

# TUNBRIDGE WELLS U3A NEWS

## November/December 2017



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
THE THIRD AGE

[www.tunbridgewellsu3a.org](http://www.tunbridgewellsu3a.org)

### CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

This is the final newsletter this year, which has prompted me to look back over our achievements this year.

We continue to attract new members, who report they heard of us through friends or family, which is the best recommendation. 149 members joined so far this year and although a dozen have found it is not for them and have resigned, the feedback is generally positive. New members are sometimes disappointed to find that particular groups are full, but we do try to open new groups whenever possible and have started 10 new groups this year.

We held our first social event in June and our Barn Dance was so successful that we have just rebooked for **10<sup>th</sup> March** next year. So put the date in your diary now and full details and an application form will be in the January newsletter.

We've also organised our first short-break away. I know the Liverpool event is in 2018, but the initiative and all the planning have been carried out this year. I'm really pleased that we are able to go ahead with this and hope it will be the first of many and will be as successful as all our outings have been.

Finally, in addition to the wonderful speakers at our monthly meetings, we have held a very successful seminar and a study day. As you'll see elsewhere in this newsletter, the Middle East Study Day was sold out and was excellent; great speakers and very smoothly hosted by Paddock Wood U3A.

*Sue Brimlow, Chairman*

Click [here](#) to email or Tel: 01892 863691

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### COMING UP

#### MONTHLY MEETINGS

at 2.30pm at the Camden Centre

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November  
"A Gallop through the History of  
Carriage Driving"  
A talk by Antonia Gallop

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December  
**CHRISTMAS QUIZ**

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018  
Fiddle and Faff

#### MONTHLY COFFEE MORNINGS

at Trinity from 10.30 – 12.00

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November  
Friday 29<sup>th</sup> December  
Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2018

#### CHRISTMAS LUNCH

on 8<sup>th</sup> December  
Application form on page 10

#### OUR OUTINGS

on 23<sup>rd</sup> November  
there will be an outing to  
**Kew Gardens to see the  
Christmas lights**  
this outing now has a waiting list

There will be no outing  
in December

There will be outings on:

11<sup>th</sup> January 2018  
To *Holiday on Ice*  
see Outings News

and on 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February  
to the Royal Albert Hall  
application form on page 9

## 2017-18 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

There are still over a hundred members who have not renewed, and our membership champions have been unable to contact many of them. Please remember that you must be a member to attend our groups and outings, so if you wish to remain a member, please do renew as soon as possible. From November, members who have not renewed will be shown on our records as 'lapsed'. If you are unsure how to renew please either [email](#) or phone Ruth Johnson, our Membership Secretary, on 01892 523097

### Christmas Lunch

There are still a few places left for the **Christmas Lunch** on **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December**,

Details are on the application form on p. 10  
If you would like to come, please complete the form and return it to Di Brown as soon as possible.

### Christmas Quiz

There will be no Monthly Meeting on the third Thursday in December.

Instead, on **Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December** at 2.30 there will be a Christmas Quiz with carols, mulled wine and mince pies. Please just turn up as usual at the Camden Centre and each table will become a team.

### Latest on Our Short Break Away in 2018

Liverpool – Chester – Port Sunlight

42 people are coming to Liverpool at the end of April to see the Terracotta Warriors. We are away 3 nights and as well as Liverpool we will visit Chester and Port Sunlight. All deposits are now with Just For Groups. If you are still thinking you might like to join us please phone 01892 752196 or [email](#).

*Sandra McDonald Outings Coordinator*

## Report on the Outing to the Brooklands Motor & Aviation Museum



On 18<sup>th</sup> October we had a lovely day out at the Brooklands Motor & Aviation museum. The first purpose-built racing circuit in the world and the birthplace of British aviation meant there would be an incredible amount to see.

More men than usual joined us. Refreshments in an aircraft hangar and an introductory talk began the day. For some it was too female biased and lengthy but the talk was titled 'Gearsticks and Lipsticks', so the story was of the women, their lifestyle and achievements.

Brooklands was the place to be in the 20s and 30s for those from privileged backgrounds. The clubhouse was regularly attended by Barbara Cartland. She hung out with the 'Bentley Boys' who she said, "danced divinely". With no women allowed to drive because the men thought they couldn't drive as well as men, Barbara organised the first ladies race in 1930 with 9 amateur ladies. She proved them wrong! Women went on to break many records and their stories are inspiring.

We learnt that motor racing initially took its lead from horse racing and cars were weighed and given a handicap. With no numbers on the cars early drivers wore jockey silk colours. The museum exhibits of early racing cars really captured the atmosphere and excitement of the time.

Then on to aviation ... Some of us boarded a Vickers VC10 designed and built at Brooklands. It was one of the biggest most deluxe aircraft ever built for its time, known as the 'Queen of the Skies'. This one had an amazing luxurious interior configured for the Sultan of Oman.

Then, clutching our boarding cards, we climbed the steps of Concorde. We sat in real Concorde seats and experienced a virtual take off, flight and landing. A highlight for many.



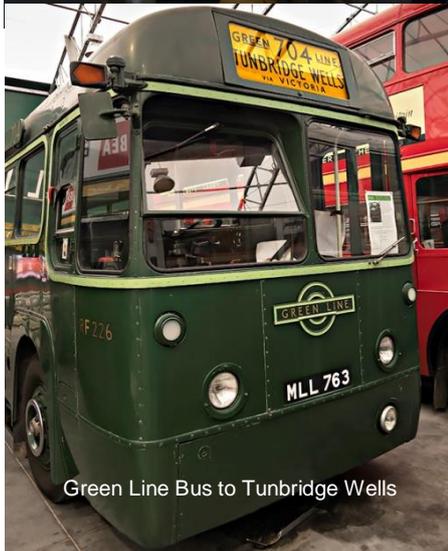
A few of us took our seats in the restored Balloon hangar, strapped ourselves in, put on our period style 3D goggles and in the 4D theatre flew with the Red Arrows or raced around the Brooklands' track in the Napier Railton motor car.



*Sandra McDonald  
Outings Coordinator*

There was still so much more to see at Brooklands including the fascinating London Bus museum, the incredible Barnes Wallis Stratosphere, and the motorbike and cycling sheds.

Text by



Green Line Bus to Tunbridge Wells

Photos by Stella Westrup, Colin Turner and Sandra McDonald

## OUTING NEWS

There is no outing in December.

We are off to the seaside on 11<sup>th</sup> January to see a magical ice skating extravaganza at the Brighton Centre, a matinee performance of *Holiday on Ice*. There may be a few places left. Please contact Sandra Chandnani 01892 538665.

You will find the application form below for our February outing by train for a backstage Grand Tour of the Grade 2 listed **Royal Albert Hall** on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. We will view the Queen's private box and visit her private suites, the gallery with its amazing views, and hear from an informative guide.

*Sandra McDonald, Outings Coordinator*

### A Message for the Art Appreciation Group

**Tuesday 21st November, 2.30 p.m.**

Due to the unfortunate need to cancel our October meeting, Liz Strang now feels it would be more appropriate to give her illustrated talk **on CEZANNE: FATHER OF MODERN ART – LANDSCAPE AND PORTRAIT** next month (as originally planned) as the National Portrait Gallery exhibition has already begun and members may wish to book tickets for it before the end of this year. Her talk on **THE ART OF EVERYDAY** has, therefore, been postponed until a later date.

We hope very much that the blinds will have been fitted by then, but it seems impractical to make any further changes to our programme for this year.

We hope to let you have full details of the revised programme for 2018 in due course and are sorry for any confusion it may have caused.

*Alison Turner (Group Co-ordinator)*  
01892 526693 or email [here](#)

## Group Reports

### A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

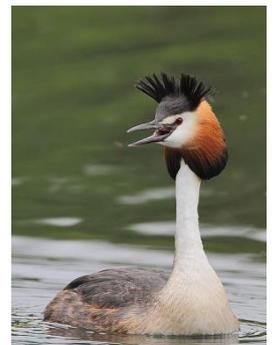
On a cold and cloudy October morning a hardy group of WOW walkers headed to the Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve. Our stalwart efforts were certainly well rewarded by the number of sightings in both the wood and on the water. The reserve's wetland and woodland habitats support a diverse community of trees, plants, fungi, birds and wildfowl. Much of this we were able to appreciate and enjoy during our walk around part of the lakes and with the visits to the well positioned bird hides.

Sightings included:

Lapwing, Gadwall, Pochard, Coot, Cormorant, Snipe, Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Teal, Tufted Duck, and a rare Canada/Graylag Goose hybrid.

Our grateful thanks go to Susanna and Peter, the wardens, for all their guidance and specialist knowledge.

*Gillian Anderson*



Great Crested Grebe  
Photo by Steve Garve

(Flickr: Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus))

[CC BY-SA 2.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

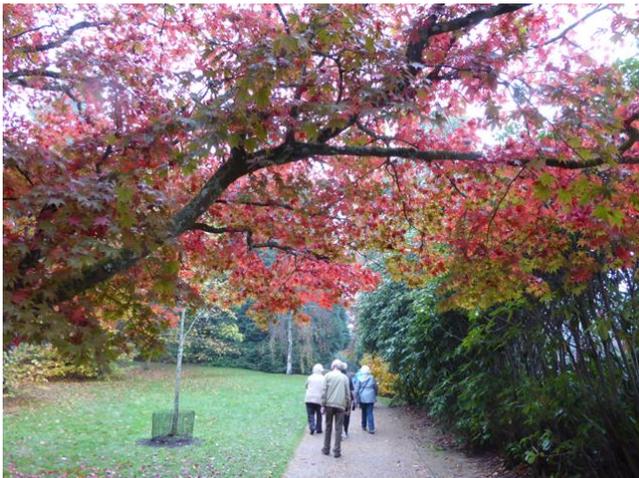
## DIGITAL IMAGING INTERMEDIATE GROUP II

The weather forecast for Wednesday 18 October was not sufficiently dire to dissuade our intrepid band from venturing out to Sheffield Park to see how the Autumn colours compared with the kaleidoscope that took all our breaths away in 2016.

Our faith in fate was rewarded with a dry calm morning and an array of colours which, in their own gentle and subtle way, were equally as beautiful as the previous year.

The internet describes the park as an informal landscape garden but, as Autumn was the season it was planted for in the early 20th Century by Arthur Soames, a more accurate description would be a horticultural work of art.

The clever selection of species including Nyssa, Acer and Taxodiums were the perfect basis to show off the talents of Capability Brown and Humphry Repton and the introduction of the lakes made this visual spectacle a sheer delight to all visitors.



Apart from mentioning that our happy group enjoyed afterwards the excellent fayre available at the Crow & Gate on the A26 just past Crowborough, I think readers will enjoy these photos far more than any additional text from me.

*Tom Guy (Group Organiser)*



## Update on Groups

Over recent weeks, with the help of our group contacts, we have been reviewing our waiting lists so that we can set up new groups where necessary. The Spanish language groups appear to be very popular, particularly the new **Beginners' Spanish** so before long we shall have **Beginners' Spanish 2**. Please email me if you are interested in joining the new group. It would also be good to hear from any Spanish speakers who might volunteer to help this group.

### More about New Groups

**Beginners Crochet Group** This group will meet on the first Monday and third Friday in the month. The contact is Sue Bailey tel 01892 528836 or email [here](#).

**A Second Garden Visits Group** There has been much enthusiasm for this group and we hoped to start in the autumn. However, so many of you were away enjoying the warm October weather elsewhere that we failed to find a meeting date. We shall try again towards the end of January and plan a schedule of visits from February/March.

**Out and About Explorers** We are still hoping for a few more members to share cars on visits to places of interest in our area. We have a wonderful choice of stately homes, historic villages, castles and festivals on our doorstep. The choice is yours.

**Italian Conversation Plus** is a new group for members who have a good command of the written language but wish to increase fluency in conversation.

**Local Music Events** If you would like to join a group to visit live music events at Trinity, The Assembly Hall, The Pantiles or any other nearby venue, please get in touch.

**Latin or Ancient Greek** For those with some previous knowledge, intermediate or advanced.

### Brand New Suggestions

Would you be interested in a **Cycling group** – 5 to 10 K rides?

A new singing group. **Old Rock Back**, inspired by national rock choir but on a more intimate level and based on earlier rock music.

### Groups looking for new members

**Military, Aviation and Maritime Histories** meets in the morning on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month. Please contact Michael Polkinghorne by [email](#) or tel 01892 539320 if you would like to know more.

**London Explorers 5** go out on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month.  
Contact Renee or Philip Dewhurst 01892 516840 or by [email](#).

**Book Group Volume 2** meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm  
Contact Diana Barry by [email](#) or 01892 525325

**For more information or to join new groups please contact Jan Sumner, Groups Coordinator [twu3agroupcoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:twu3agroupcoordinator@gmail.com) or phone 01892 860554**

*Jan Sumner, Groups Co-ordinator*

## Monthly Meetings

About 100 of us listened in awe to Laton Frewen's fascinating talk about **Sir Ernest Shackleton, "a most successful failure"** on 19<sup>th</sup> October. His enthusiasm for his subject was catching and his excellent slides helped us to imagine the appalling conditions that Shackleton and his crew suffered on their voyages. Stuck in the ice as their boat drifted for a year in the Antarctic Ocean was a terrible ordeal, yet Shackleton (who had failed to take the local whalers advice about the particularly bad conditions) managed to land his crew on the ice before the boat broke up and then made his epic journey to South Georgia, 800 miles away, to seek help.

All but the animals survived.



Photo by Frank Hurley (1885–1962)

### Speakers in early 2018

#### 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018: Fiddle and Faff

This will be a both musical and spoken presentation by two ladies, Christine Adams and Lissie Bayford known as Fiddle and Faff, entitled A Kentish Garland. You will hear songs, some traditional, some of their own, featuring tales of Kentish characters, with explanations and the stories behind them.

#### 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018: Tim Moorey: "The Joys of English".

#### 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018: Tom Way: "Britain through the Seasons".

An award winning fine art wildlife photographer, Tom Way's talk presents an array of British wildlife through our four seasons. Tom will talk about spending hours lying in the snow photographing mountain hares during the cold winter months, to waiting for fox cubs to appear from their den on the long summer evenings. Tom will go into detail about how including the different colours of the year can help improve your images and why photographing in extreme weather conditions can bring out the best in your photos.

### Middle East Matters – Study Day

Tunbridge Wells and Paddock Wood joined together to host this stimulating Study Day which was attended by 130 members from U3As in Tunbridge Wells, Paddock Wood, Pembury, Sevenoaks, West Malling, Kings Hill, Tonbridge, Goudhurst, Tenterden, Westerham and Canterbury.

All three speakers were of a very high calibre. In the morning William Tyler delivered an exceedingly lively lecture, laced with provocative side swipes at various targets. He argued, first, that one cannot understand the Middle East's present problems without a knowledge of its history and, second, that the Anglo-French division of the former Turkish-ruled lands lies at the root of contemporary tensions. Jonathan Farley followed much the same line but switched the emphasis towards Arab-Jewish relations and its connected question of the Palestinian refugees. In the afternoon Brian Beeley surveyed the present situation in the region as well as nearby Africa, more or less state by state.

The three thought-provoking academics stressed the effects of outside intervention – economic, military and political – as a major factor in the continuing intractability of the area's tensions, exacerbated by comparatively recent events such as the rise of ISIS and the Kurds. All three were also highly pessimistic about solutions and future prospects while foreign states, particularly Britain, Russia and the United States, continued to pursue their perceived national interests in the region and the Middle Eastern states themselves, including Israel, were motivated by power objectives, linked in some cases to religious divisions.

The function was very well organized and presented by Adrian Twiner, our Vice Chairman, and Andy Wickham, Chairman of Paddock Wood U3A, and the audience came away buzzing with new ideas and the interest which all three speakers had aroused.

*Jim Robertson*



## Events In November, December and January



We have the following events arranged for November, December and January:

16 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<b>“A Gallop through the History of Carriage Driving”</b> . A talk by Antonia Gallop Antonia has been around horses all her life, from earning a living training and producing for commercial work to enjoying showing them in their antique vehicles at National level. Now working as a qualified interpreter for deaf people, carriage horses remain her passion and she supports and encourages fellow carriage drivers as Area Commissioner for The British Driving Society. She dresses in the costume for driving and may demonstrate the use of the whip....space permitting!
24 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Coffee Morning at Trinity
8 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Christmas Lunch</b> at the Masonic Hall: by ticket
20 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Christmas Quiz</b>
29 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Coffee Morning at Trinity
18 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Monthly Talk: <b>Fiddle and Faff</b>
26 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Coffee Morning at Trinity

### Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	New Members' Meeting – to be confirmed
10 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Barn Dance

### New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since 1 October:

Lynn Greenslade	Malcolm Greenslade	John Hawkins	Philip Heyes
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### Useful Information and Important Messages

#### **Your Committee**

Chairman	Sue Brimlow	01892 863691
Vice-Chairman	Adrian Twiner	01892 459352
Secretary	Wendy Maher	01892 325272
Treasurer	David Scott	01892 701950
Group Coordinator	Jan Sumner	01892 860554
Membership Secretary	Ruth Johnson	01892 523097
Outings Coordinator	Sandra McDonald	01892 752196
Business Secretary	Adrian Twiner	01892 459352
Newsletter	Eryll Fabian	01892 513805



A few U3A 2018 diaries are still available at £2.50. Please phone Sue Brimlow if you would like one.

#### 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 January newsletter should be e-mailed to [Eryll Fabian](mailto:Eryll.Fabian) **before Christmas if possible** or phone 01892 513805.

**Please note that there will be no Newsletter in December**

### National Events

Details of interesting national events appear on the website. They can be found on [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) or by writing to: The Third Age Trust, 52 Lant Street, London SE1 1RB

Members only

Tunbridge Wells U3A

Fair amount of walking involved

**A day out by train to the Royal Albert Hall**

**Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018 and Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

Opened by Queen Victoria in 1871 in memory of her husband consort, Prince Albert, the Royal Albert Hall has become one of the UK's most treasured and distinctive buildings, hosting a wide variety of concerts and events, including the famous Proms in the summer.

We shall travel by train to Charing Cross and then by bus to the Royal Albert Hall, where we will have coffee and Danish pastry, followed by the Grand Tour which lasts about an hour. The afternoon will be free for people to visit one of the museums down Exhibition Road and to have lunch before returning to Charing Cross by Underground.

**Itinerary**

- 8.45 am Meet at Tunbridge Wells Station/entrance to ticket office (please be prompt)
- 9.08 am Train departs for Charing Cross
- 10.07 am Arrive at Charing Cross/catch No. 9 bus to Royal Albert Hall (**You will need bus pass**)
- 10.45 am Arrive at the Royal Albert Hall for coffee and pastry
- 11.30 am Grand Tour of Royal Albert Hall
- 12.30 pm Walk for approximately 10 mins to V&A, Science Museum or Natural History Museum.  
Lunch (not included) and free time
- 3.30 pm Meet at South Kensington Underground Station for tube to Charing Cross
- 4.42 pm Train leaves for Tunbridge Wells

**Cost £15 per person** to include refreshments and tour of the Royal Albert Hall.

**Lunch and train fares are not included in the cost.**

**Organisers are Stella Westrup 01892 523413 and Ann Wakeford 01892 524968. (Mobile on the day 07779478330).**

**Applications** to be sent to Stella Westrup, 19, Oakwood Rise, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 3HD enclosing a cheque payable to Tunbridge Wells U3A and **a stamped addressed envelope.**

**You have a choice of two dates. Please indicate which you prefer and whether you could make either date. (For each date there is a maximum of 20 people).**

Members are advised that neither the TWU3A nor the organiser will accept responsibility for any mishap of whatsoever nature during the outing. There are a fair amount of stairs to negotiate at the Albert Hall.

***NB. Once we are committed to paying out money in advance full refunds will only be given if your place can be taken by another U3A member.***

**Tunbridge Wells U3A visit to the Royal Albert Hall.** Please reserve .....place/s @ £15 each.

I enclose a cheque for £..... and a stamped addressed envelope for receipt. Please tick to indicate your choice of date and then say if you could make either date.

I have a rail card Yes ( ) No ( )

Prefer Wednesday 21st February ( ) / Prefer Wednesday 28th February ( ) / Could make either date ( )

Name/s .....

U3A No/s .....

Address/es .....

Tel.No..... Mob.No..... Signature ..... Date.....

Via email



# CHRISTMAS LUNCH ON FRIDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2017

Please join us at the **Masonic Hall, St John's Road, Tunbridge Wells** at **12.30 for 1.00pm.**

**£21** per person includes a welcoming drink of wine or fruit juice, a delicious three course Christmas lunch and gratuities.

- Prawn Cocktail
- or
- Home made Vegetable Soup
- ~~~~~
- Roast Turkey
- or
- Roast Gammon
- or
- Roast Beef
- or
- Mushroom and Spinach Wellington\*\* (*vegetarian*)
- with a selection of fresh vegetables
- and all the trimmings
- ~~~~~
- Christmas pudding with brandy sauce
- or
- Mixed Berries Pavlova
- or
- Lemon posset with fresh raspberries
- or
- Cheese and biscuits
- ~~~~~
- Coffee or Tea

NB We only need to pre-order vegetarian meals

Please send completed application form together with your cheque for ticket(s) to Di Brown, The Corner House, 44 Pennine Walk, Tunbridge Wells TN2 3NW.

***Your ticket(s) will be emailed to you. If you require a paper copy please send a SAE. As you will need to exchange your ticket for your welcome drink please bring it with you***

Queries to Di Brown on [dmzbrown@gmail.com](mailto:dmzbrown@gmail.com) or 01892 529999 or Sue Marsal on [suedvicm@gmail.com](mailto:suedvicm@gmail.com) or 01892 832627

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I/We enclose cheque for £ ..... made payable to Tunbridge Wells U3A

Name ..... Membership no.....

Email address..... Phone no.....

*If you are paying for a friend please include their details below*

Name ..... Membership no.....

Email address..... Phone no.....

\*\* I/We would like .....vegetarian meals

Via email