

# SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

June 2011



**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

### Conference 2011

This year's conference will be a celebration.

The 2011 U3A national conference, celebrating the fact that we are now a quarter of a million strong, will be hosted by Nottingham's East Midlands Conference Centre from 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> September. It will include the policy-making AGM, which takes key decisions on how the fast-growing organisation is going to face the future. Displays from regions will give an idea of the breadth of U3A activities.

#### Location

Central with excellent transport links – 10 minutes from the M1, 20 minutes from the airport and 10 minutes from Nottingham train station. The local station, Beeston, is 1½ miles away.

#### Campus

University Park is Nottingham University's largest campus and is regarded as one of the largest and most attractive in the country. It is set in extensive greenery with woodland and gardens and is situated around a lake.

#### Facilities

An air-conditioned purpose built conference centre with a tiered conference theatre, a lovely banqueting suite, flexible break-out rooms, modern audio visual facilities, & free wi-fi access.

#### Programme

We will have five excellent speakers – Estelle Morris, Peter Kalmus, Heinz Wolff, John Benyon, and Eric Midwinter; a good mix of plenary and seminar sessions plus the AGM.

#### Leisure

Entertainment will be arranged for each evening and there will be plenty of opportunity to talk with fellow members in very pleasant surroundings.

#### Conclusion

Holding the conference in a purpose-built centre will make a huge difference to the smooth running of the event and to your individual enjoyment. We want to use this conference as a celebration of the U3A movement.

Further details of the programme and the cost of attending the events may be obtained from The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley BR1 1QE, or downloaded from their website.

***Taken from the Third Age Trust Website ([www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk))***

## Visit to the Olympic Park

On 24<sup>th</sup> May a group led by Barbara Carpenter made a trip to the site of the 2012 Olympic Games. We left Sidcup Station by coach at 9.30 and were taken first to Excel, the exhibition and conference centre which is due to stage several indoor events, and where we collected our guide for the day. Following a refreshment break there, we continued by coach along a route that circumnavigated the Olympic Park. All structures required for the Games have now been built, and from the coach we saw the Olympic Village (where the majority of the competitors are to be housed), plus the velodrome, handball, hockey, and tennis centres. We alighted from our coach near Pudding Mill Lane Station and walked to a viewpoint over the site – which, whilst landscaping continues, remains a high security area – to admire the main stadium and aquatics centre from closer range. They are most impressive structures. Our guide explained how much effort had gone into regenerating the site firstly by expelling the existing industry, and then cleaning both the site and the nearby River Lea of industrial pollution even before building work commenced, and a lasting legacy intended for future generations. Afterwards, we went to Cabot Square in Canary Wharf where there were numerous shops, restaurants and a museum for us to explore for a couple of hours before our journey home. I have placed a picture taken at the Olympic Park on the Gallery page of our website.

**David Smith**

## U3A Resource Centre

The U3A Resource Centre has recently added a considerable amount of new stock on DVD. All items are available on loan free of charge for three weeks, with only the return postage to pay – which is considerably cheaper than returning videos.

A wide range of subjects is on offer, such as “Beginners Spanish” (on CD); “Through The Garden Gate – Wildlife Diary of the English Countryside”; “Art of Sugarcraft Basic Skills”; “Vibrant Watercolours” by Hazel Soan plus many about art and artists; “Masters of Jazz” and other forms of music; biographies; “The Royal Family in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century” and many more.

This update to the full DVD list will be available at our monthly meetings in June, July and August for anyone who is interested in taking advantage of this wonderful facility, either for use with an established U3A group, or to help in setting up a new group.

**Val Gosden**

## GROUP NEWS

### Ramblers 2 • Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell



Twelve members of the group met in Penshurst village on May 24<sup>th</sup> in ideal weather for a very enjoyable ramble around the medieval estate surrounding Penshurst Place. We have done this walk before and it never fails to please. At the start of the walk, one is rewarded with wonderful views of Penshurst Place, one of the finest manor houses in England, which was built in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The route took us past the house, through parkland, down a long avenue of mature trees, then along the banks of the Medway before passing the house again. Last year at the same time the woods were full of bluebells – but not this year as they were long gone. We lunched at a local hostelry before returning home.

**Brian Ginn**

## Classical Music 1 • Leader Derick Johnson



My selection for May brought to the fore outstanding solo performances, and we started with Edouard Du Puy's concerto for bassoon and string orchestra – the bassoon being played by Bram van Sambeek with the Sinfonia Rotterdam. This bassoonist is without doubt one of the finest players of this instrument. I then chose Antonio Vivaldi's Violin Concerto in A minor transcribed by, and played by, Alison Balsom accompanied by the Scottish Ensemble. This young trumpet soloist has achieved universal acclaim for her brilliant playing. To continue, I admire the work of Carl Stamitz and his Flute Concerto in G major; this was played by the Württembergisches Kammerorchester with a splendid performance by Peter Lukas Graf. After the break we played Domenico Cimarosa's Oboe Concerto in C minor transcribed by Arthur Benjamin for the trumpet. We then heard Alison Balsom play again with another of her great performances. This was followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement of Schubert's Symphony No 5 played by Staatskapelle Dresden conducted by Colin Davis. The piano was not forgotten, however, with Georg Anton Benda's Sonata No 2 in G major played by Antonio Piricone. The afternoon concluded with Tomaso Albinoni's Concerto No 5 in B flat major for oboe and strings.

### Derick Johnson

## Parks & Gardens Appreciation • Leaders Jill Bryant & Barbara Olney



We set off on a rather dull May day to a beautiful and tranquil garden in Streatham, London, called The Rookery. The Rookery is situated at the top of Streatham Common away from the hustle and bustle of the busy streets below, and is an attractive formally landscaped area with an ornamental pond, flower and herbaceous beds and a rock garden with streams. It has a café nearby and is surrounded by Streatham Common. Unfortunately, due to Council cutbacks, the gardens are not attended to as they should be, and we spoke to a gardener who said that at one time the garden was on par with any of the Royal Parks. However, despite this, the garden is still beautiful and has many interesting plants to see.

After lunch, we made our way down a green and leafy path beside The Rookery to Norwood Grove, a large mansion occupied from 1878–1913 by Mr and Mrs Frederick Nettleford who were renowned for their good works, and a blue plaque is displayed on the mansion in their memory. The mansion with its garden is in a very prominent position and has splendid views of London and beyond. Despite the weather – and although we had rain later – it didn't spoil a thoroughly enjoyable day.

### History of The Rookery and Norwood Grove

The Rookery sits on the site of an area formerly known as the Streatham Spa, where people would drink water from local springs for their medicinal and healing properties. Streatham Spa and formal gardens used to be in the grounds of a large house called The Rookery. When the popularity of the spa declined in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, local residents campaigned to buy The Rookery and later Norwood Grove to save them and the surrounding woodland for use as a public open space. The Rookery became a public garden and opened formally in 1913. Because of its heritage and unique character, the garden is on the English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

### Barbara Olney

## GROUP VACANCIES

	<b>GROUP NAME</b>	<b>LEADER</b>	<b>VACANCIES</b>
	<b>Amblers (Group 1)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (10.30 am)	<b>John Harbert</b> 020 8300 5361	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Amblers (Group 3)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (10.30 am)	<b>Norma Balfour</b> 020 8303 7693	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Bird Watching</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday (morning)	<b>Gay Braybrook</b> (co-ordinator only) 020 8309 6372	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Classical Music (Group 2)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday (2.30 pm)	<b>Maureen Porter</b> 020 8300 1628	<b>1</b>
	<b>Darts (at the Alma pub)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday (midday)	<b>See Group Co-ordinator</b> 020 8300 4291	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>German</b> Thursdays (2 pm; not 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs)	<b>Betty Deutsch</b> 020 8302 6526	<b>On hold until further notice</b>
	<b>Local History (Group 1)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	<b>John Harlow</b> 020 8300 3865	<b>2</b>
	<b>Local History (Group 2)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	<b>Pauline Watling</b> 020 8300 3910 <b>Barbara Olney</b> 020 8302 4289	<b>3</b>
	<b>Philosophy (Group 1)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday (2 pm)	<b>Bernard Catallo</b> 020 8300 8651	<b>2</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>Ramblers (Group 2) (4–5 miles)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	<b>Pat &amp; Alf Cracknell</b> 020 8302 0823	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath)</b> Mondays (10 am)	<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. Notice on board at meetings</b>
	<b>The Cathedral</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday (2.30 pm)	<b>Val Gosden</b> 020 8300 0664	<b>1</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 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

### 2011

June	<i>N/A</i>	Group Displays
July	Mr. C. Durack	Major Rowland George Hallam Shears, BEM, TD, G8KW, 1919-2009
August	Mr. R. Spiller	Entertainer & Comedian
September	Mr. A. Stockwell	Puppets, Piers & Pantomimes – 40 years in show business
October	Mr. J. Newson	Her Majesty's Crown Jewels
November	<i>TBA</i>	
December	Mrs. P. Mortlock	A Country House Christmas

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261
Vice-Chairman	Vacant	
Minutes Secretary	George Murrell	020 8850 2046
Treasurer	Christine Smith	020 8304 2305
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	Vacant	

## USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

<b>Travel Group Leader</b>	Margaret Platt	020 8309 6395
<b>Raffle Organiser</b>	Pat Garwood	020 8306 0013
<b>Newsletter Editor &amp; Webmaster</b>	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.

***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. Also available is an index of Newsletter 'Notices' covering the period April 2007 to this issue.

## Afterthought

*Though no-one can go back and make a brand new start,  
anyone can start from now and make a brand new end.*