

Message from the Chair.

Dear Friends,

I hope, like me, that are you enjoying the return to u3a events after the festive break. Thank you to the coordinators, tutors, leaders, and courses team for providing such a rich programme of activities. We are always on the look-out for new topics, so do please contact the courses team if you have a subject or activity that you could lead.

You may be aware that the University of Kent support Canterbury u3a as part of their commitment to engage with the public through its research, and to strengthen their links with the community. Their arrangements include the Gulbenkian, and I am pleased to announce the re-launch of the Cinema Interest Sharing Group. The first film showing will be on Saturday 18 February. Please see the separate article in this Bulletin.

Details for the next joining session and the February monthly meeting are listed below under Important Dates to Remember.

Robin Terry

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Important Dates to remember

Next Joining Session: Friday 3 February, 10.30 to 12 noon at St Peter's Methodist Church, Canterbury

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Monthly Meeting, Wednesday 8 February: 'Medical Detection Dogs' by Millie Harries & Bridget Wood. St. Mary Bredin, 2 p.m. prompt.

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Membership Renewal. Please submit your membership fee for 2023 now. The membership Secretary's letter which you received this week tells you of all the options to do so. Thank you.

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A message from a Saxon Shore u3a member.

Happy new year. I hope you are well. In 2021, during lockdown, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. I have recently written a cancer novel, *In No Immediate Danger* (Entry Books Whitstable, 2022), which is intended to be a free resource to people who are experiencing prostate cancer and those who are supporting them. I am a member of Saxon Shore U3A and the story unfolds in Whitstable. I thought the members of Canterbury U3A might be interested in it.

I have shown the book's outline to a contact at Prostate Cancer UK who said that it 'looks great' and that they 'really like how I've combined my diagnosis with humour. It's very creative.' They continued 'It really does look fab. Some of the quotes are really amusing.' They hoped it might also be a donation opportunity if people who read it wanted to give to Prostate Cancer UK.

I think the novel would be helpful to any members who might be experiencing prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment. It is free and available on-line direct from me at twinjac1@gmail.com or I am happy for you to make it available to Canterbury members.

Presumably you will want to read it first, so I have attached a PDF copy. Below is a summary. Feel free to circulate it as you wish.

John Crawley, Whitstable (age 71)

Outline of the novel:

This is my story about cancer which is, sadly, terribly normal. Over two thousand books appear on an internet search for cancer books. Since the thirties, over 150 English language movies have featured cancer as a main part of the screenplay.

When I was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2021 I did not know how to behave, think and feel. Conversations I had not needed before could now not be avoided. Whom do you tell or not tell? How? How much? Should I put my head down and hide?

My intention is both considerate and selfish. I made notes of what was happening, how I was feeling and what I, my family and friends did.

I take you inside a world of fluctuating emotions. I hope by recounting and explaining procedures and modes of communication attached to cancer treatment and diagnosis I can help readers cope with unfamiliar, impenetrable language, rules and experiences.

My selfish motive is to write stuff down and thereby get it out of my head. I have found this extremely therapeutic.

I have come across the term 'cancer journey' a lot. That suggests to me a starting point and destination. The beginning, the diagnosis, has for me not been easy to identify. Symptoms were ignored for years. Once you decide to enter the testing, scanning and searching process, there can be several moments when it feels as if you are starting again from scratch. The destination does eventually become clear, but not the arrival time.

I have included some self-help tools and resources and details of many difficult procedures and medical moments during a pandemic.

In my first clinic meeting with my oncology consultant I asked,

'Don't they say that prostate cancer is something that you die with not from?'

'No you will die from this,' he replied.

Death is my destination, but I am not intending to take it as my life sentence.

I hope that my story can offer support and encouragement. The story jumps back and forward in time and not everything I have written is to do with cancer. Feel free to flick forward and jump sections. Sorry if I have the occasional rant. These are always aimed at a system or process, not people.

My first three monthly 'lifelong' hormone treatment review meetings with my consultant occurred on 14 February 2022. My test results were very good. This was the beginning of a long process and I am still not sure how optimistic I should feel. I hope that I will continue to hear from medical practitioners that I am 'in no immediate danger'.

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Canterbury a History since 1500: the story of a city and its people.

Doreen Rosman writes: It was lovely to see so many U3A friends at my book launch on Tuesday 22 November. For those of you who told me you were sorry to miss it, a video of the talk is now available on the Methodist church website: stpetersmethodist.org.uk. The YouTube link is under 'Covid 19 information' or go directly to <https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCurHVyIMv4YA7PVmhP0SmRQ>.

I still have copies of the book available at the discount rate of £17 and copies of David Birmingham's *Canterbury before the Normans* at £5. If you'd like a copy of either of them, please phone me. See your personal copy of the bulletin for the number.

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Riviera Travel

A reminder that if members arrange a holiday through Riviera Travel; they will give 10% back to u3a, providing they mention Canterbury u3a when booking. To book, check availability; or to request a brochure, call 01283 248 304 or visit U3Ariviera.co.uk

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Can you contribute?

Last autumn we had a successful meeting of members, old and new, who are prepared to share interests and passions with other members in the form of courses, interest groups and other activities. With the Summer programme coming up and preparations for the autumn programme getting under way, we would like to repeat such a short workshop. We would also welcome coordinators and experienced tutors to come along and encourage potential tutors and activity leaders.

The date and time will be Thursday 16 March, 11 to 12.30, and the venue is St Peter's Methodist Church Hall in St. Peter's Street, CT1 2BE. There will be refreshments including delicious cakes.

To book a place or for further information please contact Ursula on 01227 711 536 or ursulae@btinternet.com.



Courses and Activities

A Sincere Thank You

Canterbury u3a and especially the members of the Yoga Zen group would like to give Kath O'Donovan a VERY BIG thank you for her amazing efforts during lockdown and beyond by offering Yogazen sessions every week to our members. At one point she was teaching a class of 60 from her iPad on her living-room floor! As a novice user of Zoom, and ably helped with 'tech' by Jane Dennett (also working from home) she has not only offered professional yoga sessions from home every Monday morning, but kept us all focussed and active throughout the dismal days of Covid.

On behalf of the group and Canterbury U3A we can honestly say that she has helped us to 'Live, Learn, and Laugh' through some very difficult times.



From time to time courses have to be stood down for reasons of ill health of a tutor, leader or host and here is one such. Thank you Ron, we are pleased you are feeling better.

Mindfulness for Beginners (Revised dates)

MAXIMUM: 12, SESSIONS: 6. TUTOR / LEADER: Mr Ronald WOOLVEN

We spend our lives doing various things, some pleasurable and some not so. There is another way to exist instead of doing. This way is being; and this is what Mindfulness is. The course is experiential. After each session there will be some tasks to do at home. This is a personal commitment to ourselves, and missing any session will put you at a disadvantage. If you have a mental health problem please discuss this with your GP before applying.

REQUIRED: 1. The book with a CD: *Mindfulness—a practical guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World* by Mark Williams and Danny Penman
2. A CD player.
3. An A4 ring file.

WHEN: Weekly on Wednesdays, 22 February, 1 March to 29 March. 10:30–11:45.

VENUE: Upper Room, St Mary Bredin Church, Nunnery Fields, Canterbury, CT1 3JN

To apply for this course please use the usual on-line procedure set out in the courses programme and on our website, unless you are a non-email member in which case please telephone Angela Tippet. See your personal copy of the bulletin for the number. Please do not contact the tutor. Thank you.



When there is a high demand for a course, tutors sometimes agree to repeat it and here is one such course. Thank you Jim.

Revisiting *Julius Caesar* (Repeat)

MAXIMUM: 8, SESSIONS: 1. TUTOR / LEADER: Jim Hunter

A refresher ahead of the RSC production at the Marlowe (April 20–22). The greatest of political plays, it remains always relevant. Please bring your copy of the text.

WHEN: Tuesday 4 April, 10:30–12:00. VENUE: Bridge, CT4 5TN

To apply for this course please use the usual on-line procedure set out in the courses programme and on our website, unless you are a non-email member, in which case please telephone Angela Tippet. See your own copy of the bulletin for personal details. Please do not contact the tutor. Thank you.



u3a Walk

DATE: Tuesday 21 February. START: 10:30

MEETING POINT: Outside 50 Barton Road, Canterbury CT1 1YQ. Street Parking.

23A Bus arrives from Canterbury Bus station at 10:20.

LENGTH: 6½ miles (linear). Please allow approximately 3 hours.

Along the North Downs Way through farmland and the picturesque village of Patricbourne, mainly hard surface, no stiles. One long incline taken at your own pace! Refreshment stop, coffee/cake at Mama Feelgoods café, Bekesbourne.

As places are limited, please contact Pam Godden the Walk Leader to book, preferably via email or else by phone leaving a contact number.



A Revival of our Cinema Group

WHEN: Saturday 18 February at 3.00 p.m.

WHERE: Gulbenkian, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7NB. Plenty of free parking

The event will be advertised to the public 'in partnership with u3a'.

Pamela Hutchinson (see below) will be hosting a Q&A session after the showing.

Tickets will be on sale shortly and u3a members can benefit from a promo code **U3A£5** giving access to a £5 ticket on <https://thegulbenkian.co.uk/events/pre-code-hollywood-baby-face-1933-plus-qa/>

When you click book, a promocode box appears—enter the code and then click the small grey arrow so that the code appears in the top right of the screen. The £5 ticket won't appear straight away but if you select a full price ticket and click 'Add to Basket'—the £5 ticket will show up in the basket.

The Gulbenkian Café is also happy to put on a special menu on Saturday 18 February which will offer 2 courses for £10.

Genre: Pre-code Hollywood: Rules are Made to be Broken

Film writers and critics Pamela Hutchinson and Christina Newland present some of Hollywood's most risqué films (all UK Premieres of 2K restorations, care of Park Circus and Warner Bros) made before the 1930s Hays code was enforced. *Titles Blonde Crazy* (1931), *A Free Soul* (1931), *Jewel Robbery* (1932), *Red-Headed Woman* (1932) and *Baby Face* (1933).

These are brand new remasters of five classic Pre-Codes, from the sparkling *Jewel Robbery* (1932) starring Kay Francis and William Powell in a tale of Viennese gentlemen thieves wreathed in marijuana smoke, to James Cagney and Joan Blondell in the classic crime caper *Blonde Crazy* (1931). Norma Shearer throws herself at bad-boy Clark Gable in *A Free Soul* (1931), while in *Red-Headed Woman* (1932) and *Baby Face* (1933), Jean Harlow and Barbara Stanwyck learn how to get ahead, one notch on their bedpost at a time.

On 18 February we will be watching *Baby Face* (1933).

Words by season co-curators Pamela Hutchinson and Christina Newland. With thanks to Park Circus and Warner Bros.

Listen up, all you dirty rats and hot dames. Let us transport you back to Hollywood's savage years, when the restrictive censorship of the Hays Code wasn't worth the paper it was written on. Before the Hollywood censors decided to enforce the rules around sexuality, violence, drugs and hard living, a group of films we now call the Pre-Codes tested the boundaries by breaking every single one of them. And just as the gangsters and gold-diggers on-screen raised eyebrows by profiting from their nefarious deeds, cinema was enriched by some of the wittiest, wildest and most audaciously enjoyable movies Hollywood has ever made.

If you want to see women centre-stage and expressing their own desires, or criminals so charming you'll pray they get away with the loot, step this way . . .

Pamela Hutchinson is a freelance writer, critic, film historian and curator. She writes for Sight & Sound, Criterion, Indicator, the Guardian, Empire, and she regularly appears on BBC radio. She is also the editor of Sight and Sound's Weekly Film Bulletin, an email newsletter. Her publications include the BFI Film Classic on Pandora's Box and 30-Second Cinema (Ivy Press), as well as essays in several edited collections. In 2021 she delivered the Philip French Memorial Lecture at Cinema Rediscovered. Her site: SilentLondon.co.uk is devoted to silent cinema.

Robin Terry, u3a Chair



And here is another exciting venture open to our members—

Egyptians: 22–25 February

Egyptians is a new imagining of a play by Aeschylus in ancient Greece. What makes it special is that the play was lost, bar a tiny fragment, so the team behind it have had to conduct 'cultural archaeology', including research in Greece and Egypt, to put together the content and the delivery of the play.

The piece is written by leading playwright David Greig who has previously adapted Camus's *Caligula*, Euripides' *The Bacchae* and J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. So if you have members interested in theatre, classics, literature and history, this ticks all those boxes. We will have a couple of after show discussions for members interested in hearing from the team behind this amazing project: Saturday 25 February, 7.30 p.m. and Thursday 23 February 2 p.m.

We would love to have U3A members attend and have set up a special 20% discount offer.

For 20% off, **U3A20** is the code to enter before selecting tickets.

BOOKING LINK: <https://bit.ly/GACegyptians>.



News from Rose and Tim, our Outings Leaders

Save the date: Tuesday 25 April.

For our first outing we're planning a coach trip to central London, a guided tour around Smithfield followed by a canal boat cruise. Hopefully the weather will have warmed up a bit. We'll start taking bookings a month or so before, but if you are interested in coming please note the day in your diary.

We are also planning outings for July and September and will share more details in the coming newsletters. It has been some years since the last outing and unfortunately prices have gone up, but we are hoping to keep the price of each trip to between £50 and £60.

The March Bulletin will give information on how to book and pay for outings.

Rose and Tim



Book Review

Michael Flavin, *One Small Step*. (Vulpine Press, 1922), 261 pp. Paperback

In Flavin's novel, Neil Armstrong's famous words on moon-landing become those of a small boy discovering his independence. Danny Cronin, the first-person narrator, moved to Birmingham from Derry in Northern Ireland in the early eighteen-seventies with his elder sister, his mother and his father, a bus-driver. They had left Ireland shortly before the 'Troubles,' only to find themselves caught up in the conflict as it seethed up among the Irish working-classes in Birmingham. In 1974 the IRA pub bomb exploded, with its tragic consequences. The mother's loyalty to her Irish roots conflicted with the father's wish to start a new life in England, and this tears the close-knit family apart. As an Irish child among British schoolmates, Danny, too, finds himself trapped between conflicting loyalties. The one escape is inwards - in his creating a narrative of space exploration. .

The novel is 'one big step' for the author, Michael Flavin, who lives in Canterbury, and received his Ph.D. from the University of Kent. Although he has published academic monographs, this is first work of fiction. W. H. Auden wrote that there is no such thing as a 'good' or 'bad' first novel—it is an author's initial exploration of his creative imagination. Flavin's work, which is based on his own experience as an

Irish boy growing up in Birmingham amid the Irish troubles, is constantly illuminated by the freshness of remembrance. I greatly enjoyed it.

Louis James

Autumn Holiday to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

Sunday 3 September to Thursday 7 September 2023.

We have five days in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, staying in a 4* hotel on the outskirts of Winchester.

Our itinerary includes Stonehenge, Winchester Cathedral, Hospital of St Cross, Butser Ancient Farm, a day on the Isle of Wight with Osborne House, a day in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and RHS Wisley on the way home. This is another no single supplement holiday. Cost £689 per person which includes the day-ticket to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Due to a number of factors there is a limit of 10 double rooms and 15 single rooms on this holiday.

Taking into account the unreliability of the post at the moment, for efficacy, please email me for a copy of the brochure.

If you are not connected to the internet, please write requesting the brochure with a stamped addressed envelope to Helen Natrass.

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And finally . . . Thoughts to Encourage Seniors:

The ability to speak several languages is an asset, but the ability to keep your mouth shut in any language is priceless.

Be decisive. Right or wrong, make a decision. The road is paved with flat squirrels who couldn't make a decision.

Happiness is not having to set the alarm clock.

When I get a headache I take two aspirin and keep away from children just as the bottle says.

Just once, I want the prompt for username and password to say, 'Close enough'.

Becoming an adult is the dumbest thing I've ever done.

If you see me talking to myself, just move along. I'm self-employed; we're having a meeting.

'Your call is very important to us. Please enjoy this 40-minute flute solo.'

Does anyone else have a plastic bag full of plastic bags or is it just me?

I hate it when I can't figure out how to operate the iPad and my tech support guy is asleep. He's 5 and it's past his bedtime.

Today's 3 year-olds can switch on laptops and open their favourite apps. When I was 3, I ate mud.

Tip for a successful marriage: 'Don't ask your wife when dinner will be ready while she's mowing the lawn'.

So, you drive across town to a gym just to walk on a treadmill?

I didn't make it to the gym today. That makes five years in a row.

I decided to stop calling the bathroom 'John' and renamed it the 'Jim'. I feel so much better saying I went to the Jim this morning.

Old age is coming at a really bad time.

If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would have put them on my knees.

Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven't met yet.

Why do I have to press one for English when you're just going to transfer me to someone I can't understand anyway?

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Thank you for all your contributions, from a couple of sentences up to 250 words.

Keep them coming, as this is your News Bulletin.

Send them to Ursula Steiger: ursulae@btinternet.com.

