



Upminster u3a Newsletter

"Learn, Laugh, Live"



September 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](#)

16-24 Sept is u3a week

See page 3 and/or click on link
to see what's on offer to members
[Latest updates from the Third Age Trust
\(mailchi.mp\)](#)

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 19 September '23, doors open at 1pm

[Monthly meeting speaker details: page 2](#)

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Future Guest Speakers at Monthly Meetings

Please note change (since August newsletter) of 2ND speaker

19 Sept	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keith Finch on the reopening of the Windmill. 2. John Wilcox, Pinney Talfourd, on Lasting Powers of Attorney.
17 Oct	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark Carroll about DNA and You. 2. Barclays Bank representative, Donna, on Scams
21 Nov	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paul Robbins on Cockney Rhyming Slang. 2. Gillian Ford, organiser of Upminster Dementia Choir. Gillian is also a Councillor.
19 Dec	Christmas Party (<i>no speakers</i>) – other treats instead!

View from the Chair

"If Music Be The Food of Love Play On"

This is the opening line to Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, but I'm not going to bombard you with Shakespeare even though music plays an important part in Shakespeare's plays and is often used to carry the plot. He was a very shrewd man and realised how music played an important part in everyday life.



We all grew up, not only with our music, but also the music of those around us. I have a good knowledge of Mr. Presley courtesy of my sister and I vividly remember waking up on Sunday mornings to an alternate rendition of hymns and Mario Lanza. This all came back to me while watching a programme on care for people with dementia and how important it is in their lives.

I am also reminded of popular music and nursery rhymes, depending on the age of my grandchildren - and who can forget the iconic 'Proms' are on at the moment; what can be more rousing than the last night?

Music is also precious to different countries around the world, as are different instruments they use. I cannot do justice to its importance so next time you are humming your favourite tune or joining in with a catchy song think of the meaning it has in your life and smile.

Susan Mayes



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Membership Information

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

Angela Bennet	Catherine Oates	Elaine King	Sue Oates
A new member who did not want their name published			

We also welcomed a member returning after failing to renew at the end of the last year.

As at the end of August we had 600 paid-up members.

Pamela Freer

Notices and Information

16-24 Sept is u3a week. On offer to members:

- Online programme for the week
- Interest Groups Online Fair
- September workshops for u3a members
- Conversations with the Trust events.

click on link: [Latest updates from the Third Age Trust \(mailchi.mp\)](#)

Coach Trip – Bateman’s & Battle

There are now only a couple of places left on this trip on **Tuesday 26 September**. Full details are on the Uu3a website under **Events**, or, alternatively, contact **Chris Slade: chrisslade1@sky.com or 07906-433559** to book a place, or for any further information.

Groups

Not sure what it says, if anything, about our u3a, but the third Wine & Cheese Appreciation Group is about to start (see page 10 and/or our website for details and contact information), whereas we have only one Book Group!

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As a rule of thumb, a u3a will have one Group for every ten members. At present, and with our membership now over 600, we are about ten Groups short of this aspirational target. There must be members out there who have an interest for which we don't have a Group, and I would love to hear from you.

chrisslade1@sky.com or on **07906-433559**. I'm not asking you to start a group, but to let me know what might be of interest to you.

Out & About In London

Leighton House

In the 60 years up to the first world war, some 1300 artists' studios were created in London. One was the home of Frederic Leighton, the only British artist ever to become a Lord. Sadly, not for long; he died the very next day. Not too surprisingly, the shortest peerage in British history.

An interesting and impressive property in Kensington, a visit can be coupled with nearby Sambourne House **Leighton House and Sambourne House | RBKC Museums**. Alternatively, Holland Park with its Japanese and Dutch gardens is just a few minutes away, as is the Design Museum, both with cafeterias.



The Arab Hall with pool and fountain.



Colourful Floral Chandelier

The Lookout and Horizon 22

Two new, free, opportunities to view London from on high. **The Lookout** on the 50th floor of 8 Bishopsgate, Mondays and Fridays midday - 9 p.m., Tuesdays - Thursdays 10.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m., and **Horizon 22** at 22 Bishopsgate 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. weekdays. Just views, no facilities.

Social Events

The Quiz and Supper this month is sold out, but please note 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**.

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Looking forward to **2024**, you might like to make a note of the following events/dates:-

- Tuesday 13 February - Barn Dance.
- Thursday 30 May - Event to be decided.
- Wednesday 25 September - Event to be decided.
- Tuesday 17 December - Christmas Party.

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

'All our Yesterdays'

Do you have a story/photographs/documents, of memories from the 1950s and 60s that you would like to share? You can send them to the national office of the u3a - which will publish a selection of the stories and experiences.

The page will be updated on an ongoing basis as they receive members' stories. Click here for more information – and to read such memories from other members: [u3a - All our yesterdays.](#)

Committee Members

Chair	Susan Mayes
Vice Chair	Linda Davey
Secretary	Chris Marvin
Minutes Secretary	Jill Coombes
Treasurer	Malcolm Henderson-Begg
Assistant Treasurer	Mike Massey
Membership	Pamela Freer
Website	Richard Strauss
Newsletter	Barbara Smith
1 st Speaker Organiser	Sue Jiggins
Groups Coordinator and Development	Chris Slade
Beacon Administrator	Russ Barnett
2 nd Speaker Organiser	Beryl Patient



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Tips and Tricks

General Tip

Tip for Sept 2023 – **Free Courses**

What do "The Book of Kells", "Paper Folding" and "Artificial Intelligence" have in common?

Answer:- I have started FREE courses on all those, and several other, topics.

This month's tip is to try a free online course in a subject you know nothing about. I, and some other U3A members can help you navigate the thousands of free courses available.

Not all courses are academic. For example, while researching this topic I found a course in making costume jewellery and in the past I have found a course from Harvard on playing tennis.

As you will be using your tablets or computers I suggest coming to a Practical IT session where we can explore the options available. These sessions are held on most Saturday mornings at my home. For more details drop a line to natalie@kehr.co.uk.

The Khan academy starts at school level but goes on to adult topics. Those of you who wish you could remember how to work with fractions might want to enrol with Khan. I will be enrolling in their art history course.

Universities throughout the world have started offering courses online. To entice people, they also have prepared free introductory courses on almost any topic you can think of. Some courses have set start and end dates, but others are available to start at any time and you can take as long as you like to work through the material. Those with set dates usually give access to tutors who can help us.

The only disadvantage to the free courses is that sometimes they nag you to pay for certificates and to enrol in the more advanced courses. I have found it easy to ignore the nagging. If you find you are not interested in a course and drop it they don't nag, so there is no disadvantage in trying many different courses.

Natalie Kehr



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Monthly Quiz

Who did the names in the numbered list become famous as? Match the name to the celebrity, and identify which pair is the odd one out and why.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Marion Morrison | A. Helen Mirren |
| 2. Margaret Mary Emily Anne Hyra | B. Katy Perry |
| 3. Leroy Harold Scherer Jnr | C. Stewart Granger |
| 4. Mary Isobel Catherine O'Brien | D. Tina Turner |
| 5. James Lablache Stewart | E. Harrison Ford |
| 6. Ilyena Lydia Vasilievna Mironov | F. Elvis Costello |
| 7. Archibald Alexander Leach | G. Rock Hudson |
| 8. Caryn Johnson | H. John Wayne |
| 9. Declan McManus | I. Dusty Springfield |
| 10. Kurt Affair | J. Whoopi Goldberg |
| 11. Katheryn Elizabeth Hudson | K. Meg Ryan |
| 12. Anna Mae Bullock. | L. Cary Grant. |



Chris Slade

Member-organised Events – Feedback. We have 2 particular events to tell you about this month which were organised by a Uu3amember, so don't come under 'Groups Update' heading but other Uu3a members were lucky enough to be able to be included in the events!

Visit to National Gallery

I was lucky enough to win a group guided tour to the Gallery and, being a u3a member myself, on 22nd August I took 24 other members along. We were accompanied by a photographer - as apparently our photos are going to be in their magazine to advertise tours for groups!

Our excellent London blue badge guide, Jennifer Hirschl, took us on an hour's tour, and each of us was provided with a VOC device so we could hear our guide clearly. Tours are normally 1.5 hours long. There are various tours to choose from, at a cost of £19 per head - i.e. Heroes and Villains, Impressionist Women in Art and Royal-themed Tour.

Our one was The Highlights Tour; the paintings we looked at included the following well known popular ones (we took photos of some, shown below):

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*By JMW Turner
The Fighting Temeraire
being Tugged to her Final Berth
to be broken up
Oil on canvas 1839*

*By Leonardo Da Vinci
The Virgin of the Rocks
Oil on wood 1483-86*



*By Diego Velazquez,
Toilet of Venus ("Rokeby Venus"),
oil on canvas, 1647-51*



*By Hans Holbein
The Ambassadors
oil on wood 1533*

Others paintings we viewed were:

- Venus and Mars, by Sandro Botticelli, 1485, egg tempera and oil on wood.
- Belshazzar's Feast, by Rembrandt van Rijn, oil on canvas, 1636
- Supper at Emmaus, by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, oil on canvas, 1601
- Waterlilies, by Claude Monet, oil on canvas various dates (1890-1916)
- Sunflowers, by Vincent Van Gogh, oil on canvas, 1888.

It was such a good experience to have these famous paintings explained to us, and the symbolism in them. I even got an idea for my Creative Writing Group for our next meeting!

The group thoroughly enjoyed the tour and we may go back again to try another one.

Shirley Ward



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Land of the Vikings Cruise (the Ambience) July 2023

I hadn't travelled abroad since Covid, and not cruised for a while. I was one of about 16 other Uu3a members who recently enjoyed a cruise to the ports of call of:

Gothenburg, Sweden*, *Copenhagen, Denmark*, *Aarhus, Denmark*, *Kristiansand, Norway

Many of our group were in single cabins and we received so many invitations to join cocktail parties, coffee mornings and lunches for singles, we didn't have enough time to do everything we wanted! There was even an invitation to do a Bridge Tour, meet the captain, who hails from Maldon, and his two officers who were from Montenegro.

There were many varied trips available, or some of our group chose to get on the hop on, hop off buses that were located nearby when we moored up.



***at Kristiansand, Norway,
after a steam boat tour
on Byglandsfjord.***

We could have a tour of the ship, dine in the main restaurant or other two speciality restaurants, or go to the buffet set on top deck, with a nearby speciality coffee shop. **The photo on the right was taken during a tour of the Bridge.**

In Copenhagen, the country's Queen was having her summer holiday and arrived by barge – which we saw moored up.

With the theme of the 7-day cruise, 'Rock N Roll meets Motown', I thought there would be something for everyone, and there was!

The entertainment on board was great. Something for everyone to do. There were trivia quizzes, short vignettes (plays that lasted about 15 minutes, which took place in lounges on ship), table tennis, shuffle board, quoits competitions, deck walking, talks on Vikings, and jewellery making.



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Kiki Dee, plus her guitarist Carmelo Luggeri, 'Elvis' (Ben Portsmouth) and the Soul Sisters were the cabaret acts, with entertainment by on board singers and dancers on other nights. 'Elvis' is appearing at the Cliffs Pavilion this month.

Our group had their own cocktail party. Captain's night saw the men in dinner jackets and the ladies in smart clothes. Photos of these events are shown below.



Shirley Ward

Groups Update

New Group: Wine and Cheese Appreciation, Group 3

The third Wine and Cheese Appreciation Group is now up and running.

We hope to meet on a Thursday evening every 6 weeks, with a view to increasing our knowledge and appreciation of wine and discovering what makes a good pairing to a variety of cheeses.

Our first meeting is/was on 7 September, the next is on 19 October.

At present we do have limited space for members.

If anyone is interested in joining the group, please email: chrisbottoms@btinternet.com or telephone **07804 376631**.

Chris Bottoms.



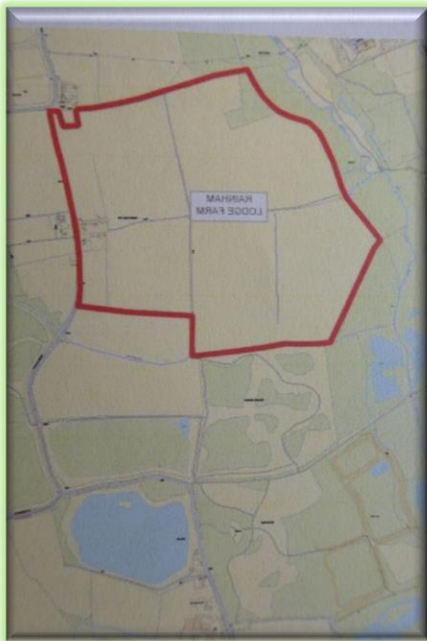
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Short Walks: Hornchurch Country Park



There was nothing particularly different from previous walks here, except that we took the opportunity do a slightly different one as it was no longer muddy in some parts.

Starting from the Essex Wildlife Trust centre, we passed one of the plaques commemorating when the park was originally an airfield during WW1 & WW2. Then across the river Ingrebourne and further on, along a footpath across the fields where there is proposed gravel and sand extraction



(www.rainhamquarry.co.uk map). A speaker at one of the monthly members meeting earlier this year talked about this.

At the bottom of this map there is a lake. Apart from fishing, this lake provides the water for crop spraying.

The only crop growing was sweetcorn and this was in part of one field. Earlier this year some of the fields had been harvested for silage. During the walk it was possible to see the Essex Wildlife Trust Centre and St. Andrew's church, Hornchurch. The walk ended by some of us having refreshments in the Essex Wildlife Trust Centre.



Russ Barnett



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Rummikub 2



Our group has been running since the beginning of this year - with 28 members now registered. We meet up every 2nd and 4th Tuesday monthly at The Windmill Pub, Upminster Bridge, 2pm to 4pm.

Not everyone is able to commit to each session, so it's a 'come as you can' group. The U3A ethos of "live, laugh and learn" certainly applies to our group, where all who play have an enjoyable afternoon without any pressure. Players are a mixture of beginners and experienced participants, so those who are new to the game are encouraged and taught by those who have been playing longer, which makes it fun.

So, if it's a game new to you, then it's definitely worth coming along to give it a try. Playing rules vary, but are agreed at each table at the beginning of the session.

We try to have tables of 4 players per table – but, of course, this does depend on the number of people who turn up to play on the day.

The pub has a set-aside area where we usually play but, if this area is booked for a private function, tables within another part of the pub are reserved for us. There is no fee charged by the pub, but they do ask that we buy a drink when we are there (can be tea / coffee)

So please consider joining our friendly group and giving this game a go.

Shirley Smithson

Coffee Morning



Coffee Morning, on Tuesdays as usual,
in Roomes Cafe at 11am

on
September 12th, 26th and October 10th

Hope to see you there for coffee and a chat.



Angela McDonald



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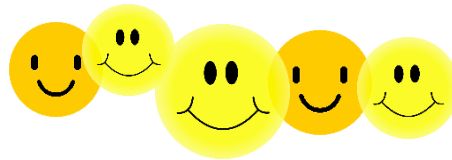
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Cinema Group

At the end of August, many of us from the cinema group went to see BARBIE after a meal at Zizzies.

It made us laugh many times throughout the film and the feedback afterwards from members was that they enjoyed it, and were pleased that they went.

This film centred around Barbie, voiced by a charismatic and talented actress, as she embarks on a thrilling adventure in a magical world. The animation is a visual treat, with the vibrant colours and attention to detail, making it an absolute joy to watch.



Annette Gaskin

Papercrafting

Our group meets on the 1st Monday of every month at Cranham Community Centre 2.30 - 4.30.

We have 10 members and we create two cards during the session - learning different techniques - using stamping, heat embossing, mixed media, embossing folders & die cutting.

We have very recently welcomed one new member; one of our original members, Teresa, joined us for the afternoon to catch up with old friends.

Sheila & Shirley run the group together.



Sheila Burton and Shirley Smithson



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Art History and Appreciation

For our August meeting we planned a social get-together for both groups, a garden lunch party. A spell of cold-overcast days with a forecast of heavy showers unfortunately kept us inside.



However, it proved to be a very enjoyable occasion. It was an opportunity to catch up with each other.



Great company, interesting conversation and plenty to eat and drink.



Chris Mecham

Creative Writing

Our group meets once a month on a Wednesday morning to read out our 1,000-word written creations to each other. We then discuss them and evaluate what we have liked and offer suggestions as to something that could possibly improve them further. We take it in turns to choose a title and it's always interesting to see the different ways that we each interpret the topic. The nature of our activity, unfortunately, determines that the number of members is limited to our current number of 6, but if others enjoy invoking the imagination and writing of short stories, we'd willingly collect names and offer support to another prospective leader.

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Sue Hartley's story below was in response to our August story opener.

Once Upon A Time Many Years Ago In A Land Far Away

There was a young lad called Coen who lived with his tribe in a remote region of Australia. Having completed his vision quest Coen, whose name means "Thunder", was now deemed an adult and knew it was time to put aside his youthful follies and take a wife. His sister Mia, or "Moon", teased that none of her friends would want him as they knew him too well and remembered when he used to scare them with ghost stories. However, Coen's eyes weren't turned to them, he was in love with Medikar from the adjoining tribe and thought she was as pretty as her name of "Flower".

Unfortunately, he was not the only one who had noticed her; his rival was Balun, who had belittled and tried to bully Coen all through their childhood to the extent that Coen often felt like throwing Balun into his namesake "River". Balun was also a braggart, but was very careful how he behaved in front of the Elders so as to hide his true nature.

Medikar was the daughter of one of the tribal Elders and Coen knew it would not be easy to gain his agreement to court her, but made his approach anyway. He was well received, but was told that Balun had also asked for permission to make his case and the Elder would think on it and let them know in due course.

After a while the Elder summoned the two young men and told them he wanted them both to join the forthcoming hunting party, which was planned to take some days, and during same he would assess them both and upon their return he would give them his answer.

The next day they set off, the hunting party consisting of a dozen or so men from both tribes, the aim being to bring back a supply of meat to supplement the more usual diet of goannas, turtles and fish. Balun turned up with a spear but Coen preferred his trusty boomerang which he had inherited from his great grandfather. Balun had always scoffed when he noticed Coen practicing his throwing, he was not a fan of the old traditional ways saying "a spear can be used both over distance when hunting and protection up close whereas what are you going to do with a piece of wood, try and bash an animal over the head if it attacks?"

During the next few days Coen noticed that Balun was doing everything he could to impress Medikar's father. He was a good hunter, spearing a couple of porcupine and even an emu when it sprang out of the grass, but left it to one of the others to do the butchering, then at night round the campfire he told stories of Dreamtime handed down by his ancestors.

For his part, Coen quietly got on with being part of a team, he used his boomerang to scare out some wild turkeys for the others to club and helped carry the loads. He made friends with Medikar's brother, Warrin or "Winter" and together they crept away from the campfire one night and returned with half a dozen possum.

Balun was not pleased!

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On the fifth day they came across a mob of kangaroos in a stand of trees, feasting on the leaves, and spread out to kill as many males, *known as boomers*, as possible - not joeys or their mothers - knowing that, if successful, they would have sufficient meat to complete the hunt. Coen and Warrin stayed close together so they could cover each other's backs, for kangaroos were known to be both fast and lethal if they felt threatened, but typically Balun crept forward, spear in hand with his eye on a particular young male boomer, a fine specimen, who was nigh on 6-foot tall.

Balun was impatient, he didn't take the time to check his surroundings, he wanted to make his kill before the boomer moved, so he hadn't noticed the koala in the nearby gum tree, who sent out a bellow of warning that predators were near, just as he launched his spear. He started, and it was sufficient to put off his aim so the spear glanced off the male's left shoulder. In turn the kangaroo stamped the ground with his powerful hind legs so that other members of the mob could both hear the warning sound and feel the vibrations of the motion and therefore scatter and look round.

The boomer with his keen eyesight immediately spotted who had thrown the spear and hurt him - his eyes fixed on Balun he hopped across the ground toward him. Balun was in a quandary; he didn't have another spear and knew his knife would be of no use against his enraged foe who could reach a speed of up to 35 miles per hour. He turned to climb the nearest tree but, in his haste, tripped over a root and sprawled on the ground. The boomer was nearly upon him and he knew it only had to stomp on him with his hind legs and his life would be over.

However, Coen spotted his predicament, and although he had already thrown his boomerang at a smaller male and made his kill, it did of course return to his hand so he quickly threw it at Balun's foe and it hit his target, felling it to the ground.

Typically, Balun did not thank him but ran forward, picked up his spear and thrust it into the kangaroo's lifeless body, claiming the kill. He did not think the others had noticed what had occurred and knew Coen would not speak out. He was unaware that Warrin had seen everything.

The Hunt was declared over and the men returned to the tribes, carrying the various meats. That evening Medikar's father summoned Coen and Balun and said he had made his decision - Coen had his permission to approach Medikar and, if she so choose, he would welcome Coen into his family. As Balun protested the Elder said that, apart from Warrin having told him what had truly happened on the Hunt, did they really think the Elders were not aware of Balun's true nature? The Hunt was a test so see if he would, or even could, change and sadly the answer was No!

** * * By Sue Hartley * * **

Jill Hilton



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Friday Morning Art Group

Langtons Bridge – both painted in watercolours

by Shirley Ward



We have about 12 members in our group, which is held at the Community Centre, Marlborough Gardens, Upminster. We meet on Fridays, 10am to 12 noon.

by Ann Cochrane



We occasionally go outside to do painting and sketching in the open air. 4 of us went along to Langtons Gardens, complete with chairs, drawing materials, paints and pencils. We stayed for nearly 2 hours; it was very peaceful - the ducks came to 'watch' us drawing!

There is a cafe and facilities in the grounds, so it's a pleasant place to go to sketch.

We hope to do more sketching and painting outdoors – maybe to Thames Chase, now their cafe has reopened.

For details about the group, please contact our tutor who is able to come along to teach us once a month: sandra.ward@btinternet.com.

Shirley Ward

Quiz Answers

1 H 2 K 3 G 4 I 5 C 6 A
7 L 8 J 9 F 10 E 11 B 12 D

The odd one out is Kurt Affair. At the beginning of his career, Harrison Ford's studio wanted him to drop his name which they considered pretentious for a young actor. He apparently suggested Kurt Affair knowing that they would reject it, which they did.

Chris Slade