

u3a Orpington

learn,
laugh,
live



Celebrating
25 years of Orpington
u3a

Save this date - Thursday 15 June
Watch out for more details.
Entry will be by ticket only - price £5 each
on sale at the May General meeting

Membership Renewal 2023

Thanks to the many members who have renewed their membership for the year.

If you still wish to renew, please do so by Easter. After that, your membership will be lapsed, you will no longer receive newsletters and will not be able to attend group meetings.

Payment by PayPal has been very successful - you can pay by debit or credit card and do not need your own PayPal account. It has the advantage that your record is automatically updated.

Payment (£12) can also be made by cheque or cash. Renewal forms were included in the Feb/March issue. You will receive confirmation by e-mail or letter.

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inc Book Sale

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 153 is Tuesday 16 May 2023

Please send your contributions to Janet : newseditor@u3aorpington.org.uk

Orpington u3a Officers, Committee & Contacts

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

17 April - A Journey on Foot across Africa - Fran Sandham

Fran took on the challenge of a lifetime by walking coast to coast across Africa from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean.



15 May - The English Civil War - Paul Robbins

Paul examines the causes of the War that split families and communities apart, the main battles and the enduring legacy of this conflict.



THERE WILL BE A BOOK SALE BEFORE THE MAIN MEETING

Monthly u3a Coffee Morning - BR6 Café (10.30am)

On the Tuesday following the General Meeting in Crofton Halls, we have our coffee morning in [BR6 Café](#), 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.



Solutions to Cryptic Crossword No 86

Across: 3 Gardening, 8 Opie, 9 Antiquity, 10 Bridge, 11 Strap, 14 Twist, 15 Toga, 16 Elite, 18 Nuns, 20 Piled,
21 Steel, 24 Sconce, 25 Birdwatch, 26 Et al, 27 Forewords.
Down: 1 Tombstone, 2 Divisions, 4 Arne, 5 Drift, 6 Nougat, 7 Note, 9 Agate, 11 Still, 12 Pollinate, 13 Handbells,
17 Epoch, 19 Stodge, 22 Erato, 23 Silo, 24 Scud.

Chairman's Letter

According to my calendar, British Summer Time is about to begin, in which case I have a feeling that I may have missed Spring? Surely the house should have been thoroughly cleaned by now, cupboards cleared, the garden pruned and mulched? The answer is, of course, that I've been too busy with u3a to bother with any of those things. Far better to spend my days with our hard-working Committee planning for the future, attending groups, visiting the printer and meeting up with other organisations and Chairmen. Of course, it involves a lot of chat and drinking coffee, but luckily I'm talented at both these things!

It would appear that many of you agree with me: as I visit groups I'm pleased to hear how much people get out of their membership of Orpington u3a. As our annual renewal process comes to an end, we have retained a steady level of members which will increase as the year progresses.

We are planning a celebration for our 25th Anniversary, to be held at Crofton Halls, so keep your eyes peeled for future announcements. In the meantime, please invite me to your groups, come along to our General Meetings or Coffee Mornings at BR6 and just enjoy the great British Summer, whether you've washed your windows or not!

Sue

GROUP REPORTS

London Explorers

Headquarters of the Magic Circle

On Monday 6 March, a group of London Explorers visited the HQ of the Magic Circle located in Euston. We were greeted by one of their members and were given refreshments. We were split up into two groups of about 15. One group was given a close up magic show where large coins were made to somehow transfer themselves into solid glass bottles with small necks and wedding rings magically disappearing and then revealing themselves impossibly threaded onto chains and various unfathomable tricks with cards. All these tricks were done right under our noses and were completely baffling.

Meanwhile our other group was given a tour of the museum where there were the props of magicians of yesteryear who really were the superstars of their day. The only non-human member of the Magic Circle was Sooty who I'm sure we all remember. One interesting fact we learned was that Sooty's nose and ears were dyed black so that he showed up better when he first appeared on black and white TV.

After this, we had another magic show, given by a young man whose experience working in the open at Covent Garden gave him a great rapport with the audience. Again, we were all close up and personal with the magician but it was completely impossible to fathom how the amazing tricks were done. I think we all agreed that it was a thoroughly entertaining day.

Elaine and Richard



Royal Courts of Justice

A large group of us visited the Royal Courts of Justice for a guided tour of the magnificent NeoGothic building in the Strand.

We were greeted very warmly by our Guides who informed us of the history of the legal system in this country which has been adopted by numerous other countries throughout the world, including U.S.A.

We were informed that as well as the legal background of the courts (there are 101 courts within the building) there is also a sporting legacy, namely that badminton is played in the entrance foyer when the courts are closed. We were told of the King's Remembrancer who advises the Courts ensuring consistency of decisions.

We were shown evidence of bomb damage when the building was lifted off its foundations and landed back on its supporting columns, slightly off centre, but we were advised still safe.

All in all a very interesting visit to observe the evolution of our legal system originating from Henry II almost 1,000 years ago.

Geoff

GROUP REPORTS

Android Users

Why do I need a smartphone? - Here are 34 reasons why

Maybe you haven't got a mobile phone yet. Think you don't need one? Then here are some of the reasons why you are missing out:

Alarm clock, apps (millions of them), calculator, calendar with timely reminders, camera, contacts list, diary, emails, emergency 999 calls, e-tickets, free newspapers, free books, games, home security (monitor your home when away), Internet access (for every Internet requirement that you may have at home), maps, Microsoft office (Word, Excel etc.), music player, news alerts (Sky or BBC), NHS app for medical information such as Covid passes, online banking, online shopping, photo gallery, price checker via Google lens, QR code reader, radio, safety when you are out and about, satellite navigation, telephone calls (incoming and outgoing), texting (incoming and outgoing), torch, Uber taxi services, weather (now and in the future), WhatsApp for free voice and video calls, instant messaging and sharing photos...



Maybe you do have a mobile phone but are unsure how to access all the wonderful features such as those listed. All of these questions can be answered, for free, at the **Android Users Group**. We meet every third Wednesday in the month at 10am. We are really friendly and welcome all newcomers. For more information, please pluck up the courage and contact

William

London Explorers

Cockney Museum

On a cold, wet day in January, we went to the Cockney Museum based in Stoneleigh.

This museum had been the dream of George Major, the Cockney King of Peckham, since he was a child. In his museum he has acquired the pearly crown jewels of cockneydom, a collection of suits, dresses, regalia and other fascinating artefacts dating back 179 years. The collection is the only one of its type in existence.

On entering the museum, you find that it is laid out in the form of streets. The first street is Poverty Street which sums up the lot of the cockney population in 19th century London. On the walls is an amazing collection of historic photographs, accompanied by descriptive cards printed in black letters on a yellow background to increase legibility. Visibility and legibility were not of the first order in this part of the museum, the whole place being very gloomy and dimly lit. Indeed, George issued us with torches, the batteries of which seemed to be on their last legs, in order for us to find our way round the exhibits. Fortunately the lighting improved as we penetrated further into the museum where we were able to admire the Pearly King's and Queen's clothing and regalia adorned with a myriad of sewn-on pearl buttons. Later on we watched a historic video showing Pearly Kings and Queens attending weddings, parades and church services. There was also a gift and brochure shop and a small cafe that was a bit too small for our party of 17. Our trip ended with a visit to a warm and conveniently nearby pub, a lovely end to the outing.

Elaine

Piano and Instrumental Duets

Our little group met for its usual gathering on Monday 13 March. We are players of piano or any orchestral instrument and we like to duet and make music together in a friendly informal manner. We also like to chat, drink tea and eat biscuits. In the past we have had players of piano, flute, recorder, clarinet, oboe and violin and indeed any instrument that would fit. The music we play is mainly from the classical repertoire but that has not stopped us venturing into the world of Latin, Jazz or whatever. The main thing is that we play together and enjoy it.

If anyone has the urge to dust off their musical skills, they would be welcome to come along to see what we do, perhaps initially just to sit in. If you would like more information, please ring

Richard

London Explorers

Forthcoming event - Tuesday 16 May 2pm

Visit to **The Royal Hospital, Chelsea**
Cost **£15.00**

Details from **Judy**

GROUP REPORTS

Walks

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 10am

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



PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTHS

Wed 19 April - Scadbury Reserve

Meet in the public car park of St Peter & St Paul Catholic Primary Academy, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington BR5 2SR.

Walk is approximately 3.5km including 16 shallow steps down with a handrail and one long but gradual incline. There is some uneven ground and can be muddy in places after rain. No stiles.

Leaders: Kay and Jan

Wed 17 May 2023 - Shoreham Circular Walk

Meet in Filston Lane village free car park, TN16 7SP. A few inclines. No stiles. Bad news, one steep hill. Good news, we go down the steep hill. May be muddy in places. A view of the White Cross, memorial to Shoreham's fallen, can be seen a number of times along the walk. Village has a couple of pubs, a tea room, if open, and not forgetting the small RAF museum.

Leaders: Tim and Renee

Kindness is in our power, even when fondness is not.

Samuel Johnson

Birdwatching

The group meets on the fourth Wednesday of the months February to November to visit an area known to offer interesting habitats for woodland and water birds. These include local parks and rivers, country parks in Kent, RSPB reserves or London parks. We take a leisurely walk in each location, binoculars at the ready, finishing with a welcome coffee stop.

We meet at each location at 10.00, or at Orpington station if travelling by train, and generally complete our outing in two to three hours.

The group includes many knowledgeable and interested u3a birdwatchers and new members are most welcome. Several of our members are shown in the photo below during a visit to the RSPB Reserve in Rainham Marshes, Essex. We are always amazed at the variety of species we see, as no two visits are the same.

Programme for the coming months:

April 26	Haysden Country Park, Tonbridge
May 24	Cray Meadows
June 28	Priory Gardens, Orpington and a walk along the River Cray
July 26	South Norwood Country Park
August 23	tbd
Sept 27	Rainham Marshes RSPB Reserve, Essex
Oct 25	Regents Park
Nov 22	St James Park

If u3a members would like to participate in the outings, please contact me for further information.

Jacqui



Ambling London

Members of this large group have already been notified of changes to the way it is to be run.

I will accept no more than 20 names for every amble. It is hoped that one or two members will start Ambling London 2 soon, and even perhaps a third Ambling London group, doing the same walk if they wish on a different day of the week.

Joan

GROUP REPORTS

Ambling London

In January, some 20 members set off for a walk around Knightsbridge with its unique Mews, high end shops and of course Harrods, founded in 1849 as a grocery and still going strong.

The walk, just under four miles in total, took in many exclusive Mews terraces, built to be out of the way, for servants and horse stables, now attracting rents of £1000 a week and sale prices in the millions.



The traditional coffee break this time was taken at a unique coffee shop with predominately pink theme!

All in all, a very pleasant experience shared by all our amblers.

Joan

On a February day with a slight drizzle in the air over 20 members made their way via Charing Cross to Soho, home of the Fitzrovia area, so named for the haunt of pre-war poets and intelligentsia, the Fitzroy Tavern.

Among the many places of interest on our walk, was the public house *The Marquis of Granby*, named after the hero of the seven year war, who aided many of his ex-soldiers to enter the licenced trade and be their own landlords.

The Charlotte St hotel, named after Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, where a pleasant night's stay is in the region of £700, including breakfast! Other places of interest included the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple and Mr Foggs House of Botanicals .

This cosmopolitan area is of so much interest and history with its ethnic cafes and restaurants, all nestling in the shadow of the iconic BT Tower, reaching 581 ft into the sky.

A big thanks to Vic and Sue for making the walk so interesting and enjoyable.

William

Philosophy

In February the



Philosophy group enjoyed a lively but varied discussion on the topic 'Democracy in Decline', very much as events unfold across the modern world.

We covered subjects, such as religion, military take overs, political doctrines, mass media and corporate intervention to see if this was the cause but we also came across some surprising alternatives!

In March, fifteen members met together for a philosophy talk on 'Consciousness'. This wide-ranging and fascinating subject ranged from 'Is consciousness hereditary or affected by environment? Is there consciousness in animals? Concluding with artificial intelligence and the possibility of its mutation'.

If you would like to join this friendly group who meet at various homes on the first Friday morning of the month at 10.00am, for further details please contact

Pauline

Science and Technology

In February we heard the story of the legendary [Phineas Gage](#) - the man who survived a traumatic brain injury and 'began neuroscience'. We also found out that rats can be taught to play hide-and-seek, and discovered that there is a new element, muonium, which is even lighter than hydrogen.

In March a summary of research stories from the [Francis Crick Institute](#) included how ice age wolf DNA has been used to trace dog ancestry, and exactly where and how misfolded proteins can damage brain cells in Parkinson's disease. There is a related article in [New Scientist](#), explaining the role of mitochondria in the brain and how restoring them could reverse ageing - we could all do with a bit of that!

Forthcoming meetings - 11-April: The Importance of Botany and the Citizen Scientist. 9th May: Modern Technology in Shipping. 13th June: Our Moon.

If you would like to join us please contact

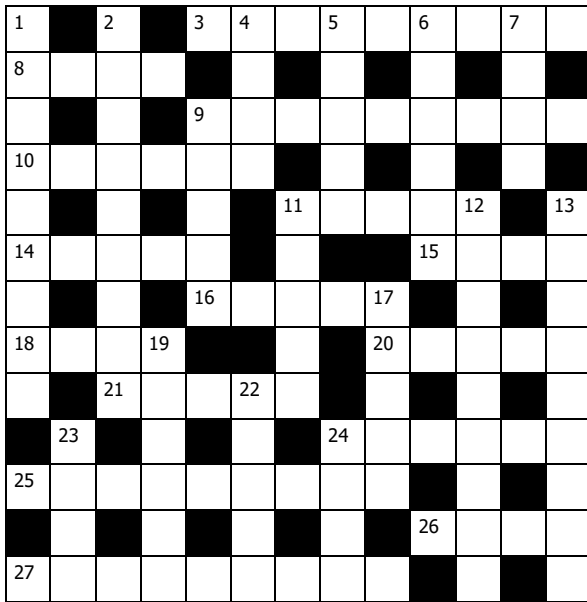
Viki

**Never keep up with the Joneses.
Drag them down to your level.
It's cheaper.**

Quentin Crisp

PUZZLES

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD no 86



Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1

Across

3. ... and Ginger will display a popular hobby (9)
8. The artist that is found after a short operation (4)
9. Against the stage union losing the point has the quality of a great age (9)
10. Crossing game? (6)
11. Bits returned for a belt perhaps (5)
14. Dance for Dickens's hero? (5)
15. Have a go at making this robe (4)
16. Oriental, hat backs up the cream (5)
18. May be Clare's or her sisters (4)
20. Propelled and voted half-heartedly (5)
21. Southern support with line metal (5)
24. Light bun holding a number from Rome (6)
25. Twitch? Gaol time on duty shift (9)
26. And the rest, reversing when not on time (2,2)
27. Introductory statements to a published work said to be lost when dumbstruck (9)

Down

1. After British Summer Time, the first person to follow the cat perhaps to the memorial (9)
2. Parts of the forces (9)
4. Composer found in Barnet (4)
5. Go with the flow. Get my meaning? (5)
6. Does tuna go swimming to make a confection? (6)
7. College resolved a short letter (4)
9. Precious stone found at a sound entrance (5)
11. Not moving a good man with a complaint (5)
12. Election at home consumed by what bees do (9)
13. Ringers with small clappers (9)
17. Record old church for a particular period of history (5)
19. Half-hearted fall guy holding a diamond in heavy, filling starchy food (6)
22. Orate shuffling the poetic inspiration (5)
23. Stirred oils in the storage capability (4)
24. The centre of his cudgel could be seen to move quickly and easily (4)

LONDON REGION SUMMER SCHOOL

St Bride Foundation Institute
14 Bride Lane (off Fleet Street)
EC4Y 8EQ

Tues 25th and Wed 26th July 2023

Save the Dates

Booking to start end of March.

£41 per day

including refreshments and buffet lunch

Activities will include 17 talks, 4 workshops and 8 guided walks.

To view the Summer School Programme, please e mail mailchimpadvisor.lru3a@gmail.com

Please check our website regularly for updates

www.u3aorpington.org.uk

SUDOKU

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

NOTICEBOARD

Can you make a cup of tea? Do you have a friendly smile?



We need help at the monthly General Meetings in Crofton Halls

The aim is to set up a rota of volunteers to help with serving refreshments and greeting new members at the door - It's a great way to meet people

For more information please contact Yvonne:
vicechair@u3aorpington.org.uk

BOOK SALE MAY 2023



Bookworms will again be having a paperback only sale at the May meeting. Please remember no hardbacks but we will gladly accept paperback books on the day.

Book prices will be 50 pence per book so bring along your 50p and £1 coins on the day.

Look forward to seeing you in May.

Beryl

Trading Standards

ALERT!



**"We're working for the Council"
No, they're not!**

Bromley Trading Standards has received another report about a doorstep trader scamming a resident:

The resident was visited by the trader who claimed that they were working for the Council. The trader had noticed an overhanging tree in the resident's garden and intimated that they would trim the trees for free, but they then proceeded to charge hundreds of pounds for subpar work. The trader also left tree cuttings in the resident's garden.

Despite what they claim, they are still cold-calling doorstep traders.

Don't deal with doorstep traders

Whatever the work being offered, dealing with doorstep traders risks **shoddiness**, having **no redress**, being pressured into **unnecessary additional work**, and being **substantially overcharged**. You may also be subjected to repeated visits in the future.

Bromley Council will never cold call offering to carry out work.

Find a reputable trader on **Trading Standards Checked**:
www.bromley.gov.uk/tradingstandardschecked