

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

The Newsletter is reporting over planning to regenerate our u3a. The Executive Committee has agreed to appoint a Regeneration Working Party aiming to put us in a better position to meet future challenges, and to avoid the risk of decline and closure that has affected some other u3as. The month we showcased Group Development and Social Teams, and this month we move on to the Communications and Technical Support Teams. I have written in previous newsletters about the need to recruit new volunteers and as Chairman I am

structure of the EC and its supporting teams, to ensure that we communicate effectively with our members. If you would like to be part of this regeneration, and are a relatively new member of our u3a, please contact me or a member of our EC with any ideas or suggestions you may have. We would appreciate hearing from you.

Dr. Ken Brown
chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

and will initially look at the

MARCH 2023 MONTHLY MEETING

Wednesday, 22nd March, 2023 at 2pm at the Bat & Ball Centre.

Our speaker this month is **Toni Mount** who is a writer, history teacher and speaker who enjoys sharing her enthusiasm for history. Her presentation entitled **"They Dared to be Doctors"** tells the fascinating story of the first Victorian ladies to succeed in a man's world. Despite endless rejection they went on to pioneer women's careers in the medical profession.

Tea and biscuits will be served afterwards. For those of you who are unable to join us at the Hall and prefer to watch from the comfort of your own home the talk will also be relayed via Zoom.

I do hope you will join us. The Zoom link will be sent out to all members by email a couple of days before the event.

Barbara Coleyshaw speakers@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk



PHOTOGRAPHY 1

In Photography 1 we are interested in taking better photographs, rather than exploring manipulation of images, or equipment. We meet on the third Tuesday in the month, usually in the morning 10:00 – 12:00, but occasionally for a full day. Some of our meetings are at photogenic locations, where we use our eyes to select images to take with our cameras or even mobile phones. For example, last year we visited Dungeness, Bewl Water and SpadeWork at Offham during their Pumpkin Festival.



At subsequent meetings we view results either as digital images or prints, and compare and comment on each other's images. We also occasionally visit photographic exhibitions. An important part of all of our meetings is being able to get coffee and have time to sit and chat!! There is room for more members and if you are interested in joining the group please contact

Mary Allwood photo1@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The Comms Team has progressively introduced digital technology to manage most of our administrative processes, and to underpin and interlink all parts of Sevenoaks u3a. With only 4 members, the Comms Team manages

- our (Beacon) membership and group database,
- two websites,
- produces and publishes the monthly Newsletter,
- the annual Members' Handbook, and
- every few years an updated Group Organisers Guide

Beacon, a secure management database, is a system developed by the Third Age Trust, which can be accessed by authorised users, and again requires regular updating.

The Comms Team would like to explore and develop a presence on social media platforms and anyone who has skills in this area would be most welcome.

The first website (<https://www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk>) is the initial point of contact for many new members, carries a wealth of information, and requires regular updating, undertaken by team members working monthly. We are currently investigating options for switching our website software to WordPress.

The second website (<https://www.sevenoaksu3aconnectandlearn.org>) is a learning resource which also needs updating on a monthly basis. This website contains many videos and access to lectures, courses and presentations, all of which are free, and which could be a useful supplement to the topics being discussed in various groups.

If you would like to be involved, or have an informal chat, please contact

David Taylor at communications@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAM (TST)

The TST is most familiar to members when seen setting up audio visual equipment for the Monthly Meeting in the Bat & Ball Centre. Their contribution has also enabled the transmission of meetings on Zoom to members at home. At our inception we used 35 mm and overhead projectors but have now transitioned to fully electronic systems.

The word Zoom was unheard of 3 years ago, but it is now part of our everyday language, an illustration of the way progressive digital transition is affecting our everyday lives. Keeping up to date is a challenge for all of us. Most Sevenoaks u3a members now use computers with variable skill and some TST members can assist them.

Out of the public eye, the TST maintains and ensures the safety of portable electrical equipment used by u3a members and groups which over the years has been progressively updated to reflect the change in technology and different ways of working. We must continue to embrace change so that our u3a can augment its programme of self-learning. As a Technical Team we are in particular need of new people with more recently acquired skills. So if you have any technical skills, especially in practical electronic devices, we would welcome your support.

We need volunteers with IT skills to come forward to assist with these tasks. If you would like to be involved, or for an informal chat, please contact:-

Bob Ruffles on techsupport@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

CALENDAR FOR MARCH

March 8	Bridge For Pleasure	March 13	Science Open Group "The Hydrogen Economy" by Steve Brown
March 22	Bridge For Pleasure	March 22	Monthly Meeting "They Dared to be Doctors" by Toni Mount
March 27	Computer Open Group		

REMINDER FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

If your email address has changed to a new provider or any of your other contact details have changed recently, please let me know.

Many thanks

Jennifer Ruffles

membership@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

BRIDGE FOR PLEASURE

Next sessions : 8th March and 22nd March.

The Group plays at Otford Village Memorial Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings of each month from October to the end of July, from 9.45 a.m. until 12 noon.

We had 5 tables on both 25th January and 8th February so numbers are quite healthy but still a bit down on pre-covid levels so we do have room for a few more players! The winners were John Christy and Sue Kennett.

New members are always welcome. We are an "open" group so new players can just come along on the day. We play ACOL in a 'Chicago' format so you do not need a partner.

For more information, please contact John and Sue Christy either on 01732 463911 or by email to bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk.

COMPUTER OPEN GROUP

27th March 2023. The next meeting of 2023 will be around the topic of **buying train tickets and the ways of saving money on long distance travel.** Please note that we are now meeting on the **4th Monday** of the month starting at 2pm as usual. PLEASE NOTE THE VENUE HAS CHANGED. For a trial period we will be using the Methodist Church Hall, 200 yards west of the old hall and adjacent to the library and Otford Builders Merchants. Car parking at the Methodist Hall is not generous and members should continue to park in the main village carpark if possible. We feel that the new hall has better facilities but we have booked for 4 months only and the decision can be revoked if members wish.

The group cannot afford to hire external speakers and we have at the moment only two people willing to give regular talks at our meetings. IT IS VITAL THAT WE FIND MORE MEMBERS TO TAKE ON THIS ROLE.

Any member who is willing to have a go should contact **Mike Davies** or **Charles Hebert** via email computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

REMINDER FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Firstly, many thanks to all the Group Organisers who have already sent me details of the members of their groups. If you haven't already replied, I would appreciate it if you would let me know as soon as possible.

David Taylor

communications@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

SCIENCE OPEN GROUP

Our next Science talk will be on **Monday, March 13th at 2:00 PM.**

Venue: **Otford Village Memorial Hall**—entry £2.00

Our Talk will be **'The Hydrogen Economy'** by Steve Brown.

This talk was postponed from December 2022 due to bad weather.

Hydrogen is one of a handful of new low carbon solutions that will be critical for the UK's transition to net zero. As part of a renewable energy system, low carbon hydrogen could be a versatile replacement for high-carbon fuels that are used today.

Hydrogen, as part of the UK energy mix, will help to bring down emissions in vital industrial sectors providing energy for power, heat and transport. Steve is a Manager of Technology at Shell Plc and he will discuss how industry is responding to this challenge.

Bob Ruffles for the Science Committee

science@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

SCRABBLE

The Scrabble Group is a fun group with no stressful competitions, which meets on the second Wednesday of the month in the Sevenoaks Library.



COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Some members appear to be unaware of EC changes, which were reported in and around the June 2022 AGM, or subsequently as inserts in the Newsletter. For members' information the following is a summary of the EC composition, as follows:-

Chairman (Dr. Ken Brown) (chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk), **ViceChair** (Beryl Mansell), (vicechair@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk), **Treasurer** (David Lowe) (treasurer@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk), and **Communications Trustee** (David Taylor) (communications@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk) all continue as EC Members. The **Group Development Coordinator** post (groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk) - previously unoccupied— is now filled by **Sue Christy**, who has changed role.

EC Secretary post - vacated by Sue Christy, after being advertised in the Newsletter, is now filled by **Helen Wood**, (secretary@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk), co-opted as allowed between AGMs by our constitution.

Social Secretary – Joyce Allen recently stood down for personal reasons. **Pam Walsh** (Social Committee Chair) (socialsec@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk) now fills the post, co-opted as allowed between AGMs by our constitution.

Membership Secretary (membership@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk) is no longer an EC post and has been filled by Jenny Ruffles since the June 2022 AGM.

NATIONAL U3A ONLINE LEARNING EVENTS

If you are interested in any of the events listed below, please click on the link to find out more and/or to register for the event, which are usually free.

Wednesday, March 1, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Climate Change - A Narrow Path Away From The Brink	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/climate-change-a-narrow-path-away-from-the-brink-tickets-517428752327
Thursday, March 2, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	An Introduction to Pilates	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/an-introduction-to-pilates-tickets-533568536857
Monday, March 6, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Brain, Pain and Anaesthetics	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brain-pain-and-anaesthetics-tickets-492278818197
Wednesday, March 8, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Genetic Genealogy: Making it Work for You	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/genetic-genealogy-making-it-work-for-you-tickets-469814867917
Thursday, March 9, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	For the Love of a Woman	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/for-the-love-of-a-woman-tickets-496212674467
Friday, 10 March, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	The Climate Crisis - and Some Solutions	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-climate-crisis-and-some-solutions-tickets-49622223027
Thursday, Mar 16, 10:00 AM – 11.30 AM through to Thursday, Apr 20, 10.00AM -11:30 AM	Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners: 6 Session Course	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cryptic-crosswords-for-beginners-6-session-course-tickets-529190030627
Friday, March 17, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Life on the Edge : The Dawn of Quantum Biology, with Jim Al-Khalili	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/life-on-the-edge-the-dawn-of-quantum-biology-with-jim-al-khalili-tickets-507458340557
Monday, March 20, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Setting Up and Running Local “Exploring World Faiths” Groups	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/setting-up-and-running-local-exploring-world-faiths-groups-tickets-537290469257
Friday, March 24, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	The Future of Ageing	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-future-of-ageing-tickets-532163073077

CYCLING GROUP

The cycling group was started by Jim Purves. Five people turned up to the inaugural meeting in December 2010, and our first ride was in February 2011. We now have 27 members of all ages from 5 U3As.

The group meets on the 1st Wednesday and 3rd Tuesday of each month throughout the year. There are also some ad hoc rides on other days. Our objective is to keep fit and enjoy our beautiful countryside – we are not out to break records !

We usually cycle between 20 and 30 miles and stop for a pub lunch. We try to stick to minor country roads and cycle tracks. We are often in the Sevenoaks and surrounding area but from time to time we are more ambitious and drive or take the train further afield.

We also try and have an annual “expedition” involving staying in hotels. In recent years we have been to The Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Paris, The Loire, Dartmoor, Ypres, Normandy, Scotland and Majorca.

We limit riding groups to about 6, so when more than that want to ride we split into groups. All members are expected to take their turn planning and leading rides. This formula means that there is in fact no limit to the number of members we can take.

The leader is expected to set a pace comfortable to all and is responsible for keeping the group together. Apart from that there are very few rules and we like to keep our cycling relaxed and informal.

Patrick Pascall

cycling@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk



Paris 2013



Dartmoor 2017



Kent Viking Trail 2022