

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

September 2012



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

NOTICES

Creative Writing Group

Any member who is interested in forming a "Writing Group" is requested to contact George Murrell on telephone 020 8850 2046, or email george.murrell@btinternet.com.

Initially, a likely format for meetings would be as follows:-

- Approximately 8/10 members.
- Monthly 2 hour meetings.
- Venue: probably a member's home.
- Members prepare a written work (which would be either a set subject or own choice) prior to each meeting.
- Approximately 10 minutes would be allowed for each member to read out his or her work and invite comment and criticism from the other members.

Since I have no qualifications whatsoever, the involvement of any members with previous experience of this type of activity would be very welcome.

George Murrell

The Fan Museum

Guided tours for groups are available at the Fan Museum, Crooms Hill, Greenwich. In addition, the Orangery can be booked for the exclusive use of groups for morning coffee or afternoon tea. Light lunches can also be pre-booked by groups.

Further details are available on the website <http://www.thefanmuseum.org.uk/> or telephone 020 8858 7879.

George Murrell

Help Needed

Volunteers are required to perform the task of Registrar, and the task of meeting and greeting new members prior to meetings. Also, owing to holidays during the October meeting, we will need help to set out the tables and chairs and to stack them away afterwards. Please speak to me if you would like to help.

Anne Evans

November Speaker

Our speaker on 15th November is Mr. D. Fulford who will speak on the subject of Antique Clocks and Watches. He is willing to discuss items brought along by U3A members, and to give valuations along the lines of the BBC's 'Antiques Roadshows'. If you have an item that is too large to carry, Mr. Fulford suggests that you bring a photograph to show him.

Val Gosden



After several weeks of increasing frailty, Vera Whipp died peacefully in Worcester Royal Hospital on 28th August at the age of 92.

Many U3A members will have a variety of memories of her in the various fields of voluntary work in which she always engaged; she was never too overloaded to help. When she was deemed to be too old to work any longer in the speech therapy department at Queen Mary's, she transferred to their Records Department and stayed there well into her 80s. Her next passion was rambling – serious rambling like a trek in the foothills of Everest and Nepal. For the past 30 or more years it has been a joy – and challenge – for me as I have tried to keep up with just some of her exploits – a formidable task! She could combine a ten-mile ramble with serious blackberry gathering or collecting horse manure for her rose garden or wind-fall apples; all of which were carried back to the car in her back-pack. Frank, her late husband, was equally involved in our excursions. I can recall being chased by a bull, being stampeded by a herd of cows, being lost in Kent after sunset and using up the next-to-last match to read the map, but to them both it was what rambling is all about, and how we enjoyed our Saturday afternoons!

Her Funeral will be for family members only in Worcester. There will be a local gathering on Friday 28th September in Bexley to celebrate her life; this is a chance for those who knew her to share their memories.

Annette Holland ☎ 01322 522252

GROUP NEWS

Local History 3 • Leaders Christine Witham & Barbara Savill



This group visited Tower Bridge on Wednesday 11th July 2012. There was a small turnout as many of our members were on holiday, and the weather was very changeable on the day.

We travelled by bus from London Bridge Station to Tower Bridge, which meant that we then had only a short walk to the booking office. We took the lift to the upper levels which had seemed tiny from ground level, but were surprisingly spacious and contained displays of bridges around the world. The second level had small sliding windows that could be opened – a real boon for camera buffs. In the second tower there were films and information about the bridge's construction. We finally returned to ground floor level for a visit to the old Engine Rooms. It was a truly memorable day.

Richard Johnstone

Local History 3 • Leaders Christine Witham & Barbara Savill



Our trip for August was to the Garden Museum in Lambeth Palace Road. The current exhibition is 'The Plant Seekers' and includes items from the RHS Lindley Library and there are some good photographs with this.

Upstairs there is a permanent collection covering three decades and some ongoing purchases, donations, and bequests which could be 400 years old. We spent some time discovering just what the display items were, but resorted to the information provided for one or two of them. In the garden is the Tomb of John Tradescant the Younger (1608-1662). There is some very interesting information regarding the carving; this is on a separate notice sheet of papers obtainable from reception. There is also a shop and a café but, if you require lunch, it is advisable to let them know beforehand.

We were able to use the 2 for 1 vouchers; our group was small but we did enjoy the visit. We departed as we wished and quite enjoyed the walk back to Charing Cross and also took in the atmosphere of the Olympics on our way.

Doreen Freeman

Freedom Pass Explorers • Leader Val Gosden



Our trip out in July was a fairly local one. Despite the absence of sun and the presence of rain and cloud, fifteen of us met at the bus stop and travelled to Petts Wood. Bearing in mind that this is the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, a visit to nearby Jubilee Country Park was a 'must'. This is quite a large park and much of it has been left as meadow, and must surely be a botanist's paradise, with many varieties of plants and grasses to be seen. Most notable were the lovely blue chicory flowers. Despite the park being not so very far away, most of us had never visited it before, so we considered this a worthwhile and pleasant trip out.

In August we visited another Country Park – this time at South Norwood. We were told by a couple of ladies in a café that it was hardly worth visiting as it had been allowed to grow wild and was largely untended. They were right, but it was very pleasant strolling along the paths, seeing the variety of wild flowers and butterflies, and eating our lunches in an almost rural setting. It was hard to believe that this area had once been a sewage farm.

Val Gosden

Ramblers 2 • Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell



On Tuesday 28th August 2012 we met in the tiny hamlet of Hodsoll Street south of Meopham on a glorious, fine day. The walk started in front of the Green Man public house, which was festooned in floral decorations. Opposite this were white clapper board or flint and brick houses with fine gardens. We walked across cow-grazed meadows and found hedgerow fruit to admire. The views of the undulating countryside were stunning. We went past Hollywell Manor (now a retirement home) and a lovely cricket pitch. In the hamlet of Ridley we went into the 700-year old church beside a dairy farm. Opposite the church was a well with a thatched roof. We saw the Angel of Ridley (a modern steel effigy) beside the road with a humorous poem for us to read. The hedgerows were abundant with autumn fruits such as blackberries. After a bit of lane walking and footpaths amongst yet more cows, we arrived back at the Green Man pub for lunch. It was a lovely day out.

Alan Godfrey

10-pin Bowling • Leader Gay Braybrook



This group set off to Cliftonville in August for our annual outing to the coast. As usual, we hired a coach and 24 of us set off. Our driver, Ted, was an ex-HGV driver and he drove us down to Cliftonville in record time! We were made welcome by Buggy's, the 10-pin bowling alley, and refreshments were included in the fee. Unfortunately, the cakes we have previously enjoyed were not available as the cake lady had not arrived, but the coffee was good.

After our games, in which we all did so much better than at Bexleyheath – is this the sea air or is it because the lanes are shorter? – we then departed to Broadstairs for lunch. It was a really hot day so it was good to see the beach busy, and one of our group did go for a paddle. We then just wandered and relaxed soaking up the sun.

Homeward bound and Ted again got us back home in record time. A good time was had by all and we must thank Margaret Scambler for organising this for us.

Gay Braybrook

i Broadstairs gets its name from a former flight of steps through the chalk cliff from the sands up to the 11th century shrine of St Mary on the cliff's summit. The town's crest motto is Stella Maris {Star of the Sea}. Harbour Street, which was cut into the chalk to give access to the sea, is still spanned by York Gate, a portal built by George Culmer in 1540. Originally, it held two heavy wooden doors that could be closed in times of threat from the sea.

Editor











Classical Music 1 • Leader Derick Johnson



Our afternoon of classical music for August was given by Shirley Haynes. We started with Edward Elgar's Overture Cockaigne played by the English Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Boughton. This was followed by the well-known 1812 Overture by Tchaikovsky played by the London Symphony Orchestra. We were then treated to the theme music from John Barry's "Dances With Wolves" which then made a diversion to John Williams's music from "Schindler's List" with Janine Jansen on the violin. This serious interlude was followed by the extremely beautiful "Did You Not Hear My Lady?" by George Frideric Handel sung by Aled Jones – and I don't imagine there would be anyone who would not wish for an encore of this piece. After our break for refreshments, we began the second half with Ralph Vaughan Williams's "The Lark Ascending" played by the English Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Boughton, accompanied by Michael Bochmann on the violin. (I can remember often hearing the skylark ascending from some rough ground close to my workplace at the B.I.C.C. factory near Erith; Vaughan Williams captured the whole feeling of this in his music). Our last pieces were Tomaso Albinoni's Concerto for Two Oboes in G played by I Solisti Veneti, and Edvard Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite № 2 performed by the San Francisco Orchestra conducted by Herbert Blomstedt. This completed our satisfying afternoon of music.

Derick Johnson

GROUP VACANCIES

	GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
	Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30am)	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	Yes
	Book Reading 1 st Thursday	See Group Co-ordinator 020 8300 4291	2
	Darts (at the Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (noon)	See Group Co-ordinator 020 8300 4291	Yes
	Local History (Group 1) 2 nd Wednesday	John Harlow 020 8300 3865	2
	Luncheon Club (Group 2) 2 nd Friday (noon)	Pam Kirk 020 8856 8372	4
	Philosophy (Group 2) 1 st & 3 rd Monday (2.00 pm)	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	2
	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
	Walking in London (3-6 miles) 3 rd Tuesday	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	2

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.

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 is not difficult to run a group and leaders of a full one can advise you how it's done.

PROGRAMME

2012

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	Pat Mortlock	A Country House Christmas

2013

January	Bob Ogle	Biggin Hill
February	Mrs. Austin	Honey
March	John Beckham	Birds of Rye Harbour
April	Ann Knief	Lola Montez – a 19 th Century Adventuress
May	Mr. Guerdon	Chickens

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261
Vice-Chairman	Lesley South	020 8300 8298
Minutes Secretary	George Murrell	020 8850 2046
Treasurer	Christine Smith	020 8304 2305
Membership Secretary	Margaret Scambler	020 8315 0108
Speakers Secretary	Sue Brooks	020 8298 1117
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	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 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; 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

The blindingly obvious is never immediately apparent.