

Chairman's note

Earlier this month a number of us went on the trip to York organised by the Social Events Committee. This was a very successful event and, whilst the weather was dry, the keen NE winds kept the temperatures down. However this did not deter our members and I believe everyone enjoyed an interesting and varied trip visiting highlights such as Burghley House, York Minster, Castle Howard and Hardwick Hall.

This month preparation of the 2012-13 Handbook is in hand and I know that some GOs have still to submit entries for next year's programme.

Please, could I ask those of you who have not responded to the request for information to do so as soon as possible. Delays in compiling the information do have a knock-on effect for the publications team.

Also in preparation are plans for the forthcoming AGM in June. More details below.

Finally, a further reminder that a number of returns on the survey are still outstanding. It may be that you think you have no input to make but a blank return is still valid as assists us in establishing a snapshot of how our U3A is working.

Bob Ruffles
 ☎ 01732 461348

Meetings open to all

The 17th Annual General Meeting of Sevenoaks U3A

will be held on
Wednesday, 27 June 2012
 at the Community Centre, Bat & Ball
 at 2.00pm

After the formal business there will be a presentation on
'Journey to the Throne'
 including Sevenoaks members of the Drama group run by Pamela Murphy.

This is an abbreviated version of the play shown at The Stag in February, and aims to celebrate this Jubilee year.

Computer Group

Friday 1 June

**On-line Television;
 An Update on Cloud Computing;
 WiFi and Mobile Networks;
 and the Roll-out of Fibre Optics**
 by Tony Fishpool

Otford Village Memorial Hall, **10.30am**.

All Sevenoaks U3A members welcome.
 Entry, £1 on the door, includes tea.

**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DAY,
 DATE AND TIME.**

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 30 and Friday 31 August 2012

SUMMER SHOW 2012

at Cricketts Farm, 6.30 for 7pm
 Cover provided in case of rain

Tickets - £10 include
 2-course Supper

an Entertaining Revue

and a Barn dance to round up the proceedings.

Order forms enclosed with June Newsletter
 Organiser Pamela Murphy ☎ 01732 365484

Diary

June

Fri	1	Computer Group Meeting
Fri	1	First Friday lunch
Tue	12	Coffee morning, The Bullfinch
Wed	13	Bridge for Pleasure
Sat	16	Cantate Choir Jubilee Concert*
Tue	19	Strollers
Wed	20	Ambling
Mon	25	Half Day Walking
Wed	27	Bridge for pleasure
Wed	27	AGM

July

Mon	2	Titsey Place**
Wed	11	Science Group: Shorne Woods Visit*
Thur	19	Kent Study Day Architecture**

Aug

Wed	8	Mansion House and Guildhall*
Thu/Fri	30/31	Cricketts Farm Summer Show 2012

* Flyer this month

** Flyer in April

Please send copy for the June Newsletter
 by **Friday, 15 June 2012**
 to both Linda Young and Magda Sweetland

News and Views

Articles to Magda Sweetland

Study Days

We are going to set up an informal programme of half-day Study Days from the autumn. We started to run these as long ago as 2000, and several members have organised them very well, but they have fallen by the wayside of late. By creating a new **Meetings** Committee, which links the booking of speakers for Monthly Meetings with Study Days, we hope to give some continuity to delivery, and also encourage our members to suggest and support some of the topics. Two new members, Ceris Williams and Joan Beacom, have agreed to assist with running them.

Study Days, well handled, can provide a simple way of focusing on some elements of a U3A, or re-configuring them. They can

- expand the annual programme for Sevenoaks U3A
- act as an introduction to some of the Visits (eg **William Morris and The Red House** - or **Dover Castle** for Knole)
- create a hub for the formation of a new Study Group
- showcase the work of the Study Groups
- encourage liaison by different groups on related topics (some of you may recall one on **Aspects of Bloomsbury** a few years ago.)

As a rule, we favour the 10-1 half-day format, with two talks, and an extended question period.

Knole has been running a very useful series since it was launched, and one aspect that has proved of benefit to both U3As is that it provides a nucleus of support for a new Study Group. The enthusiasts are all in the room together, and the Sevenoaks **Medieval History** group and a shared **Money Matters** both recruited in this way. Of course, the **Jazz and Blues** group has run a Study Day for the last three years, and gained such support for the subject that they now plan to form a second group.

What we are also keen to provide is a showcase for the work and talents of members. Thoughts are turning to a session on **Aspects of WWI**, using elements from presentations by Military History 2, together with talks on the art and poetry of the war period. Stanley Spencer . . . Wilfred Owen. This could be very interesting.

If you have any ideas you would like to promote for your group, then please get in touch with either:

Ceris Williams ☎ 07747 799369
or **Joan Beacom** ☎ 01959 524304

A Visit to the Other Faversham

Yes, gunpowder was invented by the Chinese, but did you realise that its history in Kent is closely associated with the town of Faversham? We know about the



town's brewery, the churches and the grammar school but the gunpowder industry, which finally closed down in 1934, accounted for much of the development and wealth of the town.

There are two main sites to visit, the Oare Nature Reserve and the Museum at Chart Gunpowder Mills. The nature reserve at Oare was formed around the 'leats' or narrow gauge canals that wind in to the creek at Faversham. The leats were first excavated to provide passage for the raw materials (some of these might surprise you!) on their way to the works, and then to transport the barrels of gunpowder to Chatham Docks and Upnor. Remains of the blast walls, the glazing and corning houses, plus an 80-year-old powder mill repatriated from Ayrshire, are incorporated in the layout of the nature reserve. Everything is easily accessible along a waymarked walk, with good signboards providing information.

Chart Mills are very different. The oldest of their kind in the world, these mills laid the foundation for Britain's military supremacy. Here, the powder was produced for Nelson at Trafalgar and Wellington at Waterloo. In peacetime, the gunpowder was used to blast routes for Britain's growing network of railways and canals. Today, the Museum is surrounded by a modern housing estate, but the interior has been well restored by members of the Faversham Society. The great milling machine takes pride of place, but there are scale models, a photographic exhibition of the way the mills looked in the 19th century and an impressive biographical record of all those who worked at the mills.

Also worth visiting is the Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre in Faversham. (Why does this have a French name? Because so many of the workers in the town were of Huguenot origin.) This manages to straddle the demands of younger visitors with reconstructed rooms etc, but there are well researched exhibitions and a good bookshop where the U3A member can browse and find worthwhile texts.

This excellent visit was organised by Janet Jones, the new organiser of the Sevenoaks Industrial History group, and she also gave an introductory talk to the members about the gunpowder industry. The group has some spaces. Contact **Janet Jones** ☎ 01959-523553, if this is a topic to interest you.



Visit to the Mansion House and Guildhall with guided tours



We have arranged a coach visit to two of the important civic buildings in the city of London, the Mansion House and the Guildhall. Built in the age of Hogarth, the Mansion House is a rare surviving Georgian town palace in central London. Although the Mansion House has undergone several redevelopments since it was built in 1758, it retains much of its original character.

The Guildhall was begun in 1411, and it is the only stone building not belonging to the Church to have survived the Great Fire of London in 1666. The complex contains several other historic interiors besides the hall, including the large mediaeval crypts, the old library, and the print room, all of which are now used as function rooms.

Date Wednesday 8 August 2012

Time Leave Tesco, Riverhead at 9am. Park at the rear of the store and try to car share

Schedule Tour of Mansion House from 11am for one hour.
Lunch independently at one of the nearby cafes (neither venue offers refreshments).
5 minutes' walk to the Guildhall and members may enter at any time.
Guided tours of the exhibition *Butcher, Baker, Candlestickmaker - 850 Years of London Livery Company Treasures*. This is part of the Guildhall's Diamond Jubilee/Cultural Olympiad summer show. These gems are not normally available for viewing by the public, so the event offers a unique opportunity to see the works owned by these historic City of London guilds.
1st group 2.00pm for 30 minutes. 2nd group approx. 3pm for 30 minutes.
Leave for Sevenoaks 4.00pm.

Cost £21 per person to include return coach fare and gratuity, guided tour of the Mansion House and entry to the Guildhall Art Gallery special Exhibition.

This event is open to all members of Sevenoaks U3A and their partner or a friend. Spare places will be offered to Knole U3A.

Please cut off this portion and send with a cheque for £21 per person, made payable to **U3A Sevenoaks Social Account**, to Jenny Smith, 2 Camden Villas, London Road, Dunton Green, Sevenoaks KENT TN13 2TF, together with your cheque. Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for your receipt **OR** add your email if you prefer a digital receipt.

Email address.....Tel. no.

Name (s)

Address :

News from the Groups

Beryl Mansell ☎ 01959 525010

The **Makers of History** group is looking for 3 or 4 new members. Members take turns to describe people who have made history. Recent talks have been about Gilbert and Sullivan, and the Papacy. We also have pot-pourri sessions, when members talk for about ten minutes on a given subject, such as 'A special toy that made history for you'. Members' reminiscences included Meccano, Hornby Railway and a pram. We meet 2nd Tuesday 2.30-4-30. Mary Laundon ☎ 01959 522139.

Singing for Pleasure

The survey of members has identified about ten members who are interested in starting a **Singing Group**. If you would like to join them please e-mail or ring me and I will try to set up a first meeting over the next month or so. Contact Beryl Mansell as above.

Social Events News

Pam Walshe ☎ 01732 454769

Titsey Place - This trip has a few spare places.
Date Monday 2 July 2012
Transport private car
Meet At the house for 2pm tours
Cost £16 per person; includes entry, one-hour guided tour + tea and cake.
Contact Pam Walshe ☎ 01732 454769

Events Open to All

First Friday Lunch **Friday 1 June**
The Plough, Eynsford 12.15 for 12.30.
Contact Pat Smith ☎ 01959 523596

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

Ambling

Wednesday 20 June

Meet at Shipbourne Common car park for a 4-mile walk starting at 10 am. The car park is 100 yards along Upper Green Road, opposite The Chaser Inn on the A227 Tonbridge to Ightham road. Leader: Velma Keys ☎ 01732 459001

Half Day Walking

Monday 25 June

Meet in the car park at The Greyhound at Charcott GR 522472. (From Weald turn south into Scabharbour Road. After 3 miles, shortly before Chiddingstone Causeway, there is a sign for The Greyhound, which is 200 yards up the lane on the right. The walk will be about 5 miles and will be followed by an optional lunch at the Greyhound. Leaders: Helen Doherty ☎ 01732 453549 and Mo Bidston ☎ 01732 457512

The Strollers

Tuesday 19 June

Meet in the lay-by in Penshurst (just before the village on the right of the B2176). The walk, starting at 11.00, of about 3 miles will have a few stiles and slopes. Optional lunch afterwards at the Leicester Arms. We do not take dogs as we cross fields with livestock. Leader Anne Gutteridge ☎ 01732 454923

Bridge for Pleasure

Wed 13 and 27 June

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 28 March was Jean Stackhouse and on 11 April was Franz Berger. The group is an 'Open' group, so any new players can just come along. If you need to make contact, please call Colin and Mary Butson ☎ 01732 458356

Science Group Visit

Wednesday 11 July

The Science Group is organising a visit to the Shorne Woods archaeological site which is located within the Shorne Woods Country Park, close to the A2 near Gravesend. The visit follows the talk given last year to the Science Group by Andrew Mayfield, who will guide us around the site. Flyer enclosed with this Newsletter. Information from Frank Matthews ☎ 01732 456512.

**SEE U3A 2011 - 2012 HANDBOOK FOR
FURTHER CONTACT DETAILS OF PEOPLE
REFERRED TO IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

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