



### Chairman's note

This month has seen a lot of U3A activity both within Sevenoaks and in the surrounding U3As. As a result of the Open Afternoon a number of new groups have been formed and are beginning to get established. We also attracted new members, so a welcome to them, and I hope in time they will play their part in the success story of our U3A.

On the wider front I attended an SE Regional Meeting on 26 October at Tonbridge School and met people from other U3As and our regional representatives. The message from them is that we are growing, with a national membership of around 250,000 members. By contrast, the turnover for National Office is around £1m or about £4 per head, so it is clear to see the success is not about money: it's about the members and the ethos of self-help.

With a number of local Chairmen I went along to the launch of a new U3A in Paddock Wood (Report on p2.) It was an excellent example of a community pulling together, and we wish them every success.

In our own U3A, the Chairs of the Computer and Science sub-Committees become vacant at the next AGM - under our constitution these posts must change every four years. The jobs are not daunting or bureaucratic; they can be fun. Nevertheless, they are important in helping to make the U3A run smoothly. So if you feel you can contribute, or know someone who can, please speak to one of the Committee to find more about the jobs.

Christmas is not too far away! Please look out for a whole range of events in the local area. Much of what has been alerted to us is advertised either by our Newsletter or Flyers or on our website.

Bob Ruffles



**SEE U3A 2011 HANDBOOK FOR FURTHER CONTACT DETAILS OF PEOPLE REFERRED TO IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

### Meetings open to all

**Monthly Meeting Wednesday 25 January**  
 Community Centre, Bat and Ball, start at 2pm.  
**London Statues of the famous and forgotten**  
 Susan Jenkinson is an experienced Blue Badge guide. She will be speaking to us about statues in London, which is populated by more statues than any other city on earth. Most of them date from the late 19th to early 20th centuries, but new ones are constantly appearing. Susan will explore the background to statues to the great and the good, and she will also be celebrating those members of society who risk being forgotten, tucked away in shady gardens or railway stations.

#### Science Group Monday 12 December

##### Medicines for Malaria Venture

by Dr Win Gutteridge.  
 Discovery, development & delivery of new medicines for malaria.

#### Monday 9 January

##### Biomass as a Renewable Energy Source

Ian Smith on the use of biomass as an alternative to fossil fuels.  
 Otford Village Memorial Hall, 2pm. All Sevenoaks U3A members welcome. £2 entry includes tea.

#### Computer Group Monday 19 December

##### More Useful Websites

a presentation by Committee members.  
 Otford Village Memorial Hall, 2pm. £1 entry at door. Wine and Mince Pies will be served after the meeting. No need to book, or enrol - just come and enjoy! All Sevenoaks U3A members welcome.

#### Monday 16 January

##### Doing it on-line - self-assessment by Computer

Jacquetta Brown of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs  
 Otford Village Memorial Hall, 2pm. All Sevenoaks U3A members welcome. £1 entry includes tea.

**Car parking is always difficult, both at Otford and at the Community Centre, so please share cars if at all possible.**

**There is no Newsletter in December.**  
 Please send copy for the January Newsletter by **Friday, 13 January 2012**  
 to both Linda Young  
 and Magda Sweetland

## News and Views

Articles to Magda Sweetland

**Earlier this month, the speaker at the Science group meeting was Andrew Mayfield, from the Kent Community Archaeology Project. Here he explains the purpose of the work:**

Have you ever wanted to try your hand at archaeology? You can! **Shorne Woods Country Park**, near Gravesend, has a wealth of history and archaeology within its boundaries, all of it being investigated by interested volunteers. The Project has been running for the past five years. We have been investigating the archaeology of the Park and have found sites dating from the Mesolithic period (over 8,000 years ago), a medieval manor site and the remains of RAF and Army camps in the woods.

The park has had a Community Archaeologist since 2006 as part of a Heritage Lottery-funded project which aims to identify, investigate and conserve the many different sites within the park. Anyone with a passion for the past can get involved in various ways. Field walking, surveying, researching historic documents, artefact identification and excavation are just some of the activities on offer. The archaeology spans many periods; from Stone Age flint tools scattered on the high heath, to the remains of the 20th century clay working industry, which created much of the park's contours today. A World War II RAF billet camp still lies hidden in the trees, and a grand medieval manor house with numerous outbuildings once stood looking down a slope towards the Thames.

Excavation takes place at the site of this manor house each July. Everyone is welcome to join in, whatever their level of experience. Volunteers can come for as many, or as few, days as they wish and all equipment is provided. If you are interested in taking part, please contact the Community Archaeologist at [heritageconservation@kent.gov.uk](mailto:heritageconservation@kent.gov.uk)

We have also been studying the remains of the clay works of the former Cobham clay pit, owned and operated by APCM, later Blue Circle. As part of these investigations we are keen to talk to anyone who may have worked at the clay works, or may have photos of the workings. We are also very keen to talk to anyone who may have served at RAF Gravesend and been based at the camps or being housed in the camps after the war. Your memories could contribute to the bigger picture that is currently being built of the area by a team of enthusiastic heritage volunteers. If you belong to a group who would like to see, or hear about, the park's archaeology, or if you would like further information on any of our activities, please contact the Community Archaeologist

☎ 07920 548906 ✉ [andrew.mayfield@kent.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.mayfield@kent.gov.uk)

**Andrew Mayfield, Community Archaeologist**  
[www.kent.gov.uk/randallmanor](http://www.kent.gov.uk/randallmanor)

## News from the Kent Network

### The need for more U3As:

On 26 October there was a **Seminar** in Tonbridge run by National Office with four speakers who have different roles in the South East Region. Some striking points were made by Barbara Lewis (retiring Vice-Chairman of the Trust) who stressed the need for new U3As to meet the ever-growing demand. She belongs to South Herts U3A but, when they reached what they felt was their capacity, they helped to launch the third U3A in nearby Watford. Salisbury, too, has had three U3As for about twelve years now, each working independently to keep its own character, but offering spare places in their Study Groups. This is the best of both worlds: a U3A which is a sensible size as an administrative unit, but still has the benefits of a wide choice in subjects. It can be done! Incidentally, National Office is now recommending that there should be a U3A every five miles!

**Paddock Wood Launch** was held on 3 November and was attended by 120+ potential members. Fourteen people offered to join a committee, and a similar number said they would lead a Study Group. All the Chairmen of adjacent U3As attended and spoke about different aspects of the U3A.

**Helping adjacent U3As:** Several U3As in Kent have asked to see a copy of the 2011 Knole and Sevenoaks Handbooks and the Newsletters. **Time to Learn in Sevenoaks** has been much admired and it happens to coincide with an exercise run by National Office on giving Group Contacts/ Leaders the kind of information they want. The Chairman of the national Education team has asked to quote from the booklet, which is good news.

Magda Sweetland

## *Jane Austen Birthday Celebrations*

Come and celebrate Jane Austen's birthday on Friday 16 December in the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Tonbridge.

The Birthday address will be given by Professor Michael Wheeler:

**To Begin at the Beginnings:  
the openings of Jane Austen's novels.**

**Venue:** Church of St Peter and St Paul, Church Lane, Tonbridge TN9 1HD

**Time:** 2.30pm – 4.30pm

**Tickets:** £4 including tea and cake from Mr Books, Tonbridge/Sevenoaks Library

## News from the Groups

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Beryl Mansell ☎ 01959 525010

### Military History 2

A preliminary meeting was held earlier in the month, to set up a second group. It was agreed to meet monthly, probably on a Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon, and that members would develop their own interests rather than follow a set programme. The background of the members was wide-ranging, and would give an interesting scope to meetings. Visits were thought to be an integral part of the study. There are already nine in the group but anyone interested in joining should contact John Stanton ☎ 01732-886647

### Spanish

Seven members of Sevenoaks U3A expressed an interest in joining a new Spanish Group, and a meeting was held in early November to try to make progress. There was a very wide range of experience and abilities, with two members who had lived and worked in South America (and at the same time!) It was therefore decided that three 'layers' would form as a shared Spanish Conversation group for the really fluent, while the 'Improvers' would join the Knole Spanish group, at least to start with, and finally those who felt they were very rusty would meet to listen to CDs and brush up before integrating where possible. When the groups settle in to a routine, they can flag up details in the newsletter if they are in need of extra members.

### Group with spaces - Churches Group 2

We meet on the 3rd Tuesday each month to visit churches, old and new, and explore their architecture and history. Visits are generally in the morning to local churches but we also include some to London, Surrey and Sussex and have enjoyed full day trips further afield. We are holding a planning meeting to discuss our future programme on Tuesday 20 December. Please contact us if you would like to hear what's on offer.

Ian and Angie Lister ☎ 01732 455211

### New Group - Beaded Wire Jewellery Making

Would anyone be interested in joining a potential Beaded Wire Jewellery Making Group? I am new to the hobby and would like to work with members of all standards with a similar interest. Others with absolutely no experience would also be very welcome. If you would like to attend an exploratory meeting or discuss it further, please contact Daphne Anthony on ☎ 01959-522021.

### Free Computer Training for Complete Beginners

Do you wish you knew more about computers or the internet? You now have the perfect opportunity at a new centre at 34 St Johns Road, Sevenoaks. It is part of a Government funded scheme which you may have seen advertised on BBC TV with the "Give an Hour" slogan. S&G Training is delivering the training and has offered to dedicate its facilities to U3A members from 10.00-4.00 on Mondays.

This free individual training is available now and is done at each person's own pace. It is not classroom based. S&G staff and, whenever possible, a member of U3A will be present to help you. Complimentary tea/coffee and biscuits will be provided. It is easy to park near the centre.

To find out more ring S&G ☎ 01732 458910 and talk to Annika, or speak to John Anthony, who volunteers at the centre ☎ 01959-522021 or Beryl Mansell ☎ 01959 525010

In 2012, additional training will be available for anyone who is interested in studying for the accredited Certificates in Microsoft Office. There will be a small fee for this service.

### Social Events News

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Pam Walshe ☎ 01732 454769

- Both visits to the Wallace Collection and the block-buster **Leonardo in Milan** have sold out, not all to Sevenoaks members by any means. We had to rely on Knole, Maidstone and Tonbridge members to take up the tickets which were pre-purchased. We do need our own members to be quicker off the mark!
- There are a few places left at the **Festive Lunch** on Friday 6 January 2012, at Westerham Golf Club. Three courses, coffee and mints for £22.50. Contact Lynda Alleeson 01959-534501.
- The **York trip** is fully subscribed and those who were successful in the ballot have been notified.
- The sub-committee met recently and agreed a good programme of events for 2012. It includes a visit to **Jewish London**, a repeat visit to **London Docklands**, tea and a tour at **Titsey Place**, a visit to the **Imperial War Museum** at Duxford and an unusual visit to **Cressing Temple** and **Ingatstone Hall**. Flyers in time.
- There will be a Jazz Study Day on Thursday, 24 May 2012, organised by the Jazz and Blues group.
- Kent U3A Study Day on Monday 30 April at Tonbridge School, on the subject of **Opera**. Flyer in January.

### **7-day holiday in Sicily - 2012**

This is advance notice of a 7-day (6 nights) holiday in the Autumn of 2012, which we shall be offering to members in January.

It will be to **Sicily**, visiting Catania, Mount Etna, Taormina, Syracuse, Roman Villa Casale, Enna, Palermo, Monreale, the ruins of Segeste and Cefalu.

We are awaiting publication of airline schedules for the latter part of 2012 but the holiday is likely to happen in the last 10 days of October 2012. The cost per person sharing a room will be in the region of £795 to include air travel from Gatwick, half board in two 4\* star hotels, exclusive use of a coach in Sicily and an English-speaking tour guide. Single supplement will be £107 and there will be extras for coach travel to Gatwick, travel insurance and wine.

As soon as firm flight dates are available, a flyer will be placed on the U3A Sevenoaks website, and it will also be sent to members with the January 2012 newsletter.

If you wish to register interest in this holiday, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope (min. 9"x 4") for details to: John Dean, Moretons End, High Street, Westerham, TN16 1RQ.

### **Events Open to All**

#### **Friday Lunch Friday 2 December**

The Rose & Crown, London Road, Dunton Green, 12.15 for 12.30.

Please book by Saturday 26 November. Contact Christine or Alastair Macpherson ☎ 01959 523566 There will not be a lunch in January.

#### **Bridge for Pleasure Wednesday 14 December Wednesdays 11 and 25 January**

The Group plays at Otford Village Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month from 9.50am until 12.15pm. The winner on 12 October and 9 November was Eric Wilson. This is an 'Open' group: new players are always welcome.

Contact Colin and Mary Butson ☎ 01732 458356

#### **Ambling Wednesday 18 January**

There will be no walk in December.

Meet in the National Trust car park at Toy's Hill (GR 470517) for a 10am start. From Sevenoaks, turn left off the A25 at Brasted, up Chart Lane passing the Fox and Hounds on the left. The car park is a short distance further on the right and is signposted Toy's Hill. The walk is followed by an optional lunch. New walkers are always welcome. Leader: Velma Keys ☎ 01732 459001.

#### **Half-Day Walking Monday 23 January**

There will be no walk in December.

Meet outside the Three Horseshoes in Knockholt Pound (GR 482595) for a 10am start. The pub car park is small so please try to park on the surrounding streets. The walk will be about five miles, passing the Chevening keyhole. The walk will be followed by an optional lunch at the Three Horseshoes. Leader: Sue Fraser ☎ 01732 741437

### **Strollers**

#### **Tuesday 20 March**

The Strollers take a winter break to avoid bad weather. The next stroll will be in March, details in the February Newsletter. Happy Christmas to all, and best wishes for 2012. Anne Gutteridge.

### **Diary**

#### **December 2011**

Fri	2	First Friday lunch
Fri	2	Christmas Entertainment**
Sun	4	Wallace Collection and Leonardo***
Mon	12	Science Group Meeting
Tues	13	Coffee morning, The Bullfinch
Wed	14	Bridge for Pleasure
Mon	19	Computer Group Meeting

#### **January 2012**

Fri	6	Festive lunch**
Mon	9	Science Group Meeting
Tues	10	Coffee morning, The Bullfinch
Wed	11	Bridge for Pleasure
Mon	16	Computer Group Meeting
Wed	18	Ambling
Mon	23	Half-Day Walking
Wed	25	Bridge for Pleasure
Wed	25	Monthly Meeting

#### **April**

Mon 30 – Fri 4 May Trip to York \*\*

\*\* Flyer in October

\*\*\* Flyer in September

