

Newsletter

September 2023

u3a
in Kennet

News Updates

General News: Welcome to our September Newsletter. Following the summer holidays our thoughts turn to the autumn and the programme of u3a events we are planning over the next few months. It was good to see many of you at our Open Day on 13th September at the Town Hall to hear the Mayor Nicholas Fogg, MBE and the Town Crier Mike Tupman open our event and visit the Group displays. We were pleased to recruit 24 new members on the Day and a full report is included later in the Newsletter. Thank you to Jeff Hide, Vice Chair, the Executive Committee members and to our many Group Leaders and Really Useful Group volunteers who supported the event.

AGM: Our next major event is the Annual General Meeting and Kennet u3a Talk from 2.15pm on 25th October 2023 at Kennet Valley Hall. The AGM is our opportunity to reflect on the past year and to elect up to 3 new Committee members. Full details about our AGM will be sent separately to all members along with voting and nomination forms for return by 18th October 2023 to Annette Weaver, Honorary Secretary. Please consider joining the Committee as a member to support your u3a. Full training will be given. Please contact chair@u3ainkennet.org.uk for details.

Following the AGM Robin Nelson will present the Talk on the subject of 'Great Musical Moments' and it promises to be a fascinating session with live musical accompaniments. Further information is included in the Newsletter. We look forward to seeing you at the AGM and Talk which will be followed by tea and cake and an opportunity to catch up with other u3a members.

Upcoming Events – details in main text

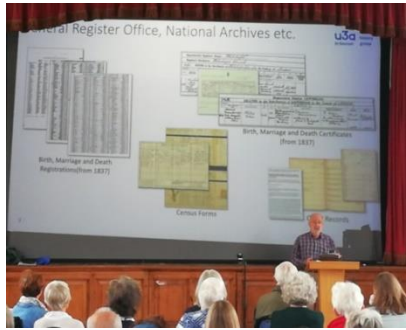
25th Oct at 2:15pm:
AGM and Kennet u3a Talk
Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge

Here are the links to our web page u3ainkennet.org.uk and Facebook page www.facebook.com/u3ainkennet

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

Please send items for the October Newsletter to: newsletter@u3ainkennet.org.uk by 15th October 2023. Members are invited to send contributions too.

Coffee Exchange: Tony Globe, the History group, gave us a fascinating Coffee Exchange. The intriguing title adopted at a few weeks old and so his were for him a truly revealing with the twists and turns of the story the streets of London. During the talk, some notes so that we could begin notes are set out below:



Group Leader of the new Family talk on his family at the August arose from the fact that he was investigations into his birth family story. We were all carried along across Continents and through Tony promised to give us all investigating our own stories. His

1. *Work backwards in time:* It's easier to work methodically from a fact such as the date of birth or a marriage of a relative than to try and trace down from a person you don't know much about.
2. *Ask the family:* Ask other relatives what they remember about their families. Make a note of any nicknames or name changes. Ask them to tell you any family stories, what their ancestors did for a living, or what they looked like. Ask if they have any photos, letters or documents relating to your ancestors.
3. *Take notes:* You never know what information will prove useful in your research so get into the habit of taking notes on what you have looked for and what you found. There are many useful computer software packages that will help you keep your records in an orderly manner and help draw up pedigrees and family groups sheets, so you know who you are dealing with.
4. *Check out the Web:* The Internet can be a useful tool for contacting relatives and finding data. The Society of Genealogists website has a lot of information to get you started. Additionally, the GENUKI website has lots of free information and links to local experts and sources for the United Kingdom and Ireland. Of course, many records themselves are now online at such sites as: Ancestry, Find My Past, The Genealogist or My Heritage.
5. *Meet other family historians:* Family Historians are an incredible help to each other. There is a network of local societies with regular meetings up and down the country. Here you can meet like-minded people with the same interests and local expertise. The Society of Genealogists prelive.sog.org.uk is the largest genealogical society with a remarkable library and education programme. Details of local societies can be found through the Federation of Family History Societies www.ffhs.org.uk.

Please note that there will not be Coffee Exchange session in either September or October due to the Open Day and our AGM and Kennet u3a Talk.

u3a Open Day: There is a Latin phrase, Omne trium perfectum, which suggests that things that come in threes are perfect or complete. We often remember three bad things that happen and the three good things remain a distant memory. Not so last Wednesday when the third u3a in Kennet Open Day took place. Our Open Days started in the middle of Covid and were then curtailed legally. Last year was very good and this time, again, it all went well thanks mainly to the enthusiasm, energy and determination of all those who supported their groups and helped to organise. Not least was the Really Useful Group led by Alision Dewar, which provided much needed and appreciated light refreshments all day from about 9am through to 3pm. This Group is indeed Really Useful! The Mayor of Marlborough, Councillor Nick Fogg M.B.E. formally opened the event with a short speech after being introduced by Town Crier Mike Tupman full of his usual good humour, ad lib jokes and much gravitas. This year we had the pleasure of hearing our Recorder Ensembles playing live as well as seeing an electric cycle and a table tennis



table that automatically fired balls towards volunteer players. The odd ball even found itself reaching display boards. The video film showing our groups, some in action was shown throughout the Day. It was compiled by Committee members Hamzah who provides our technical support, and was seen by about two hundred people who were present during the day. All our groups were represented by posters on display boards set on tables and our membership secretary, Mike Morison, welcomed 24 new members. Videos and photographs were taken by Hamzah, David Hammond and Neil Goodwin of 'Marlborough News' where you can see his full report here: marlborough.news/u3a-open-day. Our National u3a Office has been informed our celebrations with interest. Well done all who attended and thank you.

Kennet u3a Talk: This will be held on 25th October to follow the AGM which starts at 2.15pm at Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. It is called **Great Musical Moments** and will be presented by Robin Nelson, former Head of Music at Marlborough College, currently Musical Director of the Swindon Choral Society, a composer and renowned as an ornithologist. We have all wondered what eight records we would take if we ever appeared on Desert Island Discs: a song which triggers a personal memory, a work that can bring solace to the lonely soul, a passage which encapsulates a mood or feeling that words cannot express.... Robin takes the exercise a stage further, in trying to pinpoint the exact moment in a wonderful piece of music that really gets you—the final top note in “Nessun dorma” perhaps, or the ringing cries of the three Rhinemaidens:—“Rhinegold, Rhinegold!”— In the opening scene of Wagner’s epic Ring Cycle. From Bach to Britten, Handel to Strauss, eleven inspirational passages are considered and their special merits highlighted in sound and score extracts.

Storage facilities: Your u3a has various items of equipment to support our meetings: poster display boards, our feather flag and the banners which we used at our Open Day, projector stand etc. At present these items are stored by Committee members in their homes and garages and taken to events as necessary. Ideally the items would be kept together in one place near to where they are needed: principally in Marlborough. Can you help? Do you live in Marlborough and have space in your garage or garden shed where we could store some of our items? We need clean, dry and secure site (or sites) and we would arrange to collect the items and return them after use at our events. Ideally we do not want to

use our charity funds to pay for commercial storage if possible. Please contact chair@u3ainkennet.org.uk if you may be able to help with this requirement.

Group News

Day Trip Group: There will be a day trip to Arundel on Thursday 19th October. Arundel is a great destination for a day trip. The main attraction will always be the castle, and there are many other interesting sights and activities to fill a day of sightseeing. Arundel Castle takes about two hours to visit; one hour for the grounds and a second hour for the staterooms. After lunch in the town centre, you could visit the Cathedral, Saint Nicholas Church and browse the antique shops. Later you could take a stroll along the River Arun, visiting Arundel wetlands (the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust) or hire a rowing boat at Swanbourne Lake. The coach will pick up in Marlborough (08.30am) and Pewsey (08.50am), and the journey to Arundel will take around 2 hours. The coach will leave Arundel at 16.30 to return to Pewsey/Marlborough. The coach fare is £18. For more information or to book, please email daytrip@u3ainkennet.org.uk or phone Enid Mitchell on 01672 811711.

Short Mat Bowls: With autumn approaching and the move to more indoor activities, we would like to remind you that Short Mat Bowls will again be running on Friday afternoons from October to April in the Leisure Centre in Marlborough. In October 2022 we were invited along by John Lafford, the Group Leader, to try out this activity and had a very enjoyable time. John was really helpful and encouraging and spent the whole session teaching us the basics of this (new for us) sport. We discovered some hitherto unknown capabilities and left the session feeling quite pleased with ourselves. If you are interested to try out this new activity or to return to the sport, then please contact John. Players of all abilities are welcomed and you will find both John and the group very supportive. You will be assured of an entertaining afternoon. You can contact John via email: short.mat@u3ainkennet.org.uk. You can find all the details on the u3a in Kennet website: <https://u3ainkennet.org.uk/bowls-short-mat/>

Theatre Group: Our theatre Group continues to grow with considerable interest from our new members too. At present the Group does not have a leader (or leaders) to organize the next event. Can you help please? We suggest that two leaders would be able to share the role as joint leaders just as Jenny and Sarah have done so well for the past few years. If you are interested to find out more about the Group and to help with organising please contact groups@u3ainkennet.org.uk

Poetry Appreciation Group Two

We are please to announce that a new Poetry Appreciation Group (Two) is being started. We are going to meet in Marlborough from 10.00 am – 12.00 on the 3rd Wednesday of each month starting on the 18th October. It will be a small friendly group of members who enjoy reading and discussing poetry. We will touch upon a wide range of poetry chosen by members. Some may enjoy selecting the poems and poets and leading the discussions while others may prefer to listen and reflect in their own way. If you are interested in joining, please contact: Mary Caudell by email at mary_caudell@msn.com or telephone: 01672 515526.

Other News

National u3a news: Do you think we need a Commissioner for Older People? u3a is part of the national campaign calling for a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing in England and Scotland. This role acts as an independent champion of older people, raising awareness and working to resolve issues that people

face in their later life. The u3a Trust wants to ensure that the perspectives of u3a members are heard. Let them know what you think by clicking on the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/u3aCOPA>

Marlborough LITFEST 2023: Tickets are now on sale for the 14th Marlborough LitFest (28th September – 1st October). The 2023 festival offers more than 40 events with an exciting mix of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, children’s authors, workshops and LitFest’s annual Big Town Read. Book tickets online: www.marlboroughlitfest.org, by phone: 0333 666 3366, or at the White Horse Bookshop, Marlborough.

Newsletter Editor: Thank you John. John Martin has been our editor since 2020 and will stand down at our Annual General Meeting next month. The Committee thanks John for compiling our monthly Newsletter which provides us with a regular channel for communication with and for all members with news about our Groups, our events and our members. We are looking for a member (or members) to take forward John’s work and to assist the Committee with producing the Newsletter. Please support your u3a and contact chair@u3ainkennet.org.uk for further information.

u3a in Kennet Committee



Jill Turner
Chair



Jeff Hide
Vice Chair



Kiaran Roughan
Treasurer



Annette Weaver
Secretary



Mike Morison
Membership



John Martin
Newsletter



Jill Chambers
Speaker Secretary



Alison Dewar
Groups Liaison



Georgie Neville
Groups Liaison



Hamzah
Technology



Alastair Sheen
Committee Member

For more information: u3ainkennet.org.uk/executive-committee/