



Charity No T1155593

# Newsletter No 122

Learn Laugh and Live

**March 2023**

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Welcome to the March edition of our monthly newsletter. Inside you will find news and information, as well as some reports from our study/interest groups. Swanley and District u3a is now ten years old. Our first newsletter was published in February 2013, and it was soon followed by our first general meeting. I know that many of you have been part of the u3a since the very beginning. In order to acknowledge and celebrate this special occasion, we have invited groups to provide displays and presentations which tell our story. You will be able to see them at our next meeting. Please take a few minutes to look at them before the meeting starts or before you leave at the end of the morning.

The Photography Group has a selection of photographs celebrating a variety of events and outings. The London History Group has compiled a short quiz. You are invited to test your knowledge of our capital city! We also have some of the original advertising posters and documents used to launch the u3a in 2013. They were kindly donated by Pauline Long. It is pleasing to note that half of our current membership has already renewed for 2023/24. The annual subscription is still £20. There are several ways to pay. Speak to Gill, our membership secretary, for further details. Thank you for your co-operation in making the front two rows available for those members with hearing difficulties. This seemed to work well and enabled everyone to hear our speaker at the last meeting. Can I also ask you to continue to bring your own mugs and cups to the Alexandra Suite. This greatly helps our volunteers who serve the refreshments.

The speaker at our next meeting will be Bob Ogley. He is a well-known local speaker and author of over twenty books. His subject is the story of RAF Biggin Hill. He will talk about the women and men who helped to make it such a famous place.

I look forward to seeing you all on the 3rd March. We start at 10:30 a.m.

**John Baker**

[Link to South East Region](#)

### Swanley and District u3a Committee Members 2022/2023

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

**Swanley and District U3A Monthly Meeting Friday March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, at the Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley BR8 7BU**

The March talk is entitled "The story of RAF Biggin Hill" - Bob Ogley

The talk is about the most famous fighter station in the world from its days as a wireless testing centre to the creation of the RAF.

**Upcoming talks over the next 3 months.**

April:-      The Baby Boomer Nostalgic Show - Alan Haines

May:-      The AGM and a Quiz by David

June:-      A Policeman's Lot !!! - Neil Sadler

**Alan Hamling**

## Annual General Meeting Swanley & District U3a

Notice is hereby given that the 2023 Annual General Meeting of the Swanley and District U3a will take place at The Alexandra Suite, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

The nomination form for a position on the Swanley & District U3a committee is included as an attachment to this newsletter. Completed forms must be returned to [carolw8920@gmail.com](mailto:carolw8920@gmail.com) by no later than Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

**Carol Willingham**  
**Business Secretary**

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Please remember that there are numerous learning opportunities available to u3a members in addition to those offered at Swanley and District. For example, the annual Southeast Summer School takes place in Chichester 4th – 7th September. A wide range of courses will be available. Details can be found on page 23 of the recent Third Age Matters magazine. We are also reminded about the Learning for Everyone opportunities. This initiative includes, special events, subject networks, access to subject advisers, workshops and courses. Further information can be found at [www.u3a.org.uk/learning](http://www.u3a.org.uk/learning)

**John Baker**

## Summary Of Activities During the Coming Month

### GROUP NEWS

#### Group Co-Ordinator News

Our **March 2023** sees Swanley U3A celebrating its **10<sup>th</sup> birthday**.

Thank you to those groups that are taking part.

There will also be a sideshow of 10 years of Swanley U3A “2013-2023”.

The ‘off the beaten track’ London walks restarted in February with a circular walk from Wapping Overground Station.

Two dates were pencilled in to repeat the Bermondsey walks in March and then it was announced that there would be train strikes! Alternative dates have now been arranged and details will be sent to all those that have signed up for the ‘Of the Beaten Track’ walks. If you want to be added to the distribution list, please sign up at the back of the hall at the main meeting.

**Alan Hayward**

### Board and Card games

Board and Card Games Afternoon for March will take place on Monday 27th March at the Howard Centre, 39 Egerton Avenue, Hextable, Kent. BR8 7LG. Between 2-4 pm.

**Joyce Wood** [Joyce.wood@sky.com](mailto:Joyce.wood@sky.com)

## OUTINGS

The **Cambridge** trip on April 27<sup>th</sup> has proved to be very popular and is now full.

I am also organising a trip to **Ashdown Forest** on June 19<sup>th</sup> which will include a tour of the Forest with coffee and lunch. In the afternoon we will visit the Georgian **St Hill Manor** and estate and have a **cream tea** in the fantastic **Monkey Room**. Cost will be £54 and there are still several places available. I will be taking bookings with payments at the **March** meeting.  
**Penny Collins.**

## QUIZ DATES

I will be running 3 quizzes at the Red Lion this month – 2 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 February 28<sup>th</sup> 2pm. Thursday March 16<sup>th</sup> 2pm.

### EVENING QUIZ

Wednesday March 22<sup>nd</sup> 7.30pm.

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

**David Collins.**

### 'The Shawshank Redemption'

**Orchard Theatre**

**12th April 2:30pm.**

I have booked 15 tickets to see this play at the reduced price of £30:50.

Despite protests of innocence, lawyer Andy Dufresne is handed a double life sentence for the brutal murder of his wife and her lover. Incarcerated in the notorious Shawshank maximum security prison, he quickly realizes no-one can survive alone. Andy strikes up an unlikely friendship with the prison 'fixer' Red. Things start to take a turn for the better but, subjected to abuse, not least by the Prison Governor, who uses Andy's skills and knowledge for his own ends, Andy devises a plan to beat the system.

The 1984 film starring Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman, was nominated for 7 Academy awards. If you haven't seen it, you have missed a treat. It's a powerful film, examining injustice, courage, hope and the importance of friendship.

Based on Stephen King's novella 'Rita Hayworth and the Shawshank Redemption,' this thrilling adaptation stars Joe Absolom playing Andy. Joe has been on TV screens for 25 years, notably in Eastenders and Doc Martin, and Ben Onnukwe who plays Red has a 30 year stage career, as well as appearing on TV for 11 years as Recall Mackenzie in London's Burning. The production has very good reviews and should be an enjoyable afternoon at the Orchard.

If you are interested, please bring your cheque books to the meeting as I have a short holding time for the tickets.

Thank you.

**Sandra Treloar** Mob. 07939339390

## DRAPERS HALL

In January a group of u3a members visited the Drapers Hall in the City of London. The Drapers Company has its roots in the thirteenth century. The first Royal Charter was given in



1364. As its name suggests, the Company was involved in the buying and selling of woollen cloth. As with all City Guilds, its role was to regulate the trade and maintain quality standards. It also set prices, governed access to the industry, fixed wages and managed training and apprenticeships. It was a lucrative and powerful trade and gave the Drapers Company considerable wealth and influence. It was placed third in the order of precedence of the City of London Guilds. Its role today mostly concerns the support of charitable and



educational causes.

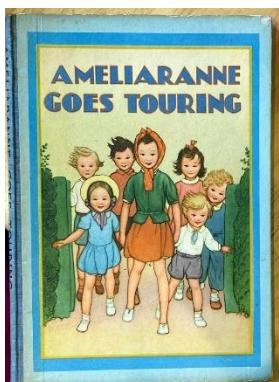
The current hall stands on the site of Thomas Cromwell's mansion. It was acquired in 1534. Destroyed by the Great Fire of London, it was rebuilt in 1667. Subsequent rebuilding and refurbishment took place in 1671, 1772 and 1898. Our guide took us on a ninety-minute tour of the magnificently decorated rooms. She explained the historical legacy of the building and the role of the Drapers Company today. The Livery Hall, in particular, is a remarkable room and can seat 276 guests for dinner. The room is filled with royal portraits and has a beautiful painted ceiling. The splendour of the Drapers Hall is to be admired with its marble staircases, stained glass windows, paintings, statues, carvings and chandeliers. Our tour concluded with a visit to the room where the collection of silver is kept. The value of the contents is demonstrated by the size and thickness of the door through which we entered! A visit to the Drapers Hall is a chance to see and learn the history of an important City Guild and admire a unique London setting.

**John Baker**

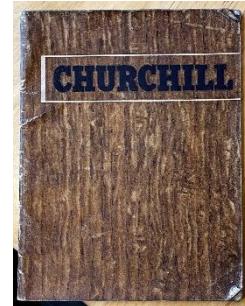
## News from the Groups

### Antiques and Collectables Group

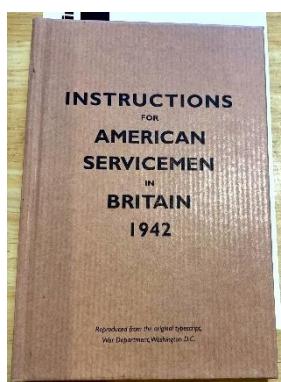
We rearranged our Christmas outing to Otford Antiques, following our disappointing attempt in December when the shop remained closed because of the snowy weather. This time the weather was very good, so 10 of us gathered in the car park ready to buy up all the best treasure. We don't argue over the antiques, as we find that we are all drawn to different things, so it works well.



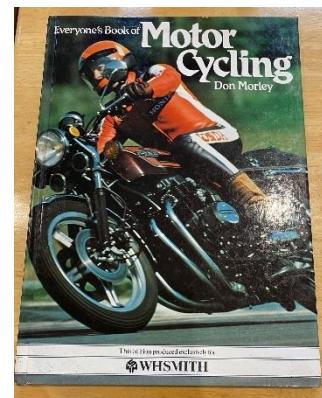
Tim loves old books and found a charming and beautifully illustrated children's book featuring Ameliaranne, who sounds a bit American to me. In contrast, he also chose a small book of quotes by Winston Churchill – of the many included, I like: "If you're going through hell, keep going." Plus: "Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference."



Sue bought a lovely porcelain pot, hand painted by 'Laura' and made in Italy in 1979. She will give this as a gift to a friend.



Tony spotted a facsimile printed booklet of instructions for American servicemen in Britain in 1942. This was issued by the War Department in Washington DC. He also picked up an old book of Motor Cycling by Don Morley – Apparently, Don Morley is widely regarded as the supreme photographer of motorcycle racing. Starting out as a freelance in 1955, he then worked on the staff of Motorcycle News, The Guardian and World Sports prior to becoming, in 1976, one of the founding directors of All-Sport, the sports photographic agency. Tony may well find a photo of himself in the book, as he and others in his family were involved in motor cycling in their younger days.





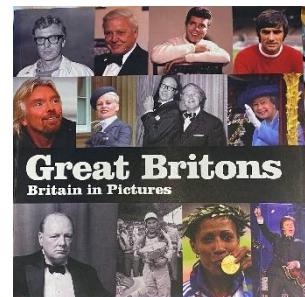
Wendy was very pleased with her cut glass Wedgwood paperweight. This has a blue jasper plaque in the centre, depicting a sailing ship in relief. It looks to be very good quality.

Her sister Jenny lowered the tone a little with her small chamber pot – made by Portmeirion in their 'Sporting Scenes' series, taken from woodcarvings by Thomas Bewick. There was a light-hearted discussion about its current

usefulness as a chamber pot, given its small size.



Dave said he will enjoy looking at his book of Great Britons, which covers notable people from entertainment, politics, sport, and royalty.



Audrey bought a lead Rupert Bear, and some strange, tinted postcards. One had three couples in odd poses, with the caption – 'Faith, Hope and Charity'. The other showed two men and a woman sitting very close together on a bench with arms linked. The men look like they are competing for the lady's attention. I hope she chose wisely.



Judy found a black wooden glove stretcher. These were commonly used in the Victorian era. The rounded tips of the stretchers, typically made of two wooden pieces hinged in the middle and spring-loaded, were

placed inside the fingers of a glove. The handles were then squeezed so the fingers were stretched, allowing the glove to be put on without damaging it.



John was delighted to come across a silver-coloured money box in the shape of a VW Beetle car – this was similar to the first car he owned when he was a student in the 1970s, except that his car was black.

Lastly, I was intrigued by a collection of versions of the Highway Code, dating from the 1930s onwards. The earliest examples were more advisory – ‘a collection of Do’s and Don’ts for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians based on good manners and common sense’. They had a separate section for Horse Drawn Vehicles. The advice was largely sound and still applies today, although there are penalties now for contravening certain aspects which are legal requirements under the 1988 Road Traffic Act.



Gill Baker

### Board and Card games

Board and Card Games Afternoon for March will take place on Monday 27th March at the Howard Centre, 39 Egerton Avenue, Hextable, Kent. BR8 7LG. Between 2-4 pm.  
I have a large selection of games, Boggle, scrabble, Rummikub numbers, Rummikub Words, Logo Games, Sequence, Crowns, Trivial Pursuit, Cribbage, Articulate, UNO, Trinominoes but do bring along any games you want to play.  
Charge is £3 towards the hire of the room.  
Please email [Joyce.wood@sky.com](mailto:Joyce.wood@sky.com) or just turn up on the day if you want to join us.

Thank you,  
**Joyce**

### Birding Visit. 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023

On Wednesday the 15th. February a small group of us met on a beautiful sunny and warm day to do some bird spotting at Bough Beech Reservoir. Already some like-minded people were already there by the roadside with binoculars at the ready. It was good to see the water levels both on the reservoir and other water areas which were last seen to be dry and covered with vegetation, had returned to normal.



After remaining by the reservoir for a while we walked along to the off- road nature reserve where there was the opportunity to see some 'non water birds' as well. The highlight on this visit was seeing a Snipe.



Birds seen on this visit :-Pochard, Tufted Duck, Great Crested Grebe, Egyptian Geese, Wigeon, Gadwall, Carrion Crow, Magpie, Blue Tit, Robin, Wood Pigeon, Red Kite, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Moorhen, Mallards, Great Tit, Great Heron, Kestrel, Teal, Coots, Chaffinch, Wren and Snipe.

The next visit is on the 15th. March at the Riverside Country Park nature Reserve 10.15 for a 10.30a.m. start. at sited 333 Lower Rainham Road, Rainham, Kent ME7 2XH.

Warm welcome to anyone who would to join us. A lift can be offered if required.

**Valerie Bamber**

### **CROQUET**

This came about because my (autistic) daughter was obsessed with Alice in wonderland Flamingos and hedgehogs I found a croquet club meeting at Crayford, soon some of the u3a wanted to have a go we now meet on the rec at Swanley. We have played the council a couple of times winning both times the standard is very good. Numbers are steady ,but there is room for a couple more.

### **PETANQUE**

We started this at the Olympic and have met at Steve Wells Garden, the Chequers public house and now we meet at Princes Park Dartford number have remained steady and again there are places available if people want to join.

### **TABLE TENNIS**

I make no excuse for this I started this because I heard Roger was looking into it and I thought with him being ill it might have been too much for him ,so I looked into it. We started on 22<sup>nd</sup> January at the old White oak leisure centre, numbers have always been good (except for covid) we now meet at the new leisure centre..

### **NEW AGE KURLING**

Being bored with no croquet or pétanque we gave this a go it is good fun and we have hosted the twinning asstn.

**Bill Hammond**

## Walking Group

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023 from “The Pied Bull”, High Street, Farningham, DA4 0DG**



Good weather and a good walk from Farningham alongside the river towards Horton Kirby, catching a glimpse of old Franks Hall along the way. Then through Homefield Farm making for Farningham Woods. The woods have had a lot of thinning and coppicing carried out which has really let the light in to what was once a bit of a dark walk. Back at The Pied Bull for lunch with many of us choosing the prawn and avo “doorstep” sandwiches.

**Morva Henry**

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023 10.00 for 10.15**

Meet **Mark** at “**The Plough**”, 65 High Road, Wilmington DA2 7BW for a walk of between three and four miles that follows the footpath across fields to join Rowhill Road then crosses Hook Green Lane down to Wilmington Common. From there, up to Dartford Heath, Oakfield Lane, the Playing Fields and Wilmington Church. Directions: This venue is easily accessible by public transport on the 477 bus route.

Please contact **Mark** at [fittock75@gmail.com](mailto:fittock75@gmail.com) or 01322 665026 to let him know you are coming and to let him know if you will be staying for lunch.

**Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 10.00 for 10.15**

Meet **Clive** at “**The Villager**”, Erskine Road, Vigo Village DA13 0TD for a fairly flat walk of between three and four miles that will be different from previous walks from this location. There is a drop out point part way round for those who want to cut it short. **Directions: by car:** From the roundabout at the bottom of Wrotham Hill on the A20, turn left onto the A227. Continue ahead for about 1.75 miles; go past what used to be the “Vigo Inn” and take the next turning right after it. After about 100 yards turn right into Waterlow Road and follow it for about one mile to the T-junction with Erskine Road. Turn left and “The Villager” is straight ahead on the left. Use the car park by the pub. **By public transport:** Vigo is served by the 306/308 bus which runs between Gravesend/Meopham and Borough Green/Sevenoaks. Please contact Clive (01474 706173 or email [clivetheilex@gmail.com](mailto:clivetheilex@gmail.com)) to let him know you are coming and say whether you will be staying for lunch.

...

**Clive**

## **Membership for 2023-2024**

Our new membership year begins at the beginning of April 2023 and runs until March 2024. The cost is remaining at £20. In order to effectively manage the administration of all the renewals I hope we will get; I would be grateful if you could pay your subscription any time between now and the start of April. You can do this as follows:

- a) By cash or cheque one of the monthly meetings. Cheques made payable to Swanley and District U3A.
- b) By post to me at the address below with a cheque (please don't send cash in the post)
- c) Existing members now also have the option of paying their £20 renewal subscription by bank transfer. The bank details are:

Bank: NatWest Account number: 51170027 Sort code: 60 21 10  
Account name: Swanley and 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](mailto: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.

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

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

Many thanks!

**Gill Baker**

**Membership Secretary**

### **Newsletter**

The closing date for the next newsletter will be Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March. Please send articles and pictures to [tscale001@gmail.com](mailto:tscale001@gmail.com), thank you. *Tony*



### **Contact Details**

<b>Chair</b>	<b>John Baker</b>	<a href="mailto:johnbaker52@talktalk.net">johnbaker52@talktalk.net</a>
<b>Vice Chair</b>	<b>David Collins</b>	<a href="mailto:dacollins53@hotmail.com">dacollins53@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Business Secretary</b>	<b>Carol Willingham</b>	<a href="mailto:carolw8920@gmail.com">carolw8920@gmail.com</a>
<b>Social/Outings Coordinator</b>	<b>Penny Collins</b>	<a href="mailto:pennycollins@hotmail.com">pennycollins@hotmail.com</a> 01322 669724
<b>Membership</b>	<b>Gill Baker</b>	<a href="mailto:gillbaker@talktalk.net">gillbaker@talktalk.net</a>
<b>Group Co-ordinator</b>	<b>Alan Hayward</b>	<a href="mailto:achayward2512@yahoo.co.uk">achayward2512@yahoo.co.uk</a>
<b>Assistant Co-ordinator</b>	<b>David Collins</b>	<a href="mailto:dacollins53@hotmail.co.uk">dacollins53@hotmail.co.uk</a>

**For contact details of group leaders please contact Alan Hayward  
[achayward2512@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:achayward2512@yahoo.co.uk) or David Collins [dacollins53@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dacollins53@hotmail.co.uk)**

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

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**Group Timetable**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Meeting Day</b>
Antiques and Collectables	Gill and John Baker	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday Morning
Art and Craft	Penny Collins	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday Afternoon
Art Appreciation	Margaret Austin	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday Morning
Art Painting & Drawing and Art Outdoors	Gill Baker	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday Evening As Notified
Bird Watching	Leader As Advised	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday Morning
Board & Card Games	Joyce Wood	2 <sup>nd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday Afternoon at Howard Centre Hextable
Book Group	Sue Scott & Wendy Keable	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday Afternoon Swanley Library
Bowls (Indoors)	Bob Mellor & John Underwood	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday Afternoon at the Whiteoak's Centre
Chess	Terry Bennet	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday Morning
Creative Writing	Penny Collins	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday Morning
Croquet	Bill Hammond	Every Wednesday Afternoon
Gardening	Sandy English	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday Afternoon
History Modern	Jackie Griffiths	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday Afternoon
History of London 1	John Baker	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday Morning
History of London 2	John Baker	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday Morning
Let's Speak French	Barbara Ramsey	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday Morning or as Notified
London History Walks	Alan Hayward & John Baker	As Notified
MOTO (Members on their own)	Sheila Botterill	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday Morning
Music Making	Mark Fittock	Every Tuesday Morning
Petanque	Bill Hammond	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday Afternoon Princes Park Dartford
Photography (Digital)	Alan Hayward	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday Afternoon
Play Reading	Penny Collins	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday Morning
Quiz Team	Dave Collins	As Notified in Newsletter
Rugby-Walking & Appreciation	Alan Hayward & John Baker	As Notified
Spanish	Leigh Aldrich	Every Thursday Morning
Strollers	Sheila Botterill	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday Morning
Table Tennis	Bill Hammond	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday Afternoon
Theatre Trips	Sandy Treloar	As Notified
Word Magic on Zoom	Gill Heath	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday Morning
Walking Group	Clive Rayner	As Notified in Newsletter
Wine and Dine	Santha Blankley	As Notified
Wine Tasting	Robert Brickell	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday Evening

