

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

This is our final Newsletter for 2015 so it is a good time to reflect on the past year.

Our Groups continue to be buoyant with a wide range of subjects offered. New groups have started or are being planned and a very successful Open Day was organised in September. There are vacancies in a number of Groups and these are listed in this Newsletter.

For the first time at this year's AGM we had a contested election for positions on the Executive Committee. This reflects a growing enthusiasm among our Members to get involved in the running of our U3A. However we still have places on some of our sub committees which remain unfilled, particularly in IT and Publishing, so if you feel you would like to get involved, even in a small way, please do get in touch. Your U3A needs you!

On behalf of the Executive Committee may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and enjoyable New Year.

Jim Purves [chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## BERYL'S BLOG

There is so much happening in Sevenoaks U3A we might be tempted not to look further but did you know that there is a World U3A, the International subject group of the UK Third Age Trust? The President lives in Australia, the Editor of the monthly newsletter runs a free school in Hyderabad and other members of the Steering Group live in Poland and England. A recent edition of the newsletter included pieces on driverless cars and mining on the Moon. <http://www.worldu3a.org/signpost/september2015.htm>.

And there is U3A Online, based in Australia. This is the virtual U3A, which allows members to study from their own homes. There are many short courses available, all open to people across the world. <http://u3aonline.org.au/home>.

Both websites are worth looking at to see how similar, and yet how different, U3A is around the globe. And where is U3A growing fastest? The Pacific Rim.

Beryl Mansell [vicechair@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:vicechair@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## DIARY

December

- Wed 9 Bridge For Pleasure
- Mon 14 Science Group
- Mon 14 Apple Group
- Sat 19 The Mill Theatre Sonning outing
- Mon 21 Computer Group

January 2016

- Mon 11 Apple Group
- Mon 11 Science Group
- Wed 13 Bridge For Pleasure
- Mon 18 Computer Group
- Mon 25 Half day walking
- Wed 27 Bridge For Pleasure
- Wed 27 Monthly Meeting**

## MONTHLY MEETING

**2.00pm Wednesday 27 January at the Bat & Ball Community Centre.**

**An illustrated talk by Dale Penfold, a Director of COOK.** This highly successful company with a shop in Sevenoaks and a processing plant in Sittingbourne specialises in making ready prepared meals. He will describe the problems experienced in the early days before success came their way.



## E-NEWSLETTER WATCH

To date **192** members have signed up. This represents an annual saving of **£1300**. Help your U3A – SIGN UP NOW to receive an electronic copy of the Newsletter in full colour direct into your mailbox.

[enewsletter@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:enewsletter@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

**Newsletter Team: Victoria Baxter, Elizabeth Purves, Celia Smith**

There will be no Newsletter next month. Copy for the February Newsletter

(which will be distributed on Wednesday 27 January) by **Wednesday 6 January 2016** to [news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## Science Group Farnborough Air Sciences Trust Visit Bob Ruffles

Sevenoaks U3A members attended the Farnborough Air Sciences Trust (FAST) which has been established on the old Royal Aircraft Establishment site as a permanent record of our aeronautical heritage. Its founders could see that the MoD initiative to create a Government Trading Agency, and latterly a fully privatised company, would lead to a loss of much of the historical artefacts and buildings. Early listing prevented destruction of the more important buildings and it was pleasing to see the subsequent redevelopment had sympathetically incorporated the old with the new. These include the original HQ office building built in the early 1900s and used as Lord Trenchard's office in WW1, the large 1924 Wind Tunnel complex, a Water Tunnel (used for testing seaplanes) the structural part of the original Balloon Factory and one of the more modern offices transformed into the National Aerospace Library which holds the archive of the Royal Aeronautical Society.

The site has been at the forefront of aeronautical development since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first manned heavier than air powered flight in the UK was undertaken on site by Samuel Franklin Cody, an American showman. He managed to obtain Government sponsorship to demonstrate the advantages of powered flight as a means of artillery observation in preference to the established balloon



and manned kites used at the time. Cody built his No 1 biplane and managed a flight of 27 seconds reaching a distance of 1,390 ft on 16 October 1908. It unfortunately crashed on this attempt and led the War Office to declare that ***“the powered Aeroplane had no place in modern warfare”***. Less than a year later on the 25 July 1909, Louis Blériot crossed the English Channel from Calais to Dover proving the War Office view to be flawed and by 1912 the Royal Aircraft Factory had been established. It was renamed on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1918 to the Royal Aircraft Establishment to avoid confusion with the newly formed Royal Air Force.

The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cody flight is commemorated by reproduction of the No.1 Flyer that sits in its own hangar and our more adventurous members attempted to fly the machine on the 21<sup>st</sup> century flight simulator; I am pleased to report they did a much better job than Cody did on his first flight.

The museum is still being developed and on display are some famous aircraft from the Farnborough fleet which include the English Electric Lightning, Hawker Hunter, Anglo–French Jaguar, Folland Gnat, helicopters and a fuselage cabin section from Concorde.



One of our members, Brian Alleeson, was able to donate some drawings of the Farnborough site in its former days. Brian had worked on site as a civil engineering contractor in the past and had rescued the drawings from destruction. Needless to say the Museum was pleased to receive the drawings.

We received a talk from the Librarian of the National Aerospace Library which contains rare historic documents from earlier times; for example the 18<sup>th</sup> Century note books of George Cayley who is recognised as the father of aeronautics, together with material from Short Brothers of Rochester.

A thoroughly enjoyable day hosted by a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable team.

## Spaces in Groups

After the September Open Afternoon several Group Leaders have said they would be prepared to take in one or more new members. If any of the groups below interest you please contact the organiser whose name appears in the Handbook for 2015/16.

- ◆ Art - Wot is Art?
- ◆ Art – Painting
- ◆ Botanical Painting
- ◆ Book Circle – Wednesday
- ◆ Bridge – Teams Bridge (apply with a partner)
- ◆ Chess
- ◆ Classical Studies
- ◆ Cycling
- ◆ Digital Camera 3
- ◆ Digital Image Manipulation 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year
- ◆ Drama
- ◆ Garden Group 6
- ◆ Geology
- ◆ Migration of People
- ◆ Military History
- ◆ Playreading 1
- ◆ Scrabble
- ◆ Snooker - open to everyone
- ◆ Sunday Club
- ◆ Walking 1a (5 miles)
- ◆ Walking 1b (10 miles)
- ◆ Walking 2 (10 miles)
- ◆ Writing – Novels

There are, of course, also Open Groups whose monthly activities appear in the Newsletter. I hope you will find or have found an activity that interests you, but if you are experiencing difficulties please contact me on 01732 690674 or by email at [groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk). I cannot necessarily get you into the group of your choice immediately, but will try to see if there are sufficient numbers to start a second group and also to liaise with groups which for one reason or another find their membership has diminished.

## MEMBERS' CORNER

Please submit items of interest to members to [news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

### Shoreham Village Remembers the Fallen 1914 – 1918.

Compiled and edited by U3A Member Lynda Alleeson for Shoreham Historical Society. In August 2014 an exhibition was held in Shoreham Church to commemorate the centenary of the start of WW1. Lorna Robinson of Shoreham British Legion researched details of soldiers who were commemorated on the memorial stone in the village and Shoreham Historical Society produced a booklet to incorporate this information. Available at £8 from Shoreham Village Shop or Lynda Alleeson 01959 525312. Half the proceeds will be given to Shoreham British Legion.

## Jazz: Something for your new 2016 diary

Sevenoaks U3A are breaking new ground in 2016 by promoting a special Jazz Study Day in the Ship Theatre at Walthamstow Hall. Billed as *The Ragged Road to Swing*, it will also be open to all nearby U3A branches. We have been fortunate enough to enlist the services of a sparkling five-piece band comprising some of the best advanced students from Guildhall School of Music, one of our elite music colleges. These accomplished musicians and their attractive lead vocalist Abbey Mordue will demonstrate the techniques used by jazzmen from the early days of jazz in New Orleans up to the swing era. Each demo will be followed by a lively session of popular classics. Look out for more details in the February 2016 Newsletter which will be accompanied by a flyer and application form for the this event This important date for your 2016 diary is Thursday 24 March.



## SOCIAL EVENTS NEWS

There are a few places left for the Festive Winter Lunch on February 12 at Knole Golf Club the cost is £20 for 3 courses and coffee. Flyer enclosed with last Newsletter and also available on the web site. Do join us. Places limited to 65 people. [social@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:social@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)



There will be a visit to Anglesey Abbey to see the snowdrops, followed by lunch and then a drive to Welney to see the feeding of the swans on February 18. Please fill in the enclosed flyer if you'd like to join us. [social@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:social@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)



Member Ray Russell has recently been elected Chairman of local concert Band, Second Wind and invites us to support the band's annual fund-raising Christmas Concert at St Mary's Church, Riverhead at 3.00pm on Saturday 19 December. Admission by donation, complimentary sherry and mince pies afterwards, net proceeds to St Mary's.





## MEETINGS AND EVENTS OPEN TO ALL See diary page 1 for complete list of events

### Bridge for Pleasure Weds 9 Dec & 13 & 27 Jan

The Group plays at Otford Village Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings of each month from 9.50 a.m. until 12.15 p.m.

However in December we only meet once on the 9<sup>th</sup>. The winner on 14 October was Gillian Simon and on 28 October was Colin Butson.

We are an "open" group, so any new players can just come along.

Colin and Mary Butson 01732 458356

### Science Group Monday 14 December

#### **Malaria eradication: are we finally winning the war against malaria? Talk by Bob Sinden**

Malaria influences the lives of some 3-4 billion persons, infecting about 200 million annually, around 600,000 of whom die – these largely being children under 5 years living in sub-Saharan Africa. Previous efforts to control the disease have focussed on management of mosquito populations with insecticides. Current efforts deploy insecticide-treated bed nets along with drug combinations but hopefully in the future will also have available vaccines and genetically-modified mosquitoes. Will we win?

Otford Village Memorial Hall 2pm. All Sevenoaks U3A members are welcome.

As an early Xmas present, the usual entry fee will not be charged, and a glass of mulled wine and mince pie will be offered.

Win Gutteridge 01732 454923

### Apple Group Monday 14 December

#### **iPad, iMac, iPhone & Apple Watch**

- ◆ Using Word on a Mac
- ◆ Fun with Luminosity
- ◆ WhatsApp
- ◆ Games for Christmas
- ◆ TED
- ◆ Round Tables: iPad user group, Mac computer group, Streaming video, WhatsApp.

Otford Methodist Church Hall 2 pm.

Dave Simmons 01732 457646

### Computer Group Monday 21 December

#### **Useful Hints and Tips Session. Questions? Problems You Would Like Sorted?**

Committee Members will introduce a selection of useful hints and tips and attempt to answer your questions.

Otford Village Memorial Hall 2pm. All Sevenoaks U3A Members welcome.

Free entry to include a glass of wine and a mince pie.

Mike Bamforth 01732 450491

## January Meetings

### Science Group Monday 11 January 2016

#### **History of UK railway signalling. Talk by Jim Swift**

The talk starts with signalling on the single-track Stockton to Darlington railway and then moves on to the Liverpool to Manchester railway, early Time Separation signalling, Mechanical Block signalling, the single track Tablet Exchange system, Electric Block signalling and finally In-Cab signalling, all illustrated by slides. This is followed by two video clips showing the driver's-eye views of Eurostar Paris to London Waterloo and the newer section into St. Pancras. Otford Village Memorial Hall 2pm. All Sevenoaks U3A members are welcome. £2 entry includes tea. Win Gutteridge

### Computer Group Monday 18 January 2016

#### **Getting the Best Out Of Your Tablets and Telephones. Presentation by Nigel Pritchard**

- ◆ Are they replacing the PC
- ◆ What are they most useful for
- ◆ What risks are we running by using them
- ◆ How to protect ourselves
- ◆ The latest developments in telephone usage

Otford Village Memorial Hall 2pm. All Sevenoaks U3A members are welcome.

£2 entry to include tea and biscuits.

Mike Bamforth

### Half Day Walking Monday 25 January 2016

Meet opposite the Leicester Arms in Penshurst in time for a 10am start. A 6 mile walk to Salmans Manor, the Bottle House, River Medway and Old Swaylands followed by an optional lunch at the Leicester Arms.

Leader: Nick White

### Ambling

There will be no walk in December or January.

Our next walk will be in February and details will appear in the January Newsletter.

### The Strollers

There will be no walk this month. Instead we will have our Christmas lunch. The next stroll will be on March 15th; details will appear in the February newsletter.

Anne Gutteridge