



Merton u3a Newsletter

Group News

Discovering Philosophy

This new group started in early November and has proved a hit – being grossly over-subscribed with a lengthy waiting list to join. Based at the community centre in Collier's Wood, it has got off to a good start, and by all accounts is proving thought-provoking and stimulating.

Indoor Climbing

This relatively new group is gaining strength with a number of new joiners. If you have some experience of climbing (even if that experience was some time ago), Peter West would welcome you, as group expansion is to some extent dependent on having a good ratio of experienced to novice climbers. However, the group hopes to graduate its first new member to independent climbing soon. Sessions are held weekly at the indoor climbing centre at Tolworth. Contact Peter on 07831 351836 or at evaluationexpert@gmail.com



Walking Group 4 enjoying a walk from Canary Wharf to Greenwich.

This friendly group enjoy fortnightly walks locally and further afield. The group started in October 2014 and organise walks that are between 5 and 7 miles long including a lunch stop, and are all reached by public transport.

Currently there are vacancies, so why not contact the leader Pam Wright to find out more? Ring on 07719 933190 or email at

Psychology

A new group is due to start in mid-January under Valerie Lucas's leadership. As you'd imagine with this topic, interest has been high – there is already a waiting list, as the group has been fully subscribed. We hope to be able to bring you some feedback on how this group is progressing in time for the next newsletter.

Tom Conway, our much-respected Groups Co-ordinator, is stepping down from the role at the AGM on 19 March 2025. We need someone to take over so why not email Tom at groups@mertonu3a.org.uk or our Chair, Jane Fisher at chair@mertonu3a.org.uk to find out what's involved.



We look forward to seeing you at our AGM which will be held on 19 March 2025 at the Trinity URC Church Hall, Mansel Road, London SW19 4AA. Information on how to register will be circulated to all members later this month, so make sure you mark the date in your diary!



Canasta 3

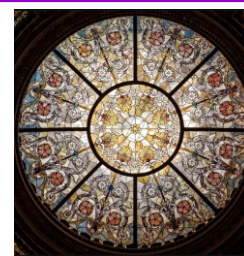
There are vacancies for the Saturday afternoon Canasta group. The sessions are held at members' homes and beginners are welcome - it's very easy to pick up. Contact Gloria Stein on 0208 645 0375/07946 378288 or at oscarstein@msn.com

History of Stained Glass

There are vacancies for this group that meets on the second Monday morning of each month

History of Western Architecture

This group meets on the first Monday morning of each month and follow a series of lectures centred mainly on the History of Western Architecture.



Both sessions start with chat and refreshments and are held near Wimbledon Park tube station. Contact Frances Funnell on 0208 946 7739 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm) for further information



New activities coming soon

In response to our recent successful appeal for existing members to create new groups, we are now looking into developing these suggestions into a range of exciting new subject areas and activities for members to enjoy. What's more, at the latest New Members' Tea, several of the new joiners also expressed an interest in creating new groups. Stay tuned for further updates on what promises to be an interesting year ahead.

Section Leaders

We are still three section leaders short (Card & Board Games, Music, Sport & Exercise). These roles help the Groups' Coordinator to better manage the provision of activities. With in excess of 80 groups, it is a very broad span to cover for one person, so having someone who is able to focus more closely on a specific set of groups means that we are better able to assist in putting new groups in place and sustaining existing groups. If you are able to help, or even to just find out what's involved, contact Tom Conway at groups@mertonu3a.org.uk

Membership Check

The annual membership check has been running since mid-October and is almost complete with only a few groups outstanding. It is important to ensure that only paid members of Merton u3a participate in groups, otherwise we risk our insurance cover becoming invalid. To that end, when a new person is about to join a group, group leaders should check either with the Groups Coordinator or the Membership Secretary that that person is in fact a fully paid-up member. Thank you for all the work that has gone into this necessary exercise.

Coffee mornings

All are welcome at the monthly coffee mornings held either at Elys in Wimbledon, M&S coffee shop, Colliers Wood or Café 46 in Raynes Park from 11am - 1pm.

Thursday 30 January - M&S Café, Sainsbury Centre, Colliers Wood

Wednesday 26 February - 3rd Floor Restaurant, Elys, Wimbledon

If you have a book you would like to pass on, bring it with you. No need to book, though it does help to know if you are planning to come along, so please email Frances Partridge if you will be joining us: frances_partridge@yahoo.co.uk



Sunday Lunches

Fancy a delicious Sunday lunch that you haven't had to cook for a change? If you would like to join us, please contact Veda at info@vedahallowes.co.uk or on 07960 478718

26 January at 1pm - Hatay (modern Turkish cuisine) 94-96 Coombe Lane, Raynes Park SW20 OAY (Still available to book)

23 February, at 1pm - Tampopo (S. Asian cuisine) 31-35 Hartfield Rd, Wimbledon SW19 3SG

23 March at 1pm - Cent Anni (Italian cuisine) 33 High Street, Wimbledon Village, SW19 5BY

New Members

In this issue, we are pleased to welcome the following new members to Merton u3a:

Jenny Alderman

Gabriella Ash

Tom Bolger

Judith Brodie

Jane Bryan

Philip Bryan

Nancy Buabeng

Lucia Cadei

Penny Clarke

Kate de Vere

Christine Eysenck

Theresa Forgiel-Jenkins

Mark Frankel

Nicola Gormley

Fiona Graham

Simon Graham

Suzie Hart

Cyril Kearney

Ann Kelly

Dezzi Lloyd

Russell Makin

David Mallory

Annette Maylam

Richard Maylam

Sheila Metcalfe

Stephen Morris-Jones

Bill Mumford

Nancy Pickett

Camilla Piper

C Porteous

Diana Saville

Liz Sherwood

Susanna Spear

Sushila Surendra

Lavinia von Kesmark

John Voos

Graham Walker

David Warne

Lesley Warne

Sharon Wheatley



It is with regret that we also have to announce the deaths of Mary Hayes and Rena Phillips.

Just a friendly reminder...

This edition of the Merton u3a quarterly newsletter is the last one to be sent to members through the post. In future only those who have no email, or have specifically requested a printed copy will receive one. You can request a printed newsletter by emailing membership@mertonu3a.org.uk with the heading 'newsletters' or by phoning Ann Hopkins on 0208 544 9478.

Other News

A book launch took place on 7 December at Raynes Park Library Hall to celebrate *Fifty Years on the Stage* which have been achieved by Michael Norman-Smith, a longstanding member of Merton u3a.

The venue was transformed into Aladdin's Cave despite the presence of a tempest, but as the saying goes - the show must go on! There was music, a banquet and an interview with the author by Joy Kluver, crime writer with James Brewer, a London journalist conducting the question time.



An invited audience enjoyed the occasion and best wishes were received from drama clubs and actors with whom Michael has performed including TJ Holmes, currently in *Treasure Island* at Edinburgh.

Wimbledon National Trust

Just a reminder about the forthcoming coach trips with places very generously on offer to Merton u3a members. Full details are not yet out, but you are welcome to contact the organisers by email, text or telephone to register your interest.

Monday 28 April. Half day visit to Chenies Manor and Garden, Rickmansworth. Cost: £35.50 (including coffee/tea & biscuits on arrival). Organiser: Maureen White maureenwhite@btopenworld.com 07881 822375 (call or text).

Wednesday 21 May. Half day visit to Osterley Park and House (National Trust) Cost £25.50 (including tea at Osterley Garden Centre). Additional cost for non-National Trust members. Organiser: Lynda Coleman lynda.coleman1@btinternet.com 07952 488908 (call or text).

Get Rid of Those Cold Callers

Cold calling is not illegal. However, *Able Community Care* have produced a door sticker stating that the occupier does not wish to receive cold calls. Any trader that ignores this may be committing a criminal offence. These stickers are available free of charge by emailing info@ablecommunitycare.com

History Newsletter

Jot & Tittle is a free history newsletter that is published twice a month. It started from work in the Salisbury Cathedral archives, for the cathedral volunteers and has since expanded to Wiltshire's historical societies and museums. The latest editions have moved into Dorset and Hampshire and the south-west. *Jot & Tittle* is decidedly non-academic, even at times lighthearted and readers can submit their own articles or correspondence for publication. The website jot-and-tittle.com carries all previous editions. Interested? A recent example can be forwarded on request to Mark.Brandon.

Talks at Merton u3a

Hopefully you have been able to attend some of the talks for Merton u3a members, held on the second Friday of each month. There is no need to book a place, and you can just turn up at Drake House (44 St Georges Road Wimbledon SW19 4ED) on the day. Talks start at 2pm, with refreshments available from 1.30pm. **We ask for £1, to cover the hire of the hall and towards a cup of tea or coffee – it is a bargain!**

14 February – The James Webb Space Telescope

The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is the largest and most powerful space telescope ever built. It's designed to see further into space and thus further back in time than any telescope before it, including its predecessor, the Hubble Space Telescope.

14 March – The Plight of the Bumble Bee

Honeybees tend to be the 'poster girls' for the threats faced by our insect pollinators but it's our wild bees, and in particular our bumblebees that are actually under threat. Only eight of our twenty-four species are widespread; we have lost two species completely and an additional nine are threatened with extinction.

11 April – Walls have Tongues

Many of our medieval churches are covered with graffiti – deliberate markings in the fabric of the church. The marks range from clumsy, hand-drawn shapes to images of mythical creatures or elegant geometric designs. This talk looks at some of the most fascinating graffiti, considers what our forebears may have wanted to achieve and tells you how to find these mysterious markings yourself.

If there is any subject you would like to suggest for a future talk, or a speaker you enjoyed and would recommend, please contact Barry Lawrence at talks@mertonu3a.org.uk

Talks by London Region u3a

The London Region Events Team present their monthly online talks (via Zoom) on the first Monday of each month 17.30-18.30.

Monday 3 February: Our human instinct for language *Alan Freeland*

Language is perhaps our most important invention. In this talk we focus on verbal communication and look at how and why language arose, how languages are similar and different, and how and why they change. We will learn why we say mice infestation but not rats infestation, what the Intestines Affairs Ministry does, what children think our cutlery should be called, how we learnt to talk about time, and how 'evidentials' could improve our social media.

Monday 3 March: IQ² Cultural Debate: 'Brave New World' vs 'Nineteen Eighty-Four'

This will use a recorded debate to consider the mood of our time as reflected in two great 20th century novels.

Please view the [Events page](#) of our website for detailed information on these sessions and links to the booking forms.

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU?

'NEW YEAR - A NEW CHAPTER, NEW VERSE, OR JUST THE SAME OLD STORY? ULTIMATELY, WE WRITE IT. THE CHOICE IS OURS.'

ALEX MORRITT

Time to take up something new?

The next few pages list all the groups currently run by Merton u3a. Take a look through and see if anything appeals – we have such a wide variety. A fuller description of each group is on our [webpage](#) or you can use the contact details to get more information.

Don't be discouraged by seeing the few that have waiting lists – people drop out for many reasons and you may be next on the list. Popular subjects can have several groups on the same subject, so consider starting one of your own – it's very straightforward. The Groups Co-ordinator will help at groups@mertonu3a.org.uk

Group	When?	Venue	Contact Details	Places?
Art Appreciation	3rd Wed./month 2:30–3:30pm	Homes in Cent. Wimbledon	David Starke 020 8330 2672 david.starke@hotmail.co.uk	Yes
Book Club 1	Last Thur./month 10:30–12:30	Members' homes	Ann Hopkins 020 8544 9478 ann.hopkins@talk21.com	Waiting list
Book Club 2	Wed. evenings monthly	Members' homes	Jon Sheppard 020 8540 2401 jon@jonsheppard.co.uk	Waiting list
Book Club 3	3rd Thurs./month 10am	Raynes Park	Shirley Cave 020 8540 8469 shirley.cave@talktalk.net	Yes
Book Club 4	1st Thurs./month 2pm	Homes in Cent. Wimbledon	M. Brunswic Citron 07886 592 369 mbrunswic@yahoo.co.uk	Yes
Climate Change	1st & 3rd Wed./ month 3:30–4:30	Zoom	Arts & Science Section Leader jacquelinechilcott@gmail.com	Yes
Cosmology	2nd & 4th Tues./ month 3–5pm	Members' homes in Dundonald area	Heather Haskins 020 8785 6931 heather.haskins@yahoo.co.uk	Yes
Creative Writing 1	3rd Thurs./ month 2–4pm	Members' homes	Ann Hopkins 020 8544 9478 ann.hopkins@talk21.com	Waiting list
Creative Writing 2	4th Thurs./month 10.30–12.30	Members' homes	Pat Flowers 07590806579 pflowers0053@aol.com	Yes
Discovering Philosophy	2nd Wed./month 10.30– 12.00	Colliers Wood Comm. Centre	Clive Whichelow clive.whichelow@gmail.com	Waiting list
Hist. of Western Architecture	1st Mon./month 10–12	Nr Wimbledon Park tube station	Frances Funnell 020 8946 7739 (Mon–Fri 9–5)	Yes
History of Stained Glass	2nd Mon./month 10.30–12	Nr Wimbledon Park tube station	Frances Funnell 020 8946 7739 (Mon–Fri 9–5)	Yes
Play–reading	1st Fri./month 2pm	Wimbledon Village	M. Norman–Smith 020 8946 6831 normansmit21@yahoo.co.uk	Yes
Poetry Appreciation	Alternate Mons 2–4pm	Via email	Laura Collyer 0203 722 3937 bernardandlaura@yahoo.co.uk	Yes
Popular Science & Technology	3rd Thurs./ month 2–4pm	Colliers Wood Comm. Centre	Deborah Chapman 020 8540 9137 djcvol@btinternet.com	Yes
Psychology	3rd Fri./month 2–4pm	Colliers Wood Comm. Centre	Valerie Lucas valerieal@hotmail.com	Waiting list
Theatre	Fri. monthly pm	Wimbledon Guild café	Judi O'Prey judioprey@hotmail.com	Waiting list

Group	When?	Venue	Contact Details	Places?
Bridge 1	Alternate Thurs. 10–12:30pm	Ely's Wimbledon	Joyce Clay joyceclay137@btinternet.com	Yes
Bridge 2	Alternate Mons. 2–4.30pm	South Wimbledon area	Sandra Neilson 020 8542 4951 sandraneilson@btinternet.com	Waiting list
Bridge–Absolute Beginners	Thurs. 10.30–12.30	Southfields area	Carole Geirnaert 020 8780 0646 carolegt3@gmail.com	Waiting list
Bridge for Improvers 1	Tues. 2–4pm	Wimbledon Broadway	Ann Walker 07879 636059 wickedwitch100@hotmail.com	Waiting list
Bridge for Improvers 2	Sat. 10.30–12.30	Wimbledon	Carole Geirnaert 020 8780 0646 carolegt3@gmail.com	Waiting list
Bridge, Social	Alternate Thurs. 2–4:30pm	Wimbledon	Jaqui Dunn jacqdunn9@gmail.com	Yes
Canasta 1	Thurs. 2–5pm	Members' homes	Susan Roberts 020 8542 3286 susanrobertssw19@gmail.com	Yes
Canasta 3	Sat. 2–5pm	Members' homes	Gloria Stein 020 8645 0375 oscarstein@msn.com	Yes
Canasta 4	Wed, 7–9.30pm	Members' homes	Lynda Salter c.salter214@btinternet.com	Yes
Cribbage	Alternate Tues. 2.30–4.30	Members' homes	Maureen Rogers 020 8640 1076 moromorden@gmail.com	Yes
Mah Jong	Alternate Mons. 2.30–4.30	Central Wimbledon	Carolyn Hartley 020 8542 7572 hartley703@btinternet.com	Yes
Art & Design	Alternate Wed. 2–4pm	Drake House	Susan Harrington 020 8540 8252 susanharrington744@gmail.com	Yes
Creative textiles and Thread	4th Wed./month 2–4pm	Members' homes	Deborah Chapman 020 8540 9137 djcvol@btinternet.com	Yes
Knitting & Crochet	Alternate Fri. 1–3pm	Wimbledon Guild café	R. Laugharne 07557 773790 rlaugharne232@gmail.com	Yes
Painting & Sketching	Alternate Thurs 2–4pm	Colliers Wood Comm. Centre	Susan Thurlow 07786 981 607 thurlowsue@hotmail.com	Yes
Papier-mâché Sculpture	Tues. 10–12	Kingston Hill	Anne Bachmann 020 8549 2625 annebachmann31@gmail.com	Waiting list
Patchwork & Quilting	1st Wed./month 2–4pm	Wimbledon	Lynda Pawley 020 8947 2468 lcpawley@blueyonder.co.uk	Yes
Photography	Alternate Tues. 10am	To be agreed	Frances Partridge frances_partridge@yahoo.co.uk	Yes
Folk Songs	Last Sat./month 10.45–1pm	Members' homes	Neil Munro 020 8947 0857 nnggmm@hotmail.co.uk	Yes
Jazz Appreciation	Last Fri./month 2–4.30pm	Members' homes	Mary Sinfield 020 8946 1028 jag.mertonu3a@gmail.com	Yes
Opera Appreciation	Alternate Weds 2–5pm	Central Wimbledon	Michael Taylor mbowestaylor@hotmail.com	Waiting list
Ukulele Intermediate	Friday 12.30–2pm	Drake House	Dudley Tipler 0795 650 0695 dudley.tipler@outlook.com	Yes

Group	When?	Venue	Contact Details	Places?
A Year in History	Alternate Tues. 10.30-12:30pm	Near Wimbledon/ Raynes Park	Sarah McKibben 079 6690 6582 sarahmck2010@gmail.com	Waiting list
Current Affairs 1	2nd Wed./month 2pm	Members' homes	Paula La Cumber paula-la@hotmail.co.uk	Waiting list
Current Affairs 2	Alternate Mons. 2-4pm	Dundonald area of Wimbledon	Sue Mullen 020 8540 2401 suemullen@blueyonder.co.uk	Waiting list
Current Affairs 3	3rd Tues./month pm	Zoom	Anne Remedios 020 8946 3653 anneremedios@outlook.com	Yes
Current Affairs 5	1st Mon./month 2-4pm	Members' homes	Paul Millbank 020 8543 0853 paulmillbank@gmail.com	Waiting list
Family & Local History: Research	Thurs. monthly 10.15-11.45am	Wimbledon	Margaret Frod 020 8287 0646 margie.frod@gmail.com	Yes
Family History 1	Alternate Thurs. 3.30-4:30pm	Zoom	Carolyn Heathcote 020 8395 6416 ceemh166@gmail.com	Yes
How the Past has Formed us	Tues./monthly 10.45-1pm	Members' homes	Neil Munro 020 8947 0857 nnggmm@hotmail.co.uk	Waiting list
Law in Action	Mon./monthly 11-12.30	Wimbledon or Members' homes	Margaret Scorer 020 8946 6373 mvscorer@sky.com	Waiting list
Local History	Last Thurs./ month 10am	Wimbledon	M. Norman-Smith 020 8946 6831 normansmit21@yahoo.co.uk	Waiting list
Cycling 1	Alternate Mons am	Wimbledon	Simon Tuley 020 8540 0403 berkeley47@yahoo.co.uk	Waiting List
Cycling 2	Alternate Mons 9.30-12.30pm	Wimbledon	Steph Wyatt 07909 774234 haremale@hotmail.com	Yes
Cycling Cortado	Alternate Tues. 10am	Raynes Park	Peter West 07831351836 evaluationexpert@gmail.com	Yes
Golf Buddies	Every 3rd Mon. 10.30am	Horton Park Golf Club	Daniel Smallwood dan.smallwood@magemel.co.uk	Yes
Indoor Climbing	Weekly	Tolworth	Peter West 07831351836 evaluationexpert@gmail.com	Yes
Pétanque	Alternating Tues 2.30pm	Holland Gardens	Peter West 07831351836 evaluationexpert@gmail.com	Yes
QiGong	Wednesdays 10am	Central Wimbledon	Mariette Ball 020 8946 1843 wimball@blueyonder.co.uk	Waiting List
Racketball	Thursdays 2.15-3pm	The Wimbledon Club	Ruth Cooke 07989 282059 ruthcooke@gmail.com	Yes
Table Tennis 1	Wednesdays 9-11.30am	Colliers Wood Comm. Centre	Roger Neal 07801714966 jneal27445@aol.com	Waiting List
Table Tennis 2	Fridays 2-4pm	Colliers Wood Comm. Centre	Glynis Duncan 020 8540 9879 g.duncan88@btinternet.com	Yes
Coffee Mornings	Monthly 11-1pm	Varies	Frances Partridge frances_partridge@yahoo.co.uk	N/A
Get Together	Ad Hoc	Various cafés, restaurants etc.	Frances Partridge frances_partridge@yahoo.co.uk	N/A
Sunday Lunch	Sun. monthly 1-2.30pm	Ad Hoc	Glen Green glenhgreen@gmail.com	N/A
Visits	Ad Hoc	Varies	Lynn Coward 07828 465537 visits@mertonu3a.org.uk	N/A

Group	When?	Venue	Contact Details	Places?
France Culture	Alternate Mons 2.30-4.30pm	Members' homes	Evelyne Clements 07940 545829 evelynejenny1@gmail.com	Yes
French Adv. Conversation	Alternate Thurs. 10-12pm	New Malden	Alain Hendrich 07948 189082 alain@hendrich.co.uk	Waiting list
French Café Conversation	1st Fri./month 10.30-12pm	Elys Café, Wimbledon	James Etheridge 020 8944 7078 james.etheridge300@btinternet.com	Yes
German Int./Adv Conversation	Alternate Mons. 2-3.45pm	Dundonald area of Wimbledon	Barbara Harris 020 8540 1462 bbharris@vinceharris.me.uk	Waiting list
Italian Int./Advanced	Alternate Mons 10.30-12pm	Wimbledon Library	Susanne Gregory 020 8395 8615 susanne.m.gregory@gmail.com	Waiting list
Italian Upper Intermediate	Alternate Weds 10.15-12pm	Members' homes	Hazel Pennell 07906 614 744 hazel.pennell@blueyonder.co.uk	Waiting list
Latin Intermediate	Alternate Weds. 10.30-12:30pm	Zoom	Anne Peacock 020 8946 1578 annepeacock@outlook.com	Yes
Parlons Français	Alternate Mons 2.30-4.30pm	Zoom	James Etheridge 020 8944 7078 james.etheridge300@btinternet.com	Waiting list
Welsh Conversation	Alternate Weds 2-3pm	Zoom	Avril Cuthbert 07814 938 228 avrilcuthbert@outlook.com	Yes
Birdwatching 1	Alternate Tues am	In and around London	Rosemary Laugharne 07557 773790 rlaughterne232@gmail.com	Yes
Birdwatching 2	Irregularly	WWT Wetlands Centre, Barnes	Jacqueline Jordan 07884 183 428 jackyjordan2000@gmail.com	Yes
Friday Walks	Alternate Fri. 10.15am	Wimbledon Station	Jacqueline Jordan 07884 183 428 jackyjordan2000@gmail.com	Yes
Gardening	Last Wed./month 10.30-12.30pm	Lower Morden	Christine Evans 020 8330 7616 evansfee@hotmail.com	Yes
Loose Enders	Alternate Sat. am	Varied	Rosemary Mattock 020 8946 9632 u3a.rose@gmail.com	Yes
Nordic Walking	Alternating Tues & Weds 9.30am	Wimbledon Common	Carolyn Hartley 020 8542 7572 hartley703@btinternet.com	Yes
Saturday Walks	Alternate Sats 10am	Wimbledon Common	Roger Frost 07592 148102 saturdaywalks@outlook.com	Yes
South Westerners Walking	Alternate weeks am	Varied	Carolyn Hartley 020 8542 7572 hartley703@btinternet.com	Yes
Walking Group 4	Alternate weeks am	Varied	Pam Wright 07719 933 190 pamwright@btinternet.com	Yes



Even if you don't know the answers, at least you'll learn something! Answers on page 12.

- Q.1 The dish Eggs Florentine contains which vegetable?
- Q.2 Whose biography was called *Neither Shaken Nor Stirred*?
- Q.3 Which famous Falls are on the Zambesi river?
- Q.4 Who was singer Lorna Luft's famous scstress mother?
- Q.5 In which film does Shere Khan appear?
- Q.6 In which century was the first circumnavigation of the earth?
- Q.7 What type of hat took its name from a novel by George DuMaurier?
- Q.8 What is the collective name for a group of frogs?
- Q.9 Where does the action of *Godzilla* take place?
- Q.10 Which tough area of New York gives its name to a cocktail?



Frances Partridge

Spotlight on our volunteers

This issue...Frances Partridge

With a professional background in training and administration, Frances Partridge is putting her organisational skills to good use not only as leader of the photography group, but also as organiser of the regular drop-in coffee mornings. Vice-Chair Linda Thomas caught up with Frances to find out more.

Q. How did you get involved with Merton u3a?

A. Through various friends from different u3as. I've been a u3a member now for around 10 years. I actually live in Lambeth but Merton u3a just seemed to have a nice wide range of things on offer.

Q. You started out with the photography group?

A. I've always been interested in photography although I'm not a very good photographer and I hate having my photo taken! I took over as leader of the group in 2019 though that was never my intention. I really enjoy running the group.

Q. So how does the group work?

A. There are 18 of us in the group and it doesn't matter what kind of camera you've got. We have a planning meeting every three months to decide on what we're going to do, then every two weeks we might go to an exhibition or for a walk. Our last outing was to the Jeffrye Museum.

Q. And you also run the coffee mornings?

A. I don't think I realised I was taking over organising the coffee mornings – I was kind of the first reserve and it just sort of happened. I don't worry about the photography group but I do worry about the coffee mornings.

Q. Why is that?

A. They're not easy to run, there's always uncertainty about how many people turn up, but I wouldn't want it any other way. It's a good place to come if you've just joined the u3a to find out about different groups and activities. The main purpose of the coffee morning is just to chat about anything and everything, nothing uncomfortable, so we try to avoid politics and religion. There's an informal book swap too – if you happen to have a book to pass on.

Q. When's the next coffee morning?

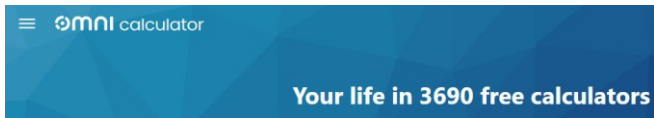
A. Thursday 30 January at the M&S Cafe, Sainsbury Centre, Colliers Wood. Everybody is welcome.

The photography group has vacancies at the moment. The group meets every other Tuesday from 10am. If you're interested in joining email frances_partridge@yahoo.co.uk

IT Notes

A calculator for every purpose

If you ever ask yourself 'how can I calculate that?' whatever 'that' may be, here's a website where you can probably find the very calculator you require. **Omnicalculator** claims to have 3,690 calculators for specific purposes, whether it's working out miles per gallon, converting heights in feet and inches into metres, or temperatures from Celsius to Fahrenheit, or something much more esoteric, you should find it here. You can convert a recipe from cups to grams or teaspoons to grams but there are also (for example) an **Inclined Plane Calculator** and a **Magnitude of Acceleration Calculator**. Whatever those are. Just explore at <https://www.omnicalculator.com/>



Tips for users of the Google Android keyboard

If you use an Android phone, you can download and install the Google keyboard (Gboard), which is probably better than the one your phone manufacturer provides by default. Once installed, go to settings and search for 'keyboard'. Then make Gboard the default. Here are some of the features you can use once it is installed (the key to all of these is the icon in the row above the keyboard that looks like four squares):

Handwriting

Tap the four-square menu icon in the keyboard's upper-left corner and then tap the gear-shaped Settings option in the full Gboard menu. Select 'Languages' followed by the Add Keyboard button. Type 'English (UK)' (or whatever language you prefer), then make sure 'Handwriting' is active and highlighted at the top of the screen. Tap the Done button to apply the changes. Now, when you edit any



text to start Gboard, you should be able to either press and hold the space bar or hit the newly present globe icon next to it to switch between the standard keyboard setup and the handwriting recognition system. With the handwriting canvas open, write and watch Google translate your writing into text almost instantly.

Clipboard

Look for the clipboard-shaped icon either in the keyboard's top row or within the main Gboard menu to get started. The first time you tap it, you might have to activate the system (via the toggle in the upper-right corner of its interface) and also grant Gboard permission to access your system clipboard. You may also need to return to the Gboard settings to find the 'Clipboard' section and enable all the options there to get everything running.



Once you do, though, it will automatically show every snippet of text and any images you've copied recently, for one-tap inserting into whatever text field you're working in — and it'll show your recently captured screen-shots for the same purpose, too.

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Perhaps most useful of all, though, is the Gboard clipboard’s capability to store commonly used items and then make them readily available for you to insert anytime, anywhere. You could use that for email addresses, physical addresses, or just phrases you find yourself typing out often. Whatever the case may be, just copy the item in question once, then pull up the Gboard clipboard and press and hold your finger onto the thing you copied. Tap the “Pin” option that pops up, and that text (or image) will be permanently stored in your Gboard clipboard for use whenever you need it. If you have Gboard installed on other devices, your permanent clips are available on them, too, once you sign into the same account.

Translate

Tap the four-square menu icon in your keyboard’s upper-left corner once more, find the Translate button, and tap it – then select whatever languages you want and type directly into the Gboard translate box. Gboard will translate your text in real-time and insert the result in whatever language you selected, directly into whatever text field you were editing.



By David Lusty, Webmaster, Merton u3a

Can’t spend a penny?

More Loos for Merton have been contacted by the *London Loo Alliance* concerning a survey they are conducting about Londoners’ experiences of finding (or not) public toilets when they are out and about.

They would really like to hear your views, so please [link to their online survey](#) and let them know.

More Loos for Merton are continuing to work with a Project Officer to develop and relaunch a new Community Toilet Scheme (C.T.S.) in the Borough, and are also waiting to hear more about TfL’s announcement to consider providing public toilets at Morden Underground Station.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Q.1 Spinach | Q.6 16th |
| Q.2 Sean Connery | Q.7 Trilby |
| Q.3 Victoria Falls | Q.8 Army (or colony) |
| Q.4 Judy Garland | Q.9 New York |
| Q.5 Jungle Book | Q.10 Bronx |



Letter to the Editor

Comments to the Editor

If you have any comments on this newsletter or would like to make a suggestion for future issues, please contact Georgina Godwin-Keene at editor@mertonu3a.org.uk