



# NEWSLETTER: AUGUST 2021

## CHAIRMAN'S BLURB

I am very happy to be able to confirm to you all that our Main Meetings will return to the Salvation Army Hall, Maidstone as from September 20th 2021. There are a few rules to follow and they are

1. Entry will be from 1.30pm only and parking is restricted to two spaces only. One of these spaces is for our speaker. Further parking is at the discretion of the Hall as it has always been.
2. Please wear a mask on entry (for now anyway) and you can remove that when you enter the hall. I suspect this will change in time as we progress to normality.
3. At the time of writing its one in, one out for the toilets, again this may change in time.

Please can I ask those who organise tea/coffee to be aware that we will now need to restart the rota of help etc.?

The dates for future meetings are as follows: October 18th, November 15th and December 20th. Dates for the New Year will be as always the third Monday of each month.

Stephen Bush  
Chairman

## Meeting 16th August 2021: Sue Haydock: William Adams

Sue stepped into the breach at short notice after our booked speaker cancelled, and gave us an enlightening talk about William Adams, the blue eyed Samurai from Gillingham. It was interesting that at the beginning of her talk Sue asked how many had heard of him and a lot of arms were raised, but when she followed up by asking how many knew anything about him only a few were raised.

Well, we all know now!

Sue has forged links with the Japanese towns where William Adams lived in the early 1600s, and after a PR campaign in Japan in 1947 he is more famous there than in the UK.

## **Next Meeting: 20th September: Speaker: Pete Allen:**

To JOURNEY'S END – The life of R C Sherriff

In 1928, RC Sherriff wrote a play called Journey's End, which was set in a dugout during the Great War and based on his own experiences of serving with the 9th East Surrey Regiment on the Western Front. Set in the trenches of Saint-Quentin, it gave a realistic glimpse into the experiences of officers serving in a British army infantry company. Through this play, Sherriff secured an agent and the play debuted in the West End during spring 1928, where it was huge hit! Word of the play's success spread across the nation and around the world. By the end of the year it was even being performed on Broadway and had been translated into German!

### **FROM STAGE TO SCREEN**

The phenomenal success of Journey's End caught the attention of the movie studios, who recruited RC Sherriff to write the script for a talking movie version of Journey's End, which was released in 1930. In the following years, Sherriff went on to write the screenplays for, and contribute to, many films we've come to regard as British and Hollywood classics, including:

· Goodbye, Mr Chips. · The Invisible Man, · the Dambuster

**The following is an up-date on Group activities during the current lockdown, and, in some cases, what groups have to look forward to when things are back to 'normal'. Members are free to contact group leaders for more information on joining other groups. Below are reports on group activity, some direct from group leaders.**

**Would group leaders please provide up dates for the next Newsletter by 20<sup>th</sup> September to the Editor by email: [newsletter21-maidstoneu3a@outline.com](mailto:newsletter21-maidstoneu3a@outline.com)**

### **Armchair Travel**

The Armchair travel group had its first post "Boris' Freedom Day" meeting on 28th July at Marsham Street, in line with the Maidstone u3a Committee guidelines and each member carried out a personal "Covid risk assessment" to assure themselves that they felt safe in attending.

15 attended. We were all pleased to get together again (helped by tea and biscuits!). We got off to a chatty start by holding a quiz on such travel matters as "towns / cities and their rivers"; "counties and their county towns" and name this place from photos. Our lack of knowledge on these questions turned out to be ultimately

educational, and prompted the need for us to be more observant on our UK travels. We put together a programme for the rest of the year (August to November) and this has been circulated to group members. New members are always welcome.

### **Art 1**

We are currently producing paintings with the Olympic rings as a subject. See end of Newsletter.

### **Art 2**

No activity at the moment but the group will be meeting in a couple of months to discuss their future programme.

## **Art Appreciation 1**

6 out of 8 of the group met to discuss our choices of paintings featuring flowers. As ever, we all managed to find something completely different to talk about although there was a common theme of real botanical understanding among all the artists chosen.

Our chosen artist were John Nash - who had started adult life pursuing a career in botany but made his living (just) from art. Phillida gave us an insight into his fascinating life. Hanca chose Jeannette Slager, a Dutch artist who painted almost exclusively flowers, a painting by which Hanca is fortunate to own. Another artist painting exact and beautiful botanical representations of flowers was Arthur Harry Church chosen by Mick. Margaret chose Millais - yet another artist capable of painting flowers and plants to botanical perfection. Mary chose William Morris (his Sunflower wallpaper) not for its exact representation of the flower but for his clear understanding of the plant and his skill at presenting it to a wider audience in a unique way. And last, but by no mean least, Hilary spoke in general about botanical illustrators through the centuries and George Ehret in particular.

We had a thoroughly informative and entertaining afternoon spent in excellent company - all to be repeated in a month's time when we will discuss "Interiors"

## **Art Appreciation 2**

### **BOOKENDS**

Bookends met at Sue's house to discuss our latest book, entitled The Innocent, by Ian McEwan.

We agreed that it was an interesting book, set in Berlin in 1953, about the installation of monitoring devices tapping German telephone lines running through tunnels under Berlin. This was based on a true story, and was undertaken by an American and British team, and until its eventual discovery was a great success.

McEwan wove the espionage story around the love affair of an Englishman working on the installation of listening devices in the tunnels and a Berliner whom he met in a nightclub, which added an extra layer to the story.

Our next book is The Fine Art of Invisible Detection, by Robert Goddard and we will be meeting to discuss it at Chris's house on Thursday 26 August at 2pm. We have room for one or two new members, and if you wish to join our friendly group, please ring Sue Jackson,

### **BIRDWATCHING:**

We hope to start again with a meeting at Rye Harbour in August.

### **BUS PASS ADVENTURES**

### **CANASTA**

Following discussions with group members by phone, e mail and coffee morning we decided to restart the group. Our first meeting will be on the 7th September 10.30 am at Marsham Street Community Centre. Please let me know as soon as possible if you can't be there. At present we have a full group but may be able to expand our numbers at a later date so please do let me know if you are interested in joining us as it will help me to plan for the future..

### **CURRENT AFFAIRS GROUP**

## **ETYMOLOGY**

Mario reports: Were it not for the pandemic so many things would be different. My situation hasn't changed having taken no vaccine and no text. Even the use of external premises (not my home) or the possibility of forming a single group may prove not to be very popular because the situation is still raw and uncertainty still prevails. It might take a while before things settle down if ever for there are indeed many other concerns, too.

## **CLASSICAL FILM CLUB**

On hold.

## **FILM CLUB**

I am very much looking forward to returning this group back to normal monthly films as from October 2021

## **FRENCH BEGINNERS/IMPROVERS**

## **FRENCH CONVERSATION**

At last another garden meeting, though reduced by people actually being able to go on holiday! Progressed with our Maigret novel - still good reads - and confounded by a quiz on fashion. Much catching up and comments on the Olympics as main conversation topics. Hope that September may give us another garden get together on Wednesday 8 September.

## **GARDENING**

## **GEOLOGY**

## **HERBAL NEWS**

## **HISTORY**

## **LITERATURE**

There is no meeting in August as we need two months to read the 700 page "An instance of the Fingerpost" by Iain Pears which we shall be discussing at Marie's on Sept. 23rd.

## **LONDON WALKS (Occasional group)**

*On hold.*

## **LUNCHEON GROUP**

After a long 18 month break we are finally regrouping next month to once again enjoy some good conversation and good food with good friends. We will be meeting as usual on the first Tuesday of the month, commencing on Tuesday 7th September for lunch at Wildwood, Earl Street, Maidstone ME14 1PF Tel: 01622 755339

## **MAH JONG**

Tessa feels unable to continue heading the group and would like to hear if any of the members are willing to take over from her.

## **MUSICAL FILM & THEATRE**

As with the films I am hoping to bring this group back in the Autumn of this year. If there is a musical that you fancy seeing even if it's a repeat do let me know.

## **OMNI MUSICA GROUP**

The group, comprising members from Maidstone and Bearsted U3As, play recorders and ukuleles.

We resumed our fortnightly meetings on at Holy Cross Church, Bearsted on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> July at 2.00pm.

## **OPERA & DANCE GROUP**

On hold.

## **OUTINGS**

On hold.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Maidstone u3a doesn't have a (Digital) Photography Special Interest Group but Maidstone Invicta u3a does. This group is currently reforming after the lockdown closure and if Maidstone u3a members wish to join this group they can join Invicta u3a for a reduced fee. The group is a "learning, doing and enjoying group", not a group of expert photographers, and new members are welcome (whether they use a phone, or a digital camera, or a box brownie!). Two members of Maidstone u3a currently belong to this group and others are welcome.

Contact Mel Painter (see Armchair Travel entry for contact details).

## **RECORDER GROUP**

The situation in the recorder group remains the same. There isn't a group functioning at the moment. Hopefully with more interest a new group will come about.

## **SHORT WALKS GROUP**

### **TAI CHI MIXED ABILITY**

*(This group was set up to accommodate U3A members, but is run independently as it does not meet the U3A criteria to be treated as a formal U3A group.)*

The group will recommence in September, meeting as before at 10.30am at Marsham Street. 11 sessions will be £76 payable in advance. We have our full complement of 10 members. Mikey hopes to find a larger venue so if you want to join us in the future please let Mary know.

## **VILLAGE INTEREST GROUP**

### **WALKING GROUP**

U3A July 2021 Walks

And then there were two i.e. Lesley & myself. We met for a circular walk from Sutton Valance to go east along the Greensand Way before dropping down & returning below the ridge, with East Sutton Park on the skyline.

The August Walk will be from West Peckham on Friday 27th.

If it's only me it might be the last one.

### **WINE, BEER & CHEESE GROUP**

The July meeting was the second since lockdown and the first at the Community Centre.

All the wines were Portuguese: 1, Azevedo Loureiro Vinho Verde 2020, described as having aromas of fresh citrus, mango and grapefruit zest. 2. Adela de Pegoes Colheita Seleccionaafa Setubal 2020, a blend of Chardonnay and 4 local varieties with a brief period in oak. 3. Al Ria Tinto Algarve 2019, made with grape varieties typical of the area, with black fruit notes. 4. Casa Ferreirinha Estela Douro 2019. Suggested that the intense aroma of the rock rose shrub of the Douro influences the wine giving a balsamic and spicy aroma which confers character. 5. Carvalhais Duque de Viseu Tinto Dao 2019. A modern Portuguese red described as fruit forward. The cheese selected were: 1. Manchego from La Mancha and the milk of the Manchega breed of sheep. Aged between 60 days and 2 years, a firm cheese with a buttery texture. 2. Gorgonzola DOP Dolce, from pasteurised cows milk. A soft cheese with mild blue flavour. 3. Wookey Hole

Cheddar. 4. Blue Wensleydale, from pasteurised cows milk. 5. Kaltbach Gruyere, from raw cows milk and cave aged.

The Vinho Verde came top in our scoring, the order being 1, 5, 2, 4 with the Algarve Tinto being last. 4, the Blue Wensleydale was the favourite cheese followed by 2, 3, 4 and 1, the Manchego last, but the scorings were very close.

Our next meeting is on Friday 20th August in room 3 of the Community Centre, Marsham Street, 2.00 - 4.00 pm when Christine and David will be presenting a selection of wines. This meeting was planned to be in my garden but the weather has cooled somewhat

### **WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP**

We met in my garden on July 22nd when we were lucky to have a lovely sunny day.

There were only 5 of our group, with some of our members unable to attend because of ill health, unfortunately. However we had a lively discussion about the individual books that we had read since our last meeting in June.

During our meeting we heard some good news from our lovely librarian in Bearsted that she was going to be back in business very soon. As we still had our booklist from 2020, we agreed to ask her to get us any of the books on the list and the hope is that we will be able to distribute them at our August meeting on the 26th and after that a return to our pre Covid format.

We have not returned to meeting in each other's houses yet, and will probably meet outdoors until the weather defeats us.

### **Maidstone Town Centre – U3A Shared Learning Project**

MMF is to hold a series of regular talks for friends (and guests) at the pop up shop in Fremlin Walk.

These will start at 6.30pm, will conclude by 8.15pm, and will always be held on a Thursday.

The first talk will be on THURSDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER, featuring ROBIN AMBROSE the local historian and writer.

He will give an illustrated talk on the SIGHTS AND MEMORIES OF SANDLING. He will cover Sandling & Boarley : four Big Houses (including Boxley Abbey), the zoo, the riverside, farms, wartime and more.

Bookings please in advance - contact the Membership Secretary -  
info@maidstonemuseumsfriends.org.uk -

