there. Future meetings will be at 2pm on the fourth Tuesday each month.

### Magic of Musicals

Mike Morrow’s sessions cover all aspects of musical theatre and can encompass just about anything that is played before an audience. The aim is to bring a deeper knowledge and understanding of this major area of entertainment. The main themes are 20th & 21st century Broadway, West End and Hollywood productions but music hall, folk, opera, et al are also considered when relevant. Programmes normally include around 30 clips generally supporting or in stark contrast with the theme set for that lecture. For example, a recent focus was Oscar-nominated songs from 1934 to the present – this indicated that though most winning songs deserved the award other nominees have proved more successful over time. Sometimes Mike concentrates on a composer or team - from G&S, via early 20th century icons such as Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Ivor Novello, R&H passing through mid-century writers including Kander & Ebb, Jerry Herman, Charles Strouse, Leonard Bernstein, Sandy Wilson et al to a 21st Century crossover with Stephen Sondheim, Lin Manuel



Miranda, Andrew Lloyd Webber and many more. It never ceases to amaze just how many well-known songs are from nearly forgotten sources. Mike welcomes requests for works you love or perhaps have not seen for many years. Please come along to a session and see if you'd like to attend on a regular basis. The next sessions are on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> March, starting at 10am prompt.



### Art History Course

Jennifer Mills' popular Art History class returned last month. We are now about halfway through her series of talks on successive Friday mornings on the **Dutch Golden Age**, focusing on a different theme each week. In the first three weeks we looked at landscapes, seascapes and townscapes before moving on to Dutch homes. In the weeks to come we will be looking at the people and their pastimes, before considering the many and varied forms of still-life painting. In the process we are discovering something of what it was like to live in 17th century Holland. The classes start at 10am prompt on successive Fridays in the Masonic Centre's Harrow Room, benefiting from its huge screen, and run to 31st March. **Jennifer is turning to**

**members of the class to provide the content for our eleventh session on Friday 24th March.** She wants to build on a successful session at the end of last year's course on Renaissance portraits when about a dozen members chose a portrait they particularly liked or found interesting and told the rest of the class something about their choice. This time Jennifer would welcome volunteers to choose a picture of a room with people in it. The picture can be from any period of history and from any country and she is hoping for variety. You would need to do a little research so you can speak about your choice for no more than 5 minutes. Lots of information should be available online to help you. If you are up for it, contact Jennifer on [jennifer.mills01@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jennifer.mills01@hotmail.co.uk) and give her the name of the picture, and which gallery it is in so she can compile a slide list for the day.

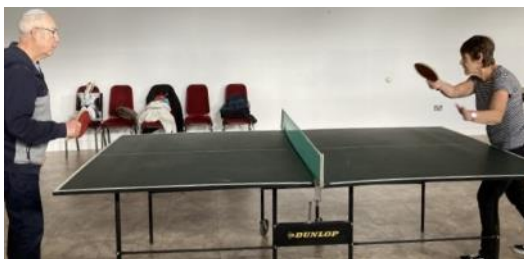
### Family History Group

January 2023 and another ku3a new group started up. Sylvia Thompson, the group facilitator, was pleased to welcome seven members to the first meeting of the *Family History Group*. As our family history and genealogical research will



involve accessing resources on the internet, we started by checking we could connect our laptops and tablets to the Masonic Centre's Wi-Fi. Members examined the details contained within birth, marriage and death certificates. Among the many details reviewed, Sylvia explained how the birth certificates for twins were unique – as they contain the time of birth. At our second session in February, we looked at Census Returns from 1841 to 1911 and the 1939 Register. We also discussed how to find wills and probate records. Future sessions will be researching our ancestors and dealing with any 'brick walls'.

### Table Tennis



The table tennis group is proving to be great fun, playing doubles and singles, and there is time for a chat while sitting it out. We now have a second table. Although the group is not aimed at beginners, if you once enjoyed playing and are now rusty about scoring and technique, you're very welcome. Do bring your own bat if you have one (though we have a couple of spares) but balls are supplied. If you are interested or

want more information, please contact Eric Kiel. Our next sessions are on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm in the Harrow Room for a couple of hours, though you can drop in or leave to suit.

## Scrabble Group

The friendly Scrabble group meets in Priscilla's home usually on the first Monday afternoon in the month. The next meeting is on Monday 6th March, then 24<sup>th</sup> April with no meeting in May. The group has reached capacity, but members can attend the Rummikub and Scrabble group in the Masonic Centre.



## What are your Memories?

The theme for the next meeting on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March at 10am in the Masonic Centre bar lounge will see us sharing memories of our timepieces. What was your first wrist or pocket watch? Do you remember your parent's alarm clock? Whatever the topic, discussions at this friendly group inevitably trigger other often unrelated yet interesting memories and recollections. New and occasional members are very welcome to come along.

## Kenton Players

If you play an instrument and would like to be part of a small group that plays music together, please get in touch with Alison (see Ku3a Diary for contact details). We have good fun, and she would love to see you. The next session is on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March, although sessions generally take place each month on the first Tuesday, starting at 2pm in the Wembley Room at the Masonic Centre.



## German Conversation

The German Conversation group meets at 2pm on the second Friday of the month in Sara Maier's home with native speaker, Sabine, leading us. At our January meeting the topic was 'Christmas memories'. Marion's story was called Weihnachts Erfahrung (Christmas Experience). June told us of a visit to a musical, which involved family members for extra excitement. Valerie's story was about Eine Überraschung (A Surprise) and Sabine's was called

Weihnachtsgespräche (Christmas Talks). Marsaili's Scottish tale described the New Year custom of Hogmanay, because Christmas tends to be a quiet affair with all the excitement concentrated on New Year's Day. At our February meeting we talked about our favourite books. We meet again on 10<sup>th</sup> March. To join us please contact Sabine. Her contact details are in the ku3a diary.

## Watercolour Art

If you'd like to try watercolour painting, do come along and give it a go. You only need a box of watercolours, paper and a pencil. We are always looking for new members to join our lively and fun small group, where we paint together companionably based on a topic. We meet in the bar lounge of the Masonic Centre at 2pm on the second and fourth Tuesday each month – so 28<sup>th</sup> February, then 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> March. Please contact Lyn Dantas for more information.



## Rummikub & Scrabble

The sociable Rummikub and Scrabble Group play both games in the Masonic Centre bar lounge from 10am on various Tuesdays and Wednesdays of the month – check the Diary, and/or website, for dates. Players of all standards - of either game - are very welcome but, as we have limited game sets, please bring yours along if you have one.

## Healthy Living

Sonia organised a fun, yet educational, quiz on a variety of healthy topics for our January meeting. For our next meeting, at 10am on Tuesday 21 February in the Wembley Room, Sonia has asked members to bring along several example food labels each. This will enable the group to investigate and discuss the ingredients, and particularly the levels of salt, fat, sugar, fibre and energy in different foods. A better understanding of each food's contents should lead to a healthier lifestyle. The group will decide the topic for March at the February session.

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy 1046kJ 250kcal	Fat <b>3.0g</b> LOW	Saturates <b>1.3g</b> LOW	Sugars <b>34g</b> HIGH	Salt <b>0.9g</b> MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake  
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ / 167kcal



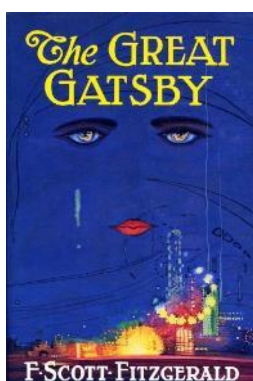
## Film Review Club

The short season of Dustin Hoffman films finished in January with *Rain Man* (1988), which was very well received. By way of contrast, however, the February film was a 2018 film *Ben is Back* – the story of a recovering drug addict who unexpectedly returns from rehab to his family on Christmas Eve. His family struggle with the many repercussions of his reappearance.

The film to be reviewed each month is normally chosen just a few weeks in advance of the meeting. This is to allow the possibility of finding a film that is available on the BBC iPlayer for those members who prefer to watch at home and just meet for refreshments and the discussion. Other films are available on DVD and are often chosen following discussion in the meeting. In all cases we aim to ensure that films are shown with subtitles. Ruth will announce the next film in due course to be shown on the Masonic Centre's large screen on Thursday March 16th at 1.30pm prompt.

## Creative Writing

We started 2023 with discussions around a short story which had won a prize in a recent Guardian competition. We also shared our work on: 'Miracles do Happen', 'Post Christmas Blues', 'New Year's Resolutions' and 'Lost and Found'. Some of our group are continuing to add to existing stories. We welcomed two new members recently and we look forward to sharing our literary efforts with them. We are currently writing character studies and pieces to enliven a mundane boring subject, such as making a cup of tea. Our next meetings are on 1st and 15th March. As always, any member of Kenton u3a is welcome to join us.



## Literature in English

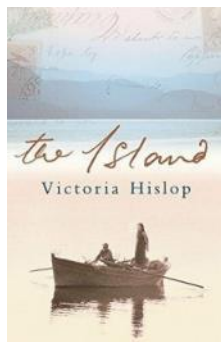
Having started life as an English Literature group, we recently took a temporary track and became a "Literature in English" group as we looked at some classics of American literature. Having completed Tennessee William's classic play *A Streetcar Named Desire* (and watched the 1951 classic version of the film), we're now starting on the last leg of that journey with an exploration of F. Scott Fitzgerald's wonderful novel of the 1920s, *The Great Gatsby*. This work is frequently described as "the great American novel" and the quintessential novel of "The Jazz Age", a term coined, as it happens, by Fitzgerald. David anticipates that we'll be discussing this novel for the next 3/4 meetings so it's a good time for newcomers to come and join us.

Due to various holidays, the next sessions are 10am on Tuesday 28th February, then Wednesday 8th March. **Note: There are no meetings on 14th or 28th March.** Please carefully check subsequent dates in the ku3a diary. If you'd like any further information about the group, please feel free to call or email David Harris, his contact details are in the ku3a diary.

## Play Reading

For our January play reading we read *Amadeus* by Peter Shaffer. This biographical drama presents a fictionalised history of Mozart through the eyes of Salieri, a largely forgotten composer who developed a deep hatred of Mozart as he was envious of his talent. This was more of a challenge than usual as we had to split some very lengthy parts.

For our February session we will be reading an adaptation of Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*. The story of Maxim de Winter's second wife, slowly piecing together her husband's tragic and unhappy past – married to the beautiful, but treacherous Rebecca – is as moving and exciting as ever. *Rebecca* is a treat for fans of romance and Gothic thrills alike. 1.30pm on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February in the Wembley Room. **Please note the following meeting is on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March (not 20<sup>th</sup>)**. Also, because we have now become a large group, members may have to share parts and scripts.



## Book Club

The Book Club met in December when we had a lively discussion about the works of **Mary Ann Evans** (who wrote under the name **George Elliot**). We agreed she deserves her place as a leading writer of the Victorian era.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February in the Wembley Room, when our chosen author is **Victoria Hislop**. Viv Gould will lead that discussion. Zsuzsanna hopes to resume responsibility for the following session on 27<sup>th</sup> April and the discussion of **Maggie O'Farrell's** works.

## Current Affairs Discussion

If you are looking to share your knowledge and opinions, or even just listen to what others have to say on the latest stories in the news, then you should head for the Wembley Room in the Masonic Centre, where we meet every Monday morning (except Bank Holidays) between 10am and 12 noon.

Maybe you would like to take the chair and manage a session from time to time so you get to choose what is covered? If so, just let Howard know and he will add you to the schedule.



## Classical Music Appreciation

In January we examined the life and works of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, a friend of Elgar, who was famous in his time but is now all but forgotten. Although his music is hardly ever encountered in live performances, it can be heard on several fine recordings, which show that it is unjustly neglected and deserves to be revived in the concert hall.



In the coming months we shall look across the Atlantic Ocean. If asked to name some American composers, who would come to mind? George Gershwin, Scott Joplin, Leonard Bernstein and perhaps Aaron Copland? All of them were active in the 20th century, but were there any American composers in the age of Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms? All will be revealed in due course! We started in February looking at the career and music of Victor Herbert. A composer and fine cellist of Irish descent who was born in 1859 in Guernsey, studied in Germany, moved to the USA and started composing hugely successful operettas that were the forerunners of Broadway musicals. In the following months we will return to the theme of music connected with Revolution, War and Politics. We started last autumn



with the French Revolution, followed by the Napoleonic age and then the rest of the nineteenth century up to World War I, with the German composer Max Reger writing a piece for organ in 1916 celebrating the forthcoming German victory and then conveniently dying a few weeks later, avoiding ultimate embarrassment. This series will include the fate of composers in Soviet Russia and later this year we shall look at classical music in the Third Reich.

### Gardening Club

At our next meetings at 2pm on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February and 22<sup>nd</sup> March in the Kenton Room, the group will focus on winter pruning and getting plants and gardens ready for Spring. From early May through to August, the club will meet twice per month, with some meetings being hosted in member's gardens. Contact Freda for more details about this group.



### French Conversation

The French conversation group meets on the first Thursday of the month at 2pm. Our next meeting is on 2nd March but, due to various holidays, the meeting after that will be on 30th March and there will be no meeting in April. Group members read (in French, of course) and translate an article, poem, story, etc. of their choice under the

supportive guidance of Brigitte. The subjects chosen are varied, and we endeavour to accommodate a mixed level of French comprehension.

### Cookery

The Group has been well attended during the winter months and with 12 in the Group the allocation of 10 lunch seats per session has proved interesting but successful. February sessions are on vegetarian cookery and the forthcoming months see sessions on Easter, Pasta and Spring Meals. While people congregate for the 10.30 start, tea and coffee is served and the friendly gossip starts! The session concludes with lunch which consists of the two courses Viv has demonstrated and usually concludes about 1pm.



### Monthly Walks



**Note: The rambling group's walk on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February is cancelled,** as Kevin is unavailable. He will advise the members of his walking group, when he can, about the date for his next walk. This may be the much-postponed Dollis Valley Green Walk, which has already been cancelled several times due to poor weather, or an alternative.

You can email Kevin to register your interest in his monthly walks and be added to his walkers' email list.

### American Politics Blog

In January, John Matlin delighted us with a special one-off session responding to our questions on a wide range of American political issues and politicians. John publishes a frequent blog about American politics. You can enter your email address in the *Subscription* section [on this webpage](#) to automatically receive his latest post. Previous blog posts can be read [on this webpage](#).



## Third Age Trust National News & Events

If you haven't done so already, do sign up to receive the monthly **national email newsletter** from the Third Age Trust. It is filled with articles, information, and ideas for staying active and having fun for u3a members across the country. The link to subscribe is [here](#). The national website currently offers twenty **free online learning events** delivered via Zoom by members for members [here](#).

For example, at 1pm on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March join the well-known scientist **Jim Al-Khalili's** talk about *Quantum Biology*. There will be a talk on *The Future of Aging* at 2pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March. *Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners* is every Thursday at 10am. Yoga and Pilates sessions are frequently offered.

## London Region of u3as

**Save the date.** The London Region of U3As is planning to host a **2-day Summer School July 25th-26th 2023** at their usual venue, the St. Bride's Foundation Institute, off Fleet St. Activities will include talks, workshops and guided walks. There will be a wide range of subjects to choose from such as Art, Current Affairs, History, Literature, Music, Sciences and Social Studies. The full programme and booking details will be publicised end of March. A number of ku3a members have attended in past years and found them enjoyable and interesting.

The London Region talks take place on the third Monday afternoons via Zoom each month at 5.30pm for an hour. Click on this link to the [flyer](#) for information about the talks. On Monday March 20<sup>th</sup> the talk, *Changing London*, will look at some of the areas of London which have changed over the centuries.

## Riviera Travel

If you book a holiday **directly with Riviera Travel** and nominate Kenton & District u3a, they will **donate commission** to us on your return, benefiting all our members. You will need to tell the person booking your travel **that you would like them to do this at the time of booking**. The donation can apply to the total basic cost of a group booking, if the person making the booking is a u3a member. When you have returned from your holiday, please confirm the following details to our Treasurer, John Bishop: your booking reference; your date of travel; the cost of your holiday. John will claim the commission on our behalf.

