

Chairman's Letter

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"A U3A is a learning co-operative of older people, which enables members to share many educational, creative and leisure activities. ...Members, through sharing their knowledge, skills and experience, learn from each other."

Dear Friends
 Above is the opening statement of our national U3A's Aims and Guiding Principles, which came to the UK in 1981. Such was the success of our 'mother' Sevenoaks U3A, with several members living in the Malling area, that their chairman, Magda Sweetland brought a group of us together in early 2007 with the help of John and Sylvia Davies to form our own local U3A and thus Malling District U3A was launched.

Others who contributed to the initial steering group meeting included Gill Golding, Carol White, Helen Turner, Edward and Tricia Charlesworth and myself. The launch meeting was held on Tuesday, 25 September later that year when 120 prospective members attended to sign up for the 12 different interest groups and to hear about the programme of monthly meetings. This ranged from French Conversation through Local History; Bridge; Writers' Workshops; Computing to Guided Walks, Opera & Ballet to Scrabble and Science. The Chairman for the first year was Gill Golding and the Committee comprised, Sylvia Davies, John McKinlay, Helen Turner, Carol White, Richard Lea; and Maeve Bhavan. Having been established Malling District U3A was formally registered with the presentation to Inaugural Chairman of our certificate in March 2008 by area representative, Ian Funnell.

From our initial membership of 120 Malling U3A has grown to a current membership around 450 with 60 interest groups

and we have even assisted in the formation of the neighbouring U3As at Kings Hill in 2012 and Meopham in 2015, to which some of our members have migrated. After the initial year the chairmanship passed to Helen Turner, then to Richard Lea in 2011, who was succeeded by Valerie Willsher in 2014 and then me in 2017. Others serving on the committee over the years have been Kate Addis, Maureen Beard, Derek Carpenter, Doug Francis, Albert Granville (Treasurer), Joan Howe, Brenda Hurd, Ann Juett, Jan Kent, Carole Lawrence, Ray Lawrence, Daphne Rowlands, Anne Sargent (Secretary), Carole Shepherd, Angela Story, Jenny Tomlin, Anne Walton (Secretary), Dianne White, and Jenny Williamson.

Also over the last ten years the audio-visual equipment operation has been supervised by John Davies and all our printing has *Continued page 4*

YOU'RE CERTIFIED!

Area rep Ian Funnell presents the registration certificate to Chairman Gill Golding



LEARNING: Ideas worth spreading

People come together and learn together. Not for qualifications but for its own reward: the sheer joy of discovery!
 University of the Third Age

A common thread of the U3A is to share skills and life experiences, or as the website succinctly puts it 'the learners teach and the teachers learn, and there is no distinction between them.' Brainfood is provided by interest groups where topics are explored and debated in depth by the members but not usually taken outside the group.

With your support, we would like to extend the scope of the Newsletter by introducing a section entitled **LEARNING: Ideas worth spreading** to give the wider membership a flavour of the research and learning that goes on inside the individual groups.

Group Convenors will be invited to submit a piece on a subject that they have been studying, which could be a collective or individual effort.

For example, the Makers of History might offer a character they have looked at in detail, the Rock 'n' Rollers a blast of the soundtrack of their lives, the Poetry Group may have a sonnet with an interpretative narrative and maybe the Science Group could teach us how to turn base metal into gold!

To get the ball rolling, Angela Lovegrove has agreed to write an article on 'How to Read a Painting'.

It is recognised that some groups may not be able to contribute because the learning may be of a different nature.

For further information, or if you wish to contribute, please email S Sangha, Editor at: dumbodds@gmail.com



REFRESHMENTS: TEA ROTA FOR AUGUST

Jan Holdsworth, Chrys Short, Jacky & John Stow

Advance warning for September

Shelagh Jones, Mike Jones & Kay Lawson

Brenda Hurd





Clockwise from main: Brian betwixt Cheesegrater & Walkie Talkie; A thing of beauty is a joy to behold - Keats with his mucker Mike; eyes down and look in - the sonnets aloud; commemoration panel which marks the original site of the Globe Theatre.

Malling U3A Walk London Group 1 Shakespeare Wallah

'The theme was to walk in Shakespeare's footsteps, viewing theatres and churches he was associated with' writes Brian Stevenson, who led the 'Shakespeare and the Southbank' walk, which explored London south of the river

This took place on Friday 4th August, walking from London Bridge to St Andrew by the Wardrobe via Bankside and crossing the Thames over the Millennium Bridge. The theme was to walk in Shakespeare's footsteps, viewing theatres and churches he was associated with and at the various stops reading aloud some of the speeches from his plays and also some of the sonnets.

We had fine weather and 18 of us gathered at the Refectory, Southwark Cathedral for coffee before the walk began at 11.00 a.m. Our first stop was on the bank of the Thames which has been cleared of warehouses to give a view of the Cathedral. On the river wall, there is a quotation of Sir Walter Raleigh stating his love of the Thames and the London stars. Our first reading was Shakespeare's sonnet No 14 which says that he learns more from the beauty of his mistress's eyes and truth and beauty thrive in them. Then we went into the cathedral where I was ordained in 1970. Southwark Cathedral is overshadowed by St Paul's and Westminster Abbey but it is the oldest church in south London and St Thomas's hospital began in the Middle Ages at the gates of the priory. Shakespeare's brother Edmund was buried in the Cathedral in 1607. We stopped at William's memorial under the window which contains Hamlet,

Prospero, Ariel etc for another reading: 'It was a lover and his lass with a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino'. Then onto Lancelot Andrewes' tomb. He translated the first five books of the King James Bible and this influenced Shakespeare. We listened to a reading from Genesis describing Rebecca meeting Isaac at the well and falling in love. Another contemporary of Shakespeare who is buried in the Cathedral is John Marshall who made a fortune out of white bread and property. Last year his charity distributed £800,000 to schools and churches in Kent, Surrey and Lincolnshire for repair. He exemplified Shakespeare's soliloquy 'The quality of Mercy is not strained'.

Then our next stop was Guy's Hospital to see the statue of its most famous graduate - the poet John Keats. There we read his sonnet 'On sitting down to read King Lear once again' The statue is based on the poem. Thomas Guy's fortune was begun as a printer of bibles - and perhaps of Shakespeare's works.

Then it was a lunch break. What a choice Borough Market provides. Four of us dined at the Lang Restaurant at the bottom of the Shard where we discovered the main lavatories are on the 35th floor. After lunch, we walked through Borough Market along Park Street to the site of the original Globe Theatre where we had a powerful reading of

Henry V's. 'O for a Muse of fire that would ascend the brightest heaven of invention 'Sadly the Globe was burnt down during a performance of Henry VIII. Across Park Street is the Rose theatre where we read the Seven Ages of man: 'At first the infant mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.' The third age in this speech is 'the lover, sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad made to his mistress' eyebrow' We passed the modern Sam Wanamaker Theatre and the Globe which is a star attraction today. We paused at the middle of the Millennium Bridge to declaim the turning point in Macbeth - the knocking on the door 'here's a knocking indeed! if a man were porter of hell -gate, he should have old turning the key'. The final stop was at St Andrew by the Wardrobe which we reached shortly before 3.00p.m. It is the church of three great livery companies - Mercers, Apothecaries and Parish Clerks and Shakespeare lived within its parish in Ireland Yard close by Playhouse Yard. His attendance at worship in St Andrew's is attested by a fine plaque up in the gallery where he is shown kneeling at a prayer desk. Our final reading was Prospero's speech in The Tempest 'Our Revels now are ended.'

However, the London walkers are far from ended as we shall be on the march again in September.

August Monthly Meeting The History of Gardening

Tuesday 22 August
Stephen Harmer

Stephen Harmer teaches garden history at Hadlow College and has a masters degree in garden history. He covers from before the ancient Egyptians to present day. He has taken groups to visit historic gardens all over Britain, France, Italy, and Spain and has written a book on a lost Jersey garden entitled, La Chaire, The Story of a Lost Garden.

September Monthly Meeting Signing Up Day

Tuesday 26 September
Jenny Tomlin
Groups Co-ordinator

The Handbook and membership cards for 2017-18 will be available for collection in the Davison Room after the August meeting and also at the Anniversary Tea on the 2 September. The remainder will be posted for the Signing-up meeting on the 26 September.

We usually have cakes with our tea at the 'Signing Up' day; please let Brenda Hurd know if you can make one and if you can help for part of the afternoon.

Can you help please?

Mike Rowe, John Davies & Ray Lawrence

For the last ten years Trevor Ledamun has printed our documents, including flyers, newsletters and the handbook on



our own U3A colour, duplex laser printer; you may know that Trevor is giving up this task due to ill health and the Committee is looking for another member to take this up and give a home to the printer so that we can continue to do our own printing. The machine is an HP CP 3525dn and measures 20" in depth; 23" wide; and 14" high – it also needs a space 10" to the right to accommodate a tray.

All help will be gratefully appreciated. Please contact Mike, John or Ray for further details.

International Links

Committee Member, Chrys Short is looking at developing international links on behalf of Malling U3A.

Malling U3A

Pastoral Group

New Initiative
Derek Carpenter



As notified previously, a small Pastoral Group has been established within Malling U3A to be available to members should they be unwell, at home or in hospital, and who might appreciate a visit or a telephone call. The seven members comprising the Group are either retired Clergy or lay Ministers within one of our local parishes.

We are, we believe, a welcoming U3A and this sense of welcome has been expressed on many occasions. We also hope that we are a caring Organisation as well which has concern for its members, and this newly-established group of folk with pastoral experience is one way of expressing that concern and care.

Apart from illness, it may well be that there are other situations in which a listening ear might be helpful and welcomed by members – bereavement, worry about someone else, or wanting to share a concern of our own are obvious examples.

There is no way in which we want to intrude upon personal lives, and we are certainly not rooting out folk whom we might visit, but we do want to make ourselves available should the need arise and if members feel it is appropriate.

The seven members of the Team are:

Elaine Almond
Brenda Hurd
Jenny Sinclair
Alan Vousden

Derek Carpenter
Margaret Moore
Brian Stevenson

Each is willing to be approached individually if you know them and would particularly appreciate their help, but any approach may be made through Derek Carpenter who will happily put one of the Group members in touch with you as he feels it most appropriate (for example, on a geographical basis).

It may be helpful to keep a note of these names and 'phone numbers in a convenient place if you feel you may, at some time, want to contact us.

Malling U3A Events

Christmas Lunch

Thursday 7 December
Angela Storey



No groans please, we're British! We know that it is only August but his year's Christmas Lunch will be held at Hadlow Manor Hotel on Thursday 7 December. Full details will be circulated by Angela next month, in the meantime kindly earmark the date for a festive treat not to be missed.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Copy deadline for the next issue is Sunday, 13 September. Please email contributions, together with pics, if possible, to the Editor, S Sangha at: dumbodds@gmail.com



Outings

Regent's Canal Cruise +

Thursday 21 September
Dianne White



Forty-one members have booked for the outing in September, but Dianne understands that the boat can accommodate more. Our costs have been covered, but there is room on the coach for up to nine more. Details of the outing were attached to the July newsletter, or contact Dianne for information. She is away from August 9 - 21 but will be picking up her emails.
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Landscape History Group

Hop Picking in Kent

Ryarsh Church Hall
Thursday 19 October



The **Landscape History Group** is planning an open meeting on Thursday, 19th October in Ryarsh Church Hall (note – NOT the Village Hall) at 10.00 am when one of our members, Jennifer Naylor is keen to share her memories of hop picking in Kent.

Jennifer grew up on a hop farm and has many items of memorabilia to share with us, so this should be of interest to all who would like to learn more about life on a working hop farm. She was prompted to offer this meeting after our study day on Kent Culture when the subject of hop picking was covered briefly.

The meeting is open to all Malling U3A members, but as Ryarsh Church Hall is smaller than the Village Hall numbers will have to be limited, so please contact Mike Rowe () or Bill Stotesbury (), who convenes the Landscape History Group, to book a place. The hall can be found in Church Road - turn right off Roughetts Road and the hall and small car park are immediately on the right.

West Kent U3A Study Day

Middle East Matters

Tuesday 24 October
Tunbridge Wells U3A



A Study Day is being arranged by the Tunbridge Wells U3A and brings together William Tyler, Jonathan Farley & Brian Beeley, three academics who have lectured and written extensively on the Middle East. Please see the attached flyer for further details.

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been undertaken by Trevor Ledamun. The success of any organisation depends on good team work and we are grateful to all who have contributed to the success of Malling U3A over the last ten years both in leadership and behind the scenes.

We have heard a wide range of speakers at our monthly main meetings from "The Changing Role of Women" and "Rudyard Kipling – His Life and Verse" in the early days to Steve Pendleton's moving "Blinded on Duty"; the interactive "The Work of Local Magistrates"; the high speed car "Bloodhound SCC"; Charles Beauclerk's "Who Wrote Shakespeare?"; and many more. But, who can forget our inimitable Albert Granville's presentation of the story of "The Mary Rose" entirely from memory and ending with the words "And so we raised the Mary Rose" – not to mention the time when our speaker was late in arriving and Albert immediately stepped into the breach and began his talk for those had missed it the previous time, only to be cut short when the speaker eventually arrived! In addition to the programme of speakers at the monthly main meetings we have held three of our own Study Days on the subjects of The Vikings, Food Security and Kent Culture, all of which have been well supported by our members, supplemented by guests from other Kent U3As. Outings and visits as well as holidays abroad (Croatia, Holland, Italy & Normandy) have been a popular aspect of our programme and we are grateful to the outings team in leading and making the arrangements. We have always had successful Christmas lunches at a variety of venues, last year being at the magnificently decorated Hever Castle.

Looking back to the national scene in the year of our formation, which coincided with the financial crisis of 2007 / 8 after which the economic crisis gathered pace, the government provision for adult education started to reduce, and the demand for what U3As could provide continued to increase. This fueled a national expansion: 44 new U3As joined the Third Age Trust in 2008, and at the end of the year there were 209,079 members in 716 U3As. By 2010 national membership hit the quarter million mark. This is reflected in our own expansion and we are clearly providing a need for adult education and at the same time providing entertainment and enjoyment in the spirit of our motto at the head of our newsletter "Eruditio et Amicitia".

We celebrate our first decade at the 10th Anniversary Tea Party on 2 September and we look forward to a memorable occasion with thanks again to all those who have contributed to our U3A over the years.