

Happy New Year ku3a



Our Winter Social on Wednesday 20 December attracted around one hundred members. The Harrow Room was buzzing with chatter. We were treated to an appetising spread of food and the highlight was being entertained by a mini panto from our very own *Play Reading Group* which had us laughing and groaning. Many thanks to those who helped in the planning and on the day to make this such a success.

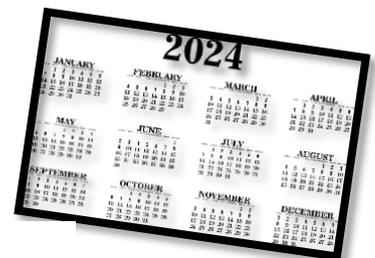
Riviera Travel

As this is a time of year when members might be booking holidays, we remind you that 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 return from your holiday, just confirm the following details to our Treasurer, Anita Maund: your booking reference; your date of travel; the cost of your holiday. Anita will claim the commission on our behalf.



Updated & Extended Diary

The latest diary has the 'when' and 'where' for every group session from now through **to the end of May 2024, including some room and date alterations**. 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: <http://www.kentondistrictu3a.org/diary.pdf>.



Warning: Interest groups leaders will endeavour to notify known group members of any last-minute changes. However, if you are planning to join an interest group for the first time, we recommend you check the date and meeting location with the group facilitator/organiser detailed in the ku3a diary.

Monthly Meeting Talks



In November our *Creative Writing Group* delivered a tremendous presentation of their work. Each member's talent was apparent as they read their intriguing, entertaining and skilfully constructed story or poem on a diverse range of topics, delivered with conviction. Marian Rummer's leadership and slick organisational skills meant the process ran very smoothly. The readings were enhanced by the audience being able to read the texts on screen; special thanks to Peter Rummer for adeptly arranging this. We also had a superb display of paintings by the *Watercolour Art Group*. Each painting was skilfully

executed, and the diversity of subject matter showed how imaginative each member of the group has been in producing such intricate detail. Thank you to Angela and Richard Rumsey for arranging the display to make sure that each painting was shown to full advantage.

After the November monthly meeting we held a cake sale to raise funds for Macmillan cancer support. A variety of homemade cakes and savouries were there to tempt us. Members were generous and the sale raised a pleasing £311. Many thanks to Viv Spiteri for organising this.



On Wednesday 24 January at 10am we start the New Year with a talk by one of our members, Herbie Goldberg, on *The History of Recording Sound*. On 28 February John Cooper will talk on *Further Stories of Kenwood House*.

If you have heard a good speaker elsewhere or know of anyone who would be willing to deliver a talk, please contact Adele Setton

Exploring London Visits



On 15 November, we visited the headquarters of the International Maritime Organisation, by Lambeth Bridge. The IMO is the United Nations body with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of pollution by ships across the World. We had a fascinating tour of the highlights of the building, including the brilliant view from the top, the wonderful art works donated by member states and learning about the work of the Organisation, which we had been rather ignorant of before.

On December 15 we had a tour at the London Museum of Water & Steam near Kew Bridge, site of the former Kew Bridge waterworks. Our enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide showed us the large collection of stationary steam pumping engines, explaining their history and how they worked and the role the Kew Bridge Waterworks played in providing London's water. Afterwards nearly all of us had lunch together.



On **Monday 29 January** we are having a one-hour tour of **Southwark Cathedral**, led by a trained guide to see the cathedral and its key features and learn about its 900-year rich and colourful history and how the cathedral has shaped the community of Bankside. The tour starts at 2.30pm and we meet at Preston Road Station at 1.40pm. The charge is £8 each. Please contact Louise Bennett if you would like to come.

Winter Quiz

We are holding a quiz open to all ku3a members on Friday 19 January starting at 10.30am in the Masonic Centre bar lounge. Ken Sinclair will be the quiz master and will provide six rounds of questions and a marathon to exercise our brains in a fun way. Refreshments will be provided. We will be organising people into teams of about the same size, so you don't need to form your own. Whether you are a pub quiz regular or new to quizzes you are very welcome to join in. If you are going to come, please let Ken know as places are limited and he needs to plan. His details are in the diary.



New Groups and Members' Wish List

We are always interested in starting and developing new groups. As you will appreciate, a new group needs enough interested members, but the key component is finding someone with the interest and commitment to facilitate a group. Please let Peter Rummer or Louise Bennett know if you are interested.

NEW Photography Group

Cyril Brazil has kindly offered to get a monthly group started with **two Tuesday afternoon sessions at 2pm on 6 February and 5 March**. The aim of these two sessions is to see which members are interested in meeting regularly. Cyril says, "I have been an active, keen photographer from 10 years of age. I still love cameras and taking photographs and I would love to share my photographic interests with you. I am well aware that not everyone wants to become an enthusiast, but most of us enjoy having a record of important occasions and events with our families and friends.



The purpose of this group is to help you take better digital pictures on whatever device you use. Most of us have a *super-duper* camera in our mobile phones. Some may have a compact camera stashed away somewhere and a few may even have a single lens reflex camera. It doesn't matter what you use (as long as it is digital), it is how you use it to get better photographs that counts. The sessions will not be too technical. So, whatever your level of photography I hope we can all enjoy a few sessions together and share our knowledge." You can contact Cyril by email – details are in the ku3a diary.

NEW Jewellery Making Group



Sara Maier is starting a monthly group at her home making jewellery using paper, fabric and plastic. **The first meeting is at 2pm on Wednesday 31 January**. Sara will demonstrate the techniques and members will be able to use their imagination to experiment with different materials and have fun making their own jewellery items. Subsequent meetings will be on the fourth Wednesdays each month, that is 28 February, 27 March, etc. If you are interested in joining the group, or would like further information, then please contact Sara – her details in the ku3a diary.

Interest Group News

Interest group co-ordinators: Louise Bennett and Peter Rummer, email ku3aGroups@outlook.com

Magic of Musicals

While Mike Morrow had a 'health break', Ruth Levere kindly stepped up and arranged the screening of three full-length musical films in Mike's Thursday morning slots. We were able to see *Sunshine on Leith* (2013), which includes the song "I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles)", *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1954) with its superb dancing and Doris Day in *Calamity Jane* (1953).



Mike will return on Thursday 4 January at 10am and is looking forward to seeing us again. He has put together a first session for 2024 with plenty of upbeat selections – many will be well-known and chosen from both traditional & recent films and stage shows. There may also be a few excerpts that will hopefully surprise you. Several of our requests will be included along with clips from genres closely allied to Broadway, West End & Hollywood. Do keep those requests coming for Mike.

MOTO - 'Members On Their Own' group



This group is for people living on their own who would like to meet up informally with other members who are also on their own, especially at weekends when things are quieter. MOTO now has more than 25 members registered on its dedicated WhatsApp Group. If you wish to be added, please contact Peter Turner or Viv Spiteri so you can be included in the invitations. Members typically offer to host a tea or coffee session in their homes or organise a meal out and others are then invited to join via WhatsApp. Dates, when known in advance, are added to our website diary but the WhatsApp group enables us to do things at short notice as and when we can fit them in.

During November Pam Edkins arranged an excellent carvery lunch at her club and on another evening, three of us attended a symphony concert at the Royal Festival Hall, arranged by Peter. In December Zsuzsanna hosted ten of us at her home for a coffee morning where we enjoyed chatting and reminiscing about our most memorable Christmases. We couldn't find time for a December restaurant outing but hope to do so again in January. Peter will be trying to organise more concert and theatre visits when he has the offer of affordable tickets. There is also a possible matinee trip to the ballet in January coming up so keep your eye on the WhatsApp group chat. We welcome members' suggestions for events and get-togethers.

Art History

Moving on from our exploration of 18th century art last term, Jennifer Mills will continue into the 19th century with this term's theme – **British Art in London Galleries** – on second and fourth Friday mornings at 10am in the Harrow Room. Again, we will look briefly at how various London galleries came into existence and then use each gallery as a springboard to look at a particular artist or artistic genre. Jan 12: The Victoria and Albert Museum – John Constable and the English Landscape; Jan 26: The National Gallery – JMW Turner and Seascapes; Feb 9: The National Portrait Gallery – Thomas Lawrence, John Singer Sargent and G F Watts; Feb 23: The Tate Gallery – Victorian Realism; March 8: The Guildhall Art Gallery – The Pre-Raphaelites; March 22: The Imperial War Museum – War Art.



Monthly Walks

On 26 November we did the **City Churches 'western walk'**, one of three City Church walks through old London's streets and lanes which were worth doing for that reason alone. Most of the 16 churches we passed were designed by Sir Christopher Wren and a couple had associations with Shakespeare.



Our next walk is on Sunday 28 January in the old **London Docklands** with a chance to see the historic buildings as well as all the changes since the 1960s. Highlights will include St Katherine's Dock, Marble Quay, Wapping High Street, Wapping Old Stairs, St George in the East church, King Henry's Stairs and several historic pubs. We meet at Preston Road

Station that morning. Please do not just turn up but register with Kevin O’Doherty in advance to come on the walk. You can join his mailing list to get more details.

Morality Matters

Members debate the issues behind the month’s topic. Everyone is welcome to come along and take part, especially if you have relevant background information that might stimulate debate. We have had interesting and varied subjects. Contact Ken Sinclair if you are willing to lead a topic one month. For our 6 December meeting Jack Friend asked the question *Religion and Morality - bedfellows or strangers?* We then had a lively discussion on whether religion and morality are indeed related and dependent on each other or are they wholly separate. On Wednesday 3 January at 2pm Ann John will lead a discussion on ***Politicians: Is their motive to feather their nests or to serve the public?*** Come along to the Wembley Room at 2pm to join the debate. On 7 February it will be John Bishop who will guide us through a discussion on ***the morality of abortion.***



Healthy Living



At our November meeting we considered alternative and complementary therapies. Members shared their experience of acupuncture, Reiki, reflexology, chiropractic treatments and herbal remedies. We looked at the origins of modern-day prescribed medicines and the availability of herbal remedies in store and online, noting the dangers of unregulated imports. In December we discussed the healthy and hazardous aspects of the festive season, splitting into groups to consider the positive and negative benefits. We all partook in seasonal refreshments – some of which were healthy! Thanks to Viv Spiteri for providing our refreshments each month. Our meeting on Tuesday 16 January at 10am will be a topical “healthy living” quiz. On 20 February we look at diabetes, sharing our knowledge and experience.

Classical Music Appreciation



In November, Herbie Goldberg examined the life and works of Edvard Greig – arguably Norway’s greatest composer – whose Piano Concerto and music for Peer Gynt are popular favourites. We’ll remain in the cold climate of Scandinavia as we move into 2024. On 11 January at 2pm we will turn to the Swedish composer **Wilhelm Stenhammar** (left). He is hardly known today but his striking themes and masterly orchestration will make you wonder why his works are so rarely heard in the concert hall, although the recording industry has served him well. We will continue on 8 February with another Swedish



composer **Hugo Alfven** (right). Once again, his name may be unfamiliar, but he was decidedly a ‘one hit wonder’ and when you hear the hit, Herbie guarantees that it will be familiar to virtually everyone present. Of course, we will be exploring some of his other works, which have been unfairly neglected. We will turn south on 8 February, to Denmark and the music of Carl Nielsen. Born six months earlier than Sibelius, his powerfully life-affirming works are in stark contrast to his Finnish contemporary’s often gloomy, introspective and ice-bound landscapes.

Scrabble Group

This Scrabble group meets in Priscilla Dale’s home usually on the first Monday afternoon in the month. The next meetings are on Monday 8 January and 5 February. There is also a Rummikub and Scrabble group which meets at the Masonic Centre on the first Tuesday and second Wednesday of the month.





Jazz Appreciation

In November Ken Sinclair looked at **Trad Jazz Revivalists** from the 1950s to the modern day so Trad Jazz fans experienced a particular treat. This seemed to go down so well with the members present that Ken will be presenting **part two of the same subject** with the accent on the British revivalists at our next meeting. That will be on Tuesday 23 January at 2pm in the Wembley Room.

Watercolour Art

The watercolour art group was delighted to put some of its work on display at the November monthly meeting (see some of it in the photo). The group hopes that will encourage more members to come along and give it a go. You only need a box of watercolours, paper and a pencil. Our next sessions are at 2pm on Tuesday 9 and 23 January in the bar lounge. **If anyone knows a teacher or capable water colourist who could provide some instruction, Lyn Dantas would love to hear from you.**



Knitting group

The knitting group is for people with all levels of ability from complete beginners to those who have been knitting for many years and, under Francine Endleman's guidance, is great fun. Members are now bringing their projects to show the group how they are progressing and to inspire others. A WhatsApp Group has now been set up and members are able to upload photos of finished items for the group to view. Some lovely examples have also been brought in, proving there is a great deal of hidden talent waiting to be shared! Why not come and join them for a relaxing afternoon on the third

Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is on 16 January at 2pm in the Northwick Room.

English Literature

Having looked at some of the poems of three of the most popular "poets of our time", Betjeman, Causley and Hughes, for our next series of sessions, starting on Tuesday 27 February at 10am, David Harris is going to move on to the poet who may well be the most popular of the lot, **Philip Larkin**. In a survey in 2003 conducted by the Poetry Book Society, Larkin was chosen as the "Nation's Best Loved Poet" and in 2008, the "Times" named Larkin as the greatest British post-war writer. Indeed, three of his poems featured in the "Nation's Top 100 Poems" as voted for, in 1995, by viewers of the BBC's "Bookworm". We'll have four sessions exploring Larkin's poetry and David will be selecting from two of his most popular anthologies, "The Whitsun Weddings" and "High Windows". David says "If you'd like to find out what all the fuss is about, please join us for a convivial and, I hope, enlightening series of sessions. And if you've never participated in our group, well, what better time to join."



German Conversation

The group now has seven regular members under the guidance of Sabine Palmer. We meet at 2pm on the second Friday of each month in Sara's home. At the meeting each person speaks in turn about the theme of



the day in a few sentences, speaking according to their level of ability in German. The sessions are about conversing and developing our level, less about perfection, more about increasing our confidence to voice an opinion. The 8 December meeting theme was Christmas traditions. June had experienced the traditional Christmas at her mother-in-law's home. Valerie reported how Christmas was spent at Berlin. Sara talked about Hanukkah. Marion explained how she had reassembled an old artificial Tannchen.

Helen shared her adultfest Christmas preparations. Sabine described the Christmas of her childhood. Our next meeting will be on the 12 January when our theme will be **a favourite object** of any kind.

French Conversation

French Conversation, led by Brigitte Levin who is herself French, meets on the first Thursday afternoon of the month at 1.30pm so 4 January is the next session. Participants bring a short piece (maximum of 250 words) to the meeting which they read in French and translate. After a break for refreshments, we have time to chat in French or discuss in more detail one of the topics read out earlier. We do our best to accommodate those who are proficient in French as well as those who are less so.



Cookery



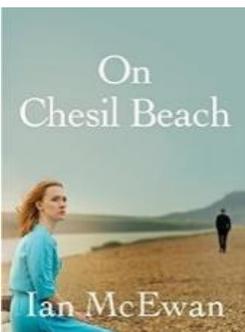
Eleven members enjoyed our Christmas meal out at Tian Hu on 15 December, deciding not to meet on December 28th as it was too close to Christmas. The Thursday 11 and 25 January meetings will be concentrating on a lower calorie menu to try and help with possible weight gains over the festive season. A chicken dish and a low-calorie pasta soup are planned. Viv Spiteri has building works planned so February and March cookery gatherings may have to be revised.

Play Reading

To prepare for a true British tradition, under Viv Gould's brilliant leadership we spent our November and December sessions rehearsing for our debut at the winter social – *Cinderalfred* – a potted panto parody! This



surprised, and delighted, all those who were fortunate enough to be there and we had great fun putting it together. On Monday 15 January at 1.30pm we will be reading *Cash on Delivery* by Michael Cooney. This fast-paced British farce concerns a con artist who has duped the welfare authorities for years. He's sent scrambling when welfare investigators show up. A hilarious comedy full of mistaken identities, slamming doors, and a con that spirals out of control.



Book Club

In December we met convivially in Zsuzsanna's house to talk about the many books of Ian McEwan. We all enjoyed his books, praising the variety of well-researched and unusual themes, the skilful construction and the beautifully written descriptive passages. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, 22 February in the Wembley Room at 2pm when we will be discussing the novels of **Robert Harris**, famed for his works of historic fiction.

Creative Writing

There are usually about 15 people at our lively twice-monthly creative writing sessions. We have recently welcomed visitors who are deciding whether to join us permanently. Some of us are still writing on the subject "All Change". Other topics that have led to interesting pieces are "Life on the Moon" and "That's What Humans Do". Some members of the group are considering sending a contribution to the u3a national poetry competition, on the theme "What If....". We much enjoyed the opportunity to share some of our work at the November Monthly Meeting. It is always gratifying to have a wider audience for our efforts. Our first meetings of 2024 will be on Wednesdays 3 and 20 January at 10am. The theme is "A New Year: A New Beginning".



Family History Group



The Family History group meets twice a month on Friday afternoons. One group member did not know much about her late husband's grandfather and so bought his birth certificate only to see he had no father listed on it, his mother was barely 15 years old when she had him and he was brought up by his grandparents on their farm. We subsequently found his mother married at age 20 but left her son in the care of his grandparents. Most of this information was found on the 1871 Census. If you would like to join the group, please speak with Sylvia Thompson.

Film Review Club

In November we watched and discussed one of Cole Porter's most well-known musicals *Kiss me Kate* (1953); a musical comedy version of Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew", especially enjoying the many well-known songs. In December we watched the original classic film noir 1950 Billy Wilder film *Sunset Boulevard*, appreciating Gloria Swanson's tragic portrayal of the deluded Norma Desmond.

On Thursday January 18th at 1.30pm on the cinema sized screen in the Harrow Room Ruth intends to show the film *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003) which stars Diane Lane. It is a romantic comedy and she thought at this time of year it would be good to review a lighter film which takes place in a glorious setting. After each film is over, we pause for refreshments and then share our thoughts about what we made of what we watched.



Gardening Club



Some 20 members of the gardening group gathered on the 29 November for a pre-Christmas get-together. Everyone contributed to the lunch, and we had an absolute feast! As Freda Raingold is having surgery in mid-January, Dick Nathan has kindly agreed to step in whilst she recovers.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 24th January at 2pm when we will be discussing what to do with the plant presents given at Christmas; attempting to forecast the date of the last London frost in Spring 2024; whether you can grow your own coffee in Kenton and gardening jobs for January. Freda and Dick hope members (new and old!) will show their support.

What are your Memories?

At our December session we shared many memories including, things we don't see anymore (such as black & white TV sets) and our school days. On Wednesday 10 January at 10am we'll be sharing memories of New Year's resolutions we've made in the past and on 14 February we'll be discussing our childhoods and schooldays (if you have a few photos you can pass round we'd love to see them). New and occasional members are very welcome to come along and have fun sharing their memories.



Rummikub & Scrabble

The popular, friendly and gently competitive Rummikub and Scrabble Group continues to thrive. Players and learners of either game are most welcome to join us in the bar lounge. We usually meet at 10am on the first Tuesday and third Wednesday of every month, so Tuesday 2 and Wednesday 17 January and Tuesday 6 February.

Table Tennis

Table tennis is enormous fun and great exercise. The group plays singles and doubles and should have a third table to play on during January. The group is not aimed at beginners, although 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. The next sessions are on Wednesday 3 and 17 January at 2pm, then Wednesday 7 February in the Harrow Room for a couple of hours, though you can drop in or leave to suit.



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, come along to our lively group. We meet at 10am every Monday (except public holidays). If you would like to take the chair and manage a session so you get to choose what is covered and how, Howard Goldstein – who oversees the group – will be delighted to add you to the schedule. Many thanks to Evelyn Berg and Margaret Ben-Nathan for providing our refreshments – such a central part of our gatherings.

Sign Supported English Course

We have completed two of our eight-session beginners' course of *Sign Supported English* classes and are now starting to learn something about how to communicate with a deaf person.

As well as testing our memories, miming skills and finger flexibility as we learn new signs, we have fun mastering what we've been shown by our patient teacher, Kay Jennings.



Third Age Trust National News & Events

As a member of Kenton u3a you are automatically a member of the national body, the Third Age Trust, which includes receiving the Third Age Matters magazine. If you haven't done so already, do sign up to get the monthly **national email newsletter** from the Third Age Trust. It is filled with information, advice 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 many **free online learning events** delivered via Zoom by u3a members for u3a members [here](#). For example, *How to better Insulate your Home* on 4 January at 2pm, *Exploring Common Themes in Faith* on 8 January at 10am, monthly *laughter yoga* with a January session on 10 January at 10am and *Chinese wand exercises for mobility and fitness* on 12 January at 10am

London Region of u3as

Look out for information and updates on talks, study days, workshops, concerts and other events taking place in the London area on the *London Region of u3as* website. The latest monthly talks programme via Zoom on Mondays at 5.30pm is: 8th January - Neville Lyons: Food for Thought, **5th February - Herbie Goldberg: Louis Moreau Gottschalk**, 4th March - Terry Lloyd: The Shaping of Eastern Europe. To view the flyer with further information about these talks and also the archive of past talks see [here](#)

St Luke's Hospice Stamp Appeal

St Luke's Hospice is appealing for any unwanted foreign or British stamps (but not regular 1st and 2nd class stamps), old stamp albums and first-day covers. Kenton u3a member, Vivienne Bishop, is collecting contributions for the hospice. If you have anything you wish to donate, then please email

ku3agroups@outlook.com and it will be forwarded to Vivienne. Donations can also be dropped off at any St Luke's shop, who will pass them to the *stamps team* to sort and package for sale to raise funds.

