

# TUNBRIDGE WELLS U3A NEWS

## November 2019



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
THE THIRD AGE

### CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

This is the final newsletter for 2019, so it inevitably has a Christmas theme.

I'm delighted to say that all the tickets for our Christmas lunch at the Masonic Hall have been sold. If you are going it is quite natural for you to want to sit with your friends or other members of your groups, but please do be as welcoming as you can to members who may be new. It can be quite daunting to come if you don't know many people and to be told twice that a seat is reserved, as happened to one couple last year, is off-putting.

Our December meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> December will be our traditional light-hearted event, with mulled wine and mince pies, then a quiz followed by Christmas carols. Instead of the usual theatre style layout, the room will be filled with tables and each table will be a team. So don't worry if you are coming on your own as everyone is welcome to join in. Last year, one of our pub-quiz teams won, so they'll be under pressure to uphold their record.

And finally, I wanted to make you aware of a change of date for our December coffee morning. We thought that as many of us wouldn't be able to make the 27<sup>th</sup> December, the last Friday in December, we would postpone it until Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January. It will be at the Trinity café as usual.

We'll try and get this out to members as quickly as possible this month, so you have an opportunity to book to see Swan Lake in February.

On behalf of the committee, I'd like to wish everyone Seasons Greetings.

[Sue Brimlow](#), *Chairman*, Tel: 01892 863691

### COMING UP

#### MONTHLY MEETINGS

at 2.30pm at the Camden Centre

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November**  
**Christmas Traditions**  
a talk by Imogen Corrigan

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December**  
**Christmas Quiz**  
See next page

#### MONTHLY COFFEE MORNINGS

at Trinity from 10.30 – 12.00

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November**



**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January**

**N.B. THERE WILL BE  
NO COFFEE MORNING ON  
FRIDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

#### OUR OUTINGS

There will be outings on

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November**  
**Kew Gardens Xmas Trail**  
Fully booked

**Wednesday 12th February**  
**"Swan Lake"**  
Application form on p. 11

**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
A HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO EVERYONE!**

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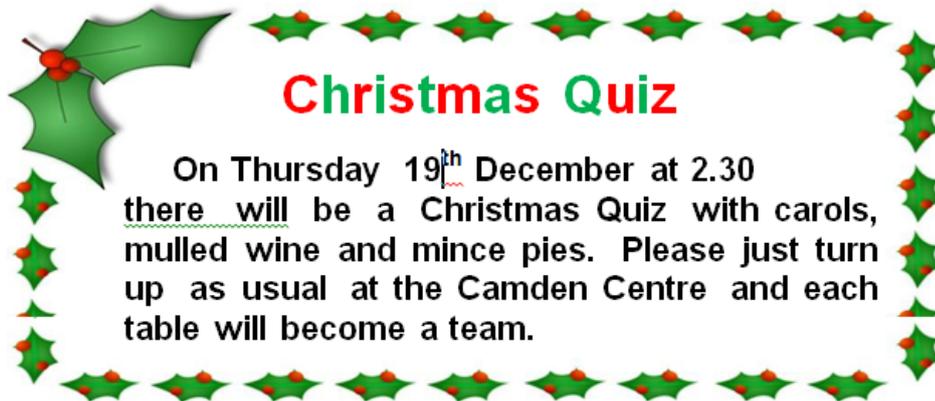
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## Christmas Lunch

**Christmas Lunch on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

The lunch is fully booked. Don't forget to bring your ticket to exchange for your drink. If anyone has sent an application / cheque and hasn't received tickets yet, please contact Suzette or phone 01892 557402 as soon as possible.



## Christmas Quiz

On Thursday 19<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.

## USEFUL TO KNOW TALKS

We have hosted two free "Useful to Know" talks this month. In the first, Gaye Illsley spoke about the importance of having a **Lasting Power of Attorney**. From her wide experience, she stressed the need to have this in place long before it is required, and pointed out that those who already have an Enduring Power of Attorney should consider replacing it with the new and far more comprehensive Lasting Power. She gave us many case histories and warned, for example, that having a joint bank account is no substitute, since banks will freeze an account if one signatory is known to have dementia. More than 80 people attended the talk and all found it very helpful. [Sue Brimlow](#) (01892 863691) has Gaye's contact details. Links to her presentation were sent with October's newsletter email.

The second talk was given by John Clayton and Alex Baggott of **Hi Kent**, (not "Hi" as in "Hello" but **H**earing **I**mpairment!) the deaf and hard of hearing charity for the county. Apparently one in five people nationally suffer from hearing loss and, as with deteriorating eyesight, this is very often connected to aging. Hi Kent's many free clinics around Kent can advise on what to do when one thinks one may be losing one's hearing and, once fitted with a NHS hearing aid, they can provide free aftercare as well as assisted equipment such as phones and a TV listener. There is a charge for more specialised equipment but Hi Kent can advise on what is available. Their other paid services include lip reading classes, tinnitus support, deaf awareness training, British Sign Language training, and providing commercial equipment such as hearing loops in buildings. The talk was attended by about 20 of us who made full use of the question and answer period and agreed that the session had been both interesting and useful. Further information about Hi Kent can be found on their website or by asking Sue Brimlow (see above) for their contact details.

You will have seen from the email which accompanied this Newsletter that the next "Useful to Know" talk will be on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November from 2.30 pm until 4 pm at the Camden Centre. Liz Orr, one of our members, will talk about **single use plastics** – a subject that should interest us all.

## OUTINGS NEWS

There was no day trip last month, as we had the Short Break to Bath and Bristol instead. Our next outing will be at the end of this month to Kew Gardens. Seeing the beautiful Christmas lights and laser displays will put us all in the mood for Christmas. This outing has proved very popular in the past and we have a full coach and a waiting list for this exciting trip.

**We still have places left for our Ballet trip on 12th February  
but you must book fast!**



Raymond Gubbay presents

### **The Russian State Ballet & Orchestra of Siberia's Swan Lake**

**Ticket numbers have to be confirmed by 15th December, so please complete and return the application form at the end of this newsletter as soon as possible.**

As the outings for next year have not been quite finalised, I will hopefully be able to give a detailed programme in January's newsletter.



*Joan Young, Outings Co-ordinator*

**We saw (and heard – what a racket) sealions at Longleat, but not swans!**

**Some photos of the short trip to Bristol and Bath (3 to 6 October)**

**(and Longleat, and Wells,  
and Tyntesfield,  
and Laycock Abbey!)**



**It was a terrific trip, Sandra! – thank you**

*Photos by Sandra McDonald, Rosemary Rees, and Eryll Fabian  
With apologies to Peter Bell and Marilyn Smart who sent photos  
which I could not squeeze in! Editor*

## SHORT BREAKS NEWS

Please see photo collage of the recent trip to Bristol and Bath on the page above.

1 twin/double room is still available on the Short Break to Devon in May 2020.  
See website for details.

## EXCITING BREAKING NEWS .....

Mini Break **2020**



**Thursford  
Christmas  
Spectacular**

3 days  
November/ December

## THE LARGEST CHRISTMAS SHOW IN THE UK!

- Set amongst the magical surroundings of mechanical organs and fairground carousels.
- Lavishly decorated with thousands of twinkling lights, Christmas trees and Christmas decorations.
- A cast of 130 professional dancers, singers and musicians.
- A 3 hour performance.
- Hotel and itinerary being finalised. Tickets sell fast. PLEASE register interest **NOW**.

E-mail [Sandra McDonald](#), Short Breaks Organiser, or phone her on 01892 752196

## GROUP REPORT

### GOLF

The Golf Group meets on Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings at Villa Golf in Blackham. New members are always welcome. Phone Graham or Jeanette Brown 01892 524251 for details.



## UPDATE ON GROUPS

At the New Members Meeting last month we had an enthusiastic response to some of our existing groups following introductions from the contacts. We were entertained with a superb performance of Blue Moon, sung by Trevor Vaughan, which led to several new members for **Singing for Fun**.

We had a very positive response to two of our new groups. **MOTO (Members On Their Own)** will be added to our list of groups early this month. The members will decide on a schedule of events; regular coffee mornings and lunches and also visits to theatre, cinema etc. **Garden Visits** was also popular and the group will meet to get started on the 12<sup>th</sup> November at 2.00pm. We have also planned an initial meeting for **Maths and Statistics** on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November at 11.00am. All of these will be held at the café in the Trinity Theatre and, following the meetings, details will appear on the website with the name of the contacts.

We are also offering:

**Four Paws Walking Group** We would envisage walks of about an hour, possibly finishing up with a cup of tea at a dog friendly café.

**Breakfast or Brunch** Meeting in a local restaurant for breakfast or just a coffee and a chat.

**A New Crochet Group** In the existing group, now at capacity, beginners started with simple granny squares and were helped by a few more experienced members. Together they have all progressed and choose whether to work on individual pieces or together on communal projects such as blankets for the charity 'Knit for Peace.' I have already had offers of help with the new group so anyone who would like to take it up, please let me know.

**A New Spanish Beginners Group** Spanish is very popular at all levels. We already have two beginners groups and I am taking names for a new one. This will be a self-taught group using books, internet etc., unless we can attract a Spanish speaker from among our members.

### NEWS OF OTHER GROUPS

**Rummikub** A new group which will meet at Trinity on the first Thursday of the month in the afternoon. The contact for the group is Sandra Chandnani [sandrachand@icloud.com](mailto:sandrachand@icloud.com).

**Tennis (Bat and Chat)** The Thursday morning sessions at St John's Tennis Club will start again in the spring. Please contact Laura Collins if you would like to be notified of the spring dates. [laura@allstarspeakers.co.uk](mailto:laura@allstarspeakers.co.uk) Tel 07802 643696.

**French Conversation 2** now has places to offer. The group is of higher intermediate standard and meets at 10.00am on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays each month, in members' homes. It is not suitable for absolute beginners. The group read and translate general topics and discuss items of current affairs etc. Contact Frank Monckton [frankmonckton352@gmail.com](mailto:frankmonckton352@gmail.com) 01892 533652.

**Cycling** Our cyclists aim to meet on alternate Tuesdays. It's a friendly group cycling at an easy pace. Contact Richard Martin [richardmartin51@btinternet.com](mailto:richardmartin51@btinternet.com) 07803 267706.

**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.

# REPORT ON THE OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING



Photo from his website  
by kind permission  
of the lecturer.

On a dank and dismal afternoon it was instantly cheering to be told that our U3A audience was “vibrant and perky” – needless to say our local guest was the many-talented **Bertie Pearce**, magician, conjuror and actor inter alia - who came to talk about the origins of Punch & Judy. Full of jokes and asides, we did wonder by the end how Bertie would describe **us** to his next audience!

Derived from the secular Commedia del Arte Italian clown Pulcinella in the fifteenth century with stock plots and an awareness of current events, the hook-nosed character first appeared in England in Covent Garden in May 1662 when, shortly after the restoration of Charles II, street theatre and live drama returned, having been banned under the Cromwellian regime. Samuel Pepys noted in his diary seeing an “Italian puppet play” which he greatly enjoyed.

Punch is the universal anarchic clown – the buffoon with scant regard for propriety or the people in authority – his partner Judy is a large argumentative lady fond of the bottle. Bertie described how, with the use of the “swazzle” (two little pieces of metal inserted into the back of the mouth), the puppeteer can make Punch’s voice rough and harsh and thus the original “Joanie” sounds more like “Judy”. By the eighteenth century the marionettes (with their leather masks) eventually became glove puppets which were cheaper and easier to manage.

Other characters included Pantalone – the elderly lascivious wealthy merchant with a yen for young ladies – Vittore, the lawyer who is maddeningly always right and the cheeky servant Harlequino – the “servant of two masters”. The tradition spread throughout Europe – even to Russia where Punch becomes “Petrushka”: its constant themes being domestic violence (babies thrown out of the window when they cry!) – public hangings; that great public entertainment – Punch manages to hang the hangman in the show – pompous town clerks and parish beadies are all mocked

Comic props were introduced like the strings of sausages and, as explorers ventured ever further, the crocodile whose gnashing teeth echoed the sound of the slapstick used in Commedia del Arte and later was included by J.M. Barrie as one of the key characters in “Peter Pan”. The show continued on into the nineteenth century, despite offending more genteel audiences and Dickens roundly defended it when a potential ban was discussed. In 1841 Henry Mayhew and Mark Lemon used Punch as an anarchic symbol as the cover of their new satirical publication “*Punch or the London Charivari*”. Frith’s 1854 painting of *Margate Sands* includes the striped booth of the Punch & Judy show and was purchased by Queen Victoria.

Together with ice creams and donkey rides, the Punch & Judy show is still a popular aspect of seaside entertainment. As Bertie observed, all societies need something to make them laugh at pomposity and officialdom – there will always be a need for a “Lord of Misrule” to relieve pent-up feelings: thus from fifteenth century street theatre to “Private Eye” and “Spitting Image” the spirit of Punch survives. Bertie did wonder whether two particular blonde gentlemen so much in the current public eye might be future targets!

Thank you, Bertie, for cheering us up! “That’s the way to do it!”

*Alison Turner*

## FORTHCOMING MONTHLY MEETINGS

**21st November:** Imogen Corrigan will talk on Christmas traditions.

**19<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Quiz

**2020**

**16<sup>th</sup> January:** Tom Way will speak on “Exciting Wildlife from around the World”.

**20<sup>th</sup> February:** “Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies”, a talk by Martin Lloyd.

## REPORT ON THE ART STUDY DAY on 27<sup>th</sup> October

Renaissance, Royalty and Rembrandt: the three talks centred on examples of Western European Art from the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery. Adrian Twiner and Paddock Wood U3A again successfully organised the Art Study day at St Andrew's church in Paddock Wood, bringing together members of 9 West Kent U3As. It was unanimously agreed to be an entertaining and very informative day and we were very grateful for the hospitality provided by Paddock Wood U3A.

Many of us had seen our three brilliant speakers at other U3A events.

**Caroline Piper** (you may have heard her talks on Tea and James Bond) started the day off with a virtual tour of the National Gallery. As a real-life guide of this gallery she knowledgeably talked us through the development of techniques and attitudes of artists from Magaritone d'Arezzo ('Madonna and child', 1250) to Velazquez ('The Toilet of Venus', 1680).

**Julia Cruse** (you may remember her talk about Cunning Queens) explained how the Tudors and Elizabethans used portraits as political propaganda. Henry VIII and Elizabeth I had portraits of their family and ancestors painted to emphasise their lineage, power and status. As time went by portraits displaying the subject's wealth, success and loyalty were increasingly commissioned by important families.

**Gayna Pelham** (who has given some of us a guided tour of the National Gallery highlights) argued that Rembrandt became the most influential of all portrait painters. He was ambitious and worked hard at capturing facial expressions and developing his technique with oils. He left 600 paintings and 2000 drawings but suffered from depression later in life and was eventually buried in a pauper's grave.

The message I came away with from these three eminently different lectures was that there is more to every painting than you first imagine. The lasting legacy of these artists is in the detail, symbolism, and craft of their works.

You just need to look more carefully and then... keep on looking.

*Bridget Sands*



Here we are in St Andrew's Church, Paddock Wood, waiting for the lectures to begin!

*Photo by Eryll Fabian*

**Many readers are probably not aware of the opportunities offered by National Office to members of all U3As. Last month, Diane Thomas told us about her experience at one of the Summer Schools. Here, Sue Brimlow tells us about a lecture at the **Royal Institution** which she attended ... and how to find out about the many possibilities on offer.**

In October I attended the 'U3A Explores Science at the Ri lecture' where we had 3 really varied talks. The first was called 'Chasing the Sun', which discussed the importance of our body's circadian rhythms and our need for sunlight. The lecturer claimed that access to sunlight (in safe amounts) is crucial to living a happy and fulfilling life. The second lecture discussed how the techniques that magicians use provide stunning insights into how our brain works. He used science, interactive demonstrations and magic to explain why our brain is so easily deceived. After tea, the third talk was about what was happening at the Large Hadron Collider since the discovery of the Higgs boson. I hadn't thought it was possible to make particle physics interesting and accessible, but the lecturer achieved it effortlessly.

Two lectures are held each year and the next one is 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Information on these events, as well as lectures at the National Gallery, Christmas concerts and other events in London are in the monthly National newsletter. To get this delivered to you, sign up at [u3a.org.uk/email](http://u3a.org.uk/email). This takes you to the National website and you have to scroll to the bottom of the screen to register and sign up for the newsletter email.

*Sue Brimlow*

**Editor's Note:** Having signed up for the Newsletter, you will have to scroll through it carefully to find out about events! The October issue includes details of the U3A Christmas Concert on 4<sup>th</sup> December which will be held in St Lawrence Jewry, next to the Guildhall. Also included are details of a fascinating programme at the British Library on 3<sup>rd</sup> February about children's literature. If anyone attends these events, please let me have a short report for the Newsletter!

### **Editor's Appeal!**

**WOT, NO GROUP REPORTS!?** Well, only one this month when the Golf Group contacted me at the end of the month. What's happened to all you budding photographers, reporters, and keen followers of U3A events? The run-up to Christmas is always a busy time, but there will be no Newsletter in December, so do, PLEASE, keep your contributions coming so that we can have a bumper edition of the Newsletter in January. The deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> December, but it is always a great help if you send your contributions in as early as possible.

### **And Reminder**

Don't forget, there will be no Newsletter in December.



## Useful Information and Important Messages

### Events in November, December and January

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

19 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	“Useful to Know” talk on single use plastics
21 <sup>st</sup> Nov.	Monthly Meeting: <b>Christmas Traditions</b> , a talk by Imogen Corrigan
29 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	Coffee Morning at Trinity
12 <sup>th</sup> Dec.	U3A Christmas Lunch at the Masonic Hall – by ticket
19 <sup>th</sup> Dec.	Monthly Meeting: <b>Christmas Quiz</b>
27 <sup>th</sup> Dec.	<b>NO COFFEE MORNING</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan.	Coffee Morning at Trinity
16 <sup>th</sup> Jan.	Monthly Meeting: <b>Exciting Wildlife from around the World</b> , a talk by Tom Way
31 <sup>st</sup> Jan.	Coffee Morning at Trinity

### Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

2020	<b>WATCH THIS SPACE!</b>
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### New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since 1<sup>st</sup> October:

John Arkell	Jane Fuller	Christine Simpson
Michelle Atterbury	Madeleine Jordan	Muriel Thatcher
Philip Clarkson Webb	Susie Nettleton	Richard Thatcher
Jean Cooper	Richard Peirce	Keith Travis
James Duncan	Barbara Raggett	Marian van Oorschot
Irene Dunlop	Joan Scott- Goldstone	Jennie Webb

### Your Committee

Chairman	Sue Brimlow	01892 863691
Vice-Chairman	Adrian Twiner	01892 459352
Secretary	Wendy Maher	01892 325272
Treasurer	David Brimlow	01892 860598
Group Coordinator	Jan Sumner	01892 860554
Membership Secretary	Ruth Johnson	01892 523097
Outings Coordinator	Joan Young	01892 546687
Business Secretary	Adrian Twiner	01892 459352
Newsletter	Eryll Fabian	01892 513805
Short Breaks & Holidays	Sandra McDonald	01892 752196

### 2020 Diaries

The U3A 2020 diary is now available at £2.75. They will be available for sale at our monthly meetings. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please phone Jo or Brian Bailey on **01732 668548** to reserve a diary.

### 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 will do our best if space allows.

If anyone objects to their photo being reproduced in this Newsletter, they should contact the editor.

Please note that there will be no Newsletter in December.

All contributions to the **January** Newsletter should be e-mailed to [Eryll Fabian](mailto:Eryll.Fabian@u3a.org) by 31<sup>st</sup> December at the latest (**earlier submissions will be welcome!**) or phone 01892 513805.

**The Russian State Ballet & Orchestra of Siberia's 'Swan Lake'  
at The Marlow Theatre Canterbury  
on Wednesday 12th February 2020 (matinee performance)**

The greatest romantic ballet of all time is brought to life by Tchaikovsky's haunting and unforgettable score. From the impressive splendour of the palace ballroom to the moon-lit lake where swans glide in perfect formation, this compelling tale of tragic romance has it all. Formed in 1981 "The Russian State Ballet of Siberia" has quickly established itself as one of Russia's leading ballet companies and has built an international reputation for delivering outstanding performances.

The Marlow Theatre, a 10 minute walk on the flat from the coach drop off point and situated in the heart of the city centre. The Green Room cafe/restaurant in the theatre offers snacks & meals (booking recommended), in the auditorium aisles are wide with low steps and a handrail. All reserved seats are at or near the end of a row. Canterbury Cathedral, museums, shops and eateries are all in walking distance.

**ITINERARY**

<b>10.00</b>	<b>Leave Southborough Fountain – bus stop opposite</b>
<b>10.10</b>	<b>Leave Crescent Road – opposite the Assembly Hall</b>
<b>11.40 approx</b>	<b>Arrive in Canterbury</b>
	<b>Free time in Canterbury for lunch (not included) sightseeing or shopping!</b>
<b>14.15</b>	<b>Arrive at The Marlow to take your seat</b>
<b>14.30</b>	<b>Performance of "Swan Lake"</b>
<b>17.20 approx</b>	<b>Leave Canterbury</b>
<b>18.50 approx</b>	<b>Arrive Tunbridge Wells</b>
<b>19.00 approx</b>	<b>Arrive Southborough</b>

**Cost** £41 to include transport, theatre ticket and gratuity.

**Applications** (including cheques made payable to "Tunbridge Wells U3A") to Joan Young, 21 Coniston Avenue, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9SP Tel: 01892 546687. Also available for queries Rosemary Rees, Tel: 01892 541517. Betty Wyatt will be leading the outing on the day with Rosemary Rees.

Members are advised that neither the TW U3A nor the outings organisers will accept responsibility for any mishap of whatever nature during the outings. Members are advised to consider personal insurance cover. Also note that once we are committed to paying out money in advance, usually full refunds will only be possible if your place is taken by another U3A member.

Tunbridge Wells U3A visit to The Marlow Theatre, Canterbury to see "Swan Lake"  
on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

Please reserve ..... place(s) on this outing. I/We enclose a cheque(s) for £ .....

I / We will join the coach at Southborough Fountain ( ) / Crescent Road ( ) please delete appropriately

Name/s: ..... U3A Membership Number/s:.....

Address: .....

Tel Number/s:..... \*email address:.....

**\*Please note that receipts will be sent by email. If you require a postal receipt, then please include a stamped addressed envelope.**