



Newsletter No 135

[Learn Laugh and Live](#)

April 2024

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Welcome to our newsletter for the month of April! Inside you will find news of forthcoming events and reports from some of our groups. The Swanley and District u3a study/interest groups offer a wide variety of learning opportunities. However, other possibilities exist slightly further afield. The Southeast u3a Forum Summer School takes place this year at the University of Chichester, 2nd – 5th September. An assortment of subjects will be available.

Details, including costs and booking procedures, will be displayed on our notice board at the Alexandra Suite. In addition, the Sevenoaks Annual Science Seminar will take place on the 5th June at East Malling.

The topic is Artificial Intelligence. Further information is to be issued in the near future. My thanks go to Sandy, Phil and the Gardening Group for organising the trip to the Thriplow Daffodil Festival. It was a very enjoyable day. There was a variety of stalls, activities, food, and drink to be found in this delightful Cambridgeshire village.

Our membership continues to grow with many people using the bank transfer method (BACS) to pay the subscription. Thank you! Remember you can collect your membership card and ask any questions at the April meeting. Speak to Gill, our membership secretary. Two other reminders! Please continue to park your car with care and consideration at the Alexandra Suite. Also, please switch off your mobile phone or turn it to silent mode before the meeting starts. Your co-operation is much appreciated.

At our March meeting, our speaker was the inimitable Tony Harris who presented his version of Margaret Thatcher. Once seen, never forgotten! Our speaker at the April meeting will be Alan Haines, another returning guest. He will present his Baby Boomer Nostalgia Show (Part Two). This is a follow up to his very enjoyable previous talk. I look forward to seeing you on the 5th April. We start at 10:30 a.m.

John Baker Chairman

Swanley and District u3a Committee Members 2024/2025

			
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 & Asst: Graham Withers	Alan Hamling Speaker Organizer	Jacky Taylor Publicity Secretary

Swanley and District U3A Monthly Meeting Friday April 5th, 2024, at the Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley BR8 7BU

The April talk is entitled The Baby Boomer nostalgic show part 2 - Alan Haines
The talk is about.

Upcoming talks over the next 2 months

May 2024 :- AGM with a quiz from - David Collins
June 2024:- C1. JFK: The politics of Hope and Expectation - Andrew J. Baker

Alan Hamling

Summary Of Activities During the Coming Month (s)

Group Co-Ordinator News

With our growing membership some of our interest groups are now becoming full and have waiting list, such that a second group could be formed but we do need new group leaders there is no reason why the group can't be a mirror image and share the same program it just needs someone to step forward. We will always help you set it up and there is a vast array of resources including national subject advisors who are only too willing to give advice. See also www.u3a.org.uk/learning There are numerous learning opportunities available to u3a members in addition to those that we offer. The Southeast u3a Forum Summer School this year runs from the 2nd -5th September at the University of Chichester and has a wide range of courses available. Details will be on the notice board at our monthly meeting or see <https://u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/events> As a thank you to our group leaders we are organising a lunch time social get together. The proposed date is Thursday 9th May further details we be emailed out to group leaders in due course.

Our Bethnal Green Off the Beaten Track walk attracted over 60 people (see separate report) and Ian Beavan our speaker at the January who gave a talk on Bethnal Green joined us on the 3rd walk and found out things about the area that he didn't know! There are 2 new walks planned for the area a linear one taking in Mile End Road, Stepney and Whitechapel and a circular one taking in other parts of Bethnal Green and Victoria park. Members who are signed up for the walks will be emailed in due course.

Alan Hayward

Photo Group visit to Crystal Palace

The photography group visited Crystal Palace in March a place many of hadn't been to for many decades. We went by train to Cystal Place (low level as it was originally known) station which was one of 2 stations built to serve the site of the 1851 exhibition building when it moved from Hyde Park. Crystal Palace (high level) station was closed in 1954 and subsequently demolished. A subway was built between this station and the Place for first class passages to proceed along. We were hoping to visit it but it is still undergoing refurbishment. We decided to be following the original Paxton's Heritage Trail which is marked by cast iron bollards with gold lettering. We saw the remains of the original Italian Terrace wall, the concert bowl which many of us had been to in the 1970's & 80's although the bowl has now been replace with a rather non-descript self-supporting metal roof. We managed to miss the maze somehow! but saw the Sports Complex and then on to the boating lake and the Dinosaurs sculptures which need some TLC having been there since the 1850's. A selection of our photos will be shown in a slideshow at the April Meeting



Alan Hayward

Target 300

Our membership is gradually increasing and, in an attempt, to recruit more members from Swanley and local villages, we are trying to reach them via our public Facebook page and our website Swanley & District u3a: Home (u3asites.org.uk)

Do you know anyone who may be interested in joining our lively group? Can you please look at our Facebook page and share it with your friends.

Many thanks!

Jacky Taylor Publicity Secretary

Southeast u3a Forum Summer School

Monday 2nd – Thursday 5th September 2024 University of Chichester

Subjects available will include Art, Mythology, Photography, Living History, Patchwork, Philosophy, Latin, Bridge, Illuminated Manuscripts, Science, Mathematics and Mah Jong

Accommodation costs from £140 - £360. Places can be booked on-line from 10:00 a.m. on 11th April 2024. www.u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/contact

MOTO (Members on Their Own) - Wednesday 3rd April 2024

This is for members who are 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 Cafe at Ruxley Garden Centre. We will be sitting inside the restaurant on the far left-hand side. The group is intended to be for people to arrange their own meetings activities in small groups. It would be helpful if you could let me know if you intend to come so that I have some idea of numbers.

My contact details are: telephone 01322 559534/07748950661 or email sheila.derek@btinternet.com

March Strollers - 10th April, 2024 - Meet at the church car park in Hextable at 10.15 for a 10-30 a:m start for a walk round Hextable Gardens and the Avenue of Limes and afterwards in the Church cafe for a coffee! Tea.

My contact details are Tel. 01322 559534/07748950661
email: Sheila.derek@btinternet.com

Sheila Derek

Membership for 2024-2025

Our new membership year begins at the beginning of April 2024, and runs until March 2025. The cost is remaining at £20.

The renewal process for the new year is open from January 2024, and runs through until April. You can renew at any time in that period.

You can do this as follows:

a) Our preferred option is that you pay your £20 renewal subscription by bank transfer.

The bank details are:

Bank: Natwest

Account number: 51170027

Sort code: 60 21 10

Account name: Swanley & District U3A

IMPORTANT - When your bank asks you to insert a **reference**, please put your **surname and membership** number so we know who made the payment! (For example - **BAKER117**)

PLUS, Please confirm that you have made this payment by emailing Gill Baker at gillbaker@talktalk.net If you are paying for a spouse or partner in addition to yourself, please provide both names and membership numbers in the email.

b) If you prefer, pay by cash or cheque at one of the monthly meetings. Cheques made payable to **Swanley and District U3A** please.

c) Or pay by post to me at the address below with a cheque (please don't send cash in the post)

Your new membership card will be available at the monthly meeting.

If you prefer to receive it by post, please send a stamped addressed envelope to

Gill Baker at 24 St Davids Road, Hextable, BR8 7RJ

Please let me know if any of your contact details have changed - address, email, phone numbers

etc.

We hope that you will want to stay with us for another year, but if you have decided not to renew, it would be very helpful if you could let me know. You are welcome to rejoin at any time if that is the case.

I hope this covers everything – please contact me if you need any clarification.

Many thanks!

Gill Baker Membership Secretary

Group News

Antiques and Collectables Group

Our group was invited to bring along a photo or two of interest.

John showed us an old family picture that was recently given to him by his brother. It shows his mum Betty and her two siblings, when she was 13 years old. Her brother Alan was 9 and her sister Brenda was 3. The date 6/12/1939 was written on the back, along with the name of the photographic studio, Jerome. WW2 had just begun and family life in Eltham was about to change significantly. The Jerome studio had a branch in Woolwich and continued to trade until the 1970s.



Judy brought along her most treasured possession, which was a leather wallet once owned by her grandfather. He used it whilst he was in service, and it contained family photos and also pictures of fellow officers who were killed. Remarkably you can see the hole where a bullet went through the wallet and some of the photos. This slowed the force of the shot and saved his life.



We liked Audrey's family gathering from about 1927, which shows her husband's relatives in their best clothes. Their name was originally Prendergast but changed to Pendergast possibly to avoid being thought of as Irish. Her husband's grandfather served in Salonica in the first War from 1915 to 1918, and had kept copies of the Balkan News, which Audrey brought along. The one shown is from February 1916.



I have very few old photos of my family, but I have some of my mother and her sister as children. The two I shared today, feature my mother as a new baby in 1931, held by her grandmother Elizabeth Benneworth, and by her mother Kate. I have copies of the 1901 and 1911 census for Elizabeth's family. She lived in Sunderland at that time, married to William who was from the Isle of Wight. By 1911 she was 44 and had given birth to 13 children, of which only 7 were still alive. My grandmother Kate was one of them, but sadly died of cancer aged 50 before I was born.

Madeline's grandfather Alfred was in the Royal Irish Fusiliers Tug of War team, even though he was only a small man. He is pictured in the front on the right. He joined up after WW1. He was from Deptford and came from a family of 12 children. Madeline also has his service record and pay book and his call-up papers. In WW2 his job was to look for gas leaks.

Sue only realised recently that the photo she has of her grandfather Reginald at a Scout Parade to celebrate the Coronation in Leicestershire in 1911, includes the figure of Lord Kitchener. The event was attended by 800 scouts in a cricket ground and Kitchener addressed the boys following an inspection and parade. He said the movement had broken down class prejudice, and had promoted discipline, comradeship, and resourcefulness. Apparently, the crowd laughed when Reginald went past, as he was very small compared to the rest!



We had no idea that Anna was once a famous breeder and judge of Siamese cats. She showed us magazines featuring her as a young woman judge in 1975. She was at that time the youngest ever judge of Siamese cats She travelled widely over the world to competitions. Her cats were known by the prefix Sianjo, which was formed from the names of her husband, her daughter and herself.

Gill Baker

Birdwatching Group

The next visit will be to Rainham Marshes on Wednesday 18th. April at 10.15 for a 10.30 a.m. start meeting in the reception area where tea and light snacks are available.

The group is welcoming and open to anyone who enjoys birds or just being out where nature is. No knowledge is required.

Bridge Group

Just a reminder that Bridge is on Wednesday at 10am at the Howard Venue in Hextable. Cost is £3.00 in cash please to pay for the room hire. Looking forward to seeing you in our new venue.

Have a lovely Easter.

Carolyn

London History Walks

“Off The Beaten Track” The Bethnal Green Walk

We were surprised and delighted that so many members wanted to participate in our history walk around Bethnal Green. In total the three walks (one in the rain, one on a sunny day, one on a cloudy day) attracted over sixty people. Thank you for your interest and support.

Bethnal Green proved to be a fascinating district of east London. As is usually the case, the historical interest was to be found in the buildings, the people, and their stories. The main industry for many years was weaving which was started by Huguenot refugees from France in the 18th century. By the end of the 19th century the local population was predominantly Jewish. Today there is a large community of people whose heritage is from Bangladesh. The number of old school buildings, not all used as schools today, reminded us how densely populated the area had once been. Significant places of interest included St. Matthew’s Church and its Watch House, the Grade II listed Victorian Bath House, 19th century Bethnal Green Library, the old houses in Victoria Park Square, York Hall and the Young V and A. The latter, which was formerly known as the Museum of Childhood, was an excellent place for lunch. It also gave the opportunity for some nostalgia. Near to the library is the Stairway to Heaven memorial at Bethnal Green tube station.

It is a reminder of the dreadful events of March 1943 when 173 local people lost their lives in a crush on the stairs whilst attempting to find shelter from German bombs. It was later acknowledged that there had been no air raid. People had been alarmed by the testing of guns nearby in Victoria park.

We passed the home of the 18th century bare knuckle boxing champion, Daniel Mendoza and the strangely named Salmon and Ball pub. Weavers Field is the district’s largest park. It was once filled with narrow streets of small houses. Voss Street illustrated how narrow the streets had been. Oxford house was established in 1896 as a place where university graduates could undertake social work in this very poor part of London. Certain names are always associated with Bethnal Green. The notorious Kray twins are still a constant presence - their old school, their boxing club, their various



pubs, their favourite café, Pellicci's. It is having been run by the same family since 1900. Of course, there is the legend of the Blind Beggar, a story dating back hundreds of years and lost in the mists of time. The circular walk concluded at Shoreditch High Street Station. We intend to explore other "Off The Beaten Track" areas of East London. Look out for further information.



John and Alan

OUTINGS 3 RIVERS TOUR

Friday May 17th- Coach pick up Hextable 9.00 Swanley 9.10.

Please let Penny know if you need a vegetarian or gluten free diet.

Tuesday July 9th- If you are on the list for this date and have not yet paid, please pay Penny at the monthly meeting to secure your place.

Unless someone drops out, this outing is now full.

Penny Collins.

QUIZ DATES

It was good to see so many of you at the first 2 quizzes at the Howard Venue in March. We raised over £130 for the RNLI.

Dates for this month's quiz afternoons (cost £3 per person) are:

Tuesday April 2nd 2pm. Thursday April 18th 2pm.

Please join us at the Howard Venue if you would like to join a U3A team on either of these dates.

David Collins

NEW SOCIAL COMMITTEE

We are delighted by the popularity of our outings, shown by the numbers booking in to them and by members making suggestions for future trips. We would like to arrange more but will need help if we are to do so.

For this reason, we are looking to form a social committee, separate from the main committee. We would only need to meet twice a year, to work out a programme of events and share the workload. Please let us know if you are interested.

Penny and David Collins

Walking Group

Tuesday 23rd April 10.00 for 10.15

Meet **Colin** at **Crockenhill Village Hall car park BR8 8LT** for a circular walk of about four miles through countryside and farmland. Please contact Colin on 07960 017523 to let him know you are coming and please say if you want lunch in "The Chequers", Crockenhill after.

Clive Rayner

Thriplow Daffodil Festival & Country Fair - Sunday 17 March 2024



On a very wet Sunday morning 44 of us made our way by coach to The Thriplow Daffodil Festival which is about 7 miles from Cambridge.

By the time we got there the weather decided to be kind to us and we spent a mild, sometimes sunny afternoon strolling around the village.



There was something for everyone. Craft tents, plant stalls, classic cars, shire horses, a blacksmith, Morris dancers and food from around the world with music from live bands. There was even a bell ringing demonstration which was very informative and entertaining. Not allowed to have a go though.

Obviously, there were daffodils growing everywhere and plenty to bring home.



A very good day was had by all and it's worth a visit if you fancy it next year.

Sandy English
Digging4cake Gardening Group

Newsletter

The closing date for the next newsletter will be Friday 29th March. Please send articles and pictures to tscale001@gmail.com , thank you. *Tony*



Contact Details

Chair	John Baker	johnbaker52@talktalk.net
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Social/Outings Coordinator	Penny Collins	pennycollins@hotmail.com 01322 669724
Membership	Gill Baker	gillbaker@talktalk.net
Group Co-ordinator	Alan Hayward	achayward2512@yahoo.co.uk
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 Mon pm HowardCtrHex
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	2 nd & 4 th Wed pm Swanley RecGrd
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
Kurling	Bill Hammond	2 nd &4 th Mon pm. White Oak
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	1 st & 3 rd Tue 15.30. PrincesPrkDfd
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 2-3.30pm White Oak
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

