

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

March 2009



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

NOTICES

AGENDA FOR AGM

- 1 Apologies for absence.
- 2 To receive and approve the minutes of the 2008 AGM.
- 3 To receive and approve the inspected accounts.
- 4 Annual reports.
- 5 Election of:-
Secretary, Treasurer, Speakers' Secretary, Membership Secretary, Group Co-ordinator, Social Secretary, and Welfare Officer. (*NB.* The Chairman was elected for a two year term in 2008 in accordance with the constitution).
- 6 Appointment of Inspector of Accounts for next year.
- 7 Charity to be supported in 2009 (from 1st April until 31st December).
- 8 Any Other Business.

Photography Competition 2009

Following the success of last year's photography competition, we are pleased to announce a new one for 2009, and hope that many members will again submit entries. The competition is to be held at our general meeting on Thursday 17th September; the subject is "ANIMALS" and photographs can be simple portraits or as quirky as you like. Photographs should be taken by members of Sidcup & District U3A within the last 18 months only. They can be highly technical, or just 'look & click', and should be no larger than 7 x 5 inches. The set up can be either 'landscape' or 'portrait', and members can submit ONE or TWO entries. U3A members will again be asked to vote at the September meeting on which photograph they like the best.

Val Gosden

Bexley Staying Put

If you need help with finding a reputable builder, electrician or any other sort of contractor, you can get in touch with Bexley Staying Put. The address is 151 Crayford Road, Crayford, Kent DA1 and the telephone number is 01322 559615. In addition to this service the Bexley Staying Put can offer help with hospital discharge, decorating, security, providing a handy man (or woman) and small adaptations. Opening hours are 9 to 5 weekdays.

John Mercer

DVD – Passion for Churches

Today's programme was loaned to us by the Third Age Trust. They have numerous DVDs, videos, slides, CDs & cassettes on many subjects which can be loaned to U3A members; the only charge being the item's return postage (50p – £2). A small group of us have watched two videos which we borrowed and found 'Clocks' and 'Seven Wonders of the Waterways' to be of great interest. If you feel you would like to set up your own group, then either our Group Co-ordinator or I are willing to help you. There are, for instance, about 30 CDs, cassettes and videos relating to poetry and about 20 DVDs about architecture – which have a connection with today's programme. There are many, too, on the subject of religion, both Christian and other faiths.

Val Gosden

Educational Leaflets

February's Newsletter gave details of educational leaflets that are currently available from the Third Age Trust's National Office. It was further mentioned that they are in the process of reviewing their 'Subject Start Up' leaflets and a recent examination of their website shows that these are now available for the following subjects:

Archaeology; Architecture; Art; Astronomy/Space Exploration; Aviation; Calligraphy; Canals and Inland Waterways; Canasta; Chess; Creative Writing; Cycling; Drama and Theatre; Environmental Studies; European Studies; Film; Fishing; Folk Dance; Food, Genealogy; Geology; Handbell Tune Ringing; Humour; ICT Awareness; International; Jazz Appreciation; Languages; Local History; Media Studies; Oral History; Philosophy; Photography; Practical Music – Singing and Instrumental; Psychology; Sailing, Dinghies, Keelboats and Yachts; Science; Technology and Society; Sport Activities (indoor & outdoor); Storytelling; Textile Crafts; Walking; Wine Appreciation.

Third Age Trust website ☎ 020 8466 6139 email: website@u3a.org.uk

Trip to Canterbury – Thursday 30th April

This day out was announced in the December Newsletter. For those interested in coming on this trip would you please note that it costs £15 and that I shall require full payment at or by the meeting on 19th March at the latest.

Anne Evans



I am very sad to report the passing of Audrey Hayes who died a few weeks after Christmas following a short illness. Audrey was a very keen gardener and when she joined our U3A wanted to join the then current Gardening Group. Unfortunately, like a lot of our groups, it was over subscribed, but nothing daunted Audrey and she set up her own gardening group – and very successful it turned out to be. She was an inspiration to us all and will be sadly missed.

Gay Braybook, Welfare Officer

Parish Wood & Woodlands Farm Trust

Parish Wood. The Council has received a grant of £400,000 to set up a public park in Parish Wood. Nine other London parks have also received a similar amount. There were forty seven applicants and the winners were judged by the number of votes sent in by the general public. The new wood will be planted with trees and shrubs and there will be better access to it from Berwick Crescent. There will be an improved play area and a wild life centre based upon a wetland area with a viewing mount.

Woodlands Farm Trust. The Trust is having a lambing day on Saturday 11th April at its site on Shooters Hill in Welling. Go and see the new born lambs. There will be produce stalls, a cafe and other attractions. The entry fee is £1 for adults and 50p for children.

John Mercer

GROUP NEWS

Ramblers 2 : Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell



Our February ramble took us on the Thames Path from Rotherhithe to Greenwich. We started near the King's Stairs Gardens, went past the Mayflower pub and onto Brunel's Engine pump house, which was built to pump the air out of the Rotherhithe tunnel. Leaving Rotherhithe Street (the longest street in London) we passed a bronze statue of a Bermondsey boy who is reading the story of the Mayflower. Going on around the Spice Island pub, we got our first sightings of Canary Wharf on the other side of the river. We then passed through Surrey Dock Farm, where the animals look well tended, then came to the parade of bronze animals on Barnard's Wharf; we then went onto Greenland Dock. Nearly at journey's end, we passed the statue of Peter the Great, which commemorates his visit to Deptford to learn about ship building. We then crossed over the bridge in Creek Road and into Greenwich. It was a very enjoyable ramble, which most of us finished in the King's Arms for some much needed refreshment.

Den Brittain

Local History 3 : Leader Pam Kirk



Our February visit was to see the "Magnificence of the Tsars" – an exhibition of ceremonial men's dress of the Russian Imperial Court, 1721–1917, at the Victoria & Albert Museum. This exhibition is a collection of rare and lavishly decorated costumes and uniforms worn by the Tsars on display outside Russia for the first time. It follows Russian history from the late 1720s with the gold-embroidered, cloth-of-silver coronation suit worn by boy Emperor Peter II, through to the coronation uniform worn by the last Russian Emperor, Tsar Nicholas II. Also on display were spectacular examples of 18th century men's dress and uniforms of court officials and coachmen, which reveal the high quality textiles and changing fashions adopted by the upper levels of society. These costumes reflect the development of style at the Russian Court, from the highly decorative coats in the French style through to the revival of traditional Russian dress. We were able to explore the bygone era of Imperial Russia through garments which have survived wars and revolutions.

Pam Kirk

Classical Music : Leader Derick Johnson



For our February meeting, John Mercer – in his usual manner – presented us with a fine mix of music which started with George Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue” played by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by André Previn. This was followed by Aram Khachaturian’s Ballet Suite “Masquerade” by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Yuri Simonov. We all love Max Bruch’s Violin Concerto № 1 in G minor by the English Chamber Orchestra conducted by Jeffrey Tate with the brilliant Nigel Kennedy on the violin. We all then gathered for a pleasant chat with tea and cakes. The second half began with Richard Tauber singing Johann Strauss’s “The Gypsy Baron” and “Die Fledermaus” {the bat} with Lotte Lehman and others accompanied by the Berlin Philharmonic 1924 & 28 respectively conducted by Frieder Weismann. Hayley Westenra then sang “Scarborough Fair”, and this was followed by Robert Schumann’s Piano Quintet by the Cherubini Quartet with conductor and pianist Christian Zacharias. It is interesting to know that the lady from Sidcup who became Dame Ethel Smyth was, in her younger days, trained by the Schumanns for the opera, knew Johannes Brahms, and was helped by Thomas Beecham. For a change of mood, we then had Manuel de Falla’s “La Vida, Primera Danza” {the life, first dance} with Catherine Wood on the cello and Ian Farrington on the piano recorded at the Royal Overseas League Music Competition of 2003. The afternoon finished with Tomaso Albinoni’s Concerto № 12 for two oboes by the Italian orchestra, I Solisti Veneti, which is a somewhat unusual, but very enjoyable, combination.

Derick Johnson

Freedom Pass Explorers : Leader Val Gosden



Please note that there will be no trip out on 13th April – which is Easter Monday. Our next ‘exploration’ will take place on 11th May.

Val Gosden ☎ 020 8300 0664

Ramblers 1 : Leader Annette Jansen



This month we decided to leave the muddy fields of Kent and head for the Thames towpath. Kate Ford was our leader of the day and ten of us assembled at Waterloo for the journey to Kingston. From there we headed eastwards along the Thames enjoying looking at the houseboats, locks, weir, the wildlife and, less enjoyably, the aircraft coming into Heathrow Airport. Upon reaching Richmond, we split into small groups for a variety of lunch venues. It was very enjoyable.

Annette Jansen

GROUP VACANCIES

GROUP NAME	LEADER	VACANCIES
Amblers (Group 3) 3 rd Wednesday	Norma Balfour/José Steward 020 8303 7693/020 8302 1627	2
Antiques Appreciation 2 nd Friday (10 am - noon)	Martin Baker 020 8300 1752	1
Bird Watching 1 st Wednesday (morning)	Gay Braybrook/José Steward 020 8309 6372/020 8302 1627	Yes. Notice on board at meetings
Darts (at The Alma pub) 2 nd Monday (midday)	Fred Green	Yes
Freedom Pass Explorers 2 nd Monday	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	Yes
Gardening 4 th Thursday (Feb to Oct)	Jill Bryant/Barbara Olney 01322 524008/020 8302 4289	3
Hand Crafted Cards (Group 2) 1 st Wednesday	Val Gosden 020 8300 0664	Yes
Local History (Group 1) 2 nd Wednesday	John Harlow 020 8300 3865	2
Luncheon Club (Group 2) 2 nd Friday	Joan Smith 020 8300 3566	2
National Trust/English Heritage Various dates & times	John & Olive Mercer 020 8300 3136	Yes
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
Saturday Ramble (4-5 miles) 1 st Saturday (morning)	Gay Braybrook 020 8309 6372	3
10-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath) Mondays (10 am) <i>except school holidays</i>	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 lists, 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.

José Steward, Group Co-ordinator ☎ 020 8302 1627

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

2009

March	AGM	DVD – Passion for Churches, by John Betjeman
April	Mr. M. Heard	The Gardens of Impressionism
May	Mr. T. Moorey	The Most Popular Indoor Activity
June	Mr. N. Arnold	Big Cats in Kent
July	Dr. Gill Stoker	Essentially Ethel
August	Mrs. J. Hay	Freelancing for the BBC
September	Photo competition & quiz	
October	Mr. M. Parkin	Women in Print
November	Mr. R. Smith	Village Signs in Kent
December	Mrs. P. Mortlock	Ightham Mote

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	John Mercer	020 8300 3136
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	José Steward	020 8302 1627
Welfare Officer	Gay Braybrook	020 8309 6372
Social Secretary	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Travel Group Leader	Margaret Platt	020 8309 6395
Raffle Organiser	Judith Bishopp	020 8468 7342
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

Afterthought

Confidence is the feeling you had before you knew better.