



Newsletter No 130

[Learn Laugh and Live](#)

November 2023

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Welcome to our newsletter for the month of November. As we now know, my reference to the arrival of autumn in the previous newsletter proved to be somewhat premature. Summer seemed to make an unexpected reappearance.

However, a recent visit to Sheffield Park revealed a spectacular variety of autumn colours on the trees. The changing of the clocks and a return to GMT last weekend really does now suggest that winter is waiting for us just around the corner. Enough of my rambling thoughts on the weather!

I am pleased to report that our membership continues to grow, and we are moving closer to our target of three hundred. Our new groups have begun

successfully. We are always immensely grateful to those people who volunteer to host or lead a study/interest group. Thank you! At the moment our committee still has a couple of vacancies. If you feel you would like to become involved in and contribute to the development of Swanley and District u3a, please speak to me. I hope you enjoyed listening to the speaker at our last monthly meeting. I thought he spoke eloquently with his stories of school life inside and outside the classroom. He did quite well and was available at fairly short notice. Many thanks to Dave Collins and Alan Hayward for their support. The speaker at our November meeting will be Chris O'Donoghue. He will be talking about his career as a potter, garden designer and author of crime fiction. It sounds intriguing. I look forward to seeing you all at the Alexandra Suite on the 3rd November. We start at 10:30 a.m.

John Baker Chairman

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 November 3rd, 2023, at the Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley BR8 7BU

From Pottery to Potting Shed - Chris O'Donoghue

The talk is about; 'This talk starts with his early days as a thrower at Poole Pottery, his time with Ceramics at Rye to garden design and restoration work.

Upcoming talks over the next 3 months

December:- A Christmas Talk version 2 - Andy Thomas

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

February 2024:- Doodle Bugs and Rockets - Bob Ogley

Alan Hamling

Summary Of Activities During the Coming Month (s)

Group Co-Ordinator News

We now have 36 active interest groups in Swanley u3a.

The new Geography group held its first meeting in October, the Family History group will be holding its first meeting on Thurs 23rd Nov in Swanley library and the Looking at Art group are also planning to have their first meeting in November.

If you are interested in starting a new group help and advice is available, so come and have a chat, I'm at the back of the hall for the main meeting.

Alan Hayward

MURDER MYSTERY LUNCH at Theresa Joanne Venue. Wednesday, November 8th

A reminder that coach pickup times are:

Hextable 10:50 am Swanley 11:00 am

We should arrive there about 12midday for lunch. I have one vegetarian meal booked. I am now leading the trip so if you need to contact me on

the day my mobile number is 07939339390. It should be an entertaining day out!

Thank you, **Sandra Treloar**

QUIZ DATES

4 quizzes at the Red Lion in the next month – 3 in the afternoon with no charge but voluntary donations to the RNLI requested and 1 in the evening with £3 entry, half the money given in prizes, the other half to the RNLI

AFTERNOON QUIZZES

Tuesday October 31st 2pm.

Thursday November 16th 2pm.

Tuesday November 28th 2pm.

EVENING QUIZ

Wednesday November 22nd 7.30pm.

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

David Collins.

OUTING

FINDERS KEEPERS – LONG MELFORD

Have you ever watched Bargain Hunt and thought you could do better? I am organising a fun Antiques hunt in the company of an Antiques expert on Monday February 5th 2024 in Long Melford.

We will arrive between 10.15 and 10.30 for Morning coffee with biscuits and a Finders Keepers briefing with the Antiques expert during which we will each be given £10. We will then have 90 minutes to search for our antique before returning to the restaurant for a 2-course lunch and coffee.

We can then grab a drink from the bar ready for the judging. A finalist will be chosen from each table and assuming no-one has found a Ming Vase for their tenner; the Finders Keepers winner will be selected based on auction value, quirkiness of the object or a great story to go with it. The winner will take home a trophy and the kudos that comes from victory and we will all take home what we bought and keep any money not spent.

We will leave for home around 3.30pm.

The total cost will be £68. This includes the coach, morning coffee, 2-course lunch, £10 to spend and the antiques expert for the day.

There are choices of menu for lunch from which you will need to select when booking:

Mains: Beef Lasagne served with garlic bread and salad. Sausage and Mash served with onion gravy.

Mushroom Pie served with chips and gravy.

Desserts: Apple Crumble served with custard. Chocolate Fudge Cake. Ice Cream.

Please sign up at the November meeting if you would like to go on this outing and pay the £68 either when booking or at next month's December meeting to secure your place.

Penny Collins

Group News

Board and Card Games Afternoon.

Our next get together is Monday 27th November between 2 - 4 pm at the Howard Centre, 39 Egerton Avenue, Hextable, Kent. BR8 7LG.

The December get together will be Monday 11th December.

Everybody welcome, please bring any games along that you want to play.

I have a wide selection, Boggle, Scrabble, Rummikub numbers, Rummikub Words, Logo Games, Sequence, Crowns, Trivial Pursuit, Cribbage. UNO, Tri-Ominos, Underground game, Mind the gap, Pass the Pigs etc.

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

Bridge Group

Three new members joined the Bridge group in October, so we had 3 tables up and running. We have a lovely mix of experienced players wanting to brush up their skills and players new to the game who are making excellent progress. What do I bid with a 4,4,4,1 distribution? Erm that's an awkward hand. Next month we look forward to seeing everyone again.

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

Colin and Carolyn

Geography Group

The first gathering of the Geography group was held on Friday 20th October – hosted by David & Penny Collins. There were 7 at the first meeting, good turnout – all had researched a different aspect of a selected country. The categories that can be covered are:

Population & Topography / Rivers & Waterways / Flora & Fauna / Climate

Economy & Industry / Culture & Cuisine / Sport / 20th Century History / Politics / Music

The group shared their research on France – this included the economic and industrial make up of this major European country – a country that is still heavily dominated by agriculture – especially the wine industry. Rivers and waterways were explored – which included the extensive canal networks across France, which are mainly used for tourism and leisure, but have been vital for industries in the past. Population comparisons were made with other European countries. The topography of the country is diverse and varied. From Mountains, Beaches, Lowland agricultural areas, and high-level industrial towns – which all influences the climate differences from North to South and East to West. Flora and Fauna was compared to that of the UK – of which many species of trees and shrubs are similar. France was dramatically affected by major historical events in the first half of the 20th century – 2 world wars fought on their soil – many working age men killed in both theatres of war. Vast parts of north France were devastated in 1914-18 and 1939-45 – all requiring rebuilding. France's Empire – colonies acquired and lost across the world were acknowledged – despite most now independent since the start of the 5th Republic constitution in 1959. We of course also discussed the vast selection of wines and spirits produced and the lovely food that it accompanies. A lovely cuppa and biscuits were enjoyed by all – and the next subject country was confirmed, and the categories allocated. I personally learnt lots about France that I didn't know before.

Lorraine Gaskin

Birdwatching Group

Visit to [Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve](#), Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks TN13 3DH on Wednesday 18th October 2023



(photo courtesy Paule Inness)

Path towards Carter Hide

Six of enjoyed our visit and were rewarded with a decent amount of sightings and managed to get to the Malt & Shovel In nearby Eynsford for lunch before the afternoon rain arrived.



(photo courtesy Paule Inness)

En-route to Willow Hide

Birds seen were as follows: Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Blue Tit, Robin, Coot, Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck, Wren, Woodpigeon, Carrion Crow, Moorhen & Mallard (from path and Carter Hide); Teal, Mute Swan, Shoveler, Cormorant, Little Egret, Lapwing, Moorhen, Kingfisher & Canada Goose (from Willow Hide); Jay, Goldcrest(heard) & Great Tit (from path); Pochard, Egyptian Goose(2 pairs), Black-headed Gull, Herring Gull & Juvenile Herring Gull, & Grey Heron (from Tyler Hide) making 30 species in total

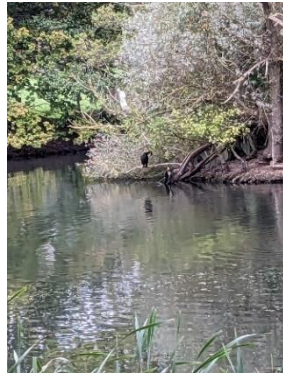


(photo courtesy Paule Inness)

Tyler Hide



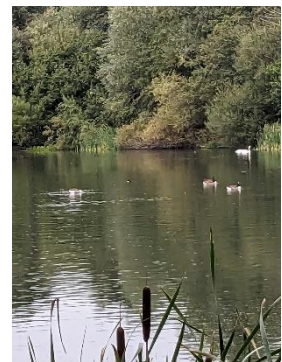
Robin on path to Willow:



Egret & Cormorants(Willow)



Mallards on path to Carter:



MuteSwan/CanadaGeese(Willow)



Next outing will be to the [Riverside Country Park](#), Lower Rainham Road, Gillingham ME7 2XH on Wednesday 15th November meet at 10:00 for a 10:15 start.

Tony Scale

Digging4cake Gardening Group - Chartwell visit Wednesday 25 October 2024

This month our gardening group visited Chartwell, the historical home of Sir Winston Churchill. The weather was kind to us while we strolled around the paths and terraces with terrific views across the Weald.



There were still plenty of flowers to be seen including Dahlias, Salvias, and Roses as well as some early autumn colour with the Cyclamens popping up and the leaves on the trees and shrubs turning red and yellow.



It wouldn't be a garden visit without checking out the cafe for tea and cake and of course there was the shop for more plants. You can never have too many plants, can you?



This was our last visit of the year.

We have had a very good time and visited many beautiful gardens. Thanks to everyone for organising their particular trips.

The next get together is our Christmas Lunch on the 6th December at The Chequers, Crockenhill, Phil will be circulating details shortly.

Our 2024 planning meeting will be next February

and of course our first trip will be to Thriplow in March.

Time to get your thinking hats on for other great venues for our group for 2024.

If you are interested in joining us looking at gardens, big or small, get in touch.

That's it for this year.

Sandy English Digging4cake gardening group

Digging4cake gardening group are welcoming in **Spring 2024** with a trip to **Thriplow Daffodil Festival and Country Craft Fair - Sunday 17 March 2024** We have booked a 49-seater coach to visit the festival, which is being held, at a time capsule of a village, in Cambridgeshire



The village closes itself, each year to traffic and the whole village puts on a flower show and a country craft fair. There are blacksmith demonstrations, classic cars and motorbikes, steam engines, stationary engines, military re-enactors, heavy horses, Morris dancers, tractor rides, food stalls, a local pub and much more.



Our two coach pickup points will be as usual at the bus stops, at rear of Asda Swanley and on Hextable Village Green. Although final cost will be dependent on numbers, we have costed it to be approximately £20 per person.



The entrance fee to the Thriplow festival is £7, however if we get a full coach on this trip, we will include the entrance fee within the £20 per person cost. As always, we do not intend to make a profit and the whole trip will be provided at cost.



Unfortunately, no food or drink can be included in this trip and members are asked to make their own arrangements, i.e., packed lunches, picnics, or of course you can purchase food at the festival or the local village pub.



Phil Saunders will be taking names of anyone interested in joining us on this trip, at the next U3A meeting on Friday 3rd November. A deposit of £10 per head will be required to finally secure your place and this will be collected at the following U3A meeting on Friday 1st December, or by no later than the 5th December 2023, when the list will close. (Details in Decembers newsletter)

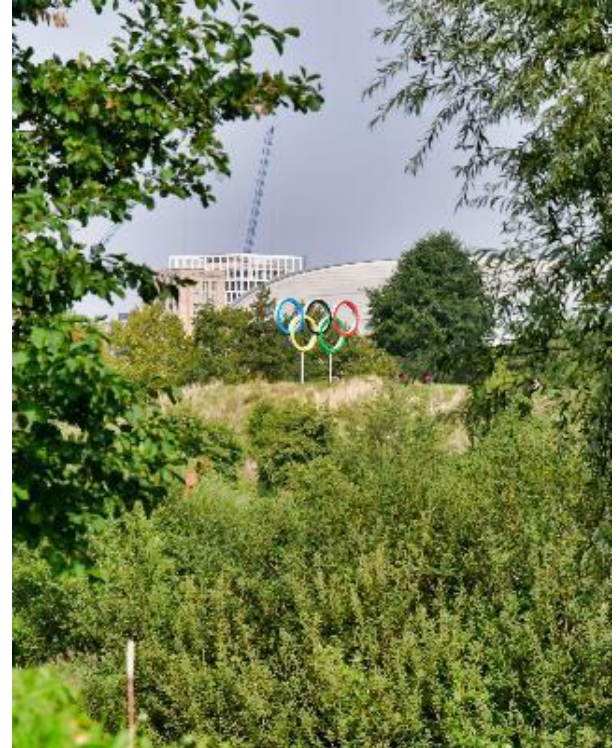
Currently over 50% of the seats have already been booked by our gardening group, and if we become fully booked, we will of course start a reserve list, to replace any dropouts. This is our groups first large-scale venture and if successful we would look to organise other trips later in 2024, to possibly Arundel Castle and Kew Gardens. So don't miss out on the limited places available on what should be a great Spring day out, so put your name down at the next meeting.

Sandy English Digging4cake gardening group.

Photography Group

Over the past couple of months, the photography have been out and about on Photo Shoots.

Firstly, in Sept we visited Queen Elizabeth (Olympic) Park, and it was interesting to see how much it had changed and developed since the Olympics in 2012.



Our 2nd Trip was a walk along the Regent Canal from Camden Lock pass London Zoo to Little Venice.



The last time we visited this area was to Camden Market in March 2020 just 3 days before lockdown came in.

There will be a slide show of our photos from these trips plus photos from the u3a trip to Sussex back in Sept at the main meeting.

Alan Hayward

London Off the Beaten Track Walk from Shoreditch Station to Hoxton Station

The London Walkers set off on a sunny day on 10th October to explore those parts of London that tourists don't normally go to. What they are missing! The back streets of the East End may lack the grandeur of the West End and the traditional sights of London, but there are still fine buildings to be seen and a strong sense of the "peoples" history.

We alighted at Shoreditch High Street station, which was originally a rural area outside the City walls, to be confronted by a fascinating display of street art (or graffiti to others) adorning the Braithwaite Viaduct, one of oldest railway structures in the world and neighbouring buildings.



Braithwaite Viaduct

Being outside of the control of the City of London, Shoreditch allowed the building of theatres in the 16th century. The plainly named "The Theatre" opened in 1576 as the first permanent playhouse in England where Shakespeare, Ben Johnson and the Lord Chamberlain's Men trod the boards followed by the opening of "The Curtain" theatre the following year. Of interest were the archaeological findings of pottery shards used as tokens for payment at the "box office" Later in the Victorian era the Standard National Theatre opened as one of the largest theatres in London and famous for its spectacular productions and circuses.

The peeling of church bells reminded us of the nursery rhyme "Oranges and Lemons" and the line "when I grow rich say the bells of Shoreditch" as we passed the parish church of St Leonard's where many Elizabethan actors had been buried. Although this church was closed, we were able to visit the St John the Baptist Church where the local vicar enthusiastically showed us the remarkable painted ceiling and talked of the lively local church community and the church's history of philanthropic welfare work.



St Leonard's Church



Painted Ceiling St Johns Church

Other fine public buildings in the area included the Victorian Shoreditch Town Hall and Magistrate's Court, alms-houses, schools, and former workhouses reminding us that in those times, the majority of local residents were very poor.



Shoreditch Town Hall



Old Street Magistrates Court

Hoxton was also a place of entertainment at the Britannia Theatre and in its pleasure gardens and had fashionable residential squares as well as a number of lunatic asylums and institutes for the destitute. Before WW2 Hoxton was famous as the woodworking district of London making fine furniture along with a lot of faked antique work for unwary buyers!

Our walk concluded at the Geffre alms-houses named after an English merchant whose fortune derived from the slave trade, that is now converted into the Museum of the Home.

Robert Moy

Note: We are repeating this walk on Thursday 16th November. There are still a couple of places available so if you are interested either e-mail me or sign up at the main meeting on 3rd Nov.

Alan Hayward

Shoreditch and Hoxton History Walk

The 10th October was a beautifully warm and sunny morning when around twenty-four of us set off on another of John and Alan's "Off The Beaten Track" walks. We arrived in Shoreditch for a wander around the quieter parts (yes, there are a few). There were many theatres in that area, and we learnt that the term "box office" derived from when ticket money was collected at the door and put in a ceramic box; afterwards being taken to an office where the box was smashed to retrieve the cash. Hence known thereafter as the "box office". We saw many churches including the famous Shoreditch church (of oranges and lemons rhyme fame). It was surprising to hear how many philanthropic people there were in the 18th /19th centuries who supported charitable establishments, especially schools and hospitals. We ended our walk at Hoxton. Thank you to Alan and John for a lovely day.

Mavis and Peter

MOTO (MEMBERS ON THEIR OWN) – WEDNESDAY, 1st NOVEMBER, 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 the change of venue. 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 OCTOBER – An enjoyable walk took place on 11th October around the Heritage Gardens.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL NOT BE AN ORGANISED WALK ON 8th NOVEMBER AS SEVERAL PEOPLE WILL BE GOING TO THE TIBERIUS DEADLIUS LUNCH. Members are welcome to arrange their own walks.

DECEMBER - STROLLERS WALK – WEDNESDAY, 13 TH DECEMBER – DARTFORD CENTRAL PARK –

MORE INFORMATION IN NEXT MONTH’S NEWSLETTER.

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

Walking Group(s)

TUDELEY WALK 10TH OCTOBER



Nice lunch at The Poacher and the Partridge

A good flat walk with pleasant weather from Tudeley, through fruit fields and skirting Five Oak Green.

Pausing at Capel Church, dedicated to St. Thomas a Becket, we took the opportunity to look inside. A very old, simple but lovely, building.

Outside around the graveyard the sheep were doing a grand job keeping the grass down.



Morva Henry

Monday 6 November 10.00 for 10.15

Meet **Christine** at **Christmas Tree Farm, Cudham Road, Downe BR6 7LF** for a fairly flat walk of about four miles through fields and woods with one steep set of steps in the woods. Refreshments will be available in the farm cafe after. **Directions: by car:** From Bromley take the Biggin Hill / Westerham road (A233), past Keston ponds. At the mini roundabout turn left to Downe (signposted) and follow the road to the village. When the road swings right, go straight ahead with the "George and Dragon" pub on your right and the church on your left to find Christmas Tree Farm a short way further down on your right. You can park free in the road by the farm. **By public transport:** You can get to Downe on an R8 bus from Orpington or a 146 bus from Bromley. Please contact Christine on 07523 273755 or email her at christine.raynsford@yahoo.co.uk to let her know you are coming.

Thursday 23 November 10.00 for 10.15

Meet **Clive** at "**The Black Horse**", **Tumblefield Road, Stansted Village TN15 7PR** for a walk of between three and four miles. **Directions: By car:** From the Farningham roundabout, take the A20 away from London for about 4.5 miles. After going under the M20 flyover, take the second turning left into Ash Lane, go ahead for about half a mile then take the first turning right into Hatham Green Lane. Go ahead for about half a mile when you will feed into Plaxdale Green Road. Keep going ahead along it to find Tumblefield Road about a quarter of a mile down on the right by the church. You will see the pub as you turn right. Please contact Clive at clivetheilex@gmail.com or 01474 706173 or 07748 8952686 to let him know you are coming and to let him know if you will be staying for lunch.

Clive Rayner

Newsletter

The closing date for the next newsletter will be Friday 24th November. Please send articles and pictures to tscale001@gmail.com , thank you. *Tony*



Contact Details

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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 October 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 Art Outdoors	Gill Baker	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday Evening
Art – Looking at Art	Gill & John Baker	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	Wednesday Afternoons- Summer
Gardening	Sandy English	4 th Wednesday Afternoon
Geography	Penny and Dave Collins	3 rd Friday Morning
Family History	Clive Taylor	4 th Thurs 10:30 @ Swanley Library
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
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 pm.Princes Park Dfd
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

