

## Chair's Report

**FUN.....**

Did you watch it????

**T**he TV programme entitled 'HOW TO AGE WELL'.....your emails tell me that a few of you missed it and apparently someone fell asleep!!! Actually, that was probably the best response as it really didn't tell us anything we don't already know about 'ageing well'. And I think members of our u3a take good advantage of the activities that we offer to ensure we all stay socially, physically and mentally fit and healthy into our golden years. For me.....it was a bit of fun to watch Martin Kemp for an hour, but that's all!!!!

**FUNNY.....**

Did you remember????

To wake up on Sunday with the clocks going forward.....or did it take a while to wonder why you were 'out-of-sync with the rest of the world!!!

Well, just to confirm, our u3a is NOT 'out-of-sync' at all, we are embracing the start of British Summer Time and moving forward with plans to re-launch our activities. We'll be sharing more details soon!

**FUNNIEST OF ALL.....**

Did you celebrate????

March 19th RED NOSE DAY.....always an excuse for some fun. I celebrated with my u3a friends ~ a great Zoom chat whilst wearing our 'deely boppers'.....Life is so much better if you can



laugh and enjoy some fun times.

Here's hoping we can get together for some more fun and enjoyment soon.

Best wishes

**Melanie Blewer**

## Next Monthly Meeting (via Zoom)

Thursday, 1st April 2021 at 2.00 pm

LUCY ALLEN

**'From Titanic to Skyfall: The Highs & Lows of a Stuntwoman's Life'**

**L**ucy Allen is a Stunt Woman and Public Speaker, who has been giving talks about her life as a Stuntwoman since 2010.

Being a professional performer means she likes to add a bit of drama and excitement into her talks and keeps them as lively and interesting as possible.

She is very much in demand as a Public Speaker.

*(Instructions for joining this meeting have been emailed to Members. Alternatively, Members can join the meeting by clicking [here](#) and following any on-screen instructions)*

## May Monthly Meeting (via Zoom)

Thursday, 6th May 2021 at 2.00 pm

PAUL BARWICK

**'The 2006 murder of Alexander Litvinenko'**

**P**aul's credentials are of a Police Officer now retired (34 years' service) with a career background in the national intelligence and security arena.

The 2006 murder of Alexander Litvinenko by 2 Russian assassins using the radioactive nerve agent Polonium 210. We look at his life, his death and the reasons why a vengeful President finally said enough. We ask if his family will ever find proper justice.

*(Members will receive emailed instructions for joining this meeting, approximately one week before the event.)*

## Workshop - Lasting Power of Attorney

Did you take part????

**G**aye Illsley led a very informative workshop session on Thursday 18th March.

There were approximately 70 u3a members who joined the Zoom session and I have had some very positive and thankful emails from you, saying how helpful this was.

Gaye highlighted the importance of having the correct paperwork in place and gave interesting examples and case studies to illustrate the points she was making.

It is a fact that only 35% of retirees have already put these procedures in place!

You can, of course, carry out the procedures for yourself online and some of you have told me that this is quite an easy option to follow.

Gaye has passed on her slides and contact details should anyone who missed the session wish to check it out.

*(Members can view and download the slides [pdf file] by clicking [here](#))*

**Melanie Blewer**

## Groups Coordinator

**A**s I write this the Government plans for a gradual road back to 'normal' are still in place, so I am hoping that groups can start to consider how best their particular activity can be resumed in a way which members are comfortable with.

I will be meeting with convenors at a Zoom meeting on 30th March to discuss plans and concerns which members may have. Following this, I will report back to the next committee meeting, and we hope to get our own 'roadmap' in place so that members have a clear idea of how we plan to progress.

Please note that groups **MUST** notify me when they plan to resume face-to-face contact, and **MUST** complete a risk assessment beforehand. This is necessary so that we can be assured as a u3a that we are taking all risks into account and running activities safely for our members.

I know that walking groups are intending to start up from April, based around the groups of max. 6 people allowed by the Government from 29th March for organised outdoor activity. This is good news, but as I indicated in previous newsletters, we do need more people willing to come forward to convene and/or share the walking groups so that more members are able to participate in this activity, which is so important for all of us.

Currently, we have no convenor for the Strollers group, and the short walks and half-day walks groups have over 30 members, so unfortunately many members will be disappointed when we do resume with restricted numbers. If you are a member of these groups or would like to join, please do consider how you can help.

On 30 March we will also be discussing how our u3a can participate in the designated u3a Day, which is to be held for the first time this year on 2nd June. If you have any ideas for activities on this day or our official re-launch in the Autumn, please contact me or another committee member.

**Elaine Scutt**

## News from the Groups

### Art Appreciation

**T**hanks to Elaine for a very interesting presentation on Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928). We all learned a lot about the architect and designer, who in later life became a painter. His most important work was the Glasgow School of Art, which encompassed many of his Art Nouveau innovations, but which, sadly, was destroyed by fire in 2014, and again, when renovations were almost complete, in June 2018.

His other commissions included the Willow Tea Rooms in Glasgow, Hill House in Helensburgh and 78 Derngate, Northampton, which all demonstrated his distinctive architecture and interiors.

His wife, Margaret MacDonald Mackintosh, was also instrumental in developing his work. After leaving Glasgow, they also lived and worked in Walberswick, Suffolk, Chelsea and the south of France.

In our next session, on 22nd April, we will be discussing art that lifts the spirits, very necessary in a time of lockdown. We will be looking at the work of Beryl Cook, E H Shepherd, Beatrix Potter and Kate Greenaway, amongst others.

**Jill Rutland**

### Baking with a Twist

**W**e have been meeting monthly through Zoom.

It was just lovely to have a chat, a cup of tea, and our own cooking, no twist necessary.

If there are any members wishing to join Baking with a Twist, we have spaces - just contact me.

**Marise Hamlin**

### Creative Writing

The task for February was to write a story framed around a painting or picture. This challenge was met by six of our members and they turned out a wonderfully varied group of stories.

The first tale took place in a small provincial art gallery. One day, out of peak season, the Manager took a day off, leaving the receptionist in charge. She chatted to the cleaner about the arrival of some new modern paintings in a storeroom and the cleaner went to look at them, accidentally spilling some coffee on one, which caused a smudge where some hands had originally been painted. Panicking, the cleaner took the painting away in the hope that her autistic niece may be able to repaint that area. When she returned and unpacked it, she was horrified to see that her niece had included a mobile phone in the recreated hand area. The receptionist looked at it and her impression was that it was modern art and the original artist was making an ironic point about communication!

A group of schoolgirls were the protagonists in a story about a prank that was to be played on their stuffy art teacher. The most rebellious girl devised a plot where she would spray crazy foam on his chair while two of her schoolmates distracted him. Unfortunately, when the rest of the class spied the foam on the seat of his trousers, they could not hold back their giggling, finally earning the girls their own painting task during detention – on the school railings.

There was a supernatural tale involving a brother and sister who lived with their elderly grandfather in an old townhouse. The brother was clearing out the loft when he came across a portrait of an ancestor in a trunk and asked his granddad about it. He was told that it depicted his great, great grandfather who was killed in an apparent riding accident on a day that the painting had fallen from its fixing on the wall. Subsequently, several deaths had occurred in the family as the painting was transferred from property to property and fell to the floor. The brother put it in an upright position but found later that it had fallen down again. At the same time, he received a call to inform him that his sister had been in a serious car accident. Upon phoning the hospital, he was informed that she was stable but, as he sighed his relief, he was told that his granddad had also been admitted after a fall, but had sadly passed away.

The next story described in detail the cherished childhood memories of grandparents running a shop in which hung a print of the famous painting called Chinese Girl by Tretchikoff, culminating in a trip to see the original at an exhibition at Bonhams as it

accompanied other works by the artist, generations later.

In the fifth submission, a man is troubled when his artistic young daughter meets an old man who shows her a new way of painting. As it does not fit with the syllabus, her teacher gives her low marks. However, when the father meets the old man, he comes to realise that life is not all straight lines and definite colours. Instead, the world is made up of patterns and impressions, different colours mixed and blended together. Subtle colours, not broad bold strokes.

Finally, there was a wonderful ethereal story about a visit to an art gallery where the writer is so entranced by a painting called “The enchanted forest” that she closes her eyes and can see, hear and feel all the surroundings within the work of art. A feeling of calmness and wellbeing envelops her.

**Paul Chapman**

## Digital Photography 1

Birds and Bridges were our themes for the month. Although our widely travelled group had photographed some famous bridges from various parts of the world, not forgotten were the



very attractive bridges both modern and ancient that we

have in our local area.

We are also lucky to have many lakes nearby which provide us with a variety of birdlife, although perhaps not quite as exotic as the plush-crested jay and yellow-billed hornbill that one of our members shared.



During March we were also tasked with taking a photograph that typified “Early Spring”.

**Cathy Sargent**

## Digital Photography 2

I am hoping that our photos this month bring a Smile to your face especially as one of our subjects was the Letter S.



The sunflowers are a joy and we are looking forward to when we can meet up again with friends and family possibly enjoying a



beautiful sunset.

The bird, I am reliably informed, is a Sparrowhawk and has



to be appreciated for the skill of the photographer in catching this moment in time.

**Brenda Powell**

## Flower Arranging

It was International Women's Day on 8th March, so our design this month was taken from a Flower Arranger magazine image. Purple, green and white are the colours that symbolise this organisation, two of which are shown in the arrangement.



We are showing you the original print so that you can compare it with one of our ladies' interpretation of it.

A quiz followed after we had been given some helpful tips on flower arranging. Did you know that

the Banana plant is related to the Bird of Paradise plant and that the juices of the Bluebell were used to make glue in the past?

As a group, we are enjoying our meetings and are planning our road map of when we can meet up again in person, with possibly a visit to a floristry sundries supplier and a garden centre.

Lots to look forward to with the better weather coming and lockdown easing so even more reasons to take care and stay safe.

**Brenda Powell**

## French Conversation and French for Improvers

Both groups continue to meet regularly on Zoom. We are continuing our exciting cultural journey through France by reading and translating



together articles from our **Read and Think French** textbook.

These have given us a great insight into French seasonal traditions which often include food and drink themes, including the history of the famous drink Pastis, the pancake (crêpe) festival, 'Les Crêpes de la Chandeleur', which involves making pancakes with rum, and Twelfth Night in France, celebrated with the famous 'Galette des Rois'.



A particularly interesting and amusing piece was entitled, "To Kiss or Not to Kiss", which we looked at, appropriately, near Valentine's Day. This explained the etiquette, which is often a mystery to foreigners, of how many kisses are appropriate and how they should be delivered as a form of greeting in different circumstances; maybe not at the moment with Covid-19 restrictions!

In the Improvers Group, we have enjoyed looking at amusing and detailed pictures sent out by our convenor, Suzanne, where we have to describe in French what we see is happening. We also continue with our exercise and grammar books.

The Thursday Group has had the opportunity to read interesting articles like one on the poet Verlaine, who, like many of the French poets, had a very colourful and finally tragic life.

We can't wait to visit France again, but feel that with the expert guidance of Suzanne, we are all getting better equipped to converse when we do get there.

Anne Munn

## London Walks Group 2

February and March 2021

We still can't travel up to London and walk around the city.....so instead we have 'met' on Zoom and listened to each other present some fascinating facts about our great capital city.

Tricia Francis talked us through a list of things we didn't know about The British Museum.....and our eyebrows certainly raised when we heard about Cupboard 55 ~ the secretive Porn Room!!!

She also unearthed the secret of The Tent in The City; a hidden gem near Liverpool Street Station, which turns out to be a Bedouin tent with 16 sides and beautiful mosaic marbling.

Tony Metcalfe took us on a journey through some of London's Markets.....then and now; with amusing anecdotes and personal memories along the way.

Then Elaine Scutt revealed the fascinating story behind A Dogs Grave located just off The Mall.....commemorating Giro, sometimes referred to as The Nazi Dog.

Some members of the group have also enjoyed watching the virtual tours and online talks about varying aspects of London given by the Mirthy organisation.

Melanie Blewer

## Makers of History

On a wet morning we enjoyed four talks on Zoom covering a diverse range of people from different historical periods.

We learnt about the extraordinary adventures of Lady Hester Stanhope who defied convention after a disastrous love affair that left her heartbroken by travelling to foreign lands and adopting Turkish dress and customs, finally dying penniless in a remote home in Lebanon.

We heard about the modern-day adventurer, Bear Grylls, who was the youngest Briton to climb Everest just two years after breaking his back in a parachuting accident. In addition to his well-known adventures in the wilderness, including with Barack Obama, he is very active in raising money for various charities.

Another subject was Henry Fox Talbot, whose invention of producing multiple photographs from a single negative remained the basic photographic process for 150 years until the digital age. We considered the way photography has been used as a powerful tool to illustrate, inform and even persuade in a wide social context.

A talk on George Washington led to some surprises when we heard that he had little in the way of formal education despite being from a wealthy Virginia family. What most shocked us were his horrendous dental problems and his morbid fear of being buried alive!

Once again, our session was fun, informative and often thought-provoking.

Joan Warren

## KHaD u3a Information

### Monthly General Meetings

Regular monthly meetings are cancelled until further notice, due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

### Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The Special Interest Groups may meet at various places, and often these are in a member's house to avoid fees for hiring a venue.

However, due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, SIGs are encouraged to meet "virtually", using Zoom, WhatsApp, or other similar apps for groups. If this is not feasible, then convenors should keep in touch with their group members by regular telephone calls.

If you wish to join a SIG, please contact the Groups Co-ordinator and the convenor before you attend a meeting.

See the website for a full list of SIGs and contacts, and watch the Newsletter for their latest activities.

### KHaD u3a Website

[www.kingshillu3a.org.uk](http://www.kingshillu3a.org.uk) (Ctrl+Click)

### Membership Enquiries

[membership@kingshillu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@kingshillu3a.org.uk)

**Newsletter** - SIG reports and photos deadline:  
Friday before each General Meeting.

**Editor: Don Bone** - [newsletter@kingshillu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@kingshillu3a.org.uk)



To see us on Facebook [@u3aKingshill](https://www.facebook.com/u3aKingshill)

### KHaD u3a Committee

#### Officers:

Chairman	<b>Melanie Blewer</b>
Vice Chairman	<b>Elaine Scutt</b>
Treasurer	<b>David Murray</b>
Business Secretary	<b>Maggie Holmes</b>
Membership	<b>Mark Richards</b>

#### Other Roles:

Groups Co-ordinator	<b>Elaine Scutt</b>
Speakers	<b>Linda Read and Sue Watson</b>
Hospitality	<b>Brenda Pretty</b>

**Plus: Maurice Chittenden** **Alan Pamplin**  
**Don Bone** **Jeanne Couch**

**Co-opted: June Routley**