



Newsletter

June 2024

WELCOME



Your June Newsletter includes our thanks to some of our long serving Group Leaders who are standing down.

u3a in Kennet is led and managed exclusively by volunteers and we need more members to come forward now to replace those who are standing down and importantly to take us into the future. Please do consider how you can help us with the wide range of

activities which we provide for you all.

Once again we have details too of other local events in and around Marlborough which may be of interest to our members .

EVENTS

COFFEE EXCHANGE: THURSDAY 27th JUNE 2024, TOWN HALL IN MARLBOROUGH 'There's nothing wrong with my memory...right?'

Annie Clayton from Alzheimer's Support will join us to talk about dementia and importantly about the help and support for patients and families that is available in our area.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Coffee Exchange; from 10.15am on Thursday 27th June 2024. Town Hall, Marlborough.

Coffee Exchange; from 10.15am on Thursday 18th July 2024 Town Hall, Marlborough.

Kennet u3a Talk: from 2.15pm 24th July 2024 at 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

REPORT ON THE WILTSHIRE AIR AMBULANCE TALK AT OUR 23RD MAY COFFEE EXCHANGE

Nearly 100 members were at the Town Hall to hear a presentation from a member of the Ground Crew at Wiltshire Air Ambulance. (Ground Crew is what all volunteers at the charity are called). Clare Bromell explained how the air ambulance began, how it functions and all about the new centre that has been built in Semington. As well as the easily recognised helicopter, there are now two fully kitted crisis cars that are available to attend incidents and accidents in



the Wiltshire and Bath area. The organisation is funded totally from donations and continues to function thanks to the generosity of the local population and local businesses. Clare presented us with impressive statistics that clearly demonstrate the vital work that the Charity undertakes and how lives are saved and outcomes improved because of the speedy response they are able to provide.

We heard stories of people who have benefited from their help and how many now repay that help by volunteering. One of our members received their care after being involved in a head on crash on the A4 and she has become a keen supporter. There are many ways that we can support their impressive work including – raising money, volunteering to help at events, helping in the office, filling collecting tins, donating to the shop or helping there and even dressing up as one of the bear mascots to publicise the charity (Wilbur the paramedic bear and Marsha the pilot bear who are shown in the picture). Our recording of the event is available here:

<https://youtu.be/slrch7cxr9Y>

IMPORTANT UPDATE – DEFERRED COLLECTION OF MEMBER SUBSCRIPTIONS AUGUST 2024

Earlier this year your Committee agreed to defer the sending of annual membership subscription invitations until **on or after 1 August**, rather than in early July as in previous years.

What does this mean for me?

- Your annual subscription is still due in August for the 2024–25 Membership Year
- When you receive your renewal email or letter, please pay promptly in your usual way; Bank Transfer, Cheque, Standing Order

What does this mean for u3a in Kennet?

- 2024–25 membership revenue will all be received & accounted for in the 2024–25 financial year 1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025, rather than split across two financial years
- The annual financial statements will properly reflect the membership subscriptions received in that financial year.

GROUPS NEWS

COFFEE EXCHANGE GROUPS TABLE

Our experiment with a 'Groups Table' at last month's Coffee Exchange was a productive one, allowing members to explore some of Kennet u3a's many activities. The table will be near the coffee point again on 27 June and is also a chance to talk informally about what might be involved in helping run a group and to suggest new groups. For existing group leaders it's an opportunity to share experiences, with other group leaders and with other members. Everybody welcome!

EXPLORING ENGLISH GROUP

Words! Words! Words! Our endlessly fascinating English language probably uses more puns and other forms of word play than any other language -- in news headlines, book titles, rhyming slang, poetry, insults, crosswords and innumerable other word games. It is a mongrel, using words from countless different languages. It is ever-changing, its roots as old as the earth, but adapting and adopting new words every day. And it is the only language that needs a thesaurus.

In our group, we look at this flawed, misleading and flexible language from a new viewpoint every month, from the jargon of the theatre, the sea, betting on the horses or high finance, to why we swear, spell and punctuate the way we do, to local dialect, English learned as a foreign language and the origins of our own names.

We are not learned. We just love exploring English, and would love you to join us. We meet in Marlborough at 10.30 am on the second Wednesday of the month.

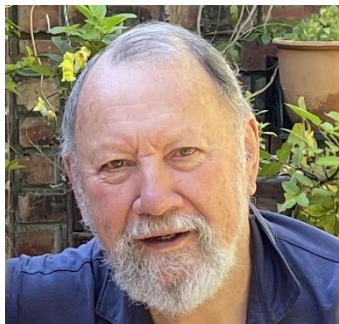
For further details please contact Group Leader: Juliet Keel on exp.english@u3ainkennet.org.uk

GROUP LEADER NEWS

As we are coming to the end of this u3a year, we would like to say a big thank you to all Group Leaders for the hard work they have been doing to make the groups so successful.

We would also like to thank the Group leaders who are stepping down at the end of July.

Firstly, our special thanks goes to Gerald Long whose contribution to the U3a Thursday walking group has been considerable and very successful. Gerald has also served on the Executive Committee as Chairman and in roles including Groups Coordinator, Vice Chair and he took the lead on publicity too. He will continue as Joint Group Leader (with Nick Stedman) of the Science News Discussion Group.



Allan Skipper has written the following:

On 10th May 2007 Tony Blair announced that he would be stepping down as PM just as Gerald stepped up to take over leadership of the U3a in Kennet walking group.

In 2007 there were around 100 members in the walking group. We met on a regular basis at Pewsey Bowls Club to plan a programme of walks for Mondays and Thursdays. Gerald took over from John Acheson who was the second group leader. At this meeting it was suggested that we have three walking groups and Gerald agreed to take over the Thursday group. Ever since then he has overseen and kept records of attendance as well as producing what is now a monthly programme of walks led by members. He has held this role now for just over 17 years. Is this a record for a Kennet U3a Group Leader? There have been nearly 900 walks during this time. It is more than likely that he has planned and led more walks than any other U3a member, past or present.

Gerald has done all this with humour, patience, competence and effectiveness. Invariably to be seen at the front of the group with the walk leader, it is no surprise that, more often than not, he is the first in the pub with his pint of beer whilst the rest of us are still struggling to remove our boots. Gerald still intends to join us on the Thursday walks and will no doubt continue to be a regular and valuable member of the walking group.

Ian Brookes has been persuaded to take over as Group Leader from the 1st August and we thank him for taking on this role.

Secondly, Brian Wood is stepping down as Group leader of the Digital Photography group. Again we would like to thank him for his leadership over the past six years and indeed during lockdown when he was able to introduce the group to zoom meetings. Sue Arnold and Kath Pocock will be taking over from 1st August and we wish them every success.

DAY TRIPS GROUP

58 members took advantage of the coach trip to Oxford on May 17th. In a repeat of our March trip to London, we were blessed with lovely weather. A tour of Oxford's "must-sees" was



provided for 15 members by Georgie Neville. The 90-minute tour started at the Sheldonian and participants were shown many of Oxford's important sights. Some of us spent a long time in the Ashmolean, interspersed with too frequent coffee stops, but redeemed ourselves by visiting the fascinating Brueghel exhibition. Others treated themselves to lunch in the Ashmolean's roof-top restaurant. The Botanic Gardens and a wander past the University colleges were also popular.



We'd like to thank the members who came with us for their support. We're looking forward to the next trip, market day in Wells in September. Kate Morrison and Juliet McGregor. Email: daytrip@u3ainkennet.org.uk

ANOTHER QIGONG CLASS WITH FELICITY SIMPSON

Following her session in Priory Gardens on 5th June Felicity has kindly offered to run another session at the same venue from 10 -11.30am on Friday 5th July 2024. She explains that Qigong helps with maintaining balance and is helpful for 'seniors'. If you are interested to attend please contact her via Whats App on 07843 771599.

OTHER LOCAL NEWS AND EVENTS MARBOROUGH OPEN GARDENS, 23rd JUNE 2024

The Marlborough Open Gardens event will be held on Sunday June 23rd between 1 and 5pm with 12 delightful gardens for visitors to explore and all within a short distance from the High Street. Tickets are available from the Merchant's House Trust website along with details of other July events at the House <https://themerchantshouse.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-calendar/>.



'SHAKESPEARE LIVE' PERFORMS MACBETH at CLEEVE HOUSE, SEEND, WILTSHIRE, SN12 6PG, 1st – 6th JULY 2024

Enjoy the Shakespearian tragedy in the garden at Cleeve House under a covered and tiered setting. Full details are available here: www.shakespearelive.com

MIRACLE THEATRE COMPANY – OGBOURNE MAIZEY, 4th JULY 2024

The Miracle Theatre Company from Cornwall will perform “Love Riot” at Ogbourne Maizey on 4th July 2024 at 7.30pm (gates open for picnics at 6pm). Bring your own chairs. Bar/coffee/ice creams/WC/parking. Venue: Maizey Lodge, Ogbourne Maizey, Marlborough SN8 1RY. Tickets in advance only: Adults £16, children (under 16) £8, Family £42 (2A+2C). Tickets: 01672-512125 or email maizey50@gmail.com. This year’s charity performance is in aid of “Project Andrew”, renovation of Ogbourne St. Andrew Church.

MARLBOROUGH HEALTH AND WELL BEING OPEN DAY. 6th JULY 2024



u3a in Kennet will be represented at the Marlborough Health and Wellbeing Open Day in St Peter’s Church on 6th July 2024 from 10.00 – 15.00.

Come along to find out more about the wide range of local health and care organisations and other community groups which provide services and the support in the local area. The event will be opened by the Mayor of Marlborough and a therapy horse and Shetland pony from Greatwood Charity will join us in the Church grounds for additional publicity along with other health activities including music and exercises. A street artist will parade along the High Street at several times on the Day with music and posters to inform shoppers about the event.

MARLBOROUGH CONCERT ORCHESTRA SUMMER CONCERT, 7.30pm 6th JULY 2024 AT St MARY’S CHURCH, MARLBOROUGH

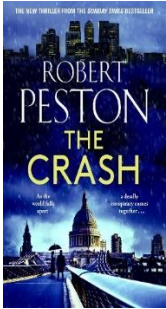
Conducted by Philip Singleton and featuring Astrid Wilson-Gignoux as the solo violinist in the Lark Ascending this concert will also separately showcase the Orchestra’s string section in Elgar’s serenade for strings and the wind and brass in Holst’s First Suite for Military Band, Op.28 No.1. The concert will conclude with Vaughan Williams’ beautifully evocative Symphony No.3 (‘Pastoral’). Tickets: Adults £15 / Students £5 / Under 18s free. Available online via [TicketSource](#) or purchase at Sound Knowledge, Hughenden Yard or on the door (cash or card)

MARLBOROUGH FESTIVAL, 12th – 14th JULY 2024. DISCOUNTED TICKET PRICE OFFER

The 3- day Marlborough Festival (12th to 14th July 2024) offers a variety of events for all age groups including Shakespeare in the park, jazz and live music, a ‘Les Mis’ singing masterclass celebrity chef, guided walks and comedy which will be held at several venues around the Town including the Marlborough College Memorial Hall, the Town Hall, St Peter’s Church and

Priory Gardens. [Les Mis Masterclass Marlborough Festival \(singspacechoir.com\)](http://singspacechoir.com) puppet shows, talks, The organizers have kindly arranged a price reduction for u3a in Kennet members providing a 10% reduction on ticket prices – please use the code: U3A10OFF. Further details are available on the Festival website: www.marlboroughfestival.com. If you have any questions please email info@marlboroughfestival.com.

MARLBOROUGH LIT FEST 26th – 29th SEPTEMBER 2024



In addition to Sarah Perry, Robert Peston, Martin Sixsmith, Sir Simon Russell Beale, Celia Imrie, Zeinab Badawi and Robert Hardman other speakers will include award-winning writer Kate Mosse previewing her fourth and concluding novel in The Joubert Family Chronicles, *The Map of Bones* (published on 10th October), bestselling author and historian William Dalrymple talking about his new book on India, *The Golden Road*, and dealing with midlife crises from journalist and broadcaster Eleanor Mills in her book, *Much More to Come*. Click here for further information:

<https://www.marlboroughlitfest.org/>

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY IN ACTION JEFF HIDE, VICE CHAIR

As I pen this philosophical prose, there are 706 members of our u3a; that's a lot! Many of these, like me, look back to the 1960s with fond memories, but then realise that 1964 was SIXTY years ago and over those years we have experienced a fast-changing world. Has it got better? Yes – in some ways and not in others. No doubt our ancestors looked at life and had the same thoughts.

I find particular points not to my liking and some I positively dislike. What I see as a drop in standards feature here from bad spelling through to what I see as the excessive activity and publicity given to single cause groups. Perhaps I should not mind queuing up in a traffic jam due to a demonstration against the use of oil. Carbon zero is a good thing. Or, marches obstructing a town centre to allow a political procession in favour or against something going on abroad. Without such dynamic organisation would women have got the vote?

“No man is an island entire of itself”, said John Donne in 1624, just 400 years ago. No one lives alone? U3a certainly supports the view where it is all about friendship, fun, and lifelong learning. Whilst involved with a group, a thought was expressed to which I was privy. It concerned the sorts of parties we used to have at home or in a public hall such as fancy-dress parties. These were popular, as were those where the fancy dress was confined to Vicars and Tarts. Perhaps we are not allowed to say that these days? Perhaps I could still be P.C. (politically correct) and suggest a costume party group where the group democratically decides a theme and its dress at quarterly parties. Any takers? Jeff Hide, Vicechair@u3ainkennet.org.uk



Jill Turner
*Chair and Charity
Commission Contact*



Jeff Hide
Vice Chair



Alastair Sheen
Treasurer



Annette Weaver
Secretary



Mike Morison
Membership



Jill Chambers
Speaker Secretary



Hamzah
Technology



Alison Dewar
Committee Member



Georgina Neville
Committee Member



David Moakes
Publicity