

Bulletin for Interest Groups



Group Co-ordinator

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Learn
Laugh
Live

Message from the Chairman

I hope you are all enjoying the summer now that it has finally arrived with some fun days out or even a holiday. No doubt you will be bringing back lovely photos of happy times.

However, it's photos of you all enjoying your u3a activities that we would like to receive. In the next few months we will be producing our new publicity leaflets and would like to use photos of our members engaging together in their groups. Please send them to the Chairman, and perhaps you and your friends will become the faces of Orpington u3a!



New Members' Meetings

These events are held several times a year for new members to meet with others new to Orpington u3a. They are social events and also a chance to find out more about the various activities on offer.

The next two are to be held on **25 September** and **7 November**, both at the Crofton Halls with a start time of 10.30am.

I will contact new members about the September meeting with more details. This notice is so new members can make a note of the dates.

If in the meantime if you have any queries please either email me or speak to me at the monthly Monday meetings at Crofton Halls. My contact email is under details of the Committee members in the Newsletter.

New Members Liaison

Crofton Halls

Doors open

at 2pm for

refreshments

until the main

meeting starts

at 2:30pm

General Meetings

16th September

A Policeman's Lot ...

Can be quite an Interesting one!

Neil Sadler

The rise of 'Robo-cop'.

Changes in police uniforms and equipment.

Cops and robbers. Well known TV cop cars. An embarrassing moment for a certain Prime Minister. A theme tune quiz. Which is the most versatile piece of police equipment... you may be surprised! How old was PC George Dixon when he actually retired?



21st October

Les Misérables to Lion King

Martyn Harrison

Martyn, a Professional Tenor in Opera and Music Theatre, presents 'Les Mis to Lion King' the last 40 years of Musical theatre, with anecdotes and memories from his career and live presentation of items from a selection of shows.

Dates for your diary (2-4pm, Crofton Halls)

18 November Fire - A Century of The Volunteer Fire Brigade (Jo Livingston)

16 December Christmas - A Festive History (Andy Thomas)

*On the Tuesday
following each*

General Meeting

we have a

Coffee Morning

at 10.30am in the

BR6 Café

All members are

welcome

London Explorers



On Saturday 20 July a group of London Explorers led by Geoff and Jan caught the train from Petts Wood to Cannon Street and walked to Guildhall to watch the annual Cart Marking Ceremony which has been going on for 500 years. This was an early form of vehicle licensing as each cart which passes through the Guildhall Arch still pays the City of London 5 shillings (25p) and, to prove you had paid a mark was branded on your vehicle. Nowadays the mark is burnt onto a small wooden numbered tile on the side of the cart which can take several marks for subsequent years.

We saw a procession of about 40 vehicles ranging from hand cart, motorcycle, horses and carriages, old vans, bus, coach, army, RAF up to modern day electric waste disposal.

Each vehicle came through the Arch and stopped in the yard to be greeted by the Lord Mayor and after paying their 5 shillings one of the robed dignitaries from the [Worshipful Company of Carmen](#) stepped forward to brand a mark on it before driving away. It proved an interesting morning and thanks to Jan and Geoff for organising it for us.

17 October outing – A look around Canary Wharf. Please go to [page 9](#) for details



Gardening Made Easy

This month our group had two meetings. One was a joint lunch at Rosemary's house that we all enjoyed. Each of us brought along a small plate of food to share. We then learnt a lot by touring her lovely garden.

Our second one was a week later when we met up at Joan's lovely garden. Joan made us so welcome and we shared gardening tips with each other to make gardening a lot easier! Then Joan excelled at her catering and brought out so many different types of cakes and strawberries for the group to enjoy.

If you would like to join this vibrant group do contact the Group Leader



Philosophy



At the August meeting, John gave a talk on Peter Singer, an Australian ethical & political philosopher best known for his work in bioethics and his role as one of the intellectual founders of the modern animal rights movement.

Singer’s work in applied ethics and his activism in politics were informed by his utilitarianism, the tradition in ethical philosophy that holds that actions are right or wrong depending on the extent to which they promote happiness or

prevent pain. In an influential early article, *“Famine, Affluence, and Morality”* (1972), he rejected the common assumption that physical proximity is a relevant factor in determining one’s moral obligations to others.

Regarding the question of whether people in affluent countries have a greater obligation to help those near them than to contribute to famine relief in Bangladesh, he wrote: “It makes no moral difference whether the person I can help is a neighbour’s child ten yards from me or a Bengali whose name I shall never know, ten thousand miles away.” The only important question, according to Singer, is whether the evil that may be prevented by one’s contribution outweighs whatever inconvenience or hardship may be involved in contributing – and for the large majority of people in affluent societies, the answer is clearly yes.

The publication of *Animal Liberation* in 1975 greatly contributed to the growth of the animal rights movement by calling attention to the routine torture and abuse of countless animals in factory farms and in scientific research; at the same time, it generated significant new interest among ethical philosophers in the moral status of nonhuman animals. The most important philosophical contribution of the book was Singer’s idea that the species membership of a being should be relevant to its moral status.

He argued that all beings with interests, deserve to have those interests taken into account in any moral decision making that affects them; furthermore, the kind of consideration a being deserves should depend on the nature of the interests it has (what kinds of enjoyment or suffering it is capable of), not on the species it happens to belong to.

He is an interesting man, with wide interests and expertise, but has lately become involved in some controversial ideas which many people might find abhorrent. Like many people with almost messianic beliefs, he probably crosses the line of what most people would find acceptable.

If you would like to join the Philosophy group please contact the Group Leader



**The Rock ‘n’ Roll Years
and
Country Music Appreciation**
Both groups are currently FULL

BOB Annual Games Afternoon

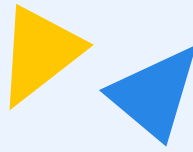
Bromley, Orpington and Beckenham u3as will be holding another Games Afternoon this year to celebrate the annual u3a week in September.

If you plan to take along your favourite board game please arrive at 1pm to set up



**Date - 25 September
Time - 1.30-3.30
Venue - United Reformed Church, Widmore Road, Bromley**

Meet the Scientists



London Region of U3As

On Tuesday 23 July, we attended a London Regional U3A event, 'Meet the Scientists' at the Natural History Museum.

The first talk, taking the form of a Q&A with the compère, was by Natalie Cooper, a researcher in the life sciences section, who specialises in mammals. She gave us an overview of the enormous (80 billion specimens) held by the museum, including dried herbarium specimens, specimens in jars and stuffed ones, and how they can be used to study modern biodiversity by comparing plant and animal distribution with the dates and locations of the historic specimens. This is then used in research on how climate change is affecting our present-day ecosystems and biodiversity, including extinctions of species. She also outlined how modern techniques can be used on the historic specimens to look at their genetic make-up and to compare them to present-day species.

The second talk was by James Witt, a researcher in paleoecology, and again this took the form of a Q&A. He described the huge numbers of specimens of rock and fossils held by the museum and how he studies their chemical composition and then compares that with specimens he collects from places such as Antarctica. By analysing ancient rock chemistry he can determine the temperature of the sea water in which the fossilised creatures lived. By this method he produces graphs of sea water temperature going back hundreds of millions of years and can use this to look at the changes in Earth's climate over geological time and use this information to help to predict future changes.

Both talks were very well presented and stimulating, and the researchers were enthusiastic about their subjects. They also had brought a few specimens to demonstrate and were very keen to answer questions.

Autumn Events Programme - London Region of U3As 9 September to 17 October

Monday 9 September: Guided Walk – Three historic Jewish quarters.

Monday 30 September: Guided Walk – Spitalfields: a melting pot for so many immigrants including French Huguenots, Germans, Jews, Bengalis and beyond.

Wednesday 9 October: U3A Wellness Day in the dance studio at Lift Islington. Talks and practical taster sessions led by qualified instructors in Yoga, Pranayama, Tai Chi, Qi Gong and Pilates.

Thursday 17 October: Guided Walk – London's Black history, Tyrants, Colonialism and Slavery.

Thursday 17 October : Guided Visit – London's Black History, Black presence in the National gallery.

For further details and links to booking forms for each event click on this link to the [Events](#) page of the London regional U3As website.

Based on previous experience we expect tickets to sell quickly.

Online booking is highly recommended to avoid delay and disappointment in booking confirmation.

Information and launch of bookings for the November and December events will be sent out towards the end of August.

London Region Events Team - bookings.lru3a@gmail.com

Science & Technology

The themes for August were solar radiation, oral communication and the digestion of carbohydrates.

In other words; we enjoyed a lovely sunny afternoon in the park, chatting and eating cake! With strawberries and freshly picked blackberries also on the menu.

We had a pleasant and very relaxing afternoon.

Our usual meetings will resume in September.



Science & Technology

meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 2-4 pm at St Paul's Church, Crofton Road, in the VCR

FUTURE MEETINGS

10 Sept	The Plastic Brain
8 Oct	Citizen Science Studies of the River Cray
12 Nov	The Moving Image: Part 2
10 Dec	Christmas Meeting

If you are interested in joining and would like more information please contact the Group Leader

MOTO 1 — Events for September

Lunch **8 September** at Lamira in Petts Wood

Lunch at The Buff in Green Street Green, Wednesdays **11 and 25 September** from 12.00

Saturday Coffee Morning at Second Home in Orpington on **14 and 28 September** from 10.30am

Play Reading with Afternoon Tea on Tuesday **10 September** from 2.00pm at a Member's home

Coffee morning at a Member's home on Wednesday **18 September** from 10.30am

Brunch at Richmal Crompton (Wetherspoons) Bromley South on **9 and 20 September** from 10.30am

Monthly MOTO 1 meeting on Wednesday **25 September** at Hulbert Hall, Orpington Methodist Church from 2.30pm

Fish and Chips Lunch at the Change of Horses in Farnborough Village on Friday **27 September** from 12.30pm

Lunch at Ye Olde Whyte Lion pub, Locksbottom on Sunday **29 September** from 1.30pm with Jazz from 2-5pm



If you would like to join this group please contact the Group Leader

Walks



Walks are on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, starting at 10am unless stated otherwise.

For more information please contact the Group Leader

PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTHS

Wednesday 18 September – Beckenham to Eden Park

Linear, fairly level, 3 to 4 mile walk (no stiles) around Beckenham to Eden Park where there are several restaurants and a Toby Carvery.

Meet outside Boots in Orpington High Street at 9.45. We will get either a B14, R1 or R11 to catch the 10:15 train at St Mary Cray. 358 bus direct back or train and 353 bus back.

Wednesday 16 October – Green St Green to High Elms, returning via Farnborough Village

This is a 3 to 4 mile circular walk which includes a couple of steep hills so may not be for everyone.

Meet in the car park of The Buff pub in Green St Green.

The Buff and a number of cafés are available for refreshments afterwards.

All walkers join the walks at their own risk.

New walkers are welcome to join any of the walks but please telephone or email before coming on your first walk.

Please ensure that you wear suitable footwear for the walks.

Note that the walk description is only a brief guide, not a complete breakdown of the walk.

Sharing an Interest - 1:1 Skill Sharing

We have received the following offers from members who wish to share a hobby or interest solely with one other person.

These are: -

- French conversation
- Italian conversation
- Playing board games
- Arranging & cataloguing books

If you are interested in participating in any of the above activities on a one to one basis OR have a hobby or interest you would like to share, please contact the Group Leader who will put people in touch with each other.

Interest Groups

There are currently 105 groups on the list, so lots to choose from!

learn, laugh, live

u3a

Anyone for Pickleball? - How about something new?

Pickleball is a fun sport that combines elements of badminton, tennis, and table tennis. Played on a badminton court with a lower (34" high) net. 2 or 4 players use solid paddles made of wood or composite materials to hit a perforated polymer ball, over a net.

Easy to pick up and a great way to exercise, pickleball is fast becoming one of the most popular racket sports in the world and is already being offered by over 100 clubs. It's a fun, low-impact, social sport that can be played as either singles or doubles. Find out everything you need to know about pickleball at the following link [Pickleball | Pickleball courts, rules & how to play | LTA](#) or type LTA Pickleball into your web browser.

We will arrange a Taster session, hopefully in September, and give initial coaching instruction on rules, the strokes and tactics. Equipment will be provided. The intent would then be to run it at the Walnuts Leisure Centre on Fridays, alongside Table Tennis & Short mat Bowls.

If you are interested in giving it a try, please contact the Group Leader



A favourite pastime of billionaires!

Bill Gates has been playing pickleball for 50 years -

“it’s fun” and “easy to learn”

www.gatesnotes.com/Pickleball

Line Dancing

Our popular Line Dancing class takes place on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at St Paul's Church, Crofton from 11-12.30 pm.. Come along and laugh whilst keeping fit with our teacher, Shirley. No partner required. Contact the Chairman for more information.



It's never too late to learn – if you go about it in the right way

Summary from a BBC Future article by David Robson

If you ever fear that you are already too old to learn a new skill, remember Priscilla Sitienei, a midwife from rural Kenya. Having grown up without free primary school education, she had never learnt to read or write.

As she approached her twilight years, however, she wanted to note down her experiences and knowledge to pass down to the next generation. And so, she started to attend lessons at the local school, along with six of her great-great-grandchildren. She was 90 at the time!

Studies from psychology and neuroscience show that an amazing achievement like this need not be the exception. Your brain still has an astonishing ability to learn and

“Education has no age limit”

master many new skills, whatever your age. And the effort to master a new discipline may be more than repaid in maintaining and enhancing your overall cognitive health.

A simple lack of confidence may present the biggest

barrier for older learners who may have already started to fear a more general cognitive decline. However, research has shown that older adults (60 years or over) frequently underestimate the power of their own memories.

If you can break through those psychological barriers to learning you may soon see some widespread and profound benefits, including a sharper mind overall.

As the 90 year old Kenyan great-great-grandmother put it: “Education has no age limit.”

Full article: [The amazing fertility of the older mind - BBC Future](#)

Addendum

London Explorers - 17 October

There are a few spaces left on the next London walk with Kim, our Blue badge guide

Thursday 17 October 2024 at 10.45 am. Cost £10.00

Dogs to Docks and Cobbles to Crossrail – a look around Canary Wharf

This walk is a fascinating look at the history of the first development in Docklands as the West India Company sought to maximise their profits and helped to make London the richest port in the world. We will see the first area to be built in today's Canary Wharf and hear how the skyscrapers quickly took over. Coming into the 21st century we will end with the new Elizabeth Line station and a fabulous roof garden.

To secure a place contact the Group Leader



*Deadlines
for the
next
Newsletter
and
Bulletin*

Deadlines for the next publications

Note: The day after the General Meeting

Newsletter 161 – 17th September 2024

Bulletin 8 – 22nd October 2024

**Please send all articles to the
News Editor Team**



Meet and Greet Volunteers

are needed for the general meetings
October, November and December

If you are willing to help at one of
these meetings please contact
the Vice-Chairman

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AND DISPOSE OF IT BY SHREDDING. THANK YOU