

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

In the November 24th Monthly Meeting in the Bat & Ball Centre, Imogen Corrigan, an ex-army Major turned historian, gave an excellent presentation on "Master Masons who Built the Cathedrals". This hybrid meeting was very well attended, live by almost 80 people, and on Zoom by 60. The Technical Support Team are to be congratulated for overcoming a number of problems integrating Sevenoaks u3a electronic systems with those in the renovated B&B Centre. We previously used both halls in the Community Centre, but saved money on this occasion by hiring only the enlarged (Harry Garrett) Hall, which proved more than sufficient. Tea and biscuits were served and there was plenty of room to sit at tables, where they had been watching

the lecture, or to stand around and chat. There is no Monthly Meeting in December, but meetings are booked every month from January to June. The Executive Committee has decided that hybrid meetings should continue. However, given warnings of a wave of Omicron infections, it may be necessary, possibly as early as January, to revert to Zoom only.

On December 3rd a New Members' Meeting was held in the Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Centre. The 70 members who have joined since September 2019 were invited and 22 attended. Short talks were given by the Chairman, Joyce Allen (Social Committee activities and events) and Ray Leathers (setting up a new Group "Walking Cricket"). Members each

completed a questionnaire and in round-table discussions had questions and concerns addressed. The need for volunteers was explained and an encouraging number expressed willingness to help in various roles. The format and outcomes of the meeting are being evaluated and the intention is to repeat New Members' Meetings at intervals, perhaps for the next meeting re-inviting the 48 who were unable to attend our first attempt!

This January Newsletter should reach you before the Festive Season which gives me the opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Dr. Ken Brown
chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

MONTHLY MEETING—Wednesday 26th January at 2pm

at the Bat and Ball Centre and on Zoom

Our speaker for January is **Tom Way**, an acclaimed professional Wildlife Photographer whose work is widely exhibited in galleries and exhibitions. He last visited us in June 2017 when he impressed us with his wonderful pictures of Wildlife from around the World. This time Tom will be giving a presentation entitled **Wildlife on your Doorstep** from Deer to Hedgehogs, from Owls to Foxes and more. He will be describing the stories behind how he took the images. The talk also covers our coastlines and northern areas of the UK showing images of the very charismatic Puffin and Red Squirrel.

I do hope you will join us either at the meeting in the hall or on Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent out to all members on email a couple of days before the event.

Barbara Coleyshaw meetings@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk



JANUARY DIARY

Jan 10th	Science Open Group	Jan 12th	Bridge For Pleasure
Jan 12th	Nordic Walking	Jan 17th	Computer Open Group
Jan 19th	Ambling	Jan 26th	Bridge For Pleasure
Jan 26th	Monthly Meeting		

The deadline for items for inclusion in the February edition of the newsletter is January 15th, 2022.

SCIENCE GROUP

Our Next Science talk will be on January 10th 2022. The topic will be 'Vaccines' by Mike Trevethick and will be delivered via Zoom.

Mike Trevethick has over 25 years experience in drug discovery and development in two major drug discovery companies. In addition Mike also teaches at UK universities on applied science, medicine and drug discovery. He will be talking about recent developments in vaccines.

For **Virtual attendees** If you attended our earlier Zoom webinars we have retained your registration details and you will automatically receive an invitation nearer the time. If you have not registered then please send us your details via the following link—scienceday@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

AMBLING

Wednesday 19th January 10.30

Meet in the car park opposite the Bell pub at the east end of Kemsing TN15 6NA. A 4 mile walk to Heaverham and Cotman's Ash returning down a steep permissive path. It is Sevenoaks Society Walk 66. It will be followed by lunch at The Bell.

ambling@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

COMPUTER GROUP

Wednesday 17 January 2.00 pm on Zoom

The format will be a presentation by a representative of KCC HQ Libraries on the use of the internet in accessing the libraries' stock of books and magazines. 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 a link to join the meeting.

Mike Davies

NORDIC WALKING

Wednesday 12th January 10.30

Meet at Lullingstone Country Park Visitor Centre, Castle Road, Eynesford, DA4 0JF. A walk of about 3 miles through Lullingstone Park followed by lunch at the Malt Shovel in Eynesford.

nordicwalking@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

BRIDGE FOR PLEASURE

Wednesdays 12th January and 26th January 09.45

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. The winner on 24th November was George Thompson and on the 8th December was David Lowe. 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 ring **John and Sue Christy 01732 463911** or email bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

LONDON STUDIES 2

The group organises monthly visits to a place of interest in the London area, e.g, a Museum, Historical House or a district. Visits are usually made by train and/or bus on the first Thursday of the month. We would like a few more members to join the group to share the work of organising visits and each member should be prepared, together with a colleague, to accept responsibility for one visit per year. This involves making arrangements for travel, refreshments and booking if required.

Recently we visited William Morris's house in Bexleyheath (the Red House) travelling by car. The picture is of the group at nearby Hall Place where we stopped for refreshments.

Mike Davies londonstudies2@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk



OLD U3A COMPUTER

Wanted - a new home for an ex-u3a Toshiba Satellite Laptop computer, complete with charging cable and carrying case and in beautiful condition. It has Open Office installed with Windows 7, so will run PowerPoint presentations, read Word documents, etc. You can type letters using the Open Office version of Word. Full Internet capability. It also has a free Virus Scanner (Avast) and hard drive cleaner (CCleaner).

If you would like to take ownership of this magnificent piece of vintage home computing, please contact David Gardner at davidgardner9999@gmail.com.

Free delivery in the Sevenoaks area.

If it doesn't find a good home, it may have to go to "electronic heaven".

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

A volunteer is needed who would :

- contact our printers with a list of those members who have opted to receive the printed version of our monthly newsletter.
- also to send to u3a National Office our quarterly updated list of those members who receive the Third Age Matters magazine.

If you are interested in taking on these roles, please contact **David Taylor** at

communications@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk.

Many thanks to Jim Purves who has fulfilled this role for quite a long time, but who has now decided to take a break.

BAT & BALL CENTRE

On 24th November we had our first live monthly meeting since before the pandemic. The new hall is a huge improvement on the old one. Imogen Corrigan gave an excellent illustrated talk about the men who built the cathedrals in the UK and France. Our technical team decided to allow members at home to join the meeting on Zoom. There were moments when the faces of members watching from home filled the screen in the hall. Fortunately, they were all awake and suitably dressed. That was an understandable teething problem which did not spoil the meeting, and we hope that future meetings will run more smoothly.

Parking. There was just enough space in the car park for about 75 members who attended in the hall. If the car park becomes full at any future meeting wardens will direct cars to available spaces in surrounding streets. Disabled spaces are available at the hall.



HYBRID ZOOM MEETINGS

At our November General Meeting we introduced a Zoom Hybrid meeting set up in the newly refurbished Bat & Ball Centre. For this meeting we had around 70 members in the hall and a further 50 or more members viewing proceedings via Zoom at home.

Over the past few months the Technical Team have been working with other technical members in the Kent u3a Network and the National Office to provide methods of maintaining some form of group activity using video conferencing. Overall Zoom has proved to be a great success and it has enabled a significant number of our groups to continue some form of group activity.

There have been some interesting observations and for us one unexpected benefit of the hybrid broadcast was the ability to engage members who cannot get to the Bat & Ball Centre for whatever reason. In fact they do not even have to be in the country ! But they can still participate in the live discussion with questions to the speaker.

This flexibility also highlights that it is essential to adopt Zoom etiquette. The need to Mute microphones on your Zoom connection is vital during the talk. **Everything** that is going on in your house is being broadcast to the hall. Obviously this is very distracting for the speaker and the hall audience, so please mute your device and **only unmute** to ask questions.

The Technical Support Team

ITEMS FROM NATIONAL U3A

SLOW WAYS

u3a members are gearing up to get involved with Slow Ways. It's a national initiative to create a network of reasonably direct, safe and accessible walking routes between cities, towns and many villages. Slow Ways aims to encourage people to walk more, further, and for more purposes. In 2020, volunteers – including u3a members - mapped out over 7,500 Slow Ways routes across Great Britain. Now the routes are drafted the challenge for 2021 was to review all 100,000km of them !

To find out more, go to <https://beta.slowways.org/Page/u3a>

ONLINE LEARNING EVENTS

Online Learning Events are listed on the national u3a website each month.

Examples of the sort of events taking place in December are :

- Staying Safe Online
- A Christmas Cookery Demonstration
- Ancient Civilisations of the Americas
- Exploring World Faiths
- A Talk from a Holocaust Survivor

For more information about Online Learning Events in 2022 go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>.

MATHS CHALLENGE

Take part in the weekly maths challenge (now in its 86th week), with problems and puzzles posed by Gordon Burgin, Andrew Holt, Rod Marshall, Ian Stewart and David Martin, the U3A Maths and Stats Subject Adviser. If you would like to share your ideas on how to solve these puzzles please join the [learning forum](#).

Keep an eye on the u3a [online events page](#) for maths and other workshops this coming year.

More information is available at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/maths-challenge>.

LEARN, LAUGH, MOVE

Now more than ever, health and fitness have become increasingly important to all of us and u3a members have been finding new ways to stay fit over this period of time. National u3a will spotlight a different fitness activity every month and are encouraging u3a members to send in details of what they are doing in that particular area.

The area of activity for December is Dance. In the coming months there will also a focus on Yoga, Cycling, plus an item called "Folk Dancing Is Fun".

For more information go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/learn-laugh-move>.

Brighten up February 2022

In company with your fellow Sevenoaks U3A members

At a **FESTIVE WINTER LUNCH**

At Wildernesse Golf Club

On Friday 18th February, 12.30 for 1.00 p.m.



There will be a 3 course lunch including starter, followed by main dish choice from the carvery (with vegetarian option) and a choice of desserts, concluding with coffee.

The all-in cost (including gratuities) is £30. Drinks will be available from the bar at a reasonable price.

Organiser: Pam Walshe 01732 454769 or 07710 208410

Please detach and send this portion to **Pam Walshe, 8 Crownfields, Sevenoaks TN13 1EF**, enclosing a cheque for £30 per person, payable to U3A Sevenoaks Social Account TOGETHER WITH a stamped self-addressed envelope for your receipt.

Name(s).....

Address.....

Phone No.....**Email**.....

Contact name and number in case of emergencies on the day.....

Please reserveplaces for the Winter Lunch. I enclose a cheque for £.....

The information submitted above may be retained by the Social Committee for administration purposes for this and future visits. Data will be retained on a password-protected computer and will only be used for communication between you and the Social Committee.