

# TUNBRIDGE WELLS U3A NEWS

<http://u3asites.org.uk/tunbridgewells>

## Chairman's Update February 2015

**T**hose of you that joined us at Salomons for the post Christmas lunch will, I am sure, join me in thanking Marilyn and Brian Smart for organising a most enjoyable event. Good food, good company in a beautiful house in a stunning location – what more could one ask for?

We are delighted that several members have indicated they are interested in taking on the Treasurer's role.

Assistant required. We have had such a successful couple of years we need additional help to get some new groups underway. If you would be prepared to assist our Groups' Coordinator, Alison Grace, with this task please let us know.

Your may be interested to see that the National Office in Bromley have a comprehensive list of non-book material they have available for loan; the subject range is huge. In addition to being of possible interest to existing groups, this material may provide an incentive to start new groups, in which a DVD might be a prelude to a discussion on a chosen subject. For more detailed information refer to the National Office website.

Joy Podbury



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE  
THIRD AGE



FEBRUARY 2015

Editor John  
Cunliffe

Don't miss

OUR MONTHLY TALKS  
at 2.30pm at the Camden  
Centre

Alan Haines

A kick up the Sixties

Thursday 19 February

See next page for details

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OUR OUTINGS

Hampstead and Kenwood  
House Tuesday 24

February Newmarket  
and Long Melford

Tuesday 14 April

See page 3 for details



Joy Podbury

01892 862158

joypodbury@talktalk.net

## Monthly Speakers

**February 19**

**Alan Haines**

**A kick up the Sixties**

This presentation takes a nostalgic excursion back to the 1960s. As Britain emerged from the austerity of the 1950s the sixties offered hope and optimism. It turned out to be a decade which shaped a generation. It was the age of a burgeoning media, in which television delivered images of The Beatles, the Profumo Scandal, the battles between Mods and Rockers, innovative fashion and social dramas, such as Cathy Come Home, into people's homes. By using old newsreels, music



favourites of the time and archive film footage A Kick Up The Sixties takes a quirky look at all of these events and more.

**March 19**

**Paul Whittle**

**Hill Stations of the Raj.**

**April 16 Maggie McNie's** subject will be 10,000 years of wine history in 45 minutes – fasten your seatbelts! Originally trained as an actress and opera singer Maggie has a wide knowledge of many aspects of the wine trade.

**May 21 Philip Bret-Day** will speak about Coco Chanel. He says that even though Chanel was a great woman the talk is one of his most interesting to both men and women.

**June 18 AGM**

## GROUP CONTACTS' LUNCH 2015

A date for the Group Contacts' diaries:

The next Group Contacts' lunch will be held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015, at the Neville Golf Club. Further details will be given nearer the date. The committee do hope that you can all join us for this event.

*Marilyn Smart, Social Secretary*

## KENT STUDY DAY 11th April 2015

The next Kent Study Day will be held in Tenterden and explores the interrelationships between Literature, Music, Film, Photography and Art and costs £12.50.

The application forms are available via the website or contact Sue by clicking [here](#) or Tel 01233 628255

## Outing News

We have two outings already full – the visit to Hampstead Village and Kenwood House on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February (contact Cecilia Dyson 01892 862068) and the repeat outing to the Geffrye Museum and BBC on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March (contact Di Brown 01892 529999). If you would like to enquire about the reserve list, in case of cancellations, then do ring the organiser.

**On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April, we have another excellent day out.** This time we are off to Newmarket. After coffee on arrival, there will be a most interesting and delightful tour of the National Stud, to learn about the history and purpose of this unique thoroughbred operation, which will incorporate a visit to the stallion unit and to the mares and foals. This will be followed by time spent in Newmarket for lunch and to see something of the town centre or the horseracing museum. Then all change in the afternoon, with a guided tour of the famous, historical wool church at picturesque Long Melford. Afterwards we will be treated to tea and cakes before we start for home. Full details can be found in the application form at the end of this Newsletter. The main organiser is Robby Holmes 01892 544095.



Details of more outings will feature in the March Newsletter.

*Pat Micklewright* – on behalf of the Outings Committee



## Update on Groups

**My role as Groups' Co-ordinator has become really busy and I could do with some help. Could this be you?** The role is all about supporting all of our existing groups (nearly 80 of them) and also setting up new groups, which has become increasingly important as our membership increases. An important part of the role is talking and listening to our members to ensure we are delivering what they want so this is a great opportunity to join in and get to know people. If you think this is for you then please contact me (alison.grace@virgin.net).

### Group News

Are you interested in or have some knowledge of trees, flowers, birds, insects or nature in general. If so, why not join the **Walk on the Wildside Group**? This is very different from our other walking groups as the emphasis is on observing nature in all of its different forms. The walking is gentle (always less than 3 miles) with plenty of stops for looking at what is around. The group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday every other month starting in March. If you are interested please contact Joy Podbury.

**The Country Dancing Group** would welcome some new members. They meet on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday afternoon of the month at the Camden Centre. No experience or partner needed. Music and caller provided. A fun way to get some gentle exercise. Contact Tina Jewell (click [here](#)).

Are you able to converse in German? Why not meet up with other German speakers for general conversation on many interesting topics. To join the **German Conversation Group** contact Bruni Townsend (click [here](#))

We are just about to start a **Beginners French Group**. If you would like to join this group from the beginning, please contact Alison Grace.

### Possible New Groups

An informal new group called "Six Village Churches - Six Village Histories" will be run by Peter Batts during the summer of 2015. A monthly visit will be arranged to a village church to explore the building and the village history. Sometimes there will be a local speaker, usually we shall be self-reliant. Some visits will be in the morning, some in the afternoon; they cannot be on a regular day. Members attending will be asked to make a contribution, say £2, to go to the host church. The group will start in April at Langton Church.



Anyone interested should contact Peter by email (preferably – click [here](#)) or by telephone, 01892 862387, so that they can be informed of each visit as it is arranged.

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## Sam Brookes



Like most boys in the thirties Sam Brookes, born 1925 in the Vale of Evesham, dreamt of being a pilot, though his father's objections as a Christian Socialist to warmongering were equally balanced by Sam's age in frustrating his plans. By the time that he could fulfil his ambition there was only a year and a half left of the war and the training scheme run by the RAF would be that long, so he opted to become a wireless operator to actually fight. Hardly had he started than he was asked if he was taught German at school; his answer resulted in accelerated instruction and promotion to Pilot officer. Posted to the famous 101 Squadron at Ludgford Magna he was in awe of its bombing record in the Battles of the Ruhr and Berlin and was delighted to take part in the radio jamming of German night fighter transmissions. Sitting cooped up deep in the body of the fuselage with no view into the night sky, his headphones blocking all other sounds, he tuned into their pilots' communications, intercepting the messages he sent contrary instructions to them in an effort to protect his Lancaster and its crew from their attacks. Coupled with dropping huge quantities of aluminium strips called 'Window' which blocked German radar he and his crew were able to complete 30 sorties intact even when flying as far as Stettin in Poland and back. Considering that the squadron lost over 1100 members, having completed in total more sorties than any other squadrons, he was very lucky.

The end of war in Europe happened whilst he was resting so he was posted to India and then to Singapore as a cipher Officer handling top secret communications. Before long Japan surrendered and he was sent home to be demobbed and to take up his old job at Martin's Bank. It was whilst on holiday in the Lake District some years later that he spotted a most attractive girl. Having discovered that she was a qualified nurse he managed to hobble into her view with a spontaneously sprained ankle. The snag was he lived in London whilst Ada lived in Newcastle, but faint heart n'er won a fair lady and his perseverance was rewarded by marriage a year later in Northumberland.



Ever diligent Sam won the Banking Institute's prize, progressed though the hierarchy of Barclay's bank from Lombard Street, finally ending as manager of their Mincing Lane branch. In between working his way upwards, in his spare time he built a Miracle dinghy and taught himself how to sail. Years later as his skill developed he acquired a Cornish Shrimper which enabled him to take his family for day trips out to sea from Southampton. In later life he joined the Old Wilsonian Sailing Club on the Medway near Upnor, before long becoming its Commodore.

Taking retirement in 1985 he moved house briefly to Otford before finally settling in Brenchley. There his enthusiasm for growing clematis led to joining the Horticultural Society where his banking skills were quickly used as treasurer. Spreading himself elsewhere he was an active member of the Historical Society and the Bowls Club. He became a member of the U3A as an enthusiastic member of the Computer, Digital Camera and Painting groups and before long had joined its committee and produced its monthly Newsletter for three years. He enjoyed painting immensely and was always willing to give advice on composition and colour when asked and, until the last year or two, he enjoyed playing snooker and golf. He died peacefully in his sleep on New Year's Day.

*Paul Oliver Smith*



Snowdrops, Lamberhurst Church

Alan Whitson

*Continued from page 4*

**6-a-side football** : Do you miss a regular game of football now that the average player has become younger and fitter than us, or maybe it's because we have become older and more unfit. We are therefore trying to resurrect our youth with a weekly game for the older generation. The only criteria for participation is a willingness to play. Games will be played on an artificial pitch during the daytime. Contact Joe Croker (click [here](#))

I have a few people interested in a **Ten Pin Bowling group**. A few more and we can get this one going. Contact Alison Grace (click [here](#)).





## Galleries and Museums Group

The group was formed early in 2013 and during that year we were able to get some idea of how the group should operate.

In January 2014, the first planning meeting was held and some guidelines drawn up. As a result, it was found that the group should be kept reasonably small to allow for visits to small locations and also to be able to hear guides when they are available. The group now has 20 members and on average there are about 10 on each visit. Each member should be willing to help organise visits, alone or with another, and should attend a minimum of 2 visits out of the 10 in a year.

During 2014, we saw gallery exhibitions ranging from Dora Brian's life (Rottingdean) to photographic history and local scenes at the Towner in Eastbourne. Museums were equally wide ranging taking in the Viking Exhibition at the British Museum, the Wallace Collection, the Castle



and Anne of Cleves House in Lewes, and the Carriage Museum at Maidstone. We were also fortunate to be given a

very detailed tour of the Tunbridge Wells Museum (including the storage areas) and the very interesting WWI exhibition.

The first 2015 visit will be to the Imperial War Museum and later in the year we hope to include visits to such places as Ditchling and Cranbrook Museums, a number of places in London and a possible return to the Towner Gallery in Eastbourne.

The group now has an optimum number and is therefore full. However, Stephen Parris would be willing to help set up another group; but not be part of it, if anyone would like to do so. Sharing responsibility is the key and the group leader should act as a co-ordinator rather than having to set up all the visits.

*Stephen Parris*



## TRINITY COFFEE MORNING

Members are cordially invited to come along to Trinity between 10.30 and 12 noon on the last Friday of each month for a relaxed cup of coffee and a friendly chat. What is more - a special offer for us-when you buy a delicious slice of cake you get a free standard cup of tea or coffee!



### Your Committee

Chairman	Joy Podbury	01892 862158
Vice-Chairman	Di Brown	01892 529999
Hon Secretary	Wendy Maher	01892 319049
Hon Treasurer	Sheena Carmichael	01580 200422
Membership Secretary	Di Brown	01892 529999
Groups' Coordinator	Alison Grace	01892 517661
Social Events	Marilyn Smart	01892 510194
Communication	Sue Brimlow sue.brimlow@btinternet.com	
Publicity	Vacant	
	*****	
Outings Coordinator	Pat Micklewright	01892 537993
Technical Liaison	Roger Crooks	01892 549553
Talks Organiser	Janet Lazell	01892 525304
Newsletter Editor	John Cunliffe	01892 740456

Registered Charity No. 1018835

We are pleased to welcome the following new members

Mr Geoff Parsons  
Mrs Anne Long  
Mrs Sheila Rout  
Mrs Maria Lemont  
Mrs Sylvia Fuller  
Mr Philip Sumner  
Mrs Margot Yeo  
Mr Howard Nyman  
Mrs Olivia de Lucy  
Mrs Diana Jenkinson

*The Editor loves to hear from readers with complaints or, better still, compliments*

*All contributions to the next  
Newsletter to  
John Cunliffe Coombe Cottage Spring Hill  
Fordcombe Tunbridge Wells TN3  
0SB john.cunliffe1935  
@btinternet.com by 28 February at  
the latest*





## **Tunbridge Wells U3A Outing** **A full day visit to the National Stud, Newmarket and Holy Trinity Church, Long Melford, Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

The outing for April will be in two parts. In the morning, we travel to the National Stud at Newmarket. On arrival, there will be time for coffee before having a guided tour of the National Stud (approx. 90 minutes). The guide will board our coach and talk to us as we drive around the grounds. The National Stud covers an area of 500 acres. Included in the tour will be a visit to the thoroughbred stallion unit. We shall also see the mares and foals in the nursery paddock; some of the foals will be as young as a few days old, whilst others will be 2/3 months old.

We then move on to Newmarket, where there will be time for a light lunch and to see something of the town/centre of Newmarket. You may wish to bring a picnic. Alternatively, some members may like to visit the Horseracing Museum.

In the afternoon, we shall be at Long Melford for a guided tour of the famous Holy Trinity Church (approx. 45 minutes). Please note that as coaches are not permitted on The Green, or in the approach road to the church, we shall alight from the coach at the bottom of Church Walk. It is then about a 5 minute walk, slightly uphill, to the entrance to the churchyard.

The Church is one of the great Suffolk wool churches. It was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century at the time of growing prosperity among the local cloth merchants. The only modern part is the tower, dating from 1903, which was built as Long Melford's commemoration to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The author, Sir Simon Jenkins, included the Church in his book "England's One Thousand Best Churches". He awarded it 5 stars, one of only 18 to be so rated.

We shall then take tea and cake before departing for home.

- 8.00 am Coach departs Crescent Road (opposite Assembly Hall)
- 8.10 am Coach departs Southborough Fountain
- 10.45 am Arrive at the National Stud at Newmarket. Coffee, followed by guided tour
- 12.45 pm Leave the National Stud, travel into Newmarket for lunch
- 2.30 pm Leave Newmarket for Long Melford
- 3.15 pm Guided tour of Holy Trinity Church, Long Melford followed by refreshments
- 4.30 pm Depart for Tunbridge Wells
- 6.30 pm Arrive back in Tunbridge Wells

**COST:** £30.50 Includes cost of coach travel, coffee and entrance/tour for the National Stud at Newmarket, guided tour and refreshments at Holy Trinity Church, Long Melford and gratuities. Members will need to pay for their lunch in Newmarket. (Please note that once we are committed to paying out money in advance, full refunds will usually only be possible if your place can be taken by another U3A member)

Applications (including cheque made payable to "Tunbridge Wells U3A" and s.a.e. for reply) to:  
Robby Holmes, 14 Albany Hill, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 3RX Tel. 01892 544095  
Also available for queries: Lynne Monckton Tel 01892 533652 Mobile on the day only 07944 364622

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

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Tunbridge Wells U3A Outing to The National Stud, Newmarket and Holy Trinity Church, Long Melford

Please reserve ..... place(s) for this visit. I/we enclose a cheque for £..... and s.a.e.

I/we will join the coach at: \* Crescent Road @ 8.00a.m. \* Southborough Fountain @ 8.10 a.m. \* (delete as appropriate)

Name/s :..... U3A Membership no/s.....

Address: .....

..... Tel. No.....

Signed: ..... Date: .....