

**SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
NEWSLETTER**

August 2011



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

NOTICES

Committee Vacancies

Members are invited to apply for the posts of Vice Chairman and Social Secretary, both of which have been vacant for rather too long.

Three more posts will become vacant at the next AGM in March 2012 because the current holders have expressed their intention to stand down. These posts are Chairman, Membership Secretary, and Speakers Secretary – jobs in which, so far, nobody has shown any interest. I would ask members seriously to consider applying for these so that our group does not lack effective leadership in the future. Indeed, if the posts are not filled the group's viability could be doubtful. These jobs are not arduous and anyone who feels tempted to take one on may speak to the current holder (at an early date, please) to discover exactly what it entails. For personal reasons, this particularly applies to the Membership Secretary post, and John Harlow would be happy for the applicant to assist and work alongside him for the remainder of this year. Contact details are shown on the back page.

Anne Evans, Chairman

(i) Speaking for myself, I have to say that I have felt more involved and our U3A group has become a lot more interesting to me since assuming my own job four years ago. I understand that our Committee members also enjoy their work.

David Smith, Newsletter Editor

Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person.

Mother Teresa

Workers' Educational Association (WEA) – Bexley Branch

Courses on a wide range of subjects are available throughout London. The venues in Bexley are Crayford Manor House and Alma Road Adult Education College. Brochures are available from the libraries, but to receive a brochure by post please contact WEA Bexley by phone on 020 8300 1845, or email to weabexley@hotmail.co.uk.

George Murrell

GROUP NEWS

Parks and Gardens Appreciation • Leaders Jill Bryant & Barbara Olney



Our June outing was to Morden Hall Park; this entailed taking a train from Sidcup to Charing Cross, and then using the Northern Line to Morden. This is a picturesque park with meadows, waterways and lovely old buildings. The Hatfeild [sic] family, who made money from snuff milling, created the park and the estate was left to the National Trust in 1941 to be preserved forever. The snuff mills still survive and are used as an Environmental Education Centre. The Rose Garden was laid out in 1922 and contains 2,000 roses – which were the reason for our visit. However, because of the early hot weather, some were past their best. The River Wandle meanders through the park and divides the rose garden. The gardener told us that plans are in place to build a bridge across the river and replant some of the rose beds. The large Victorian stable yard with a clocktower is currently being renovated and will open later this year with enhanced facilities.

We enjoyed coffee, and, later, lunch in the sunshine outside the Riverside Café and shop. This is located near the car park which once was the location of the Kitchen Garden. An alternative way to get home is from Phipps Bridge tram stop. We saw only a small area of the park which covers 125 acres.

Jill Bryant

Local History 2 • Leaders Barbara Olney & Pauline Watling



On 13th July 2011 the group visited “The Museum & Hall of Freemasonry” which contains one of the finest collections of Masonic material in the world. Located in Great Queen Street, London, the free guided tour of this excellent building took around 1 hour and 30 minutes. Our guide explained that, for many years, the Moderns Grand Lodge had held their meetings in various halls, taverns and inns, but that by 1768 it had become apparent that its members would benefit from a hall of their own. He went on to explain that the first hall was finished in 1776 and was followed by two others on the same site with the current one being built in the early 20th century. Built as a memorial to the Freemasons who died in the 1st World War, it is one of the finest Art Deco buildings in the UK and is now grade 2 listed.

What is Freemasonry? You might ask. Well, it is one of the world’s oldest secular fraternal societies; it is a society of men concerned with moral and spiritual values. It instils in its members a moral and ethical approach to life: it seeks to reinforce thoughtfulness for others, kindness in the community, honesty in business, courtesy in society and fairness in all things. Famous Freemasons have included Sir Harry Lauder, Sir Donald Campbell, William Hogarth, Billy Butlin, Sir Winston Churchill and the actor Peter Sellers.

The whole group enjoyed the excellent tour of this fascinating building and would encourage anyone to visit who is interested in finding out more about the Freemasons, or who just wants to see what a wonderful Art Deco building looks like. It is a treasure not to be missed.

Pauline Watling

① Art Deco is an eclectic artistic and design style which began in 1920s Paris. Flourishing internationally up until World War II, the style influenced many areas, including architecture and interior design, fashion, jewellery, paintings, graphic arts and film, and its characteristics are angular geometric shapes and bold colours. Art Deco is short for the French “art décoratif.”

Editor

Freedom Pass Explorers • Leader Val Gosden



On Monday 11th July, a beautiful hot and sunny morning, eight of us set out for our visit to Buckhurst Hill. We travelled from Sidcup to London Bridge, took the Northern line to Bank and then the Central line to Buckhurst Hill. We were lucky with all our connections and arrived at our destination much more quickly than we had predicted. The station appeared somewhat dark and dingy and definitely in need of a coat of paint.

We soon found our way to a local café where we were warmly welcomed. Whilst enjoying our drinks, we ordered sandwiches to take for our picnic and asked the proprietor if he could give us directions to a good park. This he did, and, upon leaving the café, he gave us a large cut loaf with which to feed the ducks. It took about 15 minutes to walk to Roding Valley Park, and we passed by some very large expensive houses. Close to the entrance was a very well equipped children's play area. We continued walking and made our way over to the lake to eat our sandwiches. It was then that the geese and ducks saw us and decided to pay us a visit, but Pat gently waved his stick and they retreated. This happened twice.

After our lunch break we decided to walk right around the lake, throwing our inherited bread to the water fowl as we did so, but making sure that we were well away from the men fishing. We did, however, stop and talk to one of the fishermen. There were some lovely colourful wild flowers and teasles which impressed us.

When it was time for us to wind our way up the hill to the station for our journey home, we decided to return on the DLR. We alighted at Stratford and caught the DLR to Canary Wharf and then Cutty Sark Station from where we caught the 286 bus back to Sidcup.

Thank you Christine, Richard, Sheila, Pat, Pam, Barbara & Jacky for your support and help in making the day so enjoyable and stress free.

Mary Huggins

Classical Music 1 • Leader Derick Johnson



Barbara Carpenter presented our afternoon of music for July. Her programme contained a fair amount of piano music; this made quite a change and it was appreciated by us all. We started by having Mozart's Divertimento in F major by the I Musici de Montréal Chamber Orchestra conducted by Yuli Turovsky, followed by Allegro and then Études Opus 10 by Chopin played by Murray Perahia on the piano. The next piece was Dvořák's Cello Concerto played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Seiji Ozawa and Adagio by Mstislav Rostropovich on the cello. We followed this with Piano Concerto № 2 by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by André Previn accompanied by Vladimir Ashkenazy on the piano. This concerto was composed by Sergei Rachmaninov who had an unusually wide reach with his hands, and this presented problems for normal pianists – but not for Ashkenazy. Before the break we then had Brahms Concerto in D for violin and orchestra Opus 77 played by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini with Itzhak Perlman playing the violin. After the break we started with an unusual piece called "Huapango" by José Pablo Moncayo played by the BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by Miguel Harth-Bedoya – a splendid piece of music. We then heard Chopin's Piano Concerto № 1 played by the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Andras Korodi with Sándor Falvai on the piano. The afternoon was brought to a close with Mozart's "Hoffmeister" played by the Endellion String Quartet.

Derick Johnson

Ramblers 2 • Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell



This month our group enjoyed a coastal walk from Walmer to Deal. We met up at Orpington Station and took advantage of an offer to buy our daily excursion rail tickets at the rate of four for the price of two – which gave us a great saving on our fares. After a comfortable journey, we enjoyed a coffee break in a café the size of a railway carriage where more chairs needed to be found to accommodate the ten of us. Once refreshed, our walk began across fields and down to the sea. It was a relaxing walk which gave us plenty of time to chat and enjoy seeing butterflies and wild flowers. Approaching Deal we passed Deal Castle, one of Henry VIII's coastal fortresses, the Timeball Tower (now a museum) and Deal Pier, which was reopened in 1957 to replace the previous Victorian Pier. Once we had completed the walk, we were ready for lunch and split up to find our own desired refreshment. We all returned home by train at approximately 4 pm. Needless to say, we all enjoyed our day.

A Happy Member of Ramblers 2

Ramblers Group 1 • Leader Annette Jansen



We are very pleased to welcome 4 new members to our group; 3 of these are new to the U3A and are a direct result of the Open Meeting in June.

With numbers boosted, 11 of us met in Crockenhill for a 5½ mile ramble led by Derek Hillier. This went into the Shoreham Valley by an east-west route rather than the familiar south-north one. Lunch was at the ever popular Lullingstone Golf Club where the bacon baps are always eagerly anticipated. Fortified with food and drink, we proceeded in an easy way until the final mile or so where a field had been set aside which made it impossible to find the diagonal path across it – so we took to the two edges of the triangle. The earlier happy chatter gave way to gritted teeth as everyone tried to avoid falling in the tangle of undergrowth; however, only one of us actually hit the dust.

Our thanks go to Derek for such an enjoyable day. If you like the sound of this, we have room for more members.

Annette Jansen

Parks and Gardens Appreciation • Leaders Jill Bryant & Barbara Olney



On 28 July seven of us met up at London Bridge Station from which we travelled to Battersea Park. The weather was perfect – nice and warm, but not too hot. We set off along the central avenue and along the lake, where we saw many species of birds. We then went on to the sub-tropical gardens with its many different types of palms. The sub-tropical garden was created in 1865, and during World War II it was converted into allotments. With help from lottery funding, it was restored to its original plans by Wandsworth Council in 2004. After a break for lunch at the café, we went along to the rose garden, which was enjoying its second flush of flower. We then made our way down to the river, passing several beautiful beds of annuals. Most of us were old enough to remember the Festival of Britain funfair and Festival Gardens held in the park, and several of the features, including the fountains, were still there. It really is a delightful park with something for everyone.

Pat Garwood

GROUP VACANCIES

	GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
	Amblers (Group 1) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30 am)	John Harbert 020 8300 5361	Yes
	Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30 am)	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	Yes
	Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday (morning)	Gay Braybrook (co-ordinator only) 020 8309 6372	Yes
	Classical Music (Group 2) 2 nd Friday (2.30 pm)	Maureen Porter 020 8300 1628	1
	Darts (at the Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (midday)	See Group Co-ordinator 020 8300 4291	Yes
	Local History (Group 1) 2 nd Wednesday	John Harlow 020 8300 3865	2
	Local History (Group 2) 2 nd Wednesday	Pauline Watling 020 8300 3910 Barbara Olney 020 8302 4289	3
	Philosophy (Group 1) 3 rd Monday (2 pm)	Bernard Catallo 020 8300 8651	2
	Ramblers (Group 1) (6–7 miles) 4 th Tuesday (10.30 am)	Annette Jansen 01322 522252	Yes
	Ramblers (Group 2) (4–5 miles) 4 th Tuesday	Pat & Alf Cracknell 020 8302 0823	Yes
	Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10 am)	Gay Braybrook 020 8309 6372	Yes
	Theatre (Group 2) Various matinées	Joan & John Somerset 020 8300 0890	Yes. Notice on board at meetings
	The Cathedral 2 nd Wednesday (2.30 pm)	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	1

The above groups, 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.

Christine Spencer, Group Co-ordinator ☎ 020 8300 4291

Why not start a new group?

If you are on the waiting list to join a full group why not create a new one and then advertise it in this Newsletter and on our website? It's not difficult to run a group and leaders of a full one can advise you how it's done.

PROGRAMME

2011

August	Mr. R. Spiller	Entertainer & Comedian
September	Mr. A. Stockwell	Puppets, Piers & Pantomimes – 40 years in show business
October	Mr. J. Newson	Her Majesty's Crown Jewels
November	<i>TBA</i>	
December	Mrs. P. Mortlock	A Country House Christmas

2012

January	John Beckham	A Woodland Mix
February	Alan Payne	What's on the Cards
March	Tony Farnham	Sailing Barges in their Heyday
April	Matthew Jackson	Korean Spirit & Culture
May	Michael Gandy	Seeing it Through Their Eyes
June	Mrs. Sandra Winter	Hand-Bell Ringing
July	Mr. Chris Hare	40 Years Without a Proper Job
August	<i>TBA</i>	
September	Myriam Steadman	Guide Dogs for the Blind
October	John Halligan	The Lord Mayor of the City of London
November	Derek Fulford	Antique Clocks & Watches
December	<i>TBA</i>	

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261
Vice-Chairman	Vacant	
Minutes Secretary	George Murrell	020 8850 2046
Treasurer	Christine Smith	020 8304 2305
Membership Secretary	John Harlow	020 8300 3865
Speakers Secretary	Valerie Gosden	020 8300 0664
Group Co-ordinator	Christine Spencer	020 8300 4291
Welfare Officer	Kathy Cordell	020 8300 4573
Social Secretary	Vacant	

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Travel Group Leader	Margaret Platt	020 8309 6395
Raffle Organiser	Pat Garwood	020 8306 0013
Newsletter Editor & Webmaster	David Smith	020 8304 2305

Please either email contributions to me at editor@sidcup-u3a.org.uk or post them to me at 56 Crofton Avenue, Bexley, Kent DA5 3AR – typed if possible.

Please submit Newsletter contributions by 3rd of the month – but at any time for the Website.

WEBSITE

www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk

This Newsletter (including previous editions) may be read or downloaded from our website. Also available is an index of Newsletter 'Notices' covering the period April 2007 to this issue.

Afterthought

Diligence is the mother of good luck. (Benjamin Franklin, 1758)