

# SIDCUP & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER

October 2009



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

## NOTICES

### Reminiscences

#### An idea for a new U3A Group.

Is anybody interested in helping me form a new group along the following lines?

- To meet once a month in a member's home.
- We would pre-select for each meeting a subject relating to the members' life experiences; for example, "memories of schooldays", "first job" and similar.
- Each member would either give a short verbal presentation, or prepare a short written essay or poem on the selected subject. This would last about ten minutes and include time for comment and discussion by the other members.

At present we do not have a "Creative Writing" or a "Public Speaking" group but maybe such groups could develop from this suggested project. If there is sufficient interest, I would be prepared to act as group leader for a trial period (say 6 months) but I would stress that I have no qualifications or special skills whereby I may be considered in any way a tutor. Perhaps we do have experienced writers and speakers amongst our membership who would be prepared to come forward.

#### For consideration:

- Numbers – Eight would seem to be a maximum.
- Venue – Ideally the same member's home for all meetings but, more realistically, on a rota basis for those with sufficient space. (I can offer on a rota basis).
- Time and day – Monday or Friday of the first week of the month would appear not to clash with other Group activities. I suggested a time of 2.15–3.45pm.

If you are interested in this proposal please contact me ☎ 020 8850 2046

**George Murrell**

### Photography Competition

Congratulations go to the winners of this year's Photography Competition, and thanks to all who entered. The winners were Michael Jordan, who took first prize, and runners-up were Mary Huggins and Olive Mercer. Their entries can be viewed on the "Gallery" page of our website. My thanks also go to Ann Harlow, Mary Allen, Pam Shaw and Mary Huggins for their help in running the competition.

**Val Gosden**

## **Warning**

I recently received a telephone call, apparently a recording, in an American accent, saying, "Attention all Visa and credit card holders. It is likely that interest rates on these cards will be increased within the next month. To get more information, press [number] now." I put the telephone down, but I wonder whether it is either an attempt to get confidential details, or a high-rate telephone line. I reported this to my local police neighbourhood watch, and they said that they will include a warning in their next Neighbourhood information email. Police advice is to put the telephone down.

**Olive Mercer**

**(i)** Further information relating to safer neighbourhoods, including the emails described above, can be found at this website address: [www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods/](http://www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods/).

*Editor*

## **Group Holiday to Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Gloucester** Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2010

The hotel is set in 240 acres of grounds. The facilities of the Sebastian Coe Health Club include indoor pool, gym, sauna, steam rooms, squash, tennis and beauty salon. Price includes bed, breakfast and evening meal, coach to hotel and return home. All bedrooms have en-suite bathrooms, colour satellite TV, radio, hairdryer, trouser press, direct telephone, and tea/coffee making facilities. I am sorry, but there are now only twin rooms available.

Excursions: Wye Valley, the Cotswolds, Cheltenham & Bath.

Cost: £321.00 per person. Cancellation insurance, if required, is £8.00 per person.

I will collect the balance for this holiday at the December General Meeting.

**Margaret Platt** ☎ 020 8309 6395

## **Nominated Charity 2010**

Members are reminded that the charity to be supported throughout 2010 will be decided at the November monthly meeting. Any member wishing to propose a particular charity should submit his or her nomination with a short supporting written statement to the secretary, George Murrell, 76 Chester Road, Sidcup, DA15 8SH, or to any committee member by 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009. Members nominating a charity must be prepared to accept responsibility for the collection arrangements.

**George Murrell**

## **Renewal of Membership for 2010**

At both the October and November main meetings forms to renew your membership will be available for collection near the Tea Bar in the main Foyer. When collecting your own form it would be appreciated if you would also take the form for another member who lives near you and who is not attending the meeting.

Many thanks.

**John Harlow, Membership Secretary**

## Shared Learning Projects

### Keats House, Hampstead

This investigates how the area of Hampstead around Keats House has changed since John Keats lived there. The project findings will help to create a new resource for young children at Keats House. The project commences on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December and thenceforth fortnightly on Tuesdays between 11am–1pm until 23<sup>rd</sup> March with the final presentation on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April. Further details and an application form can be obtained by e-mail from Pat Taylor: [patriciataylor@btinternet.com](mailto:patriciataylor@btinternet.com).

### Foundling Museum, Brunswick Square

A second shared learning project researching the education of foundlings in the 19<sup>th</sup> century commences on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January and thenceforth fortnightly on Mondays between 11am–1pm for a period of twelve weeks. Further details are available by e-mail from Joy Lowe: [joylowe@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:joylowe@blueyonder.co.uk).

**George Murrell**

## GROUP NEWS

### **Classical Music : Leader Derick Johnson**



Alan Griffiths presented his selection for our September meeting starting with Ralph Vaughan Williams' 8<sup>th</sup> Symphony played by the Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli to whom this work was dedicated. The first performance was given on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1956. Frederick Delius followed this with his Dance Rhapsody No 1 played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Norman Del Mar. This piece was composed of many variations and used a wide variety of instruments. We broke off at this point for tea/coffee and cake and our usual enjoyable chat. The second half started with Sir Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto in B minor conducted by the composer with the New Symphony Orchestra. Beatrice Harrison was the cello soloist and she spent several days with the composer to form a joint interpretation. The last item for the afternoon was John Field's Piano concerto No 1 played by the Northern Sinfonia conducted by David Haslam. Field was a contemporary of Chopin but, although Field respected Chopin, this was not reciprocated. This piece was played by Benjamin Frith who was outstanding. Although Field was Irish he introduced a marked Scottish influence.

### **Derick Johnson**

**(i)** In May 1857, the pianist and conductor Charles Hallé created an orchestra to perform at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition, and the orchestra performed there until October 1857. Hallé then decided to continue work with this orchestra as a formal organisation, and it gave its first concert under those auspices on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1858. The orchestra's home for the first part of its history was the Free Trade Hall in Manchester. Now the UK's oldest extant professional symphony orchestra (and the fourth oldest in the world), it supports a choir and a youth orchestra and releases recordings on its own record label.

**Editor**

## **National Trust & English Heritage : Leaders John & Olive Mercer**



Our September visit was to Chiddingstone Castle. It is somewhat mis-named as it was built originally in the 16th century, redeveloped in 1805 in semi-classical style, and then given battlements to make it look Gothic. It was the home of the Streatfield family for many years. After World War Two it became a school for a short time before being bought for £6,000 in 1952 by Denys Bower. He was a passionate art collector who built up a collection of Japanese armour and jewelry, and who had a life-long devotion to the Stuarts, hanging many pictures of that royalty on his walls. He was quite an unusual man who lived a colourful life – so colourful that he served time in Wormwood Scrubs for the attempted murder of his girlfriend. Today, the castle is in the hands of trustees and a devoted band of volunteers. We were fascinated by the visit because so much was unexpected, as, for example, an Egyptian sarcophagus at the top of the stairs and a full sized crocodile in an anteroom. We had lunch in the little café which provided tasty food and was tastefully decorated.

It is well worth a visit and has extensive grounds which we were unable to explore because of heavy rain.

**John & Olive Mercer**

## **Ramblers 2 : Leaders Pat & Alf Cracknell**



Ten members took part in our September ramble which started on Hayes Common on a warm, sunny morning. We went first through woods, part of Keston Common, and then followed a long footpath round fields and woods until we reached the hamlet of Nash. This hamlet was unknown to most of the group but this is hardly surprising since it comprises only a farm and Nash House. We continued uphill through fields and woods past a large red brick Victorian house, which has good views over the valley, until we reached Keston village on the edge of the Common where members were able to refresh themselves at the ‘Greyhound’.

**Mary Webb**

## GROUP VACANCIES

<b>GROUP NAME</b>	<b>LEADER</b>	<b>VACANCIES</b>
<b>Amblers (Group 1)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (10.30 am)	<b>John Harbert</b> 020 8300 5361	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Amblers (Group 3)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (10.30 am)	<b>Norma Balfour/José Steward</b> 020 8303 7693/07957 181808	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Antiques Appreciation (Group 5)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (10 am)	<b>Martin Baker</b> 020 8300 1752	<b>1</b>
<b>Bird Watching</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday (morning)	<b>Gay Braybrook/José Steward</b> 020 8309 6372/07957 181808	<b>Yes.</b> Notice on board at meetings
<b>Boules (Danson Park – seasonal)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday (10 am)	<b>Bart Jansen</b> 01322 522252	<b>5</b>
<b>Bridge</b> Monday	<b>Fred Till</b> 01322 528605	<b>4</b>
<b>Darts (at The Alma pub)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday (midday)	<b>Fred Green</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Discussion (Group 1)</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday (2-4 pm)	<b>Carol Green</b> 020 8300 4603	<b>2</b>
<b>Local History (Group 1)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	<b>John Harlow</b> 020 8300 3865	<b>2</b>
<b>Local History (Group 2)</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	<b>José Steward</b> 020 8302 1627	<b>3</b>
<b>National Trust/English Heritage</b> Various dates & times	<b>John &amp; Olive Mercer</b> 020 8300 3136	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Parks &amp; Gardens Appreciation</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday (Feb to Oct)	<b>Jill Bryant/Barbara Olney</b> 01322 524008/020 8302 4289	<b>2</b>
<b>Play Reading</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday (2-4 pm)	<b>Frank Whipp</b> 020 8300 1064	<b>1</b>
<b>Ramblers (Group 1) (6-7 miles)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday (10.30 am)	<b>Annette Jansen</b> 01322 522252	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ramblers (Group 2) (4-5 miles)</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	<b>Pat &amp; Alf Cracknell</b> 020 8302 0823	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Recorder Playing</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (2 pm)	<b>Mary Hawes</b> 020 8300 0521	<b>6</b>
<b>Saturday Ramble (4-5 miles)</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday (morning)	<b>Gay Braybrook</b> 020 8309 6372	<b>Yes</b>
<b>10-Pin Bowling (Bexleyheath)</b> Mondays (10 am)	<b>Gay Braybrook</b> 020 8309 6372	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Theatre (Group 2)</b> Various matinées	<b>Joan &amp; John Somerset</b> 020 8300 0890	<b>Yes.</b> 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.

**Christine Spencer, Group Co-ordinator** ☎ 020 8300 4291

## PROGRAMME

### 2009

October	Mr. M. Parkin	Women in Print
November	Mr. R. Smith	Village Signs in Kent
December	Mrs. P. Mortlock	Ightham Mote

### 2010

January	Katherine Eames	Climate Change
February	Dr. P. Brandham	Kew in Close-Up
March		A.G.M.
April	Mrs. B. Sadler	The Great Flood of 1953
May	Mr. S. Robinson	The City
June	Mr. M. Harrison	Midsummer Madness
July	Miss J. Aviolet	I am a tulip, what are you?
August	<i>TBA</i>	
September	Mr. H. Townsend	Harry, the Wheelbarrow Man
October	Dr. Ann Kneif	The Bevin Boys
November	Mr. V. Creek	R.A.F. Museum, Hendon
December	Miss Ann Carter	A Celebration of Christmas

## 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	Christine Spencer	020 8300 4291
Welfare Officer	Gay Braybrook	020 8309 6372
Social Secretary	Anne Evans	020 8302 2261

## USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

<b>Travel Group Leader</b>	Margaret Platt	020 8309 6395
<b>Raffle Organiser</b>	Pat Garwood	020 8306 0013
<b>Newsletter Editor &amp; Webmaster</b>	David Smith	020 8304 2305

Please either e-mail contributions to me at [editor.u3a@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:editor.u3a@ukonline.co.uk) or post them to me at 56 Crofton Avenue, Bexley DA5 3AR – typed if possible.

***Please submit contributions by 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month.***

### WEBSITE

[www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk](http://www.sidcup-u3a.org.uk)

*Afterthought*

*There's an old proverb that says just about anything you want it to.*