

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Newsletter

We normally suspend the newsletter in January and make the December edition cover two months, but in view of the pandemic we will continue the publication without a break. The news team has been receiving a good supply of material, but if your group has some interesting news with or without pictures please send it to: news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

The AGM on 28th October was conducted on zoom after voting had been completed by post and email.

90 members voted by post and online in advance of the AGM, and all the motions were passed by a large majority. There were then two confirmatory votes by way of raised hands at the meeting which were also passed by large majorities. That may have seemed a strange way of conducting the voting, but we were constrained by the fact that only a minority of members were able to operate zoom. The method chosen was approved by the Charity Commission. One of our members intended asking some questions at

the AGM. Those questions concerned our policy of admitting members of other U3As to our Groups, the decline in our membership, and the value of Group Organisers' workshops. Unfortunately, her computer was not working when it came to her turn to speak. We have therefore listed her questions, together with our answers, in a detailed document. If you would like to read that document please send your request to Chris Dance at secretary@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

The Executive Committee have rearranged the Monthly meeting on 25th November 2020 to run via Zoom. Due to the ongoing Covid 19 situation it is likely that talks planned for the early part of 2021 will also be delivered via Zoom.

Our speaker for November is Jennifer Stinton, a renowned flautist based in Sevenoaks, who performed at our 25th Anniversary tea last year. On the 25th November at 2pm she will be giving a PowerPoint presentation entitled "The Performing Life of a Musician, Recording and Royal Connections".

The initial registration for the AGM is not intended to cover subsequent

meetings, so for the November Meeting and any subsequent Zoom Monthly Meetings you will need to pre-register by sending an email to :- meetings@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

Once you have registered we will send you login details for the meeting a few days beforehand. For any subsequent meetings delivered by this method an invitation and login details will automatically be sent to those who have already registered, and registering now will ensure that you will always be kept up to date with future monthly meeting arrangements.

Barbara Coleyshaw

DIARY

Nov 16 Computer Group Open Zoom Webinar

Nov 25 Monthly Meeting "The Performing Life of a Musician" by Jennifer Stinton—via Zoom

Nov 26 Zoom Training by Computer Group

Dec 1 Zoom Training by Computer Group

Dec 9 Nordic Walking

Dec 14 Science Open Zoom Webinar

Dec 16 Ambling

U3A ASSETS FOR DISPOSAL

Over the years we have invested in a number of items to support our talks. As technology progresses some items become obsolete and so we have the following items for disposal:

Kodak 35mm Carousel Projector complete with remote control. This was purchased about 20 years ago. It is serviceable and has been PAT tested.

Toshiba L30-113 Laptop Computer. This was purchased in 2007 and was originally supplied with Windows Vista. It has been upgraded to

Windows 7 but cannot be upgraded to Windows 10. It has the Windows 2010 Office suite installed. However, it remains serviceable and may suit someone who is not too bothered about the latest operating systems. It is advised **not to use this machine on the internet** as the operating systems are no longer supported with security updates.

If any member wishes to obtain either of these items as free gift please contact me.

Bob Ruffles

techsupport@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

SOCIAL COMMITTEE EMAIL

Please amend your handbook entries for the Social Committee.

If you need to contact the entire social committee, please use social@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk.

However, if you just wish to send an email to the Social Committee Chairman, Pam Walshe, use socialsec@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk.

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

Copy by 10th December please to news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

We will shortly be contacting all members with details of our membership survey.

The aims of the survey are :

- To better understand members' current involvement in U3A events/groups;
- To understand what additional groups/ events/ etc, members would like to see introduced;
- To find out what we can do within the U3A to get more members involved more regularly;
- To find out what skills individual members have and whether they would be prepared to use those skills to help the U3A in any way;

You will receive your questionnaire before Christmas either by email or by post for those members without email. It should take less than 10 minutes to complete. It would help us greatly if as many members as possible would complete the survey, so that we can adequately plan for the future and provide what members want.

David Taylor

NEW GROUP

London Villages

As London has grown over the centuries it has spread out, absorbing tiny hamlets and small towns. Many areas still retain unique features from the past, as well as having fascinating histories, and can be interesting places to study as a group, finding out about past residents or buildings or events which took place in the area.

As we are unlikely to be able to meet in person for some time the group will use Zoom. If you are not well acquainted with the Zoom software, I can provide details of how to use it.

If you are interested in joining an initial discussion please email me at londonvillages@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk with your name and if we can get enough people interested I'll set up an initial Zoom meeting in January. See www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk for more details.

Beryl Mansell

GROUP NEWS

NORDIC WALKING 10.30 Wednesday 9th December

Nordic Walking is a new group being operated in conjunction with Knole U3A. The group already has more than 20 members and, if it continues to grow, it may have to be split into two groups. It meets at 10.30, normally on the first Wednesday of each month, and goes no more than 3 miles. Ian Galletti of Knole provides advice on technique and has members performing a series of exercises using their poles, while Nick White is the organiser. As well as being a good form of exercise it is a great way to enjoy the fresh air in a relaxed social environment.

The next walk will start at 10.30 on 9th December at Lullingstone Country Park, Eynsford, DA4 0JF nordicwalking@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

COMPUTER GROUP – Open Group and Zoom Training

14.00 Monday 16th November File types and questions by members. Please register by email to undermentioned address in advance.

Zoom Training. The group is offering some basic training in the use of Zoom to members who feel nervous about using it. The dates offered are **Thursday 26th November** and **Tuesday 1st December** at 5 pm on each day. Members wanting to take up this offer should send an email to: computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

AMBLING 10.30 Wednesday 16th December Godden Green

The November walk at Groombridge unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the lockdown. We are though planning to walk in December instead. This walk will start from outside the Buck's Head in Godden Green, TN15 0JJ. It will go through Knole Park and cover about 3 ½ miles at a steady pace.

ambling@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

SCIENCE OPEN MEETING 14:00hrs Monday 14th December

The Science Open Group successfully ran its first webinar meeting in October. We had over 50 members registered for the talk and the majority signed in on the day. We have a number of talks lined up and we are approaching the speakers listed in the handbook to see if they prepared to work with us in this way, but we may need to amend some of the talks so far advertised.

Development of Technology in modern Hearing Aids by Adam Chell of Sevenoaks Hearing

If you have not already registered to join these webinars please advise the Science Committee via the following link giving your name and email address so that we can then send out joining instructions. scienceday@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP 1

Many thanks to Mary Allwood and the members of her Photography 1 group who supplied all the photographs. The group has been keeping in touch using Cluster. This is a site where you can add photographs on a different topic each week and share them with each other. Members take it in turn to choose the topic for the week. The group have also met up outside in members' gardens and had one visit to the Royal Engineers Museum at Chatham.



Eynsford Viaduct
Mary Allwood



Great Comp
Rob Weighill



Scotney Castle
Rob Weighill



Wilderness Sunset
Lynton Jones



Leeds Castle
Cathy Enderby



Cricket on the Vine
Jack Buchanan



NATIONAL U3A EVENTS

WEEKLY QUIZ

National U3A have been running a weekly quiz for quite some time, with a separate topic each week. When they started in April, to provide a bit of entertainment during lockdown, it was thought 6 quizzes would be enough for the duration. At the time of writing It's now in its 26th week ! If you would like to test your little grey cells go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/weekly-quiz/>

BIRDWATCH

U3A members are being asked to help keep track of our garden birds.



You are invited to join [Garden BirdWatch](#), a free online tool to record your own bird sightings and keep up to date with trends.

Provided by the British Trust for Ornithology, BirdWatch is for observers to manage their own personal records and contribute data

to BTO science; supporting species conservation on local, regional, national and international scales.

This is a great opportunity – not only for members of existing U3A Birdwatching groups but for any nature enthusiast looking for a fun, outdoor project. To read more about the Birdwatch Project go to [BTO BirdWatch Project](#).

U3A EYE

U3A are running a fortnightly project to encourage people to take and submit pictures of their surroundings during this difficult time. They will post a different theme each fortnight and will invite U3A members to submit their photos on that topic.

Go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/u3a-eye>

MATHS CHALLENGE

If you are more mathematically inclined you can also take part in a weekly Maths Challenge. These challenges are set by 3 U3A members, including David Martin, who is the U3A Maths & Stats Subject Advisor. To take part go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/maths-challenge>

LEARNING EVENTS

National U3A are also offering a number of workshops, webinars and interactive sessions delivered by members for members, which are free to join.

Current topics include Cybersecurity, History, Mathematics, Philosophy and Watercolour Painting.

To find out more please go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>.

Many online events are being delivered via the Zoom video conferencing/webinar platform. We have some 'How to Guides' and are offering 'Online Tutorials' for using Zoom that may assist you if you are not familiar with this tool.

U3A RADIO

The first ever u3a radio officially launches at 2pm 29th September directly after the national AGM. The national office learning team have been working with member volunteers who are skilled in broadcasting and you can keep listening to u3a radio wherever you are as it is delivered as a recorded podcast. To watch these podcasts go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zGNxpUSUAc>

MADE IT ! MAKE IT !

Christmas may be slightly different this year but some things stay the same, Crafts are an essential part of Christmas preparations, in particular making Christmas decorations. We would love to know how you have used your time to produce festive decorations and to get ready for Christmas. We know there are thousands of interest groups continuing to be active during this time and producing some fantastic items.

Consequently, we are looking for your ideas, suggestions and pictures what you have made or are making for Christmas 2020. So that others can have a go, please direct people (either as individuals or with their interest group) to resources or sources of support if you are able to. We will publish as many of your pictures and ideas as possible to add to the gallery of submissions.

[Make A Submission to Made It ! Make It !](#)

The items mentioned above are only a snapshot of the events being run by National U3A. For more information about other projects, including Online Events and Online Tutorials, please go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events>.