



Chairman's Letter

I have to say I feel sorry for people who are not in the u3a. If I see someone walking along aimlessly, I have to restrain myself from inviting them to come and participate in all we have to offer. I have been known to dig a leaflet out of my bag and approach unsuspecting members of the public, however, luckily no one has reported me yet!

Therefore, going along to the New Members Meeting makes me feel very happy, as we start our new recruits on their membership journey. We have just welcomed another lovely bunch of people who are all very enthusiastic about the prospect of joining groups, and getting out and meeting other members. Of course, Spring is the season of hope and renewal, so it's a good time to think about trying something new, or having a go at a fresh idea in your group. Please let us know if you have tried something different!

We have a plethora of new groups starting, details of which you will find further on in this Newsletter. We are so grateful to our Group Leaders, both new and old, for providing us with such a rich diversity of subjects. Personally, I would like to go to every group, but apparently the house doesn't clean itself...

Have a wonderful time, wherever you find yourself and deny all knowledge of the fervent woman dishing out publicity!

Sue

NEWSLETTER EDITOR STEPS DOWN

We would like to thank our dear friend and colleague, Janet, for all her years of service as Newsletter Editor. You will all have benefited from her work in producing an informative, well laid out, colourful and fun magazine; but what you may not know is how much work Janet has done behind the scenes in her position on the Committee. We will miss her hard work, commitment and willingness to help. Thank you, Janet and we hope to see you soon.

MIKE

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Mike, leader of the Real Ale Appreciation group and member of many others. Mike embodied all that is good about u3a: he was always willing to help, share his ideas, teach others and enjoy a good laugh. He will be much missed by all who knew him.

Sue on behalf of the Committee

Membership Renewal for 2024 is now overdue

The fee will remain at £12 per annum

If you joined after 1-Dec 2023 you do not need to renew until 2025

Membership can be renewed easily [online](#)

For further details or if you prefer to renew by cash or cheque a membership renewal form was included with the February/March Newsletter

Gift Aid explained on page 3

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u3a Recorder
Group performs in
support of Ukraine

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. 159 is Tuesday 21 May 2024
and for Bulletin No. 5 is Tuesday 16 April**

For contact details of Committee Members and Group Leaders

Please login with your Username and Password



Monthly General Meetings - Crofton Hall (2-4pm)

15 April Venice and the British - Martin Heard

How the historic love affair with the 'Jewel of the Mediterranean' has created the modern ideal of the Venetian experience.

20 May London 1851 and the Great Exhibition - Michael Gilbert

The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, also known as the Great Exhibition or the Crystal Palace Exhibition (in reference to the temporary structure in which it was held), was an international exhibition that took place in Hyde Park, London, from 1 May to 15 October 1851.

There will also be a book sale at this meeting (paperbacks only please).

Monthly u3a Coffee Morning - BR6 Café

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



Solutions to Cryptic Crossword No 92

Across: 1 Waste, 4 Healthier, 9 Southward, 10 Ropes, 11 Mats, 12 Pluviose, 14 Nerveless, 16 Depot, 17 Tappa, 19 Flashbulb, 21 Reassure, 22 Smudge, 25 Iste, 26 Epauillette, 27 Redressed, 28 Nooks.
Down: 1 Westminster Pier, 2 Spurt, 3 Enhance, 4 Hoax, 5 Andalusian, 6 Thrived, 7 Impromptu, 8 Respectableness, 13 Performers, 15 Replanted, 18 Austere, 20 Hamelin, 23 Ditto, 24 Wand.

GROUP REPORTS

Gift Aid Explained

When you renew your membership, you are asked whether you are eligible for Gift Aid. So, what is Gift Aid?

First thing to say is that it is not a donation to a charity. In fact, it is a tax rebate we can claim on your behalf from HMRC if you pay Income Tax (or Capital Gains Tax). If you qualify and choose the Gift Aid option, we can claim £3 back from HMRC. It costs you nothing, there is no risk, and we gain this additional income.

Last year we received a refund of £1770 which allowed us to keep the Membership Subscription at £12, one of the lowest of all the u3as in the UK.

Reminder to all Interest Group Leaders: Interest Group Grant Scheme

The Grant Scheme is now live and Group Leaders have until 29th March to submit their bids.

If you are a Group Leader and have not received details of this scheme and a bidding form, please contact Bob

Calling all Photographers



Come and join the Photography group and discover your inner David Bailey! 2nd Monday 10-12

We have room for a couple of new members to join our friendly existing group, which is relaunching. A full range of ability is already represented: some experienced photographers and those (like me!) who love it, but only use their mobile phones.

BOOK SALE

DON'T FORGET THE BOOK SALE AT THE MAY MEETING

Paperbacks only please.

Bring cash and grab some holiday reading

Local Entertainment

Each month, one of the members will choose a local entertainment venue for us to visit: a film, a play, a music event. There's a lot to choose from: cinema, folk and jazz clubs, amateur dramatics, concerts in local churches. Day and time will depend on the event.

Philosophy

Bertrand Russell was born on 18 May, 1872 in Wales and was raised by his grandmother. Despite challenges, he excelled academically and went on to study at Trinity College, Cambridge. He later became absorbed in mathematics and particularly Euclidean Geometry.

As a renowned philosopher, he emphasised logic and analysis. He was an influential pacifist who actively opposed war, particularly during World War I. He believed in peaceful solutions to conflicts and was involved in various anti-war and anti-nuclear movements.

A lively discussion followed as to his analytical approach and the use of AI, the current state of world insecurity, and his mathematical approach contrasting with human emotions.

On March 1st, one of our members, Duncan Waide gave an excellent power-point presentation. He summarised this as follows:

The philosophical implications of a "Plastic" Brain

In the last fifty years significant discoveries have shown how incredibly plastic the brain is. Children have recovered from losing half their brain, blind people have been given sight via sound or touch, deaf people hearing by touch, people have experienced new senses of infra-red, ultraviolet, magnetic fields and echo location, and can control new limbs via thought.

Although this is still in its infancy, the potential is enormous. The future has profound implications for what it will mean to be human, and what might happen if we can experience other animals' or peoples' sense data.

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

New groups

Line Dancing with Shirley starts on Tuesday 9th April

11-12.30 it is open to all, so be sure to put your name down for a fun filled session. No partner necessary.

Mandarin learn to speak a new language.

Solo Sundays lunch enjoy Sunday lunch with others. Each member takes a turn to choose where to eat.

Cribbage Play this easy to learn card game. This is a brand new group as our last group closed.

Board Games New group playing the latest board games. Starting soon. 1st Wednesdays 1.30-4pm.

Scrabble this new group needs a few more members.

Badminton at the Walnuts Fridays 1-3pm has room for more players. They also have Table Tennis and Short Mat Bowls playing at the same time.

Family History 2: a brand new group which needs a couple of new members. Suitable for beginners as well as those already researching.

GROUP REPORTS

London Explorers

The visit to Royal Mews on 28 March is now fully booked, but names can still be put on a reserve list in case anyone has to drop out nearer the time.

A boat has been booked on Monday 13 May at 11am for a 3 hour 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. Please bring Cheque books to pay at the Monday General Meeting.

This will be the last trip Judy will be organising due to mobility issues. We would like to thank Judy for her commitment over the last 10 years. She assures us it has been interesting and not too arduous. 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.

Calling all Board Games enthusiasts

Would you be interested in playing a variety of board games with other members?

The first meeting is proposed for Wednesday 3 April, 1.30 to 4pm and subsequent meetings will be at the same time on the 1st Wednesday of the month.

Meetings will take place at the Group Leaders' home. There is room for 8 members but if the demand justifies it Paul and Sara would be happy to move to an outside venue later on.

Details of the group

The group will aim to play a variety of games provided by Paul and by members bringing their own games. The games should be able to be played to completion within one or two hours. Examples of the type of game that may be played could be: Ticket to Ride; Azul; Catan etc.



Tai Chi

Monday mornings from 11.30 am to 12.30 pm with Kamal in the Meeting Room at Crofton Halls. The Monday group has 26 members. We have no vacancies at present.

Thursday mornings from 10.00 am to 11.00 am with Moragh in the Meeting Room at Crofton Halls. The Thursday group has 10 members from the waiting list. There are vacancies at present.

The next set of classes will be from Monday 22 April and Thursday 25 April.

Costs: £10 (will vary with numbers and hall cost) per 10 week course. 3 courses per year.

MOTO 1

'Members on their Own' group continues to meet during 2024 at Hulbert Hall, Orpington Methodist Church on the 4th Wednesday of the month for a friendly get together, sharing time with members who live on their own whether single, through bereavement or divorce.

The aim of the group is that our members organise events that we can all share. So we meet during the month with activities organised by members. These can include coffee mornings, trips to the theatre both in Bromley or in London, local Sunday lunches, cinema visits, lunch at local restaurants. Details of events planned for the next months are published in the bulletin and newsletter.

We have vacancies



Forthcoming MOTO 1 Events

The Buff lunches from 12.00 noon, on Wednesday 10th April, Friday 19th April.

Breakfast at BR6 on Thursday 18th April from 10.30am.

Coffee Morning, Second Home in Orpington from 10.15am on Saturday 30th March, 13th April and 27th April. Seating at the back of the café on the balcony.

Sunday Lunch - 24th March at Cyprianas in Locksbottom (Full). Sunday lunch at Ephesus in Orpington (Full) on 14th April.

MOTO 1 Meeting - Wednesday 27th March from 2.30pm at Hulbert Hall, Orpington Methodist Church. Wednesday 24th April from 2.30pm at Orpington Methodist Church

Brunch at Richmal Crompton in Bromley South on Monday 1st April from 10.30am

Tour of Coolings on Tuesday 30th April at 11.00am.

Badminton at the Walnuts

We now offer Badminton alongside Table Tennis and Short Mat Bowls on Friday afternoons at the Walnuts between 1pm and 3pm and extend a welcome to any members who would like to join us.



GROUP REPORTS



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.

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

Wednesday 15th May **Circular walk round Petts Wood and Jubilee Park**

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

Bridge for Beginners and Bridge for Improvers

A slight change of routine: The Beginners and Improvers Bridge classes are now on Mondays and Wednesdays, 3.15-5.15pm.

The Beginners Course (Wednesdays) is now full, but please get in touch if you would like to be added to the waiting list.

The Improvers Course (Mondays) has vacancies, and you will be very welcome if you would like to come along and give it a try.



Scrabble

Do you love playing Scrabble and are interested in getting together with like minded Scrabblers?

At the moment, the group that met previously on 1st and 3rd Tuesday is temporarily paused and we have a member who is happy to lead another group meeting at members homes on a rota basis.



Piano and Instrumental Duets

will be changing its name to
Making Music Together
to better reflect the group's activities

Science and Technology

What is gravity? Is it the mutual attraction between all objects with mass? Is it a distortion of spacetime? John Cook bravely tackled Gravity in his February talk, from Aristotle's ideas (4BC) via Galileo and Newton, to Einstein's General Theory of Relativity (1915). General Relativity describes gravity as a geometric property of spacetime and predicts the existence of blackholes, the phenomenon of gravitational lensing, gravitational waves in spacetime, and helps to explain the Big Bang theory.

Then back to Earth for Science News: Several interesting topics were covered – starfish (where is their head?), giraffes (are they capable of statistical reasoning?), car windscreens (what are the frits for?), whales (do they have hair?), and the world's most advanced robot, with human-like facial expressions and movement, it can (with the aid of Artificial Intelligence) also hold a sensible conversation with people. Click [HERE](#) to watch a short YouTube video.



STOP PRESS:

We will be holding a **Science Event on 11-June** (2-4pm Crofton Halls) and all members of Orpington u3a are invited - **put the date in your diary** - Science sparks curiosity and wonder about the natural world, and the understanding of how things work enriches our lives. Our members have a wide variety of interests, and through this interactive science event we hope to demonstrate to you that science, as well as being fascinating, is fun!

If you would like to know more, get involved with the Science Event, or join the group please contact

NEXT MEETINGS

9-April - The Moving Image

14-May - Computers in Aviation: The Impact of Failure

11-June - Science: Fun For Everyone! - Open Event

Family History 1

As this Group is now under new management. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brenda Wheatley for running the group for many years and also for the advice and help she has given to the members of the group.

Although we have no vacancies at the moment I would like to set up a 'Standby Membership Group'. If an existing member cannot come to a meeting I will arrange for a 'Standby' to fill the gap, so if you are interested in 'Family History' please get in touch.

Golf

Our friendly golf group meets regularly on Monday morning at Cray Valley (9 holes) and Magpie Hall (9 holes) on Thursday morning. Plus, on the first Monday of the month, beginning in March, some of our golfers play a Stableford competition over 18 holes on one of the local courses. Also, we have two 9 hole Stableford competitions, held once a month, both competitions begin in April. One is held at Cray Valley, with the other competition being held at Magpie Hall (Bromley Golf Centre).

If you would you would like to join our merry band of golfing warriors, then please let me know. We welcome all new golf members - whatever your standard.



GROUP REPORTS

Nowhere to hide



Our bell ringing team found themselves on the front row at the South East Region Handbells Rally and AGM at Sanderstead on Saturday 2nd March.

The theme for the music played was Transport. We came round the mountain by train, switched to a sleigh, then a bus with a lot of wheels, a chariot and finally a ship named the Billy o' Tea. It is always special when we have massed playing as we learn such a lot about technique. Also, the addition of percussion instruments added extra excitement to the day. We even used boom whackers (try googling that) for the base line in one piece. We were also impressed by other teams who played solos. They made it look so easy. The conducting was also shared and so it was good to experience other conductors.

We all decorated our tables to reflect some form of travel. We chose ships. The leader of the rally said our stand made her feel seasick – but we still won a prize for our effort! That'll teach her to put us on the front row. Another prize was awarded to the team who came as train workers on strike.

This was an all day event, and, as always, the chance to share our music with people from all over the South East was stimulating and great fun. One team came from Haywards Heath U3a, and there was plenty of opportunity to talk to everyone over tea and cake. The cakes were wonderful and something to look forward to. All in all, a brilliant day.

In Focus

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Monday 25th March - Perspectives on the industrial World Heritage Sites of the UK

The UK is home to a much larger number of industrial World Heritage Sites than any other country and these will form the basis of our meeting. An overview of the sites and how they were accepted onto the World Heritage list will be followed by a more detailed look at the Derwent Valley Mills site with a video presentation illustrating the issues of protection, maintenance and development involved.

We'll then move on to another site – New Lanark – primarily to look at its pioneering history of improvements in working conditions and employee welfare. This history provided a significant part of the basis for New Lanark's inscription on the World Heritage list. Some of the story is well known, but other parts of it are seldom mentioned. We'll cover both.

Monday 29th April - The Industrial Heritage of the River Cray

The main item for this meeting will be a presentation by Brian Knights, who recently joined our group. Brian will show 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.

Both meetings start at 2:30 pm, last about 2 hours and are held in the Liberal Club Hall, opposite Tesco. Access is at the rear of the building, via the path to the right of the car park.

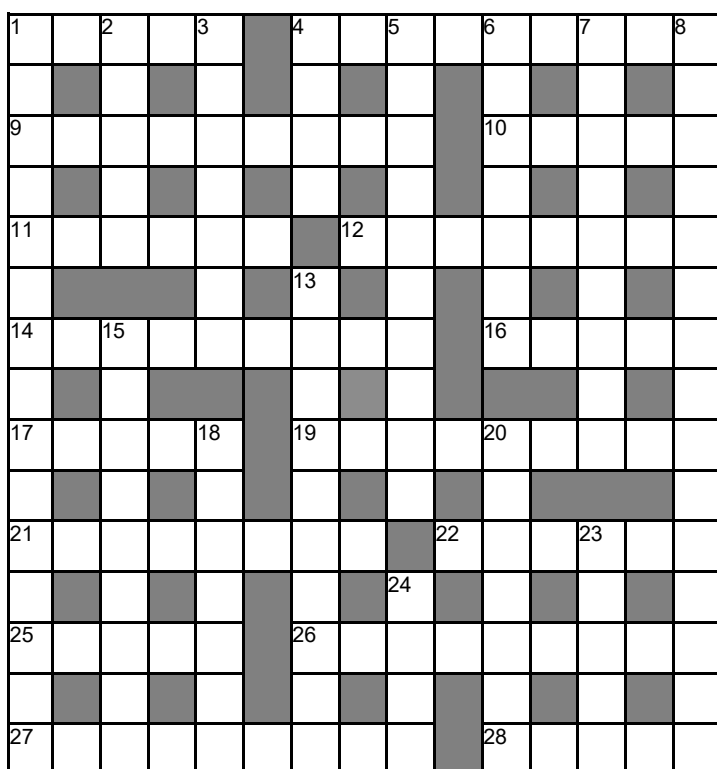
Our meetings are open to all u3a members and there's no need to pre-book



PUZZLES

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD no. 92

Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1



Across

1. A stewed cook to squander (5)
4. Fitter to hail three changes (9)
9. Coming from the north to see a grassy area around, not in house (9)
10. Prose about cordage perhaps (5)
11. Morning prayers for birds that have run away? (6)
12. Cook up olives for the rainy fifth month of revolutionary calendar (8)
14. Calm and collected as shown by English RN vessel when reviewed (9)
16. For starters don't expect people on time at the terminus (5)
17. Thin fibrous bark cut in the past apparently (5)
19. Big London leaders take bashful characters to produce high intensity light (9)
21. Reason not working sure to restore confidence in someone (8)
22. Make dirty as mud generally shows? (6)
25. A broken stile is not usually repaired with this fibre (5)
26. A French feminine perhaps with English shoulder decoration (9)
27. Made amends for a shift perhaps in the grass? (9)
28. Negative approvals for the corner alcoves? (5)

Down

1. One in the house heard at this embarkation point (11,4)
2. Use a goad with time to make a sudden forcible gush (5)
3. Magnify a space for printer when he holds an African party (7)
4. Spoof using leaders to hold one across? (4)
5. Is it possible to make Anna dial us from a Spanish region (10)
6. The endless damaged drive flourished after repair (7)
7. I am punctual at university without any preparation (9)
8. Conformity to recognized standards of conduct enables spectres to reform (15)
13. It is super for Merseyside to discover these artistes (10)
15. Put back in the ground when the red planet exploded (9)
18. The south wind with energy to become stern and severe (7)
20. Meat led blue or white flower up where the pied piper was at home (7)
23. At first did it twice to organize the same as above (5)
24. Lot of money taking name for a thin, supple rod or twig (4)

SUDOKU

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

***"We don't stop playing because we grow old;
we grow old because we stop playing"***

George Bernard Shaw

Solution on page 2



This Newsletter contains personal data

Please do not leave a printed copy in a public place and dispose of it responsibly, preferably by shredding all contact details
Thank you

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

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!

Membership Renewals Now Overdue

Thank you to everyone for your prompt membership renewals, we are almost done. A final reminder to anyone who has not yet renewed that if we don't hear from you by 28th March your membership will be lapsed and this newsletter will be the last communication you have from us.

Click on the following link to renew: .

A message from our Committee



Orpington u3a needs a Committee to keep it running
We are looking for members to join our friendly team
Why not come along to one of our Committee Meetings to see what we do and consider helping?
For more information, speak to any member of the Committee :

Orpington u3a Website

Please check our website regularly for updates

www.u3aorpington.org.uk

and share the information with u3a members who don't have online access

U3A RECORDER GROUP PERFORMS AT A CONCERT IN SUPPORT OF UKRAINE

The u3a recorder group were invited to perform at a fund-raising event in support of Ukraine at Orpington Methodist Church on Saturday 9 March

The group accepted with great enthusiasm and so it became a job of deciding what to play. We have, since February 2022, played the Ukrainian National Anthem at the start of every rehearsal so this was top of our play list and on the evening, the audience stood up for our rendition. We included a Ukrainian Folk Song and some very English light-hearted, faster paced pieces, too.

Being women deciding what to wear took nearly as long! In the end we decided to wear Ukrainian colours and our music stands were adorned with blue and yellow ribbons as well as sunflowers.

Due to positive feedback I believe that our performance was well received. One member of our group celebrated their birthday on that day but wanted to take part and brought her supporters club with her! One of them was so enthused with our performance that they are now the lucky owner of a descant recorder and are learning to play!

In all, a very well supported event - the church was full. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and hope that others did, too.

