

SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

April 2007



SIDCUP & DISTRICT U3A meets at 2.00 pm on the 3rd Thursday of every month in the Community Church in Station Road, Sidcup

NOTICES

To all the tea and coffee drinkers

In the 3 months that we have been meeting at the new hall we have been able to hand over to our previously nominated charity (St Christopher's Hospice) the sum of £28. Profit from future sale of refreshments will be donated to our new charity – "Hearing Dogs for Deaf People" – so please keep drinking!

Gay Braybrook

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

Your support for this Charity, as chosen at our recent A.G.M., is much appreciated. There will be a purple collection box for any donations you may wish to make (including any small change you may have in your purse or pocket) and the proceeds from the raffle will also be donated.

There are other ways in which this Charity can be supported, and any help you can give will be much appreciated.

- Any used postage stamps, both British and foreign, can be used to raise funds and a box will be available for you to use. Please tear the stamps from the envelope leaving a 1cm (half-inch) margin.
- A collecting box will also be available for any foreign coins you bring back from your holiday.
- Printer and laser toner cartridges can be recycled to raise money. Please put your old cartridge in its box and put it in the blue envelope which will be made available. Unfortunately, Epson cartridges cannot be accepted.
- Buying a new mobile phone? Your old one can also be used to help raise funds; just put it in the blue envelope which will be made available.

A selection of hand-made greetings cards will be available for you to purchase each month. By buying one of these you will not only be helping Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, but you will also be sending someone a unique greeting card – there may be some similar, but none will be quite the same.

Val Gosden & Annette Jansen

Visit to Winchester 19th March 2007

Twenty Seven of us joined the coach at Sidcup Station for our visit to Winchester, the county town of Hampshire. It was known to the Romans as Venta Belgarum, and it became the capital of the West Saxon kingdom of Wessex in AD 519. On arrival we alighted at the monument to King Alfred, which dominates the Broadway, and then made our way to the Cathedral where we split into two parties. The party we were in then made its way to Winchester College, passing the house where Jane Austin lived for the last six weeks of her life and where she died on 18 July 1817. She is buried in the Cathedral. Winchester College was founded in 1382 by Bishop William of Wykeham and is believed to be the oldest continuously running school in England. We were taken to see the Chamber Court, the 14th century gothic Chapel, the original Scholars dining room, the 17th century red brick school-room, and the original Cloisters. After lunch, which we took in the Cathedral visitor's centre, we had time to take a short stroll around before we all then met up at the Cathedral for our afternoon tour. The Cathedral has been a place of worship for over 900 years and is as remarkable for its hidden treasures as it is for its spectacular architecture. The Crypt was flooded for the first time in three years, but looked very picturesque with the reflections of the arches and the statue "Sound II" by Antony Gormley. We think that everyone enjoyed the day out, and many thanks go to John and Olive Mercer for arranging it. We look forward to the next trip to Bury St. Edmunds.

Den and Marie Brittain

Holiday 2007 - Chesterfield

Following Margaret's organisation, 37 of us boarded the coach at Sidcup Station bound for Chesterfield in Derbyshire. The sun was shining despite the forecast. After a stop in a Garden Centre for lunch and shopping (for the addicts!) and a tour of some less than beautiful ex-mining villages, we reached the Chesterfield Hotel in time for a soothing cup of tea. We were joined here by Alan and Joan, so the party became 39 strong. Dinner was served at 7pm in a pleasant dining room which catered for everybody's needs. One or two of the staff could have been a little more smiley! However, our rooms were clean and well-equipped. Breakfast each morning was lavish with enough choice to suit even the faddiest eater (Nell). Entertainment was laid on for us on two evenings and this was enjoyed by those of us who were brave enough. During our three days in Chesterfield we visited Buxton, Bakewell, Castleton, Matlock Bath and Chesterfield. Those who had not seen the area before were impressed by the scenery and the parish church's crooked spire which leans almost 10 feet from the vertical. Those who had been before enjoyed the nostalgia! We went to Ladybower Dam where Barnes Wallis tested the bouncing bomb during World War Two, and we went over the Snake Pass in sunshine (very rare). Some of our party visited Bolsover Castle. On Friday we set off for home still in sunshine and only encountered rain as we joined the queue for the Queen Elizabeth Bridge. We had a short diversion into North Kent and returned to Sidcup in time for tea.

Nell Reeves

May Newsletter contributions

Please note that I shall be away on holiday from 13th to 29th April and will be unable to acknowledge contributions received during this time.

David Smith



GROUP NEWS

Amblers 2 : Leader Olive Mercer

The venue was “The Cutty Sark” but, unfortunately, the famous clipper was hidden from view undergoing essential repairs. Our destination was Greenwich Park and on a bright, spring morning the park looked glorious; the ancient trees were stately, the golden daffodils glowed in the sunshine and the hyacinths were fragrant and colourful. We climbed a steep path and emerged at the summit breathless but amazed at the panorama of London spread before us. Continuing on a circuit of the park we entered the flower garden, watched ducks around the pond and were fortunate to see a solitary Mandarin duck. As we passed through the Rose Garden pruning and mulching were in progress and the gardeners were happy to give advice. Just past the Ranger’s House were the remains of the bathhouse erected for Princess Caroline - another little gem of knowledge gained. After emerging from the park gates into a throng of tourists and schoolchildren, we parted to seek refreshments and travel home. It was a lovely taste of Spring.

June Reid

Classical Music 2 : Leader Derick Johnson

The programme for March was compiled by John Mercer who had catered for voices and instrumental works. It started with the rousing Smetana’s Dance of the Comedians from The Bartered Bride, followed by Dvorak’s String Quartet in F Major. We then had an operatic interlude with Leoncallo Ruggiero Mattinate and Vesta La Guibba from Pagliacci sung respectively by Gigli and Placido Domingo. The Violin Concerto in D 1st movement by Beethoven was played by the Slovak Philharmonic with soloist Takako Nishizaki, and Saint-Saens Piano Concerto No. 2 movements 2 & 3 with soloist Cecile Licad brought us up to the tea break. Handel’s Oboe Concerto No. 1 was followed by further opera written by Puccini Signore Ascolta from Turandot sung by Katia Ricciarelli, and Senza Mama from Suor Angelica sung by Renato Scotti. Rachmaninov’s Etude-Tableau in D Major played by Martin Cousin on the piano, and Tchaikovsky’s Liturgy and Mozart’s Toy Symphony 1st movement gave us memories of childhood to complete a perfect afternoon of music.

Derick Johnson

Ramblers 2 : Leader Geoff Rozier

February 2007. Our local ramble this month was enjoyed by 14 walkers. We considered ourselves very lucky as rain had been forecast, but it remained dry. We started from Hall Place, Bexley, then used the A2 underpass which is highly ‘decorated’ by graffiti artists. We traversed a few stiles and gentle slopes, and then walked through the woods where we came across a volunteer working party clearing undergrowth from pathways. We thanked them for the benefit we all receive from their hard work. The rest of the walk was uneventful which gave us plenty of time to have a good chat. As we found the Jacobean Barn closed for refurbishment, we went our separate ways for lunch. We welcomed three new members into the group - three more prospective walkers to join us.

Geoff & Shirley Rozier

Intermediate Ramblers : Leader Geoff Rozier

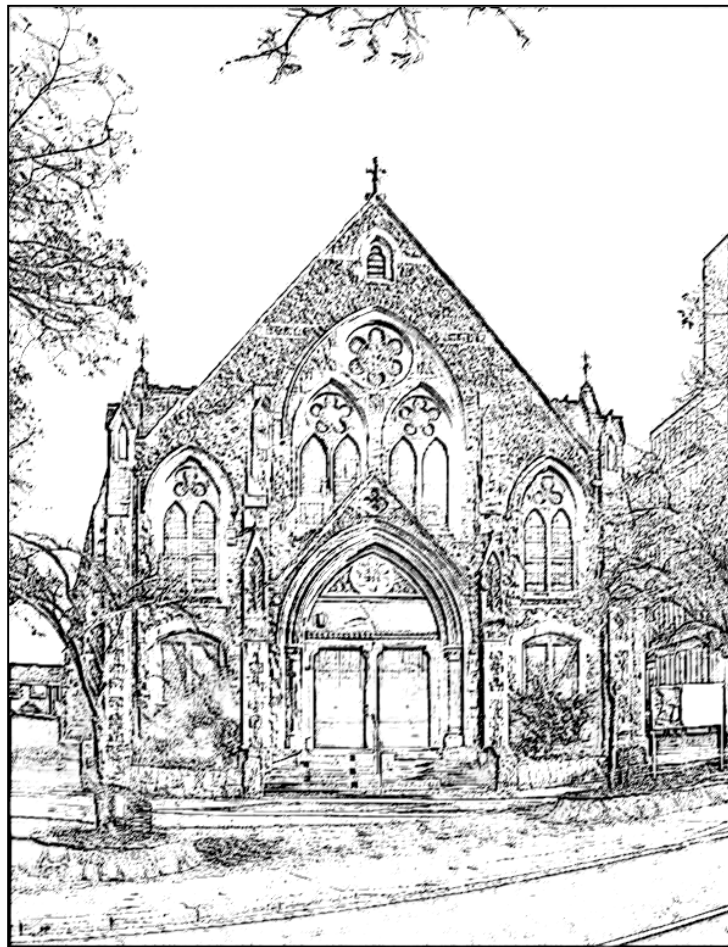
We gathered in Goddington Park on March 27th for our latest ramble. 15 members set out in perfect weather for a 4½ mile walk around Chelsfield village. Despite the proximity of London, it was like being in the heart of the country. Most enjoyable! Most of the group recuperated in The Five Bells in Chelsfield where it was warm enough to lunch in the garden.

Brian Ginn

Local History 3

Our March visit was to Pollock's Toy Museum in Scala Street, which is just off Tottenham Court Road. The museum is a fascinating place, very small with tiny rooms packed with all sorts of toys going back several centuries. Amongst the collection are teddy bears, toy theatres, gollywogs, lead soldiers and even a Hitler puppet used by a children's entertainer during WW2. My favourite had to be the original Sooty donated by Harry Corbett who, like me, has by now qualified for his free bus pass.

Barbara Savill



Community Church, Sidcup

GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday (times vary)	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	1
Beginners Bridge Acol Tuesdays (11 am - 2 pm) <i>Weekly for 6 weeks</i>	Barbara Shilling 01322 270814	3
Birdwatching 1 st Wednesday (morning)	Gay Braybrook/José Steward 020 8300 6372/020 8302 1627	Open to all. Notice on board at meetings
Classical Music (Group 2) 2 nd Friday (2.30 pm)	Derick Johnson 020 8850 1245	3
Darts (at The Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (midday)	Fred Green	Yes
Gardening (Group 2) 3 rd Friday (2 pm)	Audrey Hayes 020 8850 1032	2
National Trust/English Heritage Various dates & times	John & Olive Mercer 020 8300 3136	Open to all
Ramblers (Group 1) 4 th Tuesday (10.30 am)	Annette Jansen 01322 522252	Possible
Saturday Ramble 1 st Saturday (morning)	Gay Braybrook 020 8300 6372	3
Sunday Ramble (4-5 miles) 2 nd Sunday (morning)	Pat Peeney 020 8302 5061	Yes
Tenpin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10 am) <i>except school holidays</i>	Gay Braybrook 020 8300 6372	Open to all

The above lists, unless I am told otherwise by Group Leaders, are the ones with vacancies. Please contact the Group Leader concerned in the first instance, and, if accepted, inform the Group Co-ordinator.

José Steward, Group Co-ordinator ☎ **020 8302 1627**

Why not start a new group?

If you want to join a group that is full, why not start a new one? It's not difficult to run a group, and leaders of a full group should be willing to advise you how it's done.

PROGRAMME

2007

April	Mr B. Jones	Kingsnorth Nature Study Centre
May	Mr R. McKenna	The Cutty Sark
June	Mr I. Currie	Droughts, deluges and dust devils
July	Mr B. Bedford	Marquetry
August	Mr A. Burnett	Liquid history: a trip up the Thames
September	Mr P. Harris	The history of pantomime
October	Mrs J. Hungerford	Caveman orchestra
November	Mr J. Kennett	An aspect of local history
December	to be announced	

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	John Mercer	020 8300 3136
Vice-Chairman	Annette Jansen	01322 522252
Minutes Secretary	George Murrell	020 8850 2046
Treasurer	Dennis Brittain	
Membership Secretary	John Harlow	020 8300 3865
Speakers Secretary	Valerie Gosden	020 8300 0664
Group Co-ordinator	José Steward	020 8302 1627
Raffle Organiser	Valerie Gosden	020 8300 0664
Welfare Officer	Gay Braybrook	020 8309 6372
Liaison Officer	Norman Slaughter	020 8300 9460

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Travel Group Leader Margaret Platt 020 8309 6395

Newsletter Editor David Smith 020 8304 2305

56 Crofton Avenue, Bexley DA5 3AR

Please email contributions if possible as this saves having to retype them, to:

editor.u3a@ukonline.co.uk *Contributions by 3rd of the month please.*

Afterthought

Work expands to fill the time available for its completion.