

# SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

July 2008



**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

### **Photography Competition**

It's holiday time for many of us now, so here is a reminder for you to take photos for our competition on 18<sup>th</sup> September. The theme is "water", photos must be no larger than 7" x 5", and one or two prints per member may be entered. You may give your entry a title if you wish, but do not include your name on your photograph. Please bring your entries to the meeting between 1.30 and 1.55 pm in order to give us time to display them. All members will be given a voting slip when they arrive at the September meeting – please ensure you receive one when you register.

This information is being included in the July newsletter for the benefit of members who may be away on holiday in August; it will be repeated in the August edition.

**Val Gosden**

### **Third Learning Project at the British Library**

The British Library is hosting a shared learning project with U3A on "The English Detective". The project will look at the development of the detective in fiction from the detective hero in "The Moonstone", by Wilkie Collins, to "Inspector Morse", by Colin Dexter. If you have an interest in crime fiction and enjoy working in a team, this project would be of value to you. It starts on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September and will take place every two weeks until 6<sup>th</sup> December. If you are interested please contact Cyril Dainow by email at [cyrildainow@waitrose.com](mailto:cyrildainow@waitrose.com). The closing date for applications is Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July.

**John Mercer**

### **Newsletter**

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 from either the "Home" page or "Meetings" page of our website. Issues dating back to April 2007 are also still available. Please ensure that you type our website address ([www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk](http://www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk)) into the Address Bar of your web browser – not a Search Bar.

**Editor**

### **Coach Trip to Oxford – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

The pick-up for this trip will be at Sidcup Station in Jubilee Way at 8.30 am sharp. The journey time will be about 2½ hours. For those interested, I have booked a guided tour of Christ Church at 2.15 pm lasting approximately 1½ hours. We leave Oxford at 5.00 pm.

The costs are as follows:

Return coach fare to Oxford is £11.00.

The guided tour is £5.90.

I shall require full payment at the July meeting or as soon as possible afterwards.

**Anne Evans** ☎ 020 8302 2261

### **Freedom Pass Explorers**

Please note that on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August we shall be catching an earlier train, i.e. the 9.32 am.

**Val Gosden**

### **Music Group 1**

This group has now disbanded, but a new one is being formed.

**José Steward**

### **Visit to Salisbury – Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

This is an expensive trip out, but if you would like to:

- travel by steam train
- dine on board
- attend a carol service in a cathedral

then this could be a special day out for you.

The train leaves from a London station in the morning.

Dining is 'Premier' class; i.e. champagne breakfast or lunch, accompanied by tea, coffee and freshly baked breads and pastries during the outward journey. A delicious four-course dinner is served during the return journey. Special diets can be catered for but please advise us when booking your ticket.

The carol service in the Cathedral will probably include items sung by the choir.

The cost is £159.00 per person. If you are interested please give your name with full payment to either Val Gosden or Anne Evans by Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August so that we can book your seat. Cheques should be made payable to Sidcup & District U3A.

You will appreciate that there are only a limited number of seats in 'Premier' dining so an early response is required.

**Val Gosden** ☎ 8300 0664 & **Anne Evans** ☎ 8302 2261

## GROUP NEWS

### Freedom Pass Explorers : Leader Val Gosden



On a lovely sunny day in May fourteen of us travelled to the fictional home of The Wombles – Wimbledon Common. After a short walk we reached The Windmill, now a museum, which bears a plaque saying thereat Lord Baden-Powell wrote part of “Scouting for Boys”. We then walked round the northern part of the Common, some of which is open land and some wooded, and round a lovely lake called Kingsmere. We spotted no Wombles, although we speculated about some wood that was stacked tepee-style – had the Wombles made these? The weather was so hot that we decided to end our exploration of Wimbledon Common by eating our lunch in the shade.

It was another sunny day in June when we went to Epping. Epping High Street has many individually run shops and there were market stalls giving colour to the whole scene on the day we were there. After our usual coffee stop we decided to go to Wintry Wood, part of The Lower Forest, and almost immediately we saw two young goats, many hens, ducks and geese, which belonged to the Wintry Wood smallholding. Leaving these behind, we followed a trail through the woods but, unfortunately, due to the general terrain and the amount of rain we had had a week or so previously, the going was somewhat sticky in places. In fact, one lady lost her shoe in the mud! It was therefore quite a relief on leaving the wood to return to the station and home via wonderfully dry and solid pavements.

### Val Gosden

### Classical Music 2 : Leader Derick Johnson



Our June programme was presented by me; although it would be invidious of me to suppose that the whole Group enjoyed it, they let me leave with no abusive comments and I imagine it was tolerable.

My programme began with Saverio Mercadente’s Flute Concerto with flautist Peter-Lukas Graf, and Pachelbel Canon by James Galway playing the flute in his inimitable style. This was followed by Tomaso Albinoni’s Concerto for Trumpet, Strings and basso continuo with trumpeter Håkan Hardenberger, and then Albinoni’s Concerto for Oboe № 11 with oboeist Sarah Francis. Both items allowed these talented performers an excellent opportunity to give of their best. Music by Max Bruch followed with cellist Ofra Harnoy playing Ave Maria from Das Feuerkreuz {the fiery cross} in her usual masterful manner. After the break we heard Carl Maria von Weber’s Clarinet Concerto № 1 with Rudolf Schlegel on the clarinet accompanied by the Philharmonia Slavonica, followed by a complete change with Isaac Albéniz’s Asturias Leyenda {legend} – Preludio – played by guitarist Andrés Segovia. We finished with Léo Delibes’ Flower Duet from Lakmé with Katherine Jenkins and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa. This programme gave us a chance to appreciate the abilities of several incredibly good performers.

### Derick Johnson

**i** *Basso continuo* is a form of musical accompaniment used mainly in the Baroque period (c. 1600-1750). Basso continuo was played by a keyboard instrument – normally harpsichord – and another bass instrument such as cello, bassoon or violone (an early form of double bass).

### Editor

## **Ramblers 2 : Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell**



Our walk took us from the Queen's Head in Chislehurst and back again through the lanes and pathways of Chislehurst Common. We passed the memorial to the Prince Imperial, killed in Zululand in 1878, noted William Willetts' house, and moved on to pass the Cricket Field and the grave of Kitty O'Shea's baby in St Mary's churchyard. After passing the former site of Hawkwood, we entered National Trust woodland and crossed a stream to find the busy road linking Chislehurst with Petts Wood. We found it difficult to believe that so much meadow and woodland existed so near to London and we have much to thank those who preserved the Common for posterity. The walk was of 3.11 miles – agreed by independent pedometers. It was a gentle walk in sunny weather.

### **John Mercer**

## **National Trust/English Heritage Group : Leaders John & Olive Mercer**



Our June visit was to Chartwell, near Westerham, on a bright, sunny and warm day. Having acquired our tickets for entry to the house at 11.30am, we walked through some of the gardens to the front of the house. Whilst waiting to go in we admired the magnificent views across the Weald of Kent and we could understand why Sir Winston Churchill, who purchased Chartwell in 1922, had spent as much time as he could there.

The rooms remain very much as they were when the Churchill family lived in the house – except for two bedrooms which now display many of the awards that were bestowed upon him and also a number of his uniforms and Knight of the Garter robes. Some of his paintings were in the house and many more could be seen in the garden studio.

### **Mary Webb**

## **Ramblers 1 : Leader Annette Jansen**



For our mid-summer walk we went further into Kent and walked an extra mile or two. Nine of us met at Watlingbury and, after passing the disused village lock-up, we were soon enjoying good views along the Medway Valley to Teston and East Farleigh. Our route then took us to Nettlestead where we spent some time in the church of St. Mary the Virgin which was erected as a private chapel in the grounds of Nettlestead Place in 1345. The tower was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and its perpendicular style nave was rebuilt in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century to accommodate 6 huge stained glass windows that are thought to have been inspired by Reginald de Pympe's sight of similar glass during the Agincourt campaign in France. Five of these have the original glass dated between 1425 and 1439 and are among the oldest anywhere in the country. It was a memorable visit.

It was time to move on and along the towpath of the Medway through meadows where the grasses and wild flowers were so tall that the shorter members among us had no view of the water at all! However, heading north we were soon at the Hop Pole pub for our lunch break. Refreshed, we walked slightly uphill to Little Roydon, where we had a view of Roydon Hall (1535), now a transcendental meditation venue. After gaining a little more height we could see right across the Weald to Ashdown Forest.

What a beautiful county Kent is. Tired but content, we returned to our cars and headed for home.

### **Annette Jansen**

## **Bird Watching : Leaders Gay Braybrook and José Steward**



Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July found the Group on the London Transport route to Rainham Marshes; the journey took over two hours, but the excellent facilities and tranquillity of the Reserve made it all worthwhile. After a drink (and, for some of us, a large portion of the café's "Josie's homemade bread pudding") we set off along the Reserve's 2½ mile circular trail. The first stop was "Purfleet Scrape", a wetland area with large numbers of egrets, herons, lapwings, little ringed plovers, black headed gulls, swans and some unidentified birds. We continued along the boardwalks, passing through wet areas with shoulder high reed beds. There were little grebes and coots darting in and out of the reeds and someone spotted a water vole. The next area contained meadows where every colour of cow was represented, all grazing on the lush grass. There were herons flying to different feeding spots and lots of swallows feasting on insects as they swooped over the cattle. Once past the MOD's redundant firing ranges we found more boardwalks where the only hide is sited. We hid inside and watched coots and little grebes, all with young having fights, while we finished our packed lunches. On leaving the hide we saw goldfinches and had a very good sighting of reed buntings. We heard reed warblers, someone spotted a stonechat, and there were colourful wild flowers everywhere. We later returned to the Reserve café for a welcome cup of tea. Spending a day wandering around Rainham Marshes, mostly in the sunshine, is a privilege.

Please note that there will be no bird watching in August.

Bird watching is open to all.

**José Steward**

## **10-Pin Bowling Group : Leader Gay Braybrook**



This group will be going to Cliftonville for its annual 'Away Day' on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August. We will be travelling by mini bus this year and there are 4 seats available for anyone who would like to join us for a day out to the seaside. It is not obligatory to bowl, but you are welcome to join in if you wish. Please get in touch with me for more details.

**Gay Braybrook** ☎ **0208 309 6372**

## GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
<b>Amblers (Group 1) (3 miles)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (morning)	<b>John Harbert</b> 020 8300 5361	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Antiques Appreciation</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday (10 am - noon)	<b>Martin Baker</b> 020 8300 1752	<b>1</b>
<b>Antiques Appreciation (Group 2)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday (10 am - noon)	<b>Martin Baker</b> 020 8300 1752	<b>3</b>
<b>Bird Watching</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday (morning)	<b>Gay Braybrook/José Steward</b> 020 8309 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>Lunch Club (Group 2)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	<b>Joan Smith</b> 020 8300 3566	<b>1</b>
<b>Music (Group 2)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday (2.30 pm)	<b>Derick Johnson</b> 020 8850 1245	<b>2</b>
<b>National Trust/English Heritage</b> Various dates & times	<b>John &amp; Olive Mercer</b> 020 8300 3136	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Online Computer Group</b> Does not meet	<b>John Harlow</b> 020 8300 3865	<b>Unlimited</b>
<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 8309 6372	<b>3</b>
<b>10-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath)</b> Mondays (10 am) <i>except school holidays</i>	<b>Gay Braybrook</b> 020 8309 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 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

### 2008

July	Mr. M. Lloyd	Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies
August	Mrs. Eavis	The History of Blue and White China
September	N/A	Photography competition
October	Mr. T. Western	Magic as Entertainment
November	Wing Cmdr. Patrick Coulcher	Natural History of the South Downs
December	Mr. J. Buttress	Royal Parks

### 2009

January	Mr. T. Swan	Canterbury Oast Trust
February	Mr. & Mrs. Wagner	Phantasmagoria
March	AGM & Mr. S. Robinson	The City

## 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 & Webmaster**        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)

*(This Newsletter may be read or downloaded from our website)*

*Afterthought*

*Confession is good for the soul, but bad for the career.*