

# SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

November 2016



**SIDCUP & DISTRICT U3A meets at 2.00 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month in the New Community Church Centre, 24 Station Road, Sidcup**

**In November and December 2016 only, the meeting will be held at The United Services Club, 108 Main Road, Sidcup**

## NOTICES

### **Membership Renewal**

All members are reminded that their membership will be coming up for renewal at the end of the year. A spare membership renewal form is included with this Newsletter.

***Editor***

### **New Groups**

Norma Balfour wants to start a couple of new groups: Chess and Scrabble. She is prepared to act as hostess, but does not want to lead the groups. She would also require a bigger venue if the group gets too large; suggestions are invited for this. Anyone interested should see her at the monthly meeting, or contact on her on 020 8303 7693.

**Trevor Ford**

### **Venues Available for Group Meetings**

The matter of venues available for group meetings is mentioned in a subsequent article. Group leaders may like to note that:

- a small room at St. Lawrence's Church Hall is available for £23.50 per hour;
- a small room at Blackfen Library costs £12.50 per hour;
- a small room at the Brewers Fayre, Sidcup Place may possibly be available free of charge.

**George Murrell**

### **City of London Police Museum**

The following may be of interest to local history groups. The City Police Museum, formerly in Wood Street Police Station, has moved to a new site at the Guildhall and will open to the public on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November. Admission is free and entry is via the Guildhall Library, Aldermanbury. Opening hours are 9.30 am until 5 pm on weekdays plus some evening and weekend opening. Exhibits cover items from pre-police times until the present day including exhibits relating to the "Siege of Sydney Street," the "Jack the Ripper" murders and similar.

**George Murrell**

## **Notes of a Meeting of Group Leaders held at Ockley Court on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

**Present:** 12 group leaders or their representatives together with Committee members as listed on attendance sheet. Apologies for absence were received from Jill Bryant, Val Gosden, Roger Brown, Keith Alker, and Pat Redwood.

**Introductions:** Leaders and representatives of the following groups introduced themselves: Amblers, Bird Watching, Book Reading, Church Architecture, Classical Music, Concerts/Opera, Discussion Group, Family History, Freedom Pass Explorers, Handcrafted Cards, Local History, Parks & Gardens, Pot Pourri, Ramblers, Rummikub, and Wine Appreciation.

**Group News:** Trevor is forming a Science Group on a trial basis. Norma would like to see a chess group formed. She could possibly host but could not lead. Annette and Norma will possibly start a Scrabble group. Roy would like to form a poetry group if anyone is able to provide a venue. The Group Co-ordinator, Trevor Ford, is happy to attend the meeting of any group at their invitation.

**Annual return of group members:** At a future date, group leaders might be requested to submit to the Group Co-ordinator a list of their current members at that time. No difficulty was envisaged.

**Group Vacancies:** Whenever vacancies arise, leaders are requested to inform either David, Newsletter Editor, or Trevor as soon as possible in order that details can be published in the Newsletter.

**Non-attendance by group members:** It is not uncommon for some group members to fail to turn up at group meetings without any reasonable excuse and without notifying the leader in advance. This does cause inconvenience to other members of the group. It was confirmed that, when this occurs on more than one occasion without reasonable explanation, the group leader has absolute discretion to exclude the member from further group activities, particularly when there is a waiting list for membership of that group.

**Email "Cascade":** Although rare, occasions can arise when it would be advantageous if a message of an urgent nature could be relayed to all members with the minimum of delay, *eg.* an unforeseen emergency leading to a last-minute cancellation of a monthly meeting. To accommodate this need it is suggested that the Secretary and Group Co-ordinator maintain a list of email addresses of the leaders of each group (or alternatively the email address of a nominated alternative contact from the group) to whom the message would be sent. The group leader (or nominated alternative) would then be expected to forward the message by email to members of his/her group, or by telephone contact with members of the group without email facilities. It is suggested that messages be forwarded by "blind copy" to avoid unnecessary disclosure of email addresses. This suggestion will be discussed further by the Committee.

**U3A Network for South East Greater London:** This organisation, of which Sidcup U3A is a member, has recently been established with the purpose of enabling member U3As to undertake joint ventures such as workshops, study days, shared learning projects and similar. In addition, a procedure known as "GAFFS" has been established which will enable a member of one U3A in the Network to join a group in another U3A which has vacancies they wish to fill. Such vacancies and details of other Network events are published online in Network News. Means of accessing this publication will be advised in due course.

**Venues for Group meetings:** The difficulty in finding suitable venues for groups to meet is an ongoing problem.

**Open Day:** These have been successful in the past and those present were in favour of another "Open Day" being held in August 2017. The suggestion will be referred to the Committee.

**George Murrell**

## GROUP NEWS

### Science • Leader Trevor Ford



This group started on 15<sup>th</sup> November. It is currently full and has a waiting list.

#### Trevor Ford

### Book Reading • Leader June Reid



Our book for October was *Mother Tongue* by Bill Bryson chosen by Christine. This was an unusual choice, quite different to our regular monthly read. *Mother Tongue* is a compilation of the history and origins of the English language with its various quirks. It was not exactly bedside reading, but, as Bryson explains the eccentricity and sheer fun of our language in an irreverent way, we were amused. The chapter on swearing in various languages was quite enlightening! This book was not given the “thumbs up” by everyone, but some of us enjoyed it and felt much wiser for having read it.

#### June Reid

### Ramblers 3 • Leader Trevor Ford



September's walk to Alfriston had to be cancelled, but there was a good turnout for the walk starting at Ightham Mote at the start of October. From the National Trust property (which is well worth a separate visit), we headed down a set of steps, then went westwards parallel to the Greensand Way and past a set of cottages once used by hop pickers. At the site of a spring opening into a small pond, we turned uphill steeply through Broadhoath Wood. On our right were Kent cobnuts and then apple orchards. We crossed a minor road to where more orchards flanked our track out to the Stone Street Road and an attractive-looking pub. Hard luck – we still had miles to go! We passed a large house and estate then tried to find the route steeply upwards. On our trial visit the week before, Allan and I had followed the route in the reverse direction, so there was a bit of argy-bargy whether to hack straight on up, or whether to curve around, since the signpost for that part was a bit ambiguous. We settled for the latter and arrived breathless at the top where we walked along a ridge with occasional glimpses of great views over the scarp slope. Bracket fungi and field mushrooms lined the path, but we didn't want to risk them for lunch. Further on, the ridge dipped downwards skirting Raspit Hill then joining the road into Ivy Hatch. The Plough there had excellent food, if a little bit pricey, with very pleasant surroundings. After lunch, we walked along a short path parallel to the road through Scathes Wood which brought us back to Ightham Mote.

#### Trevor Ford

**(i)** Ightham Mote is a Grade I listed building; parts of it are a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It dates to around 1320 and is important because it has most of its original features; successive owners effected relatively few changes to the main structure. It shows how such houses would have looked in the Middle Ages. Unlike most courtyard houses, Ightham Mote wholly surrounds its courtyard and looks inward towards it. A large kennel built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century for a St. Bernard named Dido is the only Grade I listed dog house. The Mote was purchased by Thomas Colyer-Fergusson; in 1890–1891, he carried out much repair and restoration which ensured the survival of the house after centuries of neglect. Mote is thought to mean ‘meeting place.’

#### Editor

### Local History 3 • Leader Christine Withams



On 12<sup>th</sup> October, having travelled on the DLR to Limehouse Station, we had a pleasant walk along part of the Regents Canal to the Ragged School Museum. On arrival, we were able to visit the schoolroom set out as it would have been in 1886. We talked to the schoolteacher who was about to conduct a lesson for a group of primary school children. She showed us a backboard, used to punish pupils who did not sit up straight during the lesson. There was also a set of finger restraints which were for use with pupils who could not keep their fingers still. The furniture was of the time and some of us could remember using similar desks in our school days.

The Museum covers the history of this Ragged School which was set up in the East End of London by Dr. Barnardo in 1877. It also has some historical information about this area of the East End. We were given a short talk about the history of the ragged schools and how this particular one was saved from redevelopment and opened to the public. There were other artefacts related to the school as well as information and photographs of some of the children that had passed through the school in the galleries. There was a small shop selling examples of past popular toys as well as books. After a coffee in their small café which is run by special needs volunteers, some of the group went on to visit the Museum of London Docklands. At the museum, we visited exhibitions showing the planning and redevelopment of the Docklands and how the Docklands were affected by World War 2.

### Lynn Plumer & Barbara Buckland

### Group News • Leader Val Gosden



As many of you know, I lead several groups as I find doing things I enjoy whilst in the company of others beats housework hands down!

The card-making groups are now making Christmas cards and the quilling group will soon be making 'snowflakes.' I look forward to seeing what the 'Needlecrafters' will be doing when this group starts shortly.

The two new groups watching DVDs are learning about Russia and Great World Churches. The Russia of Peter the Great's childhood functioned in old traditional ways, and Peter the Great was determined to 'westernise' his country. One achievement was the building of St. Petersburg. Following his death, the country was ruled by several empresses, including Elizabeth II The Great, who worked hard to develop the economy, education and culture.

In *The World's Greatest Churches* we are shown some excellent photographs. These include The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which, according to Christian belief, is where Jesus is buried, and Hagia Sophia, which has been both a Christian place of worship and a mosque. It now is a most fantastic museum. Both these churches were built, but the Cave Churches of Cappadocia were created by cutting into rock, and are wonderfully decorated inside.

The October trip out by the Pot Pourri group was to an exhibition entitled 'We are all human' and featured works of art by offenders, secure patients and detainees. There was a wide variety of works on view: paintings, poetry, models in clay, wood, toilet paper (I kid you not), soap, beadwork, quilling, needlecrafts, and even a grandfather clock (about 6-foot high) made from matchsticks. The standard of work was high, and, although invited to do so, it was virtually impossible to choose the best item on show.

### Val Gosden

## **Local History 2 • Leaders Pauline Watling & Joyce Savinson**



### **A return river cruise from Greenwich Pier to Westminster**

On a scorching day, 15 of us set off with a discounted group ticket on City Cruises for a return trip on the river from Greenwich to Westminster. Their boats have cafeteria facilities and the journey takes two hours for the round trip. The cruise to Westminster had a recorded commentary, but, on the trip back to Greenwich, a member of the crew gave a more personal insight of the many interesting buildings along the waterfront. He explained that all the crew were watermen and had served a 5-year apprenticeship. His commentary was entertaining, and, as well as the sights, his main interest appeared to be the many pubs on the waterfront – The Grapes being his favourite.

On arriving back at Greenwich, the group split with many having lunch at Wetherspoons which is our favoured watering hole.

### **Joan I'Anson**

## **Ramblers 2 • Leader David Wedderkop**



We had a good turnout for our October ramble on a pleasant autumn day. This was a ramble close to home which explored some of the Green Chain Walk. Having started at New Eltham, we walked through Avery Hill Park, through woods, across Bexley Road and continued down Gravel Pit Lane. After reaching Falconwood Station, we went back through Shepherdleas Wood and emerged in Eltham Park North and crossed the A2 into Eltham Park South. The last part took us down Butterfly Lane into the woods again eventually reaching Southend Crescent and passing the 16<sup>th</sup> century Conduit Head – part of the system which controlled the flow of water from nearby springs to Eltham Palace. This local walk included parts that were new to a number of our group. How lucky we are to have the Green Chain.

A number of us ended up at the Rising Sun in Eltham for well-earned refreshments.

### **Mary Webb**

## GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER/CONTACT	VACANCIES
 <b>Amblers (Group 3)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (10.30 am)	<b>Norma Balfour</b> 020 8303 7693	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Bird Watching</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday (10.00 am)  	<b>Roy Black</b>  020 8302 9942	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Book Reading</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday (2.00–4.00 pm)	<b>June Reid</b> 020 8302 7887	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Chess</b> <i>Timings to be advised</i>	<b>Norma Balfour</b> 020 8303 7693	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Classical Music</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday (2.30–4.30 pm)	<b>Olive Mercer</b> 020 8300 3136	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Concerts/Opera</b> Various dates and times   £	<b>Norma Balfour</b> 020 8303 7693	<b>Vacancies</b> 
 <b>Darts (at the Alma pub)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday (noon)  	<b>Leader pending</b>  needed, please	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Family History</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues  & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs 	<b>Judith Swain &amp; Kate Berry</b> 020 8303 5759	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Ramblers (Group 2)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday (4–5 miles)	<b>David Wedderkop</b> 020 8850 5042	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Rummikub® (Group 1)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday (2.00–4.00 pm)	<b>Margaret Platt</b> 020 8309 6395	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Rummikub® (Group 2)</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday (2.00–4.00 pm)	<b>Mary Hawes</b> 020 8300 0521	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Scrabble®</b> <i>Timings to be advised</i>	<b>Norma Balfour</b> 020 8303 7693	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath)</b> Mondays (10.00 am)   £	<b>Gay Braybrook</b>  020 8309 6372	<b>Vacancies</b>
 <b>Wine Appreciation</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (7.30 pm) £	<b>Roger Brown</b> 020 8850 5362	<b>Vacancies</b>

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](mailto: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 a group.

 Not during school/bank holidays

£ A charge applies

 Certain seasons only

 Notice on the board at meetings

 Open to all

 Temporary point of contact

## PROGRAMME

### 2016

November	Steve Roberts	Tales of a Scotland Yard Detective
December	Roy Bilham	Christmas Music (on trumpet)

### 2017

January	Martin Heard	The Gardens of Impressionism – Monet and others
February	Ralph Todd	The Natural Wonders of Iceland
March	A.G.M	
	Joseph Woodcock	Springtime in the Garden
April	Peter Jones	National Trust Properties of the South East
May	Nicky Brooks	Exercise in Retirement – Pilates

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261
Vice-Chairman	Lesley South	020 8300 8298
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](mailto: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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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:** 19 East Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1QE (020 8466 6139) [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)

**London Region U3A:** [www.u3asites.org.uk/london-region](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/london-region)

**World U3A:** [www.worldu3a.org](http://www.worldu3a.org)

**Virtual U3A:** [www.vu3a.org](http://www.vu3a.org)

## WEBSITE

[www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk](http://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*

*Strange how much you have to know before you know how little you know.*

**SIDCUP & DISTRICT U3A**  
**RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP**  
**FOR 2017**

This is to remind you that your membership to the Sidcup & District U3A is renewable on 31 December 2016.

The renewal notice at the bottom of this reminder, duly completed, with a cheque for £15.00 per person, being the annual subscription for 2017, should be paid in one of the following two ways. (1) At the November or December General Meeting or (2) If you are unable to attend a General Meeting then it should be sent to our TREASURER, MR JOHN LAPHAM, 20 TIDFORD ROAD, WELLING, KENT DA16 3JS.

IF RENEWALS ARE NOT RECEIVED BY THE ABOVE DATE THIS WILL BE TAKEN THAT YOU DO NOT WISH TO CONTINUE YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND NO FURTHER REMINDER WILL BE SENT.

At the January General Meeting you will be issued a new Membership Card for the year 2017. The card will not only act as a receipt for your renewal of membership but also acknowledge that you are a bona fide member and that it should be shown to Group Leaders when attending a Group.

Yours sincerely  
Pat Andrews/Lynn Plumer  
Membership Secretary

DO NOT SOLICIT

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Membership No .....

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP 2017  
 Please tick box if you wish to continue receiving the magazine THIRD AGE MATTERS

To renew your membership, please complete this form and present it with your cheque for £15.00 (made payable to SIDCUP & DISTRICT U3A and POST DATED 1 JANUARY 2017)

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms ..... Surname .....

First Names .....

Address .....

..... Post Code .....

Telephone Number .....

E mail address .....

Signature ..... Date .....

**IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE JANUARY GENERAL MEETING PLEASE ATTACH A SAE NO SMALLER THAN 8¾" x 4½" WITH YOUR RENEWAL FOR RETURN OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD AND PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING YEAR.**

DATA PROTECTION ACT. Members are reminded that details they give are kept on a computer data-base. These details are kept in the strictest confidence. Anyone objecting to their details being kept in this way should inform the Membership Secretary.