



Learn, Laugh and Live

# Orpington Newsletter

Registered Charity 1076544

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

Issue 135

June / July 2020

## Membership Renewal

Membership renewal for 2020 is now overdue (except for new members who joined after 30th November 2019). The committee have agreed that the fee will remain at £10 per annum.

Members who have not renewed will be removed from our database and will no longer receive newsletters or be able to attend meetings.

There is still time to renew if it has slipped your mind.

This year for the first time, members were able to renew their membership online via Paypal.

Just visit our website at  
**[www.u3aorpington.org.uk](http://www.u3aorpington.org.uk)**  
and select Membership Renewal 2020 in the Members' Area. It is quick and easy and will save work for our Treasurer and Membership Secretary. Members may still pay by cheque.

## Orpington U3A website LIVE!

Please check our website regularly for updates about meetings re-starting.

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

Please share the information with other members who don't have online access.

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## Monthly General Meetings

**Monthly meetings have been cancelled until further notice.**

**Please check the website for up-to-date bulletins.**

ALL TELEPHONE NUMBERS quoted in the newsletter are as dialled from the Orpington (01689) Exchange

**THE LAST DAY FOR RECEIPT OF COPY FOR NEWSLETTER No 136 IS TUESDAY 21 JULY 2020**

## SOCIAL DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



We hope to resume our social meetings  
as soon as possible.

## REPORTS FROM GENERAL MEETINGS

Unfortunately our Monthly General meetings have had to be cancelled until further notice.

We hope to re-book our speakers as soon as it is safe to do so.

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Our U3A January speaker, April French, has forwarded four safety bulletins created by the Older Drivers Forum providing advice for members. They are available on the website [www.u3aorpington.org.uk](http://www.u3aorpington.org.uk) and can be downloaded, printed or viewed online.

## GROUP REPORTS

### Recorder Group



Earlier this year the Orpington U3A Recorder Group performed for two groups. The first was in Catford, where we played for a Seniors Club with some 40 - 50 members. We returned, by request, having played for them in November 2018.

The second group was at a memory cafe at St James the Great, in Petts Wood in March.

On both occasions the afternoon's entertainment of sing-along songs concentrated on familiar, upbeat tunes. Quite a number of the songs had a flower theme: *Edelweiss*, *Tulips from Amsterdam*, *Tip-Toe Thru' the Tulips* and *English Country Garden*, together with a variety of other well-known songs. There was good group participation and a very appreciative audience. In Catford we also indulged in a tasty afternoon tea.

Unfortunately, due to the current restrictions we could not fulfil the other two engagements we had but, hopefully, these can be re-arranged in due course.

The photograph was taken at the end of a recent concert and intending to replicate the colours of *Over the Rainbow* which was one of the pieces we played. The group are extremely enthusiastic and are keen to progress. It is really most unfortunate that we have been unable to continue with our music making but sincerely hope that we can return to playing soon.

**Angela Wilkins**

## Orpington U3A Officers Committee & Contacts

Chairman	William Sear
Treasurer	Mike Winder
Membership Secretary	Linda Haward
Group Co-ordinators	Sue Howe Janet Holmes
Meetings Secretary	Pauline Dawson
Business Secretary	Frank Rowe
Newsletter:	
Editors	Sybil Robinson Janet Tucker
Distribution	Peter Richards
Database/Web Manager	Steve Cooling
Network Advisor	Pauline Dawson



### London Explorers - Sea Life London Aquarium

Earlier this year we visited Sea Life London Aquarium on an extremely wet and windy day. Unfortunately our visit coincided with half term and in the subdued light we had to contend with children in their push chairs and dads with their back packs.

We arrived just in time to see the rays being fed and then walked over to a glass window with incredible views of the magnificent Pacific display which contained some of the most majestic creatures in the ocean including sharks. There are over 500 species of sharks and they have lived in our oceans for more than 420 million years and that makes them older than trees! Tiger sharks can use and lose up to 30,000 teeth in a life time.

There was an excellent display of jellyfish. Jellyfish are older than all of our reptiles and first swam in our oceans over 500 million years ago and there are more than 350 species. The Lion's Mane jellyfish is over two metres long and others are the size of a pinhead. Moon jellyfish are the most common species found around the UK and there is an Upside-Down jellyfish which looks like a beautiful plant and lives in shallow waters, lagoons and mangroves.

We saw the UK's largest living Coral Reef, with beautiful brightly coloured fish, penguins swimming under water and a Rainforest Adventure with lots of creepy crawlies. It was a good day out.

Margaret Bell

## Chairman's Letter

Hello fellow members

I imagine, like myself, a lot of you are self-isolated or if at risk confined to your homes.

There are those of us of more advanced years who may remember that it has the feel of the wartime. I remember the latter stages of the conflict and the constraints we all lived under and came to accept.

It has been heartening how society has rallied round, voluntary groups getting shopping and greater use of online delivery to name just a few.

Though our monthly meetings are suspended for the immediate future I am glad that groups are keeping in touch by What's App, Messenger, Zoom as well as good old email. Please pick up the phone and keep in touch.

The gardening groups have shared photos, likewise many more are keeping in touch to keep our great U3A active and supportive of each other at this worrying time.

I am pleased to say we managed to print the previous newsletter in house, a big thank you to Steve our Committee member for this huge undertaking.

Though nothing can be planned or arranged at the present time, I can assure you all we will be back as vibrant as ever.

The members of the committee and I send our best wishes to keep safe.

*William*



### British Monarchy

After some initial technical hitches, and much pressing, pushing and swiping various buttons, we eventually got a Skype combination to work. We're not sure how we've done it, but we did and managed to read through our essays while the others tuned in. We're feeling brave enough to do it again next month - as it looks like we'll be isolating for some time yet.

**Sylvia Chubb**

Be helpful.  
When you see a person  
without a smile,  
give them one of yours.

## Origins of Astronomy



Astronomy is the oldest of sciences making its history not only of great length but also very complex.

In the Near East and before air conditioning people used to sleep on the flat roofs of houses and enjoy the coolness and clear skies after scorching hot days. You could look up, as you lay on your bed, at the clear sky and see the heaven in all its splendour and wonder at the meaning of it all.

Mesopotamia has been identified as having, from around 10,000 BCE, inspired some of the most important developments in human history, including the invention of the wheel, the planting of the first cereal crops and the development of Cuneiform, the first cursive script, Mathematics, Astronomy and Agriculture.

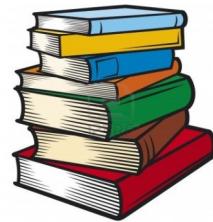
Mesopotamian mathematics and science was based on a sexagesimal (base 60) numeral system. This is the source of the 60 minute hour, 24 hour day and the 360 degree circle. The Sumerian calendar was based on the seven day week. The Babylonian astronomers were very adept at mathematics and could predict eclipses and solstices. Scholars thought that every thing had some purpose in astronomy. They worked using a 12 month calendar based on the cycle of the moon. The origins of astronomy as well as astrology date from this time.

During the eighth and seventh centuries BCE, Babylonian astronomers developed a new approach, by studying philosophy dealing with the ideal nature of the early universe and began employing an internal logic within their predictive planetary systems. This was an important contribution to astronomy and the philosophy of science and some scholars refer to this as the first scientific revolution. Babylonian astronomy served as the basis for much of Greek, Classical Indian, Sassanian, Byzantine, Syrian, medieval Islamic, Central Asian and Western European astronomy. The man, who early in the ninth century CE produced the first astronomical tables using Arabic numerals, was Mohamad Ibn Musa al-Khawarizmi who also developed Algebra as we know it today.

Some people ask why we bother to explore space. The answer must be that it is in our DNA. Man has observed Earthrise on the Moon and sunset on Mars and looked to the very edge of the observable universe.

**Nejdet Al-Salihi**

## Bookends



I belong to a small and friendly book club in the U3A, called **Bookends**. Unfortunately during these difficult times, we have not been able to meet for some while. I have continued to read books myself, and will be keeping a note of any good ones to save for a meeting when we get back together. I have been keeping in touch with the group through phone calls or emails, to check that they are well. A few of us have had some health problems during the last year, but luckily, nobody has had the Coronavirus.

I thought I would take this opportunity to recommend a book which was very popular with our group recently. Our most popular book was *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman. This would be a good book for anyone to read. It's about a young woman who struggles socially. She is very lonely initially, she doesn't see a soul outside of her workplace and is socially awkward because of her childhood experiences. She heals her trauma through her friendship with a guy named Raymond, who draws her out of her shell.

There are some really funny moments, also many serious and true to life incidents. It's about the journey of a social misfit who finds a way to survive and to open her life and heart up to others. We all fell for Eleanor, it was a real feel-good book and good to read in these difficult times.

**Vicki Childs**

## Gardening Made Easy

This group tried a Zoom Meeting for members and will hope to do better next month. Members sent in photos of their Spring garden in April and I made a collage and sent it back to them. I am now collecting more photos of their early May gardens. Everything has grown so quickly and we can see how their gardens develop. I encourage members to keep in touch with each other. This they do by recommending good gardening sites, especially Gardeners World on BBC2 and the National Garden Scheme Virtual Tours.

Although we are missing tea and cakes, we are still enjoying our gardens.

**Pauline Dawson**

1. Madame Tussauds 2. Abbey Road 3. Piccadilly Circus 4. Battersea Cats and Dogs Home 5. Olympic Park  
6. Kings Cross Station 7. One Canada Square 8. Walkie Talkie 9. Elephant and Castle 10. Waterloo Station  
11. Oxford Street 12. National Maritime Museum 13. Serpentine 14. Portobello Road 15. Imperial War Museum  
16. Royal Exchange 17. Barbican 18. Cutty Sark 19. Cross Rail Place 20. Dorchester Hotel

**Answers to London Landmarks Quiz P 7**

- Across:** 1 Harbinger, 6 Scalp, 10 Light, 11 Oast house, 12 Bottles, 13 Heretic, 14 Calligraphers,  
17 Overbundance, 21 Estates, 22 Cocaine, 24 Compiles, 25 Etcetera, 26 Lark, 27 Endoscope.  
**Down:** 1 Halfback, 2 Right, 3 Intelligence, 4 Grueser, 5 Roschid, 7 Countessan, 8 Blaeck,  
9 Charles Dickens, 15 Lion-tamer, 16 Venetrate, 18 Austere, 19 Uncased, 20 Pencill, 23 Inggo.

**Solution to Cryptic Crossword No. 69**

## Walks

### PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTHS



Our walks for June and July are cancelled. However, should the situation alter, Hazel will email members with new information. Also check the website for updates.

**Hazel and Ed Thompson**

## Philosophy

Everything and everyone is interconnected and interdependent. We are part of a web of life which supports and sustains us by interconnection with nature which provides us with the requirements of life. We are also connected with family, friends and community. People have always considered friendship very important for happiness. Thoughts words and actions that result from our connectedness will result in our and others happiness. Feeling un-connected is an unhappy feeling as we are social creatures and value the sense of belonging.

If we forget that we as humans are interconnected we can end up being self-focused in our thoughts and actions. We must learn to skilfully relate and connect, whilst being unique individuals. Growing out of our egocentricity and selfishness means thinking and acting in ways which are not focused on ourselves and to help those in need, hoping that in due course there will be others to care for us when we are in need.

Connecting positively brings sharing, generosity and friendship. We appreciate our connections to others and are grateful for those who help us. We accept the need to consider how our actions affect others and to restore harmony and cooperation when disagreement arises.

Not everyone we meet will be fully aware of their interconnection with others or be motivated to connect with us positively or unselfishly, so our connection with others may be negative or positive. We can seek to acquire skills that enhance our capacity to connect positively and to perhaps turn negative connections into positive ones. We must find peace and love within ourselves and spend time connecting with others and then living from that point on to positively influence the world around us.

**Nejdet Al-Salihi**

## Village Lunch

As we could not visit Lullingstone Castle in April as planned, I sent details from Google which included many lovely photos of the castle.

The group has been split into two and Dawn and I phone round to the A Group and Christine and Ann phone the B Group. We look forward to the time when we can meet up again.

**Pauline Dawson**



## Digital Photography

I have recently started a photography interest group, but we have only had a chance to meet three times. This is an example of the type of back garden photography that I've been doing in these lockdown times. The image above is a composite of over seven hundred long exposure photos of the night sky. The camera is aimed in the direction of the Pole Star and the total exposure time is about 2 hours. I was able to use the camera's built in intervalometer to take the photos and just left the camera on a tripod for the entire two hours needed.

This kind of photography is difficult anywhere near London because of light pollution which can clearly be seen in the lower parts of the image which gives a much brighter sky than is desirable.

Combining the images in Photoshop took me longer than the time it took to take the photographs and was a lot more work. Apart from the stars there are a number of planes crossing the sky and very faintly, possibly only visible in the original image it is possible to make out some of Elon Musk's StarLink satellites.

A collection of some of these images can be found here at <https://bit.ly/3aG8CEd>

**Maurice Childs**



## I Pad / I Phone Users

Hello all I Phone users

Sadly another more deadly type of virus has brought our group to a temporary halt. Though not being able to meet up socially please keep in touch as to how you are communicating and are putting this wonderful technology to use.

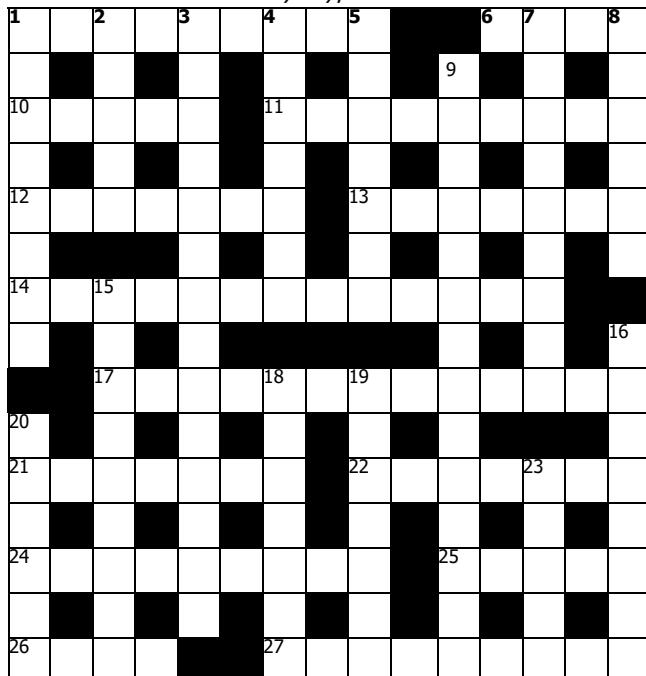
If you have any problems like those irksome glitches, please do not hesitate to contact me or likewise, if you have any useful information regarding new Apps, software or hints to pass on please let myself and the group know.

Stay safe and look forward to meeting up soon.

**John McCann  
I Pad Group**

## CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1



### Wordsworth in Lockdown

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.  
Now 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 are 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 at home to ask  
She told me of this special task :  
"I need some flour to bake a cake  
With all that cream you made me take!"  
"Ah yes, of course," I had to lie,  
I dared not ask what flower to buy,  
But then I saw them at the tills ....  
A bunch of golden daffodils!



## SUDOKU

				1	7			
		9						2
	3	2	4	8		5		
	7	3				4	8	
2			1		9		6	
6							5	
3	9		6		8	1		
1			7	5			9	

### Across

1. Could that hare bring about the forerunner (9)
6. Non-striker perhaps discharged and covering a healing wound (4)
10. Not heavy, scrap left in place of fellow (5)
11. Perhaps hops about in this place? (4,5)
12. Containers expressed to losing one's courage (7)
13. Convert Eric the dissenter from accepted dogma of the church (7)
14. Their craft may be described as character forming (13)
17. Past taking a Sally Lunn to hop beyond what is needed or appropriate (13)
21. Shortly established and consumed small grounds of country seats perhaps? (7)
22. Crack British runner capturing the first murderer (7)
24. Firm member riles upset composers (9)
25. Heath's lady? (5)
26. City with two kings carefree spirited adventure (4)
27. Conclusion of short-range instrument for internal visual examination (9)

### Down

1. Heard to be an incomplete footballer but central to the team (8)
2. Correct for 10ac to change direction (5)
3. Being brainy is back with a society's intellectuals (14)
4. Good, wake the king and find who habitually grumbles (7)
5. Appears to have got up with joint aggregate fruit of a plant (7)
7. Looking for Etruscan round a lady dispensing favours? (9)
8. Fifty in Waikiki perhaps whiten in the sun? (6)
9. Birds carrying a letter to a French city for a literary critic of social injustice (7,7)
15. Brave person twisted terminal round (4-5)
16. Treat with reverence because Ate never changes (8)
18. Harsh south wind going to the east (7)
19. Discovered peacekeepers' action didn't initially succeed (7)
20. Regularly the core of apple and chilli used to make marks (6)
23. Mr Jones heard to say I must enter (5)

### Solution on page 4

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| 1. 😞🐷☒          | 11. 🐄🚗🚧    |
| 2. 🐝⛵️          | 12. 🇬🇧💒⌚🏛️ |
| 3. 🔨ad☀️🎪       | 13. 🐍👔👔ne  |
| 4. 🖌️👩‍🦰👀🐱🐱&🐶🐶🏠 | 14. 🍷〇🔔⛵️  |
| 5. 〇👩‍🦰🔨🌳       | 15. 🤡🍐🎥💣🏛️ |
| 6. 🎯👑☒🚂         | 16. 🎯🔍🔍jj  |
| 7. 1🇨🇦💻         | 17. 📈🐝cil  |
| 8. 🚶🔑😊🔑         | 18. 🧑🔧EE⌒  |
| 9. 🐘🏰           | 19. ✨🛤️🐟   |
| 10. 💧🚽🚂         | 20. 🪵👚😊🏙️  |

Can you guess these London Landmarks?  
Answers on Page 4

**A poem by Kathleen O'Mara**  
*This was written in 1869*

And people stayed at home  
 And read books  
 And listened  
 And they rested  
 And did exercises  
 And made art and played  
 And learned new ways of being  
 And stopped and listened  
 More deeply  
 Someone meditated, someone prayed  
 Someone met their shadow  
 And people began to think differently  
 And people healed.  
 And in the absence of people who  
 Lived in ignorant ways  
 Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,  
 The earth also began to heal  
 And when the danger ended and  
 People found themselves  
 They grieved for the dead  
 And made new choices  
 And dreamed of new visions  
 And created new ways of living  
 And completely healed the earth  
 Just as they were healed.

*Reprinted during Spanish flu  
Pandemic, 1919*

**Golf**



To much relief on Monday 18 May we were able to resume playing our usual 9 hole games at Cray Valley and Bromley courses.

However, things are not completely back to normal as we can only play as 2 balls, not 3 or 4 balls, and have to book in advance as opposed to "turn up and play". Also Competitions are not allowed.

By these methods the courses are doing their best to enforce the 2.0 m distancing rules.

As we can morally only book say 6 or 7 tee times for 2 balls it could be unfair on some members who would wish to compete in one or other of our competitions but who could not get play. We will try to find a solution to this problem once the situation settles down.

At least we are back out on the fairways and greens.  
**John Morris**

## GROUP NEWS

We are pleased to report that many of our Groups are still managing to stay in contact, even though they're unable to enjoy each other's company in person or a chocolate biscuit or two! Here are some of the ones we've heard about:

**ANDROID** – Members are keeping in contact via email and William is sending out a newsletter each month.

**ART APPRECIATION 1** - is watching programmes on television and online. Ann is alerting members to various exhibitions and art programmes and Sylvia has prepared a quiz to keep brains active. The group has particularly enjoyed Philip Mould's YouTube series Art in Isolation.

**BEGINNERS BRIDGE** – Colin sends out bidding homework by email, with the answers sent a few days later.

**BRIDGE (DUPLICATE)** - are keeping in contact with each other.

**BRITISH MONARCHY** - continue to meet by Skype.

**BOOKENDS** – are keeping in contact by phone and email.

**COMPUTER DISCUSSION** - are keeping in contact via email.

**CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS 2** – Jacky has sent out a crossword.

**DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY** – Maurice is sending out regular emails with photos attached and other members are contributing their photos.

**ENLIGHTENMENT TO ROMANTICISM** – will be trying a Zoom meeting.

**GARDENING MADE EASY** – Members share tips and photos of their gardens.

**GOLF** – Both the Ladies' and Mens' Golf groups are in email contact with their members and are currently trying to organise rounds under the latest post-lockdown rules.

**GOURMET SUNDAY LUNCH** - members are keeping in contact with each other.

**HANDS ON GARDENING** – Jean and Roger send out Gardening Tips for the month and members share photos of their gardens regularly. The group also email each other with news about what Garden Centres are open or where to buy plants/compost etc.

**ITALIAN** – Groups have been exchanging emails in Italian.

**LADIES KEEP FIT** - Several people have shared links with exercise routines.

**MEDITATION** - Janey sends out a newsletter every week to the group. She says 'it's less of a newsletter, more of a magazine with people sending in articles, photos, poems, jokes; it works well.'

**PHOTOGRAPHY** - are having weekly low-key photo competitions by email to maintain contact and add some interest.

**PIANO AND INSTRUMENTAL DUETS** - are keeping in contact via email.

**POP MUSIC** – are holding Zoom meetings. See the article on the website.

**REAL ALE APPRECIATION** – are holding Zoom meetings.

**RUMMIKUB 5** – are keeping in contact by phone.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** – John Mangold (Group Leader) has set up a blog, which members can access and add comment, pictures and anything else of interest. Members share info on e.g. lectures taking place that can be circulated to the group.

**WINE APPRECIATION** – had an email meeting, with each member having a bottle of wine that they commented on and gave it a score out of twenty. They then discussed VE day memories and those that were too young to remember much talked about the 40s and 50s and their experiences. It was non-stop mailing with happy, poignant and funny stories. Everyone agreed that it was as good as an actual meeting!

**WOMEN ACHIEVERS** – are keeping in contact via email.

Some of our groups are 'Open Groups', which means that any member may join them for a particular visit or walk e.g. London Explorers, Walking. These groups do not keep contact numbers for members.

Thank you to all those who shared news of their groups and to our wonderful Group Leaders, who continue to show tremendous dedication in the face of adversity. If your group isn't listed and you would like to tell us how you are managing, please contact Janet or Sue.

We wish you all the best and hope to see you in person soon.

**Janet Holmes and Sue Howe  
Group Co-ordinators**

### National U3A Newsletter

There are lots of wonderful ideas on the National U3A website - [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)  
All of our members may sign up for the email version of the Newsletter at  
[www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter](http://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter)