

# Bulletin for Interest Groups



Group Co-ordinator

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## Message from the Chairman

Recently, during a chat on the Chairs' Forum, I was interested to hear of a u3a in Wales which had doubled its membership in one year by offering lots of evening groups. I'm waiting to hear what they are, but am wondering if our members would like more evening groups and have any suggestions. We are always open to new ideas, of course, and would love to get feedback on the sorts of subjects people would like us to offer.

In the meantime, with autumn firmly upon us, a new interest may be just what you need and we have plenty to choose from: the only limit is your time! If you think a group is full, contact the Group Leader anyway to see if anything has changed. Come along to our General Meeting to speak to our Groups Coordinator, or our New Groups Liaison Officer and they will help you to find something fun to be enthusiastic about, even if the weather isn't doing its part.

Whilst you are in your group, don't forget to send us your photos of you all enjoying yourselves. We will be ordering new publicity leaflets soon and want to show off what Orpington u3a has to offer. Our best advert is our members engaging in activities together – how many of those photos will you be in?!

### Chairman



Learn  
Laugh  
Live

## Crofton Halls

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

## General Meetings

**18th November**

### Fire - A Century of the Volunteer - Jo Livingston

A history of the years when firefighting depended on local altruism, covering the period from 1820 up to World War 2. During this period training for firemen was introduced and new technology was gradually developed, though this was mainly in urban areas.

The talk uses photographs and other items from Jo's family history – four generations of volunteer firemen. Jo will bring a fireman's helmet to pass round, as well as an early 19<sup>th</sup> century fire bucket.



*On the Tuesday  
following each  
General Meeting  
we have a  
Coffee Morning  
at 10.30am in the  
**BR6 Café**  
All members are  
welcome*

**16th December**

### Christmas - A Festive History - Andy Thomas

In a fascinating, entertaining and uplifting presentation, Andy uncovers the long and intriguing background to the festive season. From the ancient midwinter celebration of light to the marking of the birth of a messiah, mid-December has long been a time for rituals and rejoicing. Yet the history of Christmas has not been straightforward; its celebration was banned in Puritan times and its merry traditions splintered into many guises before the Victorians rehabilitated the festival into what it has become. Andy shows how, for all the commercialisation, we can still find meaning and enjoy Christmas today while keeping the flame of light alive in the winter darkness.

## WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

Wednesday 6th November 10 am – 12.15 pm

**Come along to the Meeting Room at Crofton Halls and discover more about your family tree!**

Our Family History groups and other experts will answer your questions on how to get started, help you with organising your research or suggesting ways to proceed if you are stuck. Bring your laptops, tablets, photos or even crumpled bits of paper and we will do our best to help!

There will be 2 talks:

**10.30 am – A Beginner's Guide**

**11.15 am – Solving Knotty Problems (Intermediate)**

**Free entry and refreshments**



## NEW MEMBERS' MEETING

Thursday 7th November, 10.30am

Crofton Halls

These events are held several times a year for new members to meet with others new to Orpington u3a.

They are social events and also a chance to find out more about the various activities on offer.

If you have any queries please send me an email or speak to me at the monthly Monday General Meetings at Crofton Halls.

**New Members Liaison**

## u3a Orpington QUIZ AFTERNOON

Monday 25th November 2.00 pm – 4.30 pm

In the Main Hall at Crofton Halls

We are delighted to let you know about this fun afternoon for Orpington u3a members.

The Main Hall will be set up in tables and you can come along as a team of up to 8 people or simply join others on the day and get to know them as you discuss and answer the Quiz Master's questions.

The Quiz will start at 14:00 prompt and entry to the Main Hall will be from 13:45.

The interval will be around 15:00 and the Quiz will finish around 16:30.

**>> There will be prizes for the winning table <<**

**Tickets £5 per person (includes a cuppa and cake)**

Tickets will be on sale at the General Meeting 18th November. It would help if you could bring the exact money, thank you.

If you want a ticket but are not going to be at the General Meeting please contact the

**Meetings Secretary**



## London Explorers

### Wednesday 20 November Wimbledon Tennis Museum

The London Explorers Group are proposing a visit to the Wimbledon Tennis Museum on Wednesday 20 November.

The cost for seniors is £13 and includes a 15 minute visit to the centre court for a photo opportunity.

Travel arrangements are to catch the 09.42 train from Petts Wood to Waterloo East, then transfer to Waterloo to catch the first train to Wimbledon.



### The London Transport Museum's Depot

On Thursday 19 September a group of 19 members met at Charing Cross and went by Tube to Acton Town to visit the London Transport Museum's Depot for their Open Day. A huge amount of objects were on display, with many vehicles open for inspection – vintage Tube carriages, buses, and even horse-drawn buses. Also on display were all the old signs and the beautiful artwork used over the years on the posters. Museum volunteers were on hand to enthusiastically explain and answer questions, and there was a programme of talks. Everyone had a good time on a lovely sunny day.



## Come and join our Line Dancing Group



Forget the stereotyped image of Cowboy hats and boots. Line Dancing is a choreographed sequence of steps done in lines to great tracks of music. It covers every genre of dance including ballroom, Latin, Irish, Scottish and funky. It's great fun, excellent exercise for both body and mind, and you will meet lots of others that love to dance. Come and join the fun and laugh whilst keeping fit. No partner required.

We normally meet at St Paul's Church, Crofton Rd, between 11am and 12:30pm on the Second Tuesday of the month. **But please note we will be meeting one week later in November on the 19th.**

Costs are currently £3 a month to our teacher, plus £5 per quarter towards hall hire (Hall hire fees will be reviewed in January).

## MOTO 1 – Events

**MONDAY 28 – THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER – A FETE WORSE THAN DEATH –** 8 p.m. There were flyers at the MOTO1 meeting. Please book a ticket to support this local amdram group – Tel: 020 8249 7162.

**WEDNESDAY 30 OCTOBER – BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH –** 12.30 p.m.  
At a member's home. Full.

**WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER – POPPY FACTORY TOUR –** 12.30 p.m.  
List full, with one member on the reserve list.

**SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER – SUNDAY LUNCH –** 3 p.m. At The Rose and Crown, Green Street Green. Eight people on the list so far, with space for a further four, making a maximum of 12.

**WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER – KEW GARDENS CHRISTMAS LIGHTS –** 6 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS LUNCH –** 12.30 p.m. Frogpool Manor. Chislehurst.

**SUNDAY 19 JANUARY – SUNDAY LUNCH –** 3 p.m. Landings Hotel, Biggin Hill Airport.



### REGULAR EVENTS

**2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.** The Buff, Green Street Green, at 12 noon for lunch.

**2nd and 3rd Friday of the month.** The Richmal Compton Wetherspoons, Bromley South, for brunch served between 10.30 a.m. and 12 noon. At the back near the coffee machine. No need to book, just turn up.

**Every other Saturday.** Coffee morning at Second Home, Orpington High Street, from 10.15 a.m. On the balcony at the rear.

All our events are advertised on the MOTO1 group email and WhatsApp, then individual members contact the host for address and other details. If you would like to join the MOTO1 group please contact the Group Leader.



**Volunteers to 'meet and greet'  
or help with refreshments**

are needed for the General Meetings

If you are willing to help at a meeting  
please contact:

**The Meetings Secretary**

Thank you

## Gardening Made Easy

The Gardening Made Easy group enjoyed their meeting in October at a member's house and shared gardening tips with each other. They later enjoyed tea and a look around the lovely autumn garden, full of plants for the wildlife. Her apple trees were heavy laden and the apples tasted lovely. If you would like to join this vibrant group, please contact the Group Leader



## Tai Chi - We have vacancies for the Thursday meetings

Discover the gentle, graceful movements of Yang style Short Form Tai Chi in a set of 10 classes designed to introduce you to the Tai Chi and Qi Gong forms and energy exercises. Tai Chi is a discipline which can be worked on and developed over a lifetime. Sometimes individual progression may be slow, but you will always find it rewarding. By the end of this course, you'll be able to:



- Perform some movements of the Tai Chi form
- Continue to practice some of the sequence of forms for yourself
- Perform Qi Gong exercises
- Achieve some calmness and balance in the body and mind

**Meets:** Monday mornings from 11.30 am to 12.30 pm and Thursdays from 10.00 am to 11.00 am in the Meeting Room at Crofton Halls.

**Costs:** £10 start and then top ups to cover hall cost. (10 week course – 3 courses per year)

Monday group has 17 members. We have no vacancies at present.

**Thursday group has only 5 members, so we looking for extra members to join!**

Just turn up to join or send an email to the Group Leader if you have any queries.

## Walks



Walks are on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, starting at 10am unless stated otherwise. For more information please contact the Group Leader

### PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTH

#### Wednesday 20 November – St Mary Cray

This is 4 mile circular walk around St Mary Cray and surrounding fields. No styles, a few small inclines. Given it is November, it may be muddy in places, so walking boots are advised.

Meet at the junction of Northfield Avenue and Chelsfield Road. The R4 bus from Orpington High Street, destination Paul's Cray Hill, stops on Chelsfield Road at Northfield Avenue.

There will be no walk in December, but we will be walking again in January. Details in next month's newsletter.

**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 ensure that you wear suitable footwear for the walks.**

**Note that the walk description is only a brief guide, not a complete breakdown of the walk.**

## Sharing an Interest

There has been a good response from some members interested in sharing an activity with one other member on the following topics. These are as follows:



- Arranging/cataloguing books
- Gardening
- Improving French conversation
- Improving Spanish conversation
- Improving/playing chess
- Improving Italian conversation
- Playing Board games
- Sharing walking/trips out
- Simple Piano duets

If any of the above activities interest you or for further information, please contact the Group Facilitator by phone or email.

Alternatively, If YOU have an activity or hobby YOU would like to share with another member, please contact the Group Facilitator.

## Science & Technology

In October a very informative talk about **'Citizen Science Studies on the River Cray'** was given by Brian. He explained the benefits and importance of the work of Citizen Scientists in general, and his own involvement in monitoring various riverflies in the River Cray.

Riverfly larvae break down organic matter and are an important food source for fish, birds, mammals and other invertebrates. They are sensitive to pollution, therefore monitoring their abundance and diversity gives an indication of the water quality.

To survey the riverflies, samples are collected by hand-netting then identified and counted by the trained volunteers: [riverflies.org](http://riverflies.org). Brian and the team working on the River Cray contribute to the wider Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (RMI) by acting as a networked alarm system, identifying and reporting potential pollution events.

These studies also help us to understand, protect and improve the River Cray. Brian explains more about this initiative in his recent article for the Freshwater Biological Association:

[Riverfly monitoring – a citizen scientist's view from the River Cray](#)



### FUTURE MEETINGS

12 Nov	The Moving Image: Part 2
10 Dec	Christmas Meeting
14 Jan	Techniques and Technology used by Vermeer
11 Feb	The Human Body in Space
11 Mar	Nikola Tesla
8 April	Air Traffic Control
13 May	Fusion Power

If you would like to find out more, or join the **Science & Technology Group** please contact the Group Leader

## Industrial Heritage - 'Time'

Our next meeting on **Monday 28 October at 2:30 pm** will focus on aspects of 'time' – not just its measurement, but also ways in which the experience, perception and use of time affected both industry and the lives of working people.

And we'll look at some examples of how working people used the leisure time that resulted from successive factory acts in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

We are an 'open' group, meaning that our activities are open to all u3a members without restriction or obligation.

The meeting will be in our usual venue – the hall of the Orpington Liberal Club opposite Tesco (access via the rear of the building).

For more information or any questions, send an email to the Group Leader.





# BRANDENBURG CHORAL FESTIVAL OF LONDON

We are currently working with the u3a London Region to present as a special event, one of the Brandenburg Traditional Christmas Concerts. It is at St Margaret Patten in the City on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00

Tickets are only available from the London Area via the link in this flyer [CLICK HERE](#)

In addition due to the generous financial support of a lady who loves Brandenburg and u3a equally, we are able to continue offering reduced price (£10 discount) tickets for some of our other concerts.

## **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 7.30pm at St Mary Moorfields (Moorgate) Ionian Singers**

Their highly regarded conductor Tim Salter and harpist Isabel Marie Eberhardt, present a brilliant programme titled 'from Darkness to Light' featuring a brooding dark motet by Brahms, a vision of heavenly delight by Byrd, a Lament by Seiber and Salter's setting of words of hope from Emily Dickinson.

Discount Code is **BETTY16**

## **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 7.30pm at Holy Sepulchre (Holborn) Luminosa Voices**

In their first visit to the Festival, Luminosa will be singing the exquisite Requiem setting by Duruflé alongside other works. The concert is going to be an exciting departure from the norm, as select movements of the Duruflé Requiem will be accompanied postgraduate dancers from Trinity College Laban. Subtle and complementary in nature, this addition to the performance will bring a fresh reimagining of the work for the audiences - they will be able to see and hear the interplay between music and physical movement within the beautiful space that is Holy Sepulchre.

Discount Code is **BETTY23**

## **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> December 7.30pm at Holy Sepulchre (Holborn) Brandenburg Festival Chorus**

What could be more traditional as Christmas than Handel's Messiah? Conducted by Bob Porter – we are aiming to raise the roof!

Discount Code is **BETTY28**

## **HOW TO DO IT**

For concerts other than the dedicated u3a concert, go to the Brandenburg Box Office by clicking [HERE](#)

- Choose your concert(s)
- Go through the regular online booking process
- Enter the number of tickets you need
- Enter the codes listed above as the password (BETTY plus the date of the concert)
- Carry on as normal

You do need to click on a delivery method – Etickets are free.

NB there are inevitably a limited number of discounted tickets.

And BINGO! We will look forward to seeing you there.

You are very welcome to pass on this on to chums.

**Bob Porter, Brandenburg Artistic Director, [Brandenburg](#), 07770 937328**

## **And then, as an exciting extra, as you are a music-lover,**

Why not take a look at one of the **Brandenburg Choral Cruises?** – you don't have to participate as a singer.

In parallel to the choir rehearsals, I will be running workshop-discussions every day to open the doors of your soul to a broader understanding of how music works.

You can also attend the daily rehearsals and, of course, the final concert. There are even sessions for non-choir passengers to sing-along-a-bob! But fundamentally it is just a lovely cruise as part of an established group of PLUs (People Like Us). Perfect for single travellers as you are instantly in the "gang"

If you want to send information to a friend, you can download the flier [HERE](#)

If you would like to consider it, please just email me to register an interest and I will send you final details.



### Aurora Borealis

The Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) returned to the UK on 10 October - visible over most of the country.

In Orpington they could be seen as a red glow with the naked eye, but more vivid and colourful images could be captured by a phone or camera. This photo was taken with an iPhone in Mayfield Avenue.

The Aurora was caused by a strong geo-magnetic storm driven by a cluster of sunspots on the Sun's surface facing Earth, emitting solar flares and coronal mass ejections which interacted with the Earth's magnetic field creating the 'lightshow'.

[Orpington Astronomical Society](#)



### Comet C/2023 A3 (Tsuchinshan-ATLAS)

Comet C/2023 A3 was only discovered in January last year, but astronomers believe it was last seen from Earth around 80,000 years ago, when Neanderthals were alive. Its closest approach to Earth was on 12 October and it is visible after dusk with binoculars, in the western sky until early November. This photo was taken on Tugmutton Common.

Like most comets C/2023 A3 originates from the Oort Cloud, a distant region of icy bodies beyond Pluto and the Kuiper Belt.

## Deadlines for the next publications

Note: The day after the General Meeting

Newsletter 162 – 19th November 2024

Bulletin 9 – 17th December 2024

Please send all articles to the  
News Editor Team

