

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

November 2011



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

NOTICES

December General Meeting Cancelled

Notification has been received from the New Community Church that the hall is not available for our use on our pre-booked date of Thursday 15th December. The reason given was that contractual work will be taking place on that date which raises health and safety concerns. Since the committee has been unable to obtain a suitable alternative venue or date, regrettably the December meeting has had to be cancelled. We can only apologise for any disappointment this may cause. Please bring this notice to the attention of any fellow members with whom you are in contact and who might not have received a copy of this Newsletter.

George Murrell, Secretary

① December's Newsletter will be available only for download from our website on about 10th December. However, owing to its limited distribution, it will be mainly for entertainment purposes; items not in this category will be repeated in the January 2012 Newsletter.

Editor

Erith Christmas Tree Festival

This will take place at Christ Church, Victoria Road, Erith, on Friday 9th December from 12 noon – 7 pm; Saturday, 10th December from 10 am – 7 pm; and Sunday 11th December from 12 noon – 5 pm. I went to last year's Christmas Tree Festival and was amazed at the number of trees in the church decorated and with lights, and I fully intend going again this year. You can travel by train – just get the one that goes to Crayford, Slade Green and Erith. On leaving Erith Station turn right and walk up the slope. From the top of the slope you will see the spire of Christ Church nearby. Admission is free, and, by using your Freedom Pass, travel is also free. What could be better?

I plan to visit the Festival on Friday 9th December, and will be catching the 2.06 pm train from New Eltham, 2.10 pm at Sidcup, and will be in the 3rd carriage from the front. If anyone wants to join me, I shall be pleased to have your company.

Val Gosden

① Anyone planning to attend this event on Sunday 11th December should note that it will be necessary to change trains at Dartford on that day.

Editor

Newsletter

Owing to the newly implemented closure of Sidcup Library on Thursday afternoons, I am no longer able to deposit spare copies of the Newsletter there immediately following each general meeting. To do so now entails making a special trip into Sidcup when – or if – I can find time. This is unsatisfactory and it would be more helpful for someone living nearer the library (or visiting Sidcup regularly) to deliver unused Newsletters there for the benefit of non-attendees requiring this arrangement. Furthermore, Newsletters displayed in the library help to raise our profile in the community and attract new members. Please see me after today's meeting if you are willing to provide this service; I shall be one of those moving chairs around.

Editor

Christmas Concert

We invite you to join us for the first U3A Christmas Concert with the Mosaic Chamber Choir and the Brandenburg Brass and Organ on Wednesday 14th December 2011 at the Church of St John's, Waterloo, London SE1, from 2.30pm – 4.30pm. (Doors open at 2pm).

The programme will include works by Bach, Bruckner, Chilcott, Holst and Warlock along with traditional carols and will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies. Tickets cost £16 per person including the mulled wine and mince pies. Tickets will be issued on a first-come first-served basis with a maximum of 4 tickets per applicant.

Apply ASAP in writing with your full contact details to The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1QE enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. Cheques should be made payable to The Third Age Trust. Any queries should be sent to U3A National Office 020 8466 6139, or email to national.office@u3a.org.uk.

Excerpt from Third Age Trust website

U3A National Chess by Email

This is a newly formed group. Basically you have your own chess board set up, and play by sending and receiving moves by email.

- You will have as much time as you wish to think about your next move (which will improve the quality of your moves);
- Via a grading system, you will play someone of equal strength;
- You can play at any time to suit yourself;
- You only have to concentrate for the time span of your next move;
- You will play against someone who shares your U3A philosophy of having fun, whilst doing your best without being too competitive. A game would be expected to take two to three weeks to complete.

It operates via a page on the U3A National Website www.u3a.org.uk and holds the following information from you: name, grade, U3A, short chess profile and email address.

For full information, including how you might decide on your grade, email Dick Chapman at dick.chapman@ntlworld.com.

George Murrell

① You will need to register with this website in order to access its 'Members Area'.

Editor

London Region U3A

I am pleased to say that the new London Region U3A website is up and running and you can find it at <http://u3asites.org.uk/london-region>. There is lots of information about the region including links to all of the U3A websites in London and details of forthcoming U3A events and the new Shared Learning Projects. I hope to add more information as time progresses, and in particular I would like to hear from anyone who is currently running a Subject Network in the Region since that is the next area that I would like to add.

Any comments would be appreciated as would any ideas that could be added to a wish list for future inclusion.

Roger Mead, Greater London Region U3A

 You may email any comments to Roger Mead via the 'Contact' link on his website.

Editor



Eric Percival was a long serving member of four local organisations: Lamorbey and Sidcup Local History Society, Bexley Civic Society, the Probus Club of Sidcup and University of the Third Age. In all four organisations he held offices. In Lamorbey and Sidcup History Society he was a committee member and chairman; he represented the Bexley Civic Society on the Conservation Advisory Committee of the Council; and as a Probus member he was a popular and successful chairman. At his funeral on 29th September the chapel was so crowded that mourners stood several rows deep by the exit. Eric was born in 1933 and spent his childhood in Ealing. He did his National Service in the RAF attaining the rank of Leading Aircraftsman. He came to Sidcup while employed by Burroughs & Wellcome in Dartford as a transport organiser. He was married twice; first, to Mary who bore him a son, Andrew, and a daughter, Jane. Mary died unexpectedly in 1990 and, after years of being alone, he married Frances. Both marriages were very happy. Eric was a gentleman, quiet and unassuming, always ready to help another. He will be sorely missed.

John Mercer



Classical Music 1 • Leader Derick Johnson



Betty Deutsch presented her programme for October starting with the William Tell Overture by Rossini. We then had Gustav Holst's Mars "The bringer of war" and Venus "The bringer of peace". After this we had Jean Sibelius's Finlandia Suite, followed by Intermezzo Ballade and Alla Marcia from the Karelia Suite. Before the break we had a complete change of scene with "La Donna è Mobile" {woman is fickle}, from the opera Rigoletto by Verdi, performed by Placido Domingo. After the break we heard Tchaikovsky's Italian Caprice. Our afternoon of music concluded with the 4th movement of Beethoven's Symphony № 9 in D minor; this is a choral work in German and Betty provided us with not only the German words as sung, but also the English translation. This was helpful since nobody else had any knowledge of the German language.

Derick Johnson

Ramblers 2 • Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell



For our October ramble, 10 of us met at the car park in the village of Snodland. We proceeded north up the Malling Road and past the Clock Tower, a memorial to Charles Townsend Hook that was built in 1878. Further on, we crossed the bypass and passed the Holborough Wildlife Sanctuary until we reached the River Medway. There we turned upstream and walked along the flood embankment until we reached a pillbox where we dropped down through the trees to Snodland Station. As we traversed a level crossing, we looked back at the All Saints Church, which was built in the 13th–15th century, before following the road to the south. We strolled between Brooklands Lake and a canal for about a mile, and then turned right over the canal's bridge and a footbridge across the A228 which led us into Nevill Park. After exiting the park, the walk then took us through an estate back to the car park. From there we drove down the Malling Road to the Freemasons Arms for very enjoyable lunch.

John Harbert

Parks & Gardens Appreciation • Leaders Jill Bryant & Barbara Olney



For our September outing, a small group of us, plus one new member, visited Chiswick House and Gardens. Lord Burlington designed Chiswick House in 1725 in the Palladian style, but we were interested in the gardens which were designed by Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of Burlington, and William Kent who experimented with a natural style that spread worldwide. The English landscape garden is considered to have made a major contribution to world culture. In the 18th and 19th centuries, successive owners extended and changed the gardens while keeping them at the cutting edge of fashion.

A short walk from the station brings you to Burlington Lane Gate entrance where the Obelisk stands; this has been a feature of the garden since the early 18th century. We followed the path to the right which took us to the Cascade where water was gushing under the path down to the lake. This was designed by William Kent who took inspiration from the Italian Renaissance gardens. Passing by Chiswick House, we arrived at the newly-built café designed by Caruso St John. After a coffee there, we proceeded to the Italian Gardens; unfortunately these had not been planted up and only a few ornamental urns were on show. Behind this area was the 19th century conservatory home to a world class collection of camellias, but it was, alas, the wrong time of year for them to be in flower. Following the path, we came upon the newly-restored Rosary which has a column topped by a statue of Venus sculpted by Andrian Melka. Nearby was the Deer House and a large area planted with hedges and trees radiating in avenues which have features placed at the ends to entice you to investigate. One of the few surviving 18th century buildings is the Ionic Temple, recently restored to its former glory, which looked splendid with the Amphitheatre and Obelisk nearby. We walked past a large picnic area to the Classic Bridge and leaned over it to view the swans and look down the long lake towards the Cascade. This grand stone bridge was built for the 5th Duke of Devonshire. This large garden, with interesting statues to view and hidden features around the corners, but with only a few beds of flowers, made a nice change from large very colourful displays of mixed flowers that we usually see.

Jill Bryant

 My pictures of Chiswick House and Gardens appear on the Gallery page of our website. William Kent also designed the Grade II listed building – now called William Kent House – that adjoins The Ritz. Originally known as Wimborne House, it was acquired by the owners of The Ritz in 2005 who restored and lavishly refurbished it to its original Italian Renaissance style décor following guidelines determined by English Heritage.

Editor

GROUP VACANCIES

	GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
	Amblers (Group 1) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30am)	John Harbert 020 8300 5361	Yes
	Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30am)	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	Yes
	Antiques Appreciation (Group 5) 3 rd Friday (10.00am)	Martin Baker 020 8300 1752	3
	Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday (morning)	Gay Braybrook (co-ordinator only) 020 8309 6372	Yes
	Classical Music (Group 2) 2 nd Friday (2.30pm)	Maureen Porter 020 8300 6128	1
	Darts (at the Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (midday)	See Group Co-ordinator 020 8300 4291	Yes
	Local History (Group 1) 2 nd Wednesday	John Harlow 020 8300 3865	2
	Local History (Group 2) 2 nd Wednesday	Pauline Watling 020 8300 3910 Barbara Olney 020 8302 4289	3
	Philosophy (Group 1) 1 st & 3 rd Monday (2.00pm)	Bernard Catallo 020 8300 8651	1
	Play Reading 1 st Tuesday (2–4 pm)	See Group Co-ordinator 020 8300 4291	Yes
	Ramblers (Group 1) (6–7 miles) 4 th Tuesday (10.30am)	Annette Jansen 01322 522252	Yes
	Ramblers (Group 2) (4–5 miles) 4 th Tuesday	Pat & Alf Cracknell 020 8302 0823	Yes
	Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10.00am)	Gay Braybrook 020 8309 6372	Yes
	Theatre (Group 2) Various matinées	Joan & John Somerset 020 8300 0890	Yes. Notice on board at meetings
	The Cathedral 2 nd Wednesday (3.00pm)	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	1

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

November	Mr. G. Murrell	A policeman's lot was perhaps a happy one! (Memories of a City Policeman in the 1950s)
December	<u>MEETING CANCELLED OWING TO HALL CLOSURE</u>	

2012

January	John Beckham	A Woodland Mix
February	Alan Payne	What's on the Cards
March	Tony Farnham	Sailing Barges in their Heyday
April	Matthew Jackson	Korean Spirit & Culture
May	Michael Gandy	Seeing it Through Their Eyes
June	Mrs. Sandra Winter	Hand-Bell Ringing
July	Mr. Chris Hare	40 Years Without a Proper Job
August	<i>TBA</i>	
September	Myriam Steadman	Guide Dogs for the Blind
October	John Halligan	The Lord Mayor of the City of London
November	Derek Fulford	Antique Clocks & Watches
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

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 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.

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

Afterthought

Be careful of reading health books - you might die of a misprint. (Mark Twain)