

TUNBRIDGE WELLS U3A NEWS

March 2018



THE UNIVERSITY OF
THE THIRD AGE

www.tunbridgewellsu3a.org

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

I'm writing this in the middle of our 'Siberian weather bomb' so I hope by the time you read this, it will be a distant memory and we'll be enjoying some spring weather and flowers.

It was rather annoying that the Camden Centre was closed with no advance notification on the 28th when we were due to have our new members' meeting. I apologise to any intrepid new members who made the effort to get there. The committee and group contacts were there early to set up the room, but it was far too chilly for us to wait 40 minutes for new members to arrive.

As usual, our newsletter is packed full of information and application forms. I'm sure that those of you who attended Julia's seminar on Royal propaganda last year, will be interested to see that we have another seminar coming up later this year.

It has been suggested that we organise an occasional tea dance at the Camden Centre, possibly on a Saturday afternoon. We're happy to do this if there is enough interest, so please can you let me know if you would like to be involved.

I'd like to wish you all a good Easter break and please remember that the March coffee morning will be a week earlier on the 23rd to avoid Good Friday.

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

COMING UP

MONTHLY MEETINGS

at 2.30pm at the Camden Centre

Thursday 15th March
Britain through the
Seasons

a talk by Tom Way

Thursday 19th April
The Social & Political
Satire of Gilbert & Sullivan

a talk by Bernard Lockett

MONTHLY COFFEE MORNINGS

at Trinity from 10.30 – 12.00



! Friday 23rd March !

Friday 27th April

OUR OUTINGS

There will be outings on:

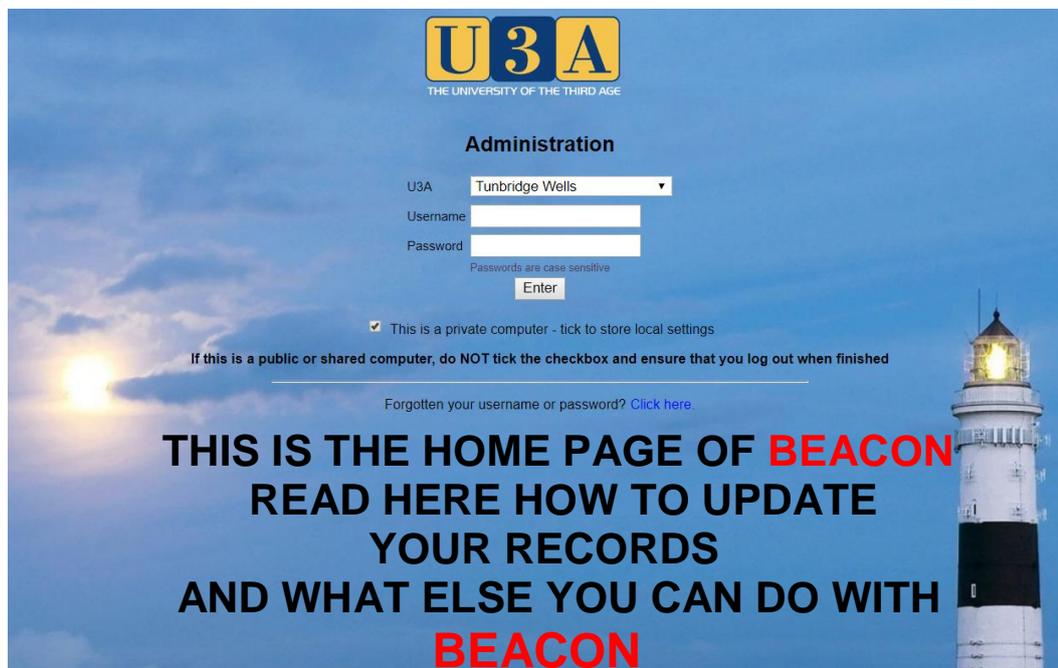
21st March
to Mottisfont (NT)
and Guildford Cathedral
this outing has a waiting list

17th April
Sussex Coastal Curios
waiting list available

15th May
Crissing Temple and the
Layer Marney Tower
application form on page 10

Page CONTENTS

1. Chairman's Update
2. How to Access **BEACON**
3. Report on the Outing to the Royal Albert Hall
4. Outing News
5. Photographic Group Report; February Monthly Talk Report
6. Update on Groups; The Amblers braving cold and mud!
7. Monthly Meetings; Branch Out with the U3A
8. Events; New Members; Useful Information; Important Messages
9. Art History Seminar details and Application Form
10. Crissing Temple & Layer Marney Tower Application Form



How to Access **BEACON**, the new U3A computerised record system

You can now access the details we hold about you and update these as you believe is appropriate.

You will need to have your details to gain access. These are (exactly as shown here):

1. Your name,
2. membership number,
3. postcode and
4. email address

Click [here](#) to gain access to the Members Portal and fill in your details in the box which appears. Click on Confirm Identity.

Once in the system you can review the details we record about you. You can also review the list of Groups and the contact details for the Group Contact.

We are currently encouraging all Group Contacts to add their members to the Group lists in **Beacon**. It is still early days and not all Group Contacts are yet doing so. Once the membership lists are up to date, your **Beacon** membership record will show which groups you are currently a member of.

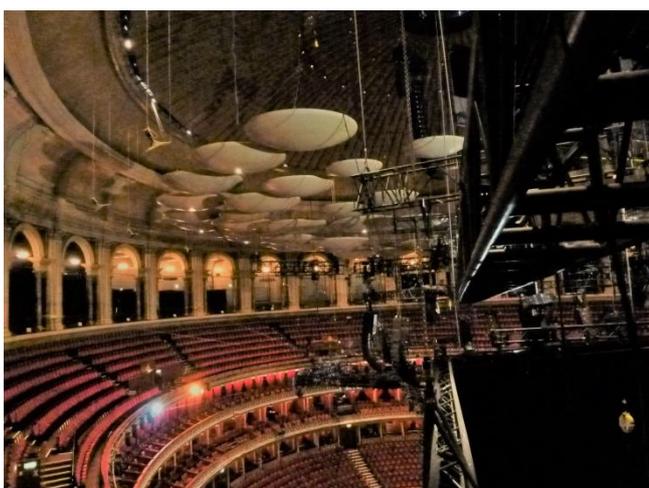
I will be sending out an email through the system to remind members of the detailed information you need to access the system.

If you have any difficulties, please contact a Committee Member (see p. 8). *David Scott, Treasurer*

Report on the Outing to the Royal Albert Hall



We walked round the amphi and gallery corridors which had many photos of famous performers from the operatic and pop world, to sporting legends, hanging on the walls. We then had the pleasure of sitting in one of the boxes right next to the Royal Box, which Her Majesty the Queen owns; the actual building belongs to a charitable trust. We **were** allowed a peep into the Royal Box! We learnt that the Queen lets her employees use it whenever none of the Royal Family is attending an event. We were able to go into the Royal Retiring Room furnished in Victorian style and saw the stairs which the Queen uses having only taken the lift once.



At one stage, years ago, the terracotta panelling was cleaned and in the process, was stripped of its colour and is now an off-white; a huge mistake, but it has been left to show how not to clean terracotta!

On the outside of the Hall, there is a beautiful 800 feet long frieze of mosaic tesserae depicting the advancement of Arts and Sciences.

Owing to the weather, our second trip to the Royal Albert Hall had to be cancelled, but the lucky first group enjoyed a most interesting day there. After coffee and Danish pastry, a very knowledgeable and articulate guide took us on a Grand Tour of the building, taking in the front-of-house areas, auditorium and gallery.

The guide told us many fascinating facts, including that the Grade 1 listed building was opened in 1871 by Queen Victoria and that it seats 5,272 people, although originally it seated 8,000! The glazed iron roof is the original and weighs 338 tonnes.

The view from both the box and gallery (The Gods) down into the Auditorium was stunning. Unfortunately, we couldn't see the organ in all its glory due to "The Cirque du Soleil" set covering it but we did see the pipes from behind the scenes. It was also amazing to see all of the acoustic equipment and the famous "mushrooms" (made from polystyrene) hanging from the iron girders in the space between the roof and auditorium.



Text and Photos by Stella Westrup

OUTING NEWS

Firstly thank you to Stella and Ann for organising the guided backstage tour of the **Royal Albert Hall**. (see separate article). Unfortunately the 'Beast from the East' came along with unprecedented snowfall which meant the cancellation of the second trip on the 28th February. A new date has been arranged for **Tuesday 24th April**. There will be a few places available. Please contact Stella (01892 523413) or Sandra (01892 752196) if you are interested. The cost is £15.00 to include refreshments and a tour of the Royal Albert Hall. It does not include train or bus fares.

Our trip to **Bramber, Lancing College, Goring and Worthing** on 17th April is full. Please phone Sandra (01892 752196) to be added to the waiting list as we do get cancellations.



On Tuesday 15th May our outing will be to **Cressing Temple and the Layer Marney Tower** in Essex. The application form is at the end of the newsletter. At Cressing we find a delightful café selling a wide range of Tiptree jams and chutneys.

We stop here to look round the amazing 13th century wheat and barley barns and discover the lovely Tudor Walled Garden. A short drive away brings us to Britain's tallest Tudor Gatehouse much of which dates back to Henry V111. We will have lunch here before having a guided tour.



On Wednesday 20th June Rosemary and Sylvia are taking us to historic **Rochester**.

Our **one night stopover** in October has been booked. This will be on 11th October. We will be staying at the 4* Witney Oxford hotel. JG Theatre Club will be our coach company. We will travel on the first day to Blenheim Palace stopping for an hour on route (to be decided). We then drive to our hotel, with dinner, bed and breakfast included. The following day we depart the hotel promptly driving to Oxford for a Blue Badge guided tour and free time. On our way home we will stop at Hughendon Manor (National Trust). This was the Victorian country mansion of the Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. There will be a limited number of single rooms which will incur a supplement. The costing is looking to be under £150.00 per person sharing a twin/double room and will include: hotel, entry to Blenheim Palace, the Blue Badge Guide in Oxford, entry to an Oxford College, coach and gratuities. This is being organised by Sandra McDonald and Christine Dove.

Could you please register your interest ASAP at twu3atours@gmail.com. An application form will be produced shortly. A deposit will be required. Details will follow.

There are so many places of interest to you might like to visit independently. A member has pointed out that at the end of May there is an amazing Flower Festival in Chichester Cathedral.

Finally we would like to say a thank you to Sandra Chandnani for her work on the outings' committee. Sandra has decided she is no longer able to continue due to other commitments. We wish her well.

[Sandra McDonald](#) Outings Co-ordinator

A REPORT FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP



Blue Tit

Following several indoor monthly meetings we were glad to get outside for some photography. The choice was Hadlow College to photograph hellebores or Sevenoaks Wildfowl for birds. A brief recce showed Hadlow to be rather muddy and as the plants required kneeling or sitting down, we opted for Sevenoaks.

On my previous visit, I found a suitable hide overlooking feeders with a lot of branches where the birds wait to get to the feeders and I also found two accessible herons' nests.

To my horror, when we arrived, all of the feeders were empty, so no birds and as we set up to photograph the lone Heron at the nest, it flew off!!



Great Tit



Chaffinch



Heron on its Nest

Fortunately, I was able to persuade the assistant manager to refill the feeders and between us we managed this and the birds began to assemble. We had a fairly successful time in the bitter cold but again the assistant manager came to the rescue with warming cups of tea.

Text and Photos by Colin Turner, Group Contact

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE! A Report on the February Monthly Talk

At the February monthly meeting Tim Moorey, a crossword compiler for The Times, delivered an entertaining talk entitled 'The Joys of English'. He initially pointed out the dominant position of English throughout the world before discussing the lack of precision in the English language. Sometimes words can be spelt the same way but mean the opposite e.g. resign and re-sign, while what has become generally colloquial but is ungrammatical often finds its way into dictionaries. This has tended to divide people into those who are sticklers for conventional grammar and those he dubbed 'libertarians', for whom grammar does not much matter. He possessed a limited sympathy for the libertarian viewpoint and invited audience members to provide examples of their pet aversions. To judge from the immediate responses, the sticklers for grammar present were plentiful. Instances were the use of 'absolutely' when the speaker merely meant 'yes' and of 'oversight' instead of 'mistake'. This concluded the afternoon on an appropriately humorous note.

Jim Robertson

Update on Groups

February was a very quiet month. I think we were all putting our energies into staying warm and dry. I would like to point out that there is updated information on the website for both [Jazz Appreciation](#) and [Art Appreciation](#).

I have been asked about starting up a new [Italian Conversation Group](#) for those who perhaps learnt at school but are now rusty and wishing to regain some fluency in the language. There has also been interest in a new [Beginners Italian Group](#). Please let me know if you would like to join either of these.

We have several [London Explorers Groups](#) where members take turns, generally in twos or threes, to plan and lead walks to places of interest. Helen Seddon has offered to start a new group which will meet on the 1st Friday of the month. Please contact me if you would like to join.

We are also offering the following:

Local Music Events If you would like to be part of a group who visit live music events at Trinity, the Assembly Hall, the Pantiles or any other nearby venue, please get in touch.

Four Seasons Bird Watching Visits to be organised to a range of sites throughout the year to see a variety of birds in different habitats. Car sharing would be encouraged.

Bead and Banter An amateur jewellery making group. Have fun with bangles, beads and baubles.

These groups are ready to receive new members:

Spanish Intermediate This group meets on 1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoons and uses a variety of materials and fun activities to enhance language skills and in particular to improve fluency in conversation. Members are welcome to visit and give it a try. Helen Bright will be pleased to receive enquiries either by [e-mail](#) or by phone 01892 527527

Wine Appreciation Two This newly formed group is rapidly filling up. Just a few more places available so if you'd like to taste and appreciate wine in a sociable atmosphere on the 4th Friday of the month, starting at 7.00pm, please e-mail [Jan Seddon](#) or phone 01892 527047

Discussion Group A Friday morning group which is held once a month on the 2nd Friday. Please e-mail [Angela Tutin](#) or phone 01892 724458

Military, Aviation and Maritime Histories meets in the morning on the 2nd Thursday of the month. Please e-mail [Michael Polkinghorne](#) or phone 01892 539320

For more information or to join new groups please contact [Jan Sumner, Groups Coordinator](#) or phone 01892 860554

Jan Sumner, Groups Co-ordinator

The Amblers braving cold and mud!

Photos by Liz Bell and Richard Martin



Monthly Meetings

15th March: 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.

19th April: Bernard Lockett: “The Social and Political Satire of Gilbert and Sullivan” focuses on the strong witty satire of Gilbert's words matched with Sullivan's melodious music.

Details of the **International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival, in Dartford from 19th to 12th September** can be found at www.orchardtheatre.co.uk; or by phoning the Orchard Theatre Box Office on 01322-220000

17th May: Grace Davies: “Alfred Nobel and his Legacy”. Alfred Nobel was a 19th century Swedish scientist, businessman and inventor. When he died he left a large fortune for the establishment of five prizes ‘for those who, in the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest’ benefit on mankind.’ This presentation and display explores Nobel’s life and work, the establishment of the prizes in Stockholm and Oslo and illustrates a number of the Peace Laureates.



BRANCH OUT WITH THE U3A



In addition to our events there is a plethora of events both in London and Kent. Here are details of some of them and you can find more information on our website

<https://www.tunbridgewellsu3a.org/u3a-events.html>

The **national residential Summer School** programme is now open for booking. The two residential programmes held in July and September cover subjects ranging from Opera and Cryptic Crosswords to Musicals and writing a TV Soap! See the full programme and book a place on the summer school page at summer-schools.u3a.org.uk.

Study Days and Seminars

Please click [here](#) for the Kent Network site for details of the following study days and seminars.

February 13th Blue Skies and Fruit Flies: Patterns in Biology at the Crick Institute

March 17th History Cuning Regal Women: English queens before Elizabeth 1

March 19th U3A explores science at the RI.

March 26th Vote 100 – The journey towards Democracy – at the British Library.

April 21st George Orwell.

June 23rd Technology meets Medicine - Bio-Engineering & Robotics

June 23rd Let's Talk About Art

TRIP TO THE NETHERLANDS

2018 KINGS HILL AND DISTRICT U3A are inviting other U3A members to join them from 17th to 21st May 2018 Four nights. Staying at the Best Western Hotel, Gouda. Approximate cost £390 [click here for more details and booking form](#).



Events In March and April



We have the following events arranged for March and April

10 th March	Barn Dance
15 th March	Monthly Meeting: Britain through the Seasons
23 rd March	Coffee Morning at Trinity. N.B. The coffee morning will not be on 30th March (the last Friday in March) as this is Good Friday
19 th April	Monthly Meeting: The Social and Political Satire of Gilbert and Sullivan
26 th April	Group Contacts' Lunch – by invitation
27 th April	Coffee Morning at Trinity

Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

17 th May	Monthly Meeting: Alfred Nobel and his Legacy
5 th June	Art History Seminar – Lee Miller and Man Ray: A Surreal Partnership
21 st June	AGM
7 th August	History Seminar – Cunning Regal Women: English Queens before Elizabeth 1
22 nd Oct.	Science Study Day – further details will be in a later Newsletter

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since 1 February 2018

Celia Claxton	Ian Hinkley	Jill Thraves	Stewart Wild
Theresa Davies	Jackie Spencer	Lynn Whiteman	

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 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 April Newsletter should be e-mailed to [Eryll Fabian](#)

by 29th March at the latest (earlier submissions will be welcome!) or phone 01892 513805.



National Events



Details of other interesting national events appear on the website.

They can be found on www.u3a.org.uk or by writing to:

The Third Age Trust, 52 Lant Street, London SE1 1RB

TUNBRIDGE WELLS U3A ART HISTORY SEMINAR ON TUESDAY 5TH JUNE 2018

lee miller and *man Ray* : A Surreal Partnership
[Signatures of Lee Miller and Man Ray from Wikimedia Commons]

In the spring of 1929, Lee Miller arrived in Paris with an introduction to Man Ray. She announced that she intended to become his student and assistant. Ray said he didn't take students, and that he was about to leave for Biarritz. "So am I" she responded, and thus began one of the most tempestuous and creative relationships in the history of 20th century art.

The speaker for this seminar is Jill Denman, who studied Art History at The Courtauld Institute, is an assistant lecturer for the University of Kent and teaches for local WEA branches. She is also a freelance gallery educator and runs courses at the Jerwood Gallery in Hastings and the Towner Gallery in Eastbourne. Jill specialised in 18th century French art when studying at The Courtauld Institute, though her main focus is now 20th century British and European art.

Date: Tuesday, 5th June 2018
Venue: The Main Hall, The Camden Centre, Tunbridge Wells
Cost: £6 per person

Programme: Registration – from 2.30 pm
 2.50 - 3.50 We will begin by exploring the careers of both Miller and Ray prior to this momentous meeting. We will then focus on specific works which they produced during the three intense years they worked side by side in Ray's studio, first as artist and assistant, then as lovers and artistic equals and finally, as bitter adversaries.



Photo of Man Ray and Salvador Dali
by Carl Van Vechten
[Public domain],
via Wikimedia Commons

3.50 - 4.15 Tea break
 4.15 – 5.15 We will conclude by examining the work and careers of Miller and Ray after 1932. Despite the acrimony and resentment immediately following their separation, they were later reconciled and their relationship developed into one of deep and devoted friendship, which would last until Ray's death in 1976.

Organiser: Adrian Twiner 01892 459352 adriantwiner@gmail.com
N.B. This Seminar is open to U3A members in West Kent



Lee Miller in 1944
by David E. Scherman/
United States Army Signal
Corps/
[Public domain],
via Wikimedia Commons

To reserve a place, please copy and complete the slip below and send it with your cheque and SAE to: Adrian Twiner, 16, Bishops Court, Bishops Down Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 8XL. Please remember to enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for your ticket.

Please retain this section for information

If we wish to attend the Tunbridge Wells U3A Art History Seminar on Lee Miller and Man Ray: A Surreal Partnership, and enclose a cheque for £6 per person made payable to TW U3A.

Name(s):

Address:

Telephone No: Email address

I enclose a cheque for £..... (£6 per person)

Outing to Cressing Temple and Layer Marney, Essex
Tuesday, 15th May 2018

Cressing Temple, between Witham and Braintree, is of supreme interest for its unique buildings and gardens. Given to the Knights' Templar in 1137, its Grade 1 listed Barley and Wheat Barns are among the oldest timber barns and surviving Templar buildings in England. The Walled Garden has been faithfully reconstructed as a Tudor pleasure garden. There will be refreshments (not included) when we arrive at Cressing Temple after which we can explore the Barns before travelling on to....

Layer Marney Tower, which was built in the 1520s, is a Grade 1 listed Tudor Palace, and is the tallest example in Britain, having 99 steps to the top from where there are fabulous views looking down to the Blackwater estuary. A Ploughman's Lunch will be provided in the Long Gallery, once the Tudor Stables, followed by a guided tour (including some of the family's private rooms). There will be time to enjoy the gardens, a "cuppa" and piece of cake (included) before returning to Tunbridge Wells.

- 8.30am** **Coach leaves Crescent Road, Tunbridge Wells (opposite Assembly Hall)**
- 8.50am** **Coach leaves Southborough Fountain**
- 10.30am** **Arrive at Cressing Temple. Refreshments (not included) and time to explore the Barns and Tudor Gardens**
- 12.00pm** **Leave for Layer Marney**
- 12.45pm** **Ploughman's Lunch**
- 1.30pm** **Tour of Layer Marney Tower followed by tea/coffee/cake (included)**
- 4.00pm** **Leave for Tunbridge Wells**
- 6.00pm** **Arrive at Crescent Road (depending on traffic)**

Cost £40 per person to include entry and tour of **Layer Marney** Tower plus lunch, coach and gratuities. Other refreshments are not included.

Please note that once we are committed to paying out money in advance, full refunds can usually only be given if your place is taken by another U3A member.

Applications (including cheque payable to Tunbridge Wells U3A + SAE for reply) to Stella Westrup: 19, Oakwood Rise Tunbridge Wells, Kent. TN2 3HD. Tel. 01892 523413. Also available for queries: Rosemary Rees: Tel. 01892 541517 Mobile on day only 07979 622270

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

TWU3A Outing to Cressing Temple and Layer Marney on Tuesday, 15th May 2018

Please PRINT your name and address

Please indicate either Cheese.....or Ham..... Ploughman's Lunch

Please reserve.....place/s for this outing. I/We enclose a cheque for £.....and SAE

I/We will join the coach at Crescent Road at 8.30am (.....) Southborough Fountain at 8.50am (.....)

Name/s.....

U3A No/s.....

Address.....

Tel. No..... Signed.....

Date.....