

# SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

January 2014



**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

### **Workers' Educational Association Courses**

The Bexley Branch of the WEA has two courses starting in the Spring Term of 2014:

#### Art & Music Studies: Key Works 2014

We will look at art, listen to music and learn about the artists and composers. Subjects will be linked to important anniversaries or exhibitions. Sessions are well illustrated with both images and music and afford opportunities for discussion and questions.

10 sessions, 2.00pm – 4.00pm Tuesdays from 7<sup>th</sup> January, at Sidcup Arts and Adult Education Centre, Alma Road, Sidcup, Kent. DA14 4ED. Fee: £79.00 (Free to those providing evidence that they receive certain means tested benefits).

#### Local History: London Walks

The opportunity to see and learn more about our fascinating capital city, with a group of like-minded people, while keeping active in mind, body and spirit. An engaging and instructive local history course where people and places meet.

10 sessions, 2.00pm – 4.00pm Tuesdays from 11<sup>th</sup> March. First and last sessions are at Sidcup Arts and Adult Education Centre, Alma Road, Sidcup, Kent. DA14 4ED. Remaining sessions are in London starting at pre-arranged locations. Fee: £79.00 (Free to those providing evidence that they receive certain means tested benefits).

Online enrolment is available. For more information please contact Eileen Rambran on 020 8300 1845 or [weabexley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:weabexley@hotmail.co.uk).

### **George Murrell**

**(i)** The Workers' Educational Association was founded in 1903 by Albert Mansbridge and his wife, Frances. He was born the son of a carpenter in 1876, and, when married at the age of 25, was recorded as a 'Gentleman'. Owing to his family's tight finances, he had to leave school at 14 and, as a result, was largely self-educated. He still managed to attend university extension courses, however, but had concerns that they were aimed only at the upper and middle classes. To help the situation, he founded the WEA using two shillings and 6d from the housekeeping money. The association and its aims were quickly recognised by universities, and Mansbridge became its full-time general secretary in 1905. He later created other adult education groups and also founded the National Central Library – a tutorial system and a scholarly library for working people not connected to an academic institution. He is commemorated by a blue plaque at 198 Windsor Road, Ilford. The WEA is now the largest independent provider of adult education in England and Scotland. It is one of the largest charities, has voluntary governance and its branches are run by volunteers.

***Editor***

### U3A Members Study Day at the Sainsbury Wing Theatre at The National Gallery

“Best of British: Exploring 18<sup>th</sup> century painting through the National Gallery Collection”  
11am – 3pm Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Tickets cost £18 each from the Third Age Trust ☎  
020 8466 6139.

North West Summer School. 26<sup>th</sup>–29<sup>th</sup> August, Newton Rigg College near Penrith. Details on the U3A website, or telephone David Joseph on 01625 861327. Residential cost is £300.

U3A Chess by Email. It is now 2 years since its formation. Anyone interested in participating should email Dick Chapman of Watford U3A at dick.chapman@ntlworld.com for information.

Britain’s Greatest Generation. Testimony Films are making a new documentary series for BBC2 paying tribute to Britain’s Greatest Generation. They want to hear from men and women over 80 who have vivid and interesting stories to tell from their past. If interested, please get in touch with Pete, Emily or Sara 0117 925 8589, or email to pete.vance@testimonyfilms.com.

**George Murrell**

### CRISIS – The charity we supported in 2013

My thanks go to everyone who supported *CRISIS* last year, whether directly by using the collecting tins, or by supporting the raffle, purchasing greetings cards, or even by simply having a cuppa after the main meeting. The total amount raised was £810.25. *CRISIS* aims to help single adults who have become homeless, giving people a listening ear and helping them to put their lives together again. And at Christmas, when so many more people arrive at their centres, extra help is given, with access to health care and services such as hairdressing which homeless people can seldom afford, yet which can give them hope.

So once again I will say THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

**Val Gosden**



We extend our deepest sympathy to Charles Owen on the death of his wife, Joan, who died over the weekend of 28/29<sup>th</sup> December.

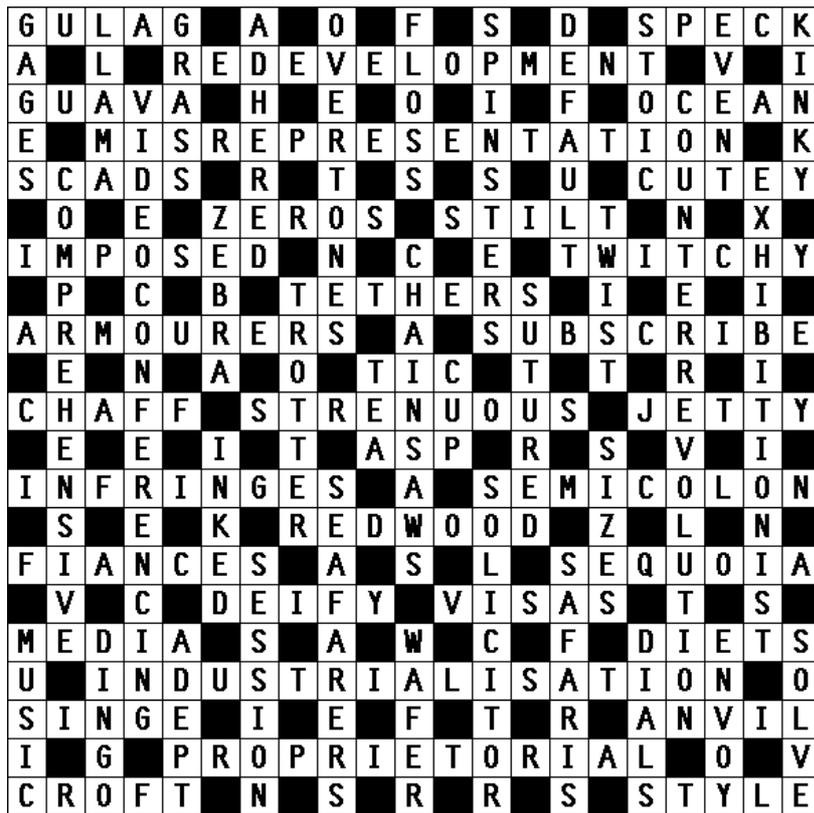
**Anne Evans**

### December’s puzzle solutions

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

T	H	F	R	P	C	O	I	K
R	C	O	F	I	K	P	H	T
K	P	I	H	T	O	C	F	R
F	O	K	I	C	P	T	R	H
P	I	R	K	H	T	F	C	O
H	T	C	O	F	R	K	P	I
I	F	T	P	O	H	R	K	C
C	K	P	T	R	I	H	O	F
O	R	H	C	K	F	I	T	P

C	Y	S	T	S	S	L	A	B
I	O	T	A	S	P	I	K	E
T	W	E	R	P	A	L	I	T
E	L	M	S	I	N	A	N	E
F	S	P	I	N	A	C	H	L
A	V	I	S	O	M	A	Y	O
R	I	S	K	F	I	X	E	D
M	O	T	I	F	G	E	N	E
S	L	E	D	S	O	D	A	S



Fred imagines the worst now his keyboard has been lost outside. When his twin Edward saw a terrible gale he vowed never to sail again. You must top or tail a German sprout. To be erratic is a kind of madness. Bob came over yesterday with Babs in the back of his car. With trombones and trumpets came a deafening noise. Along with Eric I deride this clinic of feet. "Your protocol annoys me so date all your letters," I told him. The Orbit terrified Joe at the London

Olympics. What a champ Agnes was to be sure. Now Martin in hospital has a problem on a desperate level. (23)

## GROUP NEWS

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



Our November outing was to Stratford. It was a bit of an overcast and drizzly day so we made for the M&S coffee bar which overlooks the bridge entrance to the Stratford centre. The north area of the Olympic Park opened in the summer, but we had a bit of a job to find our way in as roads were blocked and areas fenced off. The Park was nicely landscaped with a display of silver spheres – if only the sun had come out! The Unity Kitchen Café was good and not busy on a Monday. I understand the whole park will be open next summer.

In December we were back on the DLR, this time to Canary Wharf, where we passed many beautiful Christmas displays. We walked through all the green spaces, one now an ice rink, the next a running water feature park, and then to the River Thames. It was a perfect weather day with sunshine and not too cold. After crossing the Wren Landing footbridge, we arrived at the Old Custom House – now a Weatherspoon Pub – where the very accommodating staff put together the tables for our lunch.

#### Christine Withams

**(i)** Three pictures of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park taken last August are on the Gallery page of our website. More areas of the park are, indeed, due to open to the public in April.

*Editor*

## Walking in London • Leader Val Gosden



The December London Walk used part of the City of London's Dickens "Magic Lantern" by Dr. Tony Williams. We started off at the Dickens House Museum in Doughty Street from where we proceeded to Mount Pleasant – formerly Coldbath Fields Prison until the site was transferred to the Post Office in 1888/9 to become what was the world's largest sorting office.

We then went down Farringdon Road, beneath which runs the Fleet River. In Dickens' time this was an area of infamous slums. We walked into the one-time semi-rural village that is now Clerkenwell Green which is featured in *Oliver Twist*. The little-known Marx Memorial Library is here, as is St. James Clerkenwell – the latter has an unusual multiple occupancy bird box attached to a tree in its grounds. We were informed that local designers created it as part of a display. I have been unable to find confirmation of this, but could well be true.

After lunch, we walked through Smithfield, then St. Bart's Priory and Hospital. This was founded by Rahere in 1123, a former courtier of Henry I. Whilst on a pilgrimage to Rome, Rahere became ill and saw a vision of St. Bartholomew; this led to both establishments being built for the sick and poor of Smithfield.

We moved on to St Paul's Cathedral, an area which appears in many Dickensian novels. We tried to find Temple Bar, which is not in the churchyard, but in Paternoster Square. Close to this is a plaque indicating the site of Doctors' Commons, where Dickens worked between 1828 and 1832. Dickens describes this Divorce Court in *Sketches of Boz & David Copperfield*.

Here is a link for full guided walk:

[http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/visiting-the-city/walks-tours-and-architecture/Documents/Self%20guided%20walks\\_Dickens.pdf](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/visiting-the-city/walks-tours-and-architecture/Documents/Self%20guided%20walks_Dickens.pdf)

I suggest you use a highlighted London street map rather than rely solely on the above link.

### Roy Morton

#### *PS* The Singing Coalman

At one point on this Dickens walk we spotted a blue plaque dedicated to the Singing Coalman (1644–1714). This intrigued me so on returning home I 'Googled' to find some information on him. His name was Thomas Britton. Born in Rushden, Northamptonshire, he moved to London at a young age and was apprenticed to a small-coal man (charcoal merchant) in Clerkenwell. He was eventually able to set up his own business; this was in a stable, which became both store-room and home. He was known for his bass singing voice and, being interested in music, was able in 1678 to set up a tiny concert hall in the loft of his house – complete with harpsichord and 5-stop organ. His concerts included highly regarded musicians of the day and attracted visitors from all social strata, even though access was via an outside staircase. Britton himself played the viol de gamba and the recorder. Despite his social successes and considerable income, he never tried to rise above his station and remained a small-coal man all his life.

### Val Gosden

**i** The Fleet rises on Hampstead Heath, and, in Anglo-Saxon times, was a substantial body of water with wells and springs that joined the Thames through a marshy, tidal basin over 100 yards wide. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century it was called River of Wells and considered polluted. Christopher Wren's proposal following the Great Fire of London for widening the river as a fire break was rejected, and in 1680 it was instead converted into the New Canal. The upper canal, unpopular and unused, was enclosed between Holborn and Ludgate Circus in 1737 to form Fleet Market. The lower part (from Ludgate Circus to the Thames) had been covered by 1769 for the opening of the new Blackfriars Bridge. Fleet Market was closed during the 1860s with the construction of Farringdon Road and Metropolitan Railway. It is the largest of London's subterranean rivers.

*Editor*

## Classical Music 1 • Leader Alan Griffiths



Our December meeting was tinged with sadness because Derick Johnson has had to give up leadership of the group owing to illness. We have all enjoyed Derick's knowledge and his leadership and we hope that he will be able to come to our meetings again soon. The group will continue to meet at the same venue and we would be happy to welcome new members.

In the first half of our meeting we heard Vivaldi's *Concerto for three violins* followed by Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini*. This was a splendid performance by Vladimir Ashkenazy on the piano and the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by André Previn. The final piece was Shostakovich's *Jazz Suite No 1*, after which we were treated to hot mince pies.

The second half started with Goldmark's *In Italy*, a truly lyrical piece played by the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, followed by Weber's *Grand Duo Concertant for Clarinet and Piano*. The meeting concluded with Albinoni's *Trumpet Concerto in C* performed by John Wilbraham.

### Alan Griffiths

① Antonio Vivaldi was born in Venice in 1678. Nicknamed “il Prete Rosso” {the red priest} because of his red hair, he was an Italian Baroque composer, Catholic priest, and a virtuoso violinist. Recognised as one of the greatest Baroque composers, his influence was widespread across Europe during his lifetime. He is known mainly for composing instrumental concertos as well as sacred choral works and over forty operas. His best known work is a series of violin concertos known as *The Four Seasons*. Many of his compositions were written for the female music ensemble of the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice – a convent and orphanage where Vivaldi had been employed as a violin teacher from 1703–1715 and from 1723–1740.

### Editor

### Help Desk Enquiries

CALLER: "I'd like the number of the Argoed Fish Bar in Cardiff, please."

DIRECTORY ENQUIRIES: "I'm sorry, but there's no listing. Is the spelling correct?"

CALLER: "Well, it used to be called the Bargoed Fish Bar, but the 'B' fell off."

DIRECTORY ENQUIRIES: "How are you spelling that?"

CALLER: "With letters."



CALLER: "I'd like the number for a reverend in Cardiff, please."

DIRECTORY ENQUIRIES: "Do you have his name?"

CALLER: "No, but he has a dog named Ben."

## GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER/CONTACT	VACANCIES
 <b>Amblers (Group 1)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (10.30 am)	<b>John Harbert</b> 020 8300 5361	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Art (Group 2)</b> Alternate 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday	<b>Sue Moore</b> 020 8301 1952	<b>1</b>
 <b>Bird Watching</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	<b>Margaret Scambler</b> 020 8315 0108	<b>Yes</b>
 <b>Classical Music (Group 1)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	<b>Alan Griffiths</b> 020 8303 6636	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Concerts/Ballet/Opera</b> Various dates & times	<b>Norma Balfour</b> 020 8303 7693	<b>Yes</b> ↳
 <b>Darts (at the Alma pub)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday (noon) 🖐️	<b>See Group Co-ordinator</b> 020 8300 4291	<b>Yes</b>
 <b>Family History</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	<b>Judith Swain</b> 020 8303 5759	<b>Yes</b>
 <b>Handcrafted Cards (Group 1)</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday (2.00 pm)	<b>Val Gosden</b> 020 8300 0664	<b>1</b>
 <b>Handcrafted Cards (Group 2)</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday (2.00 pm)	<b>Val Gosden</b> 020 8300 0664	<b>1</b>
 <b>Local History (Group 1)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday morning	<b>Lesley South</b> 020 8300 8298	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Pot Pourri</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	<b>Val Gosden</b> 020 8300 0664	<b>Yes</b>
 <b>Ramblers (Group 2)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday (4–5 miles)	<b>Leader pending</b>	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath)</b> Mondays (10.00 am) 🖐️	<b>Various</b>	<b>Yes</b>
 <b>Theatre (Group 2)</b> Various matinées	<b>Joan &amp; John Somerset</b> 020 8300 0890	<b>Yes</b> ↳

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.

**Christine Spencer, Group Co-ordinator** ☎️ 020 8300 4291; email [rjcmspncr@gmail.com](mailto:rjcmspncr@gmail.com).

### 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 is not difficult to run a group and leaders of a full one can advise you how it's done.

🖐️ Not during school holidays

↳ Notice on the board at meetings

## PROGRAMME

### 2014

January	Claire Rogers	Greenwich and Bexley Hospice
February	John Halligan	The Life and Times of Samuel Pepys
March	Peter Maggs	Henry's Trials
April	Don Dray	Down Memory Lane
May	Robert Vidler	The War Years (1914–1918)
June	Brian Williamson	Chislehurst Caves
July	Julia Burnett	Entertainer
August	Open Day	
September	Romy McCabe	I Married the Vicar
October	Sue Spiel	Pam Ayres
November	Mr Halfors	The Spa Valley Railway
December	Alan Simmons	Entertainer

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261
Vice-Chairman	Lesley South	020 8300 8298
Minutes Secretary	George Murrell	020 8850 2046
Treasurer	Christine Smith	020 8304 2305
Membership Secretary	Margaret Scambler	020 8315 0108
Speakers Secretary	Sue Brooks	020 8298 1117
Group Co-ordinator	Christine Spencer	020 8300 4291
Welfare Officer	Kathy Cordell	020 8300 4573
Social Secretary	Vacant	

## USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

**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](mailto: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 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month – but at any time for the Website.***

## WEBSITE

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

*It's always easy to see both sides of an issue with which we are unconcerned.*

**SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE  
NOMINATION FORM**

2014-2015



**We the undersigned being persons whose names appear on the membership list of the above U3A hereby nominate:—**

Name .....

Address .....

**As candidate for:—**

Chairman/Vice-Chairman/Secretary/Treasurer/Membership Secretary/Speakers Secretary/  
Group Co-ordinator/Welfare Officer.

**Proposer** ..... **Secunder** .....

**Declaration and Consent.**

I declare that I am a member of Sidcup & District U3A and that, if elected, I consent to serve.

Signed ..... Date .....

The present Committee is as follows:—

Anne Evans	Chairman (4-year term of office completed)
Lesley South	Vice-Chairman
George Murrell	Secretary
Christine Smith	Treasurer
Margaret Scambler **	Membership Secretary
Christine Spencer **	Group Co-ordinator
Susan Brooks	Speakers Secretary
Kathy Cordell	Welfare Officer

\*\* Standing down

All nominations are to be returned by 1<sup>st</sup> March to any Committee member or by post to the Secretary, George Murrell, 76 Chester Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA15 8SH