

u3a Knole

learn laugh live



Chairman's message

It has been so lovely to see the sun this week and feel it's warmth, what is it about sunny days and blue skies that just lifts your spirits? Of course, we know that this won't last but we do know that the darkest days of winter are behind us and we can look forward to longer days and better weather to come.

With the better weather, more of us will be going out and about but without putting a dampener on proceedings, we have had several incidents lately that have served to remind us to take precautions.

Accidents can happen at any time and anywhere and although we can't always prevent them, we can make sure that we're prepared.

Sensible precautions for groups that go out and about would be for someone to have a small first aid kit with them, only basic things like antiseptic wipes and a few plasters maybe. I think it is a good idea to always carry some water and make sure you have emergency contacts set up on your phone or have them written down somewhere accessible.

The App, 'What Three Words' is a useful one to have so that you can give someone your location.

Finally, if there is a serious incident, where someone does need treatment or there has been damage to property, there is an Incident Form that should be filled in. It can be found on our website under the Policies tab.

Filled in forms should be sent to secretary@knoleu3a.org.uk

Well, with that gloomy note over, let's look forward to longer days, fun and friendship!

Debbie Magness

Social Team

Wendy Willsher has led this small enthusiastic team for 5 years and has decided to step down.

She has been Social Events Co-ordinator for Knole u3a for the past five years and the time has come for her to hand over to someone else. She and the team are responsible for organising the Christmas or New Year Celebrations, a yearly Group Contacts lunch, sorting out venues for the monthly Coffee Mornings, working with volunteers as well as the team to provide refreshments at General Meetings, the AGM and annual Open Afternoon. As most of you know, I used to be part of this team and it's a really fun team to work with. I hesitate to say that if no-one comes forward, all social events would cease, there would be no Christmas or New Year Celebrations and no tea and cake at General Meetings, AGMs or Open Days and I think that would be very sad.

Wendy would be happy to help in any way to facilitate the hand over.

Contact: social@knoleu3a.org.uk.

I hope something can be worked out.

Debbie Magness

New Group getting started

Mahjong2

We're a new group all wanting to learn the intricacies of Mahjong, helped thankfully by Jenny Wickham.

We'll be meeting regularly at The Bell in Kemsing on the second Monday of the month from 2-4 (subject to slight variations on occasion). They are kindly not charging us to hire their room but would like us to purchase drinks along the way- they prefer cash or card payments over £5 (perhaps paying for two or more together)

Other meetings will possibly be made in between group afternoons if anyone wants to practice- to be arranged between ourselves.

Do come & join us if you'd like to give it a try! We're a friendly group- very happy to welcome more members! Next meeting is April 14th. Please contact Nikki West at Mahjong2@knoleu3a.org.uk

Historic Buildings2

This month we are hoping to set up another Historic Buildings Group. If you are interested in Historic Buildings: Groups@knoleu3a.org.uk

A big thank you to those helping to get these underway.

If you are looking for new and exciting challenges for 2025 or would like us to help find more members for your existing group please contact the group co-ordinator by email Groups@knoleu3a.org.uk



Short Mat Bowls

Short mat bowls is a fantastic sport for older folk for several reasons:

It provides light exercise that improves mobility, flexibility, and muscle tone without the high impact of other sports, making it easier on joints.

It challenges the mind, with strategy and concentration required to play, keeping cognitive skills sharp.

It's an indoor sport, so it can be played year-round regardless of weather, and it can be adapted for various physical abilities.

With its relaxed pace and emphasis on skill rather than speed or strength, the risk of injury is relatively low.

So if you are interested in a friendly social group with some light exercise join us.

Contact: Groups@knoleu3a.org.uk

Groups that need Help

The Computer group, Cookery group and the 9 hole Golf Group had disappointing support for their meetings this month and need more support from you.

The Computer group is currently looking at Windows 11 and how to cope with Microsoft Outlook, Word and Excel. Without more interest this group will struggle to continue. Contact: Bryan Rawlins computerwindows@knoleu3a.org.uk

With the warmer and hopefully drier weather the **Golf groups** are getting underway and are looking for new members particularly for the 9 hole group. Contact: Bryan Rawlins golf@knoleu3a.org.uk

The Cookery group held its first meeting but needs more members to really get this exciting new group off the ground. Contact: Lesley Mitchinson cookeryandbaking@knoleu3a.org.uk

New Language group **Spanish Improvers group** could do with 1 or 2 more to join them contact: spanishImprovers2@knoleu3a.org.uk

London Walks 2

In January we walked around places associated with the suffragettes. We started at Trafalgar Square, where they held rallies, and the National Gallery where Mary Richardson attacked the Rokeby Venus, slashing it five times.



Then we walked down to Downing Street learning that two suffragettes posted themselves to 10 Downing St via a loophole in the law, another two chained themselves to the grille outside and pelted the building with stones. Another, actress Lillah McCarthy, found herself alone in the cabinet room at No 10. She opened her box of grease paints, found the reddest stick and wrote across the blotting paper 'Votes for Women'.

We then passed Caxton Hall, where they held the Women's Parliaments and onto Parliament where many protests were made, including two suffragettes chaining themselves to the grille in the Ladies Gallery in 1908.

We finished by the memorial to Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst in the Victoria Tower Gardens close to Parliament (see photo).

An interesting and instructive walk.
Jacquie Martin.

Science Group

We have two more talks left before the summer and then an outing to the Allington Waste site near Maidstone.

The first is about the moon landing in 1969 and will be given by Hugh Alford on Thursday 3rd April. As usual it will be in the Weald Memorial Hall at 2:30pm and last for about an hour.

Apollo 11 Moon Landing ~ The Real Story

The successful landing of the Apollo 11 Moon mission belied the dramatic, tension filled final minutes of the descent. As a result, many urban myths developed. Supported by a dynamic and colourful PP presentation, featuring sound, movies and animations, Hugh Alford returns to tell us the truth of what really happened!

The second talk is on 8th May and will be about "Antibiotics" given by Mike Trescothic.

Then on Tuesday 24th June we are organizing a visit to Allington Waste to Energy site. This is where they literally convert waste into energy by combustion and use the heat to power electricity generation.

Members will need to take their own cars to the site near Maidstone and the tour which is free will take just over 2 hours. There will be a pub lunch afterwards for those who would like to come. If you would like to come please contact

I do hope you will come to these which are open to all members.

Howard Dilley science@knoleu3a.org.uk

MOT3

On 3rd January we visited Hever Castle, to see their Christmas lights which were very impressive. There was lots to see and read inside the castle and when the lights came on at 4.00 we walked around the castle grounds.

We had our group meeting and post Christmas lunch at The Bulfinch, and went to The Forget-me-not Cafe on 29th for a talk by a Pearly King. We saw Maria at The Stag about the life of Maria Callas and some of us were lucky enough to get in to hear The Story of Colditz and Otford Memorial Hall but there were too many people for the capacity of the hall and some did not get in!

In February we went to the Beefeater and then The Oast to see Titternick which was so funny' a really good night out. On 12th February we saw The Brutalist at the Stag. On 14th we had lunch at The View, on 19th we went on a snowdrop walk and had lunch at Hever Castle and in the evening saw Boys from the Blackstuff at The Churchill Theatre, Bromley.

On the 26th we went to The Forget-me-not cafe at Bat and Ball for the talk called 'My Life in Entertainment' by Gary Poleykett who started in a rock band and became a childrens entertainer and ended up educating young children in scientific things while dressed as a clown, very interesting and that evening we went to see Mad About the Boy at The Stag and finally Celebrating Judy and Liza in the Footlights Bar at The Stag.

Future plans are a visit to The Oast for the Alan Bennett trilogy and Beefeater, Sevenoaks Society talk by Sir Michael Fallon on My Time in Parliament and as a Minister on 12th March. Pamoja Hall Sevenoaks for Sevenoaks Swings on 21st March. In April we hope to visit 2 Temple Place in London and in May a visit to Sissinghurst for the Vita Sackville-West exhibition which runs until 7th September plus our various other activities but more of them in the next newsletter.

Marian OBoyle

Play Reading

Anyone interested in joining can email Simon Claxton: playreading@knoleu3a.org.uk

London Studies 2

Have had their planning meeting for 2025. The visits that have been planned are: British Museum; Tate Britain; Middle Temple & Aster House; A Mayfair walk; Natural History Museum; Sherlock Holmes Museum; Lambeth Palace - Garden Museum & Cecil Beaton exhibition; Fitzrovia Chapel & Cartoon Museum; Household Cavalry Museum Blue Badge Guide; Christmas In London - shop windows and lights

We are a group of 13 so probably could accommodate a couple more members, please contact Leslie Tibbitts at londonstudies2@knoleu3a.org.uk

Garden Group



Eight of us were treated to a delightful and informative seed sowing, and plant propagation, demonstration by Ian at Coolings Garden Centre. We even had practical experience, and brought home our newly planted seeds. Julie Stevens.



Historic Buildings Group

Since the last Newsletter we have had two visits. The first was to Great St Barts church in Smithfield. This church was founded in 1123 as part of an Augustinian priory. It has been added to over time and also suffered in the Dissolution but still has some bits of the original walls. It was lucky enough to escape any damage in the great Fire of 1666 and also escaped major damage in the bombings of WWII.

Our second visit was to the Foundling Hospital. The Hospital was founded by Thomas Coram in 1739. Although the original buildings no longer exist, some of the green spaces around those buildings still exist (Coram fields) and there is a museum on the site. The surprise to me was that the artist, Hogarth, and the musician, Handel, were major supporters of the foundation. Hogarth gave many of his paintings and encouraged other artists to do the same. As a result there was an important art gallery on the site from the beginning encouraging wealthy Londoners to attend there and donate to the Hospital.
Jacquie Martin



London walks 3

Following a very successful 2024 we started 2025 with our planning meeting where we organised the whole year's monthly walks.

Our February walk was a guided tour by professional London guide Ian Porter. The theme was 'James Bond and the real Secret Service'. It was extremely interesting on a sunny day.



The tour took us through Horse Guards' Parade where we were fortunate enough to see the changing of the guard.



Following lunch we saw the Pelicans being fed.

Our next walk is on Friday 21st March which will be in the area of Regents Park.

Jenny Cousins

Half Day Walking Group 2

If anybody is looking for some exercise with companionship the Half Day Walking Group 2 is looking for some new members. We walk approximately 5 miles on the 2nd Monday of the month with much enjoyable conversation and laughter. If you are interested please contact Richard Clout at halfwalk2@knoleu3a.org.uk

Monthly Meetings

Bat and Ball Community Centre, Crampton's Road, Sevenoaks TN14 5DN
on the 4th Monday of the month between 2.00 and 4.00pm.

24 March

John Field (AIMC & Silver Star)

John Field was admitted as a solicitor in 1976 and has practised law ever since. However he gave his first stage show as a magician in 1965 and has been performing magic for longer than he has been practising law! For over 30 years he has delivered a talk on the Amazing World of Magic (formerly The History of Magic) which as well as being educational, is highly entertaining, with a practical demonstration of different styles of magic being presented throughout the talk. He has raised thousands of pounds for charities with this talk. John is an Associate Member of The Inner Magic Circle with Silver Star, one of the highest degrees in magic held by about 300 people worldwide. He consistently receives a rating of "Excellent" from the groups he addresses. Visit John's website at www.johnfield.net for more information on his abilities.

28 April

Mark Bathurst History & Preservation of Paddle Steamer MEDWAY QUEEN. Medway Queen is one of the small boats which rescued soldiers during the last war at Dunkirk.

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