



Newsletter

April 2024

WELCOME



Our April Newsletter shares updates on the recent two Coffee Exchange sessions and the Kennet u3a Talk which we have enjoyed during the past month.

In addition we share information on some forthcoming summer events in Marlborough which may be of interest to members.

Our u3a continues to grow in size with almost 700 members registered with us today. Many new recruits join us having heard about our meetings and groups from friends and family. Thank you for sharing the news about u3a in Kennet: you are our best advocates!

The Committee is keen to continue with your monthly Newsletter providing information and sharing news of our activities. We are calling for a member (or members) to assist with editing the publication. The role involves collating articles written by our Group Leaders and Committee. Please contact Chair@u3aikkennet.org.uk for further information

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Further details in the main text.

Coffee Exchange; Thursday 23rd May 2024. The work of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance charity

Coffee Exchange: 27th June 2024. Town Hall, Marlborough.

Kennet u3a Talk: 24th July 2024 at Kennet Valley Hall in Lockeridge

Here are the links to our web page u3aikkennet.org.uk and Facebook page www.facebook.com/u3aikkennet

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

EVENTS

COFFEE EXCHANGE: THURSDAY 28TH MARCH 2024 AT THE TOWN HALL IN MARLBOROUGH

The morning was overcast, windy and damp when the Poetry Appreciation Groups gave their presentation in the Town Hall. Mary Caudell, who leads the groups, had put together a programme based on 'Spring and New Beginnings'.



The poems were introduced by those who had chosen them and who read them. This added an interesting dimension to the poems themselves. The pieces were wide ranging – Shakespeare, Browning, Hausman, Wordsworth and some modern pieces including an amusing piece by Charles Causley which brought a smile to the audience. There were two original poems presented by their author, Andrew Rae.

Surrounded by cherry blossom, daffodils, buttercups, snowdrops, lilies and bog myrtle, the Town Hall had burst into Spring, overcoming the gloomy weather outside. Many members may well have left the Town Hall and found their own favourite poems about spring. It was an inspiring morning and certainly lifted the spirits of the audience. The video recording of the session is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wCh4_6Qwwl&feature=youtu.be

KENNET u3a TALK, WEDNESDAY 10TH APRIL 2024, KENNET VALLEY HALL, LOCKERIDGE



The Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre houses the historical records of the area. They have various functions and this includes giving lectures. Their Heritage Services Manager, Terry Bracher, (photograph below) is fascinated by the curious and macabre and he came to give us his talk on medicine in Wiltshire over the centuries.



The talk was based on records that are held in the 8 miles of archives in Chippenham which cover 800 years. We heard a gripping story of disease, death, medical practice, accidents and cures. He presented us with original documents and told the story with great humour. We were subjected to some gruesome recipes for cures – including cooking parts of a cat – and we gained an understanding of the different attitudes to sickness and remedies in the past. The 90 or so members of the audience listened with much interest punctuated by

laughter. The afternoon finished with tea and cakes. His talk is available here : [KVH Talk by Terry Bracher \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wCh4_6Qwwl&feature=youtu.be).

COFFEE EXCHANGE: THURSDAY 28th APRIL 2024, TOWN HALL, MARLBOROUGH 'MORE LIVES THAN A CAT!

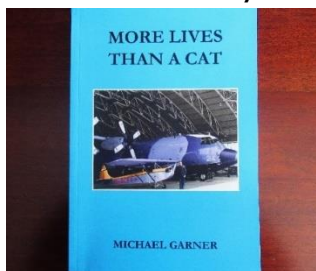
The Town Hall was busy for the Coffee Exchange on a sunny morning with over 70 members gathering for coffee and a chat. Mike Garner, one of our members came to present some of the escapes and adventures he has had over the last 90 or so years and how he has evaded death



on so many occasions. His career aloft was mostly as a loadmaster both in the RAF and then with several civilian companies. Parachutists, troops, ammunition followed by cattle, horses, camels, pigs, one day old chicks and every other sort of cargo was loaded into a wide variety of planes from the old propeller engines through to modern jets.



The planes, the methods of loading and the cargoes changed but the basic skill of the loadmaster ensuring the correct weight and balance of the planes, remained crucial to the safety of the flights. He identified his days with the Sultan of Brunei's aircraft as one of the best periods of his working life. His failure to qualify as a pilot as a young man, made Mike begin constructing his own light planes which he then flew and he is still pursuing this interest today.



Mike's enthusiasms and hobbies have certainly kept him healthy and active. Anyone interested in finding out more about Mike's career and life may like to purchase a copy of his book £10 each with £1 going to the RAF Benevolent Fund. Mike has provided his phone number to enable interested members to contact him directly on 01672 810484.

GROUPS NEWS

CURRENT AFFAIRS GROUP

Our Current Affairs group meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month (excluding July) from 10:30 until noon in the Friends Meeting House, Marlborough, to discuss issues within the news at the time. Rather than in depth knowledge of each theme chosen, we welcome interest, opinions and enthusiasm for current issues whether they are British or global.



Recent meetings have included discussion on the spring budget/taxes, reform of House of Lords, China, Ukraine, illegal immigration. climate change and liberal democracy. The list goes on.....and there is always plenty to consider.

If you would like to find out more about the group, please email: current@u3ainkennet.org.uk

OBITUARY NORMAN LAWRENCE 1933 - 2024

We were sad to hear that Norman Lawrence passed away at Great Western Hospital on 24 March 2024. His sons Jonathan and Steve confirmed that Norman really enjoyed his times with various u3a in Kennet groups including English Use & Abuse, Science and Technology, computing and finance and our Coffee Exchange mornings. His funeral was held at St Mary's church in Marlborough on 19th April 2024.

COMMITTEE NEWS - SUPPORT REQUIRED

As an organization of volunteers we are very grateful to Committee members and Group Leaders who offer their time and expertise to support our local activities.

More help is required now for our technical support arrangements. Hamzah provides us with technical support with the sound arrangements, videoing and recording our events. He stepped into the role following the untimely death of Tom Horwitz in November 2022 and we need to organize additional support so that we can continue with technical arrangements when he is on holiday.

Can you help? Do you have technical knowledge or are willing to learn. u3a in Kennet relies totally on members' voluntary support and the more members who step forward to help enables us all to share the roles. Please contact Hamzah for further information:

technical@u3ainkennet.org.uk

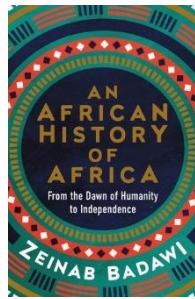
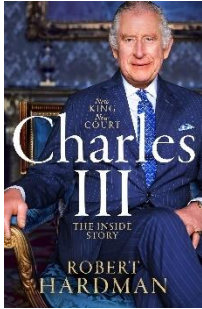
OTHER NEWS

CLIMATE CHANGE FILM

Members of Marlborough Citizens Climate Lobby will show a film on Thursday 23rd May in Marlborough Town Hall, 7pm for 7.30. The film '2040' is a climate documentary that shows a positive vision of a post carbon future. The film will be introduced by Prof. David Waltham Geophysics Royal Holloway, London University. Tickets are on sale in the White Horse Book Shop and 'Packaging Not Included' (Hughenden Yard) For more information : email

Judy@citizensclimatelobby.uk

UPDATE ON MARLBOROUGH LITFEST (26 – 29th September 2024)



Marlborough LitFest has announced that royal historian and biographer, Robert Hardman, award-winning actress Celia Imrie and acclaimed journalist Zeinab Badawi will join LitFest this year.

The fifth national Love Books competition has been launched, to celebrate and share a love of reading amongst all ages. The annual competition is open to anyone across the country in three age groups: 13–15 years, 16–19 years and 20 years and above – with winners in each age category winning £300; runners-up will each win £100. The closing deadline for entries is Friday 28 June 2024. Further details and the entry arrangements are available on the LitFest website (www.marlboroughlitfest.org) through the Love Books link.

BOOK A HOLIDAY WITH RIVIERA TRAVEL AND HELP SUPPORT YOUR U3A

Members may have noticed the offer currently being advertised on page 4 in the April 2024 edition of the national u3a Trust publication: 'u3a Matters'. u3a members who book a holiday with Riviera Travel are invited to name their u3a and arrangements will be made for it to receive 9% of the cost with 1% to the u3a Trust. The offer applies to any city break, river or ocean cruise, escorted tour or bucket list adventure. For further information please see www.rivieratravel.co.uk/u3a or call 01283 901 085

U3A IN KENNET COMMITTEE. u3ainkennet.org.uk/executive-committee/



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Alastair Sheen
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Membership



Jill Chambers
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