

SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

January 2010



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

NOTICES

Freedom Pass

You need to renew your pass before the end of March 2010; all current Freedom Passes will cease to work on 31st March. The renewal process began on 4th January and the application form is now available at Post Offices and online:

<http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/freedompass/applying/applicationform.htm>

It is a new form – the same as is used for new applications. The pass is normally renewed every two years to help prevent fraud, but the new pass is different in a number of ways:

- your new style pass will be valid for 5 years;
- for additional security, your new pass will include a photograph of you on the card itself rather than on a separate photocard, so you must produce a passport-style photograph of yourself when you apply;
- your new card will take up to 10 working days to arrive and will be sent to you in the post.

Freedom Passes are being renewed from 4th January 2010. To avoid a big rush, issue dates have been allocated alphabetically by surname. You may either fill out and download the online application form which you can then take to any London Post Office, or pick up a printed version from the local Post Office. *You must take along documents to prove your identity and address – just like when you first applied – as well as your photograph.* Use the list below to work out when you should visit the Post Office to apply.

- A/B/C/D/E surnames: 4–16 January
- F/G/H/I/J surnames: 18–23 January
- K/L/M/N/O surnames: 25–30 January
- P/Q/R/S/T/U/V/W/X/Y/Z surnames: 1–6 February
- If you miss your week, you should apply between 8–13 February.

Newsletter

Contributions for the Newsletter are invited from groups with vacancies which do not already submit reports; this is a way of attracting the members you seek. Members who wish to pick up a copy of the current Newsletter from Sidcup Library should look in the newspaper rack to the right of the entrance. Those with internet access may download it in PDF format from the “Home” or “Meetings” page of our website at any time. Back issues are also still available.

Editor

Concert at the Royal Festival Hall

Valentine's Day Concert on 14th February 2010 at 3.00pm by the Philharmonia Orchestra

- Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: "Romeo & Juliet" Fantasy Overture.
- Max Bruch: Violin Concerto № 1 in G minor.
- Aram Ilyich Khachaturian: "Spartacus" Adagio.
- Antonín Dvořák: Romance in F minor for violin.
- Georges Bizet: Carmen Suite № 1.

Tickets will cost about £14.00 – payment in January, please. Look out for more Sunday afternoon concerts on 11th April and 23rd May.

Norma Balfour ☎ 020 8303 7693

"Re-imagining Ageing"

David Lodge & Jim Crace – Wednesday 3rd February 2010

An Invitation to all members of the U3A

Britain's population is ageing. According to scientific estimates, one quarter of children born in the UK today will live to 100. By 2025, more than a third of us will be over 55.

As improved medical care, nutrition and living standards extend our lives, though, major new challenges confront us all. Do we want to live forever, or is there a point at which more life is no longer better? Is Britain heading for a new class divide, where money, position and status will make the difference between a miserable or a fulfilling old age? How much longer will we have to stay working, and what then happens to opportunities for the young? What will be the social and political effects, as older people grow in strength and influence?

Brunel University, in collaboration with the Greater London U3As, invite you to join the great debate on ageing, with renowned authors David Lodge and Jim Crace, in a public event sponsored by the UK Research Councils. All U3A members are warmly invited to attend this free event which will discuss Lodge's recent book "Deaf Sentence", considering disability and independence after retirement, and Crace's "Arcadia", featuring an ageing businessman's desire for a public legacy.

Brunel's Fiction and Cultural Mediation of Ageing Project (FCMAP) project, in partnership with the U3As, aims to shed new light on ageing in contemporary Britain by using fictional representations of old age as a stimulus to public debate. U3A volunteers from London have been participating in the project since September 2009 and this event will provide a special opportunity for them to engage with and challenge the authors.

Audience members can also participate actively in the major contemporary debate on ageing by directly quizzing the authors. It should be a lively, dynamic and provocative engagement and not the usual 'appreciation of authors' work' event.

Admission is free and the event will be followed by a drinks reception hosted by the Head of the School of Arts. For more information, and to reserve a seat, contact Natalia Clarke, School of Arts, Brunel University, Kingston Lane, Uxbridge UB8 3PH:
natalia.clarke@brunel.ac.uk

Date: Wednesday 3rd February 2010

Time: 5.30pm–7.30pm (including the reception)

Venue: Howell Lecture Theatre, Brunel University, Uxbridge Campus, Middlesex, UB9 3PH.
(Near Uxbridge underground station).

Do join the Brunel team and the reading public in this exciting contemporary debate!

John Mercer

The Manor House

Those who have the interests of Sidcup at heart will be pleased to know that the threat to the Manor House has been lifted. The Council has approved a restoration and maintenance plan, and it will be kept as a registry until at least 2014. It will not be sold off to finance future Council accommodation as was first put forward. In order to finance the plan, later additions added to the historic house will be demolished, and it is hoped that new development on part of the site will be built that will not damage the integrity of the historic building. A separate review of the Registry is to be made. This salvation is largely due to the Bexley Civic Society which organised a large petition and encouraged many letters of protest to be sent to the Council. If local residents rally sufficiently to a good cause, the Council does take heed.

John Mercer



Jill Gledhill

It is with sadness we have to report that Jill died suddenly on 1st December. She was 58. Jill was a very active member of our U3A and always willing to help with any tasks. She was one of the chair team and a tremendous help in planning the Saturday rambles as she was an ex-cartographer. She was also a valuable volunteer at Hall Place. Jill will be greatly missed.

Her funeral took place on 30th December at Eltham crematorium.

Christobel Fyffe

Christobel also died in December. Chris had been a long term member – almost from the start of our U3A. Her health had deteriorated considerably recently and she had been blind for many years. We will miss her cheerful personality.



Wine Appreciation Group • Leader Michael Jordan



WAGS hold Annual Dinner

The annual dinner of the Wine Appreciation Group (WAGS) took place on Thursday 26th November 2009 at the Frogpool Manor Restaurant, Perry Street. Twenty-eight members and partners attended a lovely evening. After a glass of mulled wine to start the party atmosphere, we had a superb four course dinner with an extensive range of dishes. We were fortunate in being able to welcome back to the fold Alan Platt, who had had a replacement knee operation only three weeks prior to the evening. There was plenty of wine to slake parched throats, and we were all *very* happy by the time our taxis came to take us home – no self driving on this occasion.

Michael Jordan

Freedom Pass Explorers • Leader Val Gosden



It was a chilly day when we went out in November, travelling first to Elephant & Castle, and experiencing the colourful below ground route between the tube and train stations. On arrival at our intended destination, Mitcham Junction, we found no cafés, so we caught a tram to Croydon where we had lunch in a pub before rejoining the tram for our return journey. The tram ride was smooth and quiet, passing through many park and woodland areas where we enjoyed the sight of the many glorious autumn colours. At the end of our day out we realised that we had travelled by train, bus, tube and tram – which was quite an achievement. But it *was* a chilly day, and I think we were all pleased when we reached home.

For our December trip we travelled to one end of the Northern Underground line, Edgware. Our first impressions were that it was much like many suburban towns, although we saw several shops with colourful displays of various fruits and vegetables, including some of which we had never heard. After studying our maps during our coffee stop, we decided to visit Canons Park before returning to the High Street area for lunch. (It was a sunny, but fairly cold, day). Canons Park is a very pleasant park, and we noted several plants in flower, some of which were unexpected in December. Within the grounds is the King George V Memorial Garden – a very peaceful walled garden with a pond. Our walk then took us past a lake on one side of the road, where a cormorant was spotted along with other water fowl. On the opposite side of the road were several large detached houses which, we guessed, might well command one million pound price tags. All in all, this December trip proved to be surprisingly pleasant.

Val Gosden

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/José Steward 020 8303 7693/07957 181808	Yes
Antiques Appreciation (Group 5) 3 rd Wednesday (10 am)	Martin Baker 020 8300 1752	1
Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday (morning)	Gay Braybrook/José Steward 020 8309 6372/07957 181808	Yes. Notice on board at meetings
Boules (Danson Park – seasonal) 2 nd & 4 th Thursday (10 am)	Bart Jansen 01322 522252	5
Bridge Mondays (2 pm)	Fred Till 01322 528605	4
Darts (at The Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (midday)	Fred Green	Yes
Discussion (Group 1) 3 rd Monday (2-4 pm)	Carol Green 020 8300 4603	1
Local History (Group 1) 2 nd Wednesday	John Harlow 020 8300 3865	2
Local History (Group 2) 2 nd Wednesday	José Steward 020 8302 1627	3
National Trust/English Heritage Various dates & times	John & Olive Mercer 020 8300 3136	Yes
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
Recorder Playing 3 rd Wednesday (2 pm)	Mary Hawes 020 8300 0521	6
10-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 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

2010

January	Katherine Eames	Climate Change
February	Dr. P. Brandham	Kew in Close-Up
March	A.G.M.	A Presentation by Students from Blackfen School
April	Mrs. B. Sadler	The Great Flood of 1953
May	Mr. S. Robinson	The City
June	Mr. M. Harrison	Midsummer Madness
July	Miss J. Aviolet	I am a tulip, what are you?
August	<i>TBA</i>	
September	Mr. H. Townsend	Harry, the Wheelbarrow Man
October	Dr. Ann Kneif	The Bevin Boys
November	Mr. V. Creek	R.A.F. Museum, Hendon
December	Miss Ann Carter	A Celebration of Christmas

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	Christine Spencer	020 8300 4291
Welfare Officer	Kathy Cordell	020 8300 4573
Social Secretary	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261

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 e-mail contributions to me at editor.u3a@ukonline.co.uk or post them to me at 56 Crofton Avenue, Bexley DA5 3AR – typed if possible.

Please submit contributions by 3rd of the month.

WEBSITE

www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk

Afterthought

Hard work has a future payoff. Laziness pays off now.