

BUCKHURST HILL U3A

10TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR



Charity Reg No 1178911

Enquiries: enquiries@buckhillu3a.org

Website: <https://buckhurst-hill.u3asite.uk>

NEWSLETTER – 11 AUGUST 2025

MEETING INFORMATION

Next Meeting:	Wednesday 13 August 2025		
Venue:	Grange Farm Centre Grange Farm Lane (off High Road) CHIGWELL, IG7 6DP (car parking is available on-site)		
Times:	09.30 am	Doors Open – NO ENTRY BEFORE 09.30 AM	
	10.00 am	Meeting	
	Wednesday 13 August 2025		
	Speaker:	John Hutchinson	<i>Concorde – a 20th Century Icon</i>
Future Meetings:	Grange Farm Centre		
10 September	Speaker	Philip McKinder	<i>Copped Hall</i>
8 October tbc	Speaker tbc	Tony Matthews	<i>Commonwealth War Graves</i>

BUCKHURST HILL u3a - MAIN CONTACTS

Chair	David Dooks	chair@buckhillu3a.org
Vice Chair	Valerie Thame	v.chair@buckhillu3a.org
Business Secretary	Sue Bird	bussec@buckhillu3a.org
Treasurer	Kevin Lucas	treasurer@buckhillu3a.org
Membership Secretary / Newsletter Editor	Christine Slade	membership@buckhillu3a.org newsletter@buckhillu3a.org
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Accessibility Officer / Outings Organiser	Hilary Wrightman	access@buckhillu3a.org outings@buckhillu3a.org
Joint Webmasters	Kevin & Fiona Lucas	webmaster@buckhillu3a.org
Group Co-ordinator	Fiona Lucas	groups@buckhillu3a.org
Administrator	Kevin Lucas	admin@buckhillu3a.org

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Thoughts from the Chair (David Dooks)

If you're a sports fan, then July must have been your favourite month of the year so far! In football, the England Lionesses battled it out through incredible extra time periods and penalty shootouts in Switzerland to retain their title as European Women's Champions, while in America, Chelsea men became the inaugural World Club Champions. Test match cricket saw England's men and women challenging India with bat and ball, while the British & Irish Lions rugby team went down under to do battle with the Australian Wallabies, winning a Test series for the first time since 2013. The Open Golf Championship took place in Royal Portrush, County Antrim and at Wimbledon, the latest tennis innovation after replacing line judges with ball-line technology was the introduction by M&S of strawberry sandwiches (strawberries with whipped cream cheese and crème fraiche between sweetened brioche-style bread - whatever next?).



It is always good to join with neighbouring u3a's when individually there may not be enough members for an event to take place. As well as the joint interest groups we have, Wanstead & Woodford u3a recently offered us the chance to visit the RHS Gardens at Hyde Hall and what a nice opportunity it was. A few of our members went along and some, as well as enjoying walking around the landscaped gardens, came away with a few unusual plants that you might not find in local garden nurseries.



You will be pleased to hear that we have seen some progress in the renovation work at Roding Valley Hall and are hopeful of being able to return there for monthly meetings in the Autumn.

Finally, let me remind you of my request for holiday photos that you are happy to see in the Newsletter (emailed to chair@buckhillu3a.org please) - I've only received a few so far, so please don't be shy!

BUCKHURST HILL u3a NEWS

Macmillan Coffee Morning (Mary Nathan)

I have a bottle of Jim Beam Red Stag Black Cherry Whiskey which I can't sell. It retails at £22.50 approx, but it's yours for a £15.00 donation to Macmillan, as I would get more doing this than having it in a raffle.

If you are interested, please 'phone Mary. **Reminder:** Christmas is coming fast!

Any more of you want a notice board advertising the Macmillan Coffee Morning? It's a good little earner and you don't have to be a u3a member, anyone can have one, so get your friends to have one as well. For every board put up, Churchill's pay £10.00 to Macmillan.

Please 'phone Mary.

All you lovely bakers: start baking so we are ready to go when I get the call to say Roding Valley Hall is reopening and we can hold our Macmillan Coffee Morning.

Fitness for Fun and Friendship – £2.00 a session (Sue Meredith)

Julie Barclay and I are starting a new fitness group in September.

Our first meeting will be on Tuesday 23rd September at Loughton Bowls Club.

We plan for our exercise to be to music in a relaxed friendly atmosphere. All abilities and fitness levels are welcome, and exercises can be completed either standing, seated or using the back of a chair for added support.

Please wear suitable clothing for exercise – leggings or trackpants, a T-shirt and training shoes are ideal. Please bring a bottle of water to keep hydrated. No other refreshments will be available, but you will be able to refill your bottle in the kitchen if needed.

There is plenty of parking at Loughton Bowls Club. Please note that the toilets are down a flight of stairs.

The group will be held once a month on the fourth Tuesday. We plan to exercise from about 10:30–11.30am. We have the hall booked from 10.00 am to 12 noon, so please do not arrive before 10.00 am. There will also be plenty of time for chatting and friendship before and after the class. The cost of each session is £2.00 to cover the cost of hall hire.

The dates for the first 3 sessions are:

Tuesday 23rd September

Tuesday 28th October, and

Tuesday 25th November.

If you would like to join this group, please email, WhatsApp or text me. My contact details are on the group information page.

Hope to hear from some of you soon.

Garden Party and Afternoon Tea

On Sunday 6th July, 17 u3a members enjoyed a Garden Party and Afternoon Tea, hosted by Mary Nathan and Joanne Share-Bernia.

Mary Nathan had arranged the beautifully decorated tables in Joanne's garden. After days of hot sunny weather, we had been looking forward to sitting outside in the sunshine but, in true Wimbledon style, as soon as we arrived the weather changed and poured with rain, including a loud clap of thunder. We managed to bring everything into Joanne's comfortable conservatory and enjoyed a delicious cream tea with scones and an assortment of cakes.

It was a very enjoyable afternoon spent chatting to members and making new friends.

Thank you, Mary and Joanne, for a lovely afternoon.

(Christine Gibson)

*

My thanks go to Joanne for the use of her garden. Right on time for the 2pm start, down came the rain.

I have had nice feedback and an offer for another garden next year, so watch this space.

(Mary Nathan)

Steve & Ian's Big Bus Tour (David & Valerie Thame)

At the last AGM, Steve mentioned that they were holding a Big Bus Tour of North Essex, starting and ending at the Layer Marney Tower, which is near Colchester. It sounded interesting so we booked seats.



We left home at 8.00am and arrived at the Tower at 9.15am at the same time as the double decker bus, an old Routemaster. We were greeted by Steve & Ian and boarded the bus along with some 30 fellow passengers. Our driver, Nick Charrington and his wife, own the Tower.

We departed at 10.00am to Colchester with Steve & Ian giving a running commentary on points of interest accompanied by appropriate music (of course, being DJs!), starting with *Summer Holiday* and *On The Buses* theme tune. In Colchester High Street Steve pointed out a statue of sisters Jane & Ann Taylor who wrote *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*. We then travelled on to Ardleigh where Mary Whitehouse lived and darts player Bobby George has a house. The music played was *Magical Mystery Tour* and the theme from *Bull's Eye*. Whilst on the way to Manningtree we were given Double Decker chocolate bars and bottles of water. Unfortunately, in Manningtree the High Street was closed due to emergency repairs. Luckily enough, a local lady named Caroline jumped on the bus and guided us through the detour. She was going to Harwich, as were we, so we gave her a lift. Next village was Misterly where the Witchfinder General, Matthew Hopkins, lived. The last stop for the morning was Harwich, which is where the LV18 (Light Vessel 18) is moored and was the home of a pirate radio station and was featured in the film *The Boat that Rocked*. It now houses a non-pirate radio station Mi Amigo on MW 1575.

After a quick look around the boat and picnic lunch Steve & Ian took us on short guided tour of Harwich old town which included the home of Christopher Jones, the Captain of the Mayflower, and The Electric Palace cinema which opened in 1911. Back on the bus.



We left for Dovercourt where Warners Holiday camp was where *Hi-de-Hi* was filmed, (theme tune played) now a housing estate. On to Frinton and over the famous gates to the 'greensward' where we stopped for the posh toilets. Eileen Fowler (keep fit fame) and John Leyton (singer and actor) lived in Frinton. From there the bus took us along Holland seafront through Clacton and back to Layer Marney through some very narrow lanes, well negotiated by Nick. Here we had our delicious cream tea. After a stroll around the gardens, we had a chat to Steve and Ian who said they were looking forward to visiting Buckhurst Hill u3a again.



A very enjoyable trip, good fun, well put together by our hosts. Let's hope they will do another sometime in the future.

10 Pin Bowling (*Mary Nathan*)

In July we had high scores from Robert Yeung 133 and 138, Carol Smalley 106 and 104, Cathy Tredgett 101 and 102, Karen Wood 101 and Edna Rogers 100. Very well done.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 2nd September for more bowling fun.

Copped Hall – Music on a Summer's Day (*Mary Nathan*)

Music was nice, shame about the weather, but enjoyed by those who went.

Paint Pouring (*Jacqueline Jacques*)

In July, we tried to create a background we could later embellish. To do this we applied dollops of acrylic paint mixed with paint conditioner, water and silicone oil and blew them around the canvas with a hairdryer on a cool setting. Next month we hope to show you the embellished results.



Creative Writing (*Jan Shillum*)

Our Creative Writing brief was to take a well-known story or poem and write it from a different character's point of view.

Sue took it several steps further, not only inventing the story but using four different characters to tell it – one of whom is dead!

Marion, on the other hand, took a rhyme we've all known since childhood and gave it an hilarious edge by imagining the response of an exasperated teacher....

It never fails to amaze me how a simple idea can be interpreted in so many different, creative ways.

THE CREMATION

by
Sue Meredith

The Celebrant

Second one today – Let's get this over with, not bad, 200 quid for 45 minutes work. They have invited me to the wake, but I will make a very valid excuse as to why I can't make it. Well, here we go, last look in the mirror, solemn expression on my face, step outside as the hearse trundles down to the doors. Sometimes these occasions are very sad, but not so this time, as he was quite old and had been ill for a while. There's quite a lot of mourners though. Here comes his daughter Madeline and her son Peter, stepping out of the car. Hand out, bit of a limp shake from Madeline, Peter's is much firmer. Let's get this show on the road.

The Daughter – Madeline

I don't really know how to feel today, my dad was quite old and had been ill for a while and took a lot of looking after, so I feel both sadness and relief all at the same time. I hope a lot of people turn up, we have catered for 40, so fingers crossed. Following the hearse with his coffin in is quite stressful and I can feel myself starting to sweat (it is June though). Thankfully we are now pulling into the crematorium. Oh, there's that Celebrant, Damien, waiting for us. My son got him off the Internet, comes highly recommended apparently. Hope he's as good as these reviews – we will soon find out. Looks like a good turnout, lots of relatives and friends waiting to go in. Here goes

The Distant Relative

I really didn't want to come to this funeral today. I hardly knew the man, but my wife said it was the right thing to do. Luckily, she is here by my side. I don't know hardly any of these people who I am supposedly related to. I hope they have some decent wine at the wake. I'm dying for a glass now, and I plan to have a few as Cath has agreed to drive home. At last, here comes the hearse – show time. Oh look, there's Uncle George and Auntie Petunia over there. At least I know someone. In we go

The Deceased

Well, I've gone and done it. I've died, and now all this fuss is being made. I told Madeleine, it wasn't necessary, but now I can't say anything, she has pulled out all the stops to give me a good send off. Lovely flowers, a shame they will only last a week at most. I did suggest Madeline asked for donations to the hospice, I hope they get something as they do a splendid job. Looks like a lot of people have turned up, Madeline will be relieved as she has catered for 40. Her life will be so much easier now as she doesn't have to worry about me anymore. We are pulling into the crematorium now, so I'll finally sign off.

SHOW AND TELL

Mary Had a Little Lamb

by

Marion Shepherd

Mary had a little lamb
Its fleece was white as snow,
And everywhere that Mary went,
The lamb was sure to go
It followed her to school one day
which was against the rule;
It made the children laugh and play,
to see a lamb at school.

Look, I don't mind the kids bringing in bits and pieces for 'Show and Tell' but I draw the line at sheep. OK, Mary said it was a lamb, but it looked suspiciously like a sheep to me. And as for being "white as Snow" it looked distinctly grey. It was no advert for Persil I can tell you. And the smell! You know what wet wool smells like, well this lamb was far worse than that, really pungent like lamb stew without onions! I've told her parents loads of times that lambs, puppies, calves, chicks, tadpoles, bluebottles are not to be brought to school for "Show and Tell".

It's against "Health and Safety". Who knows what diseases these things are carrying? I've heard you can get Liver Fluke from Sheep.

Gerald the lamb (that's his name!) managed to get on the trampoline and jump about. Of course, the kids thought it was hilarious but who was it who had to clear up its droppings? Me of course! And Brenda Smith thought they were Sun Maid Raisins and started tucking in to them! Mrs Bragg, the secretary, had to take her to A& E because she thought that Brenda could get "Foot and Mouth"!

Gerald was having a whale of a time but, quite honestly, I've got enough to do these days without a bloody sheep gambolling round the classroom. So, I've sent a letter home to parents informing them that in future pupils can only bring 'Show and Tell' items that fit into a shoe box or better still a matchbox and none of it must breathe or swim or smell or fly. Perhaps I might do away with 'Show and Tell' altogether and have a spelling bee. I'll put it to the vote at the next pupils' Council meeting and hope that 'Show and Tell' gets voted off the curriculum.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Cost	Availability	Organiser
8 Sep	Snaresbrook Crown Court	Free	7	Mary Nathan
12 Sep	Essex & Herts Air Ambulance	Free	20	Hilary Wrightman
19 Sep	<i>Local u3a Quiz</i>	£2.00	24	Christine Slade
28 Nov	Chelsea Physic Garden	£9.00		Hilary Wrightman
5 Dec	<i>LWL Christmas Lunch at The New Boar</i>	TBC	24	Christine Slade
9 Dec	<i>Christmas Lights at Roydon</i>	TBC		Hilary Wrightman

These are dates for diaries. Some booking forms have already been issued, while others (see italics) will accompany the newsletter in the coming months.

Visits that are Sold Out are no longer included.

All u3a-organised events and outings are for Members Only.

[Snaresbrook Crown Court Visit \(Mary Nathan\)](#)

Our next visit to Snaresbrook Crown Court will be on Monday 8th September. The visit is free, but if you want to have lunch, you order and pay for it when we meet at the Monkams. Lunch is booked for 1.30pm.

If you are joining us on the visit, please go to the main door and I'll meet you **inside** by 09.45am. The closing date for applications is 18th August. The booking form accompanies this newsletter.

[Visit to Essex & Herts Air Ambulance \(Hilary Wrightman\)](#)

We have the opportunity to visit the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance based at North Weald on Friday 12th September. The tour lasts approximately 1.5 hours and includes a mix of films, narrative and interactive features in the room. The booking form accompanies this newsletter.

[Visit to the Chelsea Physic Garden Christmas Fair \(Hilary Wrightman\)](#)

This year, on Friday 28th November, we are visiting the Christmas Fair at the Chelsea Physic Garden, London's oldest botanic garden. The booking form accompanies this newsletter.

COMMUNITY

[W14 \(Chris Embling\)](#)

With the continuing closure of Roding Valley Hall, not many members will have been making use of the recently introduced W14 bus route. Consequently, they will have been missing out on the treat of being transported on an electric bus. It is air-conditioned, almost silent, and rattle free. The only problem I have experienced with it is that it is too long to negotiate turns, such as that into and out of Victoria Road to get to Buckhurst Hill Station where it causes tailbacks at the junction. But does it shift going up Palmerston Road!

However, did you know that at weekends we are now also being served by a night bus? During the recent closures of the Central Line between Leytonstone and Epping, the replacement night bus runs only between Leytonstone and Loughton – it does not continue on to Epping. Perfectly understandable. Who wants to go to Epping at that time of the day?! Consequently, if you had been enjoying a lock-in at the Monkams you could still catch a bus from outside the pub at 3.00am. Isn't that useful to know?

U3A COMMUNITY

[The Third Age Trust's Annual Short Story Competition 2025](#)

The u3a Short Story Competition will be launched on Thursday 21st August. Details will be posted on the [u3a Learning Activities webpage](#) that day including a prompt to inspire your story.

As usual, the Trust is working with Bloomsbury Publishing who are providing generous prizes and one of the final judges, author Sara Grant. On Friday 3 October, Sara will conduct an online workshop to help you polish-up your story after it's been written. Details of how to enrol (free of charge for u3a members) will be in the September Creative Writing Newsletter.

This competition is open to all u3a members, not just members of Writing groups.

STANDING NOTICES

Tell Mary (*Mary Nathan*)

I report and send a card to members who are unwell, in hospital or to the family on the passing of a loved one. So please tell me if you want to share sad or happy news. We want to hear about it. Phone Mary. If I don't pick up, please leave your name and number and I'll call you back.

Congratulations and Best Wishes (*Mary Nathan*)

On a brighter note, we can send best wishes to members who wish their friends to rejoice on their special birthday or wedding anniversary.

'Phone me on the above number and tell me your name, date and age of your birthday, and names, date and number of years of your marriage. This will be put in the newsletter. If you don't want us to know, don't 'phone me!

Charity Collections: Blister Packs (*Hilary Wightman*)

Please collect the blister packs that our tablets come in (unfortunately, most of us take some medication) and bring them to our monthly meetings and I will deliver them to Superdrug. These empty packs which we normally throw away are recycled by a UK company and are made into the silver emergency blankets that the emergency services carry. Only specific outlets are involved in this project, so please do not take them to your local store.

Outings and Events (*Christine Slade*)

Booking forms are circulated with Newsletters and are available at monthly meetings. Completed forms (with contact details) must be given or posted to the event organiser.

West End Theatre outings are notified by email to those members who have requested to be on the mailing list. Due to the short time turnaround, bookings have to be made by replying to the email.

Each booking form has its own specific reference for paying-in purposes. Please use it!

Membership Renewal (*Christine Slade*)

Membership forms are available at our Monthly Meetings, or by emailing at membership@buckhillu3a.org or 'phoning 020 8505 1005. If you want your membership card posted to you, please include a stamped self-addressed envelope with your form, otherwise collect it at a monthly meeting. If you pay by bank transfer, membership cards will only be issued once membership forms have been received. When giving your own details and those of our emergency contacts, please ensure 'phone numbers are current.

Newsletter (*Christine Slade*)

Articles for inclusion should be emailed to newsletter@buckhillu3a.org or posted to Newsletter Editor, 18 Scotland Road, Buckhurst Hill, IG9 5NR. The closing date for inputs to the next newsletter is **Friday 5th September**.

GROUP INFORMATION

GROUP	MEETING DAY
Backgammon and Banter	Last Monday of the month 2.30pm
Book Club	Monthly, 2 nd Monday 10.00am
Bridge (Social)	Weekly, each Tuesday 10.00am
Carry on Crafting	Monthly, 3 rd Wednesday 11.00am
Coffee Morning	Monthly, on 3 rd Thursday 10.30 am – 12.00 noon
Creative Writing	Monthly, 1 st Saturday at 10.30am
Creative Yarns	Monthly, usually 2 nd Wednesday, 10.00am
Cribbage	Monthly, on a Thursday evening, as arranged
Current Affairs (Roding Valley)	Monthly 2 nd Tuesday 2.45pm
Curious Mementos	Monthly 2 nd Friday 2.00–4.00pm
eBay Group	As arranged
Family History	Monthly on 2 nd Saturday 10.30am–12.30pm
Film / TV discussion and Cinema	Monthly, 3 rd Monday 2.00pm
Outings Group	Cinema Outings as arranged
Fitness for Fun	Monthly 4 th Tuesday 10.30am
Flower Arranging	As arranged
Forest Walks	1 st and 3 rd Mondays, 10.00am
Fun Quiz Afternoon	Monthly on 3 rd Friday, 1.30pm (will restart in September)
Grumpy Men's Club	As arranged
Italian: Basic (Epping Forest)	Alternate Wednesdays 2.00 pm – 4.00pm
Italian: Conversation (W&Wu3a)	Alternate Wednesdays 2.00 pm – 4.00pm
Ladies Who Lunch	As arranged
Lunch Club 1	Monthly 2 nd Tuesday
Lunch Club 2	Monthly 2 nd Monday
Mahjong	First Monday, monthly at 2.00pm
Museums and Galleries Group	Monthly on 3 rd Thursday, am
Outings	As arranged
Paint Pouring	Monthly: 1 st or 3 rd Tuesday or 1 st or 3 rd Wednesday, or 1 st Friday 2.00pm
Photography	Monthly usually 4 th Thursday
Play Reading	Monthly on 1 st Thursday 2.00pm
Rummikub	Monthly on 2 nd Monday 2.30pm
Scrabble 1	Monthly on 2 nd Wednesday 2.00 pm
Scrabble 2	Last Friday of the month 2.00pm
Sunday Club	Monthly on 4 th Sunday 2.30–4.30pm
Sunday Lunch for Singles	Monthly 1 st Sunday
Ten Pin Bowling	Monthly on 1 st Tuesday (unless school holidays)
Theatre Outings (Local)	As arranged
Theatre Outings (West End)	As arranged

VISITORS

Visitors/Potential New Members will be allowed to attend the Monthly Meeting ONCE ONLY (free of charge)