

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

October 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

Shared Learning Project at the Jewish Museum, London

The project will take place fortnightly over 12 weeks on Wednesdays 11am – 1pm from 12th January until 23rd March. Computer skills are essential. If you are interested contact Gwen Wright, the coordinator, by e-mail gwen.wright@virgin.net for more information. The closing date for applications is 1st November.



Shared Learning Project with King's College, London

The aim of the project is to reveal the fascinating personal lives and careers of those who were among the first nurses to apply to join the Register of the Royal British Nursing Association in 1887. Meetings will be held fortnightly on Tuesdays 10.30am – 12.30pm from 11th January until 7th April, mainly at King's College in the Strand and at the National Archives at Kew. For further information please contact Dianna Widdis, the coordinator, whose e-mail address is dianna.widdis@ntlworld.com. The closing date for applications is 1st November.



**Shared Learning Project at the British Library;
The natural history of London through the ages**

The introductory meeting is on Thursday 13th January; the second meeting is on 20th January and then fortnightly until 31st March. (A total of 7 sessions, all from 11.00am – 1.00pm). For further information contact Kay.denny@btopenworld.com. The closing date for applications is 1st November.



National Institute for Medical Research

Wednesday 8th December 2.30pm – 4.30pm at the Institute in Mill Hill NW7 1AA. Three half hour talks followed by discussion relating to the heart and diseases and malfunctions. 150 free tickets are available on application to U3A National Office on a first come first served basis.

George Murrell

North West Region Residential School 26th-28th April 2011
Myerscough College, Billsborrow, Preston

Courses include archaeology, astronomy, creative writing, family history, geology, golf, looking at pictures and “The Victorians”.

Cost including full board £185 (Golf £215).

Full details and application form from Kathleen Mercier email kathleenmercier@talktalk.net.



2011 National Conference & AGM

Will be held at East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham University 16th - 19th September.

George Murrell

GROUP NEWS

National Trust/English Heritage • Leaders Olive & John Mercer



On 21st September 11 members of the group set out by train, tube and foot to explore the N.T. property of Eastbury Manor House at Upney, near Barking in Essex.

The land on which the house now stands was once in the demesne of Barking Abbey, which, of course, was subject to Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries, and eventually came into the hands of Clement Sysley who built the present house some time around 1560. The beautiful Tudor house, with its impressive chimneys, was once surrounded by fields and marshes and had views right down to and across the Thames; now, unfortunately, it is surrounded by a housing estate and the grounds are reduced to three small courtyards and a frontage. The house has a very impressive history right up to present times with lots of well presented written information, and Dougie, our tour guide, gave us more interesting details.

Unfortunately, the tea room had run out of sandwiches so it was agreed that we would go into Barking for lunch and thence home to Sidcup.

Pat & Sheila Jackson

Ramblers 2 • Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell



12 of us gathered in Farnborough village for our October ramble when we were blessed with dry weather. We walked through Farnborough (a name derived from Feambiorginga, meaning village among the ferns), and into the splendid High Elms Estate which was the country house of Sir William Lubbock and his descendants until it was sold to Kent County Council in 1938. We passed many fine trees collected from around the world, a nature centre and an old ice well. Ice was collected from the estate ponds in winter and stored in the well for refrigeration purposes. The walk continued around the golf course, through undulating farmland, and back to the village for a nice lunch at The Change of Horses.

Brian Ginn

Ramblers 1 • Leader Annette Jansen



Ramblers 1 Holiday. This year we chose the ancient Shire of Rutland – the smallest county in England and one that hardly anyone has heard of. We booked through Ramblers Countrywide Holidays and nine of our U3A group linked up with other participants to make a party of 17 walkers staying in the 400-year-old Whipper-In in Oakham.

Oakham is a historic county town. At its centre is the Town Cross with the original village stocks with 5 holes (of which there are only 3 such in England). Why 5 holes, we wondered! Nearby is the Great Hall of Oakham Castle; dating from 1120, it is in amazingly good condition. It has been the custom over the centuries for each visiting peer of the realm to present a horseshoe as a gift and the interior walls are hung with 240 of these in various styles and sizes. The surrounding villages are very old and picturesque with many thatched cottages. Being a farming area with little industry and no motorways, there has been no pollution – nothing was spoiled or changed until 1971 when it became necessary to supply water to the growing New Towns of Corby and Peterborough. At this time a reservoir was planned, and, as a result, Rutland Water – covering 3,100 acres – was created by constructing a huge dam between the Rivers Gwash and Welland and flooding the land between them. Some villages were submerged but 2 remain on a long peninsular in the lake. Rutland Water's most famous landmark is Normanton Church Museum; the original church dates back to the 14th century and part of it was saved from the reservoir by building a protecting wall around it and raising the floor level by 10 feet so that it now stands at the end of a causeway in the lake. It houses an interesting display of fossils and photos from the age when the family worshipped and married there.

Rutland Water has attracted ospreys and they now breed here regularly – the first in central England for 150 years. They arrive mainly from West Africa in March with their life-time partner; their fledglings hatch in May and by about 5 weeks are ringed for identification purposes. In September, flying alone, they leave for West Africa. The youngsters have never even caught a fish for themselves when they set out alone and unguided, but when they return to Rutland 2 or 3 years later it will be with their life-time partner.

Some of us left the walkers for a day and visited Burghley House, England's greatest Elizabethan residence. Built in 1550 by William Cecil, the first Lord Burghley, it continues to be inhabited by a direct descendant – although a Preservation Trust administers it. The rooms on display have been furnished by the Cecils over the centuries and are magnificent. Some of the 350 original oil paintings collected by the family during excursions to Italy are also on display.

But the purpose of the holiday was to walk and we covered many miles on foot; it's unspoilt and easy terrain with the exception of the ploughed fields which get larger the more you cross! On one walk we saw a red kite hovering over a barn before it drifted away without even a wing-flap. As the brochure said: "a rustic gem and a little piece of old England."

Annette Jansen-Holland

(i) Rutland is the smallest historic English county for which the motto "Multum In Parvo" {much in little} was adopted by its county council in 1950. Rutland's only two towns are Oakham, the county town, and Uppingham, whose market was granted by Charter in 1281 by Edward I. Rutland Water has a similar surface area to that of Windermere. Rutlanders are proverbially called Raddlemen. A traditional game called Nurdling – which dates back to the Middle Ages – is played there; this involves hurling 13 old pennies into a hole drilled through the seat of an oaken settle.

Editor

Freedom Pass Explorers • Leader Val Gosden



On a gloriously sunny day in August, we travelled to Bushey, Herts, via the comparatively new Overground system that starts at New Cross. These trains are much quieter, smoother and more spacious than standard Underground trains, and it is a joy to travel on them. Our arrival at Bushey station was somewhat disappointing as we were confronted with busy roads and large D.I.Y. stores, but we soon found a café which was clean and inexpensive – a mug of tea costing a mere 50p and coffee 70p. We have often received excellent service from the cafés we have visited, and this was no exception. Following our lunch at the café, we visited nearby Oxhey Park and walked alongside a river that has ducks and riverside plants, including bulrushes, before returning to Bushey station and then home by a more direct route.

Our trip out in September involved a rather long journey on two trains and a bus – the latter passing through leafy Surrey – until we reached The Harrow Inn at Farleigh. We enjoyed welcome refreshments and lunch here, and then went for a short country walk (enjoying a few blackberries on the way) before heading back home.

Val Gosden

ENTERTAINMENT

Composers in Verse

The author of “Ian Brydon’s History of Western Music” has also published a volume of verses on composers of classical music. Several copies were sold last year, most of them after they were offered by an online book store at a discount of 105%. Other copies were given away free with the August 2009 issue of “Masochism Monthly”. To publicise the work, the publishers have given U3As permission to reprint some of the verses without the usual fee. A few are given below. Others may appear later.

Ian Brydon

Paul Dukas

(“The Sorcerer’s Apprentice“)

Hollywood said to Paul Dukas,
“We ain’t come here to praise yer,
But could you do the Backing Tape
For Mickey in Fantasia?”

Liszt

A pugilistic pianist,
Two dozen notes beneath each fist.

Mozart

Mozart wrote a pretty tune,
Then wrote it once again.
Then twice more, and pretty soon
This tedious refrain,
Familiar as the clock which chimes
Each quarter hour throughout the day
Had served its turn one thousand times –
Hence the prefix “K”.

Wagner

In outsize operatic medium,
Small fun, and very largely, tedium.

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

October	Dr. Ann Kneif	The Bevin Boys
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

Be nice to your kids; they'll choose your nursing home.