

KANUTA

**Newsletter
November 2023**

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From the Chair

Hi everyone, this is my second column in Kanuta and, not being a professional journalist, I'm wondering what to write about! So here are a few snippets for you.

In September we held a successful Showcase event. Some of the Group Leaders who attended recruited new members to their Groups and we signed up several new members with our total membership now standing at 710.

The Outings Committee have kept up their sterling work and several successful trips have taken place, e.g. Shibden Hall and the Piece Hall (Halifax) or are in the pipeline with visits being planned for 2024. Also several concert and theatre trips have been planned. I would just like to remind members that anyone who signs up to go on a visit or an outing must be a member of the u3a, people cannot bring partners if they are not members.

On Thursday 26th October we held a successful New Members coffee morning. These have been held in the past, I remember going to one in 2016 when I joined the u3a, but the practice seems to have fallen into disuse. We thought we'd revive it by inviting all new members who have joined since the beginning of January this year. Over 40 new members attended and enjoyed the morning meeting other new members and several Group Leaders. We intend to continue holding these events once or twice a year so that new members can get a feel for how we operate and feel more included.

At the New Members' coffee morning several ideas for new Groups were put forward*. Our Groups Supporter, Stuart Allan, will shortly be emailing you all to see if there is enough interest in any of these to get some new Groups started. Any new Group will, of course, require a Group Leader but this is not an onerous task and plenty of support would be provided.

If you've never looked at the Third Age Trust (the national u3a) website I would recommend that you take a look at it. www.u3a.org.uk There are many opportunities for on-line learning on there if you are looking for something outside of the activities we offer.

Finally, I know the clocks have only just changed, but this is the last edition before Christmas so I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year when they come round.

Sue Allan

* Suggestions included Knitting, Card Making, Patchwork, Darts, Chess, Board Games, Beginners Italian, French and Spanish.

Members' Meetings

Knutsford Methodist Church
Second Thursday of every month starting at 2.15pm

2023

9th November **David Mitchell**, Town Crier of Chester, will give a talk entitled 'The Word on the Street: A History of the Town Crier and the Bellman'

14th December **Nigel Linge**, Professor of Telecommunications at Salford University, has been working in the computer networking and telecommunication fields since 1983. He will talk on 'The Internet of Things'

2024

11th January **Jacqui Hyman** will give a talk entitled: 'Samplers – A child's view of embroidery'.

8th February **Geoff Highfield** will give a talk about Blood Bikes and the work they do. Blood Bikes is a voluntary unpaid service provided by highly qualified bikers (motor bikes) who deliver medical drugs, equipment and blood for emergencies.

14th March **Julia Marwood** will talk about 'The Women of Manchester Art Gallery'.



Hidden Talents



Our popular Spring season of "Hidden Talents" will begin again on January 25th.

All presentations are from our own u3a members beginning with John Miller who last year brilliantly entertained us with his talk "A Life at the Beeb." This time, his title is "The show must go on : On the Road with the BBC....."

There will be three further exciting and educative entertainments later in the Spring including a musical afternoon with the famous Knutsford u3a choir and our own recorder group! We will then hear and see more from our most travelled globe trotter and photographer, Adrian Fisher. Finally we will discover how our intrepid and courageous treasurer climbed the Matterhorn!

The talks are in Knutsford Methodist Church starting at **2.15pm prompt** and are followed by tea and biscuits. Please aim to be seated by 2.00 pm.



Theatre and Music Trips



Eblana String Trio

Friday, 3rd November, 2023, 2:15 pm
Knutsford Methodist Church

Cost, including refreshments £12.00

We welcome the Eblana String Trio to Knutsford for another Afternoon Concert at the Methodist Church. The centrepiece of the programme will be Mozart's monumental Divertimento in E flat for String Trio, considered to be one of the greatest achievements in chamber music. Alongside this the trio will perform Gerald Finzi's evocative Prelude and Fugue for String Trio.

Since its formation in 2006, the Eblana String Trio has been performing regularly for music societies and festivals throughout the UK and beyond, winning praise from audiences and critics alike. They have given acclaimed performances at major venues and on the Radio.

The members of the trio are visiting tutors in Chamber Music at Birmingham Conservatoire. Jonathan Martindale is Associate Leader of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra: he is the son of members of Knutsford U3A. They have a website at <http://www.eblanastringtrio.com/>

The cost of £12 includes a cup of tea and the opportunity to meet the musicians. Tickets for the concert will be available on the door.

For more information, contact info@knutsfordu3a.co.uk

Margaret Joscelyne

Romeo and Juliet

Thursday, 9th November, 2023, 7:30 pm
Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester

Cost, including travel, £48.00
Coach departs the bus station 6 pm prompt

I hope this will make for an exciting evening! This is a fiery retelling of Shakespeare's tragic love story set in modern day Manchester. As described by the theatre:-

'This contemporary version of Romeo & Juliet is a love letter to Manchester, a celebration of youth, love and aspiration. A vision of hope in troubled times'

'No matter how tragic it is, this love story still has immense hope in its heart'

Well, it worked for West Side Story, so hopefully it will work for The Exchange!

Margaret Hinde



Theatre and Music Trips



HANDEL'S 'MESSIAH' by candlelight

Sunday, 3rd December, 2023, 1:30 pm
Gorton Monastery

Cost, including travel, £38.00
Coach departs the bus station 1:30 pm prompt

I am sure that anyone who came to one of our previous visits to Gorton Monastery will remember what a lovely, atmospheric building it is. Considered one of E.W. Pugin's masterpieces of Victorian Gothic architecture, it is blessed with excellent acoustics.

Manchester Camerata are giving a Candlelit matinee performance of Handel's 'Messiah' in the grand nave of the Monastery, on Sunday, December 3rd. The coach will leave Knutsford Bus Station promptly at 1.30 pm.

This should surely be a memorable afternoon.

Margaret Hinde

'BRIEF ENCOUNTER' - The Musical

Sunday, 13th January, 2024, matinee performance
Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester

Cost, including travel, £50.00
Coach departs the bus station 1:00 pm



Emma Rice's smash-hit adaptation for the stage of Noël Coward's much loved 'Brief Encounter', is directed by Sarah Frankcom, (who directed the popular production of 'West Side Story' at the Royal Exchange). This exciting musical is perfect for the Royal Exchange Christmas production.

'A heart-stopping story of forbidden love that moves to the rhythm of beautiful songs, swaying dance moves, the odd cup of tea and a bath bun.'

To purchase tickets, please send your completed application form together with your cheque for £50.00 pp, made payable to Knutsford U3A, to Margaret Hinde, 1 Warford Hall Drive, Alderley Edge, SK9 7TR. Telephone 01565 872643

Remaining tickets will be on sale at the Members' meeting on Thursday, November 9th – but please be aware that winter matinées are very popular and my 50 tickets could sell out quite quickly!

Margaret Hinde



Outings



Holiday in Norfolk

4 Nights / 5 Days, based in Norwich

Monday 13th – Friday 17th May 2024

The Outings Committee are very pleased to be able to offer a holiday in Norfolk to you!

Very briefly the itinerary will include:

- Guided walking tour of Stamford, Lincolnshire, one of the finest Georgian stone towns in the country, on Day 1, en route to Norwich.
- Visit to Royal Sandringham House, Museum & Gardens.
- A 1.5 hours cruise in the Norfolk Broads, in a double deck paddle boat.
- Visit to Blickling Hall & Estate (NT).
- Full day in Norwich, including tour of the medieval cathedral and free time.
- Visit to the Sainsbury Visual Arts Centre, one of the most prominent university art galleries in Britain.
- Visit to the International Bomber Command Centre, Lincolnshire (on our journey home).
- Final dinner at the Assembly House in the centre of Norwich.

We will be staying at the Best Western George Hotel in Norwich, a picturesque and convenient place to stay. We will be assisted in organising this by Simply Groups, the company involved with running our Slovenia and Northumberland holidays.

The cost of the holiday includes all luxury coach travel from Knutsford, 4 nights bed and breakfast, 4 dinners and 1 lunch. We have reserved rooms for 34 people; 10 twin/double rooms, 7 specific singles (no supplement) and 9 sole occupancy rooms (supplement applies).

Please note that **only double rooms** are available as of November 2023.

Price with minimum 30+ passengers - £779pp

Price with minimum 25 passengers - £799 pp

Single supplement - £79 for the 4 nights

We will have a lot more detail, (and booking forms) available at the November Members' Meeting but we thought you might like to know 'up front' what will be available.

Margaret Hinde

News from the Groups

Bowling Groups



The Tuesday and Friday crown green bowling groups have finished for the summer and will hopefully start up again in April 2024. This year has been a successful and fun one with good attendances coming to the Railway Inn Mobberley for bowls 10.30-12.00 followed by a convivial chat, beer, coffee, snack in the pub afterwards. The weather was reasonable with very few days having to be called off...it was sometimes a little damp though. The photo was taken at the Railway in early September.

Paul Buttrick

Cryptic Crosswords Group

The new Cryptic Crossword Group has continued into Autumn/ Winter with fortnightly free sessions. The group now provides separate Sections for Beginners and Improvers. New members are most welcome, the next meetings being: Beginners November 14th, Heath Room, Town Council Offices, 2pm to 3. Improvers: November 14th, same venue, 11am to 12.

For further details contact info@knutsfordu3a.co.uk

Brian Wreford

Tai Chi Group

We're very pleased to report that, after a long break, we now have a new tutor and that we were able to restart in mid-October. Both groups meet on Tuesday afternoon at the Knutsford Sports Club on Mereheath Lane: Group 1 at 2-3pm and Group 2 at 3-4pm.

We currently have spaces for a few new members. So, if you are interested in joining us, or would like more information, please contact Evelyn Flett on 01565 653048 or Yvonne Baker on 01565 651204.

Evelyn Flett

Holiday Report

A Week in Slovenia – October 2023



One Monday morning in early October, 25 U3A Members left Knutsford bus station by coach for Gatwick Airport. It was the start of a week's holiday in Slovenia, and the first international trip organised by our local group with Simply Groups. And what a trip it was! The sun shone throughout, with the exception of one day. Temperatures were mid-20sC; shorts were "de rigueur" for several of the men!



Perhaps the most spectacular place visited was the Postojna Cave, a huge cavern in the heart of the Slovenian Karst (limestone) area. The visit began with a 2 Km ride underground on a Disney-like train, before we walked for perhaps 40 minutes around the cave on a wide, smooth (but not slippery) route and marvelled at the stalactites and stalagmites of various sizes and formations. It was well lit, but without the garish flood-lighting and colours that can sometimes be found in such places. The guide described how the cavern was formed, its various dimensions and its development for tourism, without the need for contrived descriptions such as "organ pipes" or "Giants' faces"! We

returned to daylight again on the little train. It took around 90 minutes in all, and there was ample time to buy refreshments and souvenirs.

The first 4 days of the trip were based in Ribno, on the outskirts of the town of Bled. The area is reminiscent of the Austrian Tyrol, with well-wooded hills, houses with colourful window boxes and tiled roofs, interspersed with meadows, punctuated with drying racks for the grasslands. We visited Bled Castle, perched on a rocky outcrop high above its eponymous lake, which we then crossed to Bled Island with its church and tower. Some rang a bell, and made wishes! (Some just wished that the bell would be silent!). Later in the week, several took advantage of a free morning to walk around the lake, a distance of just under 4 miles on a wide track; others took advantage of the many cafes to enjoy coffee and cake!



Holiday Report



Later that day, we walked around Ljubljana noting its “Dragon” bridge, and rode up to its castle on a very steep funicular, before a boat ride on the canalised river. That evening, we were entertained over dinner by a folk group in traditional costumes who performed various dances akin to Morris dancing, and which included a hat-swapping game (to music) which clearly favoured taller contestants!

We barely noticed the rain on the only dull day, as we visited first an Alpine Dairy Museum, where we heard about the skills and traditions of local cheese-making, followed by a boat ride on Lake Bohinj and then a short time to learn about local Gingerbread in the small town of Radovljica. Our guide even found time to let us loose in a shop selling all sorts of things relating to bees and honey-products!

For the last 2 full days, we relocated to Portoroz a modern seaside resort, where we enjoyed a stylish seafront hotel. On the way, we marvelled at the dressage skills of horse and rider at the Lipica Riding School, a stud farm, home to over 300 (mostly) white horses. There was an opportunity to stroke some of the stallions in their stables, and to hear about the training routines used. Then it was on to lunch in a small winery, with suitable liquid refreshment! The next day, we went about 15 minutes along the coast to the small town of Piran, which, as our guide said, is like a small Venice without the canals, not surprising since it was built by the Venetians and was a centre for maritime trade. It displays typical Venetian architecture with narrow streets, a bell tower similar to that in St. Mark’s Square, and many churches. After ample time for lunch, we moved on to a local fish farm, where we were given canapés and white wine, whilst our host described their business, and gave tips on how to tell if fish is really fresh when purchased.

The last night of the trip was spent in Zagreb (Croatia) from where, the next day, after a short walking tour of the city we flew back to Heathrow. (Our coach journey to Knutsford took just a little over 4 hours, and we were back at the bus station soon after 9pm). Throughout the week our hotels were comfortable and well appointed with excellent Wi-Fi enabling us to keep in touch with home. The food at breakfast and dinner was plentiful and very good. The only exception was in Zagreb where the “boutique” style hotel was not really equipped to deal with a group of 25. Our guide (Tomas) had good English, and was very happy to be helped when from time to time a word escaped him, and we enjoyed his enthusiastic style and efficiency.



It was a superb week, doubtless enhanced by the glorious sunshine. Thanks are due to Lynda Harris for negotiating the itinerary and arrangements with Simply Groups, and there is a particular mention for Derek Shaw who had the unenviable task of ensuring that we all kept to time (and together!) for the journey home, no mean feat.

Trevor Bithell

The photos are also in the Archive on the u3a website at knutsfordu3a.co.uk/activity-groups-visits/photo-archive

Beyond our u3a



Knutsford Lions



Silhouette

St John's Parish Church Knutsford

Friday 10th November 2023



- **A fabulous 60s revival concert**
- **In aid of Lions Clubs Brain Tumour Research & Knutsford Lions Charities**
- **Doors open 6.45pm for 7.30pm start**
- **Unreserved seating, bar, Prize Draw**

Tickets £15 in advance

www.ticketebo.co.uk/knutsfordlions/silhouette

Email : knutsford.lions@gmail.com

or ring 07770415630

Visit – www.knutsfordlions.org.uk



Barnton Silver Band

Barnton Silver Band, a friendly, non-contesting village band based in Pickmere is looking for new players and u3a members would be most welcome.

Perhaps you have recently retired and would like to take up a new hobby or have played in the past and want to dust off your instrument and take up playing again.

The Band is open to everyone who wants to play and we may even be able to provide you with an instrument.

Our members, aged from 8 to 80+, have a wide range of musical abilities, and come from all walks of life around the Cheshire area.

We rehearse every Tuesday night at: 7:30 - 9:30 pm at Pickmere Methodist Church, Pickmere Lane, Pickmere, Knutsford WA16 0JP.

Phone 07903779619 for further information or contact us via our website at Barntonsilverband.co.uk

Booking Forms

PLEASE use a **separate booking form** and a **separate cheque** for each outing

- Write the name of the outing on the back of your cheque
- Make your cheque payable to Knutsford and District u3a
- Send a stamped, addressed envelope if you want your reservation confirmed
- Send your form and cheque **to the organiser as noted for each event**

Unless you send an SAE, you will only be contacted if your booking was NOT successful.

For further information contact the organiser (details on the appropriate booking form)

BOOKING FORM – Brief Encounter		Organised by Margaret Hinde
Event: Brief Encounter - The Musical Date & time: Saturday 13 th January, 2024, matinee performance Coach leaves at 13:00 prompt I/We would like to book place/s at £50.00 each and enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to Knutsford and District u3a		
Names of all attending		
Phone number	e-mail	Phone number In case of emergency on the day
Send this completed form and cheque made payable to Knutsford and District u3a to Margaret Hinde, 1, Warford Hall Drive, a Warford, Alderley Edge, SK9 7TR Telephone 01565 872643		