

SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

November 2008



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

NOTICES

Shared Learning Projects

The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology (Bloomsbury). Six fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays 11.00 am – 1.00 pm from 14th Jan – 25th March researching old documents. Further details are available from Liliias Gillies, e-mail: liliiasgillies@btinternet.com.

The East End of London: Past and Present. Organised by the British Film Institute, South Bank. The first meeting for the project will be on Tuesday 20th January 2009 at BFI/South Bank. Then there will be regular fortnightly Tuesday meetings ending on 7th April. The meetings will start at 11.00 am and finish at 3.30 pm with a break for lunch. The aim is to identify films relating to this subject and produce a user's guide. The project also involves visits to other museums and visiting sites. Further details are available from Sandra Cook, e-mail: sandra.cook@btinternet.com.

The Hunterian Museum, Royal College of Surgeons (Lincoln's Inn Fields). Fortnightly Wednesday meetings 11.30 am – 3.30 pm (with lunch break 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm) from 7th January – 18th March. The aim is to produce an audio guide tour of the museum for the benefit of blind and visually impaired visitors. Further details are available from Ursula Steiger, e-mail: ursulae@btinternet.com.

Jazz Holiday to Belgium and Ghent Jazz Festival, 8th – 14th July staying in Ghent. Estimated cost £560.00 per person (sharing). In addition to the Jazz Festival (with concerts on two days) the trip includes visits to Antwerp, Brugge and a chocolate shop! Further details are available from Robert Jones ☎ 01189 413889.

A new handbook for "Creative Writing Groups" is available from the Third Age Trust. It costs £2.50 including p&p.

U3A diaries 2009 – a few are still available from the Third Age Trust for £1.90.

George Murrell

Thanks from Olive Mercer

Olive Mercer wishes to thank all those members of Sidcup U3A who sent her messages of sympathy on the death of her son, Edward.

Late Winter House Party

The Balmoral Hotel, Bridlington – Tuesday 17th February to Saturday 21st February 2009

The cost is £205.00 per person and this includes bed, breakfast and evening meal. There will be free beer/lager, house spirits and soft drinks from 8.15 pm – 10.30 pm every night.

There are two twin rooms and three single rooms still available.

I will collect the balance of £180.00 per person at the November 2008 meeting. (This is the cost of £205.00 minus the deposit of £25.00). Cheques should be made payable to Airedale Tours Ltd/Clients Trust Account.

Margaret Platt, Travel Group Organiser ☎ 0208 309 6395

Xmas Mail Scam

The following has been confirmed by Royal Mail and the Trading Standards Office are making people aware of the following scam.

A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 (which is a premium rate number). Do *not* call this number, as this is a mail scam originating from Belize.

John Harlow

December Newsletter contributions

Please note that I shall be away on holiday from 1st to 5th December and will be unable to acknowledge contributions received during this time. The deadline for December's issue is 6th December.

Editor



Ramblers 1 : Leader Annette Jansen



After the heavy rain the preceding day – and before the threat of snow the following day – seven of us assembled in warm sunshine at Ide Hill for a six-mile circular ramble in October. The autumn trees were superb and the falling leaves made a colourful display underfoot but often with a tricky underlay of thick mud. After five miles the pub was a very welcome sight and we enjoyed a tasty array of bar snacks at the table set exclusively for our use; this was remarkable because this particular landlord demands a high standard of behaviour from ramblers. We must have made the grade!

If you feel you can manage about 6 miles, with a lunch break along the way, we are a friendly group who would welcome new faces.

Annette Jansen

Local History Group 3 : Leader Pam Kirk



Our October visit was to The Worshipful Company of Drapers of the City of London. Sixteen of us went on this visit which was greatly enjoyed by all. The origins of the Company go back to 1364, when they were granted their first Royal Charter. The building they have occupied since 1543 was originally built in the 1530's by Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, after whose execution it was forfeited to King Henry VIII. The King granted the property to the Drapers for the sum of 1,800 marks (approximately £1,200), when it became Drapers' Hall. Destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666, it was rebuilt and subsequently altered to what we see today. Inside the building we were shown the Court Room, the Livery Hall, the Court Drawing Room, the Court Dining Room, and finally the Silver Vault in which many fine pieces are displayed. The most treasured item is a Silver Gilt Cup and Cover presented by William Lambarde in 1578. All around the building one can see the emblem of the Company which is a ram with the Golden Fleece. The Drapers' Company continues to play its part by its Charitable Trusts, one of which is quite close to our area – the governorship of the almshouses, Queen Elizabeth's College, Greenwich.

Den Brittain

i The full name of the Drapers' Company is "The Master and Wardens and Brethren and Sisters of the Guild or Fraternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Mystery of Drapers of the City of London". This is one of the emblems they have used.



Editor

Classical Music : Leader Derick Johnson



After the absence of a meeting last month, Jean and David kindly gave us the facility of their flat for the October meeting. The programme was called "My Choice A-H". It began with the famous Adagio in G minor for strings and organ by Tomaso Albinoni, a beautiful piece, and Michael Jordan reminded us that it was written almost entirely by the Italian musicologist Remo Giazotto. We then heard Benjamin Britten's "Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra" which is always popular, and this was followed by Frederic Chopin's Grande Valse Brillante {waltz brilliant} in E flat major and A flat major. For letter 'D' we had Antonin Dvořák's Humoresque, played by National Symphony Orchestra, followed by Edward Elgar's Nimrod, from the Enigma Variations, played by the National Philharmonic Orchestra and conducted by Charles Gerhardt. Letter 'F' highlighted César Franck's Panis Angelicus {bread of angels} played by the Sunset Strings, followed by George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. We finished the first half with George Frederic Handel's Organ Concerto № 13 in F major, "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale", by the Toulouse Chamber Orchestra with organist Simon Preston and conducted by George Ansardt. After the break for tea and chat we went on to letter 'I', which did not quite fit in with Beethoven's Piano Concerto № 1, with pianist Stephen Kovacevich conducted by Cohn Davis. With 2 days to go before this concerto's first public performance, Beethoven had not reached anywhere near its completion owing to a severe cold; genius that he was, however, he completed it in time.

Derick Johnson



Visit to Syon Park 23rd October 2008

Thirteen members of this group arrived at Syon Park after a pleasant rail journey via Waterloo and a short walk through a different part of suburbia. Our first stop was at the very good cafeteria where we had a welcome drink before we explored the stately home. Syon is the London seat of the Duke of Northumberland (whose family name is Percy), but latterly their country estate at Alnwick in Northumberland has become better known through the ideas and work that the current Duchess has put into the gardens. Spectacular waterfalls, a restaurant in a tree house and a poison garden have certainly brought the tourists into a place that offers an opportunity to see where parts of the Harry Potter series were filmed.

The coat of arms of the family has a lion as the crest, which we noticed on an unused gate as we walked towards the house, and then in the house and grounds we played spot the lion! There was even one on top of a sedan chair. The house visit was made more enjoyable by an excellent audio guide which detailed the very high standard of renovation that has taken place in the first two rooms. The Duchess is planning to renovate gradually the remainder of the staterooms.

As always in these places, the history of the aristocratic family is interwoven with the history of England. Sir Henry Percy, nicknamed Harry Hotspur, was immortalised by Shakespeare.

After touring the house the group members went their separate ways, some to see the gardens and some to visit the Conservatory before lunch and the return to Sidcup.

This was our last outing of the year before meeting up again in the spring of 2009.

The Percivals

ENTERTAINMENT

La Non-Demande En Mariage – Ian Brydon

If you're looking for a charmer,
For a knight in shining armour,
You'd better not concern yourself with me.

If you're searching for a winner,
A man who'll dress for dinner,
I couldn't ever be your nominee.

If you want a man who dances,
Skilled in amorous advances,
It's obvious I'm not the man for you.

If you need a handsome brute,
Who's got more than one good suit,
I'm very much afraid I wouldn't do.

You might think that I'd be gentle,
Caring, kind and sentimental,
The only one whose life you'd wish to share.

But, you'll find upon reflection,
That I wouldn't pass inspection:
So, pass me by, and find your love elsewhere.

GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
Antiques Appreciation 2 nd Friday (10 am - noon)	Martin Baker 020 8300 1752	1
Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday (morning)	Gay Braybrook/José Steward 020 8309 6372/020 8302 1627	Yes. Notice on board at meetings
Darts (at The Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (midday)	Fred Green	Yes
Freedom Pass Explorers 2 nd Monday	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	Yes
Hand Crafted Cards (Group 2) 1 st Wednesday	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	Yes
Local History (Group 3) 2 nd Wednesday	Pam Kirk 020 8856 8372	Yes
Music (Group 2) 2 nd Friday (2.30 pm)	Derick Johnson 020 8850 1245	2
National Trust/English Heritage Various dates & times	John & Olive Mercer 020 8300 3136	Yes
Ramblers (Group 1) (6-7 miles) 4 th Tuesday (10.30 am)	Annette Jansen 01322 522252	Yes
Ramblers (Group 2) (4-5 miles) 4 th Tuesday	Pat & Alf Cracknell 020 8302 0823	Yes
Saturday Ramble (4-5 miles) 1 st Saturday (morning)	Gay Braybrook 020 8309 6372	3
10-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10 am) <i>except school holidays</i>	Gay Braybrook 020 8309 6372	Yes
Theatre (Group 2) Various matinées	Joan & John Somerset 020 8300 0890	Yes. 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

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
April	<i>To be announced</i>	
May	Mr. T. Moorey	The Most Popular Indoor Activity
June	Mr. N. Arnold	Big Cats in Kent
July	Dr. Gill Stoker	Essentially Ethel
August	Mrs. J. Hay	Freelancing for the BBC
September	<i>To be announced</i>	
October	Mr. M. Parkin	Women in Print
November	Mr. R. Smith	Village Signs in Kent
December	Mrs. P. Mortlock	Ightham Mote

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 or post them to me at 56 Crofton Avenue, Bexley DA5 3AR – typed if possible.

Please submit contributions by 6th of the month.

WEBSITE

www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk

Afterthought

Make it idiot-proof and someone will make a better idiot.