



# Newsletter

April 2014

## Chairman's note

This week the U3A Arts Exhibition will be running at the Knole Academy until 1 May. It will be open to the public so please set aside time and bring your friends to view the exhibits which include paintings, photographs and craft items produced by our members.

Now that the better weather is here many groups arrange visits to places associated with their activities and these can of course be of interest to the wider membership: let us know if your group is doing something which could be reported. A short article for the *Newsletter* is always welcome, and longer articles with photographs can be posted on our website for all to enjoy.

Earlier this month I attended the South East Forum attended by members of U3As from Kent, Surrey and Sussex. The key speaker was Lin Jonas, CEO of the Third Age Trust, and she addressed the growth and future plans for the U3A. The main thrust of her talk focused on the problems of managing over 900 U3As nationally with a Management Committee comprising only volunteer members. Part of the future strategy is to move towards greater use of Information Technology systems. The first stage has been the redesign of the National Website, which is now easier to use, and includes access to a significant amount of on-line information and resources which may be of assistance to Group Organisers. If you have not already explored this then try it out: there is a link provided from our own website.

The Executive Committee next meets in early May, and key issues arising from the Committee will be reported in the next *Newsletter*.

*Bob Ruffles*  
 01732 461348    [chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## Meetings open to all

**Monthly Meeting**      **Wednesday 28 May**  
 Community Centre, Bat & Ball      Start at 2pm

### Criminal Forensic Investigation

David Tadd

### Science Group

**Monday 12 May**

#### Science, Art and Drug Discovery, a Personal Perspective

Simon Campbell, FRS

A discussion of the scientific hypotheses that led to the discovery of Istin (Norvasc) and Viagra

Scientific excellence is an essential component of drug discovery, but imagination and innovation are equally important. Thus we developed a novel hypothesis on how to protect our compounds from breakdown in the body which led directly to the discovery of amlodipine (Istin), a once daily treatment for angina and hypertension. Sildenafil (Viagra) was successfully designed to modulate the activity of a biological messenger, but clinical trials showed benefit in male erectile dysfunction rather than our original target of cardiovascular disease.

Oxford Village Memorial Hall, 2pm.

All Sevenoaks U3A members welcome.  
 £2 entry includes tea.

### Computer Group

**Friday 16 May**

#### Cloud Computing

Tony Fishpool

Cloud Storage, Cloud Applications  
 Cloud Collaboration, Chromebook.

Do you need them? How secure are they?  
 Should you pay for them?

Time permitting, Tony will also give his advice on the demise of XP.

Oxford Village Memorial Hall, 2pm.

All Sevenoaks U3A members welcome.  
 Entry, £2 on the door, 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 May Newsletter  
 by **Friday, 16 May 2013**  
 to both Linda Gilbert and Magda Sweetland

## **Science Group**

### **Visit to CERN and the Large Hadron Collider, Geneva, Switzerland**

**Tuesday-Thursday, 15-17 July 2014**

The morning tour of the Hadron Collider starts at 9.0am on 16 July and is free. We have been allocated 48 places, of which 25 have already been taken by our members. There is a restaurant on site for lunch. In the afternoon there are two free and highly recommended exhibitions to be visited.

If you want to go, first contact Ann Slater to check that places are still available:

01732 456730

We have organised an accommodation package through Sevenoaks Travel to stay at The Drake Longchamp Swiss Quality Hotel which is in the centre of Geneva. A twin room costs £109 pp, a single room £181, for the two nights of the 15/16 July. If you want to avail yourself of this, contact Carla Dunmore at Sevenoaks Travel.

01732 458255

You will need to book your own flights: a number of low cost ones are operated by easyJet out of Gatwick which you can book at [www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)

## **News and Views**

Articles to Magda Sweetland (01732 461901)

### **Sevenoaks U3A Website Group**

The Website Group runs and maintains the Sevenoaks U3A website, with the overall guidance of the Executive Committee. The Group is led by Sheelagh Mayes, who along with Celia Smith took over the previous website from John Bonnett. For updating purposes, Sheelagh and Celia work as one sub-team, with David Taylor and Jeff Lee forming the other. Each pair is on duty for a month. David masterminded the change to the new site and knows the software inside out. Jeff does tasks such as writing guidance for members, answering queries, and helping with decisions. We all meet monthly to discuss issues and to hand over duties and the updated 'template' containing the latest edition. We all check the site regularly, fixing things as quickly as possible.

A major challenge for the Group is how best to respond to the needs of our U3A generally and the expectations and requirements of individual members. Paper, printing and postage are expensive. A website, once set up, can be relatively cheap, though it needs know-how and commitment to run it. It can also react more quickly to things and carry much more information than a paper-based system. In 2013,

36 million adults (73% of the adult population) in Great Britain accessed the Internet daily. But given our age profile, not all members are inclined or equipped to do so. So our U3A maintains a paper-based service while enabling members to benefit from the website and email.

With this in mind, we are always trying to make the content more accessible, better organised, and attractive – while protecting the privacy of members and complying with operating terms. Regular tasks include posting the latest Newsletter, the Chairman's Note and news from the Executive Committee; updating the Monthly Meetings list and the calendar page; and posting useful items from the Third Age Trust. One-offs include highlighting forthcoming activities and events, posting flyers, and updating information about groups. Outside agencies ask us to publicise activities or services and we decide on their relevance to members: we are not an advertising agency, after all. Finally, we remove out-of-date items, though some of ongoing interest are placed in the Archive section.

Some things we don't have on the website. There is no search engine, though this might be introduced if feasible since it would help members to find things faster. There is no 'members only' section. There is no discussion forum or readers' letters page: the content would need constant checking and editing, both very time-consuming. However, the Website Group is always pleased to receive suggestions and comments about the site ([✉ websitedgroup@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:websitedgroup@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)). Being only human, we are especially pleased to receive compliments, and we have had many of these (which we always acknowledge), so we must be doing something right. Please keep using the site and keep the comments coming: they help us to help you.

Jeff Lee

### **Notice from the Handbook team**

The team producing the Sevenoaks Handbook this year (Graham Smith, John Gandon and Magda Sweetland) sent a request at the end of March, asking for entries from all the Group Organisers by 1 May.

So far, we have received just about half of the entries, with notice of three groups that are closing, and details of one new group. If you have a change of entry, can you let us have it asap? Otherwise, we will assume that last year's details still apply, and copy those from the 2013 edition.

Please send material to both Graham Smith and Magda Sweetland.



## A note for your diaries!

### 20th Anniversary Birthday Party Saturday 20 September

You will be able to buy tickets (£3 each) for the tea party in September:

- on 28 May at the Monthly Meeting
- on 25 June at the AGM
- by using the tear-off slip on the flyer which will be included in the May Newsletter
- by email using the same form

Tickets will be available on a first-come, first-served basis and will initially be limited to two per purchaser. Buy yours early as numbers are limited by the maximum the Community Centre can hold.



### Sevenoaks U3A Arts Exhibition

A reminder that the 20 th anniversary U3A Arts Exhibition is now on at Knole Academy (formerly Bradbourne School). Paintings, photographs, sculptures, needlework, ceramics and pottery are on display: something for everyone to enjoy.

Open times:

Wednesday 30 April and Thursday 1 May 10am–4.30pm

Friday 2 May 10–2pm. Parking is available.

## News from the Groups

Beryl Mansell ☎ 01959 525010  
✉ [groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

### Ballroom Dancing

A small group of Knole dancing enthusiasts rekindled their skills of years ago by meeting fortnightly, at The Medway School of Dancing in Tonbridge, for an hour's tuition to go over the basic steps of ballroom and latin. These sessions took place on alternate Tuesday mornings at 10.30am.

After several months of dancing we decided to take a break just before Christmas, but would now like to start again. We are looking for additional couples to add to our number so that we can re-commence these sessions in the near future. The cost is proportional to the size of the group. Parking is available at the School.

Lesley or Richard Jolly ☎ 01732 450636/  
mob 07710 021919

### Lost Property

A member has lost a scarf in the course of the recent Legal London trip, held on 25 March. Could anyone missing it please ring Liz Thomson?  
☎ 01732 490569

## Social Events News

Pam Walshe ☎ 01732 454769

We have planned a number of day trips over the summer including:

- **Cressing Temple Barns and Ingatestone Hall** on Tuesday 3 June (flyer in March)
- **Thames River Trip** and visit to **Marble Hill House** in July (Flyer enclosed)
- **Turner Gallery** in Margate in August to see the Mondrian exhibition, combined with a visit to **Salutation Gardens** at Sandwich.

These will be popular visits, so be sure to apply promptly.

Please notice there is also a flyer enclosed for the Science group Study Day at **East Malling Research Centre** on Wednesday, 11 June.

Can we remind members that there are some spare places for the **Kent U3A Study Day** on Monday, 8 July, at the University at Chatham, on aspects of World War I. The flyer was sent out in March. This is a rare opportunity to hear truly academic speakers.

### Trip to Paris

Members will know that we were unable to go ahead with the trip to Paris next October, as there were insufficient numbers to make the trip viable. Also, it was clear from responses that many members had already made plans for their summer or autumn break. However, since calling off the trip, we have received a number of requests for it to take place next year, preferably in the Spring, and again we are anxious to establish how much interest there is for this. As before, the itinerary would consist of travel to Paris by Eurostar, a guided coach tour of Paris, with visits to the top of the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre Museum, the Chateaux de Versailles, the Cité de Sciences et l'Industrie at Villette and a cruise on the River Seine.

We are trying to find a suitable hotel to accommodate us on a half-board basis, not too far from the centre of Paris and, preferably, on the Metro. Until this is done, we shan't know the precise cost of the trip but we estimate that it will be around £475-£490 per person sharing.

If you are interested in going on this trip – which will take place in April or May next year depending on hotel availability and cost – will you please give John Dean a call **by 31 May 2014**.

☎ 01959 563373

## Events Open to All

### First Friday Lunch

**Friday 2 May**  
The Bucks Head, Godden Green, 12.45 for 1 pm.  
To book, contact Pat Smith ☎ 01959 523596

**Bridge for Pleasure      Weds 14 & 28 May**

The Group plays at Otford Village Hall on the second and fourth Wednesday mornings of each month from 9.50am until 12.15pm. The winner on 26 March was Geoff Howson and on 9 April was Gillian Simon. We are an "Open" group, so any new players can just come along. If you need to make contact, call Colin and Mary Butson on 01732 458356

**Half Day Walking****Monday 19 May**

Meet in the car park at Stubbs Wood, Goathurst Common (NGR 502519) in time for a 10am start. The car park is in the woods at a small crossroads at the top of York's Hill. The walk will follow the Greensand Way to Wickhurst Manor and return via Gracious Lane. It is less than five miles but pleasantly hilly with fine views. The walk will be a week earlier than usual due to the bank holiday. Optional lunch afterwards at the Cock in Ide Hill. Leader: Nick White 01959 564145.

**Ambling****Wednesday 21 May**

Meet outside the Greyhound pub at Charcott, (Post Code TN11 8LG; GR 522472) in time for a 10am start. Take the A2027 from Hildenborough to Leigh; half a mile after passing through Leigh take a right turn onto Compasses Road, and at the T junction left into Camp Hill. Take the next right which will bring you to the Greyhound. Please park considerately on the road outside the Greyhound. The walk is followed by an optional lunch. New walkers are always welcome. Leader: Grahame Lee 01474 852007.

**Knole U3A trip to Faversham  
Thursday, 5 June**

This visit by coach is organised by the Knole U3A Science Group and will include a tour and tutored tastings at the Shepherd's Neame brewery, Faversham, Britain's oldest surviving brewery. The guided tour will be preceded by a talk which will cover the science of brewing and the history of brewing at the site.

After some two hours at the brewery, which includes tasting, followed by a lunch break, the afternoon would continue with a walking tour of the town led by local guides. Entry to the Heritage Museum is included. Faversham is one of Kent's ancient market towns, with many distinctive medieval buildings that place it among the most attractive towns of Kent.

Cost: £30, which includes transport by coach, parking at Otford, and both guided tours. Members of Sevenoaks U3A are very welcome.

For further details contact Dr Alan Heyes:

01732 833099

The flyer is on the Sevenoaks website in pdf format: **Faversham Knole Science group**

**The Strollers****Tuesday 20 May**

Meet at 11am in the car park at Ightham Village Hall. The walk will take approx. 1¾ hours around the countryside of Ightham, with an optional lunch afterwards at The George & Dragon in Ightham.

Leader: Penny Watts 01732 886844

**Diary****April**

Wed 30 – Fri 2 May Arts Exhibition

**May**

Fri	2	First Friday Lunch
Sat	10	Kent Study Day Tenterden 'How WW1 influenced the Arts'
Mon	12	Science Group Meeting
Wed	14	Bridge for Pleasure
Fri	16	Computer Group Meeting
Mon	19	Half Day Walking
Tue	20	The Strollers
Tue	20	Science visit NPL Open Day
Wed	21	Ambling
Wed	28	Bridge for Pleasure
Wed	28	Monthly Meeting
Thu	29	Jazz and Blues Study Morning**

**June**

Tue	3	Cressing Temple Barns and Ingatestone Hall trip**
Thu	5	Knole Science trip to Faversham
Wed	11	Science Study Day 'Future Agriculture and Food Security'*

**July**

Mon	8	Kent Study Day Chatham 'Aspects of World War I'
Tue-Thu 15-17 Science Group visit to CERN		

**Sept**

Sat	20	20th Anniversary Birthday Party
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\* Flyer enclosed

\*\* Flyer with March edition

**We Got Rhythm** - the flyer for the Jazz and Blues Study Morning on 29 May includes an application form. If you've lost your copy, the flyer is available on the website.

**Editorial team:** Magda Sweetland,  
Linda Young, Victoria Baxter  
and John Spurway