

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

I am completing my column for the February 23rd Monthly Meeting (see below) as a hybrid, live in the Bat & Ball Centre, while simultaneously transmitted by Zoom to members in their own homes. I am hugely grateful to Bob Ruffles and his Technical Team for making this possible. The subject of the meeting is "The Flower Villages of Alsace and Lorraine", which must look fabulous in spring and early summer.

The appearance of snowdrops and the first daffodils are signs of spring and regeneration, giving hope that the long pandemic "winter of our discontent" may at last be over. Recently in Sevenoaks, although still high, week-on-week Covid positive test numbers fell by 57%, and daily admissions to hospital fell by 12%.

This has encouraged us to hold

New Members' Meetings will form a regular part of the Membership Process, which has been reviewed and revised by Membership Secretary Jill Davies and the Communications Committee. On 3rd December 2021 a New Members' Meeting was held in the Sevenoaks Indoor Bowling Centre, to which 70 members joining since September 2019 were invited, and 22

attended. On 25th March 2022 another **New Members' Meeting will be held in the same venue**, to which members joining since September 2021 will be invited. This will include some who were unable to attend the December meeting, and will finally "catch up" with all the new members who have joined during the pandemic. In future, NMMs will be held two or three times per annum, with only members joining since the previous NMM needing to be invited.

Three of the four groups I belong to are now meeting face-to-face and I hear of others planning to do the same. On Saint Valentine's Day, as we celebrate love and the coming of Spring, let us hope that optimism prevails!

Ken Brown Chairman

MONTHLY MEETING— WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 23RD

The u3a Monthly Meeting on **Wednesday 23rd February 2022 at 2pm** will be held face to face at the **Bat and Ball Centre**, and will also be available via Zoom.

MONTHLY MEETING—WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23RD

Our speaker this month is **Melanie Gibson-Barton BSc (Hons)**, an accomplished public speaker who has been giving talks for several years to the National Trust, the u3a, the WI, Rotary, History Groups, Church Groups and many more. Some of you will remember her from her talk to us in February 2020 entitled *Wandering in Flanders Field*, and in January 2021 when she impressed us on Zoom with her presentation about the Life and Times of Edith Cavell.

This time Melanie will be giving a presentation entitled **"Bruges – It's More Than Just Chocolate!"**. Colourfully illustrated, this wide ranging, informative and fun talk will provide her insider's view of the beautiful city of Bruges, having enjoyed a second home in Flanders in Belgium



for almost 20 years. Although famous for its chocolate shops Melanie will set out to prove that this Gothic city represents much more than just this popular delicacy. Many audience members will have visited Bruges and the talk will bring back memories but will also show that there is much more to see in this lovely city.

We will meet face-to-face in the Bat and Ball Centre for this talk and tea and biscuits will be served afterwards. For those who prefer to watch from the comfort of their own home the talk will also be relayed via Zoom. I do hope you will join us, the Zoom link will be sent out to all members via email a couple of days before the event.

Barbara Coleyshaw

FOLK DANCING

The Folk Dancing Group has been meeting monthly since September, always following Government Guidelines concerning dance meetings, and we have had a very enjoyable time with dances both old and new. We have space for new members and all are welcome to come and try a session. No experience is needed as everyone is happy to help everyone else. You do not need a partner either. There is plenty of social interaction, fun and laughs as well as gentle exercise both of body and mind, and refreshments also, of course. We meet at the **Club Room** of the **Oxford Memorial Hall** on the **2nd Friday** of the month from **10.00 to 12.00**. The cost per session is £3.00.

If you are interested, just come along or contact **Peter and Lyn Nixon** on 01959 524688 or folkdance@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

COMPUTER OPEN GROUP

The Computer Group will be holding a virtual meeting using Zoom on **Monday, 21st March 2022** at **14.00**. The speaker will be **Aimee Payne from Kent Police** and Aimee has spoken to us on previous occasions about the latest scams and how to avoid them. Her talks have been very popular and have guaranteed a full hall and lots of questions. I suggest that this is a talk not to be missed and we are looking forward to a interesting and informative afternoon.

Any member who wishes to join the meeting will be very welcome. Anyone who has already given us an email address will be invited automatically but others should send an email to computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk and leave an email address so that we can send a link to join the meeting.

PLAYREADING

This friendly group, which is now in need of some new members, meets on the third Tuesday afternoon in the month to read through a play which the organisers have obtained from the library.

Members can choose to read as small or large a part as they wish: the pleasure is in experiencing a play coming to life around you - rather like going to a matinee for free ! If you would like to join us, please contact **Susan Henson** on 01732 670694 or email playread@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

SCIENCE OPEN GROUP

Our Next Science talk will be on March 14th, 2022. 'Conservation of Artefacts held by English Heritage' by David Thickett

David Thickett graduated in natural sciences in 1988 and joined the British Museum in 1990, where he specialized in inorganic materials and preventive conservation. He joined the Collections Conservation Team of English Heritage in 2003 and gained a PhD in archaeological iron. David will talk about preservation of items possessed by English Heritage.

We are planning to return to the Oxford Village Memorial Hall for this meeting and to broadcast the event as a HYBRID meeting via Zoom. This will allow members who do not wish to attend in person to still participate in our meetings.

For **Virtual attendees** if you attended our earlier Zoom webinars, we have retained your registration details and you will automatically receive an invitation nearer the time. If, however, you have not registered then please send us your details via the following link.

scienceday@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

Our **April 14th** talk will be **'Vaccines'** by **Mike Trevethick**. This talk has been postponed from January.

MARCH DIARY

Mar 9th	Nordic Walking	Mar 9th	Bridge for Pleasure
Mar 14th	Science Open Group Meeting : David Thickett — "The Conservation of Artefacts held by English Heritage".	Mar 16th	Ambling
Mar 21st	Computer Open Group Meeting Aimee Page from Kent Police: 'Frauds and Scams and How To Avoid Them.'	Mar 23rd	Monthly Meeting : Melanie Gibson-Barton — "Bruges - It's More Than Just Chocolate !"
Mar 23rd	Bridge for Pleasure		

BORROWING DIGITAL BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

The Computer Group recently had a talk on accessing Kent Libraries collection of digital media including books, magazines, newspapers and reference material. This is a very valuable facility and completely free with a library card .

Considering some magazines often cost £5 or more to buy, this represents a real bargain and ought to be more widely known. I have borrowed books (audio and e-books) after downloading the Libby app onto my phone and found, after a little practice, that it is fairly painless. Magazines are best read on a tablet or laptop and Libby allows you to have copies of the app on 2 devices. Newspapers are also available, including past editions, although this requires a second app.

Help is available via the Ask a Kent Librarian (AKL) desk on 03000 416438 or by email at akl@kent.gov.uk. In my experience this works very well and calls are answered promptly up to 6pm.

Mike Davies, Chairman, Sevenoaks u3a Computer Group

BRIDGE FOR PLEASURE

The Group plays at Otford Village Memorial Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings of each month from October to the end of July, from 9.45 a.m. until 12 noon.

The winner on 26th January was John Christy and on 9th February Ann Mills who scored an amazing 5080 points – well done Ann !! She had the modesty to say that she had very good cards but even so. That is by far the highest score Sue and I have ever seen at Otford.

After dwindling numbers in January we were back up to 23 players on 26th January which was great as it allowed us to run 6 tables and is the best we have had since pre first lockdown days – hopefully a sign that things are starting to return to some form of normality ? We also were able to welcome two new members to the group which was pleasing as it is always good to have some new faces.

Additional new members are always welcome. We are an “open” group so new players can just come along on the day. We play ACOL in a ‘Chicago’ format so you do not need a partner. For more information, please ring **John and Sue Christy 01732 463911** or email bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk.

COMPUTER PROBLEMS

If you have, (or had), any technical or other problems which you would like to have answered, or which you yourself have answered, please send an email about it to the Computer Group at computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk. The May Open Computer Meeting will look at getting answers from the web, whether you're stuck on a computer issue, want to know how to fix a dripping tap, or want to find a picture to use on a poster.

NEW FRENCH GROUP

I would like to start a group for those eager to learn French from a level of rusty ‘O’ Level, which is my present level. I have been following a course online but find it difficult to make any more progress. I suggest that we work from ‘Talk French 2’ taking turns in leading the conversation. We would meet in each other’s houses 1st and 3rd Wednesday each month. It would be great if an expert could also join, to help or lead the rest of us. Please contact **Tony Buick** on 01689 854419, or via email at tonytwiz@gmail.com.

NEW ART GROUP

ART - PAINTING 2

This new group will meet weekly on Wednesday mornings from 10.30 until 1.30 at Seal Village Hall. All mediums can be used, and we will support each other (especially beginners).

The group starts on Wednesday, March 9th.

If you would like to join, please contact **Patsy Oseman** on 01959 476006 or via email at pattieoseman@gmail.com.

AMBLING & NORDIC WALKING

NORDIC WALKING—Wednesday 9th March

Meet in Upper Green Road opposite the church and The Chaser in Shipbourne, TN11 9PE in time for a 10.30 start. The walk is 3 miles with easy going. For those who wish to stay, the walk will be followed by lunch at The Chaser.

nordicwalking@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

AMBLING —Wednesday 16th March

Meet outside the Plough on Leigh Road, Hildenborough, TN11 9AJ, in time for a 10.30 start. It is 3½ miles with easy going to the Medway and Haysden Country Park. Leigh Road is a turning on the right opposite the Flying Dutchman in Hildenborough. The Plough is a bit over a mile down that road. The walk will be followed by an optional lunch at the Plough.

ambling@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk

NATIONAL U3A ONLINE EVENTS FOR MARCH

March 2nd at 2 p.m.	Toulouse-Lautrec and the Cabarets of Paris	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/toulouse-lautrec-and-the-cabarets-of-paris-tickets-262460013967
March 3rd to April 21st (8 weeks course) at 10 a.m	Beginners Genealogy Course	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/beginners-genealogy-course-tickets-260397143867
March 3rd at 2 p.m	The Geology of Igneous Rocks	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-geology-of-igneous-rocks-their-plate-tectonic-setting-and-formation-tickets-239912734447
March 4th at 2 p.m	Pastels with Pete	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pastels-with-pete-repeat-event-tickets-257819082817
March 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th at 4 p.m	Ancient Civilisations of the Americas—the Incas	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ancient-civilisations-of-the-americas-the-inca-tickets-254610726537
March 9th at 10 a.m	Laughter Yoga Workshop	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/laughter-yoga-workshop-tickets-166489270891
March 9th at 2 p.m	The Human Microbiome (part 1)	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-human-microbiome-part-1-tickets-252963409367
March 23rd	The Climate Crisis—Some Solutions	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-climate-crisis-and-some-solutions-tickets-256847326267

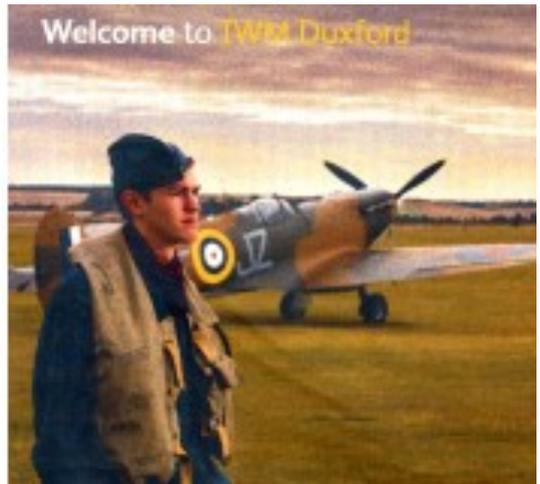
All these **free** events are held using Zoom. If you wish to attend any of these presentations, please follow the appropriate link and register in advance for the event.

NATIONAL U3A PROGRAMMES

Here are many ideas to keep learning during these times - a mixture of suggestions from members and quizzes, challenges and projects from our subject advisers, members and other u3a volunteers. Some are one-off events and others ongoing over a period a time. All of them are supported by members like yourself. Get involved!

The Battle of Britain & The Blitz	Memories from across the membership	https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/battle-of-britain
BirdTrack	Help keep track of our garden birds	https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/birdtrack
Cuisines of the World	International recipes from u3a members	https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/world-cuisine-cookery-challenge
Extreme Knitting & Crochet	Challenges & Workshops	https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/extreme-crochet
Kindertransport	Stories of the Kindertransport Children.	https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/131-information/1220-kindertransport-memories
Learn, Laugh, Move	Fitness & Wellbeing	https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/learn-laugh-move

The deadline for items for inclusion in the April edition of the newsletter is March 15th, 2022.



Visit to Imperial War Museum Duxford Thursday 26th May 2022

IWM Duxford is Europe’s largest air museum with over 300 planes and objects on display. See world famous aircraft including Concorde, B52 and the only SR-71 Blackbird spy-plane outside the USA.

Airspace :- British and Commonwealth aviation with over 30 iconic aircraft

Flying Aircraft :- see historic aircraft restored and prepared for flight

Air and sea :- a collection of boats, submarines and maritime aircraft

Battle of Britain :- Britain’s air defence from WW1 to the cold war.

American Air Museum :- American air power and its effect on the modern world

Historic Duxford :- history of RAF Duxford

Land Warfare :- ground combat – Royal Anglian Regiment

This is a very large site; there is a mobility assistance vehicle. Cafes and restaurant also available.

Depart : 09.00 (prompt) from Suffolk Way car park Sevenoaks

Cost : £43 [Includes coach, entry fee of £22.50 pp. and tip]

Organiser : Ken Robinson 01732 456358 [07814 629809 on visit only]

THIS VISIT IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS OF SEVENOAKS U3A. CLOSING DATE: 29th APRIL 2022

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Complete the portion below and together with your cheque, **made payable to Sevenoaks U3A Social Account**,

Send to: Ken Robinson, 6A White Hart Wood, Sevenoaks, TN13 1RR I/We enclose a cheque for £.....

Names(s) :

Address:

.....
Email :

Tel No :

Tel No in case of emergency :

The information submitted above may be retained by the Social Committee for administration purposes for this and future visits. Data will be retained on a password-protected computer and will only be used for communication between you and the Social Committee.