



NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2025

EDITOR'S COMMENTS



Editor: I wish every member a very happy Christmas and New Year. There was a good response for the newsletter in November, but I would like to have MORE articles in future for the newsletter regarding groups and outings. Please keep them coming! You can contact Phil Joiner at ww3aphil@gmail.com or 07728 748 131. All newsletter contributions for next month to be received by midnight on 19th January 2025 please.

STILL SMILING

Christmas 2024/New Year 2025

Most of you know that every Christmas since Covid, I have produced and distributed an annual free non-profit publication called 'Still Smiling' (You may have already read them) They are just my own concoctions, and not connected to our WWU3A.

In the 2024 edition, the first 10 pages feature jokes, cartoons, poems, facts, and words of wisdom all related to the festive season. Pages 11-20 contain dingbats, a quiz, anagrams, word links and brain teasers, which may come in useful for people to use during the Christmas season. In past years I have just produced a file, but this year I have also created a link stillsmiling2024.tiny.site It is available on the internet. Some members may already have been informed.

UPCOMING SPEAKER

On Tuesday 7th January at 10.30 a.m.
At: The Memorial Hall,
South Woodford 209 High Rd, E18 2PA.
Speaker Chris Foster

Doors open at 10.00 when Chris Foster, a retired bobby, will tell us about "Holborn's Heroes". This will be followed by light refreshments.



WWU3A QUIZ

A reminder that we are running another quiz on Tuesday 25th March 2025. Please put the date in your diary! Ticket details to follow.

MORE WWU3A



ARE YOU A GRUMPY OLD MAN? - YOUR U3A NEEDS YOU

Ron Prince writes: We men sometimes feel outnumbered so we are going to start a group "Just for men" where we can discuss topics that interest men. If you are interested in joining (grumpy or happy), please email me at ronw_wu3a@hotmail.com and include your name and phone number. When I see the response, I will arrange a first meeting, by email, to discuss how the group will run. Please note this is a cooperative group together with Wanstead and Woodford, Redbridge, and Roding Valley. It will be filled on a first come first joined, and no group will have priority.

NEW MEMBERS



Annette Carlon, John Carroll
James How, Audrey Jacobs, Christine Mudd,
James Mudd, Jennifer Reay,
Chris Shorland

CURRENT VACANCIES

Boules	Bridge	Canasta and Cards
Film Group	French	History
Italian 1	Italian 2	Local Walks
Looking at Art	Music Appreciation	Sequence Dancing
Table Tennis	Ten Pin Bowling	Trains Boats and Planes

FILM GROUP



Angela Barnes writes: At our December meeting thirteen of us watched Christmas Story. This film tells the story of a little boy Nicholas, who was orphaned very young and went on to be fostered in turn by families in his village. To repay them for their kindness he carved wooden toys which he secretly left on their doorsteps every Christmas Eve. The film was filmed in Lapland by a Finnish company and was refreshingly free of the usual American sentimentality which is often deemed a necessary part of Christmas films.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 8th January and I will be collecting £16.00 for the Spring term, as we will have 4 meetings including the April meeting which is 2 weeks before an exceedingly late Easter. You can pay by bank card on the Sum Up machine at the u3a general meeting on the day before, by bank transfer or by cheque (as a last resort) at Film Group. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

MORE WWU3A

LOOKING AT ART



John Lawrence reports: On Friday 29th November, nine of our group went to The Design Museum at 224 Kensington High Street. It is about 10 minutes walk from High Street Kensington tube.

Founded in 1987 by Sir Terence Conran it opened on its present site in 2016. We had coffee etc. in the upstairs restaurant with fine views. It has lots of contemporary exhibits i.e. TV's and radios from the last century and then the mobile devices of this century. Well worth a visit and we had an enjoyable walk back through Holland Park and returned back via Holland Park tube.



INTERMEDIATE SPANISH GROUP

The U3A intermediate Spanish group met at Iris's house for our annual Spanish Christmas lunch. You see us attempting to sing Eres Tu (it's you) which I

think we just managed with a certain aplomb !!!! We would like to extend our thanks to Iris, our ever patient tutor who has led us through another year of Spanish. We would also like to extend our thanks to Bernice for her hospitality during the year. We look forward to another year of learning with the U3A. Feliz año Nuevo (Happy New Year) to all U3A members.



FREEDOM PASS ROVERS

Janet Taylor reports: The Freedom Pass Rover group met for their annual Christmas Lunch at The Bull Theydon Bois. We enjoyed our lunch and for that we thank Sandra for organising it, as everything went according to

plan. We extend our thanks also to Lesley, who is our convenor and sorts us all out during the year, not an easy task. We look forward to 2025 and the walks we will be taking.

MORE WWU3A



TRAINS BOATS AND PLANES

Richard Moules reports: Eight members of this group braved a rather chilly overcast day to visit HMS Belfast moored opposite the Tower of London in December. We were "piped aboard" courtesy of the Canadian Ambassador who we followed on board! Sadly we were not invited to join his reception junket, but enjoyed exploring the many different areas of the ship, climbing up and down numerous metal ladders from the engine room to the bridge, the sick bay and the kitchens! We were amazed at the multitude of different skills required to operate this ship, which served in so many areas, from the tropics to Arctic Convoys, bombarding the "D day" beaches, and then the Korean War.

LONDON REGION

The London Region Events Team are pleased to announce that their Monthly Online Talks programme will continue from January to March.

As usual, the talks will be delivered via Zoom on the first Monday of each month 17.30-18.30 (log in from 17.00).

Monday 6th January: Leonardo da Vinci: would he have made a good u3a member?

Monday 3rd February: Our human instinct for language.

Monday 3rd March: Debate "Brave New World" vs "1984"

Please view the Events page of their website for detailed information on these sessions and links to the booking forms.

Please register early as bookings will close 48 hours prior to each talk.

bookings.lru3a@gmail.com Website <https://lru3a.u3asite.uk/>

CHRISTMAS POEMS

FRIENDS RE-UNITED

At Xmas time our hearts reach out to friends we think of dearly,
And checking through our friendship lists, as all of us do yearly,
We stop awhile to reminiscence and pleasantly review,
Special moments, happy times and things we used to do.
And though we've been too busy to keep in touch all year,
We send a Christmas greeting at this season of good cheer.
So Christmas is a perfect link between the old years and the new,
That keeps the bond of friendship forever running true.

SO MUCH TO DO

Season of happiness and good cheer. Pour me a drink, I'm dizzy dear.
A banging head, my feet are sore, From scampering round that Superstore.
Stuff the bird, then peel the sprouts, Stop fighting kids, don't act like louts.
Let's be cheerful, have a good day. Nana and Granddad are coming to stay.
Oh, there they are now, that's the bell. Nice to see them, all is well.
So much to do, so little time. If dinner's late, will it be a crime?

CHRISTMAS DAY

Fantastic mood. Pressies, carols, lots of food.
Fun and laughter round the tree. Family games then watch T.V.
Tea time comes, we have some cake. Take a walk for good health's sake.
Xmas over, up to bed, Heavy tummy, Aching head.

SNIPPETS

A new hotel in the Philippines has won the Guinness World Record for the largest building in the shape of a chicken, says The Architect's Newspaper. The 114-foot rooster at the Campuestohan Highland Resort was dreamt up by owner Ricardo Tan, who said he wanted to build something with "wow factor". The colossal cock pays homage both to the local agricultural sector and the country's controversial cockfighting industry. It has 15 rooms at around \$100 a night, although they don't have windows in order to maintain the rooster's "aesthetic integrity".

Britain has long been a pioneer in telecoms: we built the first commercial telegraph in 1837; made the first transatlantic phone call 90 years later; and sent the first text message to a mobile phone in 1992. But today the industry "lags rather than leads", says The Economist. According to new research, Britain ranks 46th for mobile network download speeds out of the 56 developed and developing countries for which data exists – "the worst mobile service in the rich world".

Days before signing the US Constitution in 1787, George Washington and his pals racked up a bar tab at Philadelphia's City Tavern worth the equivalent of \$15,600 today, says Gastro Obscura. For 55 guests, the damage included 54 bottles of Madeira, 60 bottles of claret, 12 bottles of whisky, seven large bowls of punch, eight bottles of cider, 22 bottles of porter and 12 bottles of beer but not a partridge in a pear tree. Talk about a more perfect union

Deep down, the youngsters know we Boomers had it better. They're obsessed with "Woolworth's, Pick n' Mix, VHS tapes, Sony Walkman cassette players, Rubik's cubes, Blockbuster Video stores and making mix tapes". Some 60% of Gen Z (born 1997 to 2012) say the Eighties is the decade they'd most like to have lived through. But, the real hoot about the "decade that cancelling forgot" was that you could pretty much say or write whatever you liked. Gen Z would do well to embrace this Eighties-style love of free speech, because their "censuring and censoring" and woke ruins all the fun.

Gen Z has declared that the sharpest look of the autumn is "grandad style", says The Daily Telegraph. Think shaggy knits in multiple colours and patterns, slip-on shoes, and acres of corduroy and tweed. The sleeveless jumper "falls straight into the grandad playbook"; the "nerdiness" of a checked shirt means it fits the bill; loafers, slippers and moccasins are now bang on trend. For extra kudos, add chunky ribbed socks. The older man is finally having his moment in the "sartorial sun".

There was one act Quincy Jones didn't enjoy working with, The Beatles. He called the band "the worst musicians in the world", in particular Paul McCartney ("the worst bass player I ever heard") and Ringo Starr ("don't even talk about it").

An emperor penguin that made it to Australia, 2,100 miles from its home in Antarctica – the longest journey ever recorded by the species. The oceanic adventurer was discovered on the beach in the resort of Denmark, around 267 miles south of Perth. "He tried to do a slide on his belly, thinking it was snow," says surfer Aaron Fowler, "and just face-planted in the sand.

We never grow up. We only learn how to act in public

CHRISTMAS LIMERICKS

A Christmas fair is cancelled no joke.
As festive fun dims for most folk.
There's no cash to be found,
As there's a run on the pound,
As our Council is totally broke.

There once was a man named Claus,
Who worked for a very good cause.
With reindeer and sleigh,
He'd be on his way,
Bringing gifts without any pause.

There once was a cat who could sing,
Carols of Christmas, she'd bring.
With a meow and a purr,
In her festive fur,
And joy is was what she would bring.

Santa, on his yearly quest,
Found cookies, always the best.
With milk on the side,
He'd take it all in his stride,
As part of his own Christmas fest.

To finance a fine Christmas spread,
My bank balance has tipped into red.
But I think that I know
As my bathroom scales show,
That there are pounds that need to be shed.

A Christmas tree, tall and grand,
In the living room did stand.
With baubles and lights,
And tinsel delights,
And everything sparkling as planned.

A wrapper of gifts, so neat,
Made every present a treat.
But with paper and bows,
All the paper just grows
Whilst goodies abound at our feet

At Christmas, a turkey named Ted,
Heard he was the feast and fled.
With a gobble and dash,
He made quite the splash,
And ate Christmas pudding instead

WORTH A VISIT



If you fancy visiting two Victorian steam engine museums and travelling between them in a vintage bus – then you're in luck as the Kempton Steam Museum and the London Museum of Water & Steam are offering exactly that for two days during Betwixmas on Monday 30th and Tuesday 31st December. Both museums will be running their steam engines and offering a joint ticket for both museums, including travel between them in an old Routemaster bus. You can buy tickets at £30.00 from either the [Kempton Steam Museum](#) or the [London Museum of Water & Steam](#)

HAVING A LAUGH

Everything in this picture is now in your pocket.



Like I was saying, the circus is just one of my careers. The real money comes from frosted flakes



Honey, our lawyer wishes us, but in no way guarantees, a Happy New Year.

From Monday postmen will be working from home. They will read all your letters and ring you if it's anything important.

Last night I ordered a glass of wine with my dinner, and the waiter asked for my ID. I replied "do I look that young?" and the waiter said "No. I just wanted to see if you qualified for the Senior Citizen discount."



YOU MUST BE JOKING

Perhaps Farmergeddon will lead to Starmergeddon.
 This man was so lazy he taught his dog to throw the stick.
 I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever.
 To be or not to be a horse rider. That is Equestrian
 Definition of austerity. Waiting for a sale at the pound shop.
 A chimpanzee put a steak on his head. He thought he was a griller.
 I tried to come up with a carpentry pun that woodwork. I nailed it.
 How to expose psychics. Throw them a surprise party.
 Jack can communicate with vegetables. Jack and the beans talk.
 There is a girl who only eats plants. Have you heard of herbivore.
 I forgot the French for strawberry, so I looked it up in a fraise book.
 Something about subtraction just doesn't add up.
 If there is an earthquake, the geologists always find fault.
 Man at the optician's asked, 'Have you got one in English?'
 Rival gangs threw grass at each other. It was a turf war.
 A convicted thief offered to pay the fine from his next robbery.
 PC World - you've got to be careful what you say in there.
 I was burgled and rang 999 but there was a 2 year waiting list.
 I bought a seaside postcard - - nothing to write home about.
 He was only a whisky maker, but she loved him still.



A millionaire walked into a bank in the middle of London and asked for a loan for £4,000. "Well, before we lend you the money we are going to need some kind of security," the bank teller said. "No problem," the man responded. "Here are the keys to my car. You'll see it outside. It's a black Porsche parked in the back of the parking lot." A few weeks later, the man returned to pay off his loan. While he was paying it off, along with the interest of £20, the manager came over. "Sir, we are very happy to have your business, but if you don't mind me asking... after you left, we looked into your accounts and found out that you are a millionaire. Why would you need to borrow £4000?" "Well," the man said, "where else can I park my car for three weeks in London for £20?"



A woman was struggling to get her tomatoes to ripen, so she sought advice from her neighbour. Her neighbour suggested, "It's simple! Just head out to your garden at midnight and dance around naked for a few minutes. Your tomatoes will be so embarrassed, they'll turn bright red." That night, the woman did just that, dancing naked in her garden. The next morning, her neighbour popped over to check on the tomatoes. "Did they turn red?" the neighbour asked. "No," the woman replied, "they're still green, but I noticed the cucumbers have shot up by four inches!"



An old man wants to take up a sport, so he decides to play tennis. After a couple of weeks, his doctor asks him how he's doing. "It's going well," the man says. "When I'm on the court and I see the ball speeding towards me, my brain immediately says, 'To the corner! Back hand! To the net! Smash! Go back!'" "That's great," his doctor says. "But then my body says," the man continued. "Who? Me? You must be kidding!"