"Registered Charity Number 1153877



NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2026

EDITOR'S CORNER



Editor: You may have heard that I am experiencing some medical problems, and I may be unable to produce the newsletter for a while. Thanks to all who have been giving me support in difficult times. Please consult Chairman Jan Martin if you have articles etc. for the newsletter, who will be able to advise the procedure. In the meantime please look at our new website (details below)

OUR NEW WEBSITE IS NOW LIVE

Our new Wanstead and Woodford u3a website launched on 28th September. The website has been created using SiteWorks, the website platform developed especially for u3a's. It contains a wealth of information about Wanstead and Woodford u3a, including our activities, interest groups, meetings, events and the many opportunities available to members. Dinah Calderbank has worked incredibly hard to create and develop the website, carefully transferring information and ensuring that it is clear, attractive and easy to use. We are extremely grateful to her for the enormous amount of time, care and effort she has devoted to this important project.

The launch is an exciting step forward for our u3a. We hope the new website will help existing members keep up to date, while also showing prospective members everything that our friendly and active organisation has to offer. Many of the items on the website are the same as the newsletter (without the jokes!)



RAISING MONEY FOR OXFAM

Christmas Carols. If you enjoy a Christmas Carol singalong came to the Wanstead Farmers Market on Sunday December 5th We will be singing Christmas Carols outside the Oxfam shop from 11 to 12 pm.

It doesn't matter what your voice is like-.so that is no excuse and Carol sheets to prompt your memory of old favourites are provided. This is a good cause and leaves everyone in the Christmas spirit so I hope some of you will join me. If you would like to take part please email me (brown2jane@gmail.com

All probabilities are 50%. Either things will happen or not

MONTHLY MEETING



On Tuesday 1st December at 10.30 a.m.
(Doors open at 9.45 a.m.)

At: The Memorial Hall, South Woodford,
209 High Rd E18.

Christmas special .
Modality Voices with seasonal carols and songs plus refreshments.

SHARED QUIZ

Change of venue. Now Loughton Bowls Club

Dates and hosts: 15th January (W &W) 9th February (BH) 9th March (RV) 16th April (B.H.) 21st May (W&W) 10th September (RV) 15th October (W&W) 19th November (BH)

Doors open for Quizzers at 1.30pm.Quiz starts at 1.45pm.Please book early as the venue is smaller than the last. If you can't make it please let us know. Contact Jane Brown brown2jane@gmail.com Or Val Lord lordval99@btinternet.com 07806093533



BRIGHTON TRIP SATURDAY 5TH DECEMBER

For members coming to Brighton on 5th December, this is just a reminder that the coach will be leaving at 8.30am from Hawkey Hall so please arrive in plenty of time to get comfortable before we leave. Looking forward to seeing you all and having an enjoyable day out. Lynne Stillwell



TABLE TENNIS CLUB

Following a very enjoyable first session we'd love to welcome more U3A members to join us for our table tennis club. It's a relaxed friendly group, offering a great opportunity to enjoy some gentle exercise, have a bit of fun and socialise with fellow members. Whether you are a complete beginner or have played before, everyone is welcome, it's all about taking part and enjoying ourselves.

Our next session is on Friday 11th December in the Hall at Derby Road Methodist Church from 10.00am – 12.00pm and the cost is just £10.00 for 4 months. Bats and balls provided. Why not come along and give it a go. We look forward to seeing you.

WWU3A NEWS

NEW ACTIVITIES – WE WOULD LOVE YOUR IDEAS!

Jan Martin, our Chairman. Writes: We are always looking for ways to develop the range of activities at Wanstead and Woodford u3a, reflecting the interests of our existing members while also making ouru3a welcoming to those who may be thinking of joining us.

One possibility is to introduce more sporting activities. Our new table tennis group, organised by Lynne Stillwell, has proved so popular that there is already a waiting list. Perhaps we could build on this success by introducing activities such as pickleball, badminton, walking football or walking netball.

These activities would be open to members of all ages and abilities, with the emphasis on keeping active, having fun and making friends. We would love to hear your suggestions, whether for sporting activities or completely different groups. We would also be delighted to hear from members who might be interested in helping to organise or run a group. You don't need to be an expert or have previous experience, just enthusiasm and a willingness to bring people together. Groups can also be run jointly, so the responsibility doesn't have to fall on one person. Support and guidance would be available to anyone interested in getting involved. Please do share your ideas or offer to help. Together, we can continue to make Wanstead and; Woodford u3a an active, enjoyable and welcoming organisation for everyone.



TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Penny Anderson,

Yvonne Wilson, Pat Morton

CURRENT GROUP VACANCIES

Boules	Bridge	Canasta and Cards
Current Affairs	Enjoying Opera	History
French	Ten Pin Bowling	Trains, Boats and Planes

CURRENT AFFAIRS/ DISCUSSION GROUP

-3rd Thursday afternoon

A lively group which has been running for some months now. Last month we discussed:-Woman on death row who survived and what will state of Tennessee do now Dress codes including tattoos, hairstyles etc. do they detract from job interviews and also say about society and Manchester City breaking financial rules.

This month's subjects: What is the most important innovation in last 20 years, Should we get closer to Europe? What is the most important innovation in last 100 years? Should we get closer to Europe? Democrats big win in Mid Term Elections what comes next?

Still one or possibly two vacancies. If interested please contact Richard or Tina Harris tina.rich86@gmail.com

 Why isn't phonetic spelt the way it sounds

MORE WWU3A NEWS



Jane Brown reports. Despite the central line's best attempts to derail our trip with their 'severe delays' a large number from the Art and Culture group managed to make it to the Wallace Collection for their monthly visit. This time the trip was organised by John and Sarah Wasik and it proved so popular that the museum ran out of tickets for the guided tour. However U3a members are a crafty lot and by passing the entry tickets back and forth and hiding at the back we all managed to get on the tour.

The guide, who had worked at the Collection for over 20 years, gave a brief history of how the collection came into being before launching on to a very interesting and informative talk, although he was rather scathing about Rachel Kneebones white porcelain sculptures which were dotted around the building.

The first section of the tour focused on the pottery which we were told had to be fired each time a new colour was added to the item, so that each piece took weeks to complete (all photos by Ros Hay)

This was followed by a look at the Rembrandt collection. Over the years experts have disagreed on which paintings were genuine Rembrandts, from none to six or seven of those on show. However, unlike the other paintings the authenticity of Rembrandt's portrait of his only surviving son Titus as a teenager has never been in doubt. The boy is dressed in a 16th century Venetian costume with a red beret covering his curly hair.

For me the most amazing paintings were Canaletto's two large paintings of Venice's Harbour. I felt I could step right into them. The paintings were bought by the 1st Marquess of Hertford who was one of the founders of the Wallace Collection in the 1730s.
The tour ended with perhaps one of the most famous paintings, The Laughing Cavalier by Frans Hals, a portrait of a young man in a flamboyant costume.

The next outing for the art and culture group is to the Museum of the Home organised by Jeanette Plumb on October 22nd.

LONDON REGION



SAVE THE DATES

London Region of U3As Walks and Gallery visits December 2026/January 2027. We are delighted to announce the next full programme of walks for December/January. All events are £10, no refunds.

The programme can be found here and on the events page of the website. The sessions for December/January will launch on Tuesday 1st December 2026 from 17.00

Please remember that the London Region events team cannot book or reserve places on your behalf. For assistance please email bookings.lru3a@gmail.com Website https://lru3a.u3asite.uk/

Ability is like a cheque. It has no value unless it is cashed

MORE WWU3A NEWS

TRAINS, BOATS AND PLANES



Ann Speed writes: Last month's journey took us to Greenwich Maritime Museum and after a swift wander round familiar galleries we ventured to the Polar World which features artifacts from expeditions. We were treated to an informative lecture about the Franklin Expedition, commissioned by the British Admiralty in 1845 to chart the last unnavigated stretch of the Northwest Passage. It appeared to be the equivalent of a modern-day journey to Mars but with no communication with the outside. The Ships HMS Erebus and HMS Terror sailed with 129 officers and men, and disaster struck as they became trapped in sea ice near King William Island in Victoria Strait. All 129 men perished from starvation, scurvy, and exposure. It was a horrific story and when the bodies were found much later cannibalism was suspected. We recovered from this tale with a short lunch and a lovely river trip to Barking Riverside and then home overground. Our next trip will be to Brighton Toy Museum. Many thanks to Richard our convenor.



We are introducing a suggestion box for our U3A group and would love to hear your thoughts and ideas.

Whether you have suggestions for new groups, outings, speakers, social events or anything else you think make our group even better, please pop your ideas in the blue suggestion box located near the notice board. There will be suggestion slips available for you to write your idea down along with your name, U3A number and email address.

We would love to hear all your ideas and make sure that everyone has a chance to contribute. Thank you Lynne Stillwell Lystillwell@hotmail.co.uk

Gross ignorance is 144 x worse than ordinary ignorance

MORE U3A NEWS



FILM GROUP NEWS

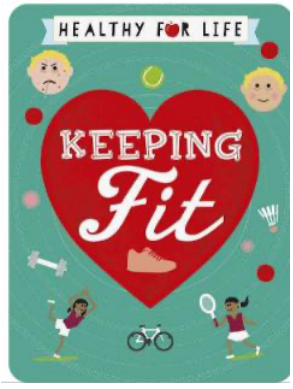
Our film for November was 9 to 5 - the memorable film starring Dolly Parton and Jane Fonda as secretaries and Lily Tomlin, the office manager, working for the egotistical, sexist boss (Dabney Coleman). After an unexpected chance to take revenge they turn their male controlled workplace into a model office.

After Dolly's recent death I realised I had never seen the film when it came out in1980 and we tried to find a copy in vain – lots of people must have had the same idea as me! One day last week our computer alerted Richard that there was a copy for me to buy! Luckily it arrived in time for Wednesday's group meeting! We had a record turn out and everyone seemed to enjoy the film whether they had seen it or not before. I have ordered 3 Christmas films for our December meeting but I will only be showing one of them – my choice? Our next meeting is Wednesday 9th December Angela Barnes angelabarnes1972@gmail.com



SINGING FOR FUN

Change of Time: it is now 11 until 1 p.m.
Same plaCe, the Woodford Methodist Church, Derby Road, South Woodford
Same date: 1st Friday of the month
Come and Join us!!



NEW KEEP FIT GROUP

Starting the 25th January for 20 consecutive weeks. At the Memorial Hall from 11 o'clock until 12 o'clock. Only £10 for 5 weeks.

For further information contact:
Jane Brown – brown2jane@gmail.com
or Val Lord _lordval99@btinternet.com
07806093533



At Woodford Underground Station, the design of the cast iron work on the brackets holding up the canopies over the platforms may go back to 1856 when the Eastern Counties Railway first opened the line, but is more likely to date from about 1880. Note also the Victorian style decoration of the pillars. The arrival of the railway heralded great changes to Woodford, with a rapid growth of population and the building of houses turning a rural retreat for the wealthy into a suburb of London. In 1947, London Transport took over the railway and electrified the line.

POT- POURRI





Spell Checker

I halve a spelling chequer,
It came with my pea see.
It plainly marks four my revue
Mistakes I dew knot sea
Eye strike a key and type a word
And weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong oar write
It shows me strait aweigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee fore two long
And eye can putt the era rite
Its rarely ever wrong.
I've scent this massage threw it,
And I'm shore your pleased too no
Its letter prefect in every weigh;
My checker tolled me sew.

PUT ON SOME MUSIC

When things don't go smoothly and times they are tough
And you find yourself properly well in the rough.
My ideal solution for lightening the mood,
Is not drinking or sulking or comforting food.
But something beloved by all of mankind.
That's magic and precious and easy to find.
Put on some music, whatever you choose.
Hip Hop, Pop, Opera or Rhythm and Blues.
For an age old solution that never goes wrong,
Turn on and tune in to your favourite song.
Your stress and your worries will soon disappear,
As the music reminds you of all you hold dear.
You hardly remember the things that went wrong
When you are lost in the sound of your favourite song

NEW WORDS FOR OLD

Twitter used to be a sound made only by the birds.
But now on my computer, it's a way of spreading words.
The tiny furry creature that scurries round the house,
Now is not the only thing that people call a mouse.
A golden handshake meant a thank you, that was nice,
But now a handshake just connects computers and device.
Tablets are those tiny things we swallow when we're ill,
But with a modern tablet, you can browse the web at will,
We think it's modern jargon but we older people know,
That all these words they're using stem from long ago.

OLD AGE

At night time I wonder as I take off my clothes,
Will I soon get to sleep or merely just doze.
Old age is golden, or so it's been said,
But sometimes I wonder, as I crawl into bed,
With my body all aching, I try to remember,
Is it now June, or July or September ?
Is there anything else that today I forgot?
Something important as likely as not!
The reason I know my youth is all spent?
Is my get up and go has got up and went.
But in spite of it all, I'm still very keen
And think of the places my get up has been.

POETS CORNER

Cards in shops already sold, Don't panic as if in a race,
Give love and best wishes, Possibly face to face,
Peace and goodwill all over the world would give our hearts a lift
And every day , a Christmas gift.

Poem by Jackie Raine U3A Member

KEEP SMILING

I'm not procrastinating — I'm on energy-saving mode.
Common sense is like deodorant. People who need it most never use it.
I don't rise and shine. I caffeinate and hope.
Life's short. Smile while you still have teeth.
I'm not arguing — I'm just explaining why I'm right.
I forgot that I am always forgetting things.
I don't need a motivational quote. I need a nap.
Brains are awesome. I wish everybody had one.
Adulthood is just Googling how to do stuff or learning via AI
I'm not lazy. I'm on power-saving mode.
I have a degree in overthinking.
I don't trip. I do random gravity checks.
I need six months of vacation, twice a year
I'm multitasking: I can listen, ignore, and forget at the same time.
I don't make mistakes. I create learning opportunities.
My life feels like a test I didn't study for.
Of course I talk to myself. Sometimes I need expert advice.
I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
My exercise is a cross between a lunge and a crunch… I call it lunch.
I'm not late. Everyone else is just early.
At my age, I don't count calories, I count naps.
I don't do 26 mile marathons—I do Netflix marathons.
I got a universal remote control, "This changes everything".
Due to a water shortage, some swimming baths are closing lanes 7 and 8.
We divorced over religion. I thought I was God, but my wife didn't.
Rumours of a new distillery in The Highlands have been scotched.
The maintenance works at the athletic track were just running repairs.
How was the Roman Empire cut in half? With a pair of Caesars.
I was told my friend was buying me headphones. Music to my ears.
It only rained twice last week. Once for 3 days and once for 4 days.
Sign outside a Castle. 'The key is under the moat'.
RAC Motto. We don't charge an arm and a leg for a tow.
Where did the person who invented patents go to register his idea?
A shotgun marriage is a case of wife or death.
He had a photographic memory which was never developed.
A dentist and a manicurist married. They fought tooth and nail
This couple went to the gym but their relationship didn't work out.



Today's The Day

Today I won't do a thing. I'm not feeling weak or ill.
I won't reach my potential, with nothing to fulfil.
Today's the day I'm lazy, no cooking or cleaning.
Or doing any tasks that I would find demeaning.
Today I'll just do nothing at all, nor answer the door to any call.
I won't consider being stressed. I'll just sit down and have a rest.