



From cave walls to iPads: 40,000 years of drawing and painting

When David Hockney discovered the joys of painting with an iPad around 10 years ago, art techniques evolved into the twenty-first century. **Judith Abbs** was introduced to iPad art by **Pam Jackson** and **Anita Nielsen**, who explained how their interest group draws and paints in this new way

Do you need a special program to create art on an iPad or tablet?

You need to download an art app. There are hundreds – from easy to more difficult – and they are all different from each other. Download one and you are ready to go. People can use other makes of tablet, too; it doesn't have to be an iPad. But sometimes non-Apple

tablets do not have the same apps as iPads, so we can't always help someone out if we are not familiar with theirs.

Are the art apps free?

Plenty of them, especially the simpler ones, are free. The ones with many different tools tend not to be, but they are not expensive.

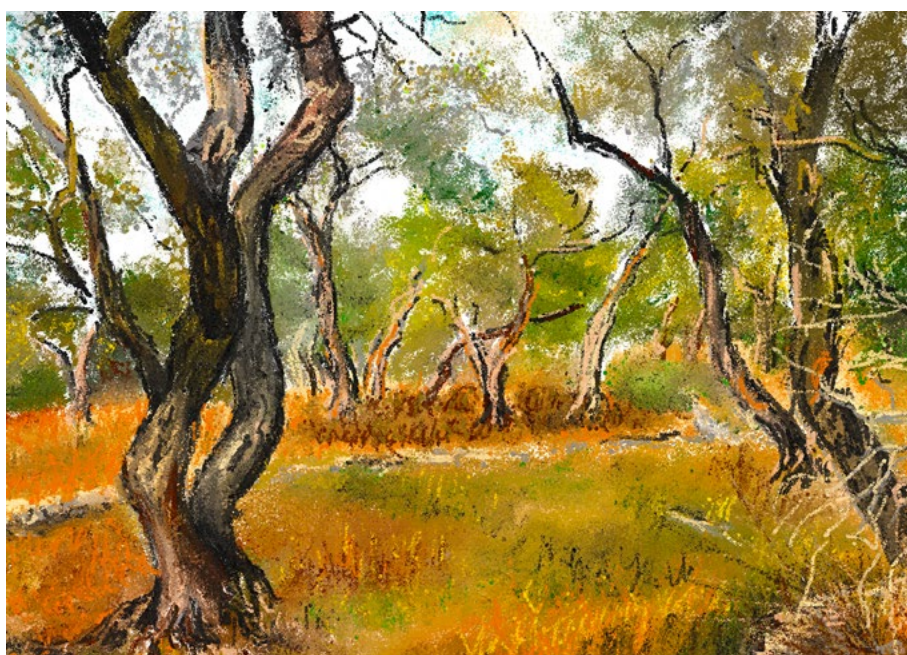
You can, for instance, get more colours if you pay a small amount for an in-app purchase.

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Our publications

The **Northern Line** (TNL) and **Update** are each published three times a year. TNL is edited by Leni Green, with assistance from Judith Abbs, and

designed by Barry Davies. **Update** is edited by Jane Marsh. Please send Jane submissions for the next Update by **4 October** to oriana.jane@btinternet.com

- The editors may shorten or otherwise amend articles to fit spacing and style requirements.

Editorial

Sometimes democracy works.

Until now, only members who don't have an email address have received a printed copy of The Northern Line (TNL). But so many people have told me that they would much prefer to read it on paper that I decided to put this matter to the AGM.

I was delighted that a majority voted to give everyone the opportunity to receive a printed copy. Now you have a choice of how you read TNL – on the website, printed on your printer, or sent to you by post.

When you renew your subscription in September, those of you want to receive a paper copy can pay an annual

cost of £6 (£2 per issue) to cover the costs of printing and postage. All you have to do is tick the appropriate box on your membership form and the £6 cost will be added to your subscription.

I hope this means that more people will enjoy reading TNL, more will share their thoughts and experiences with the membership and, maybe, more will help with production.

Our featured interest group this issue is iPad Drawing, whose stunning artwork graces our pages. Patricia Isaacs explores the benefits for U3A and the individual of volunteering – timely given that the long-standing away days team is about to retire. And I continue



our series of Blue Badges found in north London with a piece on Spike Milligan, who also has a north London commemorative statue.

Happy reading!

Leni Green

Editor

editor@nlu3a.org.uk

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An artist can choose their medium: oils, watercolours, pastels and so on. You are all using an iPad to create your pictures, so is there just one medium or do you have a choice?

Crayon Style is an easy app. If you want to use soft pastel, iPastels is excellent. Other apps, such as ArtRage, give you a bigger choice. The app Procreate is



fun. You can do 'normal' painting, such as watercolour or oil painting. But you can also do clouds, spray, texture, abstract and much more.

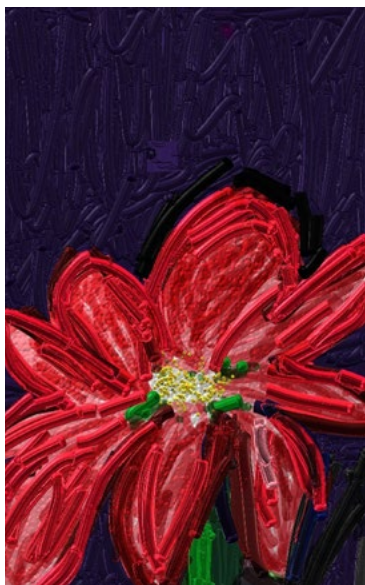
Can you find the colours you want, with all the subtle variations that an artist needs?

In the simple apps, like Crayon Style, you have a set of colours just as you would with real crayons. In the painting apps, you

can mix up your own colours, just like real paint. You can also save colours within a painting that you may want to use again.

Are there real and virtual tools for creating iPad art that are





equivalent to brushes, pencils and palette knives?

You only need your finger to draw or paint with but if you want to do more precise work, a stylus made for tablets is good. It feels as though you are using an actual artistic tool. There are styluses that even have hair, like a real brush.

Is the iPad screen like a blank canvas or sketchbook or do people download pictures or photos and use them to create their pictures?

In our group we use still life, newspaper photos, our own photos, other images. You can import the photo into the screen, put it in a corner and use it as a model, or you can draw directly onto it or colour it in.

Does everyone work from the same subject during a session?

It is completely up to the person what they choose, but there is always a selection of art books, postcards and objects to inspire them.

Does the session include teaching? Can you see a definite improvement in people's artwork since the group started?

We advise new people how to download an art app, starting with Crayon Style. It is simple, and you learn to pick colours, use thickness, blend and use the rubber. When they are ready, we move on to other apps. We collaborate and facilitate one another's work. In the four or five years that the group has been going, there has definitely been an

improvement, and a freedom to try things you would otherwise not risk doing.

Are there any disadvantages to the iPad for an artist?

If you want to paint outdoors, the iPad is not good in sunlight.

What is the most positive thing about drawing and painting on an iPad?

The undo button! It is like a rubber but can erase anything. If, for example, you are using a pen and ink or water colour app, you are able to delete anything you don't like. In real life it is very different. With an iPad there are no easels, canvasses, sketchbooks, palettes or paintboxes to lug around. Just one neat flat bag and you have everything an artist needs. ☺



As I see it

The third age army? **Patricia Isaacs** on the benefits of volunteering



Two things to talk about today. First, I see The Northern Line as an integral part of North London U3A, with a standard to be proud of both locally and nationally. It connects our members to one another; indicates our various interests and activities; and provides a link to our educational, leisure and social interests. Professional in approach and presentation, it is managed and edited by volunteers.

That brings me to the second point – something that has been a central part of my U3A life – persuading members to volunteer in order to become more involved

with North London U3A. After all, we are run entirely by volunteers and would fall apart without a team of people willing to take on anything and everything: leading a group, setting out chairs at monthly meetings, helping with catering, assisting at events and outings, and more. A good example is our summer programme, also run by volunteers and an undoubted success. Now that it is over for 2019, the planners can have a well-earned rest – before they begin again.

We need you! Having been (still am) a volunteer in a variety of roles over the last 10 years I can tell you that the involvement is rewarding, satisfying and enjoyable. Being a volunteer means being part of a team and meeting many of our members, and they are a lovely lot (that means you!). No need to worry if you don't have any experience in this field

We are run entirely by volunteers and would fall apart without a team of people willing to take on anything and everything

or that; there will be plenty of people on hand to help you, and we all learn as we go along.

Volunteers are also needed in the wider movement. You can be a delegate to the annual national conference, or to London region meetings; you can offer to help at summer schools, including our annual summer school in London; you can learn how to set up new U3As.

Please think about it! Just try one of my suggestions for a year, say, and I'm sure you will decide to continue; that's how I started. It's good for your brain, good for your social conscience. You will learn a lot – and it's fun, too. What more do you need? ☺☺

PATRICIA ISAACS WAS CHAIR OF NLU3A FROM 2014 TO 2018



Subs rise as cash reserves decrease

Snippets from the Annual General Meeting

- The big issue at this year's annual general meeting, held on 8 July at St Paul's in Finchley, was money. The cost of meeting venues has zoomed up from £11,000 to £26,000 over four years. Our cash in

the bank has dwindled from £29,600 in 2015 to £16,000 in June, which is 'uncomfortably low', said the treasurer, Roy Seger. Therefore, the meeting, attended by 118 members, voted almost unanimously to increase

membership fees by 28 per cent to £50 a year, with concessions for those on pension credit. 'This will enable us to regain financial stability and shore up our reserves, and we should be able to hold these fees for some time,'

said Roy. 'Our aim is to keep this U3A successful and on a secure financial footing.'

- After managing NLU3A's website for six years and overseeing its redevelopment, Mike Christie has stepped down as website manager. He will be replaced by Martin Goldman, who, while not an information technology professional, has been using IT for almost 50 years. 'If I don't know how to do something,

I can find out. My first actions in this new role will be to learn from others what is wanted and how to do it,' says Martin. Another new officer is Michael Johns, who takes on the role of business secretary. Brian Solomons will be the independent accounts examiner, replacing Muriel Temkin, who died last spring. Mike Christie said: 'People who help do things are worth their weight in gold.'

- The chair, Edmond Cohen, reported that we now have roughly 830 members. Since January, 71 new members have joined, mostly through the new website, which is 'truly excellent and more accessible to members', said Edmond. He added: 'Our U3A provides learning, pursuing all kinds of activities and having an active retirement and semi-retirement.' 🔄

Memory

by Rosalie Ajzensztejn

My memory's not what it used to be
Though it never was that great
But it really is deteriorating
And certainly of late
I find myself at the top of the stairs
Without a single clue
Of what, when I bounded up them
I had in mind to do
I then wander around quite aimlessly
Unable to concentrate
On any other task in hand
Trying like a crime, to recreate
My very last steps and mind set
When suddenly back it flies
I hadn't forgotten anything
I was doing my exercise
But it's not just things that evade me
Like the name of a book I've just read
Words on the very tip of my tongue
Disappear right out of my head
To reappear ten hours later

When I sit bolt upright in my bed
It could be a cause of embarrassment
If I suffered all on my own
But several of my friends are
To the same affliction prone
We engage in intuitive conversations
Because of the gaps, you see
For collaboration on any missing word
Ensures it again will flee
My partner likes to tease me
But in such a gentle way
I suspect he has also experienced
A name or word that's gone astray
I comfort myself that while I respond
By continuing to search and strive
I'm exercising my ailing mind
Thus encouraging it to thrive
And should it totally pack up and go
The blessing is I'll never know.

- Rosalie is coordinator of the Weaving Words group

We are delighted to receive articles which may be of interest to members of NLU3A. Please send them to the editor, Leni Green, editor@nlu3a.org.uk

Research active

The Francis Crick Institute, near Kings Cross, carries out pioneering investigations into the causes and treatments of illnesses. [John Hajdu](#) reports on an away-day visit that shed a light on what goes on at the Crick

The Crick Institute, which opened in 2016, is the largest biomedical discovery institute under one roof in Europe, housing 1,500 scientific and support staff. It was founded by scientists from three research organisations: Cancer Research UK, the Medical Research Council and the Wellcome Trust, and three London University colleges – UCL, Kings and Imperial.

The idea arose from the need to update facilities at Cancer

Research UK and the Medical Research Council. It was decided that they should be combined and located in central London to

take advantage of the cluster of hospitals, research organisations and transport links to create a new hub of research that would be greater than the sum of its parts. In April 2015 they formally merged and became part of the Francis Crick Institute.

The mammoth building is equal in size to 17.5 football fields. To reduce its visible mass, four floors (one-third of the structure) are below ground – these are restricted areas which we could not visit, where those who work in them have to wear special clothes and sometimes shower before and after entering.

The way in which the interior is designed for purpose is



interesting. The shape is like a chromosome with four points connected in a 'centromere' in the middle. Informal breakout spaces encourage people to have meetings out in the open. Views are maximised both across and between floors so that people are more likely to see and mingle with others.

A quadrant has between three and twelve research groups of about ten scientists with the senior scientist as group leader. Different disciplines are located next to each other with no walls between in order to encourage cross-fertilisation of ideas. Where walls are required they are of glass so that people can see who is around. The major specialist support platforms, such as electron microscopy, are dotted around the building on different floors so that people have to move around to use them.

On the ground floor is the Living Centre, a dedicated



space for the local community, the first new community space to be built for 15 years. There is a discovery laboratory for educational programmes which aim to reach all 27,000 Camden schoolchildren.

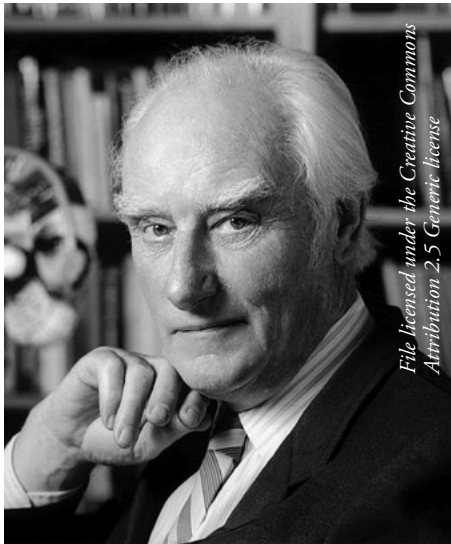
The Crick was the biggest single construction in the country at the time. One statistic may illustrate this: the labs are fitted out with over four kilometres of benching. The roof is curved to reduce the effect on local views, and the height is lower on one

side to reflect the building it faces. The roof is arranged in two shells – rather than being simply decorative, this feature houses the heating and cooling units and solar panels, and brown roofs where flowers can grow and bat boxes to encourage wildlife.

The institute is dedicated to understanding the fundamental biology underlying health and illness, to learn why diseases develop and to translate this knowledge into new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat them. Its research encompasses illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, strokes, malaria and neurodegenerative diseases, and its labs are designed so that there is no risk of any infection escaping. The scientists collaborate in the early, pre-competitive stages of research, when pharma and academia can combine their different but complementary approaches and expertise.

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Francis Crick

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In 2016, the Crick received permission from the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority to use a genome-editing technique in human embryos that will allow them to better understand the earliest stages of human development. The research looks at the first seven days of development after fertilisation, using embryos left over from patients' fertility treatment and donated by them. At this stage the embryo is a tiny cluster of cells invisible to the

naked eye. These cells will never be used to establish a pregnancy.

Our eyes were opened to the magnitude of what this world-famous institute does, and how it affects every one of us now and in the future, in this country and worldwide. ↻

- The Crick is open to the public from Wednesday to Saturday, with free exhibitions and events – so why not include it on your list of places to visit with your Freedom Pass? Find out more at crick.ac.uk

Leadership challenge?

Edmond Cohen recalls his journey to the NLU3A chair

After two years as chair of NLU3A, it's time for me to reflect on the changes that have taken place since I joined.

Initially, I must admit, I felt there was nothing to interest me. My first experience was to join a group walking round the proposed site of the 2012 Olympic Park. We assembled at Bromley-by-Bow, a bleak tube station adjoining a six-lane highway and a desolate underpass – myself and 13 women. This was a shock, but I enjoyed the walk and the excellent guiding by a member of the group.

Since then I have joined other groups and got to know more members. A few years ago the NLU3A committee asked my wife and me to attend the national conference in Nottingham. This

was a real eye-opener. The range of activities by groups all over the country and their enthusiasm prompted me to think of playing a bigger role in our own U3A.

I joined the committee as business secretary, which allowed me to see how the committee

functioned and to contribute to discussions.

When the previous chair stepped down, I was asked to stand for this post and, after much thought, agreed so that I could carry on the excellent work of NLU3A to the best of my ability.

Since then much water has flowed under the bridge. Valued committee members have stepped



Photo by Martin Goldman

There has been controversy and heartache, but the essential work of U3A in north London carries on

down and new members have been recruited. There has been controversy and heartache, but the essential work of U3A in north London carries on.

Long may it continue! ↻

Edmond Cohen, Chair
chair@nlu3a.org.uk

Large as life

A blue plaque in north Finchley and a statue called 'A Conversation with Spike' commemorate comedian Spike Milligan, who lived in and loved Finchley. **Leni Green** reports

A life-size bronze statue of Spike Milligan, the late comedian, sits on a bench and overlooks the lawn and gardens at Stephens House in East End Road. The statue was created by a local sculptor, John Somerville, after being commissioned by the Finchley Society, an amenity group of which Milligan was a contributing founder, supporter and its first president.

Milligan, creator of the Goon Show, lived in Holden Road, Woodside Park from 1955 to 1974. He loved the natural surroundings of Finchley and was a frequent visitor to Stephens (formerly Avenue) House, where the Finchley Society met. His house has been demolished, but there is a blue plaque commemorating him on the block of flats that now stands on the site.

After he died from kidney failure in 2002, the society

decided to honour him with a statue in his memory. It took 10 years to raise the £60,000 for its construction, and it was unveiled at a ceremony attended by local dignitaries and celebrities on 4 September 2014.

Spike's head is turned as if he is talking to someone sitting next to him on the bench. And people do sit there – to pose for a photo, eat their lunch, read, text – or even take up the invitation for conversation. 🗨️



Photo by Leni Green

• Do you know of a blue plaque or other memorial commemorating someone in north London? We would love to read about them, so please send a brief summary of why they've been honoured to [Leni at editor@nlu3a.org.uk](mailto:Leni@nlu3a.org.uk)

Away days

organised by Jim Sweeney, John Hajdu and Sue Teller

Away days booking form

Name(s)_____Membership number(s)_____

BLOCK LETTERS please. No more than two names per application form.

Phone number(s)_____

| Date | Name of visit |
|------|---------------|
| | |
| | |

- Cheques payable to NLU3A
- Send booking form and cheque to Sue Teller, 27 Midholm, London NW11 6LL. Please send a separate booking form and cheque for each visit.
- You will be notified **by phone if you have a place (or not)**. Your cheque will be banked or destroyed accordingly.
- If you are unable to attend the visit, please phone Sue Teller on 8381 4480 so that your place can be offered to another member or 07748 478 428 for last-minute cancellations.

Royal College of Nursing

20 Cavendish Square
London W1G 0RN

Friday 18 October

The Royal College of Nursing, which celebrated its centenary in 2016, is situated in a Grade II listed Georgian building which was originally constructed as a substantial town house in 1729. After two centuries of vicissitudes, it eventually became the residence of Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, and in 1930, was refaced and extended into the adjacent corner building. Our tour guide will provide a history



of the building and the college, after which we can look around the exhibitions and heritage centre.

Times

Meet at 10.50am for an 11am start. The tour will last about one hour.

Cost

£7 payable in advance.

Travel and accessibility

The building is fully accessible and lies on the southwest corner of Cavendish Square, where it meets Henrietta Place. Oxford Circus tube station is less than 10 minutes' walk away.

Booking is essential. Please use the booking form on page 10 or send us a note with the requested details and your cheque. We advise early application. [↻](#)

Royal Institute of British Architects

66 Portland Place
London W1B 1AD

Friday 22 November

We have arranged a guided tour of the Grade II* headquarters of the renowned Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and will learn about the history and design of this landmark building. We should also gain a unique insight into the architectural profession and the RIBA's role in championing great architecture.

Times

Meet at 10.50am for an 11am start. The tour itself will last about one hour.

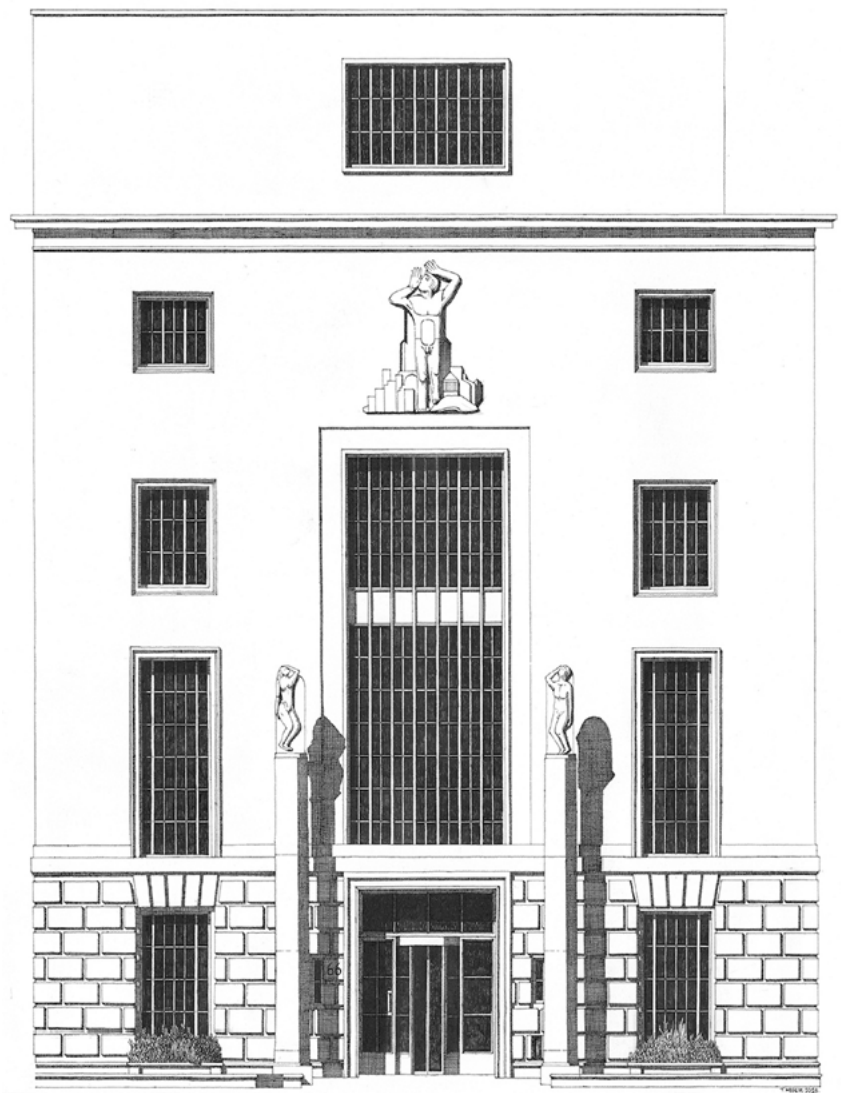
Cost

£10, payable in advance.

Travel and accessibility

The building is fully accessible and no more than 10 minutes' walk from Warren Street or Great Portland Street tube stations.

Booking is essential. Please use the booking form on page 10 or send us a note with the requested details and your cheque. We advise early application. [↻](#)



Autumn term monthly meetings

All take place at 10.45AM at St Paul's Church, 50 Long Lane, Finchley N3 2PU. Refreshments are served from 10.15AM. Please note that, out of courtesy to the speaker and to abide by the fire regulations, you might find yourself locked out of the meeting if you do not arrive by 10.40AM.

14 October

Face blindness



Face blindness, a neurological condition that impairs the ability to recognise faces, can produce embarrassment and sometimes amusement in social situations. Bexley U3A member Jo Livingstone has had it all her life but only discovered it had a name around the time she retired 15 years ago. Her talk will explain a bit about the research and also what it's like to live with it. Jo is on the Third Age Trust's national research sub-committee and is subject adviser for living history.

11 November

Codebreaking Outstations – Eastcote to GCHQ

Ronald Koorm (FRICS) is a retired chartered building surveyor and Access consultant who has been researching codebreaking outstations of World War II for around four years. He will give a balanced overview of what really happened during the second world war, when Bletchley Park provided much needed support as the focal point for codebreaking of German military intelligence.



Term dates



| Term | Start | Half term: week of | Finish |
|--------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Autumn | 9 September | 28 October | 20 December |
| Spring | 6 January | 17 February | 3 April |
| Summer | 20 April | 18 May | 24 July |

Autumn term Jewish holidays. These might affect your group if you meet in a synagogue.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Rosh Hashona | Monday 30 September and Tuesday 1 October |
| Yom Kippur | Wednesday 9 October |
| Sukkot | Monday and Tuesday 14 and 15 October |
| Simchat Torah | Monday and Tuesday 21 and 22 October |