

Chair's Report

Busy, Busy, Busy....

What is so wonderful about our branch of u3a, is that we can all join in with as much or as little as we like. For me, this month has been super busy with highlights including a Village Visit to Cranbrook, a London Walk around Kennington, and playing host to my Wine Group. Not



forgetting the SUPERB lunch at The Shard's Aqua Restaurant ~ the service, food, wine and views were all excellent and I shared the wonderful afternoon with fellow MOTO members.



I also had the great pleasure of meeting up with six new members at our recent Welcome meeting, and



my thanks to Committee members Elaine, Don and David for supporting on that occasion.

My thanks also go to the Events Team for their organisation of our day trip to Sandhurst....the guided tour was fascinating (even though

I didn't find myself an Officer to bring home!!!!).

And fascinating in a totally different way, was the well-attended Dementia Talk given by Tracy Jackson....informative and indeed thought-provoking. Thank you to Deborah Langworthy for arranging this opportunity.



Are YOU too Busy, or can you help???

Our u3a branch is vibrant and active....but this is because members give a little of their time to help behind the scenes. Somewhat urgently, I ask you all to consider IF YOU CAN HELP AND SUPPORT

YOUR U3A. We desperately need someone to join the Committee and fill the role of Secretary (please note this can also be a shared position if necessary)

Whoever steps forward will have the full support of the Committee members who will do everything they can to make taking on this role as easy as possible.

To help you decide....here's a list of the main responsibilities:-

Book venue for Committee Meetings (6 per year)
Create and circulate Agendas for Committee Meetings

Take Minutes at Committee Meetings and circulate to members

Keep Agendas and Minutes on file

Collate some paperwork for AGM

Collate proposals and nominations for Committee vacancies

Take Minutes at AGM

Keep AGM paperwork on file

Liaise with Kings Hill Community Centre re-bookings for Monthly Meetings

PLEASE give this your serious consideration, and don't hesitate to make contact with me at chair@kingshillu3a.org.uk

Thank you....

I look forward to seeing you all again soon, hopefully at our AGM on Thursday, 1st June.

Melanie Blewer

Next Monthly Meeting

Thursday, 1st June 2023 at 2pm

AGM

followed by

GUY BARTLETT

The Red Arrows

It's hard to imagine flying in a Red Arrow plane in close formation, at 332mph, and performing amazing aerobatics. However, our speaker this month, Guy Bartlett, will create the effect with his excellent talk, illustrated with videos and film. The nine "Hawk" aircraft have been in action together since 1965, entertaining crowds around the world, and we learn the history and the selection of RAF pilots, with their incredible flying skills.

July Monthly Meeting

Thursday, 6th July 2023 at 2pm

JANIE RAMSEY

Jewels

Janie Ramsay was a Director of Sotheby's when the firm was responsible for selling the Duchess of Windsor's magnificent collection of jewellery. Many of the pieces were designed by the Duke and Duchess themselves and then created by the 20th century's most renowned jewellers. Janie will tell us more about this fabulous collection and will give us an insight into the world of international jewellery trading.

Lunch Club

Lunch Club will meet on Friday, 16th June at 12 noon at The Cock Horse Inn, 39 The Street, Detling ME14 3JT. Please let June Rose know by phone on 01634 240655, or by email to junerose43@btinternet.com by Monday, June 12th if you will be joining us.

June Rose

Groups Coordinator

I am pleased to say the groups seem to be working very well at present, with members enjoying the varied activities on offer. Our newest group, for Golf, is now active and there will be more details of how the group runs in next month's newsletter. Two other groups: Pickleball and Repair Cafe, are under discussion at present – more details to follow. Unfortunately, it has been decided that the proposed 'Art in the Open Air' group will not run – but if anyone would like to take this forward then please do get in touch with me, as several members are interested in the idea of joining together for a painting/drawing session outside during the summer.

I wish all our members a very enjoyable time pursuing their interests through our Special Interest Groups.

Elaine Scutt

New Electric Guitar Group

If there is enough interest I am willing to set up a new u3a electric guitar group. This would be for players of a good standard who can play barre chords and scales.

The group would meet up once a month and would welcome members who play rhythm, lead

and bass and who could maybe sing or harmonise over popular songs from the 60s onwards.

(Correction to email address:

Email kevinstephenson@hotmail.co.uk)

Kevin Stephenson

Events Calendar 2023

July 13th Wisley Gardens - Details to follow shortly

September Holiday to Chester - FULLY BOOKED

October Oxford Mini Plant Tour

December 7th Christmas Meal plus Entertainment – Details TBC

Deborah Langworthy

Trip to Sandhurst Military Academy

Sandhurst Military Academy is the British Army's initial officer training centre.

The Royal Military Academy was formed on the site of the former Royal Military College founded in 1801. It amalgamated with the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers in 1947 incorporating the Royal Military Academy formerly in Woolwich, founded in 1741.

Following the ending of National Service in the UK and the closing of the Mons Officer Cadet School in Aldershot, in

1972, Sandhurst became the sole establishment for male initial officer training in the British Army, taking over the



responsibilities for training Short Service Officer Cadets, Territorial Army Officers, and those joining the Regular Army as graduates. In 1984, the Women's Officer Training College Bagshot was also merged into Sandhurst. In 1992, a new Commissioning Course finally unified the training of male, female, and overseas cadets.



We learnt about the selection of potential officers being identified by the Army Officer Selection Board. Interesting to learn that 10% of British Cadets are female and nearly 10% are from abroad. It

was stated that 80% of entrants are graduates but a degree is not required for entry. They have to, however, attend a Divisional Pre-selection Course, which is known to be demanding, both physically and mentally, compressing all the prominent physical tests and mental assessments that each officer cadet undertakes over the year course, into 3/4 weeks.

Basic army training is covered in the first five weeks which, by reputation, are the most gruelling

Cadets on the regular commissioning course nominate two regiments or corps that they seek to join during Junior Term. This choice may be influenced by their instructors, family connections, or by regimental history, among other factors. Each regiment is looking for different qualities in its officers, and each cadet is considered on a case-by-case basis. At the end of the Intermediate Term corps and regiments hold interviews, known as Regimental Selection Boards, to assist the corps and regiments in making offers to Officer Cadets.

We visited the two chapels on site, both very moving especially the general building which incorporated many names of officers who had lost their lives in wars. We also went into the Indian Army Memorial Room dedicated to the Indian officers who served with the British Indian Army.

The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst Collection illustrates the history of the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, the Royal Military College Sandhurst, and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. The collection includes the Gentlemen Cadet registers, historic archives, uniforms, paintings, photographs, and other artefacts.

The highlight of the tour was seeing where the Sovereign's Parade was held. Three such events are held each year outside the Old College. All cadets participate and parade past the Sovereign or his representative. The event includes Trooping the Colour, where the Sovereign's banner is shown. At the end of the Parade, the Colours and the Senior Division leave the parade ground via the Grand Steps of the Old College building. They are followed by the Academy Adjutant on horseback - it is unclear why this happens but has always been a tradition.

Pat Bell

News from the Groups

Art Appreciation

This month we had a fascinating talk from Helen about the Japanese artist Kawanabe Kyōsai. He was born in 1831, the son of a rice merchant and Samurai. He was interested in art

from a very early age, and at three was painting frogs, a subject which was to stay important to him throughout his life. At the age of six, he found a severed head in the nearby river and carried it back to his home. He hid it under his bed and started making pictures of the head. His parents were horrified and made him take it back to the river.

At the age of 10, he studied under the ukiyo-e artist Kuniyoshi. Kyōsai combined his learning from this artist with his subsequent academic training to create his own revolutionary style, creating images from the terrifying and awe-inspiring to the sweet and endearing. Kyōsai is now celebrated for his ability to bridge popular culture and traditional art. During his life and career, he witnessed Japan transform itself from a feudal country into a modern state

At 18 he discovered a passion for sake and brothels, which influenced his work for the rest of his life. He got into the habit of drinking two litres of sake a day, and this helped him to achieve a prolific amount of work. It also got him into a certain amount of trouble and he was once imprisoned for several months and took some time to rehabilitate his reputation. He became the first political caricaturist of Japan and used animals and allegories to comment on the situation in Japan. His nickname became 'the demon of painting'.

This was a new artist to most of us. Helen had discovered him in an exhibition at the Royal Academy last year. We were all intrigued by his work.

Next month, Elaine will be talking to us about the artist Frida Kahlo.

Jill Rutland

Classic Vehicle Appreciation

Members have been busy this month! It began with many members attending the Faversham Car Show, either to show their vehicles or simply to enjoy those being



presented. A great day for photography too when Chris Mason captured an impressive motorcycle and car for all to see.

Thanks were given to Richard Bowles who told The Austin Healey story



from 1946 to 1970 explaining a gap in the market for a performance sports car. The group talked about all the different models - from the Elliot to the Healey 100/4,

100/6; the 100/S standing for Sebring Circuit in Florida, and the 100/M standing for The Le Mans Circuit highly tuned vehicles for racing, then the 3000 model, and on to the frog eye Sprite (so called because of its distinctive headlamps fitted on the bonnet). 10



pictures were shown describing the different models with the original buying price to their current value. This story would not have happened without the vision of Donald Healey's flair for design and styling, and the financial muscle of Sir Leonard Lord the chairman of BMC. We were also made aware of the demise of the BIG Healey with new safety and exhaust emission regulations in the United States together with the beginning of the sad end of motor manufacturing in England. There are many Healey enthusiasts and clubs out there and it's still a popular trendy sports car today.

Many members are now looking forward to attending the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome museum and car show before the end of May.

Cathy Booyesen

Contract Whist

Firstly thanks to Debbie and Trevor who stood in to run this month's session.

Although only 12 played (mainly due to holidays) it was a good and lively couple of hours. Once again Helen came out on top with a great score of 172 - well done!

Whilst several players had successful declarations of 6 they were literally trumped on the very last hand of "no trumps" by John Philbrick with 7. Skill no doubt but perhaps helped by leading with a fistful of high cards - who knows? - but a terrific declaration.

Mike Martin

Digital Photography 1

In May one of our themes was "Beginning with B". As this has been a great year for bluebells, unsurprisingly they featured prominently in our presentations.



However, we had lots of other "B"s to choose from – blooms, blossoms, bridges, a baby and even a

London bus in a very unusual location.

Our second theme was "Shopping". You would think this should be more appealing to women, but the men more than held their own. Their choices included

"Floris Gentlemen's Fragrance Shop" and "Ede & Ravenscroft Ltd", London's oldest tailor, which dates back to 1689. We also had food shopping in Granville Market, Vancouver as well as clothes shopping in Singapore. Handbags also featured!



Our final theme was song titles. They brought back nostalgic memories of our younger days...

Cathy Sargent

Digital Photography 2

Hope you are having the opportunity to enjoy the sunshine and wow the plants in the garden have really taken off.

Our first photo this month is of a row of beach huts



at Southgate. Apparently, several other buildings along the beachfront

have also been painted with the same design.

A totally different photo to illustrate colour which must surely bring joy to see a young couple, a member's

granddaughter and her new husband, watching the fireworks at The Orangery, Turkey Mill in Maidstone. It was refurbished to



host weddings and conferences on two occasions: once in 2004 and again in 2012.

In the past, Turkey Mill was a world-renowned paper mill recorded as a fulling mill between 1629 and 1671 and the peace treaty with Japan was signed on Whatman paper at the close of WWII.

The next subject was Material which proved challenging. Among the entries was a row of neatly



stacked towels and some tartan material pleated into a fan shape; however, we chose this action shot of the granddaughter of a member doing a wing

walk. She scares the family by doing dangerous things and lives life to the full.

Take care. It's still out there.

Brenda Powell

Full Day Walks

On Tuesday 9th May, there were only four from our walking group who could commit. We, therefore, did a local circular walk from Leybourne. Pleased to report the weather forecast was wrong and we had a dry and sometimes sunny walk.

We walked through a bluebell wood to Ryarsh



Church then through fields to the back of West Malling via Offham Church where we met two ladies tracking the scent of a

lost dog with a professionally trained beagle search dog. The lost dog was last seen 3hrs before, chasing a couple of deer towards the Offham Woods.

I met the lady who owned the search dog the following day and her dog had found the runaway dog, very impressive. Isn't it wonderful that we have wild deer in our local woods?

We then walked on to Manor Park; beside the lake was an abundance of bird life, with a wonderful sight of a swan sitting on a nest of six eggs. We had our lunch in the Park, then back to Leybourne passing the Black Death plague pit.



Richard Bowles

Garden Visits

Garden Visits undertook two visits this month. Our first visit was to Squerries in Westerham. A beautiful garden, for which I have tried to obtain a visit for many years.

The garden of 15 acres contains a lake and woodland surrounding a beautiful C17 manor house. The garden, I am told, is lovely throughout the seasons from the spring bulbs to later-flowering borders.

A cenotaph commemorating General Wolfe (who grew up in Westerham at Quebec House) can be seen in the garden and a C18 dovecote. The garden had many lawns, yew hedges, ancient trees, parterres, azaleas and many roses.



Our second visit was to Bilting House near Ashford. The house with a vivid history is set in a beautiful part of the Stour Valley.



We were shown around by the head gardener, Richard. The vast garden comprising 6 acres had a ha-ha. We obviously had chosen

the best time of the year to visit, as the garden had a great display of rhododendrons, azaleas and ornamental shrubs. There was even a woodland walk with spring bulbs. We also saw an arboretum with the recent planting of specimen trees.

Pat Bell

Half-Day Walks 1

A select group of nine walkers set off from our house on the edge of Bedgebury Forest on a beautiful sunny spring morning.

The 4-mile undulating walk was planned to make the most of the dry weather and the views of the forest and surrounding countryside.

We set off down to the car park at the visitor centre passing some lovely bluebell woods on the way, and walked in a clockwise direction



across the top of the valley. We could see the old Bedgebury school and Goudhurst village in the distance.

We then walked down the grassy valley to pass Marshall's Lake on our right-hand side, splendid in the sunshine. Then into the pinetum itself. It was a shame we were a couple of weeks too early to enjoy the azaleas and rhododendrons in the 'glory hole', as the spring season has been so late this year.

We then began the long winding climb along forest paths, meeting a logging machine on our way. A good thing all the party were nimble enough to leap out of the way onto the bank as Grahame (the forestry logger) was taking no prisoners. Then back to the café for a well-deserved refreshment break before climbing the last hill back to the cars.

Miggy Yeo

Journey Challenges

Our journey challenge for this month was to Hawkhurst. It is really two villages in one – the tranquil settlement in the oldest part known as The Moor, and a pretty shopping area with a covered walkway at Highgate, which is almost 200 years old!



Hawkhurst is famous for the group of smugglers known as the Hawkhurst Gang. The Gang operated a smuggling ring across the southeast of England

from 1735-1749. The Oak and Ivy Inn in Hawkhurst was the headquarters of the gang, which was only defeated after a pitched battle with the local militia.

Today Hawkhurst is proud to have the first digital cinema in the UK, called Kino, and it was here that we had our lunch in a small yard, which was a sun trap.

We saw Hawkhurst War Memorial, which is an impressive granite monument about 10 feet high situated at the junction of High Street and Highgate Hill. It lists fatalities of World Wars 1 and 2 and one name of a fatality in Afghanistan in 2007.

Pat Bell

London Walks 1

Notting Hill and Holland Park

After coffee at Ladbroke Grove, we walked leisurely down Elgin Crescent. This area was the jewel of the Ladbroke Estate comprising beautiful houses with private communal gardens. In 1837 the Hippodrome racecourse ran around this

hill, but the gradient proved too dangerous for the horses.

We made a brief visit to the catholic church of St Francis of Assisi, where we saw a memorial plaque to the parishioners who had died in the Grenfell Tower fire. We walked on to Avondale Park which was the site of pig farms in this squalid area back in the 19th century. On Walmer Road, we saw the renovated Bottle Kiln, which is a remnant of the brick-making industry that was common in this area also in the 19th century.



We climbed up Lansdown Rise to visit St John's church. Here we viewed an exhibition of the history of the development of Notting Hill from its very lowly status to the extreme affluence of the current day.

Travelling along Lansdowne Road we were admiring the beautiful garden of one of the houses when we were invited by the gardener to view the even more spectacular rear garden, to the surprise of the owner Lady Ama Bell. We declined her invitation to view the house interior, much as we would have liked to do so. At the end of the road, we saw the tall Art Nouveau mansion block, "Lansdowne House", designed in 1904 for the South African mining magnate Sir Edmund Davis to home his many artist friends. Their names are listed on a large blue plaque.



From this relatively peaceful setting, we crossed the very busy Holland Park Road to see the statue of St Volodymyr, a ruler of Ukraine between 980 and 1015. This was erected in 1988 to celebrate the 1000th year of Christianity in Ukraine.

We then arrived at Holland Park where we enjoyed a leisurely stroll through the Kyoto Gardens and the frescos in the cloisters of Holland House. Preparations were underway for



"Opera Holland Park", a series of grand open-air productions. We finished our walk when we reached the very busy Kensington High Street where we enjoyed a well-deserved lunch.

Roma Elson

London Walks 2

Our London Walk to Kennington started in the delightful Collective Café in Kennington Park, first opened in 1897!

Kennington was first mentioned in the Domesday Book then known as Cheninton, it was given to Edward the Black Prince in 1337 and the park was formally known as Kennington Green or Common.

In 1852 the Common was converted to "a pleasant place of recreation" and renamed Kennington Park.

In 1848 the Chartist movement held its first rally in Kennington Park, where the very first Daguerreotype image photo was taken of a crowd.

Tony, who was born in Kennington and calls it his "Manor," took us through the park into St Agnes place where back in the 1960s a huge squat took place which lasted for almost 30 years. At one time it had its own Radio station and a Rastafarian temple. One of the most famous visitors and squatters was Bob Marley.

A most unfortunate act took place on 15th October 1940, when the large trench air-raid shelter beneath Kennington Park was struck by a 50lb bomb. The number of people killed remains unknown; it is believed by local historians that 104 people died. Forty-eight bodies were recovered.

We then visited Prince Albert's Model Cottage which was the name given to a model dwelling designed in the mid-19th century to offer an alternative form of accommodation for the poor. It was first erected and displayed in the Crystal Palace exhibition and moved to its present position in 1852.

Our next visit was to St Marks Church which was built on the site of the old gallows corner on Kennington Common.

We then moved onto the adjacent Kia Oval Cricket ground where we were fortunate to be shown inside the ground.

After a brief look at the Beefeater gin distillery (unfortunately closed), we stopped for lunch at the Pilgrims Pub where to our pleasant surprise our food was charged at half price!



We also visited the Durning Library, built in 1889 and designed by Sidney Smith who was also the architect of Tate Britain. And then on to The Cinema Museum, originally the Lambeth workhouse where Charlie Chaplin, who was born in Kennington, stayed.

Our last visit was to the Imperial War Museum before our journey home.

Tony Metcalfe

London Walks 4

Ticket To Ride? Rail strikes and a bank holiday meant this was only our second outing of the year.

Our first stop was Baker Street to try and detect the 'real' 221B address of Sherlock Holmes and learn



how one of his adventures inspired the £8-million robbery of Lloyds Bank there in 1971.

From there we walked alongside the boating lake in Regent's Park towards St John's Churchyard to find the grave of Joanna Southcott, a 19th-century prophetess who claimed to be pregnant with the second Messiah.

We halted for lunch and a quick quiz about Test cricket at Lord's.

The final stop was the Abbey Road studios to listen to Elgar's 1931 recording of Land of Hope and Glory and re-create that famous Beatles' picture on the zebra crossing.

(Photos: Bill Burr)



Maurice Chittenden

Makers of History

Our talk this month was on the social reformer and co-founder of the National Trust, Octavia Hill. Born in 1838, it is perhaps remarkable that it is her name we remember rather than her two male co-founders, Robert Hunter and Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley.

Although from a prosperous family and educated solely by her mother until the age of 14, Octavia was heavily influenced by the ideals of her grandfather, the social reformer, Dr Southwood Smith. A bright child, she also read widely and at an early age was

aware of the deplorable conditions endured by the urban working-class poor living in dilapidated houses, neglected by landlords only interested in collecting the rent.

At the age of 26, Octavia was entrusted with the management of properties owned by the wealthy art critic, John Ruskin, who was impressed by her determination to do things differently. She got to know her tenants personally and improved their living conditions, provided she was satisfied that her tenants played their part in meeting her standards, such as sending their children to school, avoiding overcrowding and doing what they could to “better themselves”. She saw this as the only way to avoid an endless cycle of charity and almsgiving. Although she had empathy for her tenants, her Victorian values of self-improvement led some to view her as overly harsh and judgemental.



Octavia Hill by John Singer Sargent, 1898

However, it was her belief in ensuring that green spaces were provided and conserved for people to enjoy in their leisure time that led to her participation in conservation movements and ultimately to her becoming a co-founder of the National Trust, which was established in 1894.

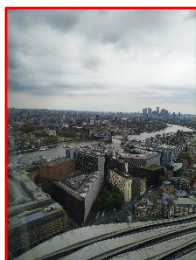
A museum dedicated to her life and work was opened in 1994 at her original home in Wisbech, near Ely in Cambridgeshire. She died in 1912 and is buried in Holy Trinity Church in Crockham Hill, near Westerham, along with her sister, Miranda, and long-term companion, Harriet Yorke.

Joan Warren

MOTO

During May, some MOTO members went to see the comedy “Arsenic and Old Lace” by Joseph Kesselring at the Oast Theatre in Tonbridge. It was absolutely enthralling and gave us lots of laughs. The whole drama was so clever. The actors' timing was impeccable. The production was so popular that the theatre needed to put on an extra performance.

10 members had a lunch date at The Shard, where we enjoyed a lovely lunch with good wine and



spectacular views over the city. It was such a pleasant way to spend an afternoon.

Recently the MOTO quiz team went to a quiz in West Malling hosted by CHIP Productions in aid of the British Red Cross. Most of us went along in our PJs as the theme for the evening was a Pyjama quiz. It was a very entertaining evening although we did not win.



If any members are willing to host an outing please let Di or Deborah know so that it can be put on the monthly programme which is sent out shortly after the meeting on the 4th Wednesday of each month. New ideas are always welcome.

Vivienne Lindridge

Motorcycling

This month's ride was to Hastings; we met on a sunny, slightly cool morning at the Hop Farm, Paddock Wood.

After our greetings and pre-ride briefing, we set off ably led by Martin Leahy, who also planned the route.

And what a route it was, through the Weald of Kent, lovely runs through tree-shrouded lanes, stopping at the Hawkhurst Fishery for essential coffee/tea and cakes. After a pleasant stop where we caught up on news and exchanged the usual banter, we set off on the final leg to Hastings.

We arrived in Hastings and after a lot of faffing about finally paid our parking fees; this used to be free.

Then off to the chippy, for our fish and chip lunch, which was enjoyed on the beach under a sunny sky.

I then led the ride back to civilisation, we stopped at the Hartley Farm Shop in Cranbrook for more refreshments. This was another pleasant break where we could talk and relax; I said my farewells as I had to get home.

We have not agreed on a destination for the June ride, But I am thinking of Deal, and also fitting in an evening run locally.

One last piece of news, I have just passed the Institute of Advanced Motorists National Observer Assessment.

This qualifies me to coach riders up to the advanced test level.

Bob Phillips

Nordic Walking

Beautiful views and even racehorses to view on the walk in Barming. An off-road circular walk with fantastic paths.



Jeanne Couch

Play Reading 2

Our play this month was "Haunting Julia" by Alan Ayckbourn. A departure from his normal style, being more of a "straight" play. Nonetheless still containing some of his normal humour and wit.

Written in 1994 the play is about Julia, a 19-year-old talented musician, who committed suicide 12 years earlier. She haunts the three men who were closest to her both through their memories and the supernatural.

Her father has found it difficult to let her go. Her boyfriend has unanswered questions. And the third man holds the answers to secrets the other two never knew.

Do ghosts really exist? Do the three men have something more to tell about Julia's sad death? This is a gripping and hauntingly tense tale of the supernatural, which kept us all guessing to the very end.

Esme Streatfield

Short walks

After meeting at Allington Open Space, we set out to walk to Cobtree Manor Park by walking down the road to Allington Lock, along the river and cutting through to Forstal Road to get to Cobtree Manor Park.



When approaching Allington Lock we caught sight of a swan in full flight over the Lock.



Continuing along the riverbank there were many things to look at and in particular the artwork under the Motorway bridge. After crossing the road into the Park we walked through the wood which was full of bluebells, and continued walking around the Park admiring the changing scenes of Spring.

It was a lovely morning for walking and when arriving back at Allington Lock we were able to enjoy a coffee at The Little Old Toll House before walking back up the hill to our cars.

Janet Perrett

Ten-Pin Bowling

Eight members bowled this month. The next meeting has been booked for Wednesday, 7th June at Hollywood Bowl Maidstone. Three Games are £9. Please arrive by 11.00am.



If this is of interest to you or would like more information I can be contacted at 07305-926811 or roycsimpson@hotmail.com

Roy Simpson

Village Visits 1

Our visit this month was to Trottiscliffe, locally known as Trosley. We started by studying the geography and archaeology of the area. There has been a settlement here since before Roman times, on the spring line below the



North Downs. The Normans established the church and manor house (now Trosley Court) under Bishop Gundulf of

Rochester.

We then went to the medieval church of St Peter and St Paul, which had been mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086). We admired the stained-glass windows, some of which dated back to 1342, and learned that the pulpit had come from Westminster Abbey. The church still has box pews, and outside there is a fine example of a flint-knapped wall.

In the churchyard is the grave of Graham Sutherland, the prolific artist, who created a large tapestry for the new Coventry Cathedral. Among his other works was the controversial portrait of Sir Winston Churchill, which was destroyed after his death by his wife, Clemmie.



We then moved on to the village itself – it has no shops since the former Post Office closed in 1984, but has two pubs, The George & The Plough. When the latter closed in 2017, it was bought by an association of local residents to save it from falling into the hands of a property developer, who wanted to convert it into a house and build a second home in its car park.

By the time we had finished our tour of the village, we had viewed all 22 of its listed buildings, many of



which were brick-built cottages and oasts from the 16th century onwards. At the very end of our visit, we discovered a link

to the agricultural past – the Trosley Community Farm (on Green Lane).

(Photos: Brian Elson)

David White & Cathy Sargent

Village Visits 2

Our visit to Cranbrook started with a guided tour of the Museum housed in the 500-year-old Rectory Cottages.

We learnt about the Roman artefacts, the development of the iron industry and the village's importance as a centre for the cloth industry.

We saw works of art by the well-known Cranbrook Colony, showing scenes of domestic life in 19th-century rural Kent.

Outside St Dunstan's Church, we noted its size and splendour and the huge West Tower.

After a splendid lunch at Kypseli Greek Taverna, we wandered along to the 200-year-old Windmill for



another guided tour. The Union Mill is England's tallest working smock mill, and some of the group were brave enough to climb to the top for far-seeing views of the surrounding Wealden countryside.

Melanie Blewer

Wine Enthusiasts

Richard and Dee were our hosts on this occasion, their theme for the evening being Greek wines.

We heard how Greece has a long tradition of winemaking stretching back many thousands of years, of their influence on the spread of winemaking throughout the Mediterranean and, in particular, the influence of Greek winemaking culture on the Romans. We also learnt how becoming part of the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century negatively impacted Greek winemaking and then the welcome renaissance of quality winemaking in much more recent times.

Our first wine of the evening was an Assyrtiko white wine, from north-west Greece although its natural home is generally considered to be the beautiful island of Santorini. Our first red of the evening was the lovely "Bizios Nemea Agiortiko 2016" purchased from Virgin Wines. Matured in a 50/50 split of French and American oak this wine was by far and away the highest-scoring wine of the evening, albeit a little on the expensive side for everyday drinking at £27.99 per bottle.

We then tasted a Kir-Yianni Kasli Riza made from Xinomavro vines over 60 years old, which weighed in with a £16.99 price tag. Finally, we tried an Athlon Agiortiko Syrah purchased from Aldi which scored almost as highly as the top-scoring wines but with a more affordable price tag of £7.29.

Although not that widely available for purchase in the UK, having tasted four Greek wines, the consensus was that modern Greek wines are well worth trying when the opportunity arises.

Our thanks to Richard and Dee for such excellent hospitality and some lovely wines to taste.

John Warren

KHaD u3a Information

Monthly General Meetings

These are held on the 1st Thursday of every month in **The Kings Hill Community Centre**, off Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, (Near ASDA) at 2:00 pm. We usually have a speaker following refreshments and a social get-together. Our meetings are normally very well attended, and it is recommended that members plan to arrive early (soon after 1:30 pm) in order to secure parking and reduce queuing for registration and refreshments.

Entry to the monthly meetings (including refreshments) is included in an annual £20 fee (currently reduced to £10), which also includes membership in the Special Interest Groups. Guests may attend monthly meetings for a maximum of three visits, at no charge, prior to becoming full members.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The Special Interest Groups meet at various places, and often these are in a member's house to avoid fees for hiring a venue. Contact the Groups Coordinator and convener before you attend.

See the website for a full list of SIGs and contacts, and watch the Newsletter for their latest activities.

Cancelled Meeting: If the General Meeting must be cancelled for any reason, we will try to get a note on the website by 11:00 am on the morning of the meeting, so please check there if you are uncertain.

Parking: There is a small tarmac-surfaced car park at the Community Centre, but this fills quickly. There is an additional parking area to the east of the Community Centre. Otherwise, there is a large public car park behind **ASDA** (3-hour parking limit) and another on **Crispin Way** to the south. All of these parking options are shown on the map below...

KHaD u3a Committee

Officers:

Chairman	Melanie Blewer
Vice Chairman	Elaine Scutt
Treasurer	David Murray
Business Secretary	
Membership	Mark Richards

Other Roles:

Groups Co-ordinator	Elaine Scutt
Speakers	Sue Christie
Hospitality	Brenda Pretty
Diversity	Simon Ellis
Events	Deborah Langworthy
Plus:	Maurice Chittenden
	Don Bone



KHaD u3a Website

www.kingshillu3a.org.uk (Ctrl+Click)

Membership Enquiries

membership@kingshillu3a.org.uk

Newsletter - SIG reports and photos deadline: Friday before each General Meeting.

Editor: Don Bone - newsletter@kingshillu3a.org.uk



To see us on Facebook [@u3aKingshill](https://www.facebook.com/u3aKingshill)

May 2023

Phone u3a Office: 0208 466 6139

u3a.org.uk



Introduction from Sam Mauger

Dear members,

Another month filled with great u3a ideas and events. The newsletter is a great way to share monthly news across the movement easily and if you know a member who doesn't already receive it, please ask them if they would like to sign up.

We have a lot to be proud of in the movement and this edition highlights Hadrian's Wall. This was a collaborative event for u3as to come together in person and online to learn, explore and have time in each other's company. **Working to support the movement is a dedicated team of expert staff members and expert u3a volunteers who work alongside the 1,000 inspirational u3as to make this movement the great place it is – a place where members can forge friendships and participate in new interests.**

Over the last six years we have worked hard to develop our communication channels to engage u3a members and beyond. We thank the communication teams and volunteers who consistently work to spread the u3a word. **This newsletter with its u3a-led content and readership of over 40,000 members and friends is a great example of that.**

I wish you a happy and enjoyable month ahead.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger

CEO of the Third Age Trust

News from the Trust



Hundreds of u3a members celebrate learning at Hadrian's Wall Event

Over 180 members attended Off the Wall, our festival of learning which took place at Hadrian's Wall. Members connected through circle dancing, charcoal drawing, creative writing, traditional cookery demonstrations and lectures from

academics from Newcastle University. Members also took part online with a diverse programme of events that enabled people from all across the country to connect together through learning.

Ann Keating, one of the organisers of the event, says "The whole idea was to raise awareness of the u3a and to bring u3as together as a family."



Postcards from Hadrian's Wall

We are thrilled to announce the winners of our 'Off the Wall' postcard competition.

Congratulations to Valerie from Camberley u3a, and to our runners up, Tania from Washington Village u3a and Chris from Syston & District u3a (pictured.) Thank you to everyone who entered – the entries showcased the creativity and talent within the u3a movement.

u3a News



25 Celebrations for 25 Years of Chandlers Ford u3a

Chandlers Ford u3a went all out for their 25th anniversary, with 25 celebrations including a celebratory poem, special commemorative bookmarks, and quizzes.

25 post box toppers were created and displayed around town which showcased the range of groups at Chandlers Ford u3a.

Two of these can be seen above, including the Birdwatching Group Topper which, after being photographed by a local resident and put on Facebook, received over 7,500 likes.

News from the Board

John Lewis, Trustee for the East Midlands

So far as Trustee, I've arranged to visit meetings of all five Networks in the Region, established a working relationship with the other new Regional Trustees, assembled a strong, independent-minded and enthusiastic support team, attended several Trustee Induction sessions and hit the ground running with my other Regional responsibilities.



What have I got still to do? In the next few months, I will publish another issue of the Regional Trustee Newsletter, appoint a new Regional Publicity Adviser and start planning for another Regional Conference, possibly in 2025.

National Vice-Chair Allan Walmsley has said that he expects the new Trustees to make quite an impact. Let's not disappoint him!

Jean Jackson, Trustee for the West Midlands

I've been Regional Trustee now for about ten weeks and I've already managed to speak to a lot of members. I'm looking forward to re-connecting with the Regional support team, and to having more people on that team, so that I can get a good view of what u3as in the Region want from me and what we'd benefit from doing collectively.



So far I've attended Much Wenlock's 10th anniversary celebrations which were very inspiring. I am contacting all the regional networks, and am working with Sutton Coldfield u3a to plan our first regional event on Wednesday 19 July.

Your Coronation Celebrations



Singing for the King

Epsom and Ewell u3a's Singing for Pleasure group celebrated the King's Coronation with a performance at their community centre.

Group leader Jenny says, "We had a great time with lots of laughter. This event was a happy one and certainly got us in the mood for the Coronation weekend."

Congratulations Roy

Holme Valley u3a member and Beacon Volunteer Roy was named one of 500 Coronation Champions for his tireless voluntary work over more than a decade. He was nominated by AbilityNet, a charity that supports older and disabled people with the use of digital technology.

Roy says: "It came as a real surprise to find out I had been nominated because I don't consider what I do to be anything out of the ordinary."

Roy and the other Coronation Champions were chosen from over 5,000 nominations. The Awards were organised by the Royal Voluntary Service, of which The Queen Consort is President, and launched to recognise exceptional volunteers from across the country.

Spotlight On:

Kathy, Prudhoe & District u3a

Pictured: a bee orchid, photographed by Kathy whilst out with her Nature Watch group.



What's my favourite thing I've learned since joining u3a? Here are a few:

- How to take some lovely photos of flowers, thanks to Carole in the photography group.
- There's a flower called "Changing forget-me-not"! (we found it on a walk with our Naturewatch group)
- How to graft knitting, and thanks to the convenor of our Crafts group I made a lovely job of finishing off my knitted jacket
- How to operate Zoom, to keep my u3a going through the Covid years and beyond
- A lot about being a groups coordinator, thorough acting as secretary to our regional network
- Through the German Conversation group, I learned or revised enough German to be able to converse with some very dear German friends
- The self-confidence to stand up in my local Co-op and promote the u3a to likely-looking shoppers, several of whom actually joined
- The joy of sharing interests with people I didn't previously know, and finding lasting friendships
- That the benefits of being a u3a member are massive!

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Headline photos: A bluebell meadow in Everdon Stubbs posted on Northampton u3a's Facebook page after a recent visit; u3a members taking part in a charcoal drawing workshop at our Off the Wall event; Wetherby u3a planting a silver birch tree to celebrate their 12th anniversary and last year's 40th anniversary of the u3a movement.