



Charity No T1155593

Newsletter No 129

Learn Laugh and Live

October 2023

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Welcome to the newsletter for the month of October. It seems that summer is now preparing to depart as we move into autumn. I am reminded of John Keats and his ode "To Autumn" - "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness". It featured on the curriculum at my secondary school. At our October meeting there will be a Sevenoaks Seniors Information event next door to us in the Clock Tower pavilion. I hope there will not be too much of an impact on the car parking facilities. Many thanks to Jacky and Alan who represented us at the recent Crockenhill Village Produce Show. It was an excellent opportunity to promote our u3a. Additional thanks go to Jacky who is currently setting up our own Facebook

page. I need to repeat my request for somebody to join our committee as Assistant Treasurer. Clive does a fantastic job looking after our finances, but the time has come to find an assistant to help him. Please speak to me or Clive if you feel you might be that person. Unfortunately, our speaker for the October meeting has had to withdraw due to illness. We wish him a speedy recovery. Instead, there will be a presentation and a quiz provided by Alan Hayward, Dave Collins, and me. Please remember that the few printed newsletters available at the meeting are for those members unable to access it from the internet. I look forward to seeing you all on the 6th October. We start at 10:30 a.m.

John Baker Chairman

[Link to South East Region](#)

Swanley and District u3a Committee Members 2023/2024

			
John Baker Chair	David Collins Vice-Chair	Carol Willingham Business Secretary	Allan Hayward Group Co-Ordinator
			
Gill Baker Membership Secretary	Janet Hamling Minutes Secretary	Penny Collins Social Secretary	Sandra Treloar Committee Member
			
Tony Scale Committee Member	Clive Rayner Treasurer	Alan Hamling Speaker Organizer	Jacky Taylor Publicity Secretary

Swanley and District U3A Monthly Meeting Friday October 6th, 2023, at the Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley BR8 7BU

A Talk By John Baker and Quiz by David Collins

Upcoming talks over the next 3 months

November:- From Pottery to Potting Shed - Chris O'Donoghue

December:- A Christmas Talk version 2 - Andy Thomas

January 2024:- Boxers, bandits, and a Blind Beggar - Ian Bevan

Alan Hamling

Summary Of Activities During the Coming Month (s)

Facebook Page

"We now have a Facebook page called u3a Swanley & District - please click and follow this link [Facebook](#) where we will post items and photos of interest. Please have a look and like (hopefully) and share with your friends. The page has a link to our u3a website for more information or please contact Jacky Taylor (jackytaylor50@gmail.com)"

Membership Update

Help us to reach 'Target 300' - Half Year Membership only £10!

We are still trying to grow our membership back up to pre-pandemic numbers. We need to do this to keep our membership fees at a reasonable level, and to ensure that as many people as possible are accessing our range of lovely groups and events.

We are fortunate that Jacky Taylor has recently joined the committee as Publicity Secretary and is exploring ways of raising awareness of the u3a. She is placing advertisements in various local publications and on noticeboards and is developing a Facebook page for us.

We also have a reduced membership fee of just £10 for anybody joining us from this month, as a half-yearly rate up until the end of March 2024. Please can you let your retired (or semi-retired) friends and family know and invite them to come along to a monthly meeting. They can come as a visitor, before committing to membership if they prefer. Application forms are available at the meeting, or from our website.

Many thanks

Gill Baker

Bridge News

After enthusiastic recruiting by some of our new players the Bridge group had its inaugural meeting. We were expecting 5 players but ended up with a lively group of 8. Perfect as we split into two groups and began the task of learning the basics. We started off fairly easily and quickly questions arose, and our group was up and running. In the end everyone achieved much more than expected. Next month we hope to welcome back the players we met in September and meet for the first time a few new members.

Bridge Group meets at 41 Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, DA5 2EB

Meeting dates; October 4th; November 1st; December 6th; January 3rd.

We look forward to seeing you shortly.

Colin and Carolyn

A New Group

In order to reduce the pressure on numbers in the Art Appreciation Group, it is proposed to start an additional group. This is in line with the ethos of the u3a movement: “if a group is full, start a new group”. The new group will be called ‘Looking at Art’. The focus will be on visiting exhibitions and galleries, locally and further afield. If you are interested in joining, please speak to one of us at the next monthly meeting or contact us by email.

John and Gill Baker

gillbaker@talktalk.net

johnbaker52@talktalk.net

Christmas Meal Friday 1st December at Pedham Place

Thank you to everyone who has signed up for the Christmas lunch on 1st December.

If you have not yet paid for your place, please can you bring cash or cheque to the next meeting on Friday 6th October. **Cheques made payable to Swanley and District U3A** please. £30 per person.

If you have changed your mind, or now find that you cannot attend the lunch, please can you let me know, as places are now limited.

You also need to let me know your choices of starter (soup or prawn cocktail) and dessert (Xmas pudor cheesecake) if you have not done so already. Also, if you want the Vegan option or have other dietary needs.

There are just a few places left, so come and see me on the 6th to secure a place.

If you have any queries, you can email me at gillbaker@talktalk.net

Gill Baker

QUIZ DATES

5 quizzes at the Red Lion in the next month – 3 in the afternoon with no charge but voluntary donations to the RNLI requested and 2 in the evening with £3 entry, half the money given in prizes, the other half to the RNLI

AFTERNOON QUIZZES

Tuesday October 3rd 2pm.

Tuesday October 17th 2pm.

Tuesday October 31st 2pm.

EVENING QUIZZES

Wednesday October 11th 7.30pm.

Wednesday October 25th 7.30pm.

Please come along if you would like to join a U3A team on any of these dates.

David Collins.

OUTING

TIBERIUS DEADIUS with a 2-course CHRISTMAS LUNCH

On **Wednesday November 8th** we will take a coach to the venue in **Brick Lane, London** and enjoy a **2-course Christmas Supreme lunch** with **Cheesecake & hot drink. Tiberius Deadius Murder Mystery** is set in an ancient Rome that owes more to Pompeii than Claudius and is a complete hoot. The cast will act out scenes of the Murder Mystery and between courses visit each table so you can question them, build up the story and try to solve the murder.

Pick up points:

Hextable 10.50.

Swanley 11.00.

We will arrive for lunch at midday and head home at 3.30 ahead of the rush hour.

Penny Collins.

FUTURE OUTINGS

February (date still to be fixed) – Antiques hunt with an antiques expert.

March 17th – **Triplow Daffodil Festival.**

More information later.

Penny Collins.

NEW GROUP

Now that the cricket season is over, I find myself with a bit more time on my hands and am interested in starting a **Geography** group. My idea is that we choose a different country each month and each member of the group researches a different aspect of that country. We need not limit our research to strictly geographical aspects and topics for research could include:

Population & Topography

Rivers & Waterways

Flora & Fauna

Climate

Economy

Industry

Culture & Cuisine

Sport

Modern History since 1900.

I will be taking names to see if there is sufficient interest to form a group at the October meeting. I will be pleased to host the group from October to March but may ask for an alternative host occasionally during the cricket season.

David Collins.

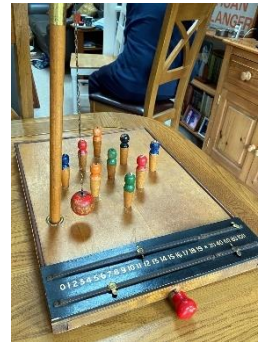
Group News

Antiques Group - September gathering

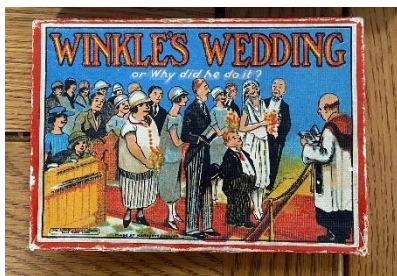
Here we are again! This month we asked people to bring items relating to 'Toys and Games'.

Judy had two contributions. Firstly, was the tabletop skittle game. Made of wood, from the 1930s, this belonged to Judy's father, and has been well played by all the family over the years at get togethers. It was from Kays of London. You pull the green handle to stand up the skittles and swing the wooden ball to knock them down. We all enjoyed having a go!

Judy also showed us a plastic 'Talk Up' doll which was made in Hong Kong in 1971 by Mattel, and they are now collectable. It says a range of phrases spoken by Jo Anne Worley (Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In, 1967-73). Judy purchased it new to appease her son when he was small.



Audrey had a selection of items by Chad Valley. One was a rather battered 'Gwenda' cooking set, made around 1950, and played with vigorously by Audrey. Her husband had contributed his two tinplate dart guns, which we handled with care as they looked lethal!



We then all played a round of 'Winkle's Wedding' – a bit like Consequences. A story was read out, and we were randomly given words which were inserted when we were pointed at randomly. Much fun was had. Chad Valley Toys originated near Birmingham at the end of 19th century, named after the valley of the Chad Brook. They successfully traded until the 1970s, and then had different owners until

2009 when the brand was purchased by Argos, now part of Sainsbury's.

I chose something out of my 'special' cabinet. A 1940s Selcol plastic doll, with removable outfits. I picked this up from an antique fair recently. The doll was known as 'Dolly Daydream' in the UK, and similar versions were made in Australia, called 'Miss Birdie'. In the US they were called 'Peggy'. She had different outfits – a pinafore dress, a siren suit, a coat, and a long party gown – which clipped on the figure.



Selcol were best known for making children’s musical instruments in the 1960s, such as the Beatle’s Big Six Guitar, and Ringo Starr’s Drum kit. These are very sought after now. In 2020 a guitar still in its packaging was sold for £3500!



We celebrated Tim’s birthday with some cake and enjoyed looking at his ‘Teddy Tails’ Annual (1935) and ‘Tiger Tim Annual’ (1934). Tim was keen to stress that these were not his own from childhood as he is not that old! The books were filled with reading material – factual and stories, on thick, heavy paper and were commonly given to children as Christmas presents.



Madeline’s father picked up items at antique fairs and auctions. He liked to mend things and made a new lid for the money box that Madeline now has. A coin is placed on a small perch, and then at the wind of a handle, a bird emerges to take the coin in its beak. She also had a Corgi Citroen Safari estate car made for the 1964 Winter Olympics, complete with a skier on the roof!

We had the chance to play another game, as Penny brought along a Victorian set of Happy Families. This was made by John Jaques in the 1880s, and the peculiar family members were all based on illustrations by Sir John Tenniel of ‘Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland’ fame.



We liked Sue’s Solitaire game, made of stone in the shape of an elephant, very tactile, and purchased in India. This simple board game has been played for centuries and consists of a number of balls usually arranged in a cross, with one missing in the middle. The game is played by jumping over pegs to remove them, until just one is left.

Lastly, John displayed his set of Flags of the World, which he bought to recreate his childhood passion for collecting these bubble-gum cards in the 1960s. There are 80 in the set, and each has interesting facts about the country on the back – name of the capital city, population, distance from London, currency etc. Several of us remembered similar collections featuring The Beatles, or The Man from Uncle.



Gill Baker

Art Appreciation Group

The monthly Monday 'Art Appreciation' group decided to have an outing for our September meeting, for which we chose the following two venues:-

1. Hastings Museum & Art Gallery



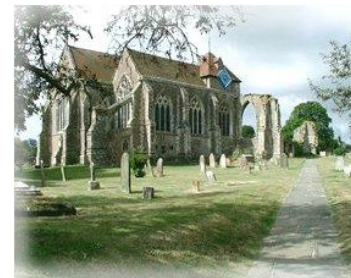
This is a very impressive building, with an eclectic mix of artefacts - well worth a visit - & entrance is free. Unfortunately, we'd just missed by one day their most recent art exhibition - but there was a wall of themed paintings 'Seascapes & Sailing' - 'Portraits & People' by various artists including one by Dorothea Sharp (who was born in Dartford) 'Children on a Hillside' (1874-1955), which was of particular interest to us, being an artist who we'd covered in one of our previous group meetings:-



2. St Thomas's Church (Winchelsea)



Renowned for its stunning stained-glass windows by Douglas Strachan, (26:5:1875 -20:11:1950) and considered to be the most significant Scottish designer of stained-glass windows in the 20th century in cathedrals and churches throughout the UK and beyond. He is also known for his paintings, murals, and illustrations.



Also, there is the headstone of Spike Milligan, upon which is his well-known epitaph 'Dúirt mé leat go raibh mé breoite' - Irish for "I told you I was ill" !

The foregoing is merely a synopsis of our 'grand day out' - as more can be gleaned from their respective websites.



Margaret Austin

Board and Card Games Afternoon.

Our next get together is Monday 23rd October between 2 - 4 pm at the Howard Centre, 39 Egerton Avenue, Hextable, Kent. BR8 7LG.

Everybody welcome, I have a selection of games however do bring any games that you want to play. We hire the room so there is a charge of £3.

Just come along or email for further details Joyce.wood1925@gmail.com

Joyce Wood

Croquet Petanque and Table Tennis

The game of Croquet between U3A v Swanley Town Council Wednesday 13th Sept 2023



(Photographs courtesy of Rod Sharman)

Croquet on a very overcast day (Wednesday 13th) six of the croquet team played a team from the council, this included the Mayor and his wife. We played in two games. Both went to a peg out (this means six all) with the council winning one and the U3A winning the second. I think all enjoyed it. Croquet closes down at the end of October But when we re start it would be nice if a few more joined us.



(Photographs courtesy of Rod Sharman)

New age Kurling, we now have one or two vacancies if you would like to play the next session is Monday 4th October, please contact me don't just turn up

Petanque this like croquet finishes on the last week of October (What will I do with myself) thank you to all that have supported these over the summer see you God willing in March.

Table tennis this has restarted after the summer break on the first and third Friday of the month at The leisure centre at Swanley

William Hammond

Digging4cake Gardening Group - Falconhurst Visit.

Nineteen Gardening members gathered on Wednesday 20th. September for our visit to Falconhurst Estate in Markbeece. It was a blustery day but kept dry for us during our tour of the garden



Nicola Talbot, the present lady of the house, gave us a short talk explaining the history of the estates she and her husband are the guardians at

Falconhurst and are the 5th. generation. The estate was built in the 1850s by John Chetwynd Talbot who was a barrister by trade and became Attorney General to the Prince of Wales. He purchased four hundred acres of farmland in 1849. He was not only active in building the Falconhurst Estate but also in building a church, school, and houses for the workers. Throughout the generations the Talbot family have been active members of the local community, each generation making their own mark. The original house was taken down in the early 1960s due to dry rot and also built of poor sandstone.



The main gardens today are set out on the site of the original building and the walls which are still standing form the background to the planting of Boxhedge showing the outline of the rooms. The gardens are in different sections with a large park area for grazing animals. There is a walled garden with a beautiful large Acer planted in 1923. The more formal garden planted with shrubs, Dahlias, Sedums, and other annuals. There is also a vegetable garden and fruit orchard. Unfortunately, we were not able to fully appreciate the 'wild' garden as the flowering season has come to an end. We were all able to have a leisurely stroll through the grounds and gardens at our own pace.



On our way to the barn, we were entertained by the two pet goats in a large pen enclosure having a boxing match and generally playing to the audience. Our visit ended with tea or coffee and cake which was enjoyed by all.



Heidi Baisch

London History Group - A PIMLICO WALK

Seven members of the London History Group recently explored the Pimlico district of the city. The origin of the name seems to have become lost in the mists of time - a local drink, a 16th century publican, a North American tribe? It was always a marshy area prone to flooding and eventually became part of the Grosvenor estate. The residential neighbourhood was created in the mid-19th century by Thomas Cubitt. By the 1860's the market gardens had been replaced with fine houses



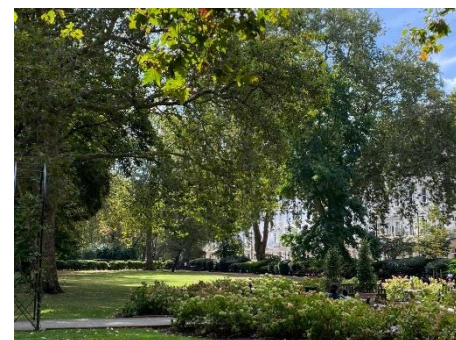
and squares. The plan was to develop another Belgravia, but Pimlico never succeeded as a rival. Most of it was sold by the Duke of Westminster in the 1950's.

Our walk started in Lupus Street where we stopped to admire the artwork of Eduardo Paolozzi. It is actually a ventilation shaft for the adjacent underground station! We saw the former home of Major Walter Clopton Wingfield, the "Father of Lawn Tennis". We crossed the road to visit St. Saviours Church, opened in 1864 for the residents of this new suburb. Laurence Olivier lived opposite and sang in the choir when his father was the curate. Next door is the Young England Kindergarten, famous because of someone who once worked here - a young Lady Diana Spencer.

St. Georges Square is big and impressive. It is the only Pimlico square open to the public. The others are very much private locations. The nearby Pimlico Gardens is home to a statue of William Huskisson. His unfortunate claim to fame is that he was the first person to be hit and killed by a train. This happened at the opening of the Liverpool – Manchester railway in 1830. He tried to cross the line to greet the Duke of Wellington.



We walked along Grosvenor Road passing Dolphin Square, built in the 1930's and still a sought-after London address. It has been home to a number of famous, and infamous, personalities such as Mandy Rice Davies and Christine Keeler, as well as politicians, secret agents, and spies. We paused at Claverton Street to hear the story of the Pimlico Poisoning, an unsolved murder mystery from the 1880's. We continued along Gloucester Road with its white Victorian houses, the green foliage of the trees and blue autumn sky. It conjured up a picture of London normally seen in those Richard Curtis films. Winston Churchill and his wife once lived next to the nearby Ecclestone Square. We continued our circular journey and, eventually, stopped for a well-earned pub lunch.



Please note: the famous 1949 film "Passport to Pimlico" was actually filmed across the river in Lambeth!

John Baker

Walking Group(s)

Tuesday 10 October 10.00 for 10.15

Meet **Morva** at at “**The Poacher and Partridge**”, **Hartlake Road, Tudeley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 0PH** for a fairly flat walk of between four and five miles. **Directions: by car:** Leave the A21 at the Tonbridge /A26/ Industrial Estate exit and continue along the A26. At the roundabout turn right into Tudeley Road. After two miles turn a sharp left into Hartlake Road. The pub is about half a mile along on the right. Please contact Morva (07811 643960, email morva.henry@icloud.com) to let her know you are coming and to stay whether you will be staying for lunch.

Tuesday 24 October 10.00 for 10.15

Meet **Colin** at the **public car park in the High Street, Otford TN14 5PQ** for his first walk for our group which will be generally flat of four to five miles long. **Directions: by car:** Take the A20 to Farningham then turn right on the A225. Continue through Eynsford until you eventually reach Otford. Go straight across the roundabout and the car park can be found on the right, opposite “The Bull”. There is a small charge for using it. **By public transport:** Come out of Otford station and turn left; the pub is about five minutes’ walk away on the far side of the roundabout. Please contact Colin on 07960 017523 or email him on lindaharris28@gmail.com to let him know you are coming and whether you want to stay for lunch in “The Bull” after.

Clive Rayner

MOTO (MEMBERS ON THEIR OWN) – WEDNESDAY, 4th OCTOBER, 2023

This is for all members who are living on their own and would like to meet up and have a coffee/tea and chat. Please come and join the group in the Mulberry Café at RUXLEY GARDEN CENTRE. We will be sitting inside the restaurant at the far-left hand side. The group is intended to be a way for people to arrange their own meetings, outings, activities in small groups. Please note that this is a change of venue from last month due to popular request.

It would be helpful if you let me know you if intend to come so that I have some idea of numbers.

My contact details are Tel: 01322 559534, email: sheila.derek@btinternet.com

Sheila Botterill

STROLLERS WALK IN SEPTEMBER – An enjoyable walk took place on 13th September through Joydens Wood.

1. STROLLERS WALK IN OCTOBER – WEDNESDAY, 11th OCTOBER for a walk round Hextable taking in the Avenue of Limes and Heritage Gardens. Park in the in the church at 10.15 for a 10.30 start.

ALL FUTURE WALKS NOW TAKE PLACE ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY IN THE MONTH.

This is an initiative for people who like walking at a slower pace. All welcome not just for people on their own. Please let me know if you intend to come.

My contact details are Tel: 01322 559534, email: sheila.derek@btinternet.com

Sheila Botterill

Newsletter

The closing date for the next newsletter will be Friday 27th October. Please send articles and pictures to tscale001@gmail.com , thank you. *Tony*



Contact Details

Chair	John Baker	johnbaker52@talktalk.net
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Assistant Co-ordinator	David Collins	dacollins53@hotmail.co.uk

For contact details of group leaders please contact Alan Hayward
achayward2512@yahoo.co.uk or **David Collins** dacollins53@hotmail.co.uk

Website-<https://u3asites.org.uk/Swanley>

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Swanley U3a Group Timetable August 2023

Group	Leader	Meeting Day
Antiques and Collectables	Gill and John Baker	3 rd Tuesday Morning
Art and Craft	Penny Collins	2 nd Tuesday Afternoon
Art Appreciation	Margaret Austin	1 st Monday Morning
Art Painting & Drawing and Art Outdoors	Gill Baker	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday Evening As Notified
Bird Watching	Leader As Advised	3 rd Wednesday Morning
Board & Card Games	Joyce Wood	2 nd or 4 th Monday Afternoon at Howard Centre Hextable
Book Group	Sue Scott & Wendy Keable	2 nd Monday pm Swanley Library
Bowls (Indoors)	Bob Mellor	4 th Thurs pm at the Whiteoak's
Bridge	Carolyn & Colin Chapman	1 st Wednesday Morning
Chess	Terry Bennet	4 th Wednesday Morning
Creative Writing	Penny Collins	1 st Thursday Morning
Croquet	Bill Hammond	Every Wednesday Afternoon
Gardening	Sandy English	4 th Wednesday Afternoon
Family History	Clive Taylor	TBC
History Modern	Jackie Griffiths	4 th Tuesday Afternoon
History of London 1	John Baker	2 nd Thursday Morning
History of London 2	John Baker	4 th Thursday Morning
Let's Speak French	Barbara Ramsey	1 st & 3 rd Wednesday Morning or as Notified
London History Walks	Alan Hayward & John Baker	As Notified
MOTO (Members on their own)	Sheila Botterill	1 st Wednesday Morning
Music Making	Mark Fittock	Every Tuesday Morning
Petanque	Bill Hammond	2 nd & 4 th Tue p.m. Princes Park Dartford
Photography (Digital)	Alan Hayward	2 nd Friday Afternoon
Play Reading	Penny Collins	3 rd Friday Morning
Quiz Team	Dave Collins	As Notified in Newsletter
Rugby-Walking & Appreciation	Alan Hayward & John Baker	As Notified
Singing Group		Not meeting at present
Spanish	Ruth Wilkinson	Every Thursday Morning
Strollers	Sheila Botterill	2 nd Wednesday Morning
Table Tennis	Bill Hammond	1 st & 3 rd Friday Afternoon
Theatre Trips	Sandy Treloar	As Notified
Word Magic on Zoom	Gill Heath	2 nd Wednesday Morning
Walking Group	Clive Rayner	As Notified in Newsletter
Wine and Dine	Santha Blankley	As Notified
Wine Tasting	Robert Brickell	4 th Wednesday Evening

