

SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

February 2016



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 (but see 'Reminder' Notice)

NOTICES

U3A Events

January 2016

More of our Winter/Spring events are now open for booking. To find out more and book your place on any of the featured events click on the links below. However, you can also log in to the members' area of www.u3a.org.uk and visit the Events page to view all our current events. Summer School booking is also available in the members' area.

Birmingham Concert

12th February / 3rd April & 2nd July

You may book online now.

U3A Explores Science at the RI

17th March 2016

You may book online now.

The Search for Life in the Universe

11th April 2016

You may book online now.

Spring Concert

Wednesday 27th April 2 pm–4 pm.

Mozart Requiem with the Brandenburg Singers and Organ, conducted by Robert Porter at St. Clement Danes, Strand, London WC2. The concert will be introduced and conducted by Robert Porter, the Brandenburg Choral Festival of London's Artistic Director. The programme will include a selection of a cappella and organ favourites, including the Mozart Requiem.

The Brandenburg Singers is a small hand-picked group drawn from the finest of the members of the 150 choirs that perform in the Brandenburg Choral Festival of London – the largest in the UK. Seating is unreserved, interval refreshments, including wine, are available for a modest extra charge.

Tickets at £18 each are available now from Third Age Trust.

George Murrell

 Those without internet access can contact the Third Age Trust in the usual way.

Editor

Reminder

Members are asked to note that the March monthly meeting (including the AGM) on 17th March will take place at the United Services Club, 108 Main Road, Sidcup. The New Community Church is not available to us on that date. Apologies for any inconvenience.

Please bring with you the Agenda and last year's Minutes (which are attached to the back of this Newsletter).

Editor

Sidcup's Great War - A Living Pageant

This is a community project which will take place from 10 am to 4 pm on Saturday 18th June in Sidcup High Street and adjoining locations; it will include, among other events, street theatre, poetry readings, local choirs, history talks and stalls and displays by local organisations. Sidcup and District U3A have accepted an invitation to provide a stall where we will be able to publicise the various activities that we provide. Volunteers from Group Leaders and other members are sought to plan and suggest ideas for displays to be mounted on our stall and volunteers will also be required to man the stall on 18th June. Any member who is interested in taking part is invited to contact Trevor Ford, Group Co-ordinator, on 020 8302 7635. An informal meeting to discuss arrangements, to which all interested members are invited, will take place at 10 am on Thursday 10th March at Ockley Court, Alder Road. (Date is subject to confirmation).

George Murrell



It is with sadness that we announce the death of Alf Cracknell who died suddenly in the last week of January after a very short illness. His funeral took place on 15th February.

Anne Evans



Pot Pourri • Leader Val Gosden



Despite the weather being colder and windier than previously, several brave souls ventured out to the Fleming Collection in January to see "Northern Lights," an exhibition of works of art by Scottish painters. There was an interesting variety of art to view including portraits and scenes, some painted as long ago as the 1700s and others executed more recently. Also included were a couple of modern art paintings, which did not get full approval from us! Another point of interest was the ornate framing of some of the pictures; a contrast to the present-day simpler styles, yet the framing added, we felt, to the interest of the artwork itself.

Val Gosden

Local History 3 • Leader Christine Withams



Our first visit of the year was to the Imperial War Museum. We had not been there since the WW1 galleries had been updated. Most of the group spent time exploring this area, which has been extremely well documented, before meeting in the café for lunch. After this, we split up and visited some of the other exhibitions including the Lord Ashcroft Gallery, which hosts the largest collection of Victoria Crosses, the Holocaust Exhibition, the galleries of WW2 showing a family in wartime Stockwell, or those of the more recent conflicts of Kosova, Iraq and Afghanistan. We all decided that there was too much to do on one visit so we have plenty to interest us on a return visit.

Mary Webb

Ramblers 2 • Leader David Wedderkop



After a period of such wet weather, we opted for a suburban walk. It was dry but there was a keen wind as we left Blackheath Station and headed off across the open space of Blackheath.

We entered Greenwich Park by the main gate and went left through the Rose Garden with The Ranger's House on our left then took a circular route back via the Rock Garden. Having entered the Flower Garden, we took the path to the lake and spent a few minutes watching a number of water fowl before continuing round until we reached the further gate. We made our way to Queen Elizabeth's Oak; the trunk was hollow and the tree – which died in the late 19th century – had been propped up by ivy until it fell after heavy rain in 1991. A new oak was planted beside it in 1992 and is growing well. You cannot visit Greenwich Park without looking at the view from General Wolfe's statue so we made our way there and then took the path by the Observatory to descend the hill. We took the path to our right down to the Park Row gate and lastly walked beside the Queen's House and Maritime Museum to exit the park along King William Walk. By this time it was starting to rain so we were pleased to reach Wetherspoons and have some welcome refreshment.

Mary Webb

Freedom Pass Explorers • Leaders Christine Withams & Joy O'Donnell



In December, 11 of us travelled by the 246 bus from Bromley all the way to Westerham; it was a scenic ride in the comfort of the bus. On arrival, we split into several groups as the coffee shops were busy. A few days after our visit, a car ended up inside the Costa Coffee! We then had plenty of time to wander around visiting the Church with its many decorated Christmas trees which were displayed to raise money for charity. We also did a lot of window shopping and regrouped to have lunch at the King's Arms Hotel.

Anticipating that January could be a little cold, we stayed in London, walking from Charing Cross to Somerset House where there was a free exhibition on Hergé and his masterpiece, Tintin. This was a colourful exhibition which included pencil sketches, character drawings and watercolours. It was also as much about Hergé himself. Leaving Somerset House, we took the number 15 bus to Tower Bridge and then boarded another bus over the bridge to lunch at The Pommeliers Rest; from here we split up, some choosing another bus, some walking by the river back to London Bridge Station and home.

Christine Withams

Quilling • Leader Val Gosden



I shall be holding a quilling session on Saturday, 19th March at 2 pm. For those of you who do not know what quilling is, it is the art of paper filigree, *ie*, twiddling slim pieces of paper into fantastic shapes.

Complete novices and anyone who wants to ‘have a go’ is welcome – all tools and papers are included in the cost of £1. Please let me know if you would like to attend.

Val Gosden 020 8300 0664

Ramblers 3 • Leader Trevor Ford



January 2016

The leader dictated an early start since there were lots of interesting venues en route. There were, therefore, several of us queueing at Sidcup Station to catch the 9.31 with our Freedom Passes. We were joined at New Eltham by another 3 and at London Bridge by another 2. We crossed over the bridge to Tooley Street and Hayes Galleria with its range of coffee shops and a central sculpture with moving parts (sometimes). Several of the group had previously worked in this area so knew it well. Pat had also been brought up in Rotherhithe so was very familiar with it. We went out to the river, then along the Thames Path past HMS Belfast and the new City Hall and under the end of Tower Bridge. On display is a replica of the mechanism for bridge-raising, which intrigued several of the engineers in the group, including my Australian architect friend. Intriguingly, along the route there are several inlets where you cross by bridges of various construction; *eg*, Butlers Wharf/St. Saviour’s Dock. Much of the route is lined either with refurbished warehouses converted into apartments, or brand new constructions – a fascinating collaboration of the old and new. Some had outside balconies between buildings, but we doubted whether they were suntraps. Just beyond St. Mary’s Church, Rotherhithe, is the pub from which the Pilgrim Fathers allegedly gathered before going to the South West and then on to America. Inside, it’s a gloriously chaotic mixture of fixtures and fittings, where some of us went on the preliminary practice walk a fortnight before. A little further on you come to the Brunel Museum which celebrates the builder of the Rotherhithe Tunnel. As you go along into the broad loop following the river, you can get disoriented looking back towards central London; it looks as if The Shard is on the north bank. Turning the top of the bend, we came to the Blacksmith’s Arms – though judging by the excellent quality of their fish lunches, they could equally be called the Fisherman’s Arms. After lunch, we traipsed through the grounds of the Hilton, past their own pier from which it’s a short hop across to Canary Wharf Pier and its huge towers beyond. Further on, the City Farm was hosting a group of school children so we didn’t go in on that occasion, but it’s worth a visit. We crossed various bridges over Greenland Dock and Marina where some large vessels were moored. Around Deptford, the route is pushed away from the river bank, including through a park. Sayes Court once attracted throngs to visit its celebrated garden created by the 17th century diarist, John Evelyn. Unfortunately, the area shows little sign of its former glory, despite having been a key factor in the creation of the National Trust. By this time, the group was rather strung out. However, I was not concerned about their navigation – or mine. (“Keep the river on your left!”) Pam was keen to get to the cinema in Greenwich for a show, so she pushed on ahead with Pat. The rest of us drifted along, stopping at the Russian memorial of Peter the Tsar’s visit for the obligatory photocell. Some then stopped for a coffee also before heading over the Deptford Creek bridge and then round the Cutty Sark. We came back home by a rather tortuous bus route to Sidcup.

Trevor Ford

Classical Music • Leader Olive Mercer



The first meeting of 2016 was very well attended and got off to a flying start with something completely different: a programme of music, which included no Classical Period music at all! Entitled “Strictly Unclassical,” it was a global spiritual journey which featured instrumental and vocal pieces from across four continents, covering many different spiritual beliefs, from ancient Mexico and Bible-belt America to Bronze Age Britain and Tibet among them. All of this generated much lively conversation and some foot stomping! As always, the group is looking forward to another year of varied and interesting selections from members. Currently, there is space for new members and all will be made very welcome.

January’s programme

Kismet from *Bond Born*, Gay-Yee Westerhoff, Cello with RPO; *And This is My Beloved* from *Faithfully* by Johnny Mathis; *Mamallay!* from *Legend of the Sun Virgin* by Yma Sumac; *A Lama’s Prayer* * by Guru Rinpoche; *Cape Clear* from *Kitty Jay* by Seth Lakeman; *Sheep, Sheep* (accapella) by Georgia Sea Island Singers *; *Om Namah Shivaya* by Krishna Das from *Pilgrim Heart* *; *Incantation* from *An Ancient Muse* by Loreena McKennitt; *Ogham the Moon* from *Sieben* by Matt Howden; *Sadness* (part 1) from *Love, Sensuality, Devotion* by Enigma; *Gates of Istanbul* and *Sacred Heart* from *An Ancient Muse* by Loreena McKennitt.

* From *Music for the Spiritual Tourist*.

Susan Stuart

Local History 2 • Leader Pauline Watling



On Wednesday 13th January 2016, a number of our group went to the British Museum. Having visited Waddesdon Manor in the past myself, I thought the collection they now have at the museum would be of interest.

The museum is currently exhibiting treasured items bequeathed to them by the Rothschild family in a new gallery that was made possible through a generous donation from the Rothschild Foundation. The collection tells the story of the rise of the family as a new European Aristocracy in the 19th century. We were all very impressed by the collection, and, although there is a lot to see at the museum itself, we concentrated upon this collection during this visit.

A surprisingly good, dry, sunny day made the trip even more enjoyable which included a meal at the Montague Pyke afterwards – a Wetherspoon pub which used to be a night club – a place frequented in its heyday by, amongst others, the Rolling Stones and Manfred Mann!

Pauline Watling

(i) Outlandish Projects: Sunken Soho. During the post-war years, as the UK’s rapid growth in car use threatened to grind cities to a halt, proposals for “comprehensive redevelopment” were common. The Buchanan Report of 1963 proposed, among many other ideas, rebuilding Tottenham Court Road as a flying pedestrian precinct, and the London County Council’s Sir William Holford tried to demolish three-quarters of the buildings on Piccadilly Circus. But, perhaps, boldest of all was a 1954 plan by Geoffrey Jellicoe, Ove Arup and Edward Mills to remake the whole of Soho as a concrete landscape of sunken roads, plazas and office towers. It would have involved knocking down much of Soho and building a raised concrete platform, with 24-storey pinwheel towers, gardens and glass-bottomed canals over the streets beneath.

Editor

GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER/CONTACT	VACANCIES
 Amblers (Group 1) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30 am)	John Harbert 020 8300 5361	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
 Classical Music 2 nd Friday (2.30–4.30 pm)	Olive Mercer 020 8300 3136	Vacancies
 Concerts/Opera Various dates and times £ 	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	Vacancies ↓
 Darts (at the Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (noon)  	Leader pending  needed, please	Vacancies
 Family History 2 nd Tuesday & 4 th Thursday	Judith Swain 020 8303 5759	Vacancies
 Ramblers (Group 2) 4 th Tuesday (4–5 miles)	David Wedderkop 020 8850 5042	Vacancies
 Ramblers (Group 3) 1 st Friday (≈ 6 miles)	Trevor Ford 020 8302 7635	Vacancies
 Rummikub® 4 th Monday (2.00–4.00 pm)	Margaret Platt 020 8309 6395	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 a group.

 Not during school holidays

 Notice on the board at meetings

£ A charge applies

 Open to all

 Certain seasons only

 Temporary point of contact

PROGRAMME

2016		
February	Bob Ogley	The Great Storm and how it changed my life
March		Annual General Meeting
	Penny Duggan	History of Blackfen
April	Dennis Chambers	Some Kent Ghosts – Their haunts and their stories
May	Anna Austin	Motorina to Racing Driver
June	Vicky Fry	Murder, Myths and Misconceptions – Working with the Magistrates' Courts
July	Maurice Tripp	“Why the show must go on!”
August	Barbara Stevens	Charles and Emma Darwin/Downe
September	Alan Ashby	Life-Saving Work of the Lifeboat Service

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261
Vice-Chairman	Lesley South	020 8300 8298
Minutes Secretary	George Murrell	020 8850 2046
Treasurer	John Lapham	020 8854 6340
Membership Secretary	Patricia Rivett	020 3302 2887
Asst. Membership Secretary	Kate Berry	020 8309 7429
Speakers Secretary	<i>Vacant</i>	
Group Co-ordinator	Trevor Ford	020 8302 7635
Welfare Officer	Kathy Cordell	020 8300 4573
General Member	Janet Lambern	020 8300 1786

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

Raffle Organiser Jackie Burke 020 8302 7395
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 since this facilitates scanning. Please submit Newsletter contributions by 3rd of the month – but at any time for the website. Photos taken during group outings and events may be shared on the website’s “Gallery” page.
Third Age Trust: 19 East Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1QE (020 8466 6139) www.u3a.org.uk
London Region U3A: www.u3asites.org.uk/london-region
World U3A: www.worldu3a.org **Virtual U3A:** www.vu3a.org

WEBSITE

www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk

This Newsletter (including previous editions) may be read or downloaded from our website; our annual booklet, Scambuster, and help with computer problems may also be downloaded. Also available is an index of Newsletter ‘Notices’ covering the period April 2007 to this issue.

Afterthought

If you think that getting old is hard you should try getting younger.

**SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

17th March 2016



The Committee invites all paid up members to the Annual General Meeting which will take place at 2.00 pm on Thursday 17th March 2016 at the United Services Club, Main Road, Sidcup.

Agenda

Apologies for absence
Matters arising
Minutes of 2015 AGM
Approval of accounts
Annual reports
Election of officers
Appointment of inspector of accounts
Any other business

Minutes of the 2015 AGM and annual reports are attached.

George Murrell, Secretary

**SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
MINUTES OF 2015 AGM**

19th March 2015



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at St. Lawrence's Church Hall, Hamilton
Road on 19th March 2015**

Apologies for absence were received from Mary Huggins and Margaret Platt.

Minutes of the 2014 AGM were approved as being correct.

Matters arising: There were none.

Approval of accounts: Proposed by Michael Jordan, Seconded by Alan Platt that they be accepted. CARRIED

Annual Reports: Proposed by Michael Jordan, Seconded by Alan Platt that they be accepted. CARRIED

Election of Officers: No nominations had been received for the posts of Chairman or Speakers' Secretary. In view of this, Anne Evans, although preferring to stand down after 5 years in office (including last year in an acting capacity), was prepared to accept the post of Chairman. George Murrell, seconded by Annette Holland proposed that Anne be elected Chairman. CARRIED. George Murrell then paid tribute to the work carried out by Anne and also to the other members of the Committee standing down, Christine Smith (Treasurer) and Sue Brooks (Speakers' Secretary). Having been properly proposed and seconded, the following were elected "en bloc" as follows:-

Vice Chairman	Lesley South
Secretary	George Murrell
Treasurer	John Lapham
Membership Secretary	Patricia Rivett
Assistant Membership Secretary	Kate Berry
Group Co-ordinator	Trevor Ford
Welfare Officer	Kathleen Cordell
Speakers' Secretary	Vacant

Appointment of Inspector of Accounts: Proposed by Dennis Brittain, Seconded by Alan Platt that Christine Smith be appointed. CARRIED

Any other business: Norma Balfour asked if there should be a post of Social Secretary. Response – there has been in the past but the support for coach trips and other organised social events had dwindled to the extent that the position was no longer required. If any member wished to take on and develop the role they would be very welcome to do so.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 2.13 pm.

SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE ANNUAL REPORTS

2015/2016



Chairman's Report 2015/2016

2015 was another full year for Sidcup & District U3A. Our well attended monthly meetings attracted visitors who, in turn, became new members.

During the year we were treated to a wide range of subjects by our monthly speakers. Two memorable topics, for very different reasons, were 'The Crop Circle Mysteries' and 'The Wiggly Wild Show' !

We have a small team working together arranging the speakers for 2016 and beyond, using the feedback from member's questionnaires.

In February, your Committee enjoyed lunch together at Sophie's Choice, an excellent meeting for which no agenda was needed.

Thanks to all those members who continue to support the membership in many and varied roles.

My special thanks to the Committee for their support and commitment this year; our meetings are a pleasure.

In March 2014, I agreed to be re-elected as your Chairman for 2 years only. I do enjoy being active in our U3A but it is very disappointing that so few members feel able to participate more fully and in particular take up posts on Committee. 2016 will be my very last year as I will be standing down in March 2017 come what may.

Please remember we are a self-directed organisation; we need you, the members, to volunteer in whatever way you can to keep alive our activities in 2016.

Anne Evans, Chairman

Group Co-ordinator's Report 2015

There is good news and some less good. Membership of groups continues to be strong, which is a double-edged sword. However, a number of groups have closed at the end of last year; partly they were short-term study-groups, *eg.* Explorers and Philosophy. Other groups have handed over leadership to new leaders, but, unfortunately, some groups have closed when leaders have felt unable to continue. Few new groups began last year and some existing groups are over-subscribed, making it difficult to welcome new members. So I would issue an ongoing plea to anyone who feels able to start up new groups, either covering existing areas or branching out into new areas. Help and advice is available from the Group Coordinator, other members of the Committee and, of course, existing Group Leaders. Praise and good wishes go out to existing leaders and their groups. The launch of the wider South-East Network should also give new opportunities for groups, visits and other events. Watch this space.

Trevor Ford, Group Co-ordinator

Membership Secretary's Report 2015/2016

During 2015, we have seen between 75 – 115 members attending the General Meetings which has been a good turnout for the excellent range of speakers that had been booked.

Total membership at the end of 2015 was 267. Forty-five people decided not to renew at the beginning of the year but we have welcomed 41 new members. Sadly, six members passed away during the year.

Patricia Rivett & Kate Berry, Membership Secretaries

Treasurer's Report 2015

I am pleased to report that, due to steady membership numbers, there will be no increase in membership fees this year.

Thanks to your increasing generosity, we raised the incredible amount of £1,071.16 for our chosen charity, Missing People.

My thanks go to Christine Smith for auditing this year's accounts books.

John Lapham, Treasurer

① See last page for statement of accounts for 2015.

Editor

SIDCUP AND DISTRICT U 3 A

Accounts from 1st Jan- 31stDecember2015

INCOME

SUBSCRIPTIONS	£3,835.00
CHARITY	£1,006.81
DONATION	£40.00

EXPENDITURE

HALL HIRE	£1,544.00
CHARITY	£1,071.16
REFRESHMENTS	
AFFILIATION FEES	£834.16
SPEAKERS	£815.00
PRINTING	£432.90
POSTAGE	£18.41
WEB SITE	£55.04
PRESENTATION	
STATIONERY	£16.89
EQUIPMENT	£7.98
CHRISTMAS	£69.00
BANK CHARGE	15

£4,879.54

EXCESS INCOME £2.27

£4,881.81

£4,881.81

01/01/15 Cash in Bank	£4,071.17
01/01/15 Petty Cash	£6.58
	<u>£4,077.75</u>

31/12/15 Cash in Bank	£4,075.19
31/12/15 Petty Cash	£4.83
	<u>£4,080.02</u>

31/12/15 Excess Income £2.27

£4,080.02

£4,080.02

The above is a true account of the SIDCUP & DISTRICT U3A's position as at the 31st December 2015

26 01/01/16

J Lapham
Treasurer

John Lapham

C A Smith
Examiner of Accounts

C A Smith