



**ORPINGTON u3a**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**TO BE HELD ON**  
**MONDAY 16 JANUARY 2023**  
**2PM**

**All members should attend the AGM as you are all entitled to vote.  
Please bring the agenda which is enclosed with this newsletter.**

**U3A coffee morning**



On the Tuesday following the general meeting in Crofton Halls, we are continuing with our coffee morning in BR6 café at Orpington College at 10.30 am. Members are invited to join other members and group leaders over a cup of coffee or tea and a pastry for £3.50.

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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 151 IS TUESDAY 17 JANUARY 2023**

Please send your contributions to  
Janet, email: [newseditor@u3aorpington.org.uk](mailto:newseditor@u3aorpington.org.uk)

## Orpington U3A Officers Committee & Contacts

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## Monthly General Meetings Crofton Hall 2-4 pm

**19 December**

**The Rat Pack at Christmas**

**Howard Slater**

The Rat Pack brings you festive classics, Christmas Waltz, Jingle Bells as well as all time favourites such as Rudolph. What better way to get into the festive spirit! Shown by videos and slides.

**16 January**

**AGM** and then

to mark the 40-year anniversary of the start of the U3A in 1982 , our speaker, **Jerry Dowlen**, will recall some of the stories that were reported in the Orpington local newspaper that year. He will then compare the Orpington of 1982 with the town today.

## Chair's Letter

This is our last newsletter for this year, and an eventful and challenging year in many ways!

It was pleasing to me personally to meet so many at November's General Meeting at Crofton Hall. Our members braced the cold and damp to join in our very successful book sale; a big thank you to Beryl Rumgay and her many helpers.

This month we enjoyed a humorous and informative film show from our friends at Orpington Video and Film Makers Club and they have encouraged us to keep Friday 24 March 2023 free for their evening Spring Show.

After the talk there was an opportunity for our Group Leaders to share their interests with our new members.

It was pleasing to end the meeting with announcing England's score of 6-2, so let's hope their future matches are as successful as the joint Games Day on the 21 September 2022.

Our next General Meeting at Crofton Hall will be on the 19 December. We have asked the u3a choir to come along and the speaker that day will be Howard Slater, with a talk entitled 'The Rat Pack at Christmas'.

I wish you and your family all the best for Christmas and the New Year.

**Pauline**





**21 - 9 - 2022**

**BOB Games Morning**



*More photos on website*



What a fun morning we had for our first BOB Games Morning.

We hope to repeat this next year.



# GROUP REPORTS

## Philosophy

### October - Reflections on Sartre (1905-1980)

Jean-Paul Sartre is one of our most famous and infamous philosophers. As an Existentialist, he insisted that 'existence precedes essence'; it is not nature or nurture that defines us but the choices we make. Although we cannot choose our immediate circumstances, we can choose what we make of them, including changing our nature, role in life, attitudes and substantial impact on those around us. As such, we should take responsibility for our choices and live our best lives.

We may not all agree to take such an individualistic (rather than communal) approach to life. However, it is hard not to support that accepting a more positive responsibility for how we affect our lives and those around us would be a good step.

**Duncan**

### November - Post Modernism

Modernism had inherited the Enlightenment values of reason and progress; so political activity sought the emancipation of society towards a distant idealised goal - Marxism was a classic example. Practical reason had led to far-reaching technological developments such as the internal combustion engine, the aeroplane, telephone etc.

Yet this complacency began to unravel. The postmodernist Jean Francois Lyotard (1924-98) saw 'the liberation of humanity' as a self-serving, self-legitimising myth, a grand narrative, 'meta-narrative' which should elicit scepticism.

The consequences of implementing Marx, Darwin, Adam Smith and the new technologies, were often disastrous: colonialism, Stalinism, the holocaust, the H-bomb, eugenics. Society, he said, should be organised instead on the basis of different groupings, to avoid 'totalising' structures leading to elite dominance and to secure recognition of the Other - hence current emphasis on 'diversity'.

If you would like to join the group which is held on the first Friday of the month at various homes, do get in touch.

**Pauline**

## IS IT TRUE?

Many years ago in Scotland , a new game was invented. It was ruled 'Gentlemen Only...Ladies Forbidden'... and thus the word **GOLF** entered into the English language.

## Outings on a Shoestring

In October, twelve of us went to Greenwich. First obstacle - the DLR nearly whisked some of our party away before they could get off. Then the escalators weren't working. We stoically climbed the seemingly endless staircase, to emerge some time later in the daylight, no worse for wear.

First, we visited the market, with its many craft stalls. My favourite was the lady who made all sorts of animals and flowers from coloured pipe cleaners. Then we went to the Queen's House. I was disappointed by the many rooms that were bare except for paintings of ships and battles but the final room had a beautiful painted ceiling. There would have been a second one, but, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Florentine artist Orazio Gentileschi created a series of nine paintings, which were removed in 1708 and given by Queen Anne to her favourite, Sarah Churchill. The canvases were installed in Marlborough House, St James, where they remain to this day.

Some went to the Maritime Museum. Two of us went to the Fan Museum. With a cost of £3 for 'senior citizens' to go in, it was marvellous value. Each fan was a highly decorated work of art, skilfully executed, from the fine filigree examples, to the contemporary art deco style metal fans.

We go out once a month to a place that costs no more than £10 to go in. If you would like to join us, please send an email to

**Janet**



## Ambling London

Some eighteen of us converged at Hays Galleria for our traditional coffee and croissants at Cinq before taking the Jubilee line to Canning Town Station, thought to be named after the Victorian Prime Minister.

Here we crossed the river Lee walking among the futuristic buildings sitting beside our Victorian Industrial Heritage. We then walked alongside the Thames facing across to the O2 building and enjoyed going back in time as we walked among memorabilia of the Trinity Light ships and buoys built here till the size of the ships required relocating down river.

This area, though kept as reminder of our industrial past, is now a haven for the arts, ballet and dance in particular.

The walk in total, just under four miles, terminating by Canary Wharf, was an interesting walk flavoured with numerous reminders of our industrial past in East London.

If you would like to join this Ambling London group or contribute with your particular favourite walk, please contact

**Joan**



## Walks



### PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTHS

*All walkers join the walks at their own risk. New walkers are welcome to join any of the walks - but please telephone us before coming on your first walk. Please don't forget to leave your phone number if you have to leave a message!*

Unless stated otherwise, all walks start at 10 am

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

**Hazel and Ed**

#### Wednesday 21 December – Knockholt Circular

Meet at 10am outside St Katharine's Church, Main Road, Knockholt (parking available on road). This 3.5 mile walk will take in some of the North Downs Way and views, with hills and stiles. Refreshments available afterwards at nearby Coolings garden centres in Knockholt and Rushmore Hill.

**Leader Madeleine**

#### Wednesday 18 January – Hayes Common Circular

Meet at 10am at the New Inn (Regans), 59 High Street, Hayes BR2 7EA for a 3 mile circular walk of Hayes Common. No stiles but a paved steep hill towards the end of the walk. Much of the walk is through woods so expect some mud.

**Leaders Hazel and Ed**

## Family History

The topic for our October meeting was *The pros and cons of having a DNA test*.

The meeting was divided into two sections; the first was to ask each member what they thought were the benefits of having the test. Everyone agreed they had received lots of information regarding where their families originated and were able, via DNA, to contact living relatives; some they did not know about, living in different parts of the world.

The second section was a general discussion on the pitfalls of having the test. We could not find many problems other than if a person didn't know they were adopted. If they took the DNA test they might get a contact from their birth parent(s) or siblings which might not be welcome. Or perhaps your DNA could be used against you in court.

Lastly, we discussed where our ancestors came from. Amongst our group, five had roots in England, four in Ireland, four in Scotland, one in Wales, five in Scandinavia, four in mainland Europe and one from the Baltic area. Eight of the nine members had representations in some of these.

**Bill**

## Real Ale Appreciation



Thirteen years ago a friend suggested to me that if Orpington u3a had two Wine Appreciation Groups, it should have at least one Real Ale Appreciation Group. I soon found myself running such a group. We have met on the second Thursday of every month since February 2009. We even met on Zoom when the pubs were shut during Covid. At our virtual meetings we discussed (and drank) our favourite bottled beers. Yes, I know that bottled beer is seldom a Real Ale!

We have visited many breweries and have had talks about beers and brewing. We also like to learn about the history of the pubs we visit so we seldom visit a pub twice. For many years we have had a summer holiday where we have sampled local beers, as well as going to the places of interest. This year, for example, we spent a few days in Stratford upon Avon for a Shakespeare-themed holiday. Our partners are invited to our annual holiday and also to our Christmas Meal. Our *Christmas Feast* this year will be at *The Bulls Head Hotel* in Chislehurst, where we have exclusive use of their cocktail bar for pre-dinner drinks and their ballroom for our Christmas meal.

Of course our main activity is to meet at different pubs where we sample unusual Real Ales. Perhaps real ales would be better called Cask Conditioned Beers. We mark the beers and distribute the beer scores to members of the group. It is a very social group and members have become good friends over the years. We currently have thirty nine members including six ladies. Obviously with this number of members I am not looking to recruit more, but as yet I haven't turned anyone away.

**Mike**

## London Explorers

On 21 September London Explorers went with Kim, our Blue Badge guide, on a tour around the Waterloo area of London.

Our tour started with Waterloo Station's Victory Arch. We then crossed the road to the gardens of St John the Evangelist church, a Waterloo church built in 1818. The gardens are named after Octavia Hill a noted 19<sup>th</sup> century social reformer. The next stop was Roupell Street, a favourite for film crews due to its unchanged period houses. A famous address is no. 42, the address of 'Q' in the Bond films. Other interesting stops were the site of a war time air-raid shelter in what was a bricked up railway arch, the site of an ancient windmill in Windmill Walk, and also a plaque in Cons Street recording the great loss of life in a wartime air raid.

Our next stops were the Young Vic theatre and then the Old Vic. We then moved on to Lower Marsh with its interesting shops and a plethora of tempting street food stalls. We then turned right into Leake Street and through the long tunnel under the railway. The tunnel is a constantly changing venue for street art. At the end of Leake Street is the Draughts restaurant where, in addition to drinks, board games are provided. We then found ourselves back into York Road and Waterloo Station. A very enjoyable trip.

**Richard**

**Solution to Cryptic Crossword No. 84**  
**Across:** 3 Spearmin't, 8 Upon, 9 Coltsfoot, 10 Hyssop, 11 Grain, 14 Ratel, 15 Name, 16 Sumps, 18 Iris, 20 Prism, 21 Apnea, 24 Demean, 25 Groundsel, 26 Case, 27 Adderwort.  
**Down:** 1 Euphorbia, 2 Forsythia, 4 Poop, 5 Aster, 6 Muffin, 7 Noon, 9 Coils, 11 Gemma, 12 Native oak, 13 Germander, 17 Spiel, 19 Spruce, 22 Endow, 23 Trod, 24 Dear.

## Science and Technology

In October, Hugh Alford, Vice Chair of the [Orpington Astronomical Society](#), presented a dynamic slideshow which lived up to its title **Space is Big!** and led to a lively discussion afterwards.



Our Sun is just one of several hundred billion stars that make up our galaxy, the Milky Way. The closest star to our Sun is Proxima Centauri which is 24 trillion miles away (4.2 light years) and it would take the Voyager spacecrafts over 40,000 years to reach this 'nearby' star! With powerful telescopes (e.g. Hubble and James Webb) we can now see billions of other galaxies in deep space and the edge of the visible Universe appears to be billions of light years away. This is mind-boggling enough, but what is beyond the 'edge'?...



Then, back to Earth, in November David Rea, Vice Chair of [Ruxley Beekeepers](#), gave an enthusiastic talk about the science of **Honey and Wax**.

He presented many interesting facts about the construction of the honeycomb; how bees produce honey; and the many possible health benefits of raw honey. For example, when applied topically, raw honey may aid the healing of burns and other wounds. There is also some evidence that raw honey increases calcium absorption and may help prevent post-menopausal osteoporosis. I've bought a jar of the local honey and will be putting that theory to the test!

Future meetings:

13 Dec - *Light-hearted Christmas quiz, mince pies, raffle, science news*

10 Jan - *The History and Building of the Clifton Suspension Bridge*

If Orpington u3a members want to know more about the [Science and Technology](#) group, please contact

**Viki** - email address on the website.

## Town and Country

In November the rain lifted for a visit to St. Giles Church, Farnborough, where we were welcomed by the assistant Church Warden, Sheila Munn, who gave an animated and informative talk on the church and historic area. Pam and her friend Dorothy and many members of the group added their contributions.

For about 1500 years, it is believed, a church has stood on the high piece of land to the south of the village of Farnborough. The view from this point takes in the farmland and natural woodland right down the valley and to the top of the next hill. Within living memory this area of Kent was owned by the Lubbock family. Sir John Lubbock (the first Lord Avebury) was responsible for the Education Act of 1870 and the Bank Holidays Act amongst others.

The font is the finest surviving internal feature of the church and dates from the latter half of the 14th century. It was originally lime-washed and coloured, traces of which remain. The stem on which the bowl stands is of the Victorian period. The octagonal bowl, which has been badly cracked in time past, has eight different geometric panels. Five are made up of quatrefoils and abstract flower panels, and three chiefly contain what appear to be stylized human figures.

The churchyard is the last resting place of Gypsy Lee, Queen of the gipsies. On her death, thousands attended her funeral.

William talked about the proposed railway extension, with a smaller gauge, to the surrounding areas - Downe, Biggin Hill and Farnborough which would have allowed produce grown in the area to be taken by train to London.

Some of the small houses in the village were built for the expected railway workers!

In the past, cart races took place down the High St, a sport gaining much attraction from far and wide.

Pam brought along her file containing many lovely photos of the village which she shared with members.

A delightful morning.

**Pauline and William**

## ANNUAL GROUP COORDINATORS REPORT 2022

Throughout this seemingly endless hot summer, many of our groups have been able to meet outside in parks or gardens, with several enjoying days out. However, with the winter months drawing in, perhaps this is the best time of year to enjoy our u3a: meeting up for a friendly chat, whilst learning something new, surely makes the weeks pass more quickly. It's always surprising that a month has passed since the last get together and how much there is to catch up on! If you haven't yet joined a group, we would recommend that you do so, as this is the best way to experience all u3a has to offer. Many of our groups have vacancies, so why not try something new or rekindle an old interest? All the information you need is on our website.

Come along to Crofton Halls, on the third Monday of the month, to see our list of new groups starting and if you can't find anything you fancy, why not consider starting a group of your own? We can advertise in this Newsletter, as well as at our monthly meeting.

At our November meeting we invited Group Leaders and new members to remain behind to talk to each other. We will be repeating this idea every few months, so watch out for details in forthcoming issues of the Newsletter.

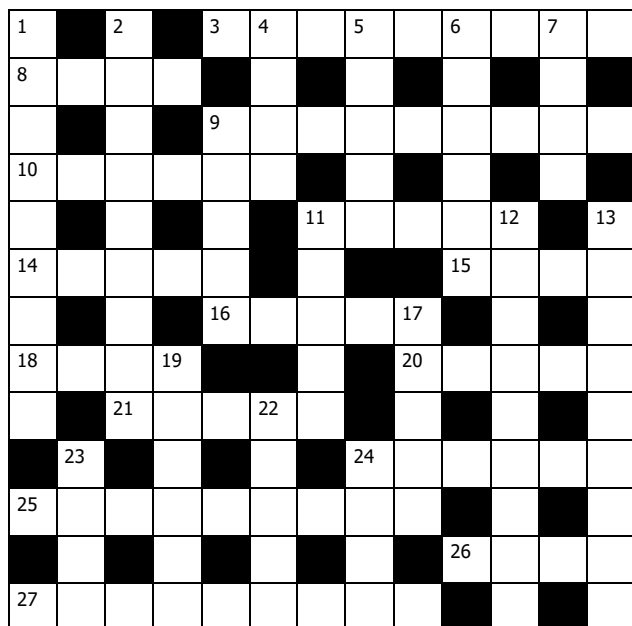
We joined with Bromley and Beckenham u3as in October for a very successful Games Morning. Members of all three u3as played Backgammon, Canasta, Cribbage, Rummikub, Upwords, Scrabble, Boggle, Continuo, Mahjong, Connect 4, Go and Jigsaws together. We would like to repeat the idea with different themed mornings, so please let us know if you have any suggestions.

Of course Orpington u3a could not continue without the support of our wonderful, dedicated Group Leaders, who give their time and enthusiasm so freely. On behalf of us all, Janet and I thank them wholeheartedly.

**Sue and Janet  
Group Coordinators**

# CRYPTIC CROSSWORD no 84

Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1



## Across

3. Aromatic plant? Now that is something to chew on (9)
8. Superior position working after being at university (4)
9. Low-growing perennial herb sounds like a young horse's measurement (9)
10. Sophy's mixed up a bitter-leaved plant (6)
11. A good shower perhaps will produce rye and barleycorn? (5)
14. A rodent led the Spanish to find the honey badger (5)
15. Mean to rearrange call (4)
16. Sinks when translated possum loses nothing (5)
18. Flag a girl's 15ac (4)
20. Advertising is more primarily used to produce a triangular effect (5)
21. A chap nearly hiding a cessation of breath (5)
24. Lower oneself by confusing me with Dean (6)
25. Playing field the south east left to find a common weed (9)
26. Suit luggage? Yes! (4)
27. Is a ladder worth having to uncover the common bistort? (9)

## Down

1. Spurge when great happiness holds a book (9)
2. This foray could be found in the garden (9)
4. Spoil the pleasure of others on deck (4)
5. Flower the Master always carries (5)
6. Firstly Mary upset food, finding it near the cake (6)
7. This time no-one is hiding inside (4)
9. Springs when the Civil Service briefly swallows a viscous liquid (5)
11. Grand heroine literally made another 15ac (5)
12. National tree, the English have it! (6,3)
13. Returned flushed after continental or composer brought an aromatic plant (9)
17. Some people I expect like initially to use elaborate speech (5)
19. Find the wood neat and tidy (6)
22. Disheartened Reuben Dowman would give a present (5)
23. Put one's foot down for a short time and stick (4)
24. Overpriced roe, it is said (4)

Solution on page 5

## Art Appreciation 1

The Queen's Gallery has an exhibition entitled *Japan: Courts and Culture* until February 2023. As I know nothing about Oriental art, one of our members offered to host the October and November meetings and do some research into Chinese and Japanese Art which she passed on in the true ethos of the u3a. In December we will visit the gallery and then have our Christmas meal in a Chinese restaurant.

Sylvia



## CHUCKLE TIME

I always pass on good advice.  
It is the only thing to do with it.  
It is never any use to oneself.

Oscar Wilde

To invent, you need a good  
imagination and a pile of junk.

Thomas Edison

Please check our website regularly  
for updates

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

## SUDOKU

	8	1	2					
			5	8				
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# NOTICE BOARD

## CREATIVE WRITING

Have you often thought of putting pen to paper, but never got round to it? Let us inspire you! We'll meet once a month on the first Monday of the month, 2 – 4 pm. We'll start with an exercise to get the creative juices flowing, followed by a discussion of an aspect of writing. Each month, there'll be a theme which you'll write about and read out at the next meeting. Feedback will be general, unless you ask for comments. To join, please email or phone

Janet

## BOOKWORMS BOOK SALE

Thank you to all who donated books and those who bought them, for a very successful sale.

Special thanks to the hard-working group members who managed the stall; Charmaine and her husband who helped to organise the books and clear up afterwards; and the u3a committee who publicised the event.

Our grand total was £76. The best result for some time. Enjoy your books or enjoy giving them away to friends and family at Christmas.

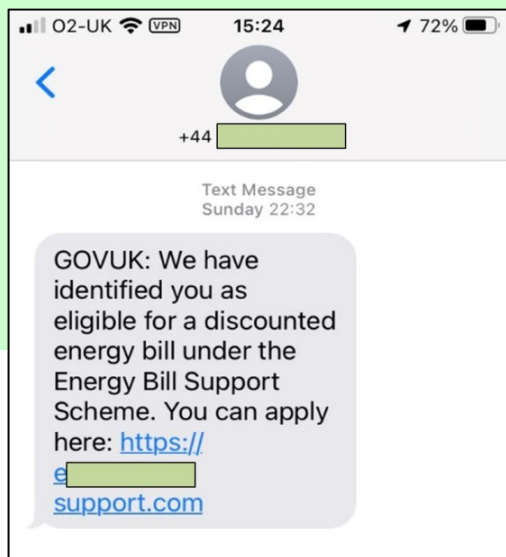
All the best  
Beryl and "Bookworms"

**Trading Standards** **ALERT!**



## Energy Bill Support Scheme Don't click to apply

**Bromley Trading Standards** is warning about text messages claiming to be about the government's Energy Bill Support Scheme.



The text message gives a link to apply for the discount – **do not click the link**. The discount is automatic for eligible households; **you do not need to apply for it**.

All households with a domestic electricity connection in England, Scotland and Wales are eligible for the discount, which provides a non-repayable £400 to help with energy bills over winter 2022 to 2023.

The Gov.uk official website explains further about how the discount will be issued [Getting the Energy Bills Support Scheme discount – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/getting-the-energy-bills-support-scheme-discount)

## PROTECT YOURSELF:

- DON'T click on links provided within text messages
  - REPORT suspicious text messages by forwarding them to 7726
  - GET HELP if you think you have shared personal information
- Guidance can be accessed via the government's National Cyber Security website [Phishing scams: If you've shared sensitive information – NCSC.GOV.UK](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/phishing-scams-if-you've-shared-sensitive-information)