

## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

As we move from lockdown to our members are not able to use musicians themselves. Tier 3, we can only hope that it. Apart from performing in normal life will resume before The speaker at our Zoom monthly orchestras she gives lessons to much longer. On the positive side meeting in November was budding flautists. If any of your we are promised a reprieve over Jennifer Stinton. She is one of the friends or family are Christmas and vaccines are on the country's leading flautists, and interested in taking flute lessons, way. For most of our groups the lives near Bat & Ball. She gave a she would love to hear from them. Her contact email is: Zoom. Even though that is an very entertaining talk about her [jenifferstinton@piedpipermusic.org.uk](mailto:jenifferstinton@piedpipermusic.org.uk) meeting face to face, and many of including some who are **Nick White**

## MONTHLY MEETINGS IN 2021

## 27th January 2021

We had originally booked Tim Moorey to talk to us about the remarkable Dr. Johnson.

Unfortunately he is not accepting invitations to speak via Zoom.

We have therefore booked **Melanie Gibson-Barton** to give us a presentation entitled "**The Life and Times of Edith Cavell**". Edith Cavell's heroism was recognized throughout the world and my interest was piqued when I visited Canada a few years ago and found that there was a mountain named after her in the Canadian Rockies .

24<sup>th</sup> February 2021

**Chris Shaw** is giving us a talk entitled "**A Sign of the Times**". Traffic signs are essential in providing information to all different types of road users. This talk explains the systems used for the design of the various types of sign and how they are used. It also includes a light hearted look at some of the alternative meanings that the public have given to some signs. Many of you will already have heard Chris speak on various different subjects at our Science Group meetings.

## 24th March 2021

**Paul Laundry** will be giving us "**A Talk about Hong Kong**". He spent many years working in Hong Kong and regards it as a second home. His talk is rich in history, illustrated with beautiful pictures, and also includes commentary which brings the content up to date. I have heard it and found it most enjoyable. You may remember he gave us a talk about Winston Churchill back in 2018.

I do hope you will be able to join us for all these meetings !

If you registered for the November 2020 talk you will automatically receive Zoom invitations to all these talks. If you have not yet registered and would like to do so please send an email to [meetings@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:meetings@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)  
**Barbara Coleyshaw.**

## SCIENCE OPEN MEETING

**Our next Science Webinar will be on Monday 11th January 2021 at 14:00hrs**

**The talk will be 'The Big Cat Sanctuary – Conservation of Endangered Species' by Gemma Bailey**

The Big Cat Sanctuary at Smarden near Ashford assists in the conservation of the world's endangered big cats and the preservation of breeding integrity, with the aim of assisting the return of big cats to the wild wherever possible. Gemma will be talking about the work of the Sanctuary.

If you have not already registered to join these webinars please contact the Science Committee at [science-day@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:science-day@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk), giving your name and email address so that we can then send out joining instructions. Please go to our website for more information about further meetings. <https://www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk>

**Bob Ruffles**

## SEVENOAKS U3A MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

All members will be receiving a copy of this survey.

- **If you receive the newsletter by post**, a copy of the survey will be in the envelope along with the newsletter. We would appreciate it if you would return it to the name and address at the bottom of the survey form; **Sevenoaks U3A Membership Survey, Web Team, 15 Highfield Road. Kemsing, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6TN**
- **If you receive the newsletter electronically**, you will get access to the survey in an email via our Beacon system. Just click on the link included in the email, complete the survey, click done and your answers will be automatically recorded.

Please complete the survey to help us with forward planning for our U3A.

## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND ITS IMPACT ON OUR U3A

As we move into a New Year we have a good reason to be optimistic about overcoming the restrictions Covid 19 has imposed on us throughout 2020. With the anticipated introduction of newly developed vaccines the nation will ultimately be less at risk to infection and life can return to normality. But what will be the new normal?

A quote from a report by McKinsey & Company last October stated that:

*'During the pandemic the results confirm the rapid shift toward interacting with customers through digital channels'*

The pandemic has also been referred to as a global shock that will change

our way of life in a similar way that the two world wars changed the social, economic and technological aspect of our lifestyles.

Fast forward to 2021 and over the past 12 months we have seen a similar pattern. There has been an increasing and rapid transition to digital technologies that has accelerated during the past 12 months and now permeated every aspect of our lives.

For us this means adapting to this new world. A number of our Groups have adopted Video Conferencing using Zoom which has enabled our meetings and social contact with friends and family to be maintained.

We have also seen a significant increase in use of on-line activity for shopping, entertainment and finding information.

Whilst we may be reluctant to adopt these new technologies it is important that we continue to embrace them and exploit the opportunities offered. Our U3A can assist in this transition and we can offer help and training to those who so far have been unsure about using these technologies. In this New Year let's build on our experience to promote a vibrant U3A and reinforce its motto – **Learn, Laugh, Live.**

**Bob Ruffles**

## ZOOMING

The Technical Support Team have produced a document '**Zooming Advice & Tips**' to help our members who may not have ventured into the Video Conferencing world or perhaps need some help in finding all the screen controls.

This is available from a link on the website home page or this link- <https://www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk/Study-Groups/Computing/computing.html#Computer-Training>.

Alternatively contact the Technical Support Team at [techsupport@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:techsupport@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## DIARY

- Jan 6 **Nordic Walking**
- Jan 11 **Science Open Meeting—via Zoom**  
**"The Big Cat Sanctuary – Conservation of Endangered Species' by Gemma Bailey**
- Jan 18 **Computer Open Group - via Zoom**
- Jan 20 **Ambling**
- Jan 27 **Monthly Meeting—via Zoom**  
**"The Life and Times of Edith Cavell" - Melanie Gibson-Barton**

## PHOTOGRAPHS



Do any members have any photographs of Sevenoaks and the surrounding villages, which we could use on our U3A website ?

Similarly, if you have any photos of your group's activities, or of our members taking part in a U3A trip or outing, they would also help to improve the look and feel of our website.

If you do have any pictures which you would be happy to let us use, please send them to [webteam@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:webteam@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk).

Many thanks in anticipation.

## GROUP INFORMATION

The latest government directive for Tier 3 states: *Organised outdoor sport, and physical activity and exercise classes can continue, however higher-risk contact activity should not take place.* We therefore understand that walking groups can continue subject to observing Covid precautions.

### **NORDIC WALKING 10.30 Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January Otford**

Meet in the car park at Otford Memorial Hall, TN14 5PQ in time for a 10.30 start. The walk will cross the recreation ground and continue to the Darenth Golf Course then back along the River Darent. The walk will be no more than 3 miles. [nordicwalking@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:nordicwalking@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

### **COMPUTER GROUP 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 14.00 on Zoom.**

**File Management by Charles Hebert** followed by questions.

Please submit questions about any IT issue which is troubling you to [computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk). Any member who wishes to join the meeting will need to inform us in advance, using the address given, leaving an email address to which we can send a link to join the meeting.

### **AMBLING 10.30 Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January Toy's Hill**

Meet in the National Trust car park, situated on the right off Chart Lane, in time for a 10.30 start. NGR 553551. The walk will be no more than 4 miles. The leader is Velma Keyes. [ambling@sevenoaksu3a.gov.uk](mailto:ambling@sevenoaksu3a.gov.uk).

### **BRIDGE FOR PLEASURE Suspended until April 2021**

We have decided to cancel our Otford Hall bookings for January, February and March. We intend to review the situation in March and will keep you posted of any changes to the situation. 🙏 Meanwhile, our best wishes to all our players. **John & Sue Christy** [bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## VACANCIES IN GROUPS

We have been given details of no less than 30 groups with vacancies, and there may be more. Just one example is the Wednesday Book Circle. This group reads modern novels and currently meets on Zoom. Anyone who is interested in joining this group should contact Ann Evans on [bookswed@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:bookswed@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk).

We do not have space to list all of the groups, but if there is a topic that interests you please contact the group organiser as per the details in the handbook. If you experience difficulty in contacting a group organiser you should contact our Group Development member, Elaine Elston on [groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk). Do remember to check your Spam box in case you have missed a reply.

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Sevenoaks U3A now has a formal Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, in accordance with the recommendations of the Third Age Trust. The Policy complies with the Equality Act of 2010 which stipulates that organisations must not treat someone unfairly on the basis of what it calls 'protected characteristics', which are:

- \* ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- \* gender
- \* age
- \* disability
- \* religion or belief (or absence of belief)
- \* marital or civil partnership status
- \* sexual orientation
- \* pregnancy
- \* gender reassignment
- \* political belief

The Policy requires us to ensure that members of Sevenoaks U3A do not experience discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristics, and that behaviour within our organisation pays due regard to issues of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Equality Act highlights that organisations need to accommodate those who may have particular needs. Whilst some activities require a certain level of fitness or mobility (members should be made aware in advance), Sevenoaks U3A group organisers should be prepared to make 'reasonable adjustments' to make activities accessible to a wide range of members, wherever practicable. The full Policy may be viewed on the website (<https://www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk/U3A-Governance/Policy-Equality-Diversity-and-Inclusion.pdf>)

**The deadline for the inclusion of items in the February 2021 newsletter will be :  
January 8th**

## CALENDARS

The Beautiful Kent calendars featured in last month's newsletter have been printed and distributed to those who have ordered them. At the time of going to press Rob White had a few copies remaining. If you would like one please contact him on [external@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:external@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk).

The thirteen pictures, all of which were taken by our members, were selected by a panel of judges comprising Elizabeth Purves, Victoria Granville Baxter and Barbara Coleyshaw. They did not know who the photographs were taken by so there could be no favouritism. Many thanks to the judges.

# ENTERTAINMENT FOR A TIER 3 WINTER

## NATIONAL TRUST COLLECTIONS

On their website the National Trust are currently featuring their national collections in the following categories:

- Paintings
- Ceramics
- Sculpture
- Tapestries
- Furniture
- Wallpapers
- Books

An article in the furniture category covers Royal Furniture at Knole House.

Go to [www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk)

## BEATRIX POTTER

**A video tour of Beatrix Potter's home at Hilltop House in the Lake District courtesy of the National Trust.**

Take a behind-the-scenes video tour of Hill Top, the much-loved Cumbrian home of author Beatrix Potter, creator of the character Peter Rabbit. Although the farm is closed at the moment you can still explore the writer's paintings, drawings, treasured objects, as well as the surrounding countryside that inspired her.

Go to [https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/members-area?campid=email\\_central\\_Newsletter\\_26112020\\_Sub4MEMNONFAM](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/members-area?campid=email_central_Newsletter_26112020_Sub4MEMNONFAM)

## MIRTHY

Mirthy is a website which provides online talks on subjects as diverse as :

- Art/Literature
- Health
- Music /Theatre
- Christmas
- History
- Hobbies
- General Interest
- Show Business
- Travel

Although there are paid access options to Mirthy, there is also a totally free option.

In the travel section is a talk about Bruges, given by Melanie Gibson-Barton, who is also giving the talk for our online January Monthly meeting.

These free talks can be accessed at <https://mirthy.co.uk/catalogue/>

## ENGLISH HERITAGE

English Heritage have also set up a YouTube site with films of many of their locations, which are currently closed because of the virus restrictions. The films last anything from 2 minutes to 25 minutes. Included amongst them are what English Heritage call "Postcards from ..." and include :

- Tintagel Castle
  - Eltham Palace
  - Kenilworth Castle
  - And Dover Castle
- Go to <https://youtube.com/user/EnglishHeritageFilm> to see what is on offer.

## GOOGLE ART PROJECT

Google has been running a project about Art Exhibitions around the world. Go to <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner> to see details of hundreds of worldwide exhibitions. There are 65 in Australia alone.

Amongst the first dozen listings are :

- The Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam
- The Musee D'Orsay in Paris
- The National Gallery in London
- The Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg

Tate Modern is, however, relegated to almost the foot of the page.

## GREYSNET

The Greysnet website was created as a dedicated space for older people online. As Greysnet says "It's a place where people at all stages of greyness (even those who dye their hair) can read, chat and find out about things that interest them.

It includes items under the following categories :

- Entertainment
- Food & Drink
- Travel
- Hobbies/Interests
- Money Matters
- Grey's Anatomy

The site can be reached at <https://greysnet.com>.

The item below published courtesy of Sevenoaks Probus

## HUMOUR

I wandered lonely as a cloud, two metres from the madding crowd,  
When all at once my name was called, to enter Waitrose hallowed hall.

This was the pensioners' special hour; I'd gone to get a bag of flour,  
But I forgot, when through the door, what I had gone to Waitrose for.

The Waitrose staff were extra kind, I told them it had slipped my mind.

They asked what else I had forgot, they clearly thought I'd lost the plot.

I phoned my wife again to ask, she reminded me of this special task:

'I need some flour to bake a cake with all that cream I had to take.'

'Ah yes I recall,' I had to lie, I dared not ask what flower to buy,

But then I saw them next to the tills—a bunch of golden daffodils!

**A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS**