

Hello U3A members, isn't it great to see the spring flowers and have a little sunshine in our lives? Sit yourselves down in a comfy chair as we have lots to tell you in this edition.

We hope that you are enjoying coffee mornings in our smart new venue, we realise that parking has caused a few problems, but if you are unable to get into the Repton Community car park, there is roadside parking available. We regret that after being advised otherwise, we had to report that you can only park in the Waitrose car park for a maximum of two hours.

On a positive note, we are pleased to give you an update to the programme of activities, plus booking details for the last two trips for this year. Please note that if you wish to book both trips you will need to use one cheque for each, (made payable to U3A Ashford, Wye & District) with the name of the trip on the reverse

Programme Update April to August 2019

Every member has a printed copy of the main Programme booklet for the year. Members should continue to refer to this as the Master Document. Where there are changes, updates or courses about to commence, these are listed below.

NB Where there is a course fee, members should make out a cheque payable to " U3A Ashford, Wye and District" and send it to Marion Dinwoodie, Programme Manager, 14 Hither Field, Charing, Ashford, TN27 0HZ. This should be paid in a timely way at the beginning of the course. Members should make clear the course for which they are paying.

In this update, I draw your attention to six new courses planned over the summer In addition to Bowls Coaching (highlighted in the December Newsletter) we also have Weekenders-a Sunday Special, Dance Exercise, Golf Lessons, Evolving French Conversation and German Conversation. Information on the numbers of members who are interested in these courses is crucial to testing the viability of any group. To assist course leaders in this, please contact them as soon as you can.

Arts and Literature

U3A Art (formerly known as Untutored Art)

This course runs all year round (except Christmas) on a weekly basis, divided into terms of 17 weeks each. There are currently some spaces and new members would be welcomed. If interested, please contact Ursula Peters.

Course Leader: Ursula Peters (01233 331583)

Venue: Iron Room (Village Hall) Boughton Aluph

Dates: Weekly on Thursdays, the summer term starts on 1st May and runs to 22nd August.

Time: 9.00am to 12 noon

Course Fee: £ 17

Play Reading

This group continues to meet on the last Monday of each month (other than when it falls on a Bank Holiday). The group has fun as demonstrated by the performance of their own play (thank you Maureen) at a recent coffee morning. New members would be welcomed, especially more men, to enable a wider choice of plays to be performed. Please contact Maureen if you are interested.

Course Leader: Maureen Andrews (01233 632317 or maureen.grassals@btinternet.com)

Venue: Ashford Community Church Hall, Francis Road, Ashford, TN23 7UR.

Dates: The remaining dates for the summer term are 29th April and 20th May

Time: 2.00 to 4.00pm

Course Fee: £6

Singing for Pleasure

This group continues to thrive and attract new members. For more information please contact Wendy Heaton

Course Leader: Wendy Heaton (01233 631770 or wendyheaton@talktalk.net)

Venue: Ashford Community Church Hall, Francis Road, Ashford, TN23 7UR

Dates: The new term will start on 26th April and run for six weeks (no rehearsal on 17th May)

Time: 2.00 to 3.00pm

Course Fee: £6

Practical Courses

Yogafit

This is a very popular well established course. There will be no summer term however this year. The course leader will return in September "fighting fit" with a new knee. Best wishes Katherine for a speedy recovery.

Dance Exercise

We have the opportunity for a new course offered by someone who is a trained dancer. Nathalie will teach us the steps of Latin American and Ballroom Dancing. You don't need any previous dancing experience, nor do you need a partner.....all you need are comfortable shoes. It will take place in Kennington Scout Community Hall on Friday afternoons. Please think about coming along to have some fun and if you are interested please contact Nathalie as soon as you can. This is important to gauge numbers to see if the course is viable.

Course Leader: Nathalie Sitval (07704 343557 or email contact@danceasugo.co.uk)

Venue: Kennington Scout Community Hall, Lower Vicarage Road, Kennington, Ashford, TN24 9AS

Dates: Fridays 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th June

Time: 2.30 to 3.30pm

Course Fee: £10 tbc, depending on numbers

Cross Stitch

An introduction to cross stitch work. All materials will be provided. This group can take on a new member, please contact Bronwen if you are interested.

Course Leader: Bronwen Harper (01233 621654 or bronwen.harper@btinternet.com)

Venue: Kennington

Date: Fortnightly on Mondays

Time: 2.30 to 4.30pm

Knit and Natter

Members will learn from each other through discussion and project planning. If members crochet or cross stitch, then they are welcome. It is not a tutorial group and members at all levels of proficiency are welcome. Members should bring their current projects with them. This group is still relatively new and new members would be welcome.

Course Leader: Jacqui Wapshott (07808 585806 or jacquiwapshott@btinternet.com)

Venue: Kennington

Date: Monthly on Tuesdays
Time: 10.30am to 12.00noon
Course Fee: Members bring their own materials

Guitar Chords

This is a well established friendly group. You will need a guitar but no previous knowledge of experience. New members would be welcome.

Course Leader: Janine Hardwick (07890 426291 or janinehardwick2@gmail.com)

Venue: Wye Methodist Church, upstairs in the Thomas Hall

Dates: Fridays, summer term dates are 5th April, 4th June and 19th July

Time: 5.00 to 6.30pm

Course Fee: £9

Computer, Share and Learn

Members will be able to learn what they need on mobile phones, tablets and computers. Most people bring their own but it is possible to share one at the group meetings. Those who know more are happy to share their knowledge with others. Members have generally achieved something new at each session.

Course Leader: Janine Hardwick (07890 426291 or janinehardwick2@gmail.com)

Venue: Tesco, Willesborough (back of store and up the escalator)

Dates: Mondays, 1st, 8th, 15th and 29th April, 13th and 20th May, 17th June and 22nd July

Time: 6.00 to 7.30pm

Games of Skill

Bridge

This group will continue to meet on Mondays in the summer term.

Course Leader: David Harper (01233 813534)

Venue: Wye Methodist Church

Date: Every Monday from 8th April to 10th June

Time: 2.30 to 4.30pm

Course Fee £ 10

Scrabble

Anyone, at any level, can play and new members are welcome

Course Leader: Sheila Chapman (01233 813011)

Venue: 33 Scotton Street, Wye TN25 5BU

Dates: Every Monday

Time: 10.30am to 12.30pm

Bowls Coaching

Two of our members, Rosemary Atkins and Christina Searle, are both Level 2 Bowls coaches. They have offered to run a new four week course in May. If members are interested they should contact Rosemary in the first instance to gauge the numbers to run the course.

Course Leader: Rosemary Atkins (01233 503645 or rosemaryatkins19@yahoo.co.uk)

Venue: Sellindge and District Bowls Club

Dates: Wednesdays weekly in May, dates tbc

Time: Probably afternoons, time tbc

Course Fee: Possibly a small contribution to green fees, tbc

Golf Lessons

One of our members has offered to coordinate a group of those members who are interested in having some golf lessons on a group basis. This would be on the basis of 5-10 people for one hour. It would take place at Ashford Golf Club, Sandyhurst Lane, just off the A20. The Head Professional, or his assistant, would take the group. Further details will be finalised when we are

able to confirm numbers and the most suitable date and time. Please confirm your interest to Steve Herron as soon as you are able.

Course Leader: Steve Herron (07583 841788)

Venue: Ashford Golf Club, Sandyhurst Lane, Ashford, TN25 4NT

Dates: A five week course, May/June tbc

Time: One hour am or pm, possibly Tuesday or Thursday

Course Fee: £25

The World Around Us

Thursday Walking Group

This group walks in the summer months and will continue now through to October.

Course Leader: Ann Mumford (01233 633551)

Venue: various

Dates: Third Thursday of each month, April to October

Time: 10.00am

Weekenders-a Sunday Special

A new "Weekenders" group is being proposed to make Sundays, for people may be alone, something to look forward to. The aim is to transform a potentially solitary day through an informal, sociable lunch, with good food in a variety of venues in and around Ashford. Ideally there will be car sharing to help those who don't drive, those who feel that they would like an occasional break from driving and also the environment. Please register your interest to Adrienne or Sylvia as soon as you can...also venue suggestions would be welcomed.

Course Leader: Adrienne Lowing (01233 611175 or adlowing@btinternet.com) or Sylvia Millard (07963 434972 or sylviamillard@virginmedia.com)

Venue: various

Dates: Sundays

Time: lunchtime

Languages

Evolving French Conversation

This group aims to encourage intermediate French speakers to meet up over coffee/tea and to chat in French. Group members will learn from each other. The suggestion is to have a different topic for each session, for example, In the kitchen, In the garden, Travelling in France etc.

Beverley Jarvis will lead the first two sessions, followed by a different member being asked to lead each of the following sessions. Please register interest in this group with Beverley as soon as you can.

Course Leader: Beverley Jarvis: (01233 663344)

Venue: Great Chilmington Farm House, Chilmington Green, Ashford, TN23 3DP

Dates: Tuesdays, 7th and 21st May, 4th and 16th June

Time: 10.00 to 11.30am

Course Fee: £2 per session

German Conversation

Barbara Hamlet has been a longstanding member of our Branch. She is from Poland and has been a German teacher. She has offered to run an informal German Conversation group from her home. Please contact Barbara, as soon as you can, so that she can gauge the numbers and what members would like to achieve from the group.

Course Leader: Barbara Hamlet (01233 625434)

Venue: Kennington

Dates: Frequency and dates tbc

Time: tbc

Showcasing our Groups

Our coffee mornings continue to be popular. They have good speakers and continue to attract an impressive number of attendees every month. This provides a good way of showcasing our groups, bringing them to life and encouraging new members to come along. So far this year we have had Book Groups, Digital Photography and Play Reading.,

Coming up we have:

April	Guitar Chords
May	Singing for Pleasure
June	U3A Art
July	Poetry Reading

Suggestions for more Courses

There continues to be a list of topics that members have requested that we should offer. These include Table Tennis, Line Dancing, Italian, Writing Skills and Playing Cards-Mainly for Men. If anyone would be willing to set up a course in these or other topics, or knows someone who would, then please contact:

Marion Dinwoodie, Programme Manager, (01233 712228 or mariondinwoodie.u3a@gmail.com)

New Trips coordinator

As I am sure most of you know, committee members serve for a maximum of 3 years and so I will be handing over to your new Trips Coordinator Carol Clay as from April 2019.

I joined the committee originally to "do my bit" for our U3A, it seemed a small price to pay for the benefits which were on offer and I was happy to join the other volunteers who keep the wheels oiled and the club running smoothly.

Soon after I joined the role of Trips coordinator became vacant and I was asked to take it on. I have been very lucky to have such a great group of ladies to help me in the role. We have had some fun times and consumed a fair amount of coffee and cake while thinking up ideas for interesting places to visit.

Most community projects large or small rely on volunteers, but most would admit they struggle to convince their membership that volunteering is not as time consuming or such hard work as they imagine. In fact it can be good fun and it allows you to meet more of the members and have a say in how the club is run. Your U3A will only continue to be successful if enough members volunteer and take part in the running of the club.

I certainly have enjoyed my time on the committee and I am very grateful to the members for their support. Perhaps you should give it a thought and in the meantime I look forward to working with the members of the holiday group to organise some new adventures.

Ieda Hogarth

News from the Holiday Group

The idea for establishing a holiday group within our U3A came about in much the same way as any other group. As a single person looking for holidays I found the options quite limited. I could travel with a company catering for single people and pay the premium for doing so or travel solo and pay the supplement for a single room and hope to meet like-minded people on the trip. I have sampled both and wondered if there was a better way and so I offered to try and get a holiday group off the ground.

After a little research and a lot of e-mailing/phoning I have managed to gather a small group together and we have had two exploratory meetings in the Tesco Crooksfoot community room. We have 22 members in the group at present and over coffee and biscuits (sorry group two, due

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to a confused start we missed out on the sweet treat) we have come up with some ideas. We also agreed that we want this to be an inclusive arrangement where even if you are travelling alone, you are among friends and need never be alone unless you choose to be. We are planning to visit Chester for 3 nights in early June and Valkenburg in Holland for 4 nights in late September. Both trips are by coach with a very reputable company and various outings are included along the way. Prices are very reasonable. Flyers and booking forms are available. The deadline for booking is mid-April.

Should you be fully booked for this year, perhaps we could tempt you in 2020 for a trip to Northern Spain including a leisurely cruise on Brittany ferries and 5 nights in Spain. You will notice earlier I did say "try" to get a holiday group off the ground, because without the support of the membership we cannot succeed. We need to get more members interested in getting together with a group of friends from our club to enjoy a short break doing something different.

Please give me a call or drop me an email if you are interested, my details are on the tri fold. I look forward to hearing from you or I may end up flying solo on my hols after all!

Ieda Hogarth

How was the Memory Maintenance Course?

I walked into Part 1 of the Memory Maintenance course wondering what I had let myself in for – no doubt some of my fellow participants were feeling the same way, but Barry Andrews, the course leader, soon had us at ease.

Apparently it is not known exactly how the brain works; human memory is a complicated collection of systems and processes which all need to work together. Over the course of four weekly sessions, we discussed the different types of memory, functions of various parts of the brain and what it needs to keep performing normally.

A healthy diet, physical exercise, brain exercise (solving puzzles, taking part in quizzes), sleep, (the brain is hard at work all time we are asleep) and positive relationships all play their part, and a good blood supply is essential. On the negative side, certain medication, vitamin deficiency, alcohol or drug abuse and anxiety can all adversely affect our memory.

We learned that networks of cells work together, the more they are used, the stronger they become. There are strategies we can use to help to improve our memory. We need to read in a good light, to concentrate and not be distracted say by a television on at the same time. As we get older our hearing becomes less efficient, if you don't hear what is being said you cannot remember it. If in doubt, it is a good idea to get our hearing tested, as we would our sight.

Different types of Dementia were discussed, as were steps to take to try and reduce the risk of developing these debilitating conditions.

If all this sounds rather heavy and depressing it wasn't. Factual information was interspersed with light hearted quizzes and memory tests, (we did our own marking and the results were not shared with everyone so no-one was embarrassed by a low score!).

I finished the course with far more knowledge of the mind than when I started, not to mention a folder of notes that I can read again to commit more facts to memory! I also had some interesting chats with U3A members whom I had not previously met, so thank you Barry for organising and delivering a very worthwhile course.

Maggie Greenwood



Mainly Men at Biggin Hill

A place where history was made

The Group was lucky enough to have the museum to themselves on the day of the visit as Tuesdays are confined to group visits so not open to the general public. So, after the initial cup of coffee we were given a tour by one of the resident volunteers who help run the site. Biggin Hill is synonymous with the 'Battle of Britain' however it was explained that because of its geographical position it was vital to the defence of the nation during WW2.



Our guide 'Andy' takes the tour

The Museum tells the story of Britain's most famous fighter station through the personal experiences of those who served there, and the community that supported them. The museum is situated on the same site as St George's RAF Chapel of Remembrance, built in 1951 to preserve the legacy of those who served and died at Biggin Hill during the Second World War. The museum safeguards the future of this important building.



Inspiring generations, remembering the Few and honouring the Many



RAF Memorial Chapel

Mainly Men is a group that likes to visit places that 'others do not reach' Despite the title of the group Ladies are welcome, but generally speaking the visits are somewhat male orientated.

U3A Ashford, Wye & District

Visit to The Tower of London on Wednesday 11th September 2019

As a royal palace and a secure fortress the Tower of London was probably being used for the secure storage of the monarch's most treasured possessions since its earliest years. Construction began in the reign of William the Conqueror (1066-1087) and continued through the centuries until the reign of Richard 11 (1377-1399). Apart from the draining of the moat the medieval defences remain unchanged to this day.

Your entrance fee is included in the trip total and gives you access to the many visitor attractions including the Crown Jewels, the White Tower, the Medieval Palace, the Fusiliers` Museum and many more throughout the Tower precincts.

There is a restaurant on site and two snack kiosks.

Total cost for the day £33

All monies are non-refundable

The coach will pick up from Wye Church at 8am and Ashford Rugby club at 8.15am

We will set off for home at 4pm.

Booking forms for Visits in 2019

Visit to The Tower of London on Wednesday 11th September 2019

Booking forms to: Mrs Teresa Clark (U3A Trips), 2 Dragonfly Close, Ashford TN23 5GH
Tel: 01233 639375 (between 5 and 6pm)
Ieda Hogarth: Home: 01233 612821 mobile: 07599 944971

NAME(S) (**CAPITALS**) 1..... Member: Yes/No

2..... Member: Yes/No

Tel..... E-mail.....

I will get on at: Wye at 08.00 / Ashford at 08.15 Please ring your choice.

I attach a cheque made out to U3A Ashford, Wye & District for **£33.00 per person.**

Signed:..... Date:.....

If you are applying by post, please include a stamped addressed envelope **or** give an e-mail address to get a confirmation of a place booked.

