

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

As we come to the end of our academic year it is worth reflecting on the philosophy, aims and guiding principles of our U3A. We are a learning cooperative which draws upon the knowledge, experience and skills of our own members to organise and provide interest groups in accordance with the wishes of our membership. Our U3A offers the chance to study over 100 different subjects in such fields as art, languages, music, history, life sciences, psychology, computing, crafts, photography, walking and cycling. Our approach is to learn for pleasure. We do not require any accreditation or validation and there are no assessments or qualifications to be gained. We do it for fun!

Sevenoaks U3A is run entirely by its own members to share educational, creative and leisure activities. All members should be thinking of making a contribution in some way and volunteering to put something back into your U3A.

Our Group Organisers and other volunteers do a fantastic job but we need more members to offer to sit on our various committees.

We currently need Chairpersons for the Communications Committee and the Computer Committee. The Social Committee is also looking for additional Committee Members.

We have over 1,000 members - WHERE ARE YOU?

Jim Purves. chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS 2016-2017

Please remember that a new subscription structure comes into play on SEPTEMBER 20th 2016 whereby each member pays a common subscription of £13.

There will be no change for **SINGLE MEMBERS**
- YOU NEED NOT TAKE ANY ACTION

JOINT MEMBERSHIP increases from £18 to £26
- PLEASE CHANGE YOUR STANDING ORDER

You can do this through

- 1 Online banking
- 2 Letter to your bank
- 3 By visiting your bank

BERYL'S BLOG U3A - Going Forward

Change seems to be in the air for the U3A.

You may have noticed in the Winter edition of Third Age Matters there was a letter from three previous National Chairpersons with proposals for changes in governance of U3A and in the Spring Edition (Page 45) Pam Jones starts a consultation by asking questions about the future of the U3A.

- ◆ Is the NEC fit for purpose?
- ◆ Do regions work well?
- ◆ Have we wandered too far from our charitable purpose?
- ◆ Will the rising pension age affect us?
- ◆ Is it harder to find volunteers?
- ◆ What changes should we make?
- ◆ How do you see the future of the movement?

I am going to the AGM in August to represent Sevenoaks U3A. We are one of the larger U3As in the country and as such our views should be heard. I am running a discussion group in July to elicit members' views on these topics. Please join me – two hours should be enough to put together our ideas.

Email me at vicechair@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk if you would be willing to join the group.

Beryl Mansell.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO OUR U3A

The technical support to our U3A is undertaken by a small team of members. One of the main functions of the team is the custody and maintenance of our growing list of IT assets, and the Technical Support Team (TST) was established to spread the workload. However with the sad loss of John Bonnett, a key team member, we are now in urgent need of additional volunteers. The TST supports the monthly meetings and undertakes the routine maintenance and safety checks of our equipment. We have two members certified to undertake the biennial PAT testing but an additional member could be trained up for the role. If you can help and are reasonably confident about connecting up the equipment then please contact me.

Bob Ruffles
01732 461348 techsupport@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

Newsletter Team: Victoria Baxter, Elizabeth Purves, Celia Smith

There is no August Newsletter.

The next Newsletter will be September, which will be distributed with the Handbook on August 24

Copy for September Newsletter by Tuesday 9 August to news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk.

The Blues Roll On (The sequel to Good Morning Blues)



Photo: Cherry Moss

On the 19th May, Otford Village Hall was transformed. For the afternoon it became the Juke Joints and lazy porches of the Deep South, the noisy bars and recording studios of Chicago and London's legendary 100 and Marquee clubs.

This magic was worked by veteran British bluesmen Dave Peabody and Alan Glen taking us on the migration of the Blues from the rural south to the urban north and onward to the UK. Explanation and illustration, accompanied by vocals, guitar and harmonica, enlivened by asides and anecdotes, guided us through the evolution of the music.

As we moved to the harder, noisier urban north, we heard how the need for amplification gave new vigour and scope to the music. Thanks mainly to Chess records this vibrant sound found its way across the pond and into the hands and heads of a new generation – including those of Mick and Keef from Dartford...

Wonder what happened to them?

Peter Moss Jazz and Blues 1



Table Tennis

A Table Tennis group has been set up which will take place on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays every month at the Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, 10-12.

New members welcome.

Contact Barbara Hine. 01732 459779.

Barbara.hine@otford.net



Theatre Studies



Photo: Jim Purves

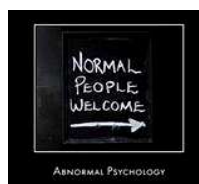
Members of the Theatre Studies group, pictured above, have just celebrated the end of the U3A year with a lunch to which everyone has contributed a dish. This is a lively and very tasty annual event. This particular meal is the climax of a morning spent discussing two challenging plays (Genet's *The Maids* and Lorraine Hansberry's *Les Blancs*) and trying to decide what to see and discuss for the next season. It should be easy.

The plays for the end of 2016 have already been fixed: Lorca's *Yerma*, updated, a new play about the oil industry simply called *Oil* at the Almeida and an Irish classic - *The Plough and the Stars* by Sean O'Casey at the National Theatre. But what should be seen in 2017? After an intensive half hour, consensus finally emerges and the group decide on Shaffer's *Amadeus* at the NT, Michael Frayn's reworking of Chekhov - *Wild Honey* at the Hampstead Theatre and the RSC production of *Cymbeline* which is being screened at The Stag and is coming from Stratford to The Barbican. April and May are unfilled but the final play for next year is agreed - Buchner's *Woyzeck* at the Old Vic.

So after such a busy and productive morning the tempting food displayed on the table is very much appreciated.

Vicki Joyce

Psychology Group



The Psychology study group, which meets on the third Friday afternoon of each month, has room for a few more people. Subjects recently discussed include Mindfulness & Meditation, Transactional Analysis, De-cluttering, The Psychology of Addictions, Childhood Experiences & their Impact on Adulthood. If you would like to join us, or simply find out more, please get in touch with Indeg Robinson - indegr@yahoo.co.uk 01732 454341

Your Ageing Brain - Use it or Lose it

Photo: Charles Hebert



Orchard Conference Centre, East Malling Research

The meeting was organised by the Sevenoaks and Knole U3A Science Groups and was open to U3A members across Kent; over 170 attended. Four speakers from Bulgaria, The Netherlands, the UK and the USA, all currently working as part of the Cambridge Centre for Ageing and Neurosciences (cam-CAN) joined us at the Orchard Conference Centre to review this topic. Dr Meredith Shafto discussed the changes in cognitive function that happen to all our brains as we age, Dr Kamen Tsvetanov analysed the changes in brain structure and function that are causing these and Dr Linda Geerligs told us about the effects that physical exercise and mental training have on these processes. Finally Dr David Nesbitt described what happens when "normal" ageing processes go "wrong" and we end up with dementia.

The key take home messages provided by our speakers were clear:

- ◆ Ageing is a development process, rather than a disease and most people are doing this healthfully, though with diversity across abilities and individuals (Meredith Shafto);
- ◆ Ageing can have a considerable impact on brain structure and function, but these changes are neither universal nor inevitable (Kamen Tsvetanov);
- ◆ With ageing, the balance in the brain network shifts from segregation (which is good) to integration (which is less good). Mental exercise improves the practice task but does not necessarily transfer to other tasks; physical exercise has positive effects on many cognitive functions (Linda Geerligs);
- ◆ Dementia is not an inevitable consequence of ageing: age for age, incidence is decreasing; most of us will not develop it. Many things, including regular exercise, a healthy diet and lots of social interactions will help prevent it (David Nesbitt).

The bottom line is clear: being in the U3A provides multiple opportunities to use your brain in all the right ways and thus not to lose it!

Win Gutteridge and Bob Ruffles June 2016

U3A All Day Walking groups

The All Day Walking groups walk 10 miles once a month with a stop for lunch at a pub. Both groups welcome new members.

Contact

Jim Purves 01732 463041 for Group 1, and
John Mitchell 01892 510880 for Group 2



Photo: Allen Lanceley

Members of All Day Walking Groups 1 and 2, enjoying a walk along the Medway valley at Teston.

Ethical Dilemmas

There are 13 members of this very engaged group. This year we have tackled discussions such as "Is torture ever justified?" "Do we support difference?" "Issues arising from Migration", "How was society changed for the better or worse in 2015?", "Eugenics, CRISPR, and the quality of human-beingness" "Free speech; growth of extreme thinking (no-platforming, trolling etc)", "Collectively, what is it right to spend our money on?" and "How is multiculturalism accepted in this country?" We ended the year with an open discussion on society's attitude to gender identity.

Usually a member volunteers to lead the discussion, but sometimes the issue is open to group discussion from the start. At the moment we are full.

The group has been running since 1997.

Victoria Granville Baxter

MEETINGS AND EVENTS OPEN TO ALL

DIARY

July

Wed 13 Bridge for Pleasure
Wed 20 Ambling
Wed 27 Bridge for Pleasure
Wed 28 Coach trip to Highclere
Mon 31 Half day walk

September

Wed 28 Open Afternoon

MONTHLY MEETINGS

There are no meetings in July or August, and in September we have the Open Afternoon on Wednesday 28th. The next monthly meeting will be on 26 October when Tom Hart-Dyke of Lullingstone Castle will give a talk about his horticultural interests and experiences. Then on 23 November Sue Walton will talk about the Pestalozzi International Village Trust. More details in the next newsletters.

Half Day Walking

Monday 27 June

Meet in the car park at the Otford Memorial Hall (£1 for three hours) in time for a 10am start. The walk is 5½ miles – hilly in parts. It goes past Filston Mill, along the Shoreham Terrace passing the cross, then through Shoreham and back past Warren Farm. Lunch afterwards for those who stay will be at The Bull in Otford. This group is open to all members. There is no need to give advanced notice – just turn up at the start.

Leader: Nick White 01959 564145

Bridge for Pleasure

13 & 27 July

The Group plays at Otford Village Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings of each month from 9.50 a.m. until 12.15 p.m. The winner on 11th May was George Thompson and on 25th May was Jim Hickey.

We do not meet in August or September, so after 27th July we shall meet again on 12th October.

We are an “open” group, so any new players can just come along.

Colin and Mary Butson 01732 458356.

Ambling

Wednesday 20 July

Meet in The George pub car park in Trottiscliffe ME19 5DR for a 4 mile walk, starting at 10 am. Take the A25 out of Sevenoaks, at the traffic light junction with the A20 turn right and after 100 yards turn left into Ford Lane for Trottiscliffe. The pub is on the left when you reach the T junction in the village.

Leader: Grahame Lee 01474 852007.

SOCIAL EVENTS NEWS

social@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk



Spitalfields Tour

A visit by public transport to Spitalfields for a guided tour by experts of Huguenot London has been organised for September 13. Numbers are limited to 40, to be divided into two groups. A flyer is included with this Newsletter which gives full details of this exciting venture.

Sheffield Park Coach Trip

A visit by coach is being planned for Sheffield Park plus Standen (with the opportunity to visit an exhibition of pottery as well the house and garden) on October 19. Please put this date in your diaries. More details and flyer in the September Newsletter. This visit is also likely to be restricted in numbers

FLYERS WITH THIS NEWSLETTER ARE

- ◆ Historic Spitalfields
- ◆ The Huguenots in Kent (Knole U3A)
- ◆ Windsor Castle (Knole U3A)

WEB TEAM NEWS

Work behind the scenes is seldom glamorous but always essential. Sheelagh Mayes has been chairing the Website Team for more years than I can recall, but it is certainly ten at least, and she is now standing down from that role and moving away from Sevenoaks. She was involved with the original version of the site, a much simpler version than the current one, and has steered the team through changes of membership, software and hosting arrangements. She has always led us with great calm and dedication despite the complexities involved, and the web team (and our U3A) owes her a debt of gratitude for all she has done. Sheelagh has been ably assisted in this by Celia Smith, who is also standing down from the team. We thank them both for all they have done for the website on behalf of the membership.

At the same time, we welcome two new members to the Team, Frank Matthews and Margaret Sinden.

Jeff Lee

For Website Team

MEMBERS' CORNER

This space is for activities and events organised by members. Please submit brief items of interest to members to news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk. These will be included space permitting.

Historic Spitalfields

Guided Visit - Tuesday 13th September

Spitalfields lying in the heart of the East End has always welcomed immigrants. Evidence of the people and communities can still be seen. A Huguenot Church, Jewish Synagogue and a Mosque. The area was quite rural until the Great Fire of 1666 when traders moved there from beyond the City of London Gates and in 1682 King Charles II granted a Royal Charter to John Balch the right to hold a market. The success of this market allowed the area to flourish. It has now become a trendy place to live.

This trip will be by public transport and this two hour guided walk will be led by two accredited City of London Guides. Your afternoon will be free.

Date: Tuesday 13 September

Meet up: Bishopsgate
Entrance of Liverpool Street Station

Time: 11 a.m.

Cost: £9.00

Organiser: Joyce Allen – 01959 522915

At the time of preparing this flyer train times into London Bridge which is scheduled to re-open at the end of August are as yet unknown. All details of travel arrangement will be advised later.

Numbers are restricted to 20 for each guide. (Should the number exceed this a draw will be made)



THIS OUTING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS OF SEVENOAKS U3A

Please complete the portion below and together with your payment send it to
Joyce Allen, 82 Evelyn Road, Otford, TN14 5PU,
with a stamped addressed envelope, to arrive no later than 5th August.
Please make out your cheque to Sevenoaks U3A Social Account.

Name:

Address:

.....

Phone No:..... Email address:.....

Please reserve place(s) for Historic Spitalfields



Next year will see the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's challenge to the Roman Catholic church of his day which led to the founding of the Protestant movement. The subsequent religious wars and divisions echo down the centuries and are still significant today. Among the people affected were French Protestants, known as Huguenots. Wars and

persecutions in their native land led to their dispersal across the globe. A substantial number settled in Britain, making a major contribution to trade, manufacturing and social habits.

The speaker for this Seminar will be Dr Kathy Chater. Since leaving the BBC in 1994 she has been self-employed as a historian, writer and speaker to family and local history groups. In 2007 she gained a doctorate on black people in the 18th century, published as *Untold Histories* in 2009. Her more recent works include *Tracing Your Huguenot Ancestors* (2012), *My Ancestor Was a Lunatic* (2014) and *The Reformation in 100 Facts* (2016), as well articles for magazines and websites. She is currently writing a history of the French community in Wandsworth, London.

Date: Monday 17th October 2016

Venue: The Community Centre, Bat and Ball, Sevenoaks

Cost: £6 per person

Programme: Registration 9.45am

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 10-11 | The first lecture, <i>A Brief History of the Huguenots</i> , will explore who the Huguenots were, how they came to leave France and where they went. |
| 11-11.30 | Coffee break |
| 11.30-12.30 | The second talk, <i>Huguenots in Kent</i> , will look at their experiences and history in Kent. |
| 12.30-1 | Questions |

Organiser: Magda Sweetland 01732-461901 MASweetland@talktalk.net

This Seminar is open to U3A members in West Kent

Please retain for information

6/16

Complete this slip and send to: **Wendy Willsher**, 7 Morel Court, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3BG
Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your ticket.

I/ we wish to attend the Knole U3A Seminar on *The Huguenots in Kent* and enclose a cheque for £6 per person made payable to **Knole U3A Extramural**.

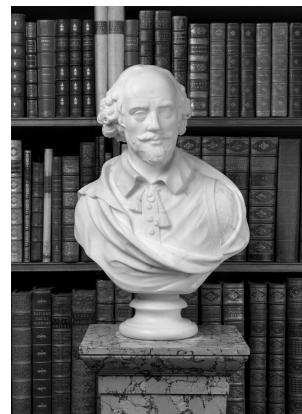
Name(s).....

Address.....

Telephone No..... Email address.....

I enclose a cheque for £.....(£6 per person)

Windsor Castle: Shakespeare and The Royal Court



We celebrate the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare with this visit by coach to Windsor Castle. The visit is in two parts: in the morning we have coffee and hear an expert lecture about the way the plays of Shakespeare were intended for performance at court. The ticket allows for re-entry to Windsor, and so members return after lunch to view the Exhibition which outlines the role of the company of actors known as The King's Men, and it also allow members to view the State Apartments and St George's Chapel.

Date: Tuesday 27 September 2016

Meet: 8.30am for departure at 8.45am sharp. Baker's Yard, Otford Road, Sevenoaks

Timings: Arrive in Windsor at 10.30am approx. Entry to the Winchester Tower for 11.30am. Coffee and introductory lecture until 1pm. For lunch, members should go back in to town and choose from the many cafes near to hand. The ticket gives return entry ay any time to visit the exhibition. We will return to the coach in time for a 5pm departure.

Access: There is no coach parking at Windsor Castle. Members go by lift from the coach park to Windsor Station, from where it is a ten minute walk to the Castle. This may not be suitable for members with mobility problems. Also, there are no refreshments available on site, apart from morning coffee.

Cost: £37 per person, includes return coach trip and gratuity, parking at Baker's Yard, coffee and lecture, and in the afternoon, entry to the Shakespeare exhibition and the State Apartments plus St George's Chapel.

Numbers: Limited to 48

Organiser: Magda Sweetland 01732-461901 MASweetland@talktalk.net

This trip is open to U3A members in West Kent.

Complete this slip and send to: **Wendy Willsher**, 7 Morel Court, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3BG.
Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your receipt.

I/ we wish to join the Knole U3A trip to Windsor Castle to see
Shakespeare and the Royal Court, plus the State Apartments
and enclose a cheque made payable to **Knole U3A Extramural**.

Name(s).....

Address.....

Telephone No..... Email address.....

I enclose a cheque for £.....(£37 per person) I will be parking at Baker's Yard ☐
(opposite Wickes store in Otford Road.)