



NEWSLETTER No. 69 March 2019

mkhdu3a.org.uk

Dear Member

Apart from all our other exciting news this month we want to highlight one thing in particular:

The guest speaker at this year's AGM will be Lucy Hawking. Lucy is a nationally highly-respected author of children's books, a populariser of Science and promoter of Science education and a trustee of the Autism Research Trust. She is the daughter of the late, world-renowned Professor Stephen Hawking. Further details on page 4.

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March Monthly Meeting:

Midlands-based Ashley Groves, our March speaker, is a full time professional wildlife photographer and runs his own company, leading tours for wildlife watchers and photographers. He has been speaking to wildlife groups, U3A's and camera clubs since 2006.

This month's topic, *A Beginner's Guide to Birdwatching*, is for those who want to brush up on their common bird song and identification skills, or just want to learn more about their garden and local birds. The talk starts with some tips on the right equipment needed to get started and how to encourage birds and other wildlife into your garden; what food attracts which birds etc. By the end of the talk you'll know your Song Thrushes from your Mistle Thrushes, your Chiffchaffs from your Willow Warblers and be better equipped to identify your garden visitors.

The meeting will be held in the All Saints Centre, at the junction of the High Street and Vicarage Road in Kings Heath, at 2pm on Tuesday March 12.

Membership Renewals

All memberships of MKHD U3A are due for renewal from 1st April. The fee for the coming year is £14.

It will be possible for you to renew from the 1st March for those of you wishing to renew online. To do this go to our website www.mkhdu3a.org.uk click on the **Join or Renew** button, then click on **Members' Portal**, where you will be asked to enter your membership number, first and last name, postcode and email address. Although payment is made via PayPal, you do **not** need to have a PayPal account but can use either your debit or credit card. This option gives you the possibility of printing your own membership card or you can simply collect one from a monthly meeting. Most of our recent new members have joined this way and find it quite straightforward – and it saves your membership renewal volunteers a lot of time!

If you wish to pay in person at the March or April meetings the hall will be open to you from 1pm. You will not need to complete a fresh Membership form but, if you wish to pay by cheque, it will help if you complete it - £14 payable to U3A MKHD and signed, before coming to the table to collect your new card. Also, if any of your contact details have changed, be sure to tell us. Cash is acceptable although cheques are preferred.

If you prefer to renew by post, send your cheque (**not** cash) for £14 together with a note of your membership number and an s.a.e. if you wish your new card to be posted to you, to: Jackie Spearpoint, 14 Awdry Court, St Nicolas Gardens, Birmingham B38 8BH. Alternatively your new card can be collected at any monthly meeting.

Our AGM in May

We now have the schedule for our AGM on Tuesday May 14. As usual, we will begin early with tea, coffee and cake. This will be followed by the business of the AGM – we will report back to members on the year's work, on our finances, and will elect a new committee. Then we will have a nationally known speaker, Lucy Hawking, and she will sign books for members who wish to buy one.

Schedule on Tuesday May 14:

1.05 – 1.35	refreshments
1.40 – 2.10	AGM
2.15 – 3.15 (approx.)	talk by Lucy Hawking and questions
3.30 – 4.00 (approx.)	book signing

New Committee Needed!

Each year we elect a new committee and it is not only encouraged, but is vital, that we see new faces on the committee so that we can refresh and rejuvenate our committee and our ideas.

This year four committee members are standing down:

- Ruth Livermore has served on the committee for the past year as an Interest Group Coordinator
- Nick Wright has served for two years as Vice Chair and is our current Chair
- Diane Worland and Mike Clark are both founding members of the committee and have served for six and a half years – they are the survivors of the original committee!
- Diane spent several years as an Interest Group Coordinator and has been our Business Secretary for the past three years.
- Mike has been either Chair or Vice Chair since we started.

As is the case every year we seek nominations for **all** of the Committee posts:

- *Chair*
- *Vice Chair (2 posts)*
- *Business Secretary*
- *Treasurer*
- *Membership Secretary*
- *Interest Group Coordinator (3 posts)*
- *Social Secretary*
- *Communications Secretary*

Role descriptions for all of these are on our website in the Documents section, other than the Communications Secretary which is a new role concerned mainly with production and distribution of the newsletter.

Present members of the Committee (see end of newsletter) will also advise you on how to find out more about the roles.

If you are interested in standing for any of the posts please email Mike or talk to him at a monthly meeting. You will need to provide him with (in writing): your name and membership number and the name of a proposer and seconder (for both of them we will also need their name and membership number). *The proposer and seconder cannot be current members of the Committee.*

Resolutions:

If you wish to propose a resolution to be discussed at the AGM, please give this to Mike either in writing or by email, including your name and membership number and the name and membership number of a seconder.

The deadline for nominations and resolutions is the end of the month, Sunday March 31.

Our AGM Speaker, Lucy Hawking:



Lucy talking to children about Science in a Primary School

Lucy Hawking initially trained as a journalist, but then moved into writing books. She is best known for her George series of six adventure books, which are based on real science for young readers. They were written in collaboration with world-leading scientists and have been translated into over 40

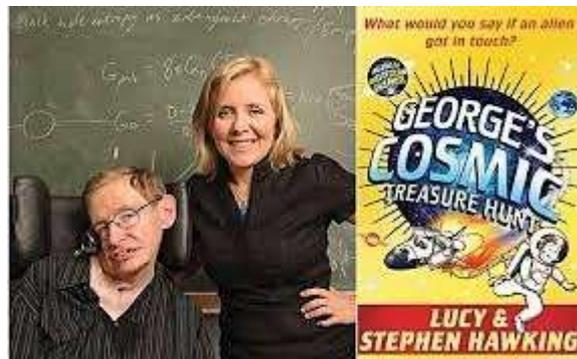
languages.

A trustee of the Autism Research Trust, Lucy has developed a new virtual reality film that allows people to experience the world through the eyes of someone with autism. She developed the concept for the film and worked with the *Guardian* and writer Sumita Majumdar, who drew on her own experiences as a person with autism in similar social situations.

Lucy has not only won prestigious awards for popularising science, but recently become chair person of the Stephen Hawking Trust.

In addition to telling us about her adult life and work, we are sure that Lucy will also tell us what it was like growing up in the household of Professor Stephen and Jane Hawking. It will be interesting to hear what she thinks of the film "The Theory of Everything".

Lucy with her famous father and one of the "George" series books on which they collaborated.



Moseley and Kings Heath Joint Literary Morning

On Tuesday February 5 we held our 5th annual Literary morning at the Friends Meeting House in Kings Heath. Members of all seven book groups, the poetry group, biography group and play-reading group attended. Normally we talk about the books that have been read in the last twelve months and nominate our favourite and *The Book to be Left on the Shelf!*

But this year we were fortunate to have Sybil Ruth, a contributor to, and Kavita Bhanot, the editor of, *The Book of Birmingham* come to talk to us. Kavita began by discussing the background to the

book and how it came to be published. She explained that it was an anthology of stories from different community perspectives set at significant periods of Birmingham's 20th century history.



The editor of the Book of Birmingham, Kavita Bhanot, and one of our members and a contributor to the book, Sybil Ruth, at the meeting

Sybil then read an extract from her story, *The Call*, and discussed how the story came to be written. This was followed by a question and answer session which opened up into a discussion about the

changing faces of Birmingham – both human and architectural. Everyone present thoroughly enjoyed listening to Kavita and Sybil and several copies of the book were sold; it was suggested that there could be a second edition including stories from other communities – for example the Irish and Polish communities.

We then listened to some of the book group leaders tell us about their group's favourite book of the year and the book they least enjoyed reading. After an interval for coffee and cake, Sybil read one of her published poems – a moving description of a woman with dementia at a Friends Meeting. We then moved on to hear choices from the other book groups. The poetry, play-reading and biography groups also talked about what they had been doing. An enjoyable and informative morning ended with a light-hearted quiz!

Paul Hunt

Interest Group Information

Ideas from the interest Group Leaders' Network Meeting:

- Look out for the 'Suggestion box' on the Enquiries Desk at our next monthly meeting.
- If you are a group leader and would like to write a paragraph about your group for the newsletter please email your contribution to:

chris.olley@btinternet.com or

brbirmingham@hotmail.com

Group Lists:

A reminder that you can see a list of our current groups at any time through our website

<http://mkhdu3a.org.uk> Click on 'Groups' then 'For Members', and give details to identify yourself.

Gardening Group Coach Trip:

The Gardening Group Coach Trip is now full and has a waiting list. We hope for good weather in early May!

The Future of the Health Service – Public Lecture

What are the prospects of the NHS reaching a healthy 100th birthday?

- Talk by Dr. Jennifer Dixon CBE, CEO of Health Foundation
- Tuesday 12th March 16.30 to 18.30 in Room G11 Alan Walters Building, University of Birmingham
- For more information or to attend, contact d.e.king@bham.ac.uk or register interest on the website

Picture of the Month



The Science group at work (or is it play?). Anne seems bemused by what's happened to hers and Muriel seems much more interested in Derek's than her own. Rumour has it that they are testing spaghetti! Let's hope they had a good lunch afterwards.

Social Activities

This is a summary of events in the coming months which are already planned. New arrangements are made frequently and if you want to be kept updated on any activities please contact the co-ordinator, (see the end of this item) or check the monthly newsletters.

Quiz:

- The much-awaited U3A Quiz returns on Wednesday May 15, 2019 – again at the United Services Club on Church Road, Moseley from 7.00 pm. We'd expect to finish by 9.30 at the latest.
- Team sizes will be strictly limited to 6 people: the entry fee is £2 per person.
- It helps to know in advance how many will be coming. If you want to come please let us know. You don't have to be part of a team from the outset - we have made up teams from people who have come in ones and twos before and some teams have spaces. In fact it can make for an even better evening to meet different people.
- So do put this in your diary and please let Carey, Julie, Paul or Roy know if you plan to come along.

Theatre:

Tickets for the following performances have been booked and paid for: -

March 15:	<i>Kinky Boots</i>	5pm performance at the Hippodrome
April 4:	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	13.15 performance at the RSC Stratford
May 2:	<i>As you Like It</i>	13.15 performance at the RSC Stratford
July 18:	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	13.15 performance at the RSC Stratford

We usually meet in the Theatre Foyer close to the Box Office half an hour before the performance and tickets are left at the Box Office for those arriving late.

These tickets were booked many months before the performances were due to take place. We are currently looking at productions being performed in Birmingham theatres and will notify theatre group members of proposed trips.

If you would like to join the Theatre Group or would like to know more, please contact Julie Alder.

Lunches:

Another meal outing will be arranged, probably for April. If you would like to be notified of future bookings please contact Carey.

Concerts:

Arrangements for the concert trip in May have now been finalised and no more bookings can be made. When the next season's CBSO programme is published we will look for further possible bookings. If you want to be kept updated of concerts please contact Carey.

Your Committee:

- Chair Nick Wright
- Vice Chairs Anne Crerar, Mike Clark
- Business Secretary Diane Worland
- Treasurer Tessa Bidgood
- Social Secretary Julie Alder
- Interest Group Co-ordinators Chris Olley, Brenda Bingham, Ruth Livermore
- Membership Secretary Jackie Spearpoint

Moseley, Kings Heath and District U3A

March 2019