

SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

December 2017



SIDCUP & DISTRICT U3A meets at 2.00 pm on the 3rd Thursday of every month in the New Community Church Centre, 24 Station Road, Sidcup

In December 2017 only, the meeting will be held at
The United Services Club, 108 Main Road, Sidcup

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year 2018

NOTICES

Blue Skies and Fruit Flies: Patterns in Biology

At the new Francis Crick Institute, scientists are working at the cutting edge of curiosity-driven or 'blue skies' research. The hope is that their fundamental discoveries will provide insights into major questions of human health and disease. Crick scientists Jean-Paul Vincent and Sophie Herszterg are working to uncover patterns in biology that could affect human health in the future by studying the incredible complexity of the fruit fly wing.

A talk has been organised for U3A members to learn how insights from the humble fruit fly could affect the future of human health, followed by refreshments and a chance to view the Crick's new exhibition, Deconstructing Patterns. There will be an opportunity for questions.

This takes place at the Francis Crick Institute, 1 Midland Road, London, NW1, at 14.00–16.00 on Tuesday 13th February 2018 and admission is free. Bookings through the Third Age Trust.

GROUP NEWS

Mono Photography Group • Leader Roy Morton



Inaugural meeting, November 2017

We had a most enjoyable morning with three of us discussing our offerings of black and white photos including close ups, portraits, and landscapes, viewed on a television with subjective and constructive comments given by all to all. We had to overcome "seeing in colour" when taking specific shots for display in mono – an interesting problem we had all dealt with. Each of us experimented with differing methods to achieve our goal; some shots were taken in camera as black and white, but most were converted from RGB colour. I personally enjoyed the opinions of members, finding that a fresh pair of eyes looking at my images improves own personal attempts at excellence. We hope to spend a day during January carrying out a "Docklands Photo Shoot."

Roy Morton

Local History 3 • Leader Christine Withams



On 8th November, the group met at London Bridge Station for our visit to the Old Operating Theatre in St Thomas St. The Old Operating Theatre Museum is situated in the roof space of St Thomas's Church on the original site of St Thomas's Hospital. The only way to the museum and operating theatre is via a 52-step steep and narrow spiral staircase – but a lift is being installed and should be in operation in December. The patients did not enter the theatre this way as the wards of the south wing of St Thomas's hospital were built around the church. *Dorcas* was the women's surgical ward and women were operated upon in the ward; this was not satisfactory, so, in 1822 the operating theatre was constructed in the herb garret of the church which was on the same level as Dorcas ward.

The Museum is small but has many exhibits and our group was fortunate to have a lecture with a group of school children in the operating theatre which we found very informative. We were told that it is the oldest surviving operating theatre in the UK and was in use up to 1862 when the hospital began the move to its present site on the south side of Westminster Bridge. The patients were mainly poor people and the theatre was only used for women and it was not until 1847 that anaesthetic was first used. After the theatre was closed, it remained forgotten for nearly 100 years and was not discovered until 1956 when researcher Raymond Russell climbed a ladder and crawled through a small hole behind the back of the operating theatre.

The museum opened in 1962.

Peter & Suzanne Holmes

Ramblers 3 • Leader Trevor Ford



November 2017

Our 2nd local walk of the autumn was a circular from North Cray around Joyden's Wood. We met at the White Cross pub and crossed North Cray Road to cross a couple of fields past lots of horses. (Why the long face?) We went through Mount Mascall Stables which straddles the footpath into the wood itself. Climbing up towards the highest point, we were surrounded by glorious drifts of autumn leaves under a shrinking canopy of autumnal colours. Reaching the 5-way signpost, we chose to walk on the outermost path, parallel to the ancient Faesten Dyk, the Anglo-Saxon defensive ditch. As it skirts the outside of the wood, the path hugs the back fences of the Joydens Wood estate which has some interesting gardens, including one with a concrete cow and dog, etc. This then opened out into the edge of a golf course and took us nearly to the farthest corner where the path cuts off the corner and along past the caravan park, *ie*, the “non-mobile” mobile homes. We found some mud there (hurrah!) – or at least effluent from the equine-sharers of the path. We went between Joyden's and Chalk Woods, then Gatton's Plantation and emerged onto a harder-surfaced track – which is an extension of Parsonage Lane. This led us steeply down the road to cross North Cray Road again. Woe betide anyone who took the short-cut back to the pub! Instead, we went to the far side of the River Cray across Five Arches and along to the “pipe-bridge” by the Royal Park playground. We walked along three sides of Loring Hall and then into Water Lane to return to the White Cross pub.

Trevor Ford

Pot Pourri • Leader Val Gosden



Our November trip was to the Cartoon Museum. Over tea and coffee, the curator introduced us to many aspects of cartoons which started with a cartoon produced in 1751 – Hogarth's rendering of the evils of gin, and continued through the many years since then until modern times. The walls of the museum are covered in cartoon strips, some black and white, many in colour, with many relating to the political and social aspects of the times. Also on view were items from comics like the Beano with characters such as Dennis the Menace taking us back to our younger days. Dan Dare, Andy Capp, Rupert and Alex – all are there to give us a chuckle or two, plus many that are less well known, which show us the variety of styles that were, and still are, used.

Val Gosden

Book Reading • Leader June Reid



Our book for November was *Innocent Traitor* by Alison Weir and chosen by Kate. This story was based on the life of Lady Jane Grey. Although we are all familiar with her history, we found this novel very enjoyable. Reading about the customs and day-to-day living in the Tudor times was really interesting. The author also describes the fashions and manners of this era so well. Jane was born to a scheming father and an ambitious mother disappointed with her being a girl. Nevertheless, they took every opportunity to parade her at court to further their own ends. Jane was a precocious and extremely gifted child. She became a strong advocate of the Protestant faith. Her parents wove the threads of a plot to marry her to King Edward VI but were thwarted by his untimely death. Undeterred, they plotted once more to place her on the throne. Poor Jane was Queen for just 9 days. Although used as a pawn in the twists and turns of Tudor politics, her honesty and intelligence shone through her tragic life. Of course, we knew the inevitable end of the story and it was still very moving. It's a good read.

June Reid

Local History 2 • Leaders Pauline Watling & Joyce Savinson



On 9th November, our group had a tour of the Dartford Theatre with afternoon tea. We found the visit very interesting. The theatre was opened in 1983 and seats over 900 visitors; it is managed by the same company as the Churchill Theatre in Bromley which has significantly less seating but a larger stage area. We toured the dressing and wardrobe rooms and back stage with the Hospitality Manager. When we reached the stage, the Stage Manager took over, telling us about the organisation and logistics that go on behind the scenes whilst each touring company is undertaking its theatre run. We were told that, at the end of each production, everything including lighting has to be taken away with them for transportation to their next venue. Sometimes this can mean that three large container lorries are packed up with equipment, costumes, scenery *etc*, at the end of production and is quickly sent on its way.

At the end of the tour we had afternoon tea which we all enjoyed. It has been a challenging year with some trips/visits being difficult to organise and some group members experiencing health issues, but, as Group Leader, I would like to thank everyone who has supported our visits in 2017 and look forward to your company and friendship next year.

Pauline Watling

ENTERTAINMENT

SUDOKU

Place a number from 1-9 in each empty cell below so that no row, column, or 3 x 3 block contains any number more than once.

				7			6
		2		6		4	7
	6		2	3			
	3	7					
	8		3	5	2		1
						8	4
				7	8		9
9		8		4		5	
3			1				

Using the same principle, place the supplied letters in each empty cell below. A word will form in either a row or a column.

	O	I		T		C		U
A								
	E		F	U				
	A				T			
				E	I	O		F
	S			C				U
	T			A				I
						T		
		C		F		A		E

Across:

- 1 Lively dance (9)
- 9 Loosen (4)
- 10 Strength (5)
- 11 Pitchers (5)
- 12 Nimbus (4)
- 13 20 quires (4)
- 14 Lift (5)
- 16 Take liquid food (3)
- 19 Weapon (5)
- 22 Musical composition (4)
- 24 Upon (4)
- 25 Wide-awake (5)
- 26 United state (5)
- 27 Joint (4)
- 28 Kind of fish (9)

Down:

- 1 Peevish (9)
- 2 Single (5)
- 3 Notion (4)
- 4 Fleshy stem bases (5)
- 5 London district (4)
- 6 2 (5)
- 7 Snakelike fishes (4)
- 8 Complainer (9)
- 14 Tint (3)
- 15 Up to the time (5)
- 17 Lively dance (5)
- 18 Blended food (5)
- 20 16th of a rupee (4)
- 21 Aquatic bird (4)
- 23 Shut in (4)

BARRED CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8
9				10				
11					12			
13				14				
		15	16		17		18	
19	20		21		22	23		
24				25				
26					27			
28								

Place the letters below in the 3x3 grid to form eight different 3-letter words – a word across each row, a word down each column, and a word along the two main diagonals.

A D E O P R R W Y

Solutions will appear in the January Newsletter

GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER/CONTACT	VACANCIES
 Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30 am)	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	Vacancies
 Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday (10.00 am)  	Roy Black  020 8302 9942	Vacancies
 Book Reading 1 st Thursday (2.00–4.00 pm)	June Reid 020 8302 7887	Vacancies
 Family History 2 nd Tues  & 4 th Thurs  	Judith Swain & Kate Berry 020 8303 5759	Vacancies
 French Conversation 3 rd Thursday (10.30 am) 	Steve Hunter hunterdigital@hotmail.com	Vacancies
 Handcrafted Cards 2 1 st Wednesday (2.00–4.00 pm)	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	1 Vacancy
 Local Theatre Trips   £	Sue Brooks 020 8298 1117	Vacancies
 Mono Digital Photography Quarterly (approx.)	Roy Morton rory.m2014@gmail.com	3 Vacancies
 Needlecrafts 1 st Monday afternoon	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	Vacancies
 Ramblers (Group 2) 4 th Tuesday (4–5 miles)	Roy Black 020 8302 9942	Vacancies
 Rummikub® (Group 1) 4 th Monday (2.00–4.00 pm)	Margaret Platt 020 8309 6395	Vacancies
 Silver Surfers 3 rd Tuesday (2.00 pm)	Steve Hunter hunterdigital@hotmail.com	Vacancies
 Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10.00 am)   £	Gay Braybrook  020 8309 6372	Vacancies
 Wine Appreciation 3 rd Wednesday (7.30 pm) £	Roger Brown 020 8850 5362	Vacancies

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 me.

Trevor Ford  020 8302 7635 email: trevor.ford@talktalk.net

Why not start a new group?

If your name is on the waiting list to join a full group, or no group that specialises in your interest exists yet, you can create a new one and advertise it in this Newsletter – see the last page. It is easy to run a group and any current leader can advise you how it's done. Members of groups are reminded that they should always let the group leader know if they cannot attend a meeting, particularly if they wish to withdraw from that group.

 Not during school/bank holidays £ A charge applies  Temporary point of contact
 Open to all  Certain seasons only  Times vary  Not intended for beginners

