



Group Co-ordinator

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Learn  
Laugh  
Live

## Message from the Chairman

### HELP YOUR u3a

There are many ways in which you can help your u3a

*“Everyone can contribute something”*

We know that you all have busy lives, but **please** consider giving up some of your valuable time to help our organisation flourish.

In particular, we are looking for people to:

- Join our friendly, innovative Committee. Why not come along to one of our monthly Committee Meetings to see what we do?
- Organise coach trips for us – liaising with the coach company, arranging ticket sales
- Become part of a social events team – planning outings and entertainments



Remember that we support each other, so you will be acting as part of our team.

Please contact the Chairman for an informal chat about any of these opportunities.

*Crofton Halls*

*Doors open  
at 2pm for  
refreshments  
until the main  
meeting starts  
at 2:30pm*

## General Meetings

**20th May – London 1851 and The Great Exhibition**

**Michael Gilbert**

The Great Exhibition of 1851 was probably the most successful, memorable and influential cultural event of the 19th century. With Prince Albert's energetic patronage and Joseph Paxton's gigantic pre-fabricated building of iron and glass, Hyde Park was from May to October 1851, filled with over six million visitors who were able to view over 100,000 exhibits. When it closed it had generated a vast profit of £186,000.



**20th May – BOOK SALE**

There will be a book sale at the May meeting. Please bring some cash if you want to buy, and paperbacks only, if you want to donate. Although we're happy to accept gardening books in hardback. Thank you

**17th June – Reach for the Stars – Paul Read**

For the past 25 years Paul has established himself as one of the West End's most accomplished Principal Dressers. He has cared for some of the industry's biggest names including Dame Diana Rigg, Bill Nighy, Paul O'Grady, Stephen Rea, David Schwimmer, Rob Lowe, Ben Wishaw, Mathew Rhys, Juliette Lewis, Dominic Cooper and the celebrities and dancers on 'Strictly Come Dancing'.

As well as the West End, Paul has also worked at the National Theatre, the Royal Opera House, Sadler's Wells, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the O2 and several of the biggest National Concert Arenas. His work was featured on a documentary at the Victoria & Albert museum and at the Lincoln Centre, New York.

He is constantly asked to write a book about this work and is currently developing his talks into a one man theatrical show, which he hopes to tour nationally next year.

Paul will be sharing his vast experience, stories and anecdotes with us.



# Monthly General Meetings

## Dates for your diary (2–4pm, Crofton Halls)

20 May	London 1851 and The Great Exhibition (Michael Gilbert)
17 June	Reach for the Stars (Paul Read)
15 July	Soldiers', Sailors' & Airmen's Families Association (Louise Phelps)
19 August	Chiropractors and Postural Tips (Dean Blackstock)
16 September	James Gillray: First Ever Political Cartoonist (Ian Keable)

## Can you make a cup of tea? Do you have a friendly smile?



We need help at the monthly General Meetings (3rd Monday of the Month) in Crofton Halls. We have a rota of volunteers to help with serving refreshments and greeting new members at the door — it's a great way to meet people.

For more information please contact: [The Vice Chairman](#)

*On the Tuesday following each General Meeting we have a coffee morning at 10.30am in the BR6 Café, Orpington College - All members are welcome*

## Come along to our **BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH**

**Saturday 4 May from 12.30–2pm**

at the Hulbert Hall, Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road

Meet other members for a laugh and a chat whilst enjoying

**complimentary tea/coffee/squash**

**No booking necessary – just turn up on the day and make new friends!**



## Science & Technology – Programme for 2024

14 May	Computers in Aviation: The Impact of Failure
11 June	Science: Fun For Everyone Event (see below)
9 July	Science Museum: New Green Energy Gallery (TBC)
13 August	Social Gathering: High Elms (TBC)
10 Sept	The Plastic Brain
8 October	Citizen Science Studies of the River Cray
12 Nov	The Moving Image: Part 2
10 Dec	Christmas Meeting



You are all invited to join the  
**Science & Technology Group**  
for a free interactive science event

**FEATURING:**

Science and Nature – Demonstrations,  
Experiments, Gadgets, Posters,  
Refreshments and more...

**WHEN:**

Tuesday 11 June at 2-4pm

**WHERE:**

Crofton Halls in the Small Hall

No lectures or anything complicated  
An opportunity to chat to other members  
Look, Learn, Laugh, Live



**Science  
Fun For  
Everyone!**

**11th June**

**FREE ENTRY  
'OPEN HOUSE'**  
No need to book



## Walks are back!



We are pleased to announce that the walking group will be back up and running in May. Walks will be on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, starting at 10am unless stated otherwise.

### Wed 15 May – Circular walk round Petts Wood and Jubilee Park

Meet at Tent Peg Lane Car Park at 10am. Approx. 3 to 4 Miles.

*All walkers join the walks at their own risk. New walkers are welcome to join any of the walks but please telephone or email before coming on your first walk.*

*Please don't forget to leave your phone number if you have to leave a message!*

*Please ensure that you wear suitable footwear for the walks. Also please note the walk description is only a brief guide, not a complete breakdown of the walk.*

## Gardening Made Easy

The Friday Gardening group met on the first Friday of April. After a very wet week we were lucky enough to be able to be outside in the sunshine. We admired Yvonne's beautiful bulbs and garden. We were able to sow different kinds of seeds including sunflowers, rudbeckia, nicotiana and cosmos although the wind wasn't very helpful at times. Hopefully these will help us to grow beautiful plants in time for the summer.

The Gardening Made Easy group meets on the first Friday of every month mainly in each other's gardens.

We have also planned a visit to the Himalayan Garden in Sevenoaks.

If you would like more information please give the Group Leader a ring and I can give you the details of our next meeting.



**Sowing Seeds on a Sunny Spring Afternoon**

## Solo Sunday Lunch — Inaugural Meeting 30 April

Solo Sunday Lunch is a new group for members that live on their own and find Sundays a bit too quiet.

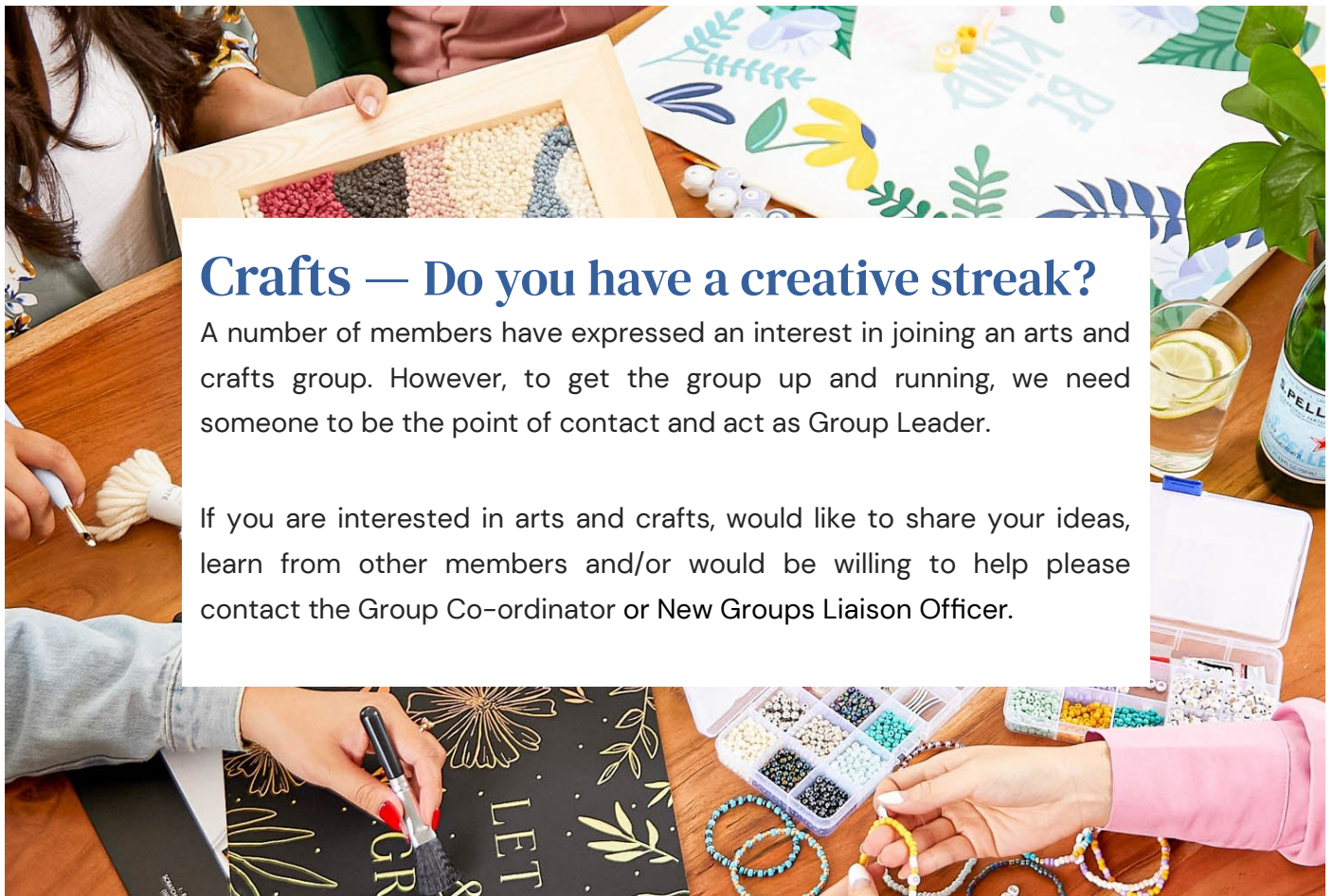
Would you like to join this group to dine out on Sundays with solo others?

Solo Sunday Lunch is having an inaugural meeting at the Buff Pub in Crescent Way near

Green Street Green on Tuesday 30 April 11am when the pub opens.

It's on the 358 and R11 bus route plus parking in car park and surrounding roads. Be sure not to park where you have to pay!

If you enjoy a Sunday roast (or other option) and making new friends please contact the Group Co-ordinator or New Groups Liaison Officer



## Crafts — Do you have a creative streak?

A number of members have expressed an interest in joining an arts and crafts group. However, to get the group up and running, we need someone to be the point of contact and act as Group Leader.

If you are interested in arts and crafts, would like to share your ideas, learn from other members and/or would be willing to help please contact the Group Co-ordinator or New Groups Liaison Officer.

## London Explorers

### 13 May Boat trip on the River Lea

A boat has been booked on Monday 13 May for 11am (to 2pm) for a guided cruise along the Old River Lea and the Lea Navigation canal to Three Mills, starting from the Olympic Park. This is a different itinerary to last year but hopefully with the same guide. Tickets cost £23

### 20 June London walk with Kim

Were you in the group who took part in the first London walk with Kim, our London Blue Badge Guide in April 2009? Our visit was to 'Secret London' areas hidden down alleyways and away from the main roads and traffic. Why not join us on a reminiscence walk seeing how many buildings are still there, what's new, what changes have happened during the past fifteen years?

*"For most of our history, London ended on Ludgate Hill and Westminster was a separate place connected to religion and the monarch. The stretch between became inhabited by those who either wanted the extra space or the escape from those who ran the City. So today we will encounter the Fleet Street press and printing industry, lawyers, rich noblemen and bishops. There are winding alleys, modern squares and a hidden river. We'll find secret pubs and churches and we'll end with spectacular buildings from the 15th and 19th centuries. Throw in the characters of Dr Johnson and Charles Dickens and we'll all leave unbelieving that we have walked less than a mile and have not time travelled".*

*We are now down from 4 London Explorers contributors to 2 so unfortunately we will only see outings every other month going forward unless other volunteers come forward.*

*Could you help out? Maybe you could work together with one or more friends to organise trips. Please contact our Group Co-ordinator if you'd like to know more about getting involved.*

## Family History 2

### Sorry no vacancies at present

Due to the popularity of this group we are now seeking a larger venue for the meetings.





# Philosophy

At April's Philosophy meeting one of our members gave a talk on '**Philosophy before the Greeks**' summarising the book of the same title, by Marc Van De Mieroop.

There is a growing recognition that philosophy isn't unique to the West, that it didn't begin only with the classical Greeks, and that Greek philosophy was influenced by Near Eastern traditions. Yet, even today, there is still a widespread assumption that what came before the Greeks was 'before philosophy'.

In his book, Marc Van De Mieroop presents a groundbreaking argument that, for three millennia before the Greeks, the people of Mesopotamia had a rich and sophisticated tradition of philosophy fully worthy of the name. In fact, in the first century BC, Greek historian Diodorus praised the Babylonians for their devotion to philosophy.



## Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia was an ancient region of south-western Asia (in present day Iraq) lying between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

Its alluvial plains were the site of the world's earliest civilisations: Akkad; Babylonia; Sumer; and Assyria.

Mesopotamia means 'between rivers' in Greek

The Babylonian approach to knowledge was in three main areas:

- The study of language, which in its analysis of the written word formed the basis of all logic
- The art of divination, which interpreted communications between gods and humans
- The rules of law, which confirmed that royal justice was founded on truth

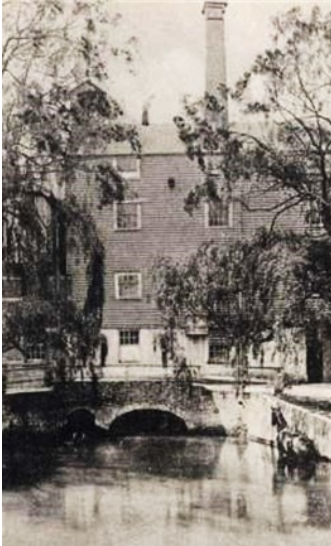
The author gives an innovative intellectual history of the ancient Near Eastern world during the many centuries in which Babylonian philosophers inspired scholars throughout the region. Up until the first millennium BC, when the breakdown of this cosmopolitan system enabled others, including the Greeks, to develop alternative methods of philosophical reasoning.

If you would like to join this interesting group, which meets on the first Friday morning of each month, please contact the Group Leader



# Industrial Heritage

## Monday 29 April — The Industrial Heritage of the River Cray



We take a journey along the River Cray, from a time when water provided the most effective and dependable sources of power and the river was the industrial heart of our area, up the first half of the 20th century.

We will explain how the Cray was altered in the past to power corn and then paper and silk mills, including developments in production, influenced by the coming of steam power and by social and economic changes.

We'll also look at a few other examples of industrial heritage on or near our own doorsteps and will preview some ideas for activities during our summer season.

Where and when: Monday 29 April 2:30 – 4:30 at the Liberal Club Hall, opposite Tesco. Access is at the rear of the building, via the path to the right of the car park.

Our meetings are open to all u3a members; there's no need to pre-book.

For more information about meetings and other activities, and to be added to the Industrial Heritage mailing list please contact the Group Leader

## Line Dancing — New Group

This popular new group meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 11–12.30 at St Paul's Church, Crofton.

The next class is on 14 May.

### HOWEVER, PLEASE NOTE:

Shirley the line dancing tutor is moving the date of her JULY class only from the Tuesday to the Monday of the same week.

The JULY class will be on Monday 8th July 11–12.30.

The June and August classes will be on the second Tuesday of the month as usual.

Shirley will be contacting the group members from her contact list.

The first class went well and lots of our members said it was great fun.

If you would like to know more please contact the Group Co-ordinator or New Groups Liaison Officer



An article from u3amatters magazine — Spring 2024

## Life lessons: WORDS OF WISDOM

u3a founder **Eric Midwinter** was asked to share his top-line philosophy on life

### BE POSITIVE

Every morning, repeat:  
"I am an active citizen, not a passive social casualty."  
We are privileged to be the first-ever generation of a society to see most people survive a natural life span, so grasp the opportunities these valuable years bring. Make sure that in the long letter of life, you end with a glorious paragraph rather than a skimpy postscript.

### GET INVOLVED

The u3a is a thriving, evolving organisation, but being part of it - as implied in the small print when members join - obliges everyone to contribute to the working of the organisation, and to help recruit new members. This is a mutual, proactive cooperative - not a dated Darby and Joan club where members amble along being looked after by others!

### SET GOALS

Have purposes and targets, things that you aim to do, whether travelling, writing your memories, or choosing new learning themes: give yourself 'commissions' to complete by a certain date. As a writer, I have found that having deadlines has, paradoxically, kept me alive.

And finally: never look up medical symptoms on the internet - that's lethal...

## Push Back Ageism

From an article on the [u3a website](#): The u3a movement believes that everyone has a positive contribution to make to the community around them and age should not be a factor in this. We want to see a world where people are seen for who they are not based on preconceptions to do with their age. We want a society which accepts that every age brings with it many new and exciting opportunities.

By providing people opportunities to come together, learn, volunteer and stay active, the u3a movement is integral to promoting health and wellbeing as we age. We believe that emphasising a positive view of ageing and working in a collaborative way with others holding the same values will show that there is a different way of looking at ageing and older people.

*“The things that we enjoy doing as u3a members is positive ageing in action and sends an important message to the wider community that later life is a time of possibility and growth.”*

*Liz Thackray*



To find out more about what the u3a has to offer click [HERE](#)

*“We don't stop playing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop playing”*

*George Bernard Shaw*

**Deadlines  
for the  
next  
Newsletter  
and  
Bulletin**

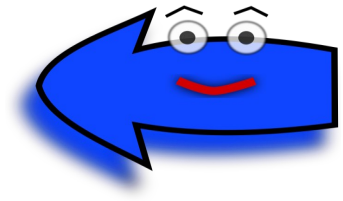
## Deadlines for the next publications

Note: always the day after the General Meeting

**Newsletter 159 – 21st May 2024**

**Bulletin 6 – 18th June 2024**

**Please send all articles to the  
News Editor Team**



### Wildlife in Orpington

Birch Sawfly (*Cimbex Femoratus*)

This is the largest British sawfly,  
measuring up to 25mm in length

[www.u3aorpington.org.uk](http://www.u3aorpington.org.uk)

PLEASE LOGIN WITH YOUR USERNAME AND PASSWORD  
FOR CONTACT DETAILS OF THE GROUP LEADERS



# Addendum

## MOTO 1

Coolings behind the scenes - 30 April @ 11.00

Coffee morning - Second Home 11 May @ 10.15

Visit RAF museum, Biggin Hill on 2 May @ 11.00

Bring Your Own Lunch on 8 May @ 12.30

Afternoon Tea at Bromley Court Hotel on Friday 10 May @ 2.30

Sunday lunch, The White Bear, Warlingham on Sunday 12 May @ 1.30

Brunch at Richmal Crompton pub in Bromley South on Monday 13th May and Friday 24th May from 10.30

Breakfast at BR6 restaurant in Orpington on 16th May from 10.30

MOTO Monthly meeting on 22 May at 2.30 at Orpington Methodist Church

Bring Your Own Lunch on Tuesday 28th May at 1.00 in Petts Wood

For more information please contact the Vice Chairman