

SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

November 2010



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

NOTICES

Holiday to Maritim Hotel, Königswinter, Germany **Tuesday 6th September – Monday 12th September 2011**

The Maritim Hotel, situated on the Rhine Promenade, has splendid views of the passing ships and the green hills with the Drachenfels {dragon's rock}. Each year there is a horticultural show called the Bundesgartenschau; in 2011 it will be in Koblenz {under 30 miles away}. The final itinerary has not yet been arranged, but there are many places of interest nearby.

The hotel has an indoor swimming pool, sauna, steam bath, solarium, hairdressing salon, massages, and a cosmetic studio. Guest rooms have bath/WC, hairdryer, air conditioning, satellite TV, telephone with voicemail, mini-bar, and writing desk.

Cost: £519.00 per person. There is a single supplement of £42.00 per person.
Cancellation insurance, if required, is £12.00.

I will collect the deposit of £40.00 per person at the January 2011 General Meeting. Cheques should be made payable to "Airedale Tours Ltd/Clients Trust Account".

Margaret Platt Travel Group Organiser ☎ 020 8309 6395

Our U3A – The Early Days

Being one of the first members of our U3A, I have been asked to write a short note on its origins. We started in Bexley, meeting in the United Reformed Church hall in the village. When I joined, we were only just viable, with very few members, the Bexleyheath U3A having already attracted nearly all those living locally who would wish to join such an organisation. Nevertheless, our few members were enthusiastic, and groups such as History, and Classical Music Appreciation, were well supported. However, an even greater problem than our small membership caused concern, and it was one which might have led to the closure of our U3A. Friction had developed between the Founder/Chairman and the Committee. It took time for this difficult and stressful situation to be resolved. It was, however, and shortly afterwards I was invited to be the new Chairman – mainly, I suspect, because I was known to have remained neutral during the dispute.

We still had the problems inherent in a small membership. This was overcome when the Committee decided to advertise in Sidcup which had no U3A. The response was all that we could wish. We have become strong and successful, and more than once we have had to find new premises. We eventually hired our present hall – which is, for the time being, adequate.

Ian Brydon

2011 Census Coming to a letterbox near you

On 27 March 2011 all residential households in the United Kingdom will be taking part in a census. Since 1801 a day has been chosen every ten years for this purpose. The census provides an excellent source of information about the population. This enables central and local government, health authorities and many other organisations to plan housing, education, health and transport services for years to come.

The census statistics feed into the allocation of funding for local authorities and play a major part in their ability to provide local services, so it is crucial the population estimate is as accurate as possible. When the questionnaire envelope comes through the door you'll easily recognise it by the purple 2011 Census logo. Take care of it. If, like many people, you want to complete the questionnaire online, your individual internet code is on the front of the questionnaire.

The 2011 Census doesn't want anyone to fall behind so there is a wide range of help options available (such as language guidance booklets, large print format, Text Relay and census field staff on hand, as well as online help and telephone call centres).

Census Customer Services 01329 444972
9am–5pm, Monday to Friday
(except UK Public and Bank Holidays)
Minicom (for the deaf or hearing impaired) 01329 444517



If you have a hearing impairment you will be able to:

- complete and submit your 2011 Census questionnaire online at www.census.gov.uk.
- view or download the British Sign Language (BSL) video guide through online help at this website: www.census.gov.uk/2011accessibility
- request a DVD copy of the BSL video guide through online help at this website: www.census.gov.uk/2011accessibility
- use Text Relay (English language only) to contact the census helpline to request a visit or for further information and advice

The online questionnaire, online help and the census helpline will be available from 4 March 2011. More information about the 2011 Census can be found at: www.census.gov.uk.

The Last Military Battle Fought on English Soil

On 27th September 1940 a German Junkers 88 plane returning from a daylight raid on London was damaged and forced down by two Spitfires onto Graveney Marsh, Seasalter, Kent. The landing was witnessed by riflemen of the First Battalion of the London Irish Rifles who, at the time, were billeted in the Sportsman public house. The riflemen raced across the marsh to capture the aircrew, but were surprised to be fired upon by two machine guns. They quickly returned effective fire which was too much for the Germans who surrendered. One demolition charge was found and removed from the Junkers, but, whilst being marched away, one was heard to say that the aircraft would “go up about now”. Captain Cantopher, the officer commanding “A Company” of the London Irish Rifles, who had just arrived, overheard the remark, returned to the aircraft and removed a second demolition charge. For his bravery he was awarded the George Medal. The 70th anniversary of this event was commemorated this year by a parade of the London Irish Rifles Association, led by their pipe band, at Graveney Marsh.

George Murrell

Report on the Autumn Conference/Study day of the Greater London Forum of U3As

Science in our Lives

These Study Days provide an opportunity for U3A members to fulfil one of the aims of the U3A, viz, learning something new!

This Science day gave us an opportunity to look at some of the science connected with Music, Food and Art. Our first speaker pointed out to us that Science is indeed involved in almost all of our activities, hidden beneath layers of technology, production processes and commerce. Think of electricity, silicon chips (computers, mobile phones, quartz watches), MRI scans, satellite dishes, antibiotics, etc. You name it – science enabled it!

The second speaker explored the physics of woodwind instruments. We were told what influenced pitch and timbre, and how a flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and saxophone, etc, all produce such different sounds, when they are all basically a tube with holes in. We had many musical demonstrations, and finished with a splendid Scherzo using assorted woodwind instruments, and composed by an astrophysicist. And, yes, it did have a tune!

Food

Professor Ian Crute, Chief Scientist, Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board, (yes, only the best for U3A!) rehearsed for us the gloomy figures for the growth in human population from 3 billion in 1950 to 6.5 billion today, and projected to 9.5 billion in 2050. Great Britain is among the top nations for efficient food production, and could be self-sufficient, thanks to advanced techniques. To meet increased demand, scientists are now addressing problems associated with soil fertility, genetic modifications (quicker than selective breeding, but obstructed by the patenting of relevant DNA), water conservation and the sustainable intensification of land use. We will need to exploit all our recent scientific advances to ensure that the succeeding generations have enough to eat; after all, our grandchildren will probably be alive in 2050.

Art

Dr. Aviva Burnstock, Head of the Department of Conservation and Technology in the Courtauld Institute, spoke of the applications of science in art history, painting techniques and forgeries. Raking light discovered sand particles in a picture of Deauville beach, and proved that the Impressionists really did paint “al fresco!” And Rembrandt printed his lace collars by dribbling black paint over a white undercoat!

Each talk provoked interesting questions, and we were able to socialise over a tasty buffet lunch. We hope that more Sidcup U3A members will feel able to join us in future.

June & Roger Brown

An Artist on the North Downs

Our speaker next February is Mr. Monty Parkin, who will be adding “The Story of Sevenoaks Market” to those he has previously given us, “Women in Print” and “Village Life in the Past”. As well as giving talks to groups such as ours, he is a professional artist, and his next exhibition will be held at Hall Place in the Stables Gallery from Sunday 7th November until Sunday 28th November, from 10.00 am – 4.15 pm (Sundays from 11.00 am). A visit to see his work entitled “An Artist on the North Downs” could make for a pleasant re-visit to this popular local venue.

Val Gosden


GROUP NEWS

Freedom Pass Explorers • Leader Val Gosden



It was a bright and sunny morning on the 11 October when we set out from London Bridge Tube Station on our magical mystery tour, and our final destination was Ruislip Lido. Our leader, Val Gosden, always manages to find us a place of interest, but this time she excelled herself. It truly is a beautiful place with a large lake with a variegated wild fowl population, including some lovely swans. After a coffee at the water's edge, we took a slow, leisurely walk of about 1¼ miles around the lake which has some wonderful views. We finished at a pub where we enjoyed a carvery lunch, before returning home after a great day.

Bill Garwood

 Photos taken during this visit may be found on the “Gallery” page of our website.

Editor

Local History 3 • Leader Pam Kirk



Visit to St. Martin-in-the-Fields

What a wonderful experience this was! The sheer size of the place was so unexpected (at least it was for me). There were 16 of us, and, after gathering at Charing Cross station, we crossed the road to the church where we were met by the Head Verger who spent the next 90 minutes conducting us on a tour. He was very easy to listen to, certainly knew what he was talking about, and enthusiastically told us how it all started – at a time when the church was actually ‘in the fields’. The present church was designed by James Gibbs and completed in 1726. We were shown all over the church, both up and down, and we saw a bronze of St. Martin (from whom the church adopted its name). Apparently, we were told, Martin ripped his cloak in half to give to a beggar and later had a dream in which Jesus said that what he had done for this poor man he had done for Him. We were then taken to the adjoining building which had just been completed after 12 years and a cost of £36 million pounds. They are committed to care, particularly for homeless and vulnerable people; hold at least 3 services every day; host concerts; hire out their new halls for conferences, and numerous other activities. I am sure that all who went on this outing would say with me – “you must go”.

June Storey

Classical Music • Leader Derick Johnson



Jean Wallis produced our October programme; although short on detail, the music provided was enjoyable. She started with the ever popular Albinoni Adagio followed by Brahms Symphony № 1; this is an incredibly colourful piece that defies the listener ever to get bored with its changes of mood and substance. We then had Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Trumpets – by which time we were all ready for our tea/coffee break. The last part of the afternoon opened with Beethoven's Egmont Overture followed by Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor. We were sent on our way by Verdi's Triumphal March from Aida making it a very enjoyable afternoon of music.

Derick Johnson

Emergency First Aid • Leader Gladys Davidson



The First Aid Group has now completed the course. At the last lesson, when we were practising chest compressions and rescue breaths (note: no longer called mouth-to-mouth resuscitation) using the St. John's Resusci Anne, we had the presence of Alison Green, a member of the Sidcup Ambulance Division, who brought us up to date and demonstrated the new method of resuscitation. In future, there will be no mouth-to-mouth contact – there will be only chest compressions, the rate of which will appear in the new edition of the St. John Ambulance First Aid manual. It is interesting to note how often terminology and practice change yet the basic aim of the first aider is to:–

1. Open the mouth and keep airways clear;
2. Maintain blood circulation;
3. Arrest bleeding.

I am sure we have all enjoyed the lessons and enriched our knowledge. As a token of having completed the course, members of the Group received a folded pocket size illustrated Guide to Emergency First Aid.

Gladys Davidson

① Resusci Anne, also known as Rescue Anne or CPR Annie, is a training mannequin used for teaching cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to both emergency workers and members of the general public.

Editor

Composers in Verse

Here are some further extracts from Ian Brydon's notorious "History of Western Music". Members wishing to purchase this work have been disappointed, all unsold copies having been pulped to provide paper for his other little known self-help book "How to be Supercilious".

Britten

Purcell, Rossini, both have written
The only tunes you'll find in Britten.

Elgar

The quintessential English country gentleman he seems
At first, though Elgar, with all his noble dreams
Felt shame at his low origin, shame hard to understand
In such a man, whose music, smiling with a sigh,
Will ever represent the spirit of our land.

Messiaen


Écoutez, s'il vous plait,
Olivier Messiaen:
C'est une grande pitié,
Qu'il ne me dit rien.

{translation}
Messiaen's music may fill you with glee;
I'm sorry to say it does nothing for me.

Palestrina

Profoundly
Affecting,
Lightly
Effecting,
Simplification of Beauty;
Transcending
Ritual,
Impelling
Natural
Adoration and duty

GROUP VACANCIES

	GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
	Amblers (Group 1) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30 am)	John Harbert 020 8300 5361	Yes
	Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30 am)	Norma Balfour/José Steward 020 8303 6372/07957 181808	Yes
	Antiques Appreciation 3 rd Wednesday (10 am)	Martin Baker 020 8300 1752	2
	Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday (morning)	Gay Braybrook/José Steward 020 8309 6372/07957 181808	Yes
	Darts (at the Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (midday)	Fred Green	Yes
	German Thursdays (2 pm; not 3 rd Thurs)	Betty Deutsch 020 8302 6526	1 (No beginners)
	Local History (Group 1) 2 nd Wednesday	John Harlow 020 8300 3865	2
	Local History (Group 2) 2 nd Wednesday	José Steward 07957 181808	3
	Play Reading 1 st Tuesday (2–4 pm)	Frank Whipp 020 8300 1064	1
	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
	Recorder Playing 3 rd Wednesday (2 pm)	Mary Hawes 020 8300 0521	6
	10-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10 am)	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 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

2010

November	Mr. V. Creek	R.A.F. Museum, Hendon
December	Miss Ann Carter	A Celebration of Christmas

2011

January	Mr. J. Halligan	Paintings in the Guildhall Art Gallery
February	Mr. M. Parkin	The Story of Sevenoaks Market
March	Annual General Meeting	
	Miss E. Turner	In the Spirit of Shackleton
April	Mr. I. Bevan	Tudor London
May	Mrs. J. Bruce	Knickers and Things
June	<i>TBA</i>	
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	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	Christine Spencer	020 8300 4291
Welfare Officer	Kathy Cordell	020 8300 4573
Social Secretary	Vacant	

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Travel Group Leader	Margaret Platt	020 8309 6395
Raffle Organiser	Pat Garwood	020 8306 0013
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 3rd of the month.

WEBSITE

www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk

This Newsletter (including previous editions) may be read or downloaded from our website.

Afterthought

Do you ever stop to think – and forget to start again?