

Chairman's note

Despite the weather there was a good turnout of Group Organisers at the Open Afternoon: thank you for all your efforts in making this another successful event. Importantly, we attracted a number of new members: a warm welcome to you from the Executive Committee. We hope you quickly find a group to join and meetings of interest. Please note, there is a welcome meeting on Friday 30 November - see page 4 for details.

I am pleased to say that Arthur and Maureen Russ have volunteered to join a working party to plan and prepare for our 20th Anniversary in 2014. This may seem a long way off but these major set pieces do take time to plan and organise.

2014 is also the Centenary of the start of WW1, which we intend to mark with a WW1 Study Day. This could provide the opportunity for a number of existing groups to collaborate, and so bring together different aspects of the war. Apart from the military aspect, areas such as art, literature, poetry, social change and the role of women, migration, technology and transport were peripheral to the battleground but provided the impetus for rapid change, and so shaped much of the 20th Century.

Do we have members with a European heritage who could present an alternative view to the British one? If any members or Group Organisers could offer to give a talk, or have suggestions to make, then please contact Ceris Williams who is co-ordinating this Study Day. ☎ 07747 799369

Bob Ruffles

☎ 01732 461348

Meetings open to all

Monthly Meeting Wednesday 28 November
 Community Centre, Bat & Ball Start at 2pm
 (Change of programme from that advertised)

Midnight Sun, Arctic Moon
 Mapping the Wild Heart of Alaska
 Mary Albaese

We will hear about a young woman's career as an arctic geological explorer.

Mary Albaese has documented and published her experiences over ten years as an explorer in the wild heart of Alaska.

Science Group Monday 12 November

Building a Medieval Cathedral

David Carder

A look at how our magnificent medieval cathedrals were planned, laid out and built.

The talk will include a discussion on medieval craftsmen, their tools, and the machines they used for lifting heavy building materials to great heights, and will be illustrated with both contemporary and modern drawings.

Oxford Village Memorial Hall 2pm.
 All Sevenoaks U3A members welcome.
 £2 entry includes tea.

Computer Group Monday 19 November

Why buy Apple? Are Mac computers really worth the extra cost?

Dave Simmons, a Sevenoaks U3A member, will highlight the differences between Apple Macs and PCs and how they integrate with iPads and iPhones.

- What are the main Mac disadvantages?
- Is the Mac software so different from Microsoft Office?
- Is Aperture comparable with Lightroom and Photoshop Elements?

Dave previously used PCs and switched over to Macs two years ago. It should be a lively discussion with hopefully lots of questions.

Oxford Village Memorial Hall 2pm.
 All Sevenoaks U3A members welcome.
 £2 entry includes tea.

Car parking is always difficult, both at Otford and at the Community Centre, so please share cars if at all possible.

Please send copy for the November Newsletter by **Friday, 16 November 2012** to both Linda Young and Magda Sweetland

SEE U3A 2012 - 2013 HANDBOOK FOR FURTHER CONTACT DETAILS OF PEOPLE REFERRED TO IN THIS NEWSLETTER

News and Views

Articles to Magda Sweetland

Gillian Jones, a longstanding member of Sevenoaks U3A, has taken on an impressive project, to restore the cobnut plantation at Ivy Hatch, near Ightham Mote, which is owned by the National Trust.

Ightham Mote cobnut plantation at Ivy Hatch – an ongoing project

About myself

When I was three years old my family moved from Bessels Green to Ivy Hatch. The parish of Ightham lies at the heart of the Kentish nut-growing area. Before World War 1 there were some 6,000 acres of land under cobnut cultivation; today there are about 300.

For me, from a very young age cobnuts were part of the scenery: our own plantation of approximately two acres had about 200 cobnut trees of different varieties. The plantation had been neglected during the war years and it was my father, Walford Green, who brought the nut trees back under control, producing a harvest which could be sent to market. The plat was home to a rich variety of wild flowers including bluebells and orchids (common spotted and a few of the rarer marsh orchids) which were valued and cared for. The upkeep of the plat consisted of the seasonal tasks of winter pruning and 'wanning' (taking out the fresh young wands), summer mowing and late summer harvesting of the nuts. The crop, when I was young, went to Covent Garden. In latter years, most of it was sold locally or from roadside stalls.

In 1990 I returned, with my husband and family, from living abroad to that same house, where I took over managing the cobnut trees. Similar plats in the area had been grubbed out and built over, or turned into pony paddocks, and the Kentish Cobnuts Association was founded at this time by a group of growers with the aim of supporting and promoting the dying industry. My family left that house in 1999, after 52 years, but I continue to live in the area and take an interest in the growing of cobnuts.

The Ightham Mote cobnut plantation

The nut plantation at Ightham Mote is hidden away near the top of Mote Hill and, having been untended for some six years, was in serious need of restoration when I took on the management a year ago. Since then, with a team of enthusiastic volunteers, a huge amount of work has taken place to start to bring it back into shape. Over last winter the team dragged the accumulated overgrowth of wands from out of the rows, lit and tended numerous bonfires (great on a cold winter day!) and tackled and tangled with brambles, which is a less pleasant task. This spring the plat was densely carpeted with primroses and violets, bugle and a sprinkling of the common spotted

orchids. In summer we were able to bring in the tractor-mower to keep the grass down between the trees. A small harvest has been picked this year but in the future this should greatly increase and the plat will eventually become financially self-sustaining.

Work to be done

There is plenty of work to be done before that stage is reached. Many young trees, mostly sports of birch and willow, have taken advantage of the neglect to grow between the nut trees and these all have to come out. 'Wanning' in late winter or early 2013 will be followed by pruning, and volunteers will be shown how they can help with these tasks as well as with bonfires to get rid of the excess growth. These are just some of the tasks where more volunteers would be welcomed to lend a hand; hopefully there is something for all ages and abilities to get stuck into.

One of the aims of the project is to draw in volunteers of all ages. For some it is the chance to get away from a desk and enjoy a day of physical activity in the open air, in lovely surroundings. For others, like the students from K-College in Tonbridge (formerly West Kent College), who joined us one day in March, it was also the chance to put something valuable onto their CV, and have fun making bonfires – with potatoes baked in the ashes at the end of it. This little plat – this 'blessed plot' as I like to call it – will be heaven for young schoolchildren in early spring as they can be allowed to pick posies of primroses and violets to take home. The ideas keep coming!

So, if you think that a day in the fresh air, in beautiful surroundings and in good company is for you, do get in touch with me.

Gillian Jones

BE PART OF THE PROJECT!

2012 - 13 is the second year of the project and volunteers are needed to learn about and help with pruning over the autumn and winter months, and to help clear young birch and willow saplings which have grown up between the trees.

INTERESTED?

If so your help is really needed! Get in touch to join the enthusiastic group of 'Nutters' who are already involved.

To find out more contact the project co-ordinator, Gillian Jones ☎ 01732 761466



Photography Groups

In the January 2013 Newsletter, we would like to have a collection of pieces about the Photography groups: what they are currently doing, and what new technologies are being developed. The Group Organisers might like to collaborate on this, or we can merge and balance various contributions. We are all keen to hear from you. Replies, please, to the editors as on the front page of this issue.

Copyright licence

After the last Newsletter went to press, we received notification that National Office has been able to negotiate a reasonable price for a copyright licence with the Copyright Licensing Agency after all. This costs each U3A £60pa and should be paid by the respective Committees, if they wish to take it up. Sevenoaks has decided to purchase a licence for the forthcoming year. The conditions are still as printed on page 20 of **Time to Learn in Sevenoaks** (appendix 5).

Launch of the new U3As in Kent

Earlier this month, the launches of both Kingshill and the second U3A in Maidstone went off very well indeed. Both have a steering committee in place, while Kingshill had an impressive list of over 30 Study Groups which were able to recruit on the day. Swanley meets to form a new U3A on 1st November and this will be the twenty-first U3A in Kent. In 1994, Sevenoaks was just the sixth! Demand for membership of a U3A is reaching unprecedented levels and is particularly strong along the M25 corridor.

News from the Groups

Beryl Mansell ☎ 01959 525010

Report on the Open Afternoon 2012

This was a very busy afternoon, despite the torrential rain.

Eighty-one groups were represented and there was a steady stream of members enrolling. We gained some 20 new members, either on the day or as a result of visiting the Open Afternoon.

Apart from people joining groups there were members who just came along to catch up with friends and to find out what had been happening in Sevenoaks U3A over the summer.

Ann Howard and her group of volunteers had made some wonderful cakes and supplied thirsty members with tea all through the afternoon.

Last week we had a meeting to review how the afternoon went and agreed that a few changes are needed, such as improving traffic flows by altering the room layouts. We will also aim to have more subject tables. The Science groups used that arrangement this year and found it worked well. There were several Group Organisers present and they took turns to sit at the Science table to deal with enquiries. Subject tables mean that one person does not have to spend all afternoon

waiting for enquiries and it gives Organisers time to find out more about what is happening with other groups, while still leaving them 'on call' if they are needed.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for ways to improve the running of the Open Afternoon please contact me.

If you were unable to come along but want to join a group, please contact the appropriate Group Organiser. There may be places available, or we may be able to start a waiting list with a view to organising a new group when there are enough people interested.

Groups with spaces:

Singing for fun

Twenty-two enthusiastic new members attended our start-up singing session on 1 October and we all enjoyed the fun. Following the U3A Open Afternoon, seventeen members are on the waiting list - or enough for a second group. To do this we **need an organiser and pianist / guitarist (whichever) to come forward.** Group Organiser Liz Bradney ☎ 01732 452051



Philosophy Group

There are places in the Philosophy group. This year the group is having an introduction to political philosophy using an accessible text. No previous experience of philosophy is required. If you are interested please contact David Milman to find out more. ☎ 01732 459089

Tai Chi

As a result of 'Games Legacy' in the September Newsletter we have received this offer:

'I am Magdalen Kit Fong Fry, born and brought up in Hong Kong of Chinese ethnicity but have now spent more time living in the UK. I came in 1972 as a post graduate student and planned only to study a year before returning to Hong Kong. It turned out quite different. I trained in social work, married an Englishman and have been living in Sevenoaks for over 20 years. I am semi-retired. I have been learning and practicing Tai Chi for about eight years with James Drewe who, though he moved to North London a few years ago, maintains weekly classes in Sevenoaks, in Knole Academy and St. Luke's church.

'I am not a Tai Chi teacher but I would be very happy to lead a group or teach if they want to practice the 24 form (which I have been doing for 8 years) and other warm-up exercises. I certainly find Tai Chi very calming and excellent for general health, remaining supple and maintaining good posture and muscle tone.'

There will be a taster session in Otford Village Memorial Hall on Wednesday, 21 November from 10am to noon. If you are interested please contact Magdalen Kit Fong Fry ☎ 01732 462351.

Social Events News

Pam Walshe ☎ 01732 454769

Enclosed are two flyers, the first for the ever-popular Festive Lunch at Westerham Golf Club in January 2013. We have maintained the price for this event and hope to attract a good number of members, as usual.

The second is the notice for the four-day trip next May, staying at Bowden Hall Hotel at Upton St Leonards. The application form is also posted on the website. Jenny has details of the Gold Cover Travel Insurance which we have negotiated. We will hold the returned applications and payment cheques until Thursday 15 November, when places will be allocated by ballot. Demand is always high for this trip, so please reply promptly.

We have a number of visits in planning for 2013:

| | |
|------------|--|
| March 21 | Bletchley Park |
| April | Walmer and Richborough |
| June/ July | Trip down the Thames |
| August | Turner Gallery, Margate, and the Salvation Gardens at Sandwich |
| September | Strawberry Hill |

The later dates have still to be confirmed. Flyers will be issued with forthcoming newsletters as always.

Note to New Members

Some 20 new members joined Sevenoaks U3A at the Open Afternoon, and we would like to invite all of you to come to an introductory session in November.

In addition, any member who joined earlier this year and has not been able to attend a Coffee Morning is very welcome.

The Committee likes to meet newcomers, and at the same time explain a little about the way a U3A functions. We will also be asking if anyone has a special subject they would like to see start up, or could help into being.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Date | Friday 30 November |
| Time | 10.30am - noon |
| Venue | Holmesdale Bowls Club, Worships Hill, Riverhead TN13 2AR |
| Schedule | We start with a short film about Study Groups in Sevenoaks U3A, before we break into groups to discuss what each member is looking for - then try to direct them towards it. |
| Confirm | We need some idea of numbers. Please tell Caroline Scales if you are coming ☎ 01959 523200 |



Events Open to All

First Friday lunch **Friday 2 November**
The George & Dragon, Chipstead, 12.15 for 12.30.
To book, contact Sally Coston ☎ 01322 866102
by Wednesday 31 October.

The Strollers **Tuesday 20 November**
Meet at 11.00 at the visitor centre in Trosley Country Park. A gentle, level walk followed by an optional lunch at the centre. Take the A25 through Seal, turn left at the traffic lights onto the A20. At the roundabout take the second exit onto the A227(Gravesend Road). Turn right onto Vigo Hill: the park is on the left.
Leader: John Baynes ☎ 01732 465349

Ambling **Wednesday 21 November**
Meet at The Poacher, Hartlake Road, Tudeley Hale TN11 0PQ (Map Ref. 462623), for a four-mile walk starting at 10.00 am. Park in The Poacher car park. Please note the pub will not be open until noon. The walk will be followed by an optional lunch at The Poacher.
Leaders: Janet & Eric Wilson ☎ 01732 458512

Half Day Walking **Monday 26 November**
Meet on the green at West Peckham GR 643523 for a 10am start. From Wrotham Heath follow Seven Mile Lane for 3 miles then turn right to West Peckham. The green and the Swan pub are just past the church. A five-mile walk will be followed by an optional lunch at the Swan.
Leader: Velma Keys ☎ 01732 459001

Bridge for Pleasure Weds 14 & 28 November
The Group plays bridge at Otford Village Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings of each month from 9.50am until 12.15pm. The winner on 10 October was David Record. The group is an 'Open' group, so new players can just come along.
Contacts: Colin & Mary Butson ☎ 01732 458356

Diary

November

| | | |
|------|----|------------------------|
| Fri | 2 | First Friday lunch |
| Mon | 12 | Science Group Meeting |
| Wed | 14 | Bridge for Pleasure |
| Mon | 19 | Computer Group Meeting |
| Tues | 20 | The Strollers |
| Wed | 21 | Ambling |
| Mon | 26 | Half Day Walking |
| Wed | 28 | Bridge for Pleasure |
| Wed | 28 | Monthly Meeting |

December

Fri 7 Pantomania - 2**

January 2013

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|-----------|---|----------------------------|
| Fri | 4 | Festive lunch* |
| May 22-25 | | Trip to Bowden Hall Hotel* |
| | | * Flyer this month |
| | | ** Flyer in September |

Editorial team: Magda Sweetland, Linda Young, Robin Tonge and John Spurway