

TUNBRIDGE WELLS U3A NEWS

August 2017



THE UNIVERSITY OF
THE THIRD AGE

www.tunbridgewellsu3a.org

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

I must start with a big thank you for all of you who have already renewed your subscription or have signed up for Direct Debits. Hopefully the process has been straightforward and our membership champions have done a great job by helping members with any queries. As well as making the process easier for you it also reduces the time taken by your committee to process the renewals and chase up members who haven't renewed by September 1st. So, if you haven't renewed yet, please do so as soon as possible.

Last month I attended a U3A Conference on Research and was inspired by some of the projects and research that other groups have got involved in. I came away buzzing with ideas and hopefully I will be able to develop them over the next few months.

I'm excited too about our first holiday break, details of which are in the newsletter. Many other U3As run short breaks and holidays successfully, so I hope that we will have enough interest to make this viable. Numbers are looking promising at the moment.

Finally, please don't forget that our August monthly meeting will be in the smaller Victoria Suite as the main hall is being redecorated. August is often a quiet month, as many members are looking after grandchildren during the school holidays, so we hope that we will all be able to fit into the reduced capacity room.

Sue Brimlow, Chairman

[Email](mailto:sue@tunbridgewellsu3a.org) or Tel: 01892 863691

COMING UP

MONTHLY MEETINGS

at 2.30pm at the Camden Centre

Thursday 17th August
"Tommy Cooper – what he was really like" a talk by John Field

Thursday 21st September
"The British Love Affair with Tea"
a talk by Caroline Piper

MONTHLY COFFEE MORNINGS

at Trinity from 10.30 – 12.00



Friday 25th August
Friday 29th September

OUR OUTINGS

on 15th August
there will be an outing to
Quex Park

on 14th September
there will be an outing to
Hampton Court

on 18th October
**Brooklands Motor
and Aviation Museum**
see application form on page 11

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Visit to Liverpool and the Terracotta Warriors Exhibition

Come with us in 2018 to spend a few days in the Liverpool area and visit this amazing exhibition which will be the first time in more than 10 years that these spectacular warriors from the tomb of China's First Emperor, Qin Shihuangdi, have been brought to the U.K. Working with 'Just For Groups', we plan to make this trip on **Monday 30th April** spending 3 nights at a 3 star hotel about 20 miles from Liverpool.

The break will include our own coach picking us up at Tunbridge Wells and a 3 night hotel stay with dinner, bed and breakfast. The itinerary is being put together and will include a stop en route, which is likely to be Shugborough Estate (NT). We will have a full excursion programme with admissions to The Terracotta Warriors, orientation tours of Chester and Liverpool, The Mersey Ferry, Port Sunlight Experience with guide, and a stop at the National Memorial Arboretum on our return journey.

This short break is dependent on at least 35 people going, which will enable the price to be under £350.00 including gratuities (excluding personal insurance cover). This will be based on 2 people sharing a room although we will have 10 rooms for single occupancy. All bookings and monies will be handled by 'Just For Groups'.

We already have quite a few people who have expressed interest from our last newsletter. There is still time for you to put your name down by emailing us [here](#). Shortly a full itinerary will be sent out followed by a booking form to those interested and a deposit required.

We hope you will join us for this exciting adventure. (For queries phone Sandra on 01892 752196)

Alison Grace and Sandra McDonald

Outing News

Firstly thank you to Rosemary for helping me with the Weald and Downland trip. It was a very enjoyable day. (Please see separate article and photos on the next page).

Our [Hampton Court Outing](#) is now full.

On Wednesday 18th October [Brooklands Motor and Aviation Museum](#) has sent out an exclusive invitation to U3A members for a day designed to inspire and entertain. We are lucky enough to have a booking. I am certainly looking forward to returning. Brooklands was the world's first purpose built motor circuit but we can also explore the jet age and climb aboard Concorde! Please see application form below.



A photo of the British Airways Concorde at Brooklands Museum, photo taken by Kane L S Smith on 25th of July 2012. (from Wikimedia Commons)

Our outings now come with a warning!! Book quickly. Please do not rely on places always being available at the monthly meeting as you may be disappointed. *Sandra McDonald, Outings Coordinator*

Report on the Outing to the Weald and Downland Living Museum



Our July outing was to the Weald and Downland Living Museum at Singleton, near Chichester. After a traffic free coach journey, in good weather, we enjoyed some welcome refreshments served by the friendly and humorous Michael at the newly opened lakeside café, appropriately named the Wattle and Daub.

We then set off with our 3 guides to explore for 2 hours some of the 50 rescued rural buildings, set in the beautiful landscaped grounds. It was a real journey through 950 years of the rural history of the South East corner of England. Our guides enthusiastically explained



how the buildings, which could not be preserved on their original sites for a variety of reasons, have been carefully measured and then moved piece by piece. After arriving here they have been rebuilt with the same materials and similar tools to those used in the original construction. It is quite amazing to imagine how it can be done. Through researching historical records, it has been possible to accurately furnish some of the houses and other buildings.

During our tour, we watched lime and charcoal being produced, saw a Tudor Kitchen in use and admired the heavy horses and other farm animals.

We had definitely earned a rest so it was either picnics or a further visit to the café. Sitting overlooking the lake with a glass of wine was a definite must for some! Then there time to visit the shop, to see the exhibition of rural crafts and trades and to tour more of the site, including the lovely cottage gardens.



A picturesque journey home through some beautiful countryside and avoiding traffic meant everyone was home in good time.

Our thanks go to Sandra McDonald for arranging such an interesting and worthwhile day.

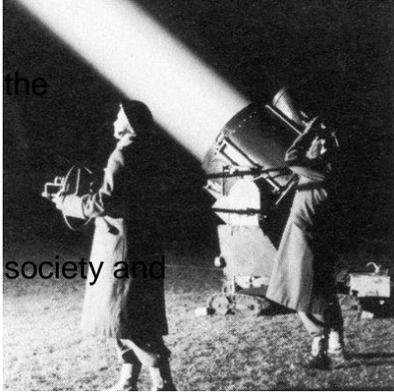
Rosemary Rees

Photos by Stella Westrup

Monthly Meetings

Please note that August's Monthly Meeting and talk, "Tommy Cooper – what he was really like" by John Field. on Thursday 17th August will be in the Victoria Suite in the Camden Centre instead of in our usual room.

Put that Light Out – the 93rd [Searchlight] Regiment, A talk by Imogen Corrigan



Public Domain

At July's Monthly Meeting we welcomed Imogen Corrigan who I introduced herself as an Army Woman, having spent 20 years in Service during the 70s and 80s in many parts of the world. She explained that both her grandmother and mother had been Army Women, her grandmother serving in both World War I and World War II and her mother in World War II.

In her interesting talk, Imogen told us how the role of women in the army had evolved over the last 100 years. The duties of women in the early years were restricted to nursing [FANY], and to drivers, cooks and clerical workers in the WAAC, [Women's Auxiliary Army Corps], which was disbanded in 1921. But by the Second World War this had expanded into many other fields, the service having been reformed in September 1938, becoming the ATS [Auxiliary Territorial Service].

We were shown images of the many prominent people both men and women who had played a leading role in the development of the WAAC, such as Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan whose portrait by William Orpen in the Imperial War Museum is on the right.

In 1942 the first all-female searchlight battery was formed, known as the Air Defence Unit. Conscription of women had been approved by the Government in 1941, and it was not until 1945 that the unit was disbanded. In 1949 the ATS became the Women's Royal Army Corps [WRAC].

Finally we were brought up to date with the role played by women in the 21st century army as, in 1992, women became fully integrated into the regular army units.



Helen Gwynne-Vaughan

Ann Bates

Group Reports

French – Develop your Skills Group ... a message for other French-speaking Members

As you will see from the Update on Groups below, the "French - Develop your Skills" group has organised a walking tour of the Pantiles and the historic heart of the town with a Blue Badge guide **in French** on Monday 11th September. They would be delighted if any French speaking U3A members would like to join them. They meet up at the Tourist Information Centre in the Corn Exchange at 2.20 for 2.30pm. The cost of the tour is £5 per head payable to the organiser, Barry Melbourne Webb, on the day. Please give him a ring on 01892 525500 - or drop him an email to barry.melbournwebb@btinternet.com - if you plan to come.

Art Appreciation Group

Please note that the 2017-18 programme is with the new group members application form on page 9 below

Walk on the Wild Side – A Summer Walk Tudeley Woods

Looking for the many species of woodland and meadow butterflies, was one of the rare treats on our WOW walk this month. Although quiet with little sound from resident birds and being too early to find the churring nightjars, this was made up for by the colourful display of the emperor dragonflies and damselflies over the pond. We admired the swathes of purple and yellow wild flowers blooming on the heath and the cool calm of the wooded area with the surprise find of a trail of fungi, probably a *common russula*. Hiding from the light we exposed, only briefly, two slow worms enjoying the warmth provided by the covers.



A most enjoyable time was had by the group on the Brakeybank trail.

Gillian Anderson
Photo by Mike Curtis - Quick

Digital Imaging Intermediate Group II

Wednesday 19 July 2017 was not the most inviting day weather-wise to venture forth but it takes more than a distant grey cloud and hint of drizzle to persuade this merry group to abandon its plan to visit **Michelham Priory**.

Situated due east of Upper Dicker, entry is via The Gatehouse comprising a stone bridge over a moat and through an imposing archway. Many however prefer to first visit the Watermill which is accessible from the car park. The first written evidence of milling goes back to 1434 but doubtless the mill was in use long before that date. It was restored in 1998, for the second time in a century, with various grants to enable it to remain a working mill.



The priory itself is surrounded by England's longest water-filled medieval moat dating back to 1229 when it was founded as the Augustine Priory of the Holy Trinity and occupied by its canons until its dissolution in 1537

by Henry VIII. The priory and its possessions were granted to Thomas Cromwell who, within three short years, incurred the King's displeasure and was himself executed. The house was then granted to Anne of Cleves, part was leased to Thomas Culpeper with the majority of the site passing to the Earl of Arundel. So having undergone various transformations including the major addition of the Tudor wing and subsequent destruction caused through the dissolution of the monasteries, it ultimately became a grand country house.



Also on the island within the moat is a most impressive Elizabethan Great Barn which dates from 1597-1601, a forge, Water and Kitchen Gardens and, near the Miller's Bridge, a stew pond where caught fish were kept until required.

By crossing the Anniversary Bridge, those wishing to work up an appetite for lunch in the restaurant can take the clockwise Moat Walk back to the car park which takes in en-route a picnic area and the Iron Age Centre featuring replica roundhouses and other buildings of the period.

The photos are of the Gatehouse and the Group Organiser on a rustic throne!

Tom Guy, Group Organiser

Update on Groups

News from our language groups

The French Develop your skills Group has organised a walking tour of the Pantiles and the historic heart of the town in French on Monday 11th September. They would be delighted if any French speaking U3A members would like to join them. For further details please contact Barry; either give him a ring on 01892 525500 - or drop him an [email](#)

The Beginners Spanish Group aims to start meetings in September, 1st and 3rd Thursday afternoons and will follow a structured text based course. Please contact Barbara McAuliffe for more details by [email](#).

Italian Conversation Plus This new group aims to start up soon and to attract members who have a good command of the written language but wish to increase fluency in conversation.

Beginning in the Autumn

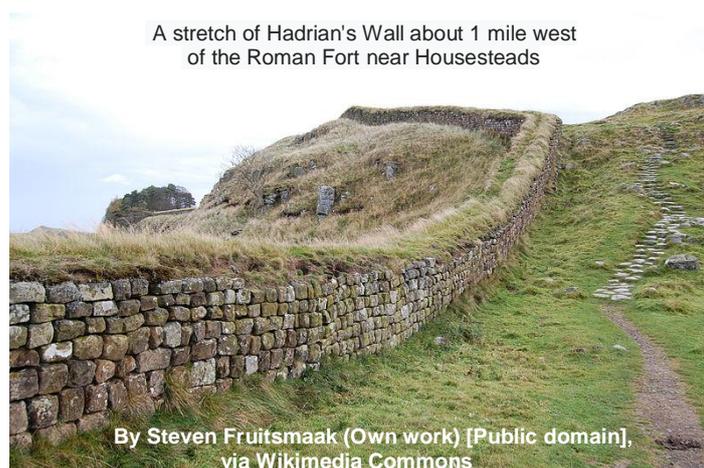
The Gilbert and Sullivan group will have its first meeting in September. The leader is Michael Duncan who can be reached by [email](#).

Medieval Europe: Art, Achievements and Everyday Life. A series of discussions will be led by Pat Wright, an ex NADFAS lecturer. Pat gives us a flavour with these words:

The middle Ages are usually considered brutish and crude. Of course life was tough but this was also a time when great cathedrals were built, splendid art created, vital inventions made and when Europe took on a recognisable shape, politically, culturally and in economic growth. Even much of the landscape we value today was hacked from forest then. Those distant ancestors of ours laughed, loved, cherished dreams as we do, leaving along the way a treasure house of inheritance for us to explore.

Out and About Explorers is a car share group which will meet monthly, sometimes at the weekend, to visit places of interest in the area – historic villages, vineyards, gardens, festivals, castles and so much more.

The Roman History group will begin again this October, focusing on 'The History of the Final Century of the Roman Empire from Constantine onwards' Contact Lionel Cole by [email](#) or tel 01580 752663



Update on Groups - Continued

Groups looking for new members

London Explorers 5 meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

Contact Renee or Philip Dewhurst by [email](#).

Scrabble Group meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays

Contact Jean Bicknell by [email](#).

Book Group Volume 4 meets on the 3rd Friday of the month at 2.00pm

Contact Barbara Cresswell by [email](#) or phone 01892 542476

A Big Band to be set up from a number of local u3a groups is looking for trumpet, saxophone and particularly trombone players to meet and practise on 4th Wednesdays at Yalding

For more information or to join new groups please contact Jan Sumner, Groups Coordinator by [email](#) or phone 07900974684

Jan Sumner, Groups Co-ordinator



heritage open days

A Reminder: Tunbridge Wells Heritage Open Days

Though not a U3A event, members may be interested to read this note from Paul Avis, Chairman, Tunbridge Wells Heritage Open Days

Every September, people from all over England join together for four days to celebrate what makes their neighbourhood special. Thousands of buildings of every age, style and function will open their doors free of charge to the public and the programme includes many other activities, such as walks and talks, which bring the past to life.

This year's event in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells, will take place between **Thursday 7th and Sunday 10th September**. We have an active Heritage Open Days programme across the Borough and there will be about 40 venues and events. The Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society provides overall co-ordination in collaboration with the National Trust, the Borough Council and numerous individuals and organisations.

At the time of writing, participants and events include an archaeological dig, Mabledon House, Salomons, the High Rocks, the Masjid-Al-Noor Mosque, Trinity Arts Centre, Cranbrook Museum, the Town Hall, the Opera House, the Spa Valley Railway, a talk and guided walk on the Tunbridge Wells of Decimus Burton, and a talk on Tunbridge Ware. Many churches in the Borough will also be opening their doors for the event.

It is an ideal opportunity for residents and visitors to experience and learn about their town in a unique and exciting way, so please look out for further information in the local press nearer the time.



The Masjid Al Noor Mosque in Camden Road

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Events In August and September



We have the following events arranged for August and September:

17 th August	“Tommy Cooper – what he was really like”, a talk by John Field
25 th August	Coffee Morning at Trinity
13 th Sept	Welcome Meeting for New Members – by invitation only
21 st Sept	“The British Love Affair with Tea”, a talk by Caroline Piper
29 th Sept	Coffee Morning at Trinity

Some Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

24 th Oct	West Kent U3A Study Day: Middle East Matters. Details and application form on p. 9
8 th Dec	Christmas Lunch at the Masonic Hall
20 th Dec	Christmas Meeting

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since 30 June:

Ashley Adams	Lindsay Hasell	James Robertson
Celia Adams	Barbara Hill	David Sutton
Anne Backshell	Tricia Hudson	Vivien Sutton
Sandra Chapman	Alison Lessen	Angela Tompson
Sue Constance	Ian Lessen	Keith Valentine
Elizabeth Dawson	Andrew MacLaren	Addita Woods
Kim de la Mare	Ken Oliver	
Nina Filby	Susan Reason	

Useful Information

Your Committee		
Chairman	Sue Brimlow	01892 863691
Vice-Chairman	Alison Grace	07900 974684
Secretary	Wendy Maher	01892 325272
Treasurer	David Scott	01892 701950
Group Coordinator	Jan Sumner	07900974684
Membership Secretary	Ruth Johnson	01892 523097
Outings Coordinator	Sandra McDonald	01892 752196
Business Secretary	Adrian Twiner	01892 459352
Newsletter	Eryll Fabian	01892 513805

A message from the Editor:

Members' photos and articles about group activities, places visited and anything relating to U3A events are always welcome. We can't guarantee to print them but shall do our best if space allows.

All contributions to the next newsletter should be e-mailed to Eryll Fabian by 31st August at the latest.
fabiantwells.t21@btinternet.com



NATIONAL EVENTS

Details of interesting national events appear on the website.

They can be found on www.u3a.org.uk or by writing to:
The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley, BR1 1QE

ART APPRECIATION GROUP
Programme 2017-18

A warm welcome to our exciting Autumn/Spring programme of illustrated talks by Liz Strang, based in the Main Hall of the Camden Centre and starting at 2.30 p.m.

(Please do not arrive until 2.15 p.m. as the Hall is in use before that time.)

This season Liz will combine a study of themes in art together with studies of individual artists.

2017

Tuesday 19th September **POWER & PROPAGANDA: WARTS & ALL.** A study of portraiture to the present day

Tuesday 24th October **THE ART OF EVERYDAY - POTS & PANS, PEARS & PLUMS & AN UNMADE BED – Still Life to Installation Art**

Tuesday 21st November **CEZANNE: FATHER OF MODERN ART – LANDSCAPE & PORTRAIT**
To link with the exhibition of his Portraits at the National Portrait Gallery
26 October – 11 February

2018

Tuesday 16th January **MODIGLIANI: A MISUNDERSTOOD MAN – The Man, the Myth and his art** - to link with the exhibition at Tate Modern 23 November – 2 April

Tuesday 20th February **CHARLES THE FIRST: KING COLLECTOR** – to link with the Royal Academy Exhibition 21 November – 15 April

Tuesday 27th March **NAKED OR NUDE: Prim, Improper or almost Peepshow: The history of painting the human body**

Our subscription rate for this year only is only £5 as we have some reserve funds.

New members of the U3A are invited to join us by completing the attached form & sending a cheque for £5 per person

Alison Turner (Group Co-ordinator) 01892 526693 dennisandalison@sky.com

ART APPRECIATION GROUP 2017-18

Please return to Linda Sydenham, 43 Bowen Rd, Rusthall TN4 8SU (01892 539945)

e-mail: sydenham8su@btinternet.co

I/we wish to join the Art Appreciation Group and enclose a cheque for £..... (payable to "Tunbridge Wells U3A") together with s.a.e. if you would like an acknowledgment.

Name/s.....

U3A No.s.....

Address:

Tel: e-mail:

WEST KENT U3A STUDY DAY: MIDDLE EAST MATTERS Programme

This Study Day brings together three speakers with an academic background who have worked in adult education and have lectured and written extensively on the Middle East.

Date Tuesday 24th October 2017

Venue St Andrew's Church, Maidstone Rd., Paddock Wood, Kent, TN12 6DZ

Time 9.15am to 3.30pm approx..

Cost £7.50 includes 3 lectures and coffee

Lunch Please bring a packed lunch
Refreshments will be available

Organiser: Adrian Twiner, Tel. 01892 459352

9.15am Registration and coffee on arrival

9.50am Welcome

10.00 – 11.10am **William Tyler:**
Ottoman Tragedy

11.10 – 11.40am Tea and Coffee Break

11.40 – 12.50pm **Jonathan Farley:**
Major and Minor Actors
on the Middle East Stage

12.50 – 2.10pm Lunch Break

2.10 – 3.20pm **Brian Beeley:**
Middle East Update

3.30pm Close

William Tyler spent his whole professional life in adult education, his last post being Principal of The City Lit in London. He has served on numerous Boards, including The Central School of Speech and Drama, and today works as a historian, lecturing widely to many clubs and societies. He is 'Scholar in Residence' at The Jewish Cultural Centre in London. William was awarded the MBE in 2009 for services to adult education.

In his talk he will maintain that the post World War One settlement of the former Ottoman territories in the Middle East by Britain and France is at the basis of many of today's problems in the region.

Jonathan Farley has worked in adult education since 1965, initially at Nottingham University and thereafter at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. For many years he was engaged in the education and staff training of serving naval officers. During this time he lectured on contemporary history and international politics, specialising in the Middle East and Africa. He has also had work published on these areas.

Jonathan's talk will focus on the parts played in the ongoing struggle for Palestine by all the states in the region, notably Israel and its immediate neighbours, and make reference to the involvement of several external powers, notably the USA and the former Soviet Union.

Brian Beeley is a university academic who became interested in the Middle East when he could not understand why Britain attacked Egypt in 1956. He has taught in universities in the USA, Iran, Scotland and latterly was a regional organiser for the Open University in south-east England. He has also been a researcher for *The Economist* and for the Turkish government. Following retirement he has acted as a consultant to the Arab Open University based in Kuwait.

In his talk Brian will maintain that outside involvement in the Middle East today contributes to regional conflicts between Sunnis and Shi'as, Saudis and Iranians, and modernisers and autocrats – in a mosaic of very different states. Why should we be concerned?

This Study Day is open to the members of any U3A in West Kent. How to Apply:

Fill in this part of the form indicating how many tickets at £7.50 per person you require.

Make your cheque payable to **TW U3A** and include a **stamped self-addressed envelope (9" x 4")** in order to receive your ticket(s) then send to:

W. Kent U3A Study Day, A. Twiner, Flat 16, Bishops Court, Bishops Down Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 8XL

I/We wish to apply for 1 / 2 places for the West Kent U3A Study Day on Tuesday 24th October 2017

Name(s) Email

Address Tel No

..... Home U3A

Outing to Brooklands Motor and Aviation Museum Wednesday 18th October

We are in for a treat with so much to see at the birthplace of British Motorsport and Aviation: the historic domed 1907 built clubhouse with its evocative Barbara Cartland room; the Barnes Wallis stratosphere; the Wellington bomber recovered from Loch Ness; the Aircraft Park containing Vickers built aircraft; the Motoring Village with its racing cars, motorbikes and much more. My favourite is The London Bus Museum housing buses from the 1890-1970s. Finally Concorde, the first one to carry 100 passengers at twice the speed of sound. We go inside and enjoy our virtual 'flight'!

9.10 am	Coach departs Crescent Road Tunbridge Wells (opposite Assembly Hall)
9.30am	Coach leaves Southborough. The Fountain
10.45am	Arrive at Brooklands
11.000am	Welcome and refreshments (included)
11.20am	Talk and archive film, 'Gear sticks and Lipsticks'
12 noon onwards	Allocated time slots to visit topic related exhibition areas at leisure
1.25, 1.55, 2.25pm	Concorde Experience in 3 timed groups
4.15pm	Depart for Tunbridge Wells
5.45 pm	Arrive Tunbridge Wells

Cost £32.00 per person to include coach, entry to the museum, welcome refreshments introductory talk and Concorde Experience.

(Please note that once we are committed to paying out money in advance full refunds will only be given if your place can be taken by another member)

Lunch (not included) can be taken in The Sunbeam Café in the Clubhouse. It serves hot and cold meals, sandwiches, cakes and snacks.

Applications (including cheque made payable to "Tunbridge Wells U3A" and stamped addressed envelope for reply) to:

Sandra McDonald, 2 Green View, The Green, Frant, Tunbridge Wells TN3 9ED

Tel: 01892 752196 Mobile on day 07889699198 or for queries Ann Wakeford 01892 524968

Members are advised that neither the TWU3A nor the organiser will accept any responsibility for any mishap of whatever nature during the outing. Members are advised to consider personal insurance cover.

Please reserve.....place/s @ £32.00 each to Brooklands Museum on Wed.18th Oct. 2017

I/ we enclose a cheque for £..... plus s.a.e.

I/we will join the coach at Crescent Road 9.10am **or** Southborough The Fountain 9.30am
(Please delete as appropriate)

Name/s.....

U3A No/s.....

Address.....

Tel: No.....Mobile..... Date.....

Signed.....