

# Newsletter

October 2022

u3a  
in Kennet

## Common News

**Annual General Meeting and Kennet u3a Talk:** We will be holding our AGM on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October at 2.15pm at the Kennet Valley Hall and on Zoom. It will be followed by a Kennet u3a Talk by Sibella Lang on the "Power behind the Veil". 'Do you drive? Go abroad alone? Work or party with men? Do your children live with you after a divorce? This lecture looks at the extraordinary drama unfolding in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as women take up new positions in the social, cultural, economic and political life of the country of which they have been a passive sector for so many years. Sibella will map the historical context of the female position from the early days of the oil boom in the 1960's to the present day. She will consider different aspects of women's life and ask some urgent questions such as why, as the Kingdom opens its doors to the West, were 12 women academics, one of whom is a good friend of the lecturer detained without trial in Riyadh?'



Sibella Laing has lived and worked most of her married life in the Middle East, enabling her to develop an extensive understanding of, and love for, the history, peoples, and societies of that region. After a history degree at Cambridge University, she and her husband studied Arabic at the Middle East Centre for Arabic Studies in Lebanon. On arrival in Jeddah in 1973, she joined the British Council, after which in Riyadh 20 years later she became an English Language trainer, lecturer and public speaker. She is now a registered Guide for the Institute of Tourist Guiding, in French and Arabic as well as English. She has continued to be in touch with Saudi friends, including those now at odds with the new regime, and to return to the Gulf whenever possible.

## Planned Events – details in main text

**26<sup>th</sup> October:**  
AGM and Kennet u3a Talk

**2<sup>nd</sup> November at 10:45:**  
Coffee Exchange

**9<sup>th</sup> November:**  
u3a Day and 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of u3a in Kennet

**Spring 2023:**  
Special Interest Day

Here are the links to our web page [u3ainkennet.org.uk](http://u3ainkennet.org.uk) and Facebook page [www.facebook.com/u3ainkennet](https://www.facebook.com/u3ainkennet)

*Please "control and click" on links to visit suggested webpages*

**October and November Coffee Exchange:** Because of the AGM, the “October” session will be held a week later on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 10:45am. It will be at a new “permanent” location, the Marlborough Town Hall.



Our speaker will be Sophia Bentley on “Salisbury Cathedral”. Sophia is a volunteer floor guide at Salisbury Cathedral, where she enjoys meeting visitors as they explore the Cathedral and its surroundings, and all it has to offer. There is so much history to learn about, and on a guided tour it is possible to be shown things, and be told many interesting stories about the architecture, the many different tombs, windows and of course our 1215 copy of Magna Carta. In her talk to the u3a,

Sophia would like to take you on a similar tour as she gives plenty of background history to the building of the Cathedral, highlighting particular points of interest which you can see, as well as pointing out any links with the Marlborough area and Salisbury Cathedral. Sophia’s talk will be illustrated with some beautiful photos, alongside some useful tips about planning a visit of your own.



We will return to our normal timing of the last Thursday of the month from the end of November with a talk by Eileen Hill on the Wansdyke on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November, again at the Town Hall.

**u3a Day and 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of u3a in Kennet:** This is now to be held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November at the Town Hall. The purpose of holding the event is targeted at increasing awareness of u3a in the general public, demonstrating what we do and, in turn, helping to recruit new members. The poster for the new date is included below.

Jeff Hide would be grateful to hear from those who were to represent their group on the day and to whom he wrote, asking for confirmation of their attendance. There is only a short time to go and he needs to know that we have enough members in the hall to cover all our groups failing which replacements will be needed. Please confirm that you will or will not be attending. Of course all 574 members from all 57 groups are encouraged too to attend and bring a neighbour or friend who might be interested in u3a

**Special Interest Day:** As a consequence of the recent death of our Queen, our Special Interest Day was postponed and is planned to take place in Spring 2023. The subject will still be “*The Future of the Media*”. More information is to follow once plans are confirmed.

**Third Age Trust Annual Meeting:** The annual meeting of the Third Age Trust (the national umbrella organisation for u3as throughout the country) was held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October. Proposals to increase the fees paid by individual u3as were not passed. A link to the annual report of the Third Age Trust can be found on the National u3a web site at [u3a.org.uk/agm-2022](https://u3a.org.uk/agm-2022).

**Christmas Coffee Exchange Party:** For the past two years we have arranged a Christmas Party on Zoom in lieu of a Christmas Coffee Exchange. It consisted of readings, poems, music played and sung. It was possible through the efforts of a few members who were prepared to perform each year.

Jeff Hide is seeking members' views on the subject of a Christmas Party style Coffee Exchange this year and he should be grateful for your views. Any offer to assist by organising or performing would also be welcomed as well as thoughts about face to face or Zoom systems.

## Group News

**Groups Leaders:** This is just a reminder for those group leaders who have not yet responded to Jeff Hide's email, dated 3 October, regarding a GL's meeting, to let him have your views on the suggestion. Over half of GLs have responded positively at the time of writing. He can be contacted at [groups@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:groups@u3ainkennet.org.uk).

**Short Mat Bowls Group:** The Group will be starting again on Friday 4th November. They play weekly from 1:45pm to 3:45pm in the Marlborough Leisure Centre. New players are very welcome. Bowls are available to use at the Leisure Centre. Please wear flat soled shoes or trainers to preserve the mats that are played on. Tuition is available for new players. Short Mat Bowls is good fun, easy to learn, but is always a challenge as you play with, or against, different players each week. The season continues through to the end of March, but is not available during school holidays. Contact John Lafford on [short.mat@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:short.mat@u3ainkennet.org.uk)

**Quiz Group:** The Quiz Group had their first meeting on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> Oct after the summer break. They are still meeting on Zoom with teams of 3 or 4 participants out into 'Zoom rooms' for each of the rounds. They have a strong core of about 10-15 regular contestants but are always looking for more. Their main aim is to live up to the u3a's motto of 'Learn, Laugh, Live' which they say they regularly achieve. If you would like to join the Group, please contact the Group Leader and quizmaster, Mike Morison, on 01249 891093 or [quizzing@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:quizzing@u3ainkennet.org.uk)

**Aviation Group:** The Aviation Group had their first meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> Oct at The Roebuck on London Road where the subject discussed was the activity of the pilots when taking a passenger aircraft across the Atlantic. They have also recently visited an old WWII airfield near Cricklade and had presentations on the Apache helicopter and the Schneider Trophy. At these meetings, they meet at venues where a drink and a meal can be taken as well. If you would like to learn more or share some of your aviation experiences with this friendly group, please contact the Group Leader, Mike Morison, on 01249 891093 or [aviation@u3ainkennet.org.uk](mailto:aviation@u3ainkennet.org.uk)

**Book Groups:** Of necessity, our various book groups need to be limited in the number of members able to attend and, in consequence, places are often few and far between. However, Jeff is pleased to tell you that a new book club entitled 'Books' is being formed and there are a few places left if you wish to join it. The venue, day of the week and times for meetings will be decided by the group once founded and the first meeting will be in Marlborough on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November starting at 2.30pm. Get a place before you're too late! Please let Jeff know ASAP if you would like to join.

**Petanque:** As with Book Groups, the nature of some other groups necessitates a limited number of members. One of these was Petanque and so we have started another Petanque group which is filling up,

although some places still exist. Our Petanque groups meet at the Three Tuns pub at Great Bedwyn on Wednesday mornings. If you do not know what Petanque, aka Boules, is, feel free to give Jeff Hide a call.

**Exploring English:** This group is re-starting in November, after the Covid suspension, and there are now spare places. The group looks at reference works, old words, new words, the reform of spelling, the jargon of the film industry and banking, building and gardening. In short, the members enjoy every aspect of this quirky language of ours. Contact Jeff Hide if you are interested

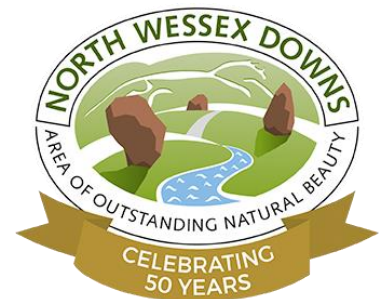
**Cycling Group:** The Group is going far afield. Here they are half way through a 40 mile ride from Bath to Bristol and back, along an old railway track route. Two very good cafes are found on route, which of course is an important aspect of the rides.



**Art and Art History:** The Group had its first session after its summer break under the new Group Leader Yvonne Cunnane. She gave a talk about David Hockney. The Group meets in the Friends Meeting House which has proved to be an excellent venue for Group meetings. Worth thinking about if you need more space

## More News

**North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty:** The NWDAONB has announced that their Annual Forum which will take place at Marlborough Golf Club on the afternoon and into the early evening of 25<sup>th</sup> November. They invite you to join them for a reception to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the designation of the North Wessex Downs as a protected landscape. Together with a range of speakers, including Lord Benyon and Professor Tom Oliver of Reading University, they will look forward to the challenges facing us over the next 50 years. There will be the opportunity to take part in a dark skies event to round off the day. Find out more at [northwessexdowns.org.uk](http://northwessexdowns.org.uk) to make a booking



**Prof Sir Muir Gray:** Further to Sir Muir's presentation at our Kennet Talk on 20<sup>th</sup> July and the evaluation programme currently underway with some u3a in Kennet volunteers, a copy of an article in the Daily Telegraph on 3<sup>rd</sup> October can be found at our u3a in Kennet web site at: [it-is-never-too-early-and-never-too-late-to-reduce-your-risk-of-dementia.pdf](http://it-is-never-too-early-and-never-too-late-to-reduce-your-risk-of-dementia.pdf)



**New u3a in Kennet Members:** We welcome the following new members, who have joined u3a in Kennet since the list was published in September.

*Iain Goodfellow, Gina Cooke, John Macve and Christine Woodhead*

# u3a in Kennet 30th Anniversary

*Make the most of life once you're no longer in full time work by exploring new ideas, skills and interests with your local u3a.*



**Come and discover more on  
Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 \***  
from 10.00am to 3.00pm at  
Marlborough Town Hall

Here in Marlborough and the surrounding area we have around 600 members with over 60 interest groups covering indoor and outdoor activities, learning and fun – from Art History to Wine Appreciation, Languages to Table Tennis.

Start a new hobby or improve and enjoy an existing one. Meet new people, make new friends.

We will be exhibiting what we do and will be on hand to answer your questions. Come and join us.

Look out for us and see us on  
[www.u3ainkennet.org.uk](http://www.u3ainkennet.org.uk).

*\* Rescheduled from 14<sup>th</sup> September*

u3a in Kennet Charity No 1028680 Established 1992

# u3a 40th Anniversary

u3a in Kennet Committee



David Hammond  
*Chairman*



Jill Turner  
*Vice Chair &  
Charity Contact*



Annette Weaver  
*Hon Sec.*



Kiaran Roughan  
*Treasurer*



Mike Morison  
*Membership*



Jan Lillywhite  
*Social Events*



John Martin  
*Newsletter*



Jeff Hide  
*Groups*



David Lacey  
*Speaker Sec.*



Tom Horwitz  
*Website*