

Dear u3a member,

Welcome to our August Newsletter.

It has been a second, quiet month for news, and our Newsletter is consequently shorter than usual.

Following on from Springfield Farm and Brandwood Cemetery, this month we have an article about the Moseley Dovecote. It is well worth a visit if you have not already had that pleasure.

Please continue to send your letters, creative works and local photos to: ken's email.

With every good wish from Ken Fisher, Editor

In this month's newsletter

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Message from our Chair, Ray Tier

August is traditionally a quiet month of the year when many of us are on holiday but the u3a calmly carries on, albeit often with depleted numbers at group meetings or the monthly talks. Another August tradition is moaning about the British weather, although our discontent this year is clearly more justified. What is more unusual however is that the complaints are directed not just at the weather here but in the Mediterranean, not due to it being too cold but because it is too hot. Personally, as I read news of thousands of tourists fleeing forest fires in Rhodes, I am rather grateful for our thundery showers.

We had another fascinating talk at our recent monthly meeting from David and Pam Humphries about the No. 8 Inner Circle bus route. What really struck me (apart from the amazing vintage buses) was the extent to which the bustling inner Birmingham industrial community had been lost, replaced by featureless grass covered roundabouts, warehouses and ex-pubs repurposed as takeaways. This month our monthly meeting will become a games afternoon – a repeat of the very successful session we held last August. This is an opportunity for you to hone your games skills ready for family gatherings next Christmas, so I hope you will be able to join us.

Wherever you are, have a good August.

Events and reminders

Drop in for a coffee and chat at Fletcher's Bar



Friday 11th of August. from 10:30 to 12:00 at Fletcher's Bar in York Road in Kings Heath.

We have the front room to ourselves. You just need to pay for your own drink at the counter in The Kitchen Garden café, cost will depend on your choice of drink. We will provide biscuits. All access is through the Kitchen Garden Cafe, this includes Disabled access but if required they can

also put up a ramp at the front door of Fletchers provided you let them know in advance.

Any questions call me, Tessa Bidgood on ????????????? or tessabidgood@btinternet.com or speak to Val Baxter

Monthly Meetings

[A message from Janet Burgess, our Social Secretary](#)

July Meeting at The Shires

Tuesday 11th July 29 members were greatly informed and entertained by Dave and Pam Humphries on the buildings and history of the area the 8 or Inner Circle bus route takes. For some it was completely new territory while others had memories of parts of the route. The Covid lockdown was the impetus for them to devise this companion piece to the equally fascinating Outer Circle talk. Whilst the route has barely changed it was very striking how much of old Birmingham had been swept away, often for the better with regard to slum dwellings but also sometimes with changes of purposes, pubs in particular becoming transformed into eateries for example. Perhaps the jewel in the 8's crown is the listed Barton Arms in Newtown, a pub well worth visiting for a good beer and (currently) Thai meal.

Thanks to Carey for the organisation of refreshments and to Sylvia Butler for helping out at the signing in desk.

August 8th meeting: 2-4 pm. at The Shires

On August 8th there will be a bring your own games afternoon. Come along with your favourite game(s) whether it's whist/Bridge/Scrabble/Rummikubs/Mahjong or something else.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Interest Group Matters

South Birmingham Network news

The SBN is made up of our u3a, together with Kings Norton and Edgbaston & Harborne u3sa.

If you are interested in joining a group in one of these u3as, you can contact the relevant Group Leader. Contact details can be found on their respective websites. They will need to check you are a member of MHKD u3a, either by seeing your membership card, when you join a group, or by confirming with Faith Walsh, our membership secretary. You will have to pay the same contributions towards venue costs (if any) that other members of the group pay.

Members of KN and H&E wishing to join a MKHD group will need to contact Anne (James) as the IGL, and she will take it forward from there.

Kings Norton u3a Ballet, Opera, Music and Theatre Programme (BOMaT)

Dr Peter Rookes runs this group. He writes that the group has attended some really great events during the last month, including, for example, the live screening of *Il Trovatore* from the Royal Opera House, free Jazz at the Symphony Hall on Friday evenings, Samuel Becket's *Masterpiece*, *Happy Days* at the REP, which was a truly amazing performance and the brilliant VIP event at Elmhurst Ballet School. This group is available to members of MKHDu3a.

Peter will book your seats when you tell him that you want to attend, and he would like payment to be made by cheque, payable to Peter Rookes, using a black pen. Send to Peter's address. He also requests that you let him have your mobile number, in case he needs to contact you at short notice. Tickets are stored on his phone

If you fancy attending the Free Jazz, you need to book your own tickets. Go into BMusic at <https://bmusic.co.uk/whats-on> and click Jazz. If it says 'Sold Out', more tickets are released on Friday afternoons which you can book online or get at the booking office at 4.30. Free Jazz is not, in fact, limited to Friday evenings.

Future offerings include

The Lion King, Birmingham Hippodrome, Sat 19th Aug, Front Circle – £90.

Love is All Around, Andre Rieu, Live Screening, Cineworld, Broad Street, Sun 27th Aug, £15.50

Black Sabbath, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Sept – sold out

Sinatra, The Musical, Thurs 28th Sept, 7.30pm, Birmingham Rep, Row E, £32-50

Don Quixote, Royal Ballet, Live Screening, Cineworld – Tues 7th Nov – Booking details not yet available

La Traviata, Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 9th Nov, Side of Front Circle – £48

If you are interested in attending any of these performances, please let Peter know if you would like him to book any of these events for you. You can also ask to be included on his mailing list. Contact Peter at Peter's email

Health and Safety

Please inform your Group Leader or a member of our Executive Committee of any H&S concerns that you may have, so that these can be fully addressed as soon as possible. Risk Assessment documents can be found on the [National u3a site](#) by following the menu link - 'Support for u3a's'. However, you will need to log-in (and create an account if you do not have one) to enable you to search for relevant information

Membership matters

A message from Faith Walsh, our Membership Secretary

A warm welcome to our four new members:

Mary Dunning

Stephen Dunning

Anna Konczak

Lucy Sobrero

A new minutes-taker needed

Your Executive Committee continues to seek a new minutes-taker for 2023. This would involve attending each monthly meeting, held on the final Tuesday of the month at 14.00, and typing up the minutes. If anyone is interested, even only for a trial period, please email Ray Tier, our chair, at Ray's email.

Photographs from Members

Some photographs from our member Roy Stove



Purple Clematis



Evening blooming Day Lily



Redleaf rose



A summer rose

Scam Watch

M&S WhatsApp scam

Scammers are sending WhatsApp messages claiming that M&S is giving away '2000 dine-in meals for 2'.

If you click on the link you'll be taken to a dodgy website, which asks you to complete a questionnaire and share the message with people in your contacts list. Do not go there.

Santander 'update your information' email

These emails impersonate Santander by using its logo and branding to tempt you into clicking a phishing link.

This dodgy email claims that you have out-of-date information on your Santander account, and that you should update your contact details due to 'security concerns.'

General advice

Beware of unexpected emails, calls or texts asking you to provide personal details or log into your account via a link provided in the message. Genuine firms or organisation would never ask you to respond in such a manner. If in doubt, contact the firm or organisation directly and speak with someone to verify matters.

Some Actions you can take if you suspect a scam

- Forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk
- Forward suspicious text messages to 7726.
- If you feel you have been a victim of a scam notify your bank immediately and report it to www.actionfraud.police.uk

Local History The Moseley Dovecote



If you walk up the Alcester Road from Moseley Village centre towards Kings Heath, after a few hundred yards on your right you will spot the Moseley Dovecote. It was built to serve Moseley Hall. Now restored, looked after by the Moseley Society and open to the public at certain times, the dovecote gives us an intriguing glimpse of what life was like in the early 18th century.

So what was the purpose of dovecotes? Essentially they were one of the few sources of fresh meat during winter. Until the introduction of root crops, such as turnips and swedes, in the mid 18th century, it was necessary to slaughter livestock in the Autumn in order to conserve sufficient food to maintain the breeding stock throughout the winter. In consequence of this slaughter, only salted or smoked meat would have been available in the winter. The fresh pigeon meat was therefore welcome, and there was the added bonus of eggs and squabs (unfledged birds) in the summer. The guano was also a very effective fertiliser.

It is thought that pigeon-keeping originated in ancient Rome, and spread through its extensive empire.. The birds were kept for sport and for food in buildings called columbaria. There is no evidence of Roman columbaria in England; so the Normans probably introduced them. Although dovecotes, as we now call them, existed in many architectural forms, they generally had elevated nesting areas designed to prevent predators, such as rats, entering and devouring eggs and squabs. For this reason, the Moseley dovecote is entered via a first-floor storage room with laddered access to the second floor nesting chamber. The overhanging roof eaves serve as a further vermin deterrent. Originally, there were two pigsties in the base of the octagonal brickwork structure and their arched entrances can still be seen.

In Norman times, only the Church and Lords of the Manor were allowed to have dovecotes, as the birds were considered detrimental to essential seed crops. Nevertheless, dovecotes proliferated with an estimated 26,000 in England during the 17th century. Not surprisingly, landowners considered pigeons to be a pest. However, in 1751 a court ruled that dovecotes were not a nuisance as the King owned some, and to rule against them would be ruling against the Crown. Later that year it was made an offence to shoot a pigeon, carrying a penalty of a three-month prison sentence. By the end of the 18th century, the introduction of foddors to enable the overwintering of livestock, gradually made dovecotes redundant.

If you wish to discover more, you can visit the dovecote on its opening days which can be viewed on the Moseley Society web site by clicking this web link [Dovecote opening times](#):

Contact information

Please ensure that emails sent to the addresses below include 'u3a' in the subject box. Clicking on the email title should open an email to the actual email address.

Interest Group enquiries

Anne James

Groups email

Membership enquiries

Faith Walsh

07789 253089

Membership email

Accounts enquiries

Carey Baff

Accounts email

Newsletter

Ken Fisher

Communications email

General enquires

Ray Tier

Enquiries email

Social events

Janet Burgess

Events email

Your Executive Committee

- Chair Ray Tier
- Vice Chair Ken Fisher
- Business & Communications Secretary Cormac Quigley
- Treasurer Carey Baff
- Interest Group Co-ordinator Anne James
- Membership Secretary Faith Walsh
- Social Events Secretary Janet Burgess
- Member Heather Lawrence