



Upminster u3a Newsletter

"Learn, Laugh, Live"



October 2023

We meet at
The New Windmill Hall, Upminster, RM14 2QH
on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

News & Notices

London Region Events [click here](#)

Useful Links

Upminster u3a website [click here](#)

Upminster u3a Committee
Contact details [click here](#)

For future news, articles, and feedback,
please email
Barbara Smith, Newsletter Editor
uu3abarbara489@btinternet.com

Newsletter entries must be received by Barbara by the
1st of each month. Thank you.

The Editor reserves the right to amend or omit
content.

For your Diary



Our next meeting will be on
Tuesday 17 October '23, doors open at 1pm

Monthly meeting speaker details
(we now have two each month): [page 2](#)

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Future Guest Speakers at Monthly Meetings

Please note that some speakers are different to those shown in previous newsletters

17 Oct	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark Carroll about DNA and You. 2. Barclays Bank representative, Donna, about scams.
21 Nov	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'Sing a Song for Christmas' - Danielle Barnett, professional singer (talking about Christmas traditions, songs and their origin). 2. Gillian Ford, organiser of Upminster Dementia Choir. Gillian is also a Councillor.
19 Dec	Christmas Party (no speakers) – other treats instead!
2024	
16 Jan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gary Lucas - talk about Hitchcock's Leytonstone 2. Richard Jeremiah-Clarke from Connect Lifetime Mortgages together with Legal and General to talk about Equity Release.
20 Feb	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Veronica King - talking about her time as a store detective. 2. TBA.

View from the Chair

From a Railway Carriage

I cannot take credit for the title as Robert Lewis Stevenson wrote it a long time ago, but it did come to mind recently when taking a train journey with my grandchildren. Trains are something I take for granted and adore travelling on them (even Beeching couldn't quell that). This was, however, my grandchildren's first time even though they live in London. They were enthralled and so excited by the whole experience of being able to see out of the window during their travels calling out when they spotted everyday things.



Trains have been with us a long time but this experience taught me about how much (and fast) our lives have changed and we must live and love every moment and not take it for granted. This journey with the children made me realise the importance of small everyday things.

- Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
- Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
- And charging along like troops in a battle
- All through the meadows the horses and cattle;

..... Look it up if you are interested in the rest.

Susan Mayes



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Membership Information

Since our last newsletter we have welcomed the following new members:

- Maureen Allison
- Maureen Dennis
- Barbara Lewis
- Brigitte Neugebauer
- Joe Turney

As at the end of September we had 605 paid-up members.

Pamela Freer

Notices and Information

(some unusual ones this month - highlighted)

Speakers at Monthly Meetings

Re the list of **future guest speakers** on page 2, and the fact that some have needed to change/cancel the dates when they come to talk to us at our monthly meetings, although this is not within our control, we will always try our best to advise any changes as soon as we can.

Barbara Smith.

Update on Refreshment Initiative at Monthly Meetings

In order to move in line with other u3as around the country, we have been looking at ways to be more eco-friendly. Our decision was to move forward in the refreshment area first.

It was proposed that individuals should bring their own cup/mug and be responsible for it. Refreshments will still be free - with tea being poured at the hatch in the usual way. You help yourselves to coffee, milk, sugar and biscuits available on two tables away from the serving hatch. Hot water for the coffee will be available at the hatch.

Obviously this is in its infancy and there will be problems both for u3a members and the ladies serving, but I'm hoping we can solve them together to make us a more sustainable u3a.

Thank you in anticipation for your cooperation.

Susan Mayes.



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Suggestion for a New Group – Wine Making

We have received the following invitation from a fellow member.

Bottling up Summer

Over the past few years, we have taken our black grapes to Organiclea in Chingford who made them, and others from the area, into wine. They have decided to discontinue this community wine scheme and I was wondering if there are any Uu3a members who want to, or already do, dabble in vinification? Our grapes are ripe, and last year we contributed 19 kilos from our one vine.

With just over 600 members I feel sure there is someone out there either eager to make their own wine or who knows someone who is! It seems such a shame to waste all that potential.

If anyone is interested please email: sueanni@talktalk.net or telephone 01708 223231.

Sue Lawrence.

Social Events

Almost 150 members came along to the first Quiz & Supper event run by the new social committee. In spite of a few teething problems, it was a successful evening with a lot of positive feedback. The fish/chicken and chips went down well as did the bonus of a dessert. All in all, it was an enjoyable sociable evening which we hope to organise again in the future.

Future Events

A reminder that the Christmas Party, with food, drink and entertainment, will be on **Tuesday 19 December**, the monthly meeting date. Tickets - £12.00 **will be for Uu3a members only**, and will go on sale at the October monthly meeting. If you are unable to get to the meeting, ask a friend to get a ticket for you. **After** the monthly meeting tickets can be obtained by contacting **Chris Slade at chrisslade1@sky.com or on 07906-433559.**

Looking forward, you will soon be getting your 2024 diaries and calendars, so you might like to make a note of the following events/dates.

- Tuesday 13 February - Barn Dance. Full information to come, but please note that tickets for this event will go on sale at the November monthly meeting. Due to space constraints, only about 100 tickets will be available, and will be for Uu3a members only.
- Thursday 30 May - Event to be decided.
- Wednesday 25 September - Event to be decided.
- Tuesday 17 December - Christmas Party.

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Further details will be provided as and when available, and please note that Social Event information is on the Uu3a web site.

Your Social Committee

Annette, Brenda, Janet, Maureen, Sue, Yve

Out and About in London Further to last month's item relating to the two new high-level viewing sites in Bishopsgate, please note that both are now open and free, although tickets do need to be booked on-line, and check the web sites for opening times.

The Lookout 8 Bishopsgate - 50 stories high with an, approximately, 180 degree view out over East, South, West London. No facilities other than 1 toilet.

Horizon 22 - 22 Bishopsgate, next door to number 8. The viewing area on the 58th floor, with 360-degree views over London, makes Horizon 22 the highest free-viewing platform in Europe. There are toilet facilities, and a small cafe with food and drinks will open a few weeks after the launch at the end of September. Whilst the views are impressive, probably best to visit when you are going up to town for something else, rather than going just for the views.

Chris Slade.

Monthly Quiz



Almost but not quite!

You might know the longest, highest, biggest etc., but what about the **second?**

1. Second longest river in the world?
2. Second highest mountain in the world?
3. Second oldest country, by date of earliest known organised government, in the world?
4. Second biggest country in the world?
5. Second highest population in the world?
6. Second smallest country in the world?
7. Second largest ocean in the world?
8. Second largest county in England?
9. Second largest terrestrial animal, after three species of elephant, in the world?
10. Second longest river in the UK?

Chris Slade



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Groups Update

Cinema Group

A group of us went to see *A Haunting in Venice* after meeting for lunch in Zizzi's.

The film didn't disappoint; an eerie, atmospheric, beautifully shot and amazingly acted, haunted house mystery film that weaves in a number of sub-plots, which helped to maintain engagement and created a good plot development. There were so many twists and turns and it was hard to keep up!

The scenery was breathtaking, with lovely shots of the water.



Annette Gaskin

Visits to Places of Interest

I managed to arrange three new visits but then, unfortunately, had to cancel the first one due to the date clashing with a family funeral. The October visit to Covent Garden and the November visit to Emery Walker's House proved very popular and are both sold out.

Group members will be notified as soon as additional visits are arranged.

Pamela Freer



Coffee Morning



The dates that we are meeting are October 10th, 24th and Nov 7th - always the same place and time in Roomes Cafe at 11am.

Angela McDonald



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Art History / Appreciation – After Impressionism: Inventing Modern Art

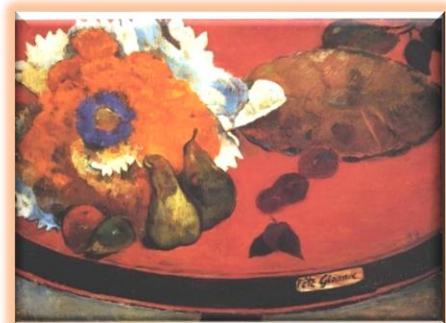
This exhibition at the National Gallery brought together many of the artists and themes we have discussed within our group. As the title suggests, it told the story of the great changes which occurred in art late 19th and early 20th century France – the transition from Impressionism into modern art movements.

"Artists were not content with the art of the past or, for the same reason, the art of the present dominated as it was by realism and naturalism", Mary Anne Stevens, Curator.

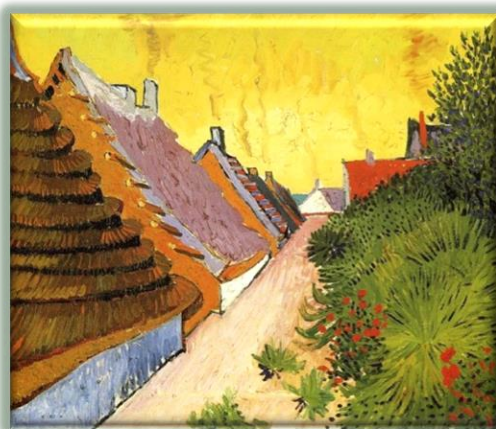
The exhibition opened on a celebration of the three 'giants' in art of that era – Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh. Working in divergent and independent styles, they distorted form and colour and created expressionist moods and compositions.



Monte Sainte-Victoire
Paul Cézanne, 1904



Still Life Fete Gloanec
Paul Gauguin, 1888



Houses in Les-Saintes-Maries de la Mer
Vincent Van Gogh, 1888

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The Automobile
Ramon Casas, c.1900

We then followed the influences these artists had on their peers, younger generations of French artists and wider circles of art across Europe.

It was really interesting to see how new approaches to art originally appearing in Paris radiated out to cities such as Berlin, Barcelona, Brussels and Vienna.



The Scheldt Upstream from Antwerp, evening
Theo van Rysselberghe, 1892

In the final room of the exhibition there were some indicators of future directions in art. The fragmentation of one art historical story into many different strands. For example, Picasso's early experiments with Cubism showing the influence of Cézanne of whom Picasso spoke of as "my only master."



Woman with Pears
Picasso, 1909

His lover Fernande Olivier's head splintered into fragments unpacking Cézanne into Cubism.

We saw some wonderful paintings by the great artists of the era. Many coming from private collections which we had never seen before and which made our visit so worthwhile.

Chris Mecham



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Coach Trips

In August we took our largest ever number of members on one trip (50) for a **gentle cruise along the River Lee** from Broxbourne while eating a fish and chip lunch. The weather was mild and pleasant and I think the day was enjoyed by all. It made a lovely change to have a short coach journey.



In September we had a much busier day on our two-site visit to Sussex. Again, we were favoured by mild and pleasant weather.

First we visited **Bateman's**, the home Rudyard Kipling lived in for the final 30 years of his life. He was by then at the height of his fame and very wealthy but the house – although grand by modern standards – was relatively modest for a man of his status. It is wood-panelled and the rooms, with one exception, are small. The Kiplings' own furniture is still in situ and everywhere there are books. When he originally purchased the house it had 33 acres of land but he bought up all the neighbouring land that became available and the grounds now comprise more than 330 acres through which visitors are allowed to walk. After seeing the house, we only had time to enjoy the 13 acres of formal gardens nearest to the house. The main garden leads down to a stream where an old water mill provided the Kiplings with one of the first water turbine electric generators. Unfortunately, this was not working on the day of our visit.

After the Bateman's visit we drove the short distance to Battle where we all had lunch in the town then visited the **Battle Abbey and battlefield**. There we had lots of walking: either right round the battlefield or along the contour line just below the buildings. Either way we were given lots of interesting information on the audio guides which reacted to the place we were standing rather than giving us a serial tour.



After seeing as much of the battlefield as we wanted we had to walk through the substantial ruined remains of the abbey complex. Enough remains to show that this was a huge community in its heyday. We were not able to see inside the best-preserved part of the original abbey: the abbot's great hall and library, as this is now a private boys' school and can only be visited on a few days in the school holidays.

Pamela Freer



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Ancestry Group

Over the last few months, we have had some very interesting and, hopefully, enjoyable meetings.

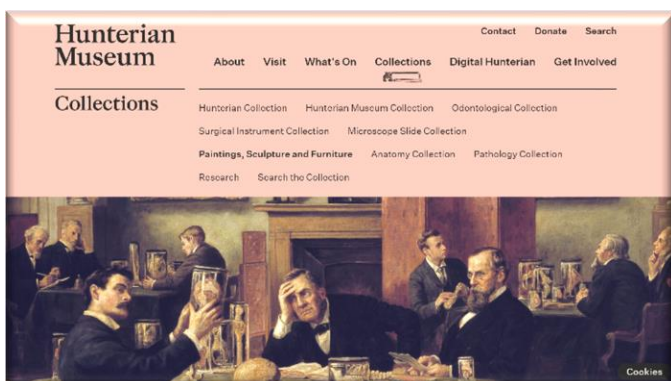
At our last meeting at the beginning of September, one of our members gave us a very interesting talk on her German pork butcher ancestors and future talks will be on various topics such as how one member's ancestors all ended up in the London area. We will also look at such things as brick walls and the value of joining Family History Societies.

Some members of our group will be at the October meeting, when the talk is about DNA, and will be happy to talk about our Ancestry Group meetings to anyone who may be interested in joining us.

Mary Hunwicks

STEMM in September

Eight members explored the newly multi-million-pound refurbishment of the Hunterian Museum <https://hunterianmuseum.org> housed at the Royal College of Surgeons of England. In two hours, we weaved and perused our way through some of the fascinating medical advancements from antiquity up to 2022.



From the screenshot one will note the range of items comprising the various collections: history, art, technology, engineering, science and medicine.

Underpinning some of the items on display lurked the question about the ethics of their acquisition. There are notes to this effect online and at a few points in the museum. There are going to be academic events including exploring 'the ethics of display'.

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The collection is the lifework of John Hunter (1728-1795). An important point is that John could not read yet he became a renowned collector, anatomist, surgeon and educator.

Might he have been dyslexic but a keen observer and explorer (of the world as well as human anatomy)?

Are you a proud owner of a pacemaker?

See how these life-savers have evolved since the 1970s to 2022.



There are invaluable online learning tools, along with interviews, etc., <https://hunterianmuseum.org/online-exhibitions/the-operation-room> that could be used as career guidance resources for our younger generations, as well as their educators.

The digital exhibition is informative and interesting, some might say 'gross', but seeing all the real items in the museum display is awesome! I would encourage you to visit, maybe even take someone from another generation, but do remember to book using the online portal.

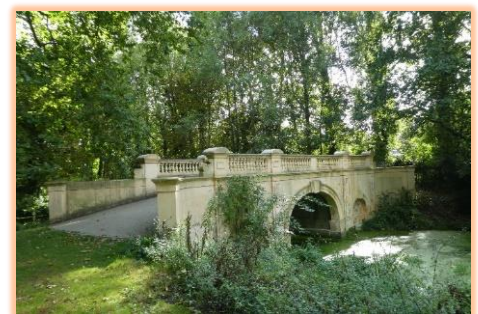
In many ways this was a truly STEMM trip: the Hunterian Museum display comprised all facets of science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine whilst being an excellent forum to promote intergenerational activity and interest.

Lyn Haynes

Short Walks - Parklands Open Space and Bonnetts Wood



We met at the end of Parklands Ave, before walking to the lake. This was created in the late 17 hundreds by damming the stream that rises in Cranham Marsh and flows via Berwick Ponds into the river Ingrebourne.



The lake was part of Gaynes (or Engaynes) Manor. We walked along the bank to the bridge that is grade 11 listed. This bridge linked Great Gaynes to Londons. Londons was named after Dr. London, the parish doctor, who lived there 1804. On the other bank was a lone fishermen.

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Returning to the other end of the lake we crossed the road to Bonnetts wood with its meandering paths and wooded areas. At this time of year there were rose hips. Bonnetts wood is named after the Bonnetts family who farmed here as part of their Central Farm in the 1920's.



Passing over the same stream as Parklands up a gentle climb leads to another former gravel extraction and landfill site that has been reclaimed as green space and is now part of Bonnetts wood. There is a restricted 360° panoramic view from this space, the view including Langdon Hills to the east and Canary Wharf to the west. The latter is virtually obscured because the trees have grown since planting in about 2020.



Russ Barnett

POETRY APPRECIATION

After the August break we started our September meeting in celebration of the sixth anniversary of our first meeting - in September 2017! This was with many of the original members. I refer to Group 1.

We explored the work of Cecil Day-Lewis - *Nearing The Legendary Isle* and Vita Sackville-West's - *A Creed*. Day-Lewis, as well as being a Cambridge lecturer, was the author of mystery stories and wrote several books under the pen name of Nicholas Blake.

Sackville-West lived a somewhat interesting life who was part of the illustrious Bloomsbury Group - a collective of writers, artists and intellectuals in the early 20th century that included Virginia Woolf, E.M. Forster and the economist John Maynard Keynes. Our Guest Poem was the beautiful *Mother, Summer, I* - by Philip Larkin.

Group 2 explored *FERN HILL* and the life of Dylan Thomas, one of the greatest poets ever who sadly died at age 39. Much has been written about Dylan Thomas; too much to mention here.

We also looked at Day-Lewis's*Nearing The Legendary Isle* and our Guest Poem was *Judging Distances* a WWII poem, by Henry Reed. It is the second of a set of five about an NCO training new recruits to the army, and the first one *Naming of Parts*, is well known because it is in so many anthologies.

We look forward to meeting again in October.

Michelle Blythe



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Quiz Answers

1. Amazon. But it does carry the largest volume of water.
2. K2 (Godwin-Austen).
3. Egypt.
4. Canada.
5. China. Having, according the UN recently been overtaken by India.
6. Monaco.
7. Atlantic.
8. Lincolnshire.
9. White rhinoceros.
10. Thames.



*Enjoy the October beauty
of autumn*

See you all in November

