

Chairman's note

This Newsletter advertises the first of our new season of activities and details of our Open Day are given below. This year will certainly go down in history as a momentous year for Great Britain. Despite all the politics and depressing business news, we have seen over recent weeks the real spirit of our country rests with individuals and once motivated we can perform. This spirit is reflected in how our U3A operates and any support from you is what makes our U3A successful. So as we open our new season of activities, let's get involved and make it another successful year.

Bob Ruffles

☎ 01732 461348

Coffee Morning for Group Organisers The Bullfinch, Riverhead Tuesday 28 August 10.00am

All Group Organisers are invited to the Coffee Morning, the main business of which will be arrangements for the Open Afternoon of 26 September.

If you will be organising a Group for the first time this year you will find the morning particularly useful: it provides an opportunity to ask questions, and to talk to other Group Organisers and members of the Executive Committee.

Beryl Mansell

Meetings open to all

Open Meetings

Computer and Science Groups and the Monthly Meetings resume in October. Details are in the 2012-13 Handbook and dates, speakers, etc., will be repeated as usual in the September Newsletter.

London Studies 3

The group has booked a visit to Spencer House and The Wellington Arch on Monday 1st October and there are some spare places. The tour of Spencer House (cost £10) needs at least 15 people. For more details, or to book a place, please contact Barbara Collins ☎ 01959 523682

Please send copy for the September Newsletter by **Friday, 14 September 2012** to both Linda Young and Magda Sweetland

Open Afternoon

Wednesday 26 September

Community Centre, Bat & Ball 2-4pm

To all members -

This annual showcase for Sevenoaks U3A lets members enrol in groups and talk to Group Organisers. We also recruit new members. Or you can visit the 'Help Desk' to register your interest in a new subject. If there is sufficient demand, we will try to create a new group.

How does it work? Details of all Study Groups are on pages 11-39 of the 2012-13 Handbook, listed by broad subject area. Groups seeking new members send a representative. They are seated together by the subject areas used in the Handbook. Each will be identified by a sign: if you are interested in a topic just talk to the person at the desk.

We are using the Main Hall, the Small Hall and the Bar area of the Community Centre. A floor plan will be available on the day.

Please stagger your arrival

Group Organisers will not recruit ahead of the Open Afternoon so there is no need to be at the Hall at 2pm. Last year quite a number of people arrived early. This caused confusion and a traffic jam in the entrance, as Group Organisers were still setting up their tables.

To all Group Organisers -

Please confirm attendance at the Open Afternoon **by Monday 3 September** by phoning Beryl Mansell on ☎ 01959 525010.

This will give time to decide the desk layout and make other detailed arrangements.

Groups with similar activities may share representation. If your group is being covered by another Group Organiser please let Beryl know so this can be made clear on the floor plan.

If you do not ask for a desk in advance you will not be able to recruit as space will not have been allocated to your group.

Please arrive by 1.45pm at the latest.

No new members should be recruited to your group before 26 September. If members ask you to treat them as a special case, to be fair, take their name and contact details, to be considered along with those who come on the day.

If you do not want to recruit, there is no need to attend.

News and Views

Articles to Magda Sweetland

Travel Insurance for U3A Members

This can be expensive and it pays to shop around. These notes may help to get the best deal.

Annual or Single trip policies

Generally speaking, if you plan to travel abroad more than twice a year, it is more economical to buy an annual rather than a single trip policy, although it is worth getting quotations for both types of policy for comparison.

Insurance for the over-50s

Below are details of a number of specialist insurance companies which deal with the over-50s, but some impose upper age limits. It is worthwhile getting several quotations:-

AgeUK

This new charity is an amalgamation of Age Concern and Help the Aged and it offers travel insurance policies for the over-50s with no upper age limit. ☎ 0845 685 1058.

www.ageuk.org.uk/buy/age-uk-travel-insurance/

SAGA

SAGA offers policies to the over-50s with no upper age limit. ☎ 0800 015 8055.

www.saga.co.uk/insurance/travel-insurance

Easyjet

The airline offers competitively-priced travel policies with no upper age limit. However, policies can be bought only on-line. Website: easyjet.com - click the Travel Insurance box.

Cover my Travels

A private company offering insurance cover for those with medical conditions, they are happy to discuss individual requirements by telephone. Covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. ☎ 0800 389 5904 (Monday to Friday.) Website: www.covermytravels.co.uk

Travel Supermarket

This is an on-line comparison website for everything connected with travel, including insurance policies, which is worth looking at. Website: www.travelsupermarket.com - click travel insurance.

Travel Agent's policies

Travel agents invariably offer travel insurance with their package holidays and often their premiums are worth considering.

European Health Insurance Card

All UK residents, who are temporarily visiting European Union (EU) countries, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, are entitled to essential medical treatment at a reduced cost or sometimes free. However, the treatment provided is limited to that available under the state scheme. The EHIC replaces the E111 card which is no longer valid. Not all UK residents are covered under this scheme in non-EU countries.

The EHIC doesn't replace travel insurance as it offers only medical treatment provided in the state hospital. However, EHIC Plus (below) offers a top-up policy. To apply: ☎ 0845 606 2030, website www.ehic.org.uk, or your local Post Office.

EHIC Plus

This is a policy to top-up EHIC run by the Medical Screening Company and is underwritten by a Lloyds syndicate. It does not cover private medical treatment but it does offer basic cover for cancellation, baggage loss, personal accident, missed departure, legal expenses etc. It covers for certain pre-existing medical conditions.

☎ 0845 055 5222 Website: www.ehicplus.com

John Dean

News from the Groups

Beryl Mansell ☎ 01959 525010

Singing for Fun

This is a new group for all who enjoy a good sing. We don't expect members to read music (though this may help) and the emphasis is firmly on fun. To start with, we are likely to sing traditional and folk melodies as well as songs from the shows. In time the programme will reflect the wishes of the group but it will also draw on the latent talent of the members. From October, meetings will be held on 1st and 3rd Mondays, from 2-4pm. Group Organiser Liz Bradney ☎ 01732 452051

Good Morning Blues

The Jazz and Blues Group Study Morning in May promised an exploration of **The Blues**. Our guides on this expedition were two veteran British Bluesmen, Bob Hall and Dave Peabody. They started the set with the comment that 'for musicians there is only one ten o'clock in the day and it's not this one'. Despite this handicap, the next two hours were a fascinating illustration of the music and the rapport between these two seasoned performers.

We were treated to fine boogie piano from Bob, a stomping guitar from Dave with some harmonica and mandolin thrown in, all held together by vocals from them both, and explanation and anecdote about the styles and songs.

I shall never forget a room of 85 silver-haired U3A'ers enthusiastically clapping and joining in the chorus of a blues celebrating the virtues of narcotics. A good time was had by all!

Peter Moss



Cricketts Farm

For over 12 years now, some of the practical arts groups have met at Cricketts Farm, thanks to the generosity of Jim and Sonya Bailey who have made some brick outbuildings, and also space for a Portakabin, available to U3A members.

These groups have included Sculpture, carving and moulding, Painting, Drama, Writing (often for the Drama productions) and in the past, Pottery and Calligraphy. The spin-offs for this U3A have been tremendous. Twice a year, the Drama group puts on a production from serious to comic, and always great fun. The last **Pantomania** was attended by over 100 U3A members!

The groups also come together, every three years or so, to mount an exhibition at Knole Academy, and they then invite artists from throughout the U3A to show their work. This is always an impressive occasion and the standard of work has improved demonstrably with each exhibition.

This doesn't happen by itself. There are the committed Group Organisers for each group, then a management team headed first by Ann Evans and for six years or so by Pamela Murphy. It is a complicated process, overseeing materials and buildings, allocating resources and paying for the necessary overheads and we are very grateful to everyone who has taken part in creating what became known as the Cricketts Arts Centre.

Of course, none of this was possible without the willingness of Jim and Sonja Bailey who have shared space and skills with the groups and their members for so long, in the best U3A tradition. How do they do it? It calls for endless reserves of patience and goodwill, plus a sense of humour.

Jim and Sonya are now moving house and the groups are finding new venues. Everyone regrets the breakup of this unique setting, but we hope the elements are strong enough to go on giving stimulus and enjoyment to the members for a long time to come.

Magda Sweetland

Refreshing the Newsletter

One of the functions of a newsletter is to provide a regular Noticeboard for members. But that is only one of its functions. Others include offering a picture of the life of the U3A to the casual or enquiring reader; and providing an exchange between study groups, either for their mutual encouragement and support, or to interest and enthuse the wider membership. It is this last function, the sharing between Study Groups, which we, the publications team, feel a need to encourage at this time - not enough of it is getting into the Newsletter!

What are we suggesting? Suppose you have organised a successful visit, and have come back full of enthusiasm. A blow-by-blow account of the day is not what we have in mind, though the

Website might well accommodate it. But a report which says where you went, how you enjoyed it, what you gained from it and what you would recommend to others could be just the ticket. Similarly, if your Study Group has turned up new knowledge or new sources, or one of your members has won a Nobel Prize, tell everyone about it.

We are not asking Organisers or members to write a book, or even a booklet - though that could come later. We are looking for articles of about 220 or 440 words in length - that is, about a half or a full column - which are essentially forward-looking. It also helps if they are not time-sensitive: it may not be possible to include a contribution in the first edition after it is received.

We very much hope that Study Groups will respond to this note and, by contributing to the Newsletter, contribute also to the universality and inclusivity it seeks to offer to our total membership.

John Spurway

Inserts with Sevenoaks U3A Newsletters

The Executive Committee has revisited its decision not to carry flyers for other organisations with the Newsletter. A number of small societies in the town were dismayed at the impact this was likely to have on their bookings, and many of these organisations were of interest to our own members - or were run by them. We try to support local societies, but the demand for inclusion in the mailings had become significant and the danger was that we would exceed the size and weight limits for second class postage.

So, we have arrived at a compromise. We will take flyers as long as they are not larger than A5. The cost is currently £10 per mailing, but that may be reviewed. The number of flyers should be agreed with Elizabeth Purves ☎ 01732 463041 and delivered to her the week before each monthly meeting, in time for stuffing.

Those organisations which would still like to use Sevenoaks U3A for publicity, but have larger brochures than we can carry, should contact the Chairman, Bob Ruffles, to ask if he would make an announcement and/or put flyers on the chairs at a monthly meeting.

New U3As in North Kent

The launch date has been set for Malling 2 (to be based at Kingshill) on Thursday 4 October, while Maidstone 2 will have its preliminary meeting on Monday 8 October. A new U3A in Swanley will meet on Thursday 1 November. Tell your friends who live nearby to save the date. Details of venues and contacts in September.

Editorial team: Magda Sweetland, Linda Young, Robin Tonge and John Spurway

Social Events News

Pam Walshe ☎ 01732 454769

Two Exhibitions

Enclosed is a flyer for a coach visit to two of the major exhibitions in London this autumn, at the Queen's Gallery and Tate Britain. We do need members to reply swiftly as the trip will be opened to Knole U3A by the end of September.

The way we handle our bookings

For some years now, we have taken bookings for events in the same way - holding the unopened applications for 10 days or so, and then making a draw if there are more replies than places. We still think it is the fairest way of doing things. Although we repeat this every so often, members seem surprised if they miss out on the draw. In future, we will try to print this on each flyer.

We make refunds only if the place can be sold on and this has been our policy for 15 years or more.

Events Open to All

Half Day Walking **Monday 20 August**

Meet in the National Trust car park north of Toy's Hill GR 470517 for a 10am start. A 4-mile circular walk to Ide Hill to mark the centenary of Octavia Hill, a founder of the National Trust. Optional lunch afterwards at the Woodman in Goathurst Common. Leader: Colin Butson ☎ 01732 458356

First Friday Lunch **Friday 7 September**

The White Rock Inn, Underriver at 12.30 for 1pm. To book, contact Christine or Alastair Macpherson ☎ 01959 523566 by Thursday 6 September

The Strollers **Tuesday 18 September**

For details of this walk please ring me; Anne Gutteridge ☎ 01732 454923

Ambling **Wednesday 19 September**

Meet at Leigh Village Green (GR 464549) for a 4-mile walk, starting at 10 am. Park on the far side of the green away from the B2027 road. Leader: Grahame Lee ☎ 01474 852007

Half Day Walking **Monday 24 September**

Meet outside the George in the centre of Trottiscliffe (GR 643599) for a 10am start. There is a large car park behind the pub. The 5-mile circular walk goes along part of the North Downs Way and past Coldrum Long Barrow. Optional lunch afterwards at the George. Leader: Nick White ☎ 01959 564145

Bridge for Pleasure **Weds 10 & 24 October**

The Group plays bridge at Otford Village Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings of each month from 9.50am until 12.15pm. The winner on 27 June was David Record and on 11 July was Mary Butson. There will be no meetings until October 10 & 24. The group is an 'Open' group, so new players can just come along. Contacts are Colin and Mary Butson ☎ 01732 458356

Sunrise Senior Living

Sunrise Senior Living in Chipstead runs groups and events for its residents, some of whom - as with Rockdale - are also members of one or other of the local U3As. There are up to five such interest groups each day, and they are looking to expand the programme. Some of the clubs include Classical music, history, ballet and opera club, art and crafts, Bridge, giant team scrabble, crosswords, gardening, book of the month, flower arranging, and ten pin bowling.

In particular, they feel they would benefit from hearing U3A speakers, possibly Group Organisers, or any other members who would talk to a gathering about a project, an activity, or a personal interest they have pursued.

Of course, our brief in the U3A is to promote the education of all those who live in the area, not just our own members. This is a chance to publicise the activities of the U3A. Some of you may remember that a few years ago we made this suggestion to our members on behalf of the Cheshire Home in Chipstead. Those who did offer to go along to talk about their interests or Study Groups were made very welcome.

If anyone is interested, please contact

Stephanie Seale ☎ 01732 748400 or sevenoaks.dcr2@sunriseseniorliving.com

Otford Heritage Centre

You may know the Otford Heritage Centre has recently been refurbished and relaunched. The Heritage Centre Management Committee are keen to make this information available as widely as possible and encourage groups and individuals to visit and use the Centre. The Centre has considerable resources and exhibits and the Management Committee wonder if these might be of interest to groups, or individuals, of Sevenoaks and Knole U3A. For example, talks at the Centre and guided tours of Otford (etc) can be arranged. The Chair of the Management Committee is Sir Mike Bett and the Secretary Carol Griffiths. Please feel free to contact the Centre if you would like further information. ☎ 01959 522384

Diary

August

Mon 20 Half Day Walking

Sept

Tues 4 Cressing Temple/Ingatstone Hall**
Friday 7 First Friday Lunch
Thurs 13 Audley End trip (Knole)
Tues 18 Strollers
Wed 19 Ambling Group
Mon 24 Half Day Walking
Mon 24 Walk round Edenbridge**
Wed 26 **Open Afternoon**

** Flyer in June

SEE U3A 2012 - 2013 HANDBOOK FOR FURTHER CONTACT DETAILS OF PEOPLE REFERRED TO IN THIS NEWSLETTER