

SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

March 2018



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

In March 2018 only, the meeting will be held at The United Services Club, 108 Main Road, Sidcup

NOTICES

University of Greenwich Study Day

Measuring brain activity with user-friendly equipment when people start walking

This study is being conducted within the Department of Psychology, Social Work and Counselling, Faculty of Education and Health at the University of Greenwich. It will form part of a programme of research for my PhD, examining brain activity when people start walking. The study has been approved by the University of Greenwich Research Ethics Committee.

During the study, volunteers will be required to perform some walking tasks; in particular, *(i)* forward walking, *(ii)* forward walking while carrying a glass and *(iii)* going around a table placed in front of you. The study is broken down into 4 sessions and you do not have to take part in all four sessions. Each session will last approximately 2-3 hours. There will be breaks between the tasks, and tea and biscuits will be provided. Brain activity will be measured with user-friendly equipment. This is not painful or uncomfortable in any way and it is safe to use on babies.

My study is looking for participants in the following age groups: 45 to 59 years or 60 years and over. However, you cannot take part in the study if you have any physical, neurological or neurodegenerative disorder, sensory impairment or be on any medication that may affect walking in general. To take part in the study, you should be able to walk without an assistive device (*eg.* cane) for about 10 metres and should not require assistance from another person.

If you are interested in participating, please contact me at sh321@gre.ac.uk or on 07760 206113. The study will take place at the Avery Hill campus of the University of Greenwich. Directions to and around the campus are accessible at this link: <https://www.gre.ac.uk/about-us/travel/avery-hill>.

We would really appreciate your participation and hope that you find the research interesting.

Thank you.

Hava Sokoli

Psychology, Social Work & Counselling

University of Greenwich

London, SE9 2UG

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Annual General Meeting Agenda

Apologies for absence
Minutes of 2017 AGM
Matters arising
Approval of accounts
Annual reports
Election of officers
Appointment of inspector of accounts
Any other business

① The statement of account – missing from the February Newsletter – is on the back page.

Editor

Railcards

I imagine that many U3A members have Senior Railcards. These cost £30 for a 1-year card (£70 for a 3-year card) and give one-third off many rail fares, but are not operational during the London and South-East Rail Network area during the morning peak hour. However, you may not be aware that if you are registered as having a hearing loss you can obtain a Disabled Railcard. These cost £20 for a 1-year card, (£54 for a 3-year card), and also give one-third off rail fares; unlike the Senior Railcard, however, they can be used at any time of day. Added to all that, a fellow-traveller can also benefit from one-third off the price of tickets. This is well worth looking into, I feel.

I think that this information is up to date, but I recommend that you check this out before purchasing a Railcard.

Val Gosden

King Henry VIII

We were honoured with the presence of His Royal Highness King Henry VIII at our General Meeting on the 15th February 2018.

Helen Salmon

① A photo to commemorate this visitation appears on the “Gallery” page of our website.

Editor



It is with sadness that we report that Pam Green passed away on the 30th January 2018. Condolences from the Sidcup U3A have been sent to her family. Pam was a long-time member of Sidcup U3A.

Colin Barclay

Sadly, Pam Green, a member of our U3A for many years, died on January 30th after a fall. She was a member of the 10-Pin Bowling Group and also worked as a volunteer for Queen Mary's Hospital for a long time. Her funeral took place on 7th March at the Eltham Crematorium.

Gay Braybrook

Erratum

Please note the request in the February Newsletter for a Singer should have read SIGNER. Please contact Janet Lambern if you can SIGN.

Many thanks.

Janet Lambern, Speakers Secretary

GROUP NEWS

Pot Pourri • Leader Val Gosden



Our first trip out in 2018 was to the Victoria and Albert Museum, which was hosting two special exhibitions, the 'Woman's Hour Craft Prize', and 'Into the Woods', which displayed photographs of trees. The former exhibition was somewhat disappointing, we felt, and had only a few items on display, although various techniques were used by the creators. The photographs of trees were in black and white and in colour. Some of these photographs had been taken more than 100 years ago, and details of the techniques used were given.

Val Gosden

Pot Pourri • Leader Val Gosden



As they were fairly close to each other, we visited two places for our February trip out. The first was to the Bank of England Museum; the Bank itself being established by Royal Charter in 1694. Information of its history since then, which covered items such as the South Sea Bubble and the financial challenges of wartime, were given along with the role that is now played in relation to the economy and the fixing of interest rates. Visual descriptions of the making of coins and bank notes were most interesting, but perhaps the highlight for many was actually being able to lift a gold bar – if you were strong enough!

Our second visit was to The London Mithraeum, which is on three levels, and it is on the lowest level that we were able to see Temple of Mithras. On view in the room at street level were some of the many artefacts that were discovered during excavations of the site. On the mezzanine level we were given some information about Mithras, although it is acknowledged that most of what is known today is the result of interpretation, but the visual displays with their explanations proved most informative.

Val Gosden

NB Rinka Halliday and I will be taking over the running of this group after the March outing and hope to run the group as the Parks & Gardens whereby all the members have an input and lead the group on interesting visits to places of their choice. This would, in fact, mean that each member arranges only one outing during a two year period.

Most members of the current group to whom Rinka and I have spoken are happy with this arrangement and all suggestions of trips are most welcome. I will be the main point of contact and you can contact me at pat.laughton@btinternet.com should you have any queries.

Pat Laughton

Local History 3 • Leader Christine Withams



Our February outing was very local with a visit to Hall Place, Bexley. On arrival, we were lucky to be given a talk about the history of the House given by one of the stewards. We had gone specially to see the current exhibition (ending 18th March) “The Last Curtsey: Etiquette and Elocution, the Life of a Debutante.” From the mid-19th century, upper class wealthy young ladies were presented at the Royal Court. Their “debut” into society heralded their search for a suitable husband. Lord Byron referred to these presentations as “marriage markets.” “The Season” consisted of parties, teas, balls, regattas and other social occasions. This all changed in 1958 when the Queen stopped court presentations, leading to a slow demise and change for the world of a debutante. The exhibition showed the reality behind the glitter, and some of the beautiful gowns were on display.

We also viewed two other exhibitions there: “Faces of the Great War: Sidcup & the Pioneers of Plastic Surgery” which displayed the remarkable work that was done at the Queen’s Hospital, and “Code Name Santa Fe: The secret wartime history of Hall Place.” American soldiers were based there during WW2 and intercepted German coded messages. This was top-secret work linked to Bletchley Park. Finally, we enjoyed refreshments in the Riverside Café.

It’s always good to re-explore what’s on our doorstep as even the places we’re familiar with can hold something new.

Kate Berry

Ramblers 3 • Leader Trevor Ford



February walk

Our second foray into *London’s Hidden Walks* (by Stephen Millar) was around Spitalfields. This area acquired its name from St. Mary Spital, an Augustinian hospital founded in 1197 and the fields surrounding it. As the book points out, if you wish to get the full flavour of all three markets, including Brick Lane and Petticoat Lane (open air stalls), the best time to do so is on a Sunday morning, which I had done the previous weekend with my grandchildren: food and clothing abound. However, on the Friday morning Ramblers Group 3 set off from Liverpool Street Station north along Bishopsgate, past the Institute delivering a wide variety of courses, a symbol of Victorian self-improvement – as was The Whitechapel Art Gallery.

From here we plunged into the heart of the area, which has seen three major waves of immigration over the past 300 years from Huguenot weavers and tailors fleeing persecution from France, followed by Jewish tailors and, latterly, Bangladesh. All have left their mark on this fascinating area. The original merchants’ houses were large and have been gentrified further in recent years making them much sought after. Space does not permit even a truncated description of the sights and sites along the way, but particular mention is drawn to Dennis Severs’s house in Folgate Street. Several of the group had been on candlelit tours there. In fact, Roy had been shown round by the eccentric American himself. Mosques, churches and synagogues nearly rub shoulders with each other. The stories associated with Jack the Ripper give a gruesome reminder of London’s shady past, but racial tension is also memorialised in the Altab Ali Park where a demonstration was taking place as we traversed it. The oldest Begel shop in town is just one instance of the area’s Jewish heritage, together with a former soup kitchen and Russian steam baths. Spitalfields City Farm is an animal and plant oasis in this congested social and historical pageant of the human fodder and rag trade that is Spitalfields.

Trevor Ford

Book Reading • Leader June Reid



Our book for January was *Dominion* written by C. J. Sansom and chosen by Trevor. This was an historical novel and a thriller set in the 1950s. The graphic details brought the story to life, especially to those of us in our senior years as it is a bittersweet jolt to the memory (Lyons Tea Houses and filthy London Fogs). This is post-war Britain following our defeat at Dunkirk. Churchill leads the Resistance. Jews are deported and Hitler is suffering from Parkinson's Disease. David Fitzgerald, our hero, is a civil servant working in a Whitehall department who has agreed to spy for or against his country. Alas, I feel unable to reveal more or I would spoil your enjoyment of this absorbing, racy read. It is quite a hefty tome but even the faint-hearted in our group found it an easy page-turner. It is quite a thought-provoking story which is well written.

June Reid

① In 1940, the threat of invasion was real; victory was not assured for Great Britain. Norway, Denmark, France and the low countries had already been occupied and it was feared England would be next. In preparation, over 600 secret bunkers were set up in the countryside, with units of armed men tasked with staying behind and fighting the enemy in case of invasion. The intention was to allow themselves to be overrun and thereafter hit the enemy in the comparatively soft spots behind zones of concentrated attack. There were about 30 to 35 units in each county with six men per unit; each man's life expectancy was counted in days.

Editor

Local History 2 • Leader Pauline Watling



We were a large party of 18 for this trip to the Postal Museum. We travelled from Sidcup Station to London Bridge, then jumped onto a No 17 bus to Gray's Inn Road followed by a short walk to the museum. Some of us took coffee in the nice café and some of us looked in the museum shop. The museum was well laid out with the history and artefacts of the postal and communications systems. It was interactive with old style uniforms and hats to try on and lots of other things to engage the younger visitors. We had to cross the road to get to the building for the postal train ride, which we all enjoyed apart from bumping our heads getting in and out of the little carriages. At the end of the ride were more exhibits to see. All of us enjoyed the museum and felt it was well worth the £12.50 entrance fee.

Sheila Fallon

① Photos taken during this visit can be viewed on the "Gallery" page of our website. The Post Office Railway (later Mail Rail) was a narrow gauge, driverless underground railway in London that was built from 1915 by the Post Office to move mail between sorting offices owing to road traffic congestion causing unacceptable delays. Electrically powered, it operated from 1927 until 2003 and ran from Paddington Station to the Eastern District Office at Whitechapel, a distance of 6½ miles, and, at its height, had eight stations, the largest of which was underneath Mount Pleasant. It closed because transporting mail in this way became several times more expensive than doing so by road. Most of the tunnelling and track still exists with parts of it being used either for storage or research.

Editor

GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER/CONTACT	VACANCIES
 Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30 am)	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	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
 Family History 2 nd Tues  & 4 th Thurs  	Judith Swain & Kate Berry 020 8303 5759	Vacancies
 Handcrafted Cards (Group 2) 1 st Wednesday (2.00–4.00 pm)	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	2 Vacancies
 Local History (Group 3) 2 nd Wednesday morning	Christine Withams 020 8850 4144	Vacancies
 Mono Digital Photography Quarterly (approx.)	Roy Morton rory.m2014@gmail.com	3 Vacancies
 Needlecrafts 1 st Monday (2.00–4.00 pm)	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	Vacancies
 Ramblers (Group 2) 4 th Tuesday (4–5 miles)	Leader required	Vacancies
 Rummikub® (Group 1) 4 th Monday (2.00–4.00 pm)	Kathy Cordell  020 8300 4573	Vacancies
 Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10.00 am)   	Gay Braybrook  020 8309 6372	Vacancies
 Theatre Trips: Musicals   	Sue Brooks 020 8298 1117	Vacancies
 Wine Appreciation 3 rd Wednesday (7.30–9.30 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 that group.

 Not during school/bank holidays
 Temporary point of contact

 A charge applies
 Certain seasons only

 Open to all
 Times vary

PROGRAMME

2018		
March	AGM Mike Clinch	<i>NB</i> at The United Servicemen's Club Underground
April	Janie Ramsay	What's It Worth?
May	Paul Whittaker	"Music to My Ears"
June	Tony Farnham	Romance of the River Thames
July	Christoph Bull	Pocahontas – Without Disney
August	Colin Pinney	"The Raven" & "The Ancient Mariner"
September	Michael Grillo	Two Kinds of Teardrops (Del Shannon & Roy Orbison)
October	Ian Waller	Workhouse Life – Bread, Gruel & Suet Dumplings
November	<i>To be confirmed</i>	
December	Singers	Serenade

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Colin Barclay	07401 474844
Vice-Chairman	Carolyn Barclay	07401 474844
Vice-Chairman	Sandra Applegate	07717 020611
Minutes Secretary	George Murrell	020 8850 2046
Treasurer	John Lapham	020 8854 6340
Membership Secretary	Patricia Andrews	020 8300 2064
Asst. Membership Secretary	Lynn Plumer	07714 234398
Speakers Secretary	Janet Lambern	020 8300 1786
Group Co-ordinator	Trevor Ford	020 8302 7635
Welfare Officer	Kathy Cordell	020 8300 4573
General Member	Sue Brooks	020 8298 1117

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: 52 Lant Street, London, SE1 1RB ☎ 020 8466 6139 www.u3a.org.uk
Greater London South East Network: www.u3asites.org.uk/glondonsenetwork
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

The road to success is usually under construction.

SIDCUP AND DISTRICT U 3 A

Accounts for 01/01/17-31/12/17

INCOME

SUBSCRIPTIONS	£3,680.00
CHARITY	£471.26
DONATION	£185.80

EXPENDITURE

HALL HIRE	£1,459.66
CHARITY	£491.26
REFRESHMENTS	£18.44
AFFILIATION FEES	£976.15
SPEAKERS	£777.50
PRINTING	£363.20
POSTAGE	£32.24
WEB SITE	£149.70
PRESENTATION	£41.95
STATIONERY	£6.37
EQUIPMENT	£10.98
CHRISTMAS	£50.00
BANK CHARGE	£4.00

£4,381.45

EXCESS INCOME - £44.39

£4,337.06

£4,337.06

01/01/17 Cash in Bank	£3,950.81
01/01/17 Petty Cash	£17.30
	£3,968.11

31/12/17 Cash in Bank	£3,887.58
31/12/17 Petty Cash	£36.14

31/12/17 Excess Income - £44.39

£3,923.72

£3,923.72

The above is a true account of the Sidcup & District U3A's position as at 31/12/2017

J Lapham
Treasurer



C A Smith
Examiner of Accounts

