



# Upminster u3a Newsletter

"Learn, Laugh, Live"



June 2023

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

## News & Notices

Our AGM will be held on Tuesday 20th June  
2023 at 1.30pm  
when new Committee Members will be elected

This will be followed by the speaker  
(details shown on right-hand panel on this page)

AGM papers have been circulated

\*\*\*\*\*

London Region Events. For details of the full  
range of events, [click here](#)

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\* London Region Summer School – will be on  
25th & 26th July '23 \*\*

\*\* See 'Notices' on page 3 for full details \*\*

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## Useful Links

Visit our Upminster u3a website to view our  
current list of active groups, [click here](#)

Upminster u3a Committee – Contact details can be  
found on our website, [click here](#)

For future news, articles, and feedback,  
please email

Barbara Smith, Newsletter Editor  
[uu3abarbara489@btinternet.com](mailto: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 is the AGM on  
Tuesday 20 June '23, doors open at 1pm

## Future Guest Speakers – 2023

- 20 June Sandra Lawrence on Ellen Willmott, Warley Place.
- 18 July Veronica King on her career as a store detective.
- 15 Aug Simon Keable on his relative Robert Keable.
- 19 Sept Keith Finch on the reopening of the Windmill.
- 17 Oct Mark Carroll about DNA and You.
- 21 Nov Paul Robbins on Cockney Rhyming Slang.

## Inside this Edition

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15	Upminster Windmill - <b>information and opening dates</b>



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## Chair's Annual Report for Membership Year 22/23



In my first newsletter 'View from the Chair', I began with 'What an eventful week'. One year later I reiterate that sentiment with 'What an eventful year!'

The Upminster u3a continues to go from strength to strength and is a solid feature of Upminster life for retired people.

The outgoing Social Committee were eventually able to celebrate their Platinum Jubilee party after many unfortunate obstacles crossed their path. They followed this with an excellent Christmas party before moving over to allow other people to take up the reins. This was done admirably (as we are used to in the Upminster u3a) with a Murder Mystery Evening and a Coronation Party. My thanks on your behalf go to outgoing and incoming committee for such a smooth transition.

We have had a variety of 'speakers' this year - emphasising the diverse interests in the u3a. They have all been extremely informative and, although I have my favourites, it would be wrong to single any one speaker out. We hope to follow this up by introducing a second speaker for interested parties - as suggested by those at the 'thank you supper' for Group Leaders and other helpers.

The committee has organised 2 group leader and thank you evenings this year to highlight their efforts in helping out and running the groups - which keep the overall members enthusiastic. Both evenings were a success and allowed for the interaction of the committee and group leaders in a very positive way.



Our membership numbers continue to climb and, now our membership is over the 600 mark, it is a true reflection of the commitment of the people in the area to the u3a. Subscription once again remains at £10.00, which is far less than many other u3as in the London area - where the average membership is £30.00 plus. I congratulate all involved in keeping the subscription stable and viable.



Most of the present committee have been together for 3 years and some have decided to step down and allow others a chance of running the u3a. Initially we had problems filling these positions but people have stepped up to keep our u3a alive and relevant. These will obviously have to be voted in at the AGM but I wish to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing members for all their hard work and welcome and thank the incoming members for taking up the mantle.

*Susan Mayes*



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## Membership Renewals

I would like you thank you all for the ease in which the renewal process went this year. We have over 600 members with a majority of you renewing by bank transfer, which makes it very easy for us all. In all we ended up with the lowest number of members who did not renew their membership, so Upminster u3a continues to grow.

*Terry Smith*

## Notices

**Upminster windmill has now re-opened. See final page for information/opening times, etc.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**\*\* London Region Summer School 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 \*\***

St Bride Institute, 14 Bride Lane (off Fleet Street), EC4Y 8EQ

**Sessions booking up fast - don't miss out! Full Programme and Application form available from Events page of London Region website <https://u3asites.org.uk/london-region/events>**

This is a popular non-residential event for u3a members only £41 per day including refreshments and buffet lunch with a choice of healthy salads and fruit. You can attend for one or both days.

Some sessions are now fully booked but, at the time of going to press, there is availability for the following:



**Music & Dance:** The Royal Muse/Ballets Russes/  
Ukelele Workshop

**Art/Crafts:** After Raphael; Quilting Workshop



**Literature:** Long Dark River

**Climate Change:** Practical Steps for Controlling Global Warming/London's Energy/  
Oresme, the Harmonic Series and Climate Change

**Social Studies:** Indian Success Stories/The Future of allotments/  
Please Miss, We're Boys



**Science:** What have we Learned from visiting the Moon? Riddle of the Rainbow.

**Walk:** The City from the Romans to Richard Rogers

For enquiries, email: [bookings.lru3a@gmail.com](mailto:bookings.lru3a@gmail.com) or Tel: **07774 884 297**



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## *Interesting Events*

### Out and About in London

Two **free** locations that are both worth a visit if you're up in town:

1. **Sir John Soane's Museum**, 13, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Open Wednesday to Sunday, 10 to 5. Said to be the country's smallest museum, it was the home of Sir John Soane, the architect most famous for The Bank of England. The museum has been kept as it was at the time of his death in 1837, and displays his vast collection of antiquities, furniture, sculptures, architectural models and paintings.

If you should go, be there for 2 p.m. in the paintings room, where the 38 pictures on display, including works by Hogarth, Turner and Canaletto are turned into 118, including some of Soane's spectacular architectural drawings, by the flick of a couple of bolts. One drawing (below) was his wonderful idea for a majestic entry into London which, sadly, was never taken up.



You can visit by walking in on the day. Joining a highlights tour, or visiting as a group of eight or more, **requires advanced booking.**

2. **The Garden at 120**, 120 Fenchurch Street. Open daily.

Just a few minutes from the main entrance to Fenchurch Street station. Less than half the height of the nearby Sky Garden, but, in my opinion, nicer. Take a drink up and just enjoy the view down to the Tower of London and Thames, although the wisteria will probably be past its best until the second bloom.

*Chris Slade*



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## Social Committee

154 tickets were sold for our Coronation party which took place on the 16th May.



Everyone who attended was able to enjoy the food and drink together with entertainment provided by singer Bethan Marshall, who was a semi-finalist on Britain's Got Talent. It was great to see people dancing to Beth's songs! We are most grateful to everyone that was able to come along and make the event such a success. Also, we have received wonderful feedback which is much appreciated.



If you would like to give further feedback to help us plan future events this can be provided on our **Socials page** on the uu3a website at: <https://u3asites.org.uk/upminster/page/103071>.

We are busy planning our next event, which will include a quiz with fish and chips supper and a raffle with some great prizes! This takes place on **Wednesday 27 September 2023**, at **The New Windmill Hall 6.30pm – 9.00pm (doors open 6pm)**.

Please also save the date for our Christmas party, **19th December 2023, New Windmill Hall 1.30pm - 3.30pm (Doors open 1pm)**.

*Brian Makepeace*

## Tips and Tricks

### General Tip



This month's general tip is to try and buy a set of multi-coloured **pipe cleaners**. I bought mine at a pound shop. I put 2 of the same colour on each electrical cord. It is then easy to insert or remove the correct plug for each appliance.

When travelling I also use pipe cleaners to tie up chargers and stop them becoming tangled.

*Natalie Kehr*



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## Practical IT

The Practical IT group meets most Saturday mornings at my home. There is no waiting list.

People bring along their laptops, phones or tablets. Between us we usually manage to solve most problems, and we all learn a lot. I send out the occasional newsletter to members of the group (even those who never attend).

For details contact [natalie@kehr.co.uk](mailto:natalie@kehr.co.uk).

*Natalie Kehr.*

## June Quiz

Answers on page 14

As we move into June, we can hopefully, look forward to a lovely Summer with lots of sunshine.



Now, all of you will know that Cliff Richard sang about a Summer Holiday, but can you remember who recorded these other summery, sunny songs? **N.B.** Some of these will have been sung by more than one person, but the answer is the most well-known version.

1. In The Summer Time.
2. Here Comes Summer.
3. Sunny Afternoon.
4. Summertime Blues.
5. Summer In The City.
6. Sunshine Superman.
7. Summer Nights.
8. Those Lazy-Hazy-Crazy Days Of Summer.
9. Here Comes The Sun.
10. Summer Wind.

*Chris Slade*



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## Groups Update

### Papercrafting



Members of our group have been meeting since the Upminster U3A was formed. We have 10 ladies and meet on the 1st Monday of the month – each time participating in 2 projects (usually making cards) to take home.

If anyone is interested, we have a waiting list and we may be able to start another group.

*Sheila Burton and Shirley Smithson*

### Short Walks (2)

#### (1) Hornchurch Country Park

This time our walk took us to Ingrebourne Hill that is the site of a reclaimed refuse tip. Views from this include Canary Wharf and Shooter's Hill, Kent, with Dagenham in the foreground.

*Lake near Albyn's Farm*



*View towards Shooter's Hill  
from Ingrebourne Hill*



*'Coffee' Refreshments*



On the way there we saw the WW2 Command Bunker that is part of the Hornchurch History Trail and the lake near Albyn's farm. After walking back mainly by a different route we had our usual 'coffee' stop.

*Russ Barnett*



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## (2) Four Royal Parks, London

Our short walks this month took us to Kensington Palace for the start of our stroll through four royal parks. We started in Kensington Gardens, walking past the very large duck pond. The park was developed by William and Mary as a palace garden but the person who transformed it was Caroline of Ansbach, the wife of George II.

On the other side of the duck pond, we walked through to Hyde Park and the Serpentine where we made the most of the sunshine by having a leisurely coffee at the Lido. From there we passed the Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain and made our way to Hyde Park Corner and Green Park, stopping to admire the wonderful Bomber Command Memorial.



**Flags along the Mall**



**3 Bomber Command Memorial**

After Green Park we entered St James Park which was looking very lush and colourful in the spring sunshine. The walk ended at Horse Guards where a few of us walked to St Martin's Crypt for lunch.

**The photo to the right shows the flowers  
In St James Park**



*Helen Stewart*

## Coffee Mornings



June is busting out all over  
All over the meadows and the hills  
and  
especially at Roomes cafe 11am on June 20<sup>th</sup> and July 4<sup>th</sup>  
so come along for coffee and a chat.

*Angela McDonald*





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## Art History/Appreciation - *Forgotten Women Artists*

In recent years the art world has begun to celebrate the undervalued and forgotten women artists of the past. Today, with a growing rota of exhibitions focusing on them, it would seem these women artists are now being enthusiastically remembered.

In May we visited the exhibition, 'Women Artists and Global Abstraction', 1940-1970, at the Whitechapel Gallery. There we saw a wide range of work by unsung women artists from all corners of the world - mostly overlooked or 'borrowed from' by other artists. They were part of the Abstract Expressionist movement which emerged in America in the mid-20th century. It led to the centre of the art world moving from Paris to New York.

One of many we discovered was the artist Janet Sobel. A Ukrainian migrant to America, she began making art when a grandmother well into her 40s. Her inspiration was music and the emotions it aroused in her.



*Milky Way*

*"I love music ... I don't think I could paint a picture without music to listen to. All humans must have something like that to warm them inside ... I paint what I feel within me."*



*Untitled, c.1945*



*Janet Sobel in her studio, 1945*

Her methods were unconventional. Working on the floor, she dripped and splattered paint using glass dispensers normally used for eye drops, syringes and at times using her vacuum cleaner to pull paint across the canvas.

Janet Sobel's work was critically recognised and she was given a solo exhibition in 1946. She is now seen as anticipating Jackson Pollock's 'all over' drip paintings. Pollock much admired and recognised the originality of her work. Dubbed 'Jack the Dripper', when he died in 1956 Jackson Pollock was one of the most famous artists in the world.

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*Jackson Pollock  
working in his studio*



Sadly, after moving away from New York Janet faded from the spotlight. In our discussion meetings we compared their work and felt that Janet Sobel should at least be credited as an inspiration and influence on Pollock's work.

We left the exhibition excited by so many artists we had never seen or heard about before. Each of us with our own favourites.

*Chris Mecham*

## Poetry Appreciation Groups

Sunny and warmer days has seen the birth of a second poetry appreciation group and I was delighted to meet and welcome new members in early May at our first meeting.

The poems for discussion were : ***To the Indifferent Women*** by American poet Charlotte Gilman, She was a writer and lecturer who tried to create a cohesive body of historical and social thought that combined feminism and socialism. The earlier part of her life was spent living with various members of her father's family, to name two, Isabella Hooker a suffragist and Harriet Becher Stowe, best known as author of Uncle Tom's Cabin. In 1890 Gilman wrote a short story '***The Yellow Newspaper***' which is now the all-time best-selling book of the Feminist press. However, it was her first book of poetry, ***In this Our World*** (1893,) a collection of satirical poems that brought her recognition.

Our second choice was ***Will Ever?*** by Stevie Smith. a somewhat fascinating woman, described as 'a little nugget of genius' who was a modern poet and a novelist. Smith is probably best known for her poem '***Waving Not Drowning***'. Although she lived a somewhat secluded life in north London, she corresponded and socialised widely with other writers and creative artists. She also gave poetry readings for BBC radio and this gained her new friends and readers amongst a younger generation. In fact, the American poet Sylvia Plath described herself as a 'desperate Smith addict'.

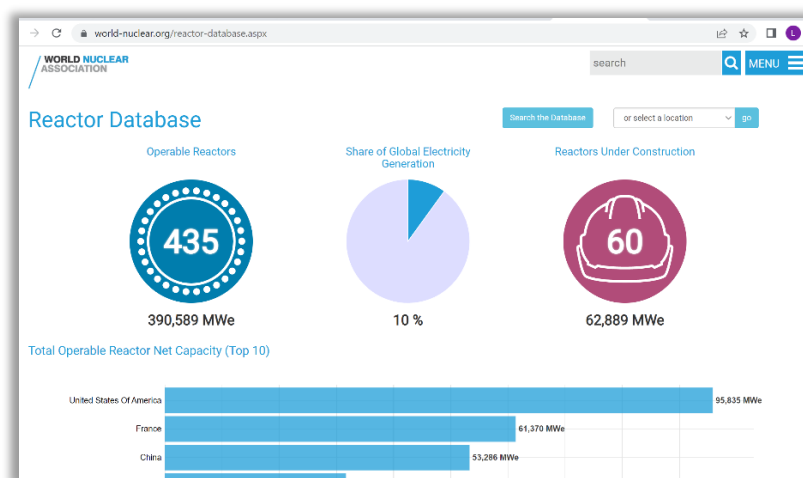
Our Guest poem was ***The Horses*** by Edwin Muir a deep and meaningful poem describing the aftermath of a nuclear war. Our meetings were much enjoyed and we look forward to another couple of gatherings before the summer break in August.

*Michelle Blythe.*



## STEMM

Dr Ron Bennett is a chemist who extended himself to address the STEMM group, most eloquently, on Nuclear Power. He recommended that everyone refers to the world nuclear website (<https://world-nuclear.org>) to keep abreast of changes and thinking in this field and to inform ourselves such as the evidence in the figure. The UK does not even appear in the 'Top 10' in any category.



EDF is constructing Hinkley Point C for us, based on the new funding formula that we (the tax payers) pay before it is delivered. In 2021 it was estimated that construction might be completed by June 2026. Hinkley Point C is a new Pressurised Water Reactor, but using old technology, that should deliver 40% energy output and 60% waste heat. These data evidence the low efficacy levels and high environmental impact we can anticipate.

Ron took us through the physics and chemistry of the different types of nuclear reactors, including the range of new experimental types. Much of the experimental work is being commercially funded: for example, Bill Gates is behind the Travelling Wave Reactor that uses liquid metals and expected to deliver by 2030! As these reactors do not use water as the coolant they do not produce steam and thus need to be near the coast to dissipate the heat.

Mini Nuclear Reactors range from producing 15MWe (megawatt electric) to 1600MWe and can be located anywhere, reducing any fear of terrorism scares. These are funded by Rolls Royce Consortium.

Thorium Reactors do not produce plutonium (used for nuclear weaponry) and nasty isotopes that take in the order of 100,000 years to decay (and be considered safe).

Nuclear Power has always attracted much debate, and instilled fear in the populace. Ron stipulated that the fear we hold is IF there is a failure with the back-up systems, then there could be an explosion.

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What is the globe's biggest crisis? It's Global Warming and for this reason nuclear energy, especially the new modular reactors, needs to be the solution. The late James Lovelock of Gaia fame said [in 2004] "only nuclear power can halt global warning". Did our leaders hark this critical advice?

Green energy: is there actually such a thing? When last did you observe all wind turbines to be in motion? The wind is not strong enough or blowing too strongly [might this be a case of ... the wrong kind of wind?], or the machine is just not working. Toxic resins are used in their construction but the machines will be sent to landfill when they reach the end of their working lives. Electric vehicles present a problem because the grid system for recharging is not in place. Machines using lithium batteries are highly polluting through the extraction of cobalt and lithium and currently about 50% of the valuable materials are recyclable.

The bottom line is that we need sufficient and reliable power sources to take us into the immediate future. Ron presented a compelling argument as to why the new models of nuclear power reactors are the only sustainable and least environmentally destructive.

*Lyn Haynes*

## Photography

In May the Photography Group met at the canal basins around Kings Cross station. The photo brief for the month was 'Modern Canal Life'.



***Barges at Rest***

***Photo by Peter Knight***

To see some more of the photographs from the May brief, please use this link:  
[https://uu3a-photos.direct.quickconnect.to:57824/photo/#/shared\\_space/folder/1](https://uu3a-photos.direct.quickconnect.to:57824/photo/#/shared_space/folder/1)

*Terry Sims.*



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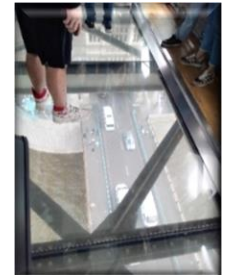
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## Steam Interest and Modellers

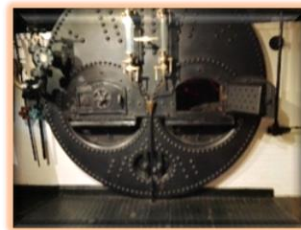
Welcome all and at last it looks like the summer is starting.



In May we organised a visit to Tower Bridge. We got to explore the bridge including its main towers, high level walkways, the history of the competition to build the bridge and how today it is a structure that is recognised throughout the world.



Having seen all around we then went inside the engine room where we got to see the Steam driven beam engine with its boilers and machinery used to lift "Bascules" or road way from its opening in 1894 until 1972 when the Steam driven beam engine was replaced by an electrically driven hydraulics system. A very interesting day out.



If you would like to join us for other days out for steam related attractions, please get in touch.

Malcolm [malcolmhb@hotmail.com](mailto:malcolmhb@hotmail.com)

*Malcolm Henderson-Begg.*

## Cinema Group

As a group, at the start of the month we went to the Vue cinema in Romford to see "The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry". It was a non-religious pilgrim story about the power of hope and joy - a movie that celebrated everyday joys and human connection. It was the perfect pick-you-up tonic for tough times. This politely unassuming little film builds into a wrenching examination of grief, guilt and eventually closure.

Last week a group of us went to see the "Book Club - The Next Chapter," which we also saw at Vue cinema Romford. The scenery in Italy of course was fantastic. It was fun, whimsical and silly - not a film for men though. The ladies bring a good message about ageing gracefully and encouraging new adventures.

*Annette Gaskin*



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## Modern London Architecture

The Modern London Architecture group meets at my home on the 2nd Thursday of the month and have an outing on the 3rd Thursday. There is no waiting list.

In April, 5 of us were lucky enough to visit Cosmic House in Holland Park. We are keeping an eye open for the next booking slot. **[The Cosmic House \(jencksfoundation.org\)](http://jencksfoundation.org)**

Our May outing will be a free guided walk of Royal Wharf and Riverscape on 15th June  
**[LFA 2023 - Walking Tour of Royal Wharf and Riverscape Tickets, Thu, Jun 15, 2023 at 3:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)**. Some of us have booked 2 tickets. Let me know **ASAP** if you would like to join this walk. If nobody else wants to join us, we will release the spare tickets back to the organisers.

The walk is part of the London Festival of Architecture, which will have started by the time you read this. There is lots going on every day, but we haven't tried organising more than one group outing.  
**[Programme - London Festival of Architecture](#)**. Lots of the events are free.

*Natalie Kehr.*

## Quiz Answers

1. Mungo Jerry.
2. Jerry Keller.
3. The Kinks
4. Eddie Cochran.
5. Lovin' Spoonful.
6. Donovan.
7. Olivia Newton-John & John Travolta.
8. Nat King Cole.
9. The Beatles.
10. Frank Sinatra.



*Chris Slade.*





# Upminster Windmill is re-opening in May 2023

The restoration is now complete. Come along and be amazed at what's inside!



0300 030 1803  
info@upminsterwindmill.org  
www.upminsterwindmill.org

## Open Days 2023

27/28 May • 24/25 June  
29/30 July • 19/20 August  
23/24 September • 28/29 October

10am - 4pm

Admission by ticket  
Adults £6 • Children £2

Book online at  
[www.upminsterwindmill.org](http://www.upminsterwindmill.org)

The sails will be turning on open days, wind permitting