



Charity No T1155593

Newsletter No 119

Learn Laugh and Live

December 2022

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Welcome to our December newsletter, the final edition of the year. Once again, you will be able to read reports of the various u3a activities and information about future events. This has been a year of consolidation following almost two disrupted years during the lockdown period. It is pleasing to see that our total membership is now nearing two hundred and fifty. It is also worth noting that we are approaching the tenth anniversary of our foundation.

I hope you all enjoyed our November meeting. Tony Harris was on top form as he entertained us with tales from the world of film, theatre, and pantomime. All of them interesting and some of them quite outrageous! Our December meeting will have a Christmas flavour. Our speaker, Bertie Pearce, will be

telling us about some of the traditions dating back to Victorian times. His presentation is called "A Dickens of a Christmas" In addition, our Singing Group will be entertaining us with some songs. There will also be mince pies and a free raffle! I need to remind you to bring your own cup/mug to the meeting. It makes life much easier for our volunteers in charge of the refreshments. Your co-operation is much appreciated.

Please remember the Christmas lunch which will take place on the 9th December at Pedham Place Golf Club. Further details can be found in this newsletter. Finally, I will take this opportunity to wish you the very best for the festive season. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on the 2nd December. We start at 10:30 a.m.

John Baker

[Link to South East Region](#)

Swanley and District u3a Committee Members 2022/2023

			
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
			Vacancy
Tony Scale Committee Member	Clive Rayner Treasurer	Alan Hamling Speaker Organizer	Committee Member

Swanley and District U3A Monthly Meeting Friday December 2nd

at the Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley BR8 7BU

The December talk is entitled "A Dickens of a Christmas and God Bless Us Everyone" - Bertie Pearce, The talk is a Dickensian Christmas with Readings, Biographical details, and conjuring tricks.

Upcoming talks over the next 3 months

- January: - Reliving our own story - Andrew J. Baker
- February: - M19 escape lines and "James Bond" gadgets Helen Fry
- March: - The story of RAF Biggin Hill - Bob Ogley

Alan Hamling

Summary Of Activities During the Coming Months

OUTINGS

Please look out in next month's newsletter for possible outings in 2023.

Penny Collins.

PLAYREADING

We had much fun and lots of laughs reading **Last Tango In Whitby** by **Mike Harding**. Set in the North on a day trip to Whitby, a romance develops. The bus journey to Whitby is hilarious. Next month we will be reading a **JB Priestley** play, **I Have Been Here Before**.

Penny Collins.

QUIZ DATES

I am just running one Quiz evening at the Red Lion in December with a Christmas theme. This will be on **Wednesday December 14th** 7.30pm. There is a £3 charge per head with half the money given in prizes and the other half going to the RNLI.

Please come along if you would like to join a U3A team and test your knowledge of Christmas questions.

I will also be providing a Table Quiz with a Christmas theme at the U3A Christmas Dinner.

David Collins.

Swanley U3A Christmas Carols at Wilmington Memorial Hall Tuesday 20th December 2022 **2.00 pm**

The Swanley U3A singing group invite members of the U3A to our Christmas get-together on Tuesday 20th December between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm. Why not join us in singing Christmas carols with the group, accompanied by Mark Fittock' s music group.

Mince pies and mulled wine will be on offer!

For further information please contact Sue Scott scottsusan146@gmail.com

MOTO (MEMBERS ON THEIR OWN) – WEDNESDAY 7th DECEMBER 2022

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 us at the Mulberry Tree café at Ruxley Manor Garden Centre. We will be inside the restaurant.

PLEASE NOTE THE JANUARY MOTO MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE ON JANUARY 4th

PLEASE NOTE THERE IS NO STROLLERS WALK ARRANGED FOR DECEMBER

STROLLERS WALK IN JANUARY – 11th JANUARY – for a walk around Shoreham. Please meet in the free car park – 10.15 a.m. for a 10.30 start.

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

Sheila Botterill

GROUP NEWS

Group Co-Ordinator News

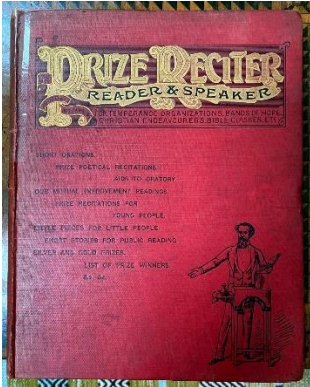
The Swanley Groups Directory has been updated and is now available on our website (although at present there is an issue with website host sever so you may see a message saying it's been suspended) and an updated Group Timetable can be found at the end of the newsletter.

Swanley U3A will be celebrating its 10th birthday next year (our 1st Newsletter was in Feb 2013). Back then we had an initial 24 interest groups – now we have 32. Although some of the initial groups have fallen by the wayside for one reason or another, new ones have sprung up or risen again in a different format. 13 of the original groups are still going strong. We feel it would be nice to celebrate our 10th birthday for example by having some displays at the main meeting either on the notice boards (articles), tabletops (for the crafts) or in the form of photos that could be put together in a slide show to show what we have done collectively over the past 10 years. So put your thinking caps on and let us have your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions of how we can achieve this together.

Alan Hayward

News from the Groups

Antiques and Collectables



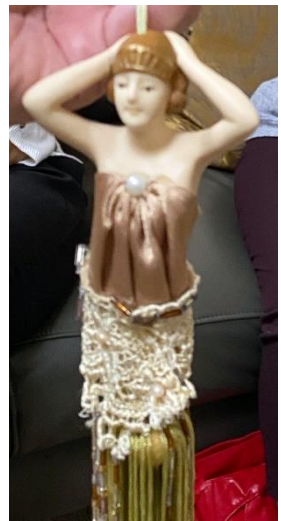
Another random assortment of treasures this month – Wendy went first, with a Temperance movement book from 1900 called Prize Reciter. This was aimed at children, with moralistic tales about the perils of drink and other nasty habits. There were some quite scary messages and illustrations to emphasise the warnings. This provoked a discussion about the Temperance movement and one person remembered that their grandmother, who was a strict Baptist, would not even eat a trifle if she thought there was sherry in it!



Jenny purchased a box of odds and ends at an auction, which included an interesting French ceramic match holder and striker. There was also a pretty 1930s porcelain figure with long tassels, to hang up on cupboards as decoration. It can be worth bidding on a 'mystery' box!

Judy showed us a 'free sample' French ceramic bottle, called a mignonette, bought in Otford, which was given away by the Jacobert company to promote the sale of its liqueurs. Sometimes these small vessels were used to contain oyster sauce.

They are quite collectable and can be found in different shapes and sizes.



Penny's lacquered wooden jewellery box was also purchased in Otford. It was very pretty and probably Chinese or Japanese. The three figures were inlaid with lustrous shell pieces. Penny is not sure of its origin, but we decided it was a jewellery box, as it was lined in red



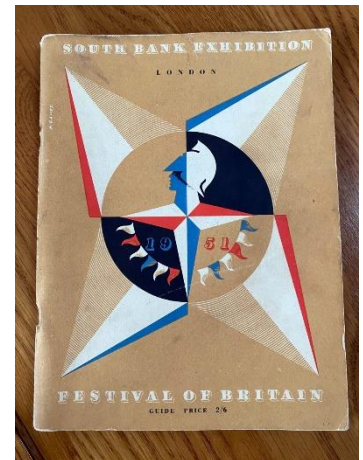
We were intrigued by Tim's small, sweet tin, which turned out to contain a large number of antique red seals. These were given to Tim by a relative in Hextable. They were all seals that had been carefully cut off documents and letters from different companies and businesses. Most of them looked Victorian. It is still possible to buy sealing wax and stamps, and they are often used on legal documents.



I recently purchased a small container made from a gourd, together with a silver straw. After some research, I found out that it was a Yerba Mate Gourd from South America. This was made to contain an herb infusion drink, which was drunk through the straw, called a Bombillas, as it had a sieve on the end to strain the liquid. The drink was traditionally passed around at social events and was reportedly stimulating and energizing. If you are interested, you can buy versions of the 'tea' from Amazon, Holland and Barrett, and even Waitrose!



John's contribution was a guide to the 1951 Festival of Britain exhibition on the South Bank. Costing half a crown, it gave information about visiting the exhibition, but also many articles about what was happening to rebuild Britain after WW2. The aim was to give British people a feeling of recovery and progress, with optimism for the future. It focussed on principles of urban design using the international 'modernist' style. It was marking the 100th anniversary of the Great Exhibition in 1851. As often is the case, the adverts in the booklet were also very interesting!



Gill Baker

Board Games and Card Afternoons

Our next afternoon will take place on Monday 12th December 2022 at the Howard Centre, Egerton Avenue, Hextable, BR8 7LG Between 2pm and 4pm. (Cost £3 for room hire). Bring along any games you want to play.

Please note that after Christmas we will be meeting twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Monday, 9th and 23rd January 2023.

If you would like to join us please email Joyce.wood@sky.com or come along on the day.

Joyce Wood

Curling, Croquet, Table Tennis and Petanque



Table tennis this is this Friday(2nd) this will be the last one till January 21st next year thank you to all who have supported this. Can I remind all who have signed up for lunch at the Bull, it is next Wednesday (7th) at 1pm if possible, can you bring cash, as it will make life easier.

New age curling we have met twice, and it went very well, the next session is on Monday 5th December at White oak indoor bowls club starting at 2pm till 4 pm if you would like to have a go see me after the meeting. Cost is only £3

I would like to thank all who have attended Croquet, Petanque, and table tennis without you they would not take part

I wish you, and all the U3A a happy Christmas and see you all in the new year.

William Hammond

MOTO (MEMBERS ON THEIR OWN) – WEDNESDAY 7th DECEMBER 2022

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 us at the Mulberry Tree café at Ruxley Manor Garden Centre. We will be inside the restaurant. Please note that we will be sitting straight ahead as you enter the café at table 25, just in front of the quiet area. Ideas for activities would be most welcome. The group is intended to be a way for people to arrange their own meetings, outings, activities in small groups. It would be helpful if you let me know you if intend to come so that I have some idea of numbers.

PLEASE NOTE THE JANUARY MOTO MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE ON JANUARY 4th.

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

Sheila Botterill

STROLLERS WALK IN HEXTABLE

On 8th November, eleven members enjoyed a Strollers Walk in Hextable Gardens followed by a walk through the Avenue of Limes and afterwards some refreshments at the Church Café.



PLEASE NOTE THERE IS NO STROLLERS WALK ARRANGED FOR DECEMBER

STROLLERS WALK IN JANUARY – 11th JANUARY – for a walk around Shoreham. Please meet in the free car park – 10.15 a.m. 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

London Off the Beaten Track Walks

A historical walk through Bermondsey

On 8th November twenty four U3A intrepid London Walkers set off to explore the fascinating but lesser-known areas around Bermondsey despite inclement weather and traffic disruption caused by climate change activists! Once more our path had been thoroughly researched beforehand by Alan and John to include every conceivable place of interest. Bermondsey is that area lying south of London Bridge Station, and which had been one of the poorest areas of Victorian London where the foul smells of the leather trade held sway. Skins and hides coming from the Smithfield Market across town were soaked in tannery pits using urine, dog poo, lime, and other noxious substances to tan the leather. The trade had disappeared from the area by the 1980s leaving behind some fine commercial buildings such as the Leathermarket Exchange and Neckinger Mills.



Further back in history the area had been the site of Bermondsey Abbey from the 11th century rivalling in height and size Westminster Abbey until its dissolution in 1537. Subsequently it was torn down and little remains today of this great structure save for a few street names. The squalid housing of the tannery workers and the grim Bermondsey workhouse have long been replaced by 1920s social housing developments such as the much admired Arnold Estate. We did however find well preserved and attractive 17th century

housing in Grange Walk and surrounding areas.

Our London walks always incorporate something of the history of Education as John points out the various charitable schools along our path such as the Ragged Schools for society's most destitute children that existed before compulsory education was introduced. Of equal interest are the philanthropic housing and social developments for ordinary working people such as the Guinness Trust buildings, The Time & Talents Settlement & Methodist Missions.



The leather industry of the past was later replaced by food processing with the sweeter smells of biscuits, jam, and chocolate production along with that of vinegar. But now Bermondsey Street is rapidly moving on from its past malodorous squalor to become gentrified with cafes and restaurants and expensive warehouse loft conversions.

Robert Moy



The Leather Market



Watchtower & public Drinking Fountain

Bermondsey Wireworks Ghost Sign, Tanner St.

Bermondsey History Walk

On 8th November around 24 intrepid members (weather and M25 climate protesters notwithstanding) set off from Dartford station for the last history walk of the season with Alan and John. From London Bridge we walked to Bermondsey where leather was processed using noxious substances. The stench can only be imagined!! It is surprising how much of the past can be seen in the faded painted wall signs in the area; looking up as well as down is the answer. John told us about the Victorian “Ragged schools” which were financed by charity before schooling was compulsory. We also saw a school keepers house which was the only remaining building of the original school. Where a workhouse once stood, there are now tennis courts and gardens. Once again, many thanks to Alan and John for their informative and interesting tour around Bermondsey and we look forward to more walks next year.

Mavis Treen

Walking Groups

Monday 5th December 10.00 for 10.15

Meet at Christine at Hall Place car park, Bourne Road, Bexley, DA5 1PQ for a four mile flat linear walk to Avery Hill Park, through woods and open spaces. Bring your bus pass for return journey back to Hall Place. There is a cafe at Avery Hill for coffee, sandwiches, cake etc. Directions: by car, the A2 at the Black Prince Interchange and follow the A223 Bourne Road signed Crayford; from the roundabout after 200 metres turn right into the Hall Place car park & park on the right. By public transport, the buses B12, 132, 229 & 492 pass close by & Bexley rail station is one mile (20 minutes' walk) away. Please contact Christine on 07523 273755 or email her at christine.raynsford@yahoo.co.uk to let her know you are coming.

Friday 30th December 10.00 for 10.15

Meet Mark at his home, 41 Crescent Gardens Swanley BR8 7HE for a four mile walk to help recover from the Christmas excesses that will go via Birchwood Golf Club and Joydens Wood. A lunch of veggie soup or BBQ sausages will be provided by Mark after. Directions: Crescent Gardens is just off the A20, near the "Bull" at Birchwood. If you would like to come, please contact Mark Fittock email fittock75@gmail.com or phone 01322665026 indicating if you would like to stay for lunch.

Clive Rayner

Newsletter

The closing date for the next newsletter will be Friday 30^h December. Please send articles and pictures to tscale001@gmail.com , thank you. *Tony*



Membership Cards Issue Notification: -

Membership Update

The membership fee for anyone joining from now is £10, for the remainder of the year up until the end of March 2023.

From January 2023, I will be collecting money (£20) from existing members for the year commencing 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. More information on how to pay will be in the next newsletter.

Any enquiries to me at gillbaker@talktalk.net

Many thanks

Gill Baker - Membership Secretary

Contact Details

Chair	John Baker	johnbaker52@talktalk.net
Vice Chair	David Collins	dacollins53@hotmail.com
Business Secretary	Carol Willingham	carolw8920@gmail.com
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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Group Timetable

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 Afternoon Swanley Library
Bowls (Indoors)	Bob Mellor & John Underwood	4 th Thursday Afternoon at the Whiteoak's Centre
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
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 Tuesday Afternoon 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	Sue Scott	3 rd Tuesday Afternoon
Spanish	Leigh Aldrich	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

