

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

I am very pleased to advise that the Executive Committee has appointed David Taylor as our new vice-chair. David also deals with communications, Beacon and the website as well as setting out our newsletters.

Our monthly meeting on 27th January, when Melanie Gibson-Barton spoke about Edith Cavell, attracted members on 100 devices many of which were shared. It was an excellent talk,

and I thought that both the sound and vision were better than at St. Nicholas Church. While we are still relying on Zoom all members will receive links to these meetings by email. So long as you have a suitable device all you need to do is click on the link and follow some simple instructions. As soon as we are allowed, we will hold live meetings at the new Bat & Ball Community Centre. If you are likely to attend live

monthly meetings on a regular basis and would be willing to administer first aid please contact our Meetings Manager, Barbara Coleyshaw, on meetings@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk.

Apologies to those members who were unable to join the last monthly meeting. We are upgrading our Zoom subscription and the problem should not occur next time.

Nick White

CLIMATE CHANGE STUDY DAY 17th March—Paddock Wood U3A

Paddock Wood U3A are planning a Study Day on the topic of Climate Change which will be run as a Zoom webinar. Speakers from Greenpeace and Extinction Rebellion have been booked and other speakers are being secured. This is a topic of general interest and a number of local U3As have been invited.

Details of the programme are still to be finalised and these will be provided in due course but if you are interested in attending please can you register your interest with our Science Committee :- scienceday@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

If you wish to take this subject further, Exeter University are running a free short course called "Climate Change : The Science". The course involves 3 hours of study per week over a 4 week period. Go to <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/climate-change-the-science> for more details.

APPLE GROUP

Dave and Shirley Simmons have moved to Chichester but are keeping their house in Chelsfield as a second home so that they can stay in touch with local friends and the Apple Group once they can get back to reality again.

apple@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk



SCIENCE OPEN WEBINAR MEETING

Our next Science Webinar will be on Monday 8th March 2021 at 14:00hrs. 'Artificial Intelligence in Video Surveillance Systems' - by Bernard Jones

Astraguard, is a company with expertise in dynamic imaging, image analysis and artificial intelligence. These skills are used to develop intelligent systems in three main areas: elderly care, security and surveillance, and environmental monitoring. Our Speaker will be introducing these technologies.

If you have not already registered to join these webinars we do ask that you do via the following link scienceday@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING 24th March 2021

A **Special General Meeting (SGM)** of Sevenoaks U3A will be held at **2.00 pm on Wednesday 24th March 2021**. The Meeting will be followed by the Monthly Meeting which will be held online, using Zoom.

The purpose of the Meeting is to approve amendments to the Constitution of Sevenoaks U3A to enable General Meetings to be held by electronic means (e.g. using Zoom) and to enable proxy (postal) voting for members unable to access a General Meeting by electronic means. If the amendments are agreed at this meeting, they will have been made before expiry on 30th March of the temporary legislation (The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020) which permits Charitable Organisations to utilise such procedures, regardless of whether they are provided for in the charity's Constitution. These procedures will then be available for use at the AGM in 2021 and in future years, should that be necessary.

There is one Motion for the Meeting, which is included in the Meeting Agenda attached or enclosed with this Newsletter. If you expect to be unable to join the Zoom Meeting you will be able to submit your vote by post or email by using the Postal voting form also attached or enclosed with this Newsletter.

MARCH MONTHLY MEETING

Paul Laundy is our speaker on **24th March** and he will be talking about **Hong Kong**. Once a British Crown Colony, Hong Kong has been a Special Administrative Region of China since 1997. This talk traces the history of one of the world's most dynamic cities including the recent unrest. Aspects covered are Finance & Commerce, Transport, Culture and of course the Frangrant Harbour, all supported by stunning images. Paul spent his working life in the London offices of The Hong Kong Government and then in a Hong Kong based Trade Promotion Organisation. Some of you will no doubt remember the excellent talk he gave

to us a few years ago about Winston Churchill. The talk will be preceded by a Special General Meeting.

Barbara Coleyshaw, Meetings Manager



FREE ONLINE RESOURCES

MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses) – <https://www.futurelearn.com/> or <https://www.edx.org/>
Free online courses across a range of subjects. Self-paced but with specified start dates so groups start learning altogether and can communicate and support each other via forums.

TED Talks <https://www.ted.com/talks>

TED provide short, powerful talks (18 minutes or less) from science to the arts to global issues

The British Museum Online - <https://www.bl.uk/learning/online-resources#vi>

A collection of items and expert commentary related to History, English, Religious Studies & Citizenship.

Geograph - <https://www.geograph.org.uk/>

A project that aims to collect geographically representative photographs and information for every square kilometre of Great Britain and Ireland. Users can take part in the geography game by uploading pictures of UK areas, including images from decades gone by, or just to take a meander around the UK without leaving your living room.

Square Stories. A free group online chat on March 1st, organised by UK Tours. Share stories and the history of London's garden squares, Oxford's Radcliffe Square, Bath's Queens Square, the tourist favourites of Trafalgar and Parliament Squares, and more. To register to take part, go to https://uktoursonline.com/forthcoming-tours/?mc_cid=76c9b75cee&mc_eid=0cf39559e0

National Geographic - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpVm7bg6pXKo1Pr6k5kxG9A>

Tate Online Gallery - <https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/projects/unilever-series-turbinegeneration/online-gallery>

Architecture documentaries - <http://www.openculture.com/2016/04/watch-50-documentaries-on-famous-architects-buildings.html>

Gardening, Gardeners' World- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mw1h>

Gardening show packed with good ideas, tips, advice from experts and timely reminders to get the most out of your garden, whatever its size or type.

YouTube Channels - <https://www.youtube.com/>

Subscribe to channels to watch material on a range of areas from art documentaries to artificial intelligence.

The deadline for submissions for the April Newsletter is March 8th to news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

CROCHET GROUP

We are a very small group, normally meeting on the first Wednesday of the month in each other's homes, and in the past year we have managed to keep in touch despite the lockdown. In the summer we had one meeting in my garden, socially distancing of course, and we have had regular monthly Zoom meetings. During the year we have tackled various projects including: penguin, rose flower motif, goldfish, string-type bag, mobile phone case, slippers, butterflies, motifs for Xmas cards, and a Xmas cracker.

Pauline Gofton crochet@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

FRENCH DISCUSSION

Thanks to Anny Stevens, who has been leading our group on Zoom twice a month for a few months and Peter Brignell, who has also hosted the meetings, we have managed to hold on... I have now begun leading the group again on Zoom on the 2nd Thursday of the month, while Anny takes on the 4th Thursday. From my next session in February, we shall be talking about French short stories as well as current affairs during my allocated monthly meeting with the group.

Nicole Hickey frenchdiscuss@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

EXPLORING WORLD FAITHS

This Group has kept going very well since the summer, with monthly sessions on Zoom. Members have been keen to participate, and one member talked about *Confucianism* and another about *Humanism*. We have had one presentation on some aspects of *Judaism* by a visiting speaker, which was very well received. We invited interested members from some other U3A Groups and had a good take-up. This session was recorded so that it could be sent to members who were not able to attend, or those who wanted to see the presentation again. We are planning to have another visiting speaker soon, and other sessions planned are on *Jainism* and *Zoroastrianism*. We have vacancies.

Celia Smith worldfaiths@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

CIRCLE DANCING

If you like dancing and a wide range of music from all over the world then circle dancing is for you. The dances can be lively or gentle, meditative or exciting. The moods and styles vary enormously and there is something for everyone in the repertoire. You don't need a partner or experience. Dance bare-foot or in soft-soled shoes. The group is open to other U3As. Last summer, groups of six danced in the garden until the ground became too wet and slippery. We have also had a few sessions indoors, again with restricted numbers.

Venue: Christchurch, URC Hall, Littlecourt Road

Sandie Wade circledancing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

COMPUTER OPEN GROUP

There will be a **virtual meeting** using **Zoom** at **2 p.m.** on **15th March**. There will be a presentation by two members of the group on the **Sevenoaks u3a website** and the **Beacon database system**. Any member who wishes to join the meeting will be very welcome.

Anyone who has already given us an email address will be invited automatically, but others should send an email to: computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk and leave an email address so that we can send you a link to the meeting.

Mike Davies

PHOTOGRAPHY 2

Our Photography Group has kept going very enthusiastically during the last year. We have been meeting on Zoom once a month, with a high attendance. Members have shown any photographs they want to, highlighting any successes or problems. Some have talked about the software they use for photo editing, others about techniques, or camera features. We have had a monthly informal competition, each month on a different theme, with members sending in two photos. When they have all been submitted, we each choose our First Preference and Second Preference. This process has been made much easier for the last couple of months, since we set up a Group on Cluster (a photo sharing website), which means we can compare all the photos together. We have vacancies.

Celia Smith photo2@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

LONDON VILLAGES

At our first meeting we agreed to start our programme with Clerkenwell. Subjects for the future include Greenwich, Chelsea and Marylebone.

Each group member will choose a subject (person, building, event/s) connected with the village and present their findings to the group. The programme for each village will begin with a scene-setting talk from one member.

Early reading has revealed some interesting Clerkenwell residents, including "Lady" Lewson, a Miss Havisham figure, the Duchess of Newcastle, known as "Mad Madge" and Thomas Bretton, the "musical small coalman". In 1798 there were 7000 watchmaking artisans working in the village and in 1715, for the sum of 2/6d, you could watch fights between men, dogs and women. Clerkenwell was also home to a monastery and three prisons and was the setting for *Oliver Twist*.

We have two vacancies. If you are interested in joining the group please email londonvillages@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

Beryl Mansell

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHY 2 GROUP

All the photographs were taken by members of the group during lockdown.



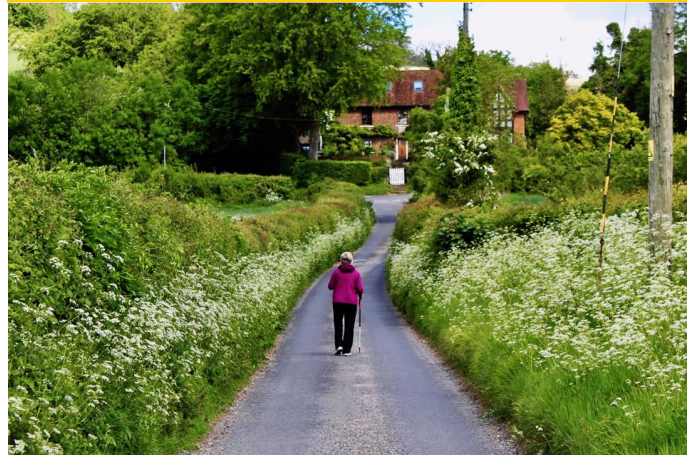
Autumn Tapestry - from Celia Smith



Blue Tit - from John Ward



Chevening Interchange - from Rob Weighill



Walker on the Pilgrims Way - from Terry Platt



Architecture in Motion -from Keith Smith



Spectre of Lockdown
from Rob Weighill

Many thanks to all
the members of the
group who
contributed
photographs.

DIARY

- Feb 24th** **Monthly Meeting** (via Zoom) 2 p.m — “A Sign of the Times” - A presentation by Chris Shaw.
- Mar 8th** **Science Open Group** (via Zoom) 2 p.m - “Artificial Intelligence in Video Surveillance Systems” - a presentation by Bernard Jones
- Mar 15th** **Computer Open Group** (via Zoom) 2 p.m — a joint presentation— “U3A Beacon Membership System” by David Taylor and “Our U3A Website” by Bob Ruffles
- Mar 24th** **Special General Meeting** 2p.m— followed by the **Monthly Meeting**—a presentation by Paul Laundy— “A Talk About Hong Kong”