



Chairman's Letter

There's nothing quite like the feeling you have when you belong to a group. The companionship you experience whilst enjoying a shared interest, skill or passion and the discussion that follows. For me, the ensuing chat about the latest celebrity crisis, must watch tv programme, or why the bins weren't collected is all part of maintaining a connection and enhances my appreciation. If you haven't yet joined one of our nearly 80 Interest Groups, then why not go along and try some out? We are sure you won't be disappointed.

Of course, we need to remember that Orpington u3a is part of a local consortium, with Beckenham and Bromley (we call ourselves BOB). The three Chairs meet regularly to share tips and swap ideas – a useful resource. We are also a member of area groups – we attend both Kent Network and London Region courses and meetings, again with the idea of getting (and giving) help to other u3as around us.



Finally, we are members of both a national and international organisation. We were honoured to welcome Liz Thackray, Chair of the Third Age Trust and Susie Berry, South East Region Trustee to our July meeting at Crofton Halls. Both recognised the need for people to feel that sense of belonging and connection, perhaps sometimes missing between grass roots level and the Board; to this end Liz is travelling around to various regions to meet with u3as, varied in their organisation, but all with a common purpose, to remind us that we are all just volunteers and members of an organisation. It gave us a moment of reflection: we are part of a group of 400,000 people, all making the most of our retirement. As one of that number, I hope you too are revelling in your groups and finding pleasure in being a member of our u3a community.

Sue

Orpington u3a are pleased to announce a lunch to celebrate our 25th Anniversary

Thursday 26th October 1.30-3.30 pm, at Crofton Halls



**Entry by ticket £5 each, members only, on a first come basis
(Capacity of hall 150 max)**

**To reserve your place please email
chairman@u3aorpington.org.uk**

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The last day for receipt of copy for Newsletter No 155 is Tuesday 19 September 2023

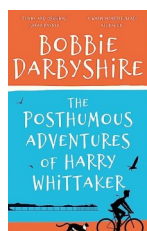
Please send your contributions to : newseditor@u3aorpington.org.uk

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New committee members needed!

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



21 Aug - Where do novelists get their inspiration from? Bobbie Darbyshire

From initial spark to realisation on the page, Bobbie explains how the complex world of character, location, plot and subplot arrives in a writer's mind. Bobbie, author of four novels (so far), has won the 2008 fiction prize at the National Academy of Writing and the New Delta Review Creative Nonfiction Prize 2010.

18 Sept - Sextant to Sat Nav, 45 years in aviation with a fear of heights (Part 2) Peter Griffiths

Peter started flying in 1967, for BOAC, the forerunner of BA. His career spanned the time from 'steam driven' aircraft, navigated by map, compass, sextant and a certain amount of hope, to the highly sophisticated aircraft of today, accurate to within a few feet.

The talk includes a rich fund of stories, both humorous and serious, about the days of flying before the cockpits became so automated and the foibles of the rich and infamous on their private jets.

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 88

Across: 1 Charm, 4 Bedfellow, 9 Marinades, 10 Cocoa, 11 Howard, 12 Besmirsch, 14 Matchwood, 16 Almer, 17 Trait, 19 Contrato, 21 Rescuers, 22 Psyche, 25 Omagh, 26 Andromeda, 27 Telepathy, 28 Erect.
Down: 1 Come home to roost, 2 Arrow, 3 Monarch, 4 Body, 5 Descendant, 6 Encomia, 7 Lachrymal, 8 Weather forecast, 13 Concordant, 15 Transvaal, 18 Touch up, 20 Restore, 23 Crepe, 24 Eddy.

GROUP REPORTS

Chi Kung – An Introduction

The Chi Kung practice is known as Zhan Zhuang, "Standing Like A Tree" - It is pronounced "Jam Jong!" This health system is attracting international attention and scientific interest, and results are impressive: strengthened immune system, higher levels of energy, and a more relaxed nervous system.

It is an original and interesting energy system because it involves virtually no movement, which to the beginner is most surprising! Also surprising, unlike most exercise systems that use the body's energy, Zhan Zhuang creates energy for the practitioner. Focusing on the mind, posture, breathing and movement, it reverses the process of decay, building up and releasing within the body an extraordinary flow of energy that is dormant within us, and all quite naturally.

In the practice of Zhan Zhuang, we can relax the nervous system and the muscles simultaneously. This clears the path for the renewed circulation of our original, natural energy within our bodies and minds. This practice is truly 'The Way Of Energy'.

I have studied martial arts for 25 years. A retired headteacher, I have studied Chi Kung under Master Lam and Master Ni. I have also studied Kung Fu and Tai Chi (Penang Style).

I am hoping to start the group on Monday mornings at 10am, weekly to begin with, then once we have mastered the programme we may move to fortnightly or even monthly depending on the progress of the group. Please contact:

John

Handbells

On 17-June more than a hundred bellringers from across Greater London and the South East, including six members of the Orpington Handbell team, gathered together in Guildford Cathedral for a Handbell Festival Service.

The theme 'In Celebration' was to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III. We started with Zadok the Priest, accompanied by the cathedral organ and then played a variety of hymns, classical pieces and folk tunes throughout the service.

The acoustics of the cathedral are wonderful, so the overall sound was very special. We had an enjoyable, but exhausting, day to remember.

Jo



Handbell ringing in Guildford Cathedral

Android Users

We are a friendly group that will give you tips and advice for using your Android phone.

We also discuss various topics related to IT. In June we had a short presentation about AI, including ChatGPT.

If you would like to join us please contact

William



Science and Technology

Following last year's talk about the Universe, Hugh Alford from the [Orpington Astronomical Society](#) returned in June to give us a captivating and animated talk about our Moon. We were taken back to July 1969, for the first Moon landing — but this time the problems that the astronauts had to overcome were revealed.

After avoiding an area covered in boulders, the landing was achieved with only seconds of fuel to spare. Also, a switch in the lunar module, crucial for their return, was broken — but Buzz Aldrin's quick thinking circumvented disaster.



An exciting and amazing story; remarkable as the computer power for Apollo 11 was much less than that of a modern smartphone!

In July we had an enjoyable afternoon in High Elms (Green Roof Café). We sat in the shade of the trees, getting to know new members and catching up with old friends.

PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTHS

8-Aug: Alexander Fleming Museum - Outing

12-Sept: Fossils 'Show and Tell'

10-Oct: Technology

14-Nov: Carnivorous Plants

12-Dec: Christmas Meeting

Thank you to members who have given a talk, presented the Science News, set out the chairs, asked questions, joined in the discussions or helped to tidy up at the end of the afternoon — your help is much appreciated.

Our meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. For more information about the [Science and Technology](#) group please contact

Viki

GROUP REPORTS

London Explorers

We set sail from the Olympic Park at Stratford with 'Captain' Judy leading her motley crew of about 40 members. During the 3 hour cruise we explored an interesting section of the waterway where the River Lea joins the Lee and other man-made spurs giving access to various factories lining these banks: furniture making, soap making, flour mills, leather tanning.

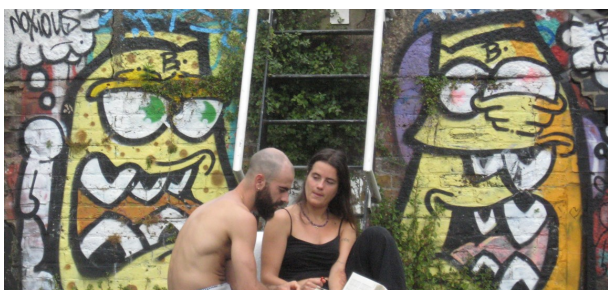


"Our boat was moored alongside a dozen or so swan pedaloos which looked fun but were not practical for our voyage!"

Our guide was excellent with his running commentary and in-depth knowledge of the area. He painted a grim picture of days gone by when these factories were fully operational and smells from bone boiling for soap and leather tanning filled the air. He described the massive clearing operation needed for the area and evidence of nefarious past actions with the finding of several safes and skeletons.

Contamination was of major concern resulting in many thousands of tons of soil being removed and either cleaned or disposed of responsibly. The waterways had been the dumping grounds for shopping trolleys, old cars, and industrial waste to the point where nothing could survive. Now the rivers are clean, banks planted with reeds imported from Norfolk, and fish thrive.

The variety of new buildings was of particular interest, including Sadlers Wells rehearsal rooms and a new very futuristic looking V & A museum. We passed under numerous bridges each technically interesting and often adorned with graffiti, some of which was of very high standard. Our cruise also took us through two locks, one conventionally gated and the other a revolving gate.



The leisurely pace was a great unwinder and all too soon we were back where we started. A great trip, no cries of man overboard, with the same number ending up as started.

Thanks Captain Judy, another successful outing enjoyed by all.

Brian

London Explorers

Tuesday 22-August 2023 8.30am

King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, Woolwich Barracks.

A visit has been booked lasting approximately four hours. Car parking has been arranged.

The cost is £10.00, payable to Orpington u3a. Places are limited. For further details contact

Geoff

Wednesday 13-September 2023

London Zoo.

We will visit the Zoo as a group and as long as there are a minimum of 15 of us we will get a group discount of £20.60 per person.

This is not a guided tour and we will just be taking ourselves around. If you are interested please look our for us at the next General Meeting or contact

Elaine

Philosophy

The June meeting began with a discussion about existentialism, a philosophical movement that emphasises individual freedom and choice. It proposes that there is no inherent purpose or meaning to existence, individuals create their own meaning in life and everyone has responsibility for their own lives.

We followed with a summary of a news article about an IVF procedure to prevent severe inherited genetic disorders - [Baby born from three people's DNA in UK first](#). We debated whether or not the procedure is ethical and if it is justified for others (professionals and parents) to take responsibility and make decisions on behalf of an unborn child.

In July we travelled back to c1500-1700, the Early Modern period, a time of great change but also of surprising continuity. This was the 'Age of Reason' when scientists were devoted to alchemy and astrology, and witch hunting was a serious matter.

This period is called the Enlightenment (philosophy), the Renaissance (art), or the Reformation (religion) - terms suggesting a sudden change, an awakening or rebirth, as if nothing had happened for a long time. A view expressed in Alexander Pope's epitaph for Isaac Newton (even though Early Modernism started long before Newton):

**"Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night:
God said, Let Newton be! and all was light"**

This was a paradoxical time when people looked back to the ancient world for knowledge (discarding much of what had been learnt in the intervening centuries) but also (by their search for certainty) laid the foundations of our very uncertain modern world.

The group always welcomes new members, for further details please contact

Pauline

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

Wednesday 16-August - Circular Walk of Farnborough

Meet at the Buff Public House, Green Street Green BR6 9NL, for a circular walk of Farnborough. Parking available in the side roads. There are some slight inclines and wooded areas and after rain might be muddy.

Leaders Bob and Lin

Wednesday 20-September - Walk around London Parks

Meet at Orpington station for the 09:38 fast to Charing cross for a 4 mile walk through London Parkland including St James Park, Green Park, Hyde Park and finally Kensington Gardens. It is fairly flat walk with NO STILES!!!

Leaders Hazel and Ed

Cheers

The members of the 'Cheers' Wine Tasting Group have recently been enjoying tasting and comparing white wines from New Zealand and red wines from Spain. It was particularly interesting to compare some Spanish wines of the same type but made from vines of different ages.

We still have a few vacancies for new members, and you can expect a warm welcome if you would like to join us, and learn more about wine in an informal and congenial atmosphere.



Our monthly meetings are on Tuesdays – in the evenings during summer time and during the afternoon in winter. For more information, please contact

James

Gardening Made Easy



The Gardening Made Easy group enjoyed sharing plants, tips, and knowledge with each other at their monthly meetings in May and June.



The second big event, apart from Wimbledon, in July was our group getting together to exchange our personal gardening experiences over afternoon tea. A big thank you to Joan, not least for her sumptuous carrot cake and strawberry scones.



If you would like to join this convivial and vibrant group, please contact

Pauline

Creative Writing

Do you like to write? Would you be interested in airing and sharing? You might like to consider joining our group which meets on the first Monday of each month 2-4pm.

We look at all genres of writing and attempt styles we might not have considered.

We are encouraged to write a piece for homework each month which we share with the group. If this would interest you please contact

Janet

GROUP REPORTS

Theatre Groups — A merger is announced

Right from the early days of Orpington u3a, there have been three thriving theatre groups. Margaret organised regular visits to the Churchill Theatre, Tony and Maureen (Jo and Bob from 2012) concentrated on London Theatre productions and Pauline and Gordon's Matinee Group, set up in 2007, visited London Theatres and also ventured further afield to Chichester, Sonning and Hever etc.

“Together we have organised many hundreds of theatre visits”

All activity suddenly stopped of course in 2020 due to the pandemic restrictions. Happily our members are back in theatre-going mode and 15 different productions have been booked over the past 18 months. In late April members met up at the BR6 for a social lunch and had a chance to talk about their theatre experiences.



The Future: From 1-July, there will be one combined Theatre Group under the leadership of Pauline and Gordon – the **Theatre Matinee Group (TMG)**. Jo and Bob will work closely with them to support and deputise as circumstances arise.

July General Meeting



Liz Thackray (National Chair) and Susie Berry (SE Region Trustee) joined our General Meeting in July

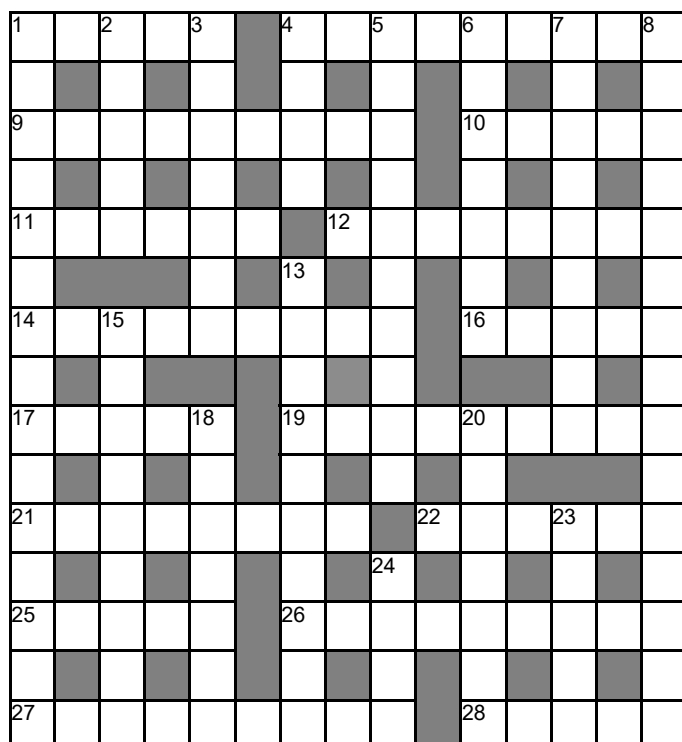
“u3a members have always exercised their individual preferences, some viewing the large monthly meeting as central to the u3a experience, while others prefer the more intimate atmosphere of an interest group. Some regard technology as an anathema, while for others it is part of daily life. We are all different, and it is our differences that make us interesting – as well as providing the incentive to learn and share new experiences together. We are social beings. The bedrock of the u3a movement is the interaction between members, the relationships we develop with each other, the activities we participate in together and in which we learn from each other”

Liz Thackray, TAM Feb 2022

PUZZLES

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD no 88

Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1



Across

1. Discover in a melodic, harmonious quality of pleasing appeal (5)
4. Plot with a chap that one has a close association with (9)
9. Made Sarin steep in a mixture of vinegar, wine and oil perhaps (9)
10. Primarily can one cut open a beverage? (5)
11. This name changed the front of a windy fellow (6)
12. Heartless bench taking assorted crimes to dishonour (8)
14. Something to strike and courted without energy by making chips perhaps? (9)
16. One with an eye on the target using the main road to the sea in France (5)
17. Characteristic feature returning pictures to it (5)
19. Cartoon characters left empty singer (9)
21. Take nothing out of resources for savers (8)
22. Personification of the soul a gypsy cherishes at heart (6)
25. A round publication he initially found in Ireland (5)
26. Dead Roman characters rescued from the sea by Perseus (9)
27. On the box track an unknown exchange of thoughts without sensory perception (9)
28. Standing in the rectory? (5)

Down

1. Motto more choose as an unexpected adverse consequence for the one responsible (4,4,2,5)
2. School head taken off for a quarrel (5)
3. Perhaps a butterfly ruler? (7)
4. Initially boys only defy you finding the entire structure of an organism (4)
5. Ted scanned letters describing one from a specific ancestor (10)
6. Formal expressions of praise from English sergeant perhaps returning object (7)
7. Ally charm becoming characterized by tears? (9)
8. Confused at free show? React to a prediction of climatic conditions (7,8)
13. Agreeing but not for a thin rope to be put on soldier perhaps (10)
15. Where naval arts were rediscovered in Africa? (9)
18. Make final adjustments perhaps to 20dn, a piece of artwork (5,2)
20. An 18dn may help to this for a piece of artwork (7)
23. Creep about in a thin fabric of silk, cotton or wool with a crinkled surface (5)
24. The male found in a whirlpool (4)

Solution on page 2



SUDOKU

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

Laughter is the best medicine
But if you're laughing for no reason
You may need medicine

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

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

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 or contact Sue:

chairman@u3aorpington.org.uk

Have Your Say!

Do you have a short article or notice about your u3a group meetings, outings or upcoming events (100-150 words)? Or a u3a photo to share?

The Newsletter is written by our members for the members, so we would love to hear from you.

It is published every other month and the deadline for contributions is on the day after the General Meeting - The date is always given at the bottom of the front page.

To ensure your contribution is seen by all editors on our team, please send to:

newseditor@u3aorpington.org.uk

Interest Groups Bulletin

Feedback from members suggests that publishing the Newsletter only once every two months is not frequent enough, some groups would like to advertise their outings in the month between issues.

Therefore, we are planning to trial an additional Orpington u3a publication in the interim months.

It will be a short bulletin, primarily to keep members up to date with forthcoming events and outings.

The deadline will be the day after the General Meeting in the alternate months

To avoid extra costs and additional work for the committee the bulletin will be distributed only by email and on the website.

Trading **ALERT!** Standards



Trading standards checked

Residents who need to find a trusted trader are reminded of the trading standards checked scheme which works alongside trading standards alert.

Bromley trading standards checked is a fair-trader directory to help you find a safe, reliable trader that you can trust, in partnership with Kent County Council.

Visit www.bromley.gov.uk/tradingstandardschecked to learn more.

Trading Standards Checked is a fair trader directory for trades in the home maintenance sector run by the London Borough of Bromley. Together with our members, we aim to prevent financial abuse, stop doorstep criminals and protect residents, especially the vulnerable, from criminal and rogue traders.

We know it is difficult to find a safe and reliable trader that you can trust. Trading Standards Checked carries out thorough [checks on traders](#) and has access to information that no other scheme in Bromley has, so you can have peace of mind when choosing a Trading Standards Checked trader to do work in your home.