

Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends

Earlier this month I caught an item on the radio reporting some research from Age UK and Southampton University about the importance for older people of participating in creative activities. This intrigued me and so I tried to track down the report on the internet. Either my computer skills are worse than I thought or it was buried deep in cyber space because in the end I had to email Age UK who sent me a link to a summary of their "Index of Wellbeing in Later Life". The report made interesting reading. It looks at how well older people are doing across a variety of areas – social, personal, financial, health and local environment – in order to get a snapshot of the current situation and inform future policy. What stood out for me was that taking part in creative and cultural group activities such as singing, playing an instrument, going to the opera or cinema makes the highest contribution to overall wellbeing. Also in the top quarter of positive effects were physical activities, thinking skills and social participation. Does this sound like U3A to you? If the research is right, it suggests that the activities available in a typical U3A like ours make a considerable contribution to the wellbeing and enjoyment of life of those who engage with them. I hope your participation in our activities will help to lift your sense of wellbeing in these grey, damp and chilly February days!

Best wishes

Valerie Willsher

Chairman Malling U3A

☎ 01732 885021 ✉ valerie.willsher@gmail.com

Refreshments

Tea Rota For February :

Michael Chapman, Sylvia Chapman,
Brenda Hurd and Angela Coslett-Derby



Early warning for March :-

Jennifer Cradock; Dianne Hiller;
Sylvia Davies; and Wendy Demuth

Brenda Hurd

Malling U3A Bake Off



Do you enjoy baking? Could you produce a special cake for our celebration for Malling U3A's 10th anniversary later this year? We would like to have a large iced and decorated sponge cake to cut at our special anniversary tea on Saturday, 2nd September 2017. Do you have the skills? Would you enjoy the challenge? There is plenty of time to discuss the details and we will reimburse the cost of the ingredients. If you are interested, please let Valerie Willsher know.

Grantham Institute
Climate Change and the Environment
An Institute of Imperial College London

GREENPEACE

Sevenoaks U3A Science Group

is advertising a **Study Day** on 'Climate Change: Facts, Causes and Consequences' on Wednesday, 14th June at East Malling Research Station. The cost is £18 (no lunch)

or £26 (including lunch). Contact either Valerie Willsher or Mike Rowe who can supply a booking form—to be returned before 26th May.

Monthly Meetings

(4th Tuesdays in Ryarsh Village Hall at 2 pm)

February 28th

'The Amazing World of Magic' by John Field

(N.B. Change to the scheduled speaker as he was unavailable at short notice.)



An astonishing and remarkable presentation by award-winning professional magician John Field from the famed Magic Circle. This delightful talk on magic will leave you entertained, amused and amazed. You will see John Field perform the oldest trick in magic, learn about the oldest magician, modern day scams and how to avoid them and about the despair of magic in the dark ages. He will also reveal the father of modern magic and famous magicians of the past and present. John, a retired solicitor, is a Member of The Magic Circle and was elevated to Associate Membership of The Inner Magic Circle, an exclusive group of magicians of which there are about 300 in the world. He has also been awarded a Silver Star for performing skills.

March 28th

'The European Parliament: how it works and who makes the laws'

by

Elisabeth Sweeney -Smith



European Parliament

The talk was booked as far back as 2015 and the subject is still very relevant today.

As David Dimbleby said in the early hours of 24th June 2016 – "The British people have spoken— and the answer is 'We're out!'".

Elisabeth will cover the formal processes by which this decision by the British electorate will lead to the UK leaving the European Union. She will also cover the mechanics of how legislative decisions have taken place in the EU during the UK's membership of 40+ years, and about how the EU works in terms of law-making.

Do you know that elected MEPs along with elected Government Ministers from across the 28 Member States of the EU, are the voice of the 505 million citizens and vote on EU law, rather than faceless bureaucrats!? She will explain who is making EU laws and where and who has given them a mandate.

However, it cannot be a talk that veers into the pros and cons of EU membership or indeed anything which could be construed as political, as this is the reserve of elected politicians and not an EU civil servant, as Elisabeth is.

News from the Groups

Computer Group

The next meeting will feature a talk by John Davies on "Shortcuts and Apps on a PC". The meeting is at 14.00hrs in Ryarsh Village Hall on Monday 6th March. All are welcome. Cost is £1.00 including tea & biscuits.
Chris Daly

Digital Photography Group

Trevor Ledamun and Mike Rowe have been members of the Digital Photography group since it was formed and have led the Group jointly as convenors for the last nine years. Due to health problems Trevor wishes to take a back seat, so we are looking for someone to help run the group and also provide some new ideas for session subjects.
So, please contact Trevor or Mike if you are interested.

Gardening Group

The Gardening Discussion Group had its first meeting of the season, and was well attended. The weather was kind to us and we were able to walk around our host's garden without bothering with umbrellas and wellies! As a group we discussed the problems presented to us by our host, and lots of suggestions were offered, including fake grass as a solution to a rather dark area; a north facing portion of the garden, central to the plot, mostly shaded and surrounding a promising raised bed for herbs. We also discussed evergreen climbers for south facing walls. After welcome tea and biscuits, we looked at the merits of plants in pots around the garden. How to plant up correctly, and their versatility to add colour to gaps in flower beds.

I am sure we will evolve into an interesting and diverse group as the year progresses, and members will contribute their ideas to that end.

I look forward to our next session.

Patricia Sutch

U3A Singing Group 2

We are holding a preliminary meeting to discuss what we would like to sing and on what days. If you are interested please phone or email *Anne Sargent* on 01622 764063 or a.sargent4@sky.com

YOUR POETRY PLEASE!



As part of our super 10th anniversary celebrations on September 2nd, Malling U3A is running a poetry competition open to all members, with prizes being awarded at the celebratory tea.

Entrants are encouraged to keep in mind the ideas of celebration/anniversary/Malling U3A, but otherwise the field is wide open for the creative juices to flow. Try your hands at haiku; limerick; sonnet; rhyming couplets; free verse; a humorous ballad; a reflective odeAll forms and moods will be welcome, but individual poems must be limited to a maximum of 30 lines.

Entries must be received no later than Friday, June 16th and will be sent to our independent judge. Typed entries only, with accompanying name, address, email, phone and membership number on a separate sheet of paper for the purposes of anonymity to: Dianne White, 26 Little Buckland Ave. Maidstone, Kent ME160BG, or by email attachment to: mrsdiannewhite@gmail.com Good luck all!

Dianne White

Visit to The Historic Dockyard at Chatham – Friday, 31st March

The Outings Committee's first outing for 2017 is to Chatham Historic Dockyard on Friday, 31st March. The visit includes a one-and-a-half hour guided tour, a fish and chip lunch, and a guided tour of the Ropery and Ocelot Submarine. You will have free time to visit the other museums on the site.

The cost is £28.50 per person, and to keep costs down transport is not included, so make your own way there. A flyer with full details and booking form is attached to the Newsletter.

Jenny Williamson

Outings 2017

Planning is now well underway for our programme of visits and outings during 2017, so it might be helpful for all members to know what is in the pipe-line. Some of the visits have already been booked, while some are still at the planning stage.

March 31st: Chatham Dockyard with fish and chip lunch. The flyer and booking form for this outing accompany this newsletter.

May 4th: A National Trust day out to Hughenden, home of Benjamin Disraeli, followed by a visit to Cliveden and afternoon tea.

June 22nd: Backstage and auditorium tours at the **Royal Albert Hall** am; afternoon free to visit national museums in South Kensington. Further details to follow. Cost is likely to be £30.

September 2nd: 10th anniversary celebration tea

September: Michelham Priory, with lunch. Details to follow.

October 21st: Kate Glassock at Ightham Mote in an adaptation of Henry James' ghostly tale *The Turn of the Screw*. Cost £37.50 will include a two-course dinner in the restaurant. Only 26 tickets have been reserved for this event so early booking is advised.

Looking forward into 2018!

A Kent-based outing to Walmer Castle with lunch or tea

Theatre visit to Tunbridge Wells, shopping-time; lunch or early after-show dinner.

Both of the above were discussed for this year, but it was felt that the programme was full enough with the additions of the Study Day on March 1st; the Anniversary Tea and our annual Christmas lunch, which has not yet been booked.

Your comments on any of the outings we organise are always appreciated. Are there too many/not enough/sufficient? Are the venues interesting? Is there enough variety in what we plan? Do they cater for varied tastes and interests? Is the cost too expensive/good value? Are there places you would like to suggest for next year? Would you like to help on the committee?

Please feel free to email me and make whatever comments or criticisms you wish as this is a committee serving all the members. We look forward to seeing you during the year.

Dianne White mrsdiannewhite@gmail.com

March Newsletter:

Copy is required by Sunday, 19th March
Please send material to the Editor, Mike Rowe at mike.quintain@gmail.com