

Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends

It is that time again when your committee is beginning to think about our AGM in June and the composition of the committee for 2017/18. Over the last few years the committee has been very stable but we are coming to a time when several people will be reaching the end of their term of office and will not be able or may not wish to stand again. One of the aspects that concerns me is that many of the officers or post holders have been doing the same job for many years. If one or more of them had to stand down for any reason, we would find ourselves in a situation where we had lost all our expertise in that area. For that reason we would like to find people who could 'shadow' certain committee roles so that they would be able to step into the breach if necessary.

This is particularly important where our finances are concerned. Ray Lawrence, our Treasurer, has set up new systems and everything is running very smoothly but if someone was willing to work with him, our eggs would not all be in one basket! Could this be you? Do you have some financial expertise which you would be willing to put to good use in your U3A? Our membership database is also operating well but it would be good to have a volunteer to work with our Membership Secretary and see how it works. The group that organises our outings would very much like to have some new faces. It has always been made up of both committee and 'ordinary' members. Do you have fresh ideas to put forward? And would you be willing to help in the planning and organisation of the outings which our members appreciate so much?

I have been chairman of Malling U3A for nearly three years now and I can honestly say that the committee is a pleasure to work with. We have been fortunate in having a committed group of people who just get on with their jobs and ensure that everything runs smoothly but we would very much like to welcome some new faces onto the committee at the AGM. There will be one or two vacancies and we also have the ability to co-opt additional members. When we send out nomination forms next month, do think very seriously about whether you would like to get involved. Talk to your friends and see if any of them would like to be nominated. If you want more information, do speak to any of the committee or contact me by email, phone or wherever you see me around.

Best wishes

Valerie Willsher

Chairman Malling U3A

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Refreshments

Tea Rota For April :
Gwendoline England; Jean Evans;
Christine Hewett; and Ted Bristow

Early warning for May :-
Sandra Eyers; Ann & Peter Fisher;
Patricia Francis

Brenda Hurd



Monthly Meetings

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

April 25th

'A Wealden Woman's War'
by Penny Harris

The Talk is based on a true story written by a Kent character called Edwina Hall. It starts in the long hot summer of 1940 and involves WW2, spitfires and hurricanes and a love story with a twist. The couple end up running a rural pub in a hamlet with a host of characters who introduce them into the joys of village life and who warn them about the upheaval when "they" arrive. The hop pickers arrive to "do up their 'uts" but also check out the pub and cause mischief. It's a warm affectionate tale of nostalgia for a time when there were 77,000 acres of hops in the U.K.



Imperial War Museum ©

May 23rd

'Satirist to Insanity - Celebrating the life and work of James Gillray'
by Ian Keable

N.B.—Due to the planned speaker being unavailable this subject replaces the one advertised in the handbook—this talk was originally scheduled for February (Ed).

James Gillray was the natural successor to William Hogarth but differed in concentrating on political, as opposed to social, satire. He was uncompromising, and fearless, in his caricaturing of politicians and the royal family alike. Combined with his brilliant draughtsmanship and engraving skills was a love of modern and classical art and literature which he seamlessly weaved into the subject matter of his prints. Although Gillray's reputation plummeted during the Victorian climate of moralistic righteousness, he is now generally accepted as the first, and the greatest, political cartoonist - an influence even today on the likes of Gerald Scarfe, Steve Bell and the television programme Spitting Image.



News from the Groups

New Group – Practical Skills



I'm sure that there are a number of members, both ladies and gentlemen who have practical hobbies from which we can all learn something. The hobbies might involve wood, metal, glass, pottery, model making of all sorts and in all materials. It would be good to have a small group so that we can all share tips and tricks from our own discipline and help each other out with ideas. I envisage that the emphasis will be on the practical rather than the theoretical aspects of hobbies.

If this appeals to you please contact Richard Meehan by email to register an interest.

Walking Group

Kate Adds has handed over leading the Walking Group to Shaun Gurteen as of the beginning of May. He can be contacted by email or phone.

Croquet

For those who signed up last September to play croquet, the long agonising wait is almost over. We start on Tuesday 2nd May at 10 o'clock (till midday). Even if you did not sign up please come and bring friends as well.

The site is at Cobdown, (now K Sports, Cobdown). The entrance is off Station Road, Ditton - ignore the new car park on the right and drive straight past the main club house, through the car park and turn right then first left; then you will see us. All you need to bring are trainers or flat soled shoes and £5.

Looking forward to seeing you.

David Parkins

Computer Group

The next meeting of the computer group will be on Monday 8th May, delayed due to the bank holiday, when there will be a talk by Trevor about "Transferring photos between Cameras, Tablets, phones and PC's".

We have been asked many times about saving photos from portable and mobile devices, so we hope this talk will answer your questions.

The meeting is open to all Malling U3A members and starts at 14.00hrs at Ryarsh Village Hall. The cost is £1.00 each including tea & Biscuits.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Chris Daly

Outing



With the newsletter this month you will receive a flyer with a booking form for **A day out in London at the Royal Albert Hall and local museums** on Thursday, 22nd June.

Outings offered by other U3As.

Recently some of our neighbouring U3As have been in touch to offer spare places on some of their forthcoming outings. Currently on offer are the following:

Bletchley Park Wednesday 7th June.

The cost of £30 per person includes "executive" coach travel from Meopham and a group tour of the entire site but not food or drinks. Departure time is 8 a.m. and expected return approx 6 p.m. (Meopham)

Shepherd Neame Brewery in Faversham Wednesday 17th May.

£23 per person includes a tour of the brewery and a tasting followed by a home cooked lunch. This is a self drive outing. (Kings Hill)

Mamma Mia at the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury Thursday 20th July.

Coach travel to Canterbury arriving 12 noon for the matinee performance at 2.30 p.m. and leaving at 5.45 p.m. £57 per person includes top stalls seats and coach but not lunch. (Kings Hill)

If you are interested in any of these please contact Mike Rowe or Valerie Willsher who can provide all the details. This sort of co-operation is of mutual benefit to all our U3As and we look forward to welcoming visitors from other U3As on some of our trips. However, our Outings Group works very hard to arrange interesting excursions for Malling U3A. A recent outing had to be cancelled due to lack of support, so if you are choosing between two or more events that are close in date, we hope that you will prioritise Malling trips!

Following last month's notice in the Newsletter . . .

are there really not 3 or 4 folk – out of our membership of more than 450 – who could represent us at the Seniors Advice and Information Fair on Friday 26th May at the TA Centre in Ditton, Aylesford?

Stop Press – due to the General Election in June, Tracy has postponed this event.

Tracey Crouch, MP, has again invited Malling U3A to be represented at an Advice Fair in Ditton, which will be from 10am until 2pm on Friday 26th May. She says: 'The Fair helps ensure Seniors are aware of the services available to them and how collectively organisations can assist older people to continue to play an active role in the community'. Malling U3A has participated in two previous events of this nature, and we are looking for, ideally, two members to sit at our Table for each of the four hours. We will supply all the literature relating to U3A generally and Malling U3A in particular. If you can spare an hour or so on the day, please contact Derek Carpenter and he will produce the rota. We have gained new members in this way before, and it is all good publicity for us in our 10th anniversary year.

Please consider whether you can help.

Poetry Competition

In case you failed to notice this in last month's newsletter, Malling U3A is running a poetry competition as part of its 10th birthday celebrations. All entries are welcome in any form from limericks to sonnets, ballads, free verse, rhyming couplets Just don't get too carried away and exceed 30 lines! Entries will be judged by an independent judge and small prizes awarded at the birthday tea on September 2nd. Typed entries to me by the middle of June, please, with your name on a separate piece of paper to preserve anonymity.

Here are some of the entries so far:-

I Remember, I Remember

(with apologies to Thomas Hood)

I remember, I remember
Joining the U3A
With time to learn and time to laugh
Sweet fullness every day.
The monthly speakers, full of wit
Who open windows in the mind
New friends and interests make me glad
Work days are left behind!

I remember, I remember
Leaving my daily job.
Retirement came, I looked ahead
And left without a sob.
It didn't come a wink too soon
Nor brings too long a day
With meetings, classes, visits, too,
I while my time away

I remember, I remember
The weary days long gone
The wintry mornings getting up
Before the rising sun.
Returning home, the sky all dark
Through wind and lashing rain
Rejoice, my soul, that life here'll bring
Those dreary days again!

A Limerick

A young retiree from Kent
With a sound poetic bent
Knowing her Keats from her Duffy
And being not at all stuffy
To Malling District she went.

A Haiku

Having fun, learning,
Making wonderful new friends.
That is U3A.

A Limerick

There was an old woman of Malling
Who found her retirement appalling
But she joined U3A
Which so brightened her day
That she knew she had found a fresh calling.

Now We Are Ten

Remember when we had scabs on our knees
And runny noses, we climbed rough trees
Played cowboys and Indians, fought with girls
Stole their sweets and pulled their curls?

Now we are ten I'm pleased to say
We put such childish things away
We kiss the girls, we tease the dog
At the groaning tea table we go the whole hog.

Now we are ten years married with kids,
Wipe runny noses, it's Ellie's, now Sid's,
Take out the dog armed with a poop scoop
Work, work, work til our eyelids droop.

Now we are ten years retired and seek
To find fulfilment and aim to keep
The brain alive, just like a sage
So hello to University of the Third Age.

Now our branch is ten and long may it last
Art, ambling, books, opera – it's all a blast
Chance to make friends, to go out to dinner,
Even refresh German, Ich bin ein Berliner!

We are ten years successful, singing for pleasure,
Cycling and walking, fun beyond measure
Spanish for holidays, Scrabble and Mahjong
Makers of History, you just can't go wrong.

So much to choose from, where will it end –
And suddenly we find we've made a new friend.
Not just the one either, social life's a pleasure;
Like-minded people delight our leisure.

Now we celebrate a very special day:
Happy anniversary Malling U3A!



Make sure that you put the date for our 10th Anniversary Celebratory Afternoon Tea in your diary – Saturday, 2nd September –
Invitations and further details will be going out with the Newsletter next month, so watch this space.

LEARN, LAUGH AND LIVE

With the newsletter this month you will receive a programme and booking form for the **South East U3A Forum one-day conference**. This gives U3A members across Kent, Surrey and Sussex an opportunity to meet, exchange news and views, and hear of innovations and examples of good practice. If you are interested in attending this free event which takes place on Wednesday 10th May, you should book direct with Alison Gaitonde whose contact details are on the programme. Further information, including directions, can be obtained from Valerie Willsher.

May Newsletter:

Copy is required by Sunday, 14th May
Please send material to the Editor, Mike Rowe at
mike.quintain@gmail.com