

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



**New Year greetings to you all!**

This time last year, my chairman's report was full of optimism because the Astra Zeneca vaccine had just been approved but it has been a more difficult year than many of us expected. Nevertheless, although so much uncertainty remains, we are definitely better equipped to deal with the problems that arise than we were a year ago.

With the help of so many of you in so many different ways, in 2021 TWu3a continued to provide interests for us all to enjoy and, indeed, we continued to grow. With your help, we shall continue to do so in 2022. There is so much scope, so please let us have your ideas and suggestions and, of course, if you can spare some time to volunteer in any way, just let me know!

The virus is still disrupting life and, as you will see on page 2 below, we have had to change the venue for the monthly meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January, and are in the process of finding a new speaker. You will be glad to hear, however, that the Rock Choir will be coming to give us their demonstration later in the year.

Problems can usually be solved and I am still looking forward with optimism. I hope you are too. Please stay safe, and remember our motto – Learn, Laugh, Live!

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year, [Eryll](mailto:eryl@u3a.org) (01892 513805)

### Inside this issue

1	Chairman's Update; contents	6	Group news
2	<b>NB Monthly Meeting</b> ; IT Help Needed ; Quiz	7	Last month's talk; Anti Ageism; Quiz Answers
3	Thursford Short Break Report	8	Useful Information
4	Outings coordinator ; Outings news	9	March Outing Application form
5	Group Coordinator's report; Caroline Piper		

### Coming up this month

**Thurs. 20th January**  
at 2.30 pm

**Monthly Meeting**  
**Speaker:**

**Dr Nikki Gammans on**  
**Gardening for**  
**Pollinators**

## Monthly Meeting on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January at 2.30

### **Change of Venue and Programme**

Sadly the Rock Choir will not be able to perform for us on 20<sup>th</sup> January and Dr Nikki Gammons of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust has kindly stepped in at very short notice to give us a talk on **Gardening for Pollinators**. Many of you may remember her fascinating talk about bumblebees some years ago.

*This news was too late for the postal version of this email so, if any of you have friends who receive their Newsletter by post, please tell them about the new speaker.*

As the Camden Centre is being used as a vaccination centre in January, our meeting will be in the **Tunbridge Wells Christian Fellowship** hall, where we held the Christmas Quiz and Carols.

This is the large hall on the first floor above the Tesco Express in Grosvenor Road (nearly opposite the main Post Office). The entrance is in the side road beside Tesco. The address is: TWCF, Hanover Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1EY. There is parking in Meadow Road Car Park.

This will be a hybrid meeting, so if you would prefer to attend on Zoom and are not already members of the Zoom Talks Group please contact [Eryll](#) who will send you a Zoom invitation.

## **WAS ONE OF YOUR NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS TO GET MORE INVOLVED?**

Probably not, but in our never-ending quest for more volunteers, we need someone to boost our **IT support**. Our membership database Beacon was purpose written by members for the u3a, and is widely used and well supported. I'm currently our administrator and would appreciate having some back-up. Regular tasks are fairly simple, mainly setting up new system users and unblocking emails. I know that some of you out there definitely have the right skill set, so please drop me an email to find out more.

Sue Brimlow – click [here](#) to email me.

### **Thank you Colin**

Colin Brennan's Quick Quiz has kept our brain's ticking over during the last 18 months. He is now passing on the Quizmaster's marking pen to his wife Jenny.

### **Welcome Jenny.**

#### **???????????????????? JENNY'S TEST OF TEN ??????????????????????**

1. Which Roman god was January named after?
2. Which city's name translates as river of January?
3. In January 2009 who was inaugurated as US president?
4. Which US state became the 49th on January 3rd 1959?
5. January Jones is an actress best known as portraying Betty Draper in which American TV series?
6. On 15th January 1559 who was crowned monarch of England?
7. Margaret Thatcher Day is celebrated on the 10th January - where?
8. What notable event happened in England on 22nd January 1901?
9. Who, in January 1649, was condemned as a 'tyrant, traitor, murderer and enemy of the people'?
10. Kevin Kline stars as a detective in which 1989 comedy thriller film?

Answers on page 7



## THURSFORD CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR

39 of us enjoyed our 3 days away in North Norfolk. We went inside the magnificent **Ely Cathedral**, were mesmerised by a glass blowing demonstration at **Langham Glass** and walked round pretty **Bury St Edmunds**.



The highlight, though, was the **Thursford show**.

The inside arena is fantastic, having an original Galloping Horses funfair ride to wander round and much more to gaze at. We were right at the front and were enthralled by the large cast of dancers and singers. It had the magical wow factor and was very enjoyable. We will return.



*Sandra McDonald*



## Outings Coordinator

Our March outing will take us to High Wycombe to see Hughenden Manor. The house offers a vivid insight into the charismatic personality and colourful private life of the most unlikely Victorian Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, who lived there from 1848 to 1881. We can browse among the extraordinary collection of personal memorabilia in rooms on the ground and first floor. On the top floor is a special exhibition with a timeline of Hughenden's history for us to explore.

A secret wartime past is revealed in the WWII rooms with interactive exhibits and eye-witness accounts. We can experience the immersive wartime displays in the ice house bunker and find out why Hughenden was high on Hitler's hit list.

Amongst the rolling parklands there are lovely woodland walks and a beautiful formal garden.

The date for this outing is Wednesday 9th March and the application form is at the end of this newsletter.



"Hughenden Manor" by Mibby23 CC BY-NC 2.0

[Joan Young](#)

## December's Outing to Wisley Glow



A packed coach set off for the Wisley Glow in early December. The Glow was scheduled for 4 pm but exceptionally the M25 was not gridlocked and we were early so Barry, our very experienced driver, took us off piste for a detour to Oxshot and a bird's eye view of the sumptuous mansions favoured, amongst others, by footballers' wives.



Even so we were still early and had plenty of time for hot chocolate, mulled wine, or whatever took our fancy, before the Glow started.

Finally, darkness fell and we could follow the Glow trail. It rained but that didn't matter, rather it enhanced the experience, lasers lit up the dark sky turning the raindrops into diamonds, coloured fountains sprung to life shooting up from the lakes, waterfalls thundered and changed colour. We walked through tunnels of light accompanied by classical music, goblets of fire exploded to the foot tapping beat of



"New York, New York". Even the trees appeared to shimmer, and of course there were carols. It was simply a stunning banquet for the senses, and a great way to welcome in Christmas. I loved it. And if that wasn't enough there was still plenty of time to explore and perhaps buy the lovely goodies in the Christmas shop.



*Sheila Casey*

# Groups coordinator

Are you interested in joining or helping to run one of the following groups?

**A Beginners Family History Group**: there are currently 2 existing FH groups, so this group might suit those who would like to start researching genealogy. We already have an offer from a member to lead the group.

**The Photography Group**: this group is keen to start meeting again and would welcome keen photographers.

How are you dealing with stress or anxiety? Are you interested in sharing your spiritual experiences with others? eg by examining personal interpretations of healing, the afterlife, meditation, dowsing etc. If you are interested in joining a **Spiritual Group** please get in touch, so that we can arrange a start-up meeting in 2022.

[Lindsay Hasell](#)

## Last date for the Virtual Walks Group

Caroline Piper has entertained us for the last 18 months, during lockdown and travel restrictions. We've virtually visited London, museums and galleries and ventured to the Cotswolds, Bath and Stratford upon Avon and we've all been impressed with her knowledge, clarity and friendliness. All

good things come to an end though and numbers for the last few 'tours' have been low, so the re-scheduled trip to the V&A on the 11<sup>th</sup> January will be the final one. I know the group have enjoyed the tours and hope that others enjoyed reading about them in the newsletter. Caroline had previously spoken at two of our monthly meetings and a study day, so I hope we will be able to see her in person in the future.

If you want to keep in touch or have a 'real' tour with her, this is the link to her Blue Badge tours.

**This is the last tour for this group**

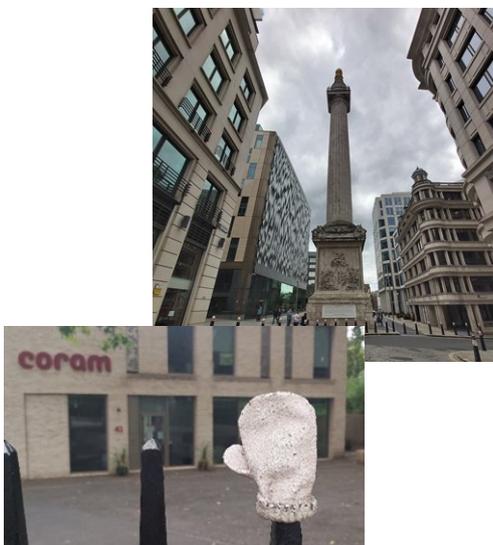
[Sue Brimlow](#)

**January 11th at 2pm - Virtual Tour of the V&A British Galleries**

A few reminders of Caroline's tours



The logo for the Institute of Tourist Guiding London features a circular emblem with a building illustration and the text 'INSTITUTE OF TOURIST GUIDING LONDON' and 'CAROLINE PIPER TOURIST GUIDE'. To the right is an oval portrait of Caroline Piper, a woman with brown hair wearing a light blue top. Text to the right of the portrait reads: 'Caroline Piper Blue Badge Tourist Guide <http://pipertours.com> Please follow me on [www.facebook.com/pipertours](http://www.facebook.com/pipertours) Or see Tripadvisor for reviews'.



## Group News

### Gardening Group tree planting at TN2 3SF



Working with Kasia Olszewska-Martin (TWBC Parks Technical Officer) and the Friends of Grosvenor & Hilbert Park (FoGH) the TWu3a gardening group planted three mountain ash trees on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. The group had raised the funds to donate 3 trees to commemorate each decade that u3a has been active in Tunbridge Wells and

also to remember those we might all have known, and maybe lost, in those thirty years.

The photos show Eryll and Sue planting the trees, members of the gardening group, Kasia, Tony Cheeseman the park keeper and Chris Hughes representing FoGH.



### Out & About Weekenders



We were busy in December with 23 of us having a great Christmas lunch at The Barn...

... and 12 of us car sharing to do the **Christmas Light Trail** at **Bedbury Pinetum**. Both are highly recommended.



Sandra McDonald

## Last Month's Talk

### A Kent Christmas by Geoff Doel

#### An interesting bundle of local Christmas history

Christmas traditions; we usually take comfort from seeing the same decorations and eating the familiar feast every year. However, the Christmas we know and love has its roots firmly in the pagan midwinter festival. It slowly evolved and included many of the rural superstitions alongside the Christian theme.

'**Bringing in the green**' goes way back and was a sign of bringing life into the house when most of nature was closing down. The holly, ivy etc was then burned on twelfth night. At the end of the Georgian period middle class families started bringing in trees to decorate the house.

Giving to charity at Christmas time was traditional as it was thought to ease the giver's transition into heaven.

**Goodening** was a custom in Kent & Sussex of going from house to house for doles (donations) on St. Thomas's day. It was done by women only and the gift could be money or food to allow the poor some sort of Christmas festivity.

**Mummers** would travel around and put on a little play for donations. The play had a set story of a death and a resurrection but could be updated and include local detail.

**Hoodening** was similar but the action was more farcical and usually unscripted. A Hooden Horse (a wooden horse's head with clacking jaws) was a key part of the show and money was again collected.

**Wassailing** is thought to have started in Kent. Wassailers would go from house to house singing (carols and other Christian songs came later) and wishing the occupants good health in return for money or food.

If you enjoyed the talk you can still buy the books *A Kent Christmas* (Sutton), and *A Kent Christmas - A New Selection* (History Press) from Geoff & Fran for £6 each including postage – Geoff & Fran Doel, 27 Nargate Street, Littlebourne, Canterbury CT3 1UH. Telephone 01227 721972. E-mail: [geoffdoel@btinternet.com](mailto:geoffdoel@btinternet.com)



Tunbridge Wells Mummers

### It's time to combat Ageism!

Ageism is a bias from one age group towards another. It includes the use of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination against people based on their age.

Does this ring a bell? Ageism affects people of all ages and apparently one in three people in the UK experience age-based prejudice or discrimination.

u3a and the Centre for Ageing Better have produced a toolkit for challenging ageism. You can download it from the national website [here](#).

### Jenny's Test of Ten Answers

1. Janus
2. Rio de Janeiro
3. Barack Obama.
4. Alaska.
5. Mad Men.
6. Elizabeth I
7. Falkland Islands.
8. Death of Queen Victoria.
9. Charles I
10. The January Man

# Important information

## Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

Please check venue of monthly meetings nearer the time

17 Feb 2022	Monthly meeting: David Tadd "The Forensic Investigation of Homicide"
17 Mar 2022	Monthly meeting: Pat Bryer "A Woman of a Certain Age"
24 Sept 2022	Barn Dance (details later)

## New members

A big welcome to our 9 new members this month.

**David Elliott Celia Evans Anne Goldstein Leisa Gurney-Nichols  
Alan Jones Janice Jones Stephen Kelly Debbie May Ann Sangwin**

## Your Committee

Chairman	Eryll Fabian	01892 513805
Vice-Chairman	Sandra McDonald	01892 752196
Secretary	Fiona Findlay	07872 169146
Treasurer	David Brimlow	01892 860598
Group Coordinator	Lindsay Hasell	01892 673180
Membership Secretary	Judy Horwood	01892 537601
Outings Coordinator	Joan Young	01892 546687
Newsletter	Bridget Sands	01892 546161
Short Breaks & Holidays	Sandra McDonald	01892 752196

## A Message from the Editor

Any publication is only as good as its contributors and I do hope you will continue to support the Newsletter as it is such an easy and effective way to communicate with you all. If you have a great idea for an article or there is anything interesting you would like to see in the newsletter in the future please let me know.

If anyone objects to their photo being reproduced in this Newsletter, please contact me as soon as possible.

All contributions to the **February** Newsletter should be e-mailed to **Bridget** by January 30 at the latest (**earlier submissions are always welcome!**) or phone 01892 546161.

## National Office



Keep up to date with National Office news on the website:

[www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) or write to:

The Third Age Trust, Room 104, Lenta Business Centre,  
156 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8EN

HUGHENDEN MANOR, HIGH WYCOMBE WEDNESDAY 9th March 2022

Our March outing will be a visit to Hughenden Manor and gardens. Originally a farmhouse it was converted to a gentleman's residence in 1738. Hughenden Manor was remodelled in 1862 for Benjamin Disraeli by Edward Buckton Lamb. As a prospective leader of the Conservative party Disraeli needed a suitable country seat, so in 1848 he bought the Hughenden Estate, and continued the process of Gothicising the house which had begun by an earlier owner, the antiquary John Norris. Gothic plaster vaults were installed in the hall in 1858 and E.B. Lamb was commissioned to reface the facades in his own Jacobean style. Designed in an Italian style the formal garden features terraces, perfect lawns, classic statuary and a parterre full of brilliant colours. The walled gardens and pleasure grounds offer a relaxed space for a gentle walk.

Hughenden was home to a secret map making operation in the Second World War, so secret it only came to light 60 years later after a chance encounter. Codenamed 'Hillside' the Manor played a significant role in shaping the outcome of the war.

Departure from Crescent Road will be at 9.00a.m, then calling at St Johns and finally the Fountain at Southborough, approximately 5 to 10 minutes later.

Arriving at Hughenden Manor at 10.30 a.m. depending on traffic. We will be leaving the Manor at 3.30 p.m. to return to Tunbridge Wells around 17.00p.m.

The cost of this trip to National Trust members will be £.18.00 to cover the cost of the coach and the driver's gratuity. No food or drink will be supplied on this outing, but there is a cafe where you can purchase hot and cold drinks, snacks, sandwiches and sweet treats. NT member to bring your NT card on the day) Non-N/T members will pay an additional entrance charge of £13 at the time of writing this application.

Our preferred method of payment is by Bacs. To make an online transfer to Tunbridge Wells u3a: Sortcode 40-52-40 Account number 00024097. Reference F6 Surname. Mine would be F6 Young. If paying by Bacs send me an email to [jyoutings@gmail.com](mailto:jyoutings@gmail.com) confirming your name, telephone number preferably mobile number and most importantly where you want to join the coach. If you are making a transfer on behalf of someone else, please send their details on the transfer a separate payment is needed for each application for accounting purposes.

If you do not use online banking, please send your cheque payable to the U3A Tunbridge Wells to Joan Young, 21 Coniston Avenue, Tunbridge Wells. TN4 9 SP. Please do not send a SAE, I will acknowledge all applications by email, and for the few members that are not on email I will confirm by telephone.

My telephone number to contact me on the day or any queries is 07504919081

I enclose a cheque for £. payable to Tunbridge Wells u3a

Name .....Telephone numbers.....

If you are paying for a partner or U3A friend, please include their details below.

Name .....Telephone numbers.....

I/We will join the coach at Crescent road..... St Johns bus stop opposite the local Sainsburys.....The fountain Southborough.....

Members are advised that TWu3a or the organiser of the outing will not accept responsibility for any mishap of whatever nature during this outing. Members are advised to consider personal insurance cover.

Please tick if you are NOT a National Trust member .....