

# SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

October 2018



**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**

## NOTICES

### **Coffee Morning for New Members and Group Leaders**

All new members who have joined during 2018, together with group leaders and/or their deputies, are invited to attend a coffee morning at Ockley Court, Alder Close, (Off Main Road, Sidcup, almost opposite Orchard Road) at 11 am on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> November. This will be preceded by a meeting of group leaders at 10.15. It would be appreciated if new members could indicate their intention to attend by informing any member of the Committee in advance.

**George Murrell**

## GROUP NEWS

### **Local History 3 • Leader Christine Withams**



We visited The British Library in September to see the free exhibition “Windrush: Songs In A Strange Land.” In June 1948, approximately 500 migrants from the Caribbean arrived at Tilbury Docks on the *Empire Windrush*. This small exhibition showed the difficulties these people faced when they arrived in the UK. Their welcome and job opportunities were limited and many struggled to fulfil their potential whilst contributing greatly to the needs of the communities they became a part of.

Whilst here, we had an opportunity to discover more of the facilities provided at the British Library. The large centrepiece, a six storey bronze and glass tower, houses the private collection of King George III; it contains over 85,000 volumes. In the Sir John Ritblat Gallery, “Treasures of the British Library,” we saw some of the world’s most exciting, significant and beautiful books, manuscripts and sound recordings ranging from The Magna Carta and Shakespeare to the Beatles. The many Illuminated Manuscripts, including The Lindisfarne Gospels, are breathtakingly beautiful. There is a large Philatelic exhibition – the largest permanent display of stamps in the world – with over 80,000 items including stamps, airmails, banknotes and postal history from around the world. There is a gift shop and a book shop and several places to eat and drink; our choice was the Terrace Restaurant providing both indoor and outdoor seating. There is a large poster on the wall in the entrance hall welcoming people who fall into many categories. Maybe I was a “local fancying a cup of tea.” The last two lines welcome all: “Welcome curiosity. Welcome imagination. Welcome U.K. Welcome world. British Library: 20 years of welcomes.”

**Ilena Harrington**

## Local History 2 • Leader Pauline Watling



On a lovely warm summers day, we walked along the Regents Canal to the Ragged School Museum in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The museum was opened in 1990 in the premises of the former Dr Barnardo's Copperfield Road Ragged School. The school opened in 1877 to serve the children of Mile End with a basic education; it was the largest of its kind at the time. At the heart of the museum is a unique classroom, where visitors can experience a glimpse of Victorian life. The room has been recreated in one of Dr Barnardo's original classrooms, restored as it was in the 1870s when the social reformer set up this free school. The classroom is equipped with authentic and well-used school desks, slate writing boards, blackboards and easels and even dunce hats!

On leaving the museum, we walked back along the canal to the DLR and returned to Greenwich where we had lunch. Everyone agreed that it was another interesting visit for our Group – thanks, Peri, for arranging such a good day.

### Helen Watling

## Book Reading • Leader June Reid



Our book for September was *Cousins* written by Salley Vickers and chosen by Jan. This story is a rich family drama with many layers. The author is an accomplished writer and the narrative grips from the start. Young Will Tye has suffered an appalling accident. This terrible event causes ripples through three generations of the eccentric and complex Tye family. Old tragedies and dangerous secrets are revealed. It is a complex and interesting book. We all enjoyed it.

### June Reid

**i** There have been many London Bridges since the original Roman crossing in 50 AD. Made from wood, early versions were susceptible to fire, storms, and occasional invading armies. The first stone bridge was started in 1176 when it was common for men of the cloth to design buildings as they were taught the art of building arch structures out of stone in the Monastic Orders. Completed in 1209, this new London Bridge took 33 years to build but lasted more than 600 years. It was 26 feet wide, and about 800–900 feet long, supported by 19 irregularly spaced gothic arches, founded on starlings set into the river-bed. It featured a central chapel, a host of shops and houses (the rent from which funded its construction and upkeep), gates, a drawbridge and even waterwheels and a mill. The houses were up to seven storeys high and jugged over the river by as much as 6½ feet on either side. Many practically touched in the middle, making the bridge more of a tunnel in places. The bridge became the site of calamities: in 1282, five arches collapsed under the pressure of winter ice. Houses on the bridge were burnt during Wat Tyler's Peasants' Revolt in 1381 and during Jack Cade's rebellion in 1450. A major fire of 1633 that destroyed the northern third of the bridge formed a firebreak that prevented further damage to the bridge during the Great Fire of London in 1666. By 1762, all the houses were removed, the carriageway was widened to 46 feet, and the two central arches were replaced by one great arch at mid-span. The removal of the central pier led to serious erosion of the riverbed, and gravel was constantly poured to protect the remaining piers. Finally, the maintenance became too much of a burden, and the City held a design competition for a replacement of the medieval bridge.

### Editor

## GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER/CONTACT	VACANCIES
 <b>Bird Watching</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday (10.00 am)  	<b>Roy Black</b>  020 8302 9942	Vacancies
 <b>Book Reading</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday (2.00–4.00 pm)	<b>June Reid</b> 020 8302 7887	Vacancies
 <b>Craft &amp; Chat</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday (10.00 am) 	<b>Pauline Springhall</b> 020 8308 1975	Vacancies
 <b>Family History</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues  & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs  	<b>Judith Swain &amp; Kate Berry</b> 020 8303 5759	Vacancies
 <b>Handcrafted Cards (Group 2)</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday (2.00–4.00 pm)	<b>Val Gosden</b> 020 8300 0664	2 Vacancies
 <b>Local History (Group 3)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday morning	<b>Christine Withams</b> 020 8850 4144	Vacancies
 <b>Mono Digital Photography</b> Quarterly (approx.) 	<b>Roy Morton</b> rory.m2014@gmail.com	3 Vacancies
 <b>Needlecrafts</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday (2.00–4.00 pm)	<b>Val Gosden</b> 020 8300 0664	Vacancies
 <b>Pot Pourri</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 	<b>Pat Laughton</b> 020 8302 9984	3 Vacancies
 <b>Ramblers (Group 2)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday (4–5 miles)	<b>Helen Salmon</b> 07786 465862 or 020 8309 1689	Vacancies
 <b>Rummikub® (Group 1)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday (2.00–4.00 pm)	<b>Kathy Cordell</b>  020 8300 4573	Vacancies
 <b>Science</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday (2.00–4.00 pm)	<b>Trevor Ford</b> 020 8302 7635	2 Vacancies
 <b>Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath)</b> Mondays (10.00 am)   £	<b>Gay Braybrook</b>  020 8309 6372	Vacancies
 <b>Theatre Trips: Musicals</b>   £	<b>Sue Brooks</b> 020 8298 1117	Vacancies
 <b>Wine Appreciation</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (7.30–9.30 pm) £	<b>Roger Brown</b> 020 8850 5362	Vacancies

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 that group.

 Not during school/bank holidays  
 Temporary point of contact

£ A charge applies  
 Certain seasons only

 Open to all  
 Times vary

