

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

December 2007



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

**NOTICES**

**Royal Academy & English Heritage Experience**  
(Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February or Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February)

*Programme*

- 10.20am Meet at Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, Piccadilly (inside the main building on left hand side) for a private tour of the permanent collection.
- 2.00pm Meet in the main foyer of Apsley House, Hyde Park Corner for a guided tour of Apsley House and Wellington Arch followed by refreshments.

Admission by ticket £13 per head. Apply in writing to The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley BR1 1QE enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope. Cheques are to be made payable to the Third Age Trust.

**John Mercer**

**U3A Summer Schools**

The U3A Summer School South is at The Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> until Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2008. Courses will include Industrial Heritage, Music Appreciation – Benjamin Britten, China – Life and Language, Crime and Society, Introduction to Watercolours, etc. The cost is £290 for full board en-suite accommodation.

Summer School North is at Harper Adams University College, Newport, Shropshire, from Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July until Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008. Courses will include Architecture after the Iron Bridge, Christianity in England (Romans to Vikings), Century of Cinema, Crime and Punishment, Digital Photography, Shropshire local history, etc. The cost is £290 for full board en-suite accommodation.

Early application is advised for both schools and application forms and full details are available from Third Age Trust, 19 East Street Bromley, BR1 1QE.

**George Murrell**



**Hearing Dogs**  
*for Deaf People*

The ramble for our charity took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> November in Scadbury Park, Chislehurst. The weather was sunny and warm and it was a beautiful autumn day. Twenty-five people took part including 2 children who walked the whole route. Some of us then finished by having a well-earned lunch at The Sydney Arms.

We collected £220 for the walk and we would like to thank everyone for their generosity. The donations for the charity are mounting up; the Christmas cards and items have sold very well, as have the bring and buy items. The raffle and the tea money are also bringing in a goodly amount. We are hoping to reach a goal of £1000 – can we do it?

**Gay, Annette and Val**

## GROUP NEWS

### **Creating New Groups**



Some months ago we put a notice on the board at the U3A Meeting asking members in what new groups they would be interested. We have names for the following groups and possible leaders, but, as yet, no hosts.

Anyone else who is interested should let me know and I will put them in touch with other members. Also, please let me know if you are no longer interested.

#### ***Creative Writing***

Carol Black  
Jan Clifton  
George Murrell  
Ilena Harrington  
Cynthia Pocock

#### ***Family History***

Judith Bishopp  
Jan Clifton  
Pat Peeney  
Judith Swain

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

### **Play Reading : Leader Frank Whipp**



It has come to our notice that one of the plays written by Ian Brydon for the Play Reading Group, “The Wellingbourne Women’s Guild”, is one of the seven winners of the second Play Reading competition run by the Third Age Press. There were 57 entries. The winning plays will be published next February.

***Editor***

## Freedom Pass Explorers : Leader Val Gosden



Our September trip out was to Harold Wood, an area that is more urban than suburban. Nevertheless, we found a pleasant park to walk around, and some of us who wanted to explore further still found a larger park, of course, on the other side of town.

Our October trip out was led by Christine who took the group to Cheam. After our usual coffee stop, with sandwiches in hand, we made our way to Nonsuch Park where once stood Henry VIII's Nonsuch Palace. We did a circuit of the park and then ate our sandwiches on a nice row of park seats in front of the Mansion House (now boarded up) which has a view across the gardens.

In November we went to Harrow & Wealdstone, where a kindly policeman directed us to a clean, friendly, cafe, where the helpful staff provided us with packed, well-filled sandwiches at very reasonable prices. Our map showed us a park with museum which we reached after a little walk. This was well worth visiting as the buildings were an old tithe barn, a granary, and a small barn. All had items of interest in them, notably pictures, posters and items relating to Harrow in the past, including Whitefriars Glass and Kodak (photographic). We ate our lunch with all 14 of us seated on one long curved seat (instead of having to split up into several groups). The day, although a little chilly, was sunny, so a brisk walk round the adjoining park was welcome, and several of us reverted to childhood by swishing through the fallen autumn leaves.

### Val Gosden

**i** Nonsuch was Henry VIII's last and most fantastic palace. It stood on the west side of Nonsuch Park and is sometimes confused with Nonsuch Mansion on the east side of the park. Work on the Palace began on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1538, in the 30<sup>th</sup> year of Henry's reign, and six months after the birth of his son. It was intended as a triumphal celebration of the power and grandeur of Henry VIII and the Tudor dynasty.



*Editor*

## Ramblers 1 : Leader Annette Jansen



We met at High Elms Country Park, the former country home of the Lubbock family, now owned by Bromley Council. The whole Estate covers 400 acres and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest; it has the support of many environmental groups and in spring there are 10 species of orchid and a variety of wildlife including the rare dormouse. On a damp November day none of this was evident. However, our ramble was enjoyed by all even if the mileage was disputed. We reached Downe for lunch where the now famous meat pies and meat pudding restored the famished, and for those with more modest appetites the crusty bread sandwiches were great.

For our December ramble we stay local and then enjoy our Christmas Lunch at the White Cross where former members of the group will join us – the ones who used to keep a check on the mileage!

**Annette Jansen**

## **Classical Music 2 : Leader Derick Johnson**



For our November meeting we had an almost maximum turnout for Alan Griffiths who presented us with his selection of “Eastern European Miscellany”. Firstly, we heard the work of the Bohemian, Josef Suk, hailed as the music heir to Dvořák, with his “String Serenade” played by London Chamber Orchestra conducted by Christopher Warren-Green. A piece of Hungary followed with Franz Liszt’s “Grand Galop Chromatique” played by Jorge Bolet. We then heard Bedřich Smétana’s “Má Vlaste” (my country), which represents a vision of Czech legend, history and landscape. After the break we visited Hungary again for Zoltán Kodály’s “Háry János Suite” played by the Philharmonia Hungarica conducted by Antal Doráti; this is a splendid piece which is not heard often enough. Mikhail Glinka has been termed the father of Russian nationalism so we heard his “Russian & Ludmila” overture played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. We then had part of Ernő Dohnányi’s “The Veil of Pierrette”, played by the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Matthias Bamert, and finished with a well-earned round of applause.

It is great to have an enthusiastic group and we can only be cheered by how well all members research their particular programmes.

### **Derick Johnson**

## **Local History 2 : Leader José Steward**



Our November outing was to Chelsea, the first visit of which was to the National Army Museum. The history ranges from 1066 to the present day and includes a new exhibition covering the original Queen Mary’s Hospital in Sidcup, from 1917, when it was the base for pioneering the techniques used in plastic surgery for the shockingly disfigured troops returning home during World War I. We felt huge admiration for those men who endured years of extreme discomfort in order to return to their communities with “acceptable” faces. There was admiration, too, for the surgeons who achieved amazing results.

There was a lot more to see at the Museum, and I particularly enjoyed the Art Gallery which contained large (and in the case of the Zulu war, very long) paintings of battles from two and three centuries ago. I feel that this Museum deserves another visit.

After lunch in the Museum café, we went “next door” for a tour of the Royal Chelsea Hospital. David, our guide, looked splendid in his fine red coat. He has a great sense of humour and kept us amused for two hours with his tales about life in the Hospital. Charles II ordered the building of the Hospital in the 1600’s on what was then marshland for his troops who had “served him well”. The chapel and Great Hall are grand buildings, the latter being used as the Dining Hall and set up for “tea” when we arrived. We also saw a mock-up of a resident’s room which was 9ft square and very comfortable, David informed us. A new and sympathetically designed block is nearing completion and will be home for 120 residents.

It was a busy and worthwhile day!

### **José Steward**

**(i)** The original building for Queen Mary’s Hospital was Frognaal House. Opened in 1917, the hospital and its associated convalescent hospitals provided over 1,000 beds, and between 1917 and 1921 admitted over 5,000 servicemen.

*Editor*

### **On-line Computer Group : Leader John Harlow**



We wish to announce the intended creation of a new group for computer users with internet access. People who join this group will have access to a special Forum (email discussion board) that is associated with the Sidcup & District U3A website. Members will be able to ask questions relating to computer issues to which all other members of the group may offer advice. The Forum can be reached by clicking the button labelled “Forum” on the first page of our website. Help with using the Forum is available by clicking the “FAQ” link near the top of the Forum’s first page. Anyone who is interested in joining this group may contact John Harlow either by phone or by email – to send an email click the “Membership” button on the first page of the website.

A Forum intended to facilitate discussion of matters of general interest to members of Sidcup & District U3A already exists; it may be reached as described above.

*Editor*

### **Local History 3 : Leader Pam Kirk**



The venue for our November outing was Leighton House in Kensington. After meeting at Charing Cross Station, we caught a number 9 Routemaster bus that in itself was a bit of history – especially as there was no graffiti on the top deck. For some of our group Leighton House was a second visit, but the De Morgan work is always worth a second viewing; another bonus is the additional displays of work by some of the Pre-Raphaelite members. Although we were a small group, it was well worth the visit.

### **Doreen Freeman & Gloria Stevens**

 William De Morgan (1839–1917) was the most important and innovative potter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and his distinctive style and glorious lustres are instantly recognisable. He designed stained glass, ceramic tiles and painted furniture between 1863 and 1872. He met William Morris in 1863 and both became central figures in the Arts and Crafts Movement. Desiring more control over the finishing of his work, he built a kiln in the basement of his London home where he used his knowledge of chemistry and his gift as an inventor to develop different lustres and glazes.

*Editor*

### **Ramblers 2 : Leader Geoff Rozier**



Our November ramble started on a misty morning in Shoreham; this was a pity as the autumn views over the valley could not be seen. We first went north, and then turned south along the River Darent, passing Samuel Palmer’s house, which is now under scaffolding for renovation, and on across paths and fields until we reached the steep ascent to the hill above the village. We proceeded up the wooded path along the hill crest until we reached the first of three stiles down a steep descent back to the village. We arrived for our pub lunch to find other U3A members, not Ramblers, already there. What a busy lot we are!

### **Olive and John Mercer**

## ENTERTAINMENT

### Thanks for the memory

Recently, I was diagnosed with A.A.A.D.D. - Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder. This is how it manifests itself:

I decide to water my garden.

As I turn on the hose in the driveway, I look over at my car and decide that it needs washing.

As I head for the garage I notice mail on the hall table that I collected from the mailbox earlier.

I decide to go through the mail before I wash the car.

I lay my car keys on the table, put the junk mail in the rubbish bin under the table, and notice that the bin is full.

So, I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the rubbish first.

But then I think, since I'm going to be near the mailbox when I take out the rubbish anyway, I may as well pay the bills first.

I take my cheque book off the table, and see that there is only one cheque left.

My new cheque book is in my desk in the study, so I go inside the house to my desk where I find the can of Coke I'd been drinking.

I'm going to look for my cheque book, but first I need to push the Coke aside so that I don't accidentally knock it over.

The Coke is getting warm, and I decide to put it in the refrigerator to keep it chilled.

As I head toward the kitchen with the Coke, a vase of flowers on the worktop catches my eye - they need water.

I put the Coke on the worktop and discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning.

I decide I better put them back on my desk, but first I'm going to water the flowers.

I set the glasses back down on the worktop, fill a container with water and then spot the TV remote which someone left on the kitchen table.

I realize that tonight when we go to watch TV, I'll be looking for the remote, but I won't remember that it's on the kitchen table, so I decide to put it back in the lounge where it belongs, but first I'll water the flowers.

I pour some water in the flowers, but quite a bit of it spills on the floor.

So, I set the remote back on the table, get some towels and wipe up the spill.

Then, I head down the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do.

At the end of the day:

The car isn't washed; the bills aren't paid; the rubbish bin is full; there is a warm can of Coke sitting on the worktop; the flowers don't have enough water; there is still only one cheque in my chequebook; I can't find the remote; I can't find my glasses and I don't remember what I did with the car keys. Then, when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all day, and I'm really tired. I realise this is a serious problem, and I'll try to get some help for it – but first I'll check my e-mail....

Do me a favour. Forward this message to everyone you know, because I don't remember who I've sent it to. Don't laugh – if this isn't you yet, your day is coming! And if I have sent this to you in the past please bear with me because I don't remember whether I have sent it or not....

**Gay Braybrook**

## GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
<b>Beginners Bridge Acol</b> Tuesdays (11 am - 1 pm) <i>Weekly for 6 weeks</i>	<b>Barbara Shilling</b> 01322 400443	Vacancies on future courses
<b>Bird Watching</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday (morning)	<b>Gay Braybrook/José Steward</b> 020 8300 6372/020 8302 1627	<b>Yes.</b> Notice on board at meetings
<b>Darts (at The Alma pub)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday (midday)	<b>Fred Green</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Freedom Pass Explorers</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	<b>Val Gosden</b> 020 8300 0664	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Local History (Group 3)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	<b>Pam Kirk</b> 020 8856 8372	<b>4</b>
<b>Music (Group 2)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday (2.30 pm)	<b>Derick Johnson</b> 020 8850 1245	<b>3</b>
<b>National Trust/English Heritage</b> Various dates & times	<b>John &amp; Olive Mercer</b> 020 8300 3136	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Quilling</b> Occasional Saturdays (2 - 4 pm)	<b>Val Gosden</b> 020 8300 0664	Please phone leader
<b>Ramblers (Group 1) (6-7 miles)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday (10.30 am)	<b>Annette Jansen</b> 01322 522252	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Saturday Ramble (4-5 miles)</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday (morning)	<b>Gay Braybrook</b> 020 8300 6372	<b>3</b>
<b>10 Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath)</b> Mondays (10 am) <i>except school holidays</i>	<b>Gay Braybrook</b> 020 8300 6372	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Theatre (Group 2)</b> Various matinées	<b>Joan &amp; John Somerset</b> 020 8300 0890	<b>Yes.</b> Notice on board at meetings

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

## PROGRAMME

### 2007

December            Mr. J. Weigle                            Music and mince pies

### 2008

January	Dr. Ann Kneif	Leeds Castle
February	Mr. J. Beckham	Recognising birds
March	Annual General Meeting	
April	Mr. J. Ripley	An afternoon with John Ripley
May	Mrs. B. Stevens	Tales of Downe
June	Mr. M. Matthews	Around the world with music
July	Mr. M. Lloyd	Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies
August	Mrs. Eavis	The History of Blue and White China
September	<i>To be announced</i>	
October	Mr. T. Western	Magic as Entertainment
November	Wing Cmdr. Patrick Coulcher	Natural History of the South Downs
December	Mr. J. Buttress	Royal Parks

## 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
Social Secretary	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261

## USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

**Travel Group Leader**                            Margaret Platt                            020 8309 6395

**Newsletter Editor**                            David Smith                            020 8304 2305

Please either e-mail contributions to me at [editor.u3a@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:editor.u3a@ukonline.co.uk) or post them to me at 56 Crofton Avenue, Bexley DA5 3AR – typed if possible.

***Please submit contributions by 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month.***

## WEBSITE AND FORUM

[www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk](http://www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk)

*Afterthought*

*You must know your limits to break through them.*