



Chairman's Letter

As I write this, the memories of brown grass, every window in the house open, freezers full of ice lollies and the wail of "It's too hot for me!" seem to be gone forever! However, now that the schools are back and some of our members are returned from grandparent duties or holidays, perhaps it's time to think about filling your leisure hours with all that Orpington u3a can offer you.

Many of our Interest Groups are looking for new members. These are advertised both here and in our new Bulletin, which will appear in your inbox between the bi-monthly Newsletters. Our thanks to our wonderful Newsletter team for producing both, enabling everyone to keep up to date.

Our monthly General Meetings at Crofton Halls are a great way to meet new friends over a cuppa, hear about forthcoming events and listen to speakers on a diverse number of subjects. Come and tell us if you are new or would like us to introduce you to another friendly member. Also, feel free to make suggestions – we are always looking to improve.

If you have not been to our Coffee Morning at BR6 on the third Tuesday of the month, then please give it a try. We really enjoy chatting over a coffee and pastry and there's always lots of discussion about things going on, even outside of our u3a!

Finally, we are always looking for volunteers to help, even in a small capacity. Could you help fold our paper Newsletters, make the tea at a meeting, distribute some flyers, organise an event or join our friendly Committee? Come and get involved – we guarantee you will enjoy it!

Sue

**Have you collected your ticket for our
25th Anniversary Lunch?
Thursday 26th October 1.30-3.30 pm, at Crofton Halls**



**Entry by ticket £5 each, members only, on a first come basis
(Capacity of hall 150 max)
To reserve your place please email the Chairman**

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All telephone numbers quoted in the newsletter are as dialled from the Orpington (01689) Exchange

The last day for receipt of copy for Newsletter No 156 is Tuesday 21 November 2023

Please send your contributions to the Newsletter Editors

**For contact details of Committee Members and Group Leaders
Please login with your Username and Password**

www.u3aorpington.org.uk



Monthly General Meetings - Crofton Hall (2-4pm)

16 Oct - London Seen Through Painters' Eyes - Graham Taylor

Before photography became widely available in the 1870s our only visible record of our city and the lives of its inhabitants was provided by painters and engravers. Since the 19th century imaginative artists have also provided unusual and new views of London. This talk will show in a colourful way how London life has changed in a thousand years.

20 Nov - Smoke, Steam and Soot - David Burnell

1863 saw the opening of the world's first underground railway in London. This light-hearted talk explores why the line came to be built, how it was built and what was said about it at the time. The talk is fully illustrated and is presented by David, a volunteer guide at the London Transport Museum and the deviser of an award winning tour of the architecture on some classic Underground stations.

Monthly u3a Coffee Morning - BR6 Café

On the Tuesday following the General Meeting in Crofton Halls, we have our coffee morning in the BR6 Café, Orpington College, at 10.30am. Members are invited to join other members and group leaders over a cup of coffee or tea and a pastry for £3.50.



Solutions to Cryptic Crossword No 89

Across: 3 Important, 8 Ogre, 9 Womenfolk, 10 Diver, 11 Steed, 14 Riles, 15 Dene, 16 Truss, 18 Used, 20 Theme, 21 Relay, 24 Bright, 25 Ploughman, 26 Knee, 27 Dependent.
Down: 1 Wonderful, 2 Traveller, 4 Moot, 5 Overt, 6 Tuffed, 7 Nile, 9 Wrest, 11 Saucy, 12 Detergent, 13 Seventeen, 17 Stern, 19 Deluge, 22 Ached, 23 Clue, 24 Barn.

Solution to Cryptic Crossword No. 89

GROUP REPORTS

Ambling London

On a warm but pleasant day some 20 or so Amblers explored one of the shortest but most interesting parts of London.

We took in the path of the river Fleet, the palatial ex-Prudential Victorian building with its bust of Charles Dickens, the smallest listed building in the grounds of Lincoln's Inn and numerous other historical gems within or near Holborn.

A big thank you to Vic who led the walk and gathered so many interesting facts to make it the success it was.



Cheers

At our August meeting, we compared different white wines made with Riesling, and some reds made with Tempranillo. Barbara also explained to us the mysteries of semi-carbonic maceration, and its role in creating fresh fruit flavours.

In September, John showed us some wines from South-West France, including several interesting lesser-known grape varieties. These included "Cot", which turned out to be even more similar to Malbec than we had supposed (it was the same).

Our monthly wine-tasting meetings are on Tuesdays – in the evenings during summertime and during the afternoon in winter. We currently have 15 members in the group, but there are spaces for a couple more if you are interested.

For more information, please contact the Group Leader

Philosophy

At the August meeting of the Philosophy group, I gave a talk based on the cult favourite autobiographical work by Robert M Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. I freely admit I know next to nothing of philosophy, and I joined the group to learn more.

While we often think of philosophy as primarily in the domain of the humanities and social sciences, Robert M Pirsig is recognized for his contributions to science and technology. However, his most famous work addressed distinctly 20th-century questions related to what defines good and what defines bad - in other words, the metaphysics of quality.

In its introduction, Pirsig explains that, despite its title, "it should in no way be associated with that great body of factual information relating to orthodox Zen Buddhist practice. It's not very factual on motorcycles, either." John

Glynis gave us a very detailed and interesting talk on Voltaire in September. She has summarised it as follows:-

Voltaire (1694-1778) was a larger-than-life character, a man-of-letters, who wrote in many genres, from verse to serious prose, on politics to science. He was an architect of the Enlightenment. Witty and brave, he was hated by some but adored by others. He wanted to make people think.

If you would like to join this friendly group which meets on the first Friday morning of each month, please contact the Group Leader

Can you help?



We are looking for someone to look after our stock of jigsaws. This would involve bringing them to the General Meeting on the 3rd Monday of the month, setting them out and leaving them for people to borrow and then taking them home again.

If you can help, please contact the Chairman.

The Committee would like to thank Brian for taking on this job over the last couple of years.

GROUP REPORTS

London Explorers

Visit to The Kings Troop Royal Artillery at their Woolwich barracks

The Royal Horse Artillery was founded in 1793. It fought in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, through to WW1. It gave mobile fire support to the fast moving cavalry, which was then mechanised, and in 1946 the regiment became known as The Riding Troop later renamed The King's Troop, after inspection by King George VI. It is now the only remaining mounted unit of the Royal Artillery.

Highlight of the visit was the horses. These are similar size to a Shire, although not as heavily built. Each horse is placed in position in the team pulling the gun carriage according to its build and ability. They have beautiful stables, clean and airy. When they are ready for retirement they can be bought by anyone who has worked with them. The saddlery was very interesting, with the smell of polish and leather, harnesses and saddles, all hand made and stitched to the highest standards.

Two horses were getting attention in the Farriers. Again very clean and airy. Furnaces were alight but cool as big doors open at the end and plenty of windows. Our last visit was where the gun carriages are cleaned, and polished.

There are various large areas where the horses are trained including a very large grassy area where they practise their moves for occasions, such as Queen Elizabeth's funeral and King Charles' coronation. They do demonstrations around the country, especially the Musical Drive, where the horses pull gun carriages in time to music.

We were made very welcome, and all enjoyed the visit. Geoff



Theatre Matinee

Visit to The Hever Festival Theatre

On a drizzly Friday in August, we set-off by coach from Orpington. The drizzle was of some concern as the Theatrical performance we were to see at Hever was being held on an open-air stage with limited cover.

Fortunately, by the time we arrived at Hever, the sky had cleared and we enjoyed a sunny afternoon. The stage was set on a lawn surrounded by beautiful gardens and trees.

The play we went to see was *A Chorus of Disapproval* presented by the Bromley Little Theatre and written by the award winning playwright and theatre director Sir Alan Ayckbourn.

The play takes place at PALOS (Pendon Amateur Light Operatic Society) and tells the story of widower Guy Jones and his rise through the amateur operatic company due to his inability to say "no" and the expectations placed on him. The play is juxtaposed with scenes and music from *The Beggar's Opera*.

The play has been praised by Michael Billington of the Guardian as a "brilliantly intricate comedy which skilfully interweaves two themes, the destructiveness of innocence and the spread of civic corruption".

After the play we enjoyed a very good afternoon tea in the Pavilion after which we returned to Orpington. Hazel and I would like express our gratitude to Pauline and Gordon for organising this most enjoyable afternoon and for the way they looked after us all. Carlos and Hazel

Note from Pauline and Gordon (Group Leaders):

Our visit to Hever was at one time in the balance as very early in this year's season a large branch from a tree fell on the stage and covered centre tier of seats, where we were due to be sitting. Fortunately, the theatre was closed so no one was injured. The team at Hever worked tremendously hard and no performances were cancelled, with some being relocated to other venues. A new stage was up and running only a week before our visit and with a change of seats we were under cover.

Sylvia's Memories

When I attended the first u3a meeting 25 years ago I immediately registered to join a book group. Since then I have enjoyed belonging to Antiques, Architecture, Art Appreciation, Bookworms, Gardening, Industrial Archeology, London Explorers, Travel and Shakespeare. Thanks to these groups I have learned so much, been to so many different places, had some great holidays but above all have made some lovely friends. Sylvia

GROUP REPORTS

Walks

All walkers join the walks at their own risk. New walkers are welcome to join any of the walks - but please telephone us before coming on your first walk. Please don't forget to leave your phone number if you have to leave a message!

Unless stated otherwise, all walks start at 10am

Please ensure that you wear suitable footwear for the walks. Also please note that the walk description is only a brief guide, not a complete breakdown of the walk.



PROGRAMME FOR THE COMING MONTHS

Wednesday 18-October – Walk along the River Darent

Meet at Shoreham car park for an autumnal walk along the Darent River towards Lullingstone. Hopefully not too muddy. Lunch optional in Shoreham Village. Approx 3 miles.

Wednesday 15-November – Walk around Dryhill Country Park, Sundridge

Meet at Dryhill Country Park Picnic Site and Nature Reserve, Dryhill Lane, Sundridge, TN14 6EP for a 4 mile walk through farmland and woodland. There are no stiles but 2 inclines.

Science and Technology

In the Summer we had an interesting trip to the Alexander Fleming Laboratory Museum. We were shown the tiny lab where penicillin was discovered in 1928 and heard the story of how a chance finding lead to development of a lifesaving drug destined to revolutionise medicine.

We then started the Autumn term with a couple of short talks about fossils, followed by an interactive session with members showing their own collections of fossils and seashells to the group.



Temper is what gets most of us in trouble.

Pride is what keeps us there.

Mark Twain

BOOK SALE

There will be a book sale at the November meeting so bring your books (paperbacks only) and your money to stock up on winter reading and Christmas gifts. Beryl



Interest Groups Bulletin - Members Feedback and Comments

As proposed in the previous Newsletter we emailed the first issue of the Interest Groups Bulletin to members on 1-September and, we are pleased to report there has, on the whole, been a very positive response:

"Thank you so much for including my article. I think the bulletin is a great idea"

"This bulletin is impressive. It reads well, hits the right note, and demonstrates to members that the committee care about communicating"

"Perfect supplement to the newsletter"

"Thank you and your team for the first of the interest groups bulletin. I found it very useful and interesting. Thank you for your hard work"

"It's good to be able to keep in touch with members more frequently than the newsletter allows"

"I have read through the new bulletin and it is full of good information and ideas. We really appreciate all the hard work that goes into making our u3a so good"

However, there was also concern that this electronic publication may replace the printed Newsletter that we currently post to some members. We want to reassure members that this is NOT the case. The aim of the Bulletin is to be an **additional** Orpington u3a publication for the months between the Newsletter.

Information about Interest Groups will continue be posted to those requesting printed copies of the Newsletter - around 25% of members. This information, and a printed copy of the Bulletin, will also be available at the General Meetings - at the Interest Groups desk and on the noticeboard. The only difference will be that members with an email address (91%) will also be sent the Bulletin electronically and therefore may receive this information sooner.

Our aim for the Bulletin is to disseminate information in a more timely fashion to as many members as possible, not to exclude anyone. However, to avoid extra costs and additional work for the committee the Bulletin will be distributed only by email and on the website.

Thank you everyone for your comments — Newsletter Editors

New Group

True Crime Discussion Group

This is a very new group, yet to decide on the best date and time for its monthly meetings.

We have started reading our first book: *No Ordinary Day* by Matt Johnson and John Murray about the shooting of WPC Yvonne Fletcher outside the Libyan Embassy which occurred 40 years ago next April. It can be bought online, in bookshops or downloaded to your Kindle.

We're expecting to hold our first monthly meeting possibly on 10 or 11 October to discuss it (tbc by participants). Meetings will probably be at my house. Easy parking and on the R1 bus route and 5 minutes' walk from Chelsfield station.

The second month's book will be *A Silenced Voice* about the journalist Kim Wall who was murdered by someone she was interviewing (and who attempted to cover it up). You may have seen the Netflix documentary about it.

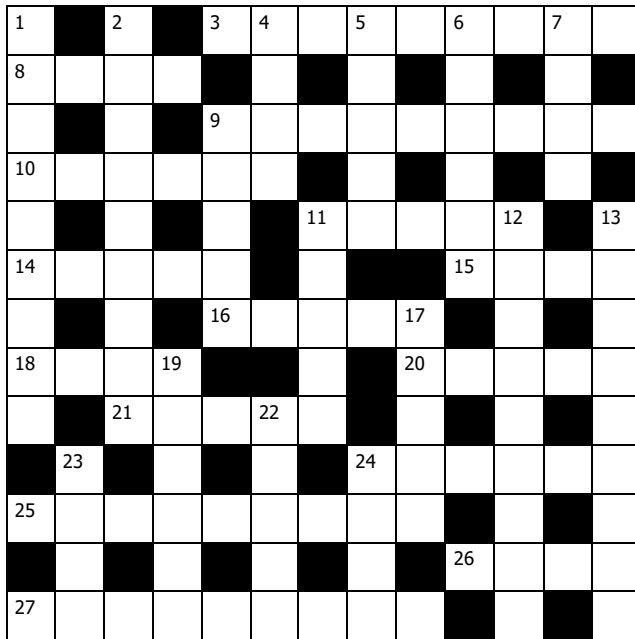
If you are thinking that it's ghoulish to 'enjoy' reading about a real murder, I do see your point and I feel a bit like that myself. But in the case of Yvonne Fletcher, a close colleague of hers is still fighting for justice and does not want the story to be forgotten, hence the book. And the book about Kim Wall was written because her parents actively want the world to know about their beloved daughter.

Please do contact the Group Leader if you are interested in joining this group.

PUZZLES

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD no 89

Submitted by Cryptic Crosswords 1



Across

3. Of great significance, bringing in from an outside source to a soldier perhaps (9)
8. Monster at the heart of progress (4)
9. With a sign seen by people generally as the females of a community (9)
10. Plunge to the right to turn from a course (6)
11. Mount found in a chaste educational establishment (5)
14. State the French rubs up the wrong way perhaps (5)
15. Need changes for a sandy tract by the seashore (4)
16. Integral support for citrus speciality growers? (5)
18. American journalist is seen to be employed (4)
20. Article before the setter was a topic of discourse or discussion (5)
21. To put down again for a race perhaps? (5)
24. Initially brilliant, radiant, intense, glowing, heavily tinted and shining (6)
25. Groundbreaker? (9)
26. A low joint may be bent when dubbed (4)
27. Ted penned changes to mean a subordinate to another clause, phrase or word (9)

SUDOKU

4							3	
	5		7			1		
								6
2								
	9	7			8	2		4
			6	5		7	1	
			2			6	9	
		3	4					1
5		2			3	4	8	

Down

1. Flew round disturbed and became awe inspiring (9)
2. One on the move to revert all changes (9)
4. Vehicle check has nothing in it to be debatable (4)
5. Deliveries take time to be open and observable (5)
6. Top-knotted reportedly hardy, resilient and spread out to dry? (6)
7. Blue or white African flower? (4)
9. To take possession of forcefully, it is said to refrain from exertion (5)
11. In Nassau cygnets appear to be impertinent and disrespectful in a playful way (5)
12. Prevent or discourage a chap from looking for a cleaning agent (9)
13. Number observed around a significant occurrence (9)
17. It's harsh being at the back end (5)
19. Noah's heavy downfall? (6)
22. Initially anxiety caused havoc enduring dull and sustained pain (5)
23. This is one indicator for the solver (4)
24. Building to store bran mash (4)

Solution on page 2

Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.

Confucius



This Newsletter contains personal data

Please do not leave a printed copy in a public place and dispose of it responsibly, preferably by shredding all contact details
Thank you

Orpington u3a Website

Please check our website regularly for updates

www.u3aorpington.org.uk

and share the information with u3a members who don't have online access

A message from our Committee



Orpington u3a needs a Committee to keep it running
We are looking for members to join our friendly team
Why not come along to one of our Committee Meetings to see what we do and consider helping?
For more information, speak to any member of the Committee or contact the Chairman

Have Your Say!

Do you have a short article or notice about your u3a group meetings, outings or upcoming events (100-150 words)? Or a u3a photo to share?

The Newsletter is written by our members for the members, so we would love to hear from you.

It is published every other month and the deadline for contributions is on the day after the General Meeting - The date is always given at the bottom of the front page.

To ensure your contribution is seen by all editors on our team, please send to:

The Newsletter Editors

Interest Groups Bulletin

Members can read on page 6 how our new Interest Groups Bulletin has been received by email members.

We have received much positive feedback.

Trading Standards **ALERT!**



Bromley Trading Standards is reminding residents to be very wary of gardeners, tree 'surgeons', or other traders offering their services through a leaflet or a cold call at your door.

Whatever the work being offered, dealing with

doorstep traders risks **shoddiness**, having **no recourse**, and being **substantially overcharged**

Do NOT:

- **Don't** contact trader via leaflets without thorough checks beforehand
- **Don't** deal at the door - it's **OK** to say NO
- **Don't** pay large sums of money in advance
- **Don't** assume rubbish collection is included
- **Don't** accept that traders are members of an organisation because they use a logo
- **Don't** be rushed into a decision - seek advice first from someone you trust

Do:

- **Do** get several quotes - prepare a clear list of works beforehand
- **Do** seek references; read reliable reviews; ask to visit previous jobs before work starts
- **Do** check directly with any /website reputable organisation named or whose logo is shown on a leaflet to confirm the trader is affiliated with them
- **Do** get a contract in writing before the work starts - check the T&Cs
- **Do** check and verify a trader's insurance