

u3a Orpington

Learn
Laugh
Live



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Chairman's Message

*Spring
is sprung!*

In this hopeful season of optimism and renewal, I am happy to notify you of several opportunities for you to enjoy the new season.

- > **Take up snooker** - we now have a member who is starting a new snooker group to be held at Petts Wood Snooker Club on Monday evenings.
- > **Drink wine** - our wine Appreciation group 'Cheers' after having been closed to new members for a while is now able to accept new members again so please contact the group leader if you are interested in joining.
- > **Listen to music** - join with fellow u3a members in attending a performance of Musicals in the Crypt at St Martins-in-the-Fields on the evening of 30th May - we still have some tickets available so please contact the Events Manager to secure your place. Food and drinks are also available at this event.

Whatever you decide to do I hope you enjoy it.

Happy Easter to all our members!

This is a polite reminder to anyone who has not yet renewed their membership. Your membership will lapse on **29 March** if you do not renew before this date. If you joined after 1 December 2025 you do not need to renew until 2027.

Renewal can be done easily [online](#) or instructions for cheque or cash payment can be found on our website in the 'Members Area'.

If you need help with the renewal process please contact the Membership Secretary



NEW GROUP START-UP FUNDING

Have you been considering starting a new Interest Group but are worried about the up-front costs?

If so, we may be able to help you get it off the ground.

Why not discuss your idea with our friendly Group Coordinators and see what's possible.

Crofton Halls, BR6 8PR, 3.30-5.30pm. Third Tuesday of the month
Doors open at 3.30pm for refreshments, until the main meeting starts at 4pm

Members who park at Crofton Halls when attending the GM will need to enter their car registration at reception to avoid a parking fine. Please go to our Website or click [HERE](#) for further details.

21 April - Clive Nutman National History, Ecology, Wildlife and Travel



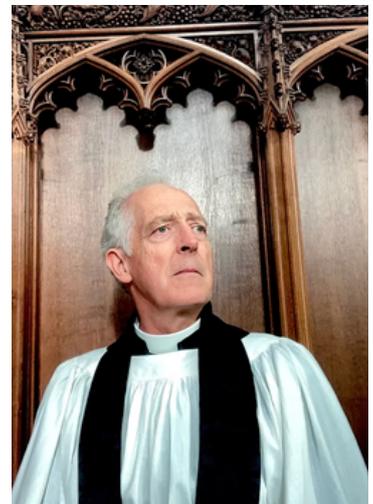
Clive is a Kent-based biologist who gives regular talks and presentations on his work in conservation; including ecology and natural history. He worked for the Tropical Biology Association at Cambridge University and organised scientific training courses in East Africa, Madagascar and South East Asia. Along the way he has collated a huge collection of photographs and videos that capture some of the wildlife, scenery, people and culture of those regions which he enjoys to share with his audiences.

19 May - Tim Baker-Bartholomew Dark Secrets of the Acting Lark (Triumphs and Disasters)

Tim is a tall, balding and wrinkly actor, a comic novelist and, in drag as Mimsey McWirter, a children's storyteller.

In an improvised and lively talk guaranteed to generate gales of laughter, Tim shares his insider's knowledge about appearances on TV in both commercials and dramas – from glamorous ego-boosting triumphs involving large amounts of money and international travel, to the vital but soul-destroying creation of casting self-tapes at home and firing them off into the ether... usually to complete silence.

Audience participation – indeed heckling – is encouraged as Tim reveals the secrets of the trade: the role of producers, "creatives", directors, casting directors, agents and, finally, the lowly actor.



Monthly u3a Coffee Morning

On the third Thursday of the month we have a Coffee Morning at 10.30am in the [BR6 Bakehouse Café](#)

All members are welcome

● Solutions to Cryptic Crossword

Across: 3 Grease gun, 8 Bray, 9 Estimates, 10 Comedy, 11 Level, 14 Noose, 15 Dial, 16 Dross, 18 Else, 20 Habit, 21 Ensur, 24 Grille, 25 All aboard, 26 Star, 27 Accepting;
Down: 1 Absconded, 2 Farmhouse, 4 Rosy, 5 Alive, 6 Elated, 7 Used, 9 Edged 11 Loose, 12 Liability, 13 Cloth-ears, 17 Shard, 19 Engage, 22 U-boat, 23 Bloc, 24 Grin.



Events!

RHS Gardens Wisley



The events team is pleased to announce the next trip is to **RHS Wisley on Monday 22nd June**, a great time to see the Bowes-Lyon Rose garden in first bloom. Gardens are accessible with a recommended wheelchair path available from the entrance.

Some areas are not fully accessible, such as the rock garden. Wheelchair and mobility scooter hire is available. If required, it is recommended to do so before the visit.

Departing from Spur Road, war memorial end, at 9:45.

Leaving RHS Wisley at 15:30

Ticket prices: £15 coach, £15 entrance.

Free entrance for RHS members, who can also take a guest.

Tickets on sale at the April monthly meeting.

Card (preferred), cash or cheque.

If you require any more details please contact the Events Manager.



‘Cheers’ - Wine Tasting Group



The Cheers group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at a member's house. One of the group presents six wines chosen from a particular region or based on a specific theme. The wines are tasted and discussed. Costs are divided up between those present at the meeting.

If you are curious and would like to try us out, why not come to one of the meetings to see what you think. It's a relaxed, friendly way to explore new wines and you'll be very welcome.

Please contact the Group Leader in advance for more precise information.



Slightly Ballroom

with Orpington u3a!

Our **social** Ballroom and Latin Tea Dance class has got off to a flying start, so we have booked another block of 11 classes after Easter, Monday afternoons from April 13th 2026 to June 29th, **not** including May 4th bank holiday. 2.30 - 4pm with tea in the middle, in the Aubrey Mullock Hall at Orpington Village Halls.

We know dancing men are in short supply, so gentlemen are especially welcome, may expect to be shared, and ladies to dance together sometimes.

There will be a **£5** per session charge to cover the cost of premises, **1 free session** (total £50) if you pay in advance.

Please contact the Group Leader to register an interest and go on the mailing list for updates.

Volunteer Group Leader is an Associate member of the United Kingdom Alliance of Teachers of Dance





Walks



All walkers join the walks at their own risk

Walks are on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, starting at 10am unless stated otherwise. New walkers are welcome to join any of the walks - but please telephone us 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.

PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTHS

Wednesday 15 April

Shorne Woods Country Park

Meet outside the Café / Car Park, Brewers Road, Shorne, Kent DA12 3HX for a 3.7 mile circular walk around the country park. The terrain is undulating woods or meadowland. There are no stiles but 3 sets of steps in the woods, 1 short, 2 long. But the walk is organised to descend rather than ascend all the steps. Walking poles are advised if you have them.

Please ensure you are fit enough to cope.

Car Parking is £3.30 for the whole day so you may want to consider car sharing. Toilets and refreshments are available after at the café.

Wednesday 20 May

Lullingstone Country Park

Meet outside the café in the Lullingstone Country Park car park (£3) Castle Road, Eynsford DA4 0JF.

This is a circular walk of 3.5 miles. Please be warned it is quite hilly so please make sure you are up for it, but it is worth it for the views!

Toilets and refreshments in the car park at the end or several pubs 5 mins away in Eynsford.

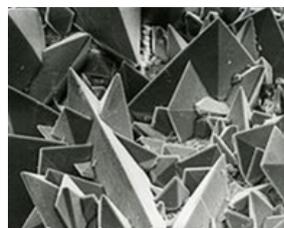


“I don't do jokes about a wooden step in the corner of a field that doesn't belong to me - that's not my style”

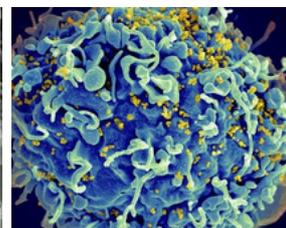
Tim Vine

Science & Technology

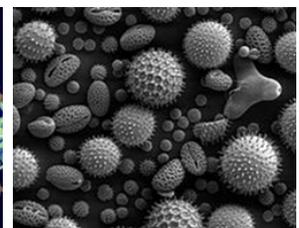
Electron Microscopes



Kidney Stone



HIV infected T-Cell



Pollen

The speaker outlined how optical microscopes work and emphasised their limitations, contrasting them with electron microscopes, which deliver far higher magnification, superior resolution and a much greater depth of field. Instead of light, electron microscopes use an electron gun to fire a beam of high-energy electrons, and electromagnetic lenses to focus and steer that beam, revealing far finer detail.

Several types of electron microscope were introduced: the transmission electron microscope; scanning electron microscope and scanning tunnelling microscope, and showed some of the amazing images that can be captured, illustrating how electron microscopes can show features invisible to optical instruments.

If you would like more information about this group please contact the Group Leader

London Explorers

Visit to Highgate Cemetery - Wednesday 20 May

London Explorers has arranged a visit to this historic Victorian Cemetery at 12.30pm. The cost is £18 per person which includes access to both cemeteries together with an extremely knowledgeable guide.

We will catch the 09.41am train from Petts Wood to Charing Cross, second carriage from the front or meet under the clock at Charing cross at 10.30am if you're coming on the fast train from Orpington. We will then take the underground to Archway with a slow walk up Highgate Hill (very steep) or take the bus. There is then a short walk to the Cemetery.

London Explorers

Bart's Hospital North Wing

On Monday 16th March we visited the North Wing of Barts Hospital in the City. Our guide Anne-Marie explained the history and architecture of the impressive courtyard, before leading us inside. There she showed us the Great Hall, a magnificent 18th century meeting hall for the Governors of the hospital. It was previously not open to the general public, but was closed for two years for restoration. The wing reopened last year and the restoration, overseen by Will Palin (son of Michael) is stunning. The ceiling is beautifully decorated and gilded, and the walls lined with boards listing the donors to the hospital up to the present day.

Leading up to the Great Hall is the Hogarth Stair. Here, two enormous murals of biblical scenes have also been cleaned and restored.



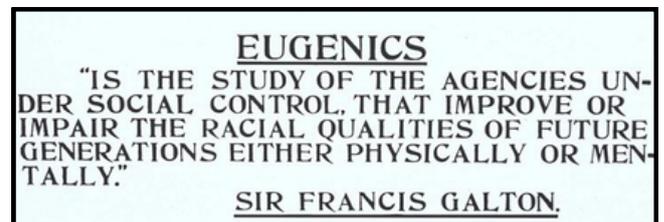
A video explaining the restoration gave some of us a chance to sit down, before we were led through the main hospital, which is a fantastic piece of modern architecture and design. On the far side she took us into tiny Postman's Park, where there are panel memorials to those who gave their lives to save others.

Finally, we made our way home, after a stimulating and interesting visit.

Philosophy

Eugenics

Eugenics is the pseudo-science of improving humanity by selective breeding. The term was first used by Francis Galton in 1883 and reached the height of its popularity in early decades of the 20th century when it spread from the United Kingdom to much of Europe, the United States and around the world.



Eugenic policies were implemented in many ways: Marie Stopes introduced birth control clinics to reduce the number of "undesirables", while at the same time the "better" sort of people were encouraged to have more children; racial segregation was widely practiced, marriage between different groups being discouraged or forbidden; mentally ill and disabled people were segregated; compulsory sterilisation, forced abortion and forced pregnancy were practised. Ultimately, eugenics culminated in genocide.

Eugenics became less popular after the atrocities of the second world war, but it hasn't disappeared. New technologies such as genetic screening, pre-natal screening, embryo selection and genome editing have opened up new possibilities for eugenics, and need to be used with great care.

To join our friendly group, please contact the Group Leader.

Film Studies (BOB Bromley) - New Group

This group is open to Beckenham and Orpington members under our BOB arrangement where members of the other u3as can attend without having to join Bromley u3a.

The group re-started on 17/09/25 but new members are welcome at any time.

An affable, leisurely, friendly amble through aspects of film criticism (the role of a director, the conventions of film genres such as westerns or sci-fi, the representation of gays/women etc). Also some key moments of film history such as the French new wave, new German cinema, film noir, silent films and much more.

Roughly a third lecture/screening/class discussion; this is a chatty, informal entertaining group. Occasional visits to the cinema occur. The course is delivered by our member who has 35 years' experience of the subject as a lecturer in FE and higher education.

Zoom-online every Wednesday: 10.00 to 11.30. Contact the Group Leader.



Canasta JN (Bromley) - New Group



I am considering the formation of a Group to play Canasta. It would be for anyone already familiar with how to play the game, and would be held during the afternoon on the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Chequers Pub on Southborough Lane.

If this would interest you, please contact the Group Leader.

Snooker - New Group

For people interested in playing snooker in a friendly group. All levels of ability accepted, including beginners. Communal cues available if required.

Day: Every Monday evening from 7-9pm. **Number of players:** Maximum of 12.

Venue: Petts Wood Snooker Club, West Approach, Queensway, Petts Wood BR5 1DB (next to railway station). Access is **via stairs** to the club. Good public transport links.

Cost: £15 for two hours, based on two players per table. Discounted offers available for combined table and drinks. After the first session, members must join the club (£15 p.a. for seniors).

Please contact the Group Leader.



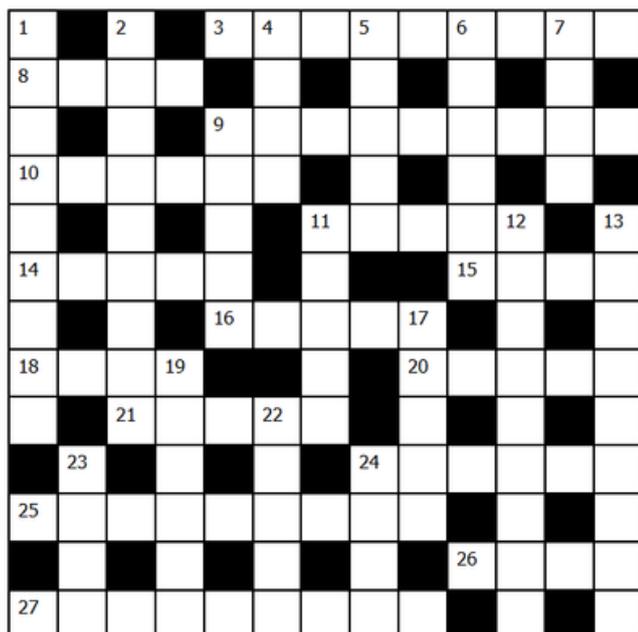
Opera - New Group



A few of us have started a new opera group for anyone who may be interested in joining us. At present we are 6 members and our knowledge and experience of Opera is varied (my own being embarrassingly exposed) - so I am proof that you don't need to be a great buff to come along. We hope to use our different experiences to expand our awareness of different operas and performers (especially mine). Another aspect will be to go to cinema broadcasts and possibly live performances. We don't yet have a fixed day for our morning meetings and hosting is rotated. We are hoping to have a table at the April monthly meeting to answer any questions.

If this is something that you think you might enjoy please contact the Group Leader

Cryptic Crossword No. 104 - Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1



Across

- 3. Using this means of lubrication may ensure that gunges are removed (6,3)
- 8. Literary vicar perhaps may have heard the donkey in Berkshire (4)
- 9. Conjectured that my mates tied up (9)
- 10. Arrive at an empty dairy looking for fun (6)
- 11. Iron flat or flat iron, whichever way you look (5)
- 14. Lasso one having a ring in the nose (5)
- 15. Face it laid back (4)
- 16. The leaders of donkeys riding only side saddle is rubbish (5)
- 18. Inside you may feel secure instead (4)
- 20. Perhaps sister's clothing is in the wash a bit longer (5)

- 21. Come after the unlimited hidden suet pudding (5)
- 24. Lattice a confused girl the French displayed (6)
- 25. Sing a ballad or a medley demanding everybody gets on (3,6)
- 26. Performing arts? (4)
- 27. Tolerating without protest? Panic – get Charlie involved (9)

Down

- 1. Deserted with the damaged code bands (9)
- 2. Her famous alternative agricultural establishment (9)
- 4. I'll say sorry, but your healthy look returned inside (4)
- 5. Animated in Bali very excitedly (5)
- 6. Exultantly joyful to see the ale Ted drunk (6)
- 7. Fed up, leaving defused second-hand appliances (4)
- 9. Gently moved by two journalists taking golf to heart (5)
- 11. Not the sort of cannon wanted in the Battle of Waterloo seemingly (5)
- 12. An encumbrance I bait Lily about (9)
- 13. Rudely suggesting the hearing difficulty could be damaging to Charles (5-4)
- 17. Be quiet; a road emptied by a glass fragment (5)
- 19. Obtain or contract the services of one requesting a union (6)
- 22. Initially undersea, being one alternative to using this vessel (1-4)
- 23. Political alliance primarily based locally on continental Europe (4)
- 24. No tea for a feeling of mental unease, leaving a broad smile (4)

Solution on page 2



Exciting New Initiative

The u3a HQ has unveiled a surprising new policy: from next month, all members will be randomly reassigned to a different interest group every four weeks!

The aim, according to the announcement, is to “broaden horizons, prevent over-attachment to favourite activities, and ensure fair distribution of biscuits across all interest groups.”

Early pairings include the Curry Club being allocated to Ballroom Dancing, the Recorder Playing group moving to Handbells, and the Philosophy group joining Bird Watching at dawn.

A trial run will begin shortly — although members are advised to check the date of this issue before panicking. For more information please contact: april.fools@u3aorpington.org.uk ;)