

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

September 2017



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

NOTICES

**U3A National Office
Change of Address**

The Third Age Trust's National Office has now relocated to 52 Lant Street, London, SE1 1RB. The office telephone number is not changing.

George Murrell

(i) The website address has also not changed. Contact details are always shown on the back page of our Newsletters. National Office hours are from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.

Editor

New Members

All members who have joined this year are invited to a Coffee Morning on Thursday the 12th October at 10.30 am at Ockley Court. I hope this will provide an opportunity to get together away from the hustle and bustle of the main meeting. For catering numbers, please let me know if you plan to attend.

Anne Evans ☎ **020 8302 2261**

Website Gallery Page

Pictures taken during various group outings are available to view on the Gallery page of our website as follows:

Ramblers 2: Swanley Park to Bexley on 25/7/17; Oxleas Woods on 27/6/16; Green Chain Walk to Bostall Woods on 23/5/17.

Parks & Gardens Appreciation: Kew Gardens on 27/7/17; Lee, The Tarn, & Eltham Well Hall Pleasaunce on 22/6/17.

Local History: Quebec House, Westerham on 14/6/17.

These pictures are the copyright of Helen Salmon. No reports describing these outings have been received for publication in the Newsletter.

Webmaster

Showcase Some Personal Thoughts

For me, the “Showcase” was a celebration of shared achievement – like the cast party at the end of a show. And yet the show was, itself, the party. Wonderful! Any extra interest shown for individual groups, for Sidcup U3A or for U3A overall was a bonus. But what a bonus! The room was buzzing. Fantastic!

So a public thanks goes to all those involved: Group Leaders and members for putting on such good displays and interaction, Anne for the planning, George for advertising and the rest of the Committee for their commitment.

Trevor Ford, Group Coordinator

“Would Like” Survey

The Speakers Team would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who completed our “Would Like” Survey at the “Showcase” afternoon. We have now analysed in excess of 50 responses and gauged the popularity, or otherwise, of the topics. We have also noted the topics you suggested that we had not included. We shall be meeting later this month to cross-reference all of this information to our speaker lists culled from several different sources and to start ringing round to formulate a programme for July 2018 onwards and into 2019.

Footnote: If the ladies who talked to one of the team about The Edward Alderton Theatre and the profoundly deaf musician are here today, will they please make themselves known to Janet.

Janet Lambern

① Pictures taken during the “Showcase” event appear on the Gallery page of our website. They are the copyright of George Murrell.

Webmaster



Book Reading • Leader June Reid



Our book for August was *The Secret Wife* written by Gill Paul and chosen by Jenny. This was a very popular choice and enjoyed by everyone. It was an intriguing blend of two stories in two different eras. We start with Kitty in London, reeling from the discovery of her husband’s infidelity and still grieving from the sudden death of both her parents. She inherits a cabin in America left to her by her grandfather. Travelling to view this legacy, she determines to learn more about her ancestor. She discovers that her grandfather, Dmitri, was secretly married to Tatiana, a Grand Duchess in Russia. We were then transported to another era, following the characters across the century and through the First World War and the terror of the Russian Revolution. The story is enthralling and gripping – especially brought to life by photographs we found when we researched the characters. It was amazing to find that this young Russian couple actually existed in the history books. The story was beautifully written and was a perfect blend of romance and history. It is highly recommended.

June Reid

Local History 2 • Leader Pauline Watling & Joyce Savinson



On the 9th August, 15 of us visited the Ranger's House adjacent to Greenwich Park – which is actually in Blackheath. We met at 9.30 am and took the 286 bus to Greenwich then changed to the 386. The 386 took us close to the main gate of the park where we walked along the avenue of chestnut trees to the Pavilion for refreshments. Outside, the rain was pelting down. When it had subsided a little, we walked to the Ranger's House where we received a warm welcome. The Ranger's House is a medium-sized red brick Georgian mansion in the Palladian style dating from 1700. The house has had a number of owners and the last owner was Field Marshal Lord Wolseley who stayed there until 1895. In 1897, the LCC acquired the house and renovated it. The house is now the home of the Wernher Collection which belongs to Sir Julius Wernher, a German diamond magnate. There are about 700 items on display. It forms part of his collection of memorabilia and there are a large number of wonderful paintings by famous artists. The collection also includes jewellery, tapestries, furniture, porcelain and some beautiful carved ivories. The day was enjoyable but, unfortunately, the wet weather put a dampener on our day! The Ranger's House is now in the care of English Heritage.

Maureen Woplin & Amelia O'Brien

Local History 3 • Leader Christine Withams



For our August visit, we went to Leighton House Museum, the former home and studio of Frederic Leighton. I knew that there was an exhibition of paintings, but had not realised that every piece of furniture had been removed! We had to immerse ourselves into the late-Victorian art world of Lawrence Alma-Tadema. I must confess I was not aware of this artist, but I did recognise some of the paintings. He is best known for scenes of beautiful women in classical dress posing on white marble terraces. He was a prolific artist, and, with his second wife Laura, he created two remarkable studio-houses in London.

I very much enjoyed this visit on a very wet August day! We will have to go back when Frederic Leighton's furniture is returned!

Christine Withams

Pot Pourri • Leader Val Gosden



Our August trip out was to the Library and Museum of Freemasonry which is celebrating Three Centuries of English Freemasonry. We had a guided tour around this amazing building which was constructed, it seems, with money no object. Fantastic craftsmanship and materials were evident everywhere – up, down, and all around. Our guide gave us some information about Freemasonry, explaining about the significance of many of the things that we could see, and finally taking us into the Grand Temple. Here he explained about who sat where, the rituals that took place, and finishing his talk by playing some music on the organ. We then had an opportunity to look around the various display items, which ranged in size from small badges through to a vast 'throne' which had been specially constructed to accommodate the Prince of Wales (later King George IV) in 1790.

Val Gosden

 For those wishing to visit this museum, it is at 60 Great Queen St, London WC2.

Editor

French Conversation • Leader Steve Hunter



We meet to improve our spoken French in a relaxed atmosphere. Reading from printed texts leads to discussion, questions and answers in French, and in turn leads to increasing confidence when listening to French as well as speaking it.

Steve Hunter

Silver Surfers • Leader Steve Hunter



An informal group, we meet to answer basic questions about computing, apps, mobile phones, and tablets, etc. In addition to answering questions, we try to fit each answer into an easy to understand master framework of how all computers work.

Steve Hunter

i As both groups currently have vacancies, please see the Vacancies page for contact and timing details.

Editor

Ramblers 3 • Leader Trevor Ford



August Walk

Taking the opportunity to make good use of the longer days and British summer weather – no, it didn't rain all day – we ventured further afield to the south coast at the beginning of August. With my sister and her friend accompanying as guests, we played the usual game we Midlanders enjoy in the car: being the first to spot the sea! Instead of making the team climb over Seven Sisters, we did the very easy option of starting uphill; the only hill walking was at the end down into Alfriston village, itself. This did involve juggling with cars at the start and end of the walk, but it saved a tedious uphill struggle along the road. We began by taking in the wonderful views over the Cuckmere, including the Haven, from “High and Over.” From there we mostly contoured along The Comp above and around the deep bowl of Alfriston Country Park. When I was first walking here, 40 years ago, it was sheep-farming country, but the west facing slopes have now been turned over to a huge vineyard that makes white sparkling wine, for which England is gaining a great reputation, even beating the French sometimes. Is that true, Steve?

Navigation is simple up there, since you can even see where you are heading! The track curves northwards, climbing gently up to join the car park and crossing the South Downs Way where the steep, ziggy road comes up from the A27. We took the opportunity to have our trail snacks (nuts, bananas, etc.) so that we could look out over the view northwards, as well as south. From there, we followed the South Downs Way gently at first, then more steeply towards the end down into the village. Being too proud to consult the map, I led us off the path too early and had to make the party retreat back uphill to re-join the correct path. The South Downs Way completes its village entry down an ordinary road and I remember cycling up it with Scouts years ago. We had an excellent pub lunch at The George Inn, Alfriston, although I have previously had more elaborate (and expensive) restaurant meals there also.

Trevor Ford

GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER/CONTACT	VACANCIES
 Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday (10.30 am)	Norma Balfour 020 8303 7693	Vacancies
 Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday (10.00 am)  	Roy Black  020 8302 9942	Vacancies
 Book Reading 1 st Thursday (2.00–4.00 pm)	June Reid 020 8302 7887	Vacancies
 Classical Music 2 nd Friday (2.30–4.30 pm)	Olive Mercer 020 8300 3136	Vacancies
 Darts (at the Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (noon)  	Leader pending  needed, please	Vacancies
 Family History 2 nd Tues  & 4 th Thurs  	Judith Swain & Kate Berry 020 8303 5759	Vacancies
 French Conversation 3 rd Thursday (10.30 am) 	Steve Hunter hunterdigital@hotmail.com	Vacancies
 Handcrafted Cards (Group 2) 1 st Wednesday (2.00–4.00 pm)	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	1 Vacancy
 Meditation 1 st & 3 rd Monday (10.00–11.30 am)	Keith Alker 020 8850 2853	2 Vacancies
 Pot Pourri 2 nd Tuesday 	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	Vacancies
 Ramblers (Group 2) 4 th Tuesday (4–5 miles)	Roy Black 020 8302 9942	Vacancies
 Rummikub® (Group 1) 4 th Monday (2.00–4.00 pm)	Margaret Platt 020 8309 6395	Vacancies
 Silver Surfers 3 rd Tuesday (2.00 pm)	Steve Hunter hunterdigital@hotmail.com	Vacancies
 Ten-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10.00 am)   £	Gay Braybrook  020 8309 6372	Vacancies
 Wine Appreciation 3 rd Wednesday (7.30 pm) £	Roger Brown 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

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 £ A charge applies  Temporary point of contact
 Open to all  Certain seasons only  Times vary  Not intended for beginners

PROGRAMME

2017

September	Ian Bevan	The History of the Crystal Palace
October	Nigel Dawson	Comedy Heroes
November	Heather Woodward	Churchill & Chartwell
December	Joe Mendell	Bob Newhart Rides Again!

2018

January	Russell Bowes	“Dig For Victory”
February	Tony Harris	Henry VIII
March	AGM	<i>NB</i> at The United Servicemen’s Club
	Mike Clinch	Underground
April	Janie Ramsay	What’s It Worth?
May	Colin Pinney	“The Raven” & “The Ancient Mariner”
June	Tony Farnham	Thames Barges

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Colin Barclay	07401 474844
Vice-Chairman	Carolyn Barclay	07401 474844
Vice-Chairman	Sandra Applegate	07717 020611
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 Lamborn	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 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 3rd 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: 52 Lant Street, London, SE1 1RB ☎ 020 8466 6139 www.u3a.org.uk
Greater London South East Network: www.u3asites.org.uk/glondonsenetwork
London Region U3A: www.u3asites.org.uk/london-region
World U3A: www.worldu3a.org **Virtual U3A:** www.vu3a.org

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

Money isn't everything - it isn't even enough!