

**SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
NEWSLETTER**

May 2013



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

NOTICES

Science Club

Calling all science lovers! We are looking for fun and engaged people to be part of our studio audience for the recording of BBC 2's "Dara O'Briain's Science Club". Hosted by the wonderful Dara O'Briain, the series is filmed 'as live' and will cover a range of cutting-edge science topics. In this series, we will meet the scientists who are using mosquitoes to vaccinate people against malaria, preventing earthquakes using social networks, and reading dreams with MRI chambers. Dara will be joined in the studio by a host of leading scientists, and we have some amazing science demos to perform in the studio, ranging from remote-control cockroaches to cooking hot dogs with lightning to the spray-on clothing of the future.

21st/22nd May (TBD): 'Future You 2025' – Life in the year 2025; we look at up-and-coming technologies that will re-shape your life, from the intelligent cities we will live in to the robots who will help us with day-to-day tasks.

28th May: 'Who's in Control?' – the surprising results of questions about the world around us; did you know that 90% of cells in your body are not human? There will also be a new look at the ever-weird field of Dark Matter.

31st May: 'Adventures in Time' – what is a millisecond worth? In financial trading – everything. We look at this and more, including the forensic fingerprint of time, and 'mental time travel.'

13th June: 'Hidden Worlds' – we look at the worlds beyond our senses, including the incredible science of mind reading, and the cosmic microwave background radiation helping us learn about the early universe.

We will be allocating around 20 tickets per recording, but this is a rough estimate at the moment; our studio is in Dalston, about 5 minutes walk from Dalston Kingsland. The evening recording would start at about 5.45pm, and run through to about 8.00–8.30pm. For tickets email euan.mcdonald-smith@bbc.co.uk with the date/episode you would like to attend.

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. Two such new groups have been added to the Group Vacancies page this month.

Editor

Teas: Help Needed

We need one or two volunteers to oversee the tea rota and either bring along the milk and biscuits to the General Meeting each month, or organise others to do so. We also require a couple more people to be reserves for the tea rota in case someone is unable to attend for his turn.

I am resigning from this task now as I have done it for the last 5 years and would like to take a break. Please get in touch if you would like to help out with this task.

Gay Braybrook ☎ 020 8309 6372

ICE – In Case of Emergency

Eight out of ten people do not carry information that would help if they were involved in an accident. Storing next-of-kin details in your mobile phone can assist the emergency services if you are unable to tell them who to contact.

How does it work?

Simply use your mobile's phone book to store the name and number of someone who should be contacted if you have an emergency – but add the letters ICE in front of their name. ICE stands for 'In Case of Emergency'; this is what the emergency services will look for if you are involved in an accident and have your mobile phone with you.

Getting started

On most mobile phones you simply need to select 'Contacts' and choose 'Add New Contact'. Next enter the letters 'ICE' next to the name, followed by the telephone number of your next-of-kin. Make sure you choose a number that is easy to get in touch with – a home number could be useless in an emergency if its owner works full time. It is recommended that you enter daytime and evening numbers where this is possible. For more than one contact name use ICE1, ICE2, ICE3 etc.

What to do next

Ensure that the person whose name and number you are using has agreed to be your 'ICE partner'. You should also make sure your ICE partner has a list of people to contact on your behalf, such as your place of work. In addition, they will need to know about any medical conditions that could affect your emergency treatment, including allergies or medication.

If you are under 18, your ICE partner should be your mother, your father or an immediate member of your family who is authorised to make decisions on your behalf. Friends and other relatives will not be able to make decisions for you if you are admitted to hospital.

Storing an ICE number makes it easier for everyone if you are involved in an accident.

East Anglian Ambulance Service have launched a national "In case of Emergency (ICE)" campaign with the support of Falklands war hero Simon Weston and in association with Vodafone's annual life savers award.

Excerpt from a Neighbourhood Watch website

(i) This article first appeared in the February 2010 Newsletter at which time its content was added to the "Other Information" page of our own website.

Editor

Open Garden Squares Weekend 8th & 9th June

Over 200 private, hidden and little-known gardens will open to the public as part of this 2-day event organised by the London Parks and Gardens Trust in association with the National Trust. Gardens range from historical private squares to contemporary roof gardens, prisons and barges. The weekend includes entertainments, guided walks and bike rides. Tickets cost £10.00 if bought before 8th June and are valid for both days. U3A members receive a 10% discount for tickets bought online before 31st May. Children under 12 are free. Ticket price includes a guidebook. For further information and booking visit <http://www.opensquares.org/>.

Anne Evans

Group Leaders Meeting

Group leaders were invited to meet the Committee at a coffee morning held on 2nd May. Seventeen leaders attended, several of whom are leaders of more than one group and almost every activity was represented. The meeting proved useful as it provided the opportunity for the leaders to discuss common problems and exchange ideas and it was suggested that it should become a regular annual event.

Thanks are due to Kathy Cordell who arranged the venue and provided the refreshments.

George Murrell

GROUP NEWS

Theatre 2 • Leader Joan Somerset



I have bought many theatre tickets and arranged innumerable trips to theatres – but this time it was horrendous! Eighteen people had signed up to see “Top Hat” which I had provisionally booked with a company that sells group tickets. When I went back to them, I was informed that our seats would be in rows A and B in the stalls. Three applicants said that they could not accept these as they had neck troubles and could not look up at the stage. I therefore requested other seats – which turned out to be unavailable. Eventually, after a number of phone calls, a sympathetic young man gave me a private number to try. The person who answered the call was angry but gave me another ticket agent who had plenty of seats. She advised me to ring the theatre to find out about the layout of the place in order to choose the best seats. I found out that the dress circle at the Aldwych Theatre is at street level with only fifteen steps up, whereas the stalls are twenty-seven steps downstairs. I also found out that row B is, in fact, the fourth row in the stalls. After waiting two to three weeks for my paid tickets, the theatre informed me that they had been sent to the wrong house. I enquired at the house where the owner told me that she had received eighteen tickets, not looked at the name on the envelope, and had thrown them into her paper recycling box! The manager at the agency sent the second lot of tickets by courier and they arrived the next day at the correct address.

I do hope everyone will enjoy the show!

Joan Somerset

Local History 2 • Leaders Pauline Watling & Barbara Olney



On Wednesday 10th April our group went to Benjamin Franklin's house at 36 Craven Street, Charing Cross. During the week before the visit I was informed that only fifteen of us could go on the tour because the rooms are small. The most we have ever had attending a trip was fourteen – but I noticed that our group has recently grown to twenty-three. Imagine my horror when nineteen arrived at the house! My husband, John, said that he would go elsewhere, but that left eighteen – how would I choose? It was very embarrassing. In the end, two couples dropped out leaving fourteen, but the people running the tour came outside and gave them free tickets for another time. That dilemma must never happen again!

The tour was excellent, very well organised and very interesting. The house did not belong to the American Benjamin Franklin; he lodged there for a number of years with a widow and her daughter Polly. We were shown an introductory film and then a young lady dressed as Polly took a vocal part in various video films as Polly who related the history and the local activities of Benjamin Franklin – politician and man of many interests. It was well worth seeing.

Joan Somerset

Local History 3 • Leader Christine Withams



On 10th April our group assembled at London Bridge Station to catch the 43 bus to the Angel, Islington. Traffic was very slow, but eventually we began our walk along the Islington Spur. This is a ridge running north to south with good panoramic views across London to the west. From St. John's Road looking south the road descends to the City. We turned into Myddleton Square, with St Mark's Church as its centrepiece; this is a quiet area with elegant early 19th century terraces. Some are converted into flats but many are still of single occupation – plenty of money here. We went into Lloyd Square and on through a narrow passage into Cumberland Gardens: surely one of the most peaceful and elegant little squares in London. The housing is still terraced but of a different design, reflecting a different builder. We then walked along Amwell Street towards a district which is downmarket from the previous streets. On the left was Barnard Park, edged on its north side by a beautiful terrace. We passed the old reservoir, still in use, which was built by Sir Hugh Myddleton in the early 1600s to bring water to the City, and then passed over the tunnel of the Regent's Park Canal.

John & Olive Mercer

Ramblers 2 • Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell



On a beautiful, warm spring day, eleven of us set off for a walk from Chiswick to Barnes. Chiswick House and Park looked lovely in the sunshine and we were lucky to spot a nest of two-day-old coots on the lake. After a coffee stop, we headed for the Thames Path and walked past modern flats and Georgian houses with their gardens full of spring flowers, shrubs and several trees in blossom. Some members had a look in The Dove public house where Charles II romanced Nell Gwynne. There have been many famous patrons over the centuries and the pub is said to have the smallest bar in the world. After admiring the houseboats moored on the river, we crossed Hammersmith Bridge and continued our walk towards Putney. Turning off at Queen Elizabeth Walk, we passed the London Wetland Centre (which a couple of our bird watching members took the opportunity to visit) and finished at the Red Lion for our lunch.

Olive Adkins

Ramblers 1 • Leader Annette Holland



In case the rain and mud continued, we decided to walk near to home. 15 of us met in the lay-by on North Cray Road and headed for Joydens Wood where we walked a circular course and emerged 2 hours later in Vicarage Road, Bexley. The woods are quite remote and empty of humans – there must be much wild life, certainly birds, and in the middle life-size carvings from felled trees of warriors standing on opposite sides of the Anglo Saxon defensive bank known as Faesten Dic. The Woodland Trust, which owns the woods, are now clearing the Corsican Pines, planted in the 1950s, and replacing them with a wide variety of native trees and shrubs which should encourage more wildlife to return. It's a real gem! In the village, we split into 2 groups for lunch and then compared the merits of each pub when we re-assembled for part 2 of the walk – a long track round North Cray Meadows. On the way, we passed the remains of North Cray Place; the Manor of Footscray is first recorded in the Domesday Book and the villa was started in 1754 and was used mainly for lavish parties. It finally burned down in 1949.

It had been an interesting (and exhausting) walk right on our doorstep.

Annette Holland

① Faesten Dic (in Old English: strong dike or ditch) was built 1500 years ago by Saxon settlers either to defend a village or settlement, or to mark the edge of a territory. Its remains are a scheduled monument and run for over a kilometre through Joyden's Wood. Evidence of Iron Age roundhouses has also been discovered there.

Editor

Help Desk Enquiries

Tech Support: "What kind of computer do you have?"

Customer: "A white one..."



Caller: "I've been ringing 0700 2300 for two days and can't get help."

Operator: "Where did you get that number from, sir?"

Caller: "It was on the door."

Operator: "Sir, those are our opening hours."

GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER/CONTACT	VACANCIES
 Antiques Appreciation (Group 5) 3 rd Friday (10.00 am)	Martin Baker 020 8300 1752	2
 Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday	Margaret Scambler 020 8315 0108 Gay Braybrook 020 8309 6372	Yes
 Book Reading 1 st Thursday	See Group Co-ordinator 020 8300 4291	2
 Cinema Various Tuesdays	Various	Yes
 Classical Music (Group 1) 2 nd Friday	Derick Johnson 020 8850 1245	Vacancies
 Concerts/Ballet/Opera Various dates & times	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	Yes ⚡
 Darts (at the Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (noon) 🖐️	See Group Co-ordinator 020 8300 4291	Yes
 Family History Various days	Judith Swain 020 8303 5759	Yes
 Handcrafted Cards (Group 1) 1 st Thursday (2.00 pm)	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	1
 Knit & Knat Day to be decided	Various	2/4
 Local History (Group 1) 2 nd Wednesday	Lesley South 020 8300 8298	2
 Local History (Group 3) 2 nd Wednesday	Christine Withams 020 8850 4144	3
 Ramblers (Group 2) (4–5 miles) 4 th Tuesday	Pat & Alf Cracknell 020 8302 0823	Yes
 Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10.00 am) 🖐️	Gay Braybrook 020 8309 6372	Yes
 Theatre (Group 2) Various matinées	Joan & John Somerset 020 8300 0890	Yes ⚡

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.

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

2013

May	Mr. Guerdon	Chickens
June	Paul Gourden	Age UK
July	Ian Porter	Suffragettes
August	Peter Gilman	Coastline National Trust
September	Chris McCoory	Rogues, Rascals & Rebels
October	Jack Wheeler	Japanese Gardens
November	Bernard Locket	Author
December	Jack Ripley	Max Miller & Friends

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 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.

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

Old age is always 15 years older than I am.