CHAIRMAN’S UPDATE

I spent yesterday at a Kent Network day and as always it’s fascinating to hear about other Kent U3As. Some of them are in awe of us as we’re one of the larger groups with over a 1,000 members. That’s partly due to a very successful Open Day that we held 4 years ago.

Each year, we provisionally put a date in the diary and debate the need to hold another one. Whilst we can absorb the steady trickle of new members each month, given that most of our groups are full, we are concerned that we would struggle to cope if we had a large influx of new members in one month. The last thing we want is for people to join and then be disappointed, so once again we have decided against having one this year.

Having said that, the U3A will be promoted nationally and locally in the next few months. So demand will increase and we must find imaginative ways to expand our existing groups and continue to set up new ones. The committee are always open to ideas for new groups or venues.

Finally, in the newsletter you’ll find a plea for the 3rd time for replacement committee members (reminds me of something else going on at the moment!) The key role is Treasurer, as we can’t continue to operate without one in place. This isn’t an idle threat, it’s one of the key committee members we must have. We’d be very happy for members to shadow any of the committee members for a short time to find out what’s involved, without making a definite commitment.

Sue Brimlow, Chairman, Tel: 01892 863691

COMING UP

MONTHLY MEETINGS
at 2.30pm at the Camden Centre

Thursday 18th April
The History and Work of The Dogs Trust
a talk by Lara Murphy

Thursday 16th May
The Ghosts of Kent
a talk by Rupert Matthews

MONTHLY COFFEE MORNINGS
at Trinity from 10.30 – 12.00

Friday 26th April

Friday 31st May

OUR OUTINGS
There will be outings on

Wednesday 10th April to Bletchley Park
fully booked

Tuesday 7th May to Heaven Farm, Standen, And Saint Hill Manor
waiting list only

Tuesday 11th June to Polesden Lacey
application form on p.12
OUR U3A IS AT RISK OF CLOSING!

That sounds very dramatic, but it's true. Each U3A has to have 4 key committee members, Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. David Scott, our current Treasurer, has done a fantastic job, but has already served for 4 years and indicated last year when he was re-elected that he only wished to stay on for 1 year. We had hoped to have a successor lined up but life and other commitments intervened and other efforts to find a replacement have failed. So it's over to you. Are you numerate, accurate and with some book-keeping or accounting skills? If so, please contact David either by phone on 01892 701950 or email to find out what's involved. We've tried to streamline our processes as much as possible so the role isn't too time-consuming.

Sue Brimlow, Chairman

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held at the Camden Centre on Thursday 20th June 2019 at 2.30pm

Nominations are sought for the position of Chairman, Treasurer, Outings Co-ordinator and Short Breaks Co-ordinator. Nomination forms can be downloaded here.

All AGM documentation will be downloadable from our website no later than 30th May, 21 days prior to the meeting.

All nominations should be proposed and seconded and sent, together with motions for discussion, to the Hon. Secretary, Wendy Maher by email or by post to 22 Chancellor House, Mt. Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells TN4 8BT no later than 23rd May 2019

The AGM will be followed by strawberries and cream and a glass of bubbly.

Cunning Regal Women – English Queens before Elizabeth I

There is still time to book for this seminar on Tuesday 11th June. Entry is by ticket, costing £6 per person, and the seminar is open to all members of West Kent U3As. Details and application form are on p.11 below.

Please note that registration at the Camden Centre begins at 2.30.

Adrian Twiner, Business Secretary
Short Breaks Away

There is one double/twin room left for the trip to Bristol and Bath on 3rd October. The cost is £336.00 per person. This is a 3 night break on a half board basis with stops on route to places of interest and a range of included excursions. Please contact me if you are interested for a full itinerary and booking form.

Looking forward, I am planning a 4 night break away in May 2020 and possibly a 1 night away in early October 2020.

I have recently been with other group travel organisers to South Devon and this is appealing as is The Peak District. Both offer a variety of lovely things to do, National Trust houses and stunning scenery. I would welcome your thoughts.

Photo and text by Sandra McDonald, Short Breaks Co-ordinator
01892 752196   twu3atours@gmail.com

OUTINGS NEWS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sheila Austin, who at the eleventh hour took charge of the successful Windsor trip on the 20th March, kindly assisted by Sandra McDonald, due to the sad death of my husband. Photos of the outing are in this Newsletter below.

Our April trip to Bletchley Park on the 10th April is fully booked with a waiting list.

The outing on Tuesday 7th May to historic Heaven Farm, the Tulip Festival at Standen and tour of Saint Hill Manor Georgian house with cream tea, still has a few places. Please contact Christine Dove 01892 524983 or Sandra McDonald 01892 752196 for more information and to check availability. You will find the application in the March Newsletter.

At the end of this Newsletter is the application form for our Outing in June to Polesden Lacey, a National Trust property near Dorking on Tuesday 11th June, and for National Trust members a great value day out at a cost of £12, so send your applications and cheques in early to avoid disappointment.

Lastly, I wanted to say a big thank you to Sue Brimlow, and the members of the U3A who have kindly sent me cards, letters of condolences, their best wishes and for the flowers and gifts from the Windsor trip. I feel very lucky to have such support from this very caring organisation at such a devastating time in my life, it makes me really glad that I joined the U3A.

Photo and text by Sandra McDonald, Short Breaks Co-ordinator
01892 752196   twu3atours@gmail.com
GROUP REPORTS

GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS GROUP

On a cold March day the Galleries and Museums Group went to the V & A to see the exhibition about Christian Dior. We saw early suits and dresses by Dior himself and then later more sensational outfits designed by subsequent designers for the fashion house he founded. It was interesting to learn how Dior started in France but quickly moved to London where he was very popular in calico to see how they would look with the upper classes. But he also had a good eye for business and wanted ordinary women to be able to feel they also could have some Dior and so produced perfumes with his name on the label.

But what is this exotic creation? A Lobster Hat!

Some of us among the crowds in the room of “toiles”- designs made up quickly in calico to see how they would look.

Elaine Royal
Had an excellent day out on 8th March visits the beautiful Italian style St Peter's Church in Clerkenwell Road, Holburn. Architect was Sir John Miller-Bryson. Following lunch we went to the Postal Museum with an interesting train ride through the original underground tunnels. Finishing with the Postal Museum itself. Arranged by Carol and Wendy.

Suzette Elliott-West, Group Contact

London Explorers 5 visited St. Clement Danes.

Here they are outside the church. One or two members of the group found relatives amongst the names of fallen RAF airmen.

Photograph by Shally Hunt
LONDON EXPLORERS 2

London Explorers 2 enjoyed a day of curios. We set off for a morning at the British Museum where we were treated to a tour of the Enlightenment Room which was full of interesting objects. For lunch we walked down Drury Lane to Sarastro which is a restaurant decorated to look like the inside of an opera house. Fortunately we didn’t have to sing for our supper but we’re provided with a delicious meal.

Ruth Johnson

British Museum Façade by Ludi Ling
[CC BY-SA 3.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)]

PUB QUIZ GROUP

Last August, the Pub Quiz Group announced that the total from winnings exceeded £2,000, all of which had been donated to charity. Now, I can announce that in just over six months since then, we have raised more than £1,000 to bring the current total to £3,154. Quiz teams at The Spread Eagle at Hawkenbury and The Beau Nash at Mount Ephraim compete weekly, but, contrary to popular belief, we don’t win every week; although it may seem like it!

On the 19th March at the Beau Nash quiz categories included Nature, General Knowledge, Food and Drink, Round Britain, Film and Bad Eggs. Nature was a nasty round and included a question on whether Crocodiles can run faster than humans? It’s not true, as long as you are fit. Crocs get tired after 30 metres or fed up! Ha! Fed Up! You didn’t run fast enough, did you! And How many legs do Dragonflies have? The clue’s in the name ‘flies’; they have six legs. General Knowledge was also tricky for some. How many hearts do Octopuses have? They have 3 hearts and, incidentally, 9 brains. How do you coordinate 9 brains? Things improved with Food and Drink where Haggis made from sheep, and Ugli fruit, a cross between a grapefruit and Tangerine, made an appearance. Round Britain proved to be another good round with; What is the name of the business district on the Isle of Dogs? There is a doggy clue here. Answer - Canary Wharf located on the strangely named Isle of Dogs. ... Canary Wharf itself takes its name from the sea trade with the Canary Islands, whose name originates from the Latin ‘canis’ (dogs). See what you can learn from quizzes. Film usually proves to be our nemesis, but was strangely benign for a change, although the first Carry On film in colour, probably caught most people out. It was Carry on Cruising in 1962; everyone remember that? Finally Bad Eggs, that of course, is all about naughty people; dictators, murderers and general villains etc; a category we usually do well at; strangely!

So, a win for U3A with a score of 60½ brought up our total to date to £3,154.

Can we make it £4,000, by the end of the year? Watch this space.

Dick Hoare, Group Contact
LOCAL AFFAIRS DISCUSSION GROUP

The Local Affairs Discussion Group occasionally invites a visitor to talk about various aspects of local policy. This month Councillor Tracy Moore, T.W. Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Communication) visited the group. We had the opportunity to question and discuss a wide range of issues including the current commercial, civic and cultural developments in the town, both those being done by developers as well as the council. We also discussed the economic prosperity of the town, the financial investments being made by the council in Tunbridge Wells and the local farmers’ market.

Tracy was the second Cabinet Member to meet us, Lynne Weatherly previously joining us to discuss welfare and support services in the community.

The Group meets monthly on the second Tuesday at 10:30. Its sister group, National and International Affairs, meets on the fourth Thursday at 2:30pm. The Groups discussions cover a wide range of issues including NHS, housing, education, transport and many other aspects of life, culture, business and government, pertaining to Tunbridge Wells and surrounding areas.

David Scott, Group Contact

DIGITAL IMAGING INTERMEDIATE GROUP II

After coffee and biscuits and clement weather prevailing, the Group set off for Eltham Palace Gardens in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

The original palace passed to the Crown in 1305 and remained a Royal Residence until the 16thC. Not only was it Henry IV’s favourite palace, it hosted Manuel II Palaiologos, the only Byzantine Emperor ever to visit England.

Tudor Courts often used Eltham Palace for their festive gatherings but during the English Civil War, the surrounding parks were denuded of trees and deer and the palace, then in ruinous state, was bestowed by Charles II upon John Shaw for whom the title of Best-Shaw Baronetcy was created. It passed to his descendants until as late as 1893.

In the 1930s the current house was built on the site of the original and it incorporates the Great Hall, the third-largest hammerbeam roof in England.

In 1933, Stephen Courtauld (younger brother of Samuel Courtauld who founded the Courtauld Institute of Art) and his wife Virginia acquired the lease and restored the Great Hall, adding a minstrel's gallery, and refurbishing the interior in art-deco style. Despite being badly damaged by German incendiary bombs during the war, the family remained there until 1944 leaving the Palace in the hands of the Royal Army Educational Corps from 1945 to 1992.

Since 1995, English Heritage have managed the Palace and effected extensive repairs to the interior and the gardens.

Come 14.15, our Group was able to have lunch at the Miller & Carter Steakhouse, Bexleyheath, a dining experience not to be missed.

Tom Guy, Group Contact
UPDATE ON GROUPS

New Group
WAGNER’S RING CYCLE  The group had a meeting at Trinity at the end of March to agree dates. They will meet once a month at a member’s house where they will explore how Wagner tells the story through the music. The first meeting has been arranged for the 22nd May and the contact for this group is Roger Temple rogtemple@gmail.com or phone 01892 539781.

Proposals for new groups
Some of these groups are almost ready and just need a couple more names. So please contact me if you would like to know more.

CHESS  A group for beginners and those who would be willing to share their skills.

A SECOND FOOD APPRECIATION GROUP  The first group has been very popular and now has a waiting list. Throughout the year they plan a range of different food events: tea, lunch or dinner at a restaurant or at a members’ house where all contribute a dish. Also seasonal events such as a summer barbeque or picnic and Christmas canapes.

A GUITAR GROUP  Learn to play the guitar. Emphasis on classical guitar and reading music. Someone to lead the group would be most welcome but if not, there are good teach yourself books to work through together.

A BREAKFAST OR BRUNCH GROUP  Meeting in a local restaurant or pub to breakfast and chat.

SPANISH BEGINNERS  A new Spanish group has been requested. Come along and learn together.

A PATCHWORK GROUP  Beginners are welcome. The proposal for this group comes from a lady with experience in patchwork so there will be plenty of help. It will be suitable for all levels.

DOG WALKING:  If you would like to join a group of dog walkers for regular walks, please get in touch.

The Groups below are looking for new members

SINGING FOR PLEASURE would welcome more gentlemen to enable them to continue giving concerts at local care homes and other venues. Contact Adrian Twiner or phone 01892 459352.

CREATIVE WRITING  The group members agree a theme and read their offerings to one another in their monthly meetings. Meetings are on 2nd Thursday mornings. Contact Don Laurie or phone 01892 539951.

5 MILE MONTHLY WALKING GROUP  A small group who enjoy walking in the countryside and an occasional pub lunch. Contact Joy Podbury or phone 01892 315549.

WINE GROUP 1  2nd Wednesday. Contact David Britton or phone 01892 528785.
WINE GROUP 2  4th Friday. Contact Ian Seddon or phone 07815188471.

LONDON EXPLORERS 5  4th Wednesday. Contact Bob Slater or phone 01892 547520.
LONDON EXPLORERS 6  1st Friday. Contact Helen Seddon or phone 0786667701

FOLK AND MORE  Meetings at St John's Yard on third Monday afternoons at 2.00pm. If you'd like to join in please contact Courtney courtneyhayden@btinternet.com 07811183101

Group Closure
Digital Imaging Intermediate 1 which started in 2001 has now decided to call it a day. What an amazing run they've had.

For more information or to join new groups please contact Jan Sumner, Groups Coordinator twu3agroupcoordinator@gmail.com or phone 01892 860554.
POETRY GROUP
We have held two very successful meetings where we have discussed a range of poems from John Clare and W B Yeats to Ted Hughes and Roger Mc Gough but we could do with a few more people to bring other points of view and ideas. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 23rd April at 10 a.m. when we shall include some Shakespeare to celebrate the Bard’s Birthday. Contact Elaine Royal for more details - telephone 01892 524537 or email yorvadale@gmail.com

Elaine Royal

AND HERE ARE SOME PHOTOS OF OUR MORE SEDENTARY GROUPS!

A REPORT ON THE MARCH MONTHLY MEETING
The Origin and Meaning of Nursery Rhymes
In this talk by Dr Linda Hall which was accompanied by numerous slides, we learnt that nursery rhymes were initially preserved by the oral tradition rather than being written down which explains why there are often many variants. Early ones probably had a hidden religious meaning, later ones becoming more educational - through counting for instance - and later still just for entertainment, although throughout there was often a moral to the tale. More recently still one’s interpretation would be governed more by the artist’s depiction which could vary from the macabre to more child-like humour. Behind all this one must remember they were told by adults not always with children in mind.

Mike Duncan
[The Editor still has a copy of a book illustrated by one of the artists mentioned in the talk – here it is!]

FORTHCOMING MONTHLY MEETINGS
18th April 2019: The History and Work of Dogs Trust, a talk by Lara Murphy about the Dogs’ Trust which is the largest UK charity supporting dogs.

16th May 2019: “Ghosts of Kent” by Rupert Matthews.

20th June: AGM followed by strawberries and cream.

18th July 2019: Roger Hailwood will talk to us about the National Memorial Arboretum visited by the U3A group last year.
Useful Information and Important Messages

**Events in April and May**

We have the following events arranged for April and May:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>6th April</td>
<td>Barn Dance – by ticket</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th April</td>
<td>The History and Work of Dogs Trust, a talk by Lara Murphy</td>
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<tr>
<td>25th April</td>
<td>Group Contacts’ Lunch – by invitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>26th April</td>
<td>Coffee Morning at Trinity</td>
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<td>12th May</td>
<td>Carvery Lunch at the Masonic Hall – by ticket</td>
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<tr>
<td>16th May</td>
<td>The Ghosts of Kent, a talk by Rupert Matthews</td>
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**Forthcoming Events For Your Diary**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>11th June</td>
<td>Julia Cruse Seminar: Cunning Regal Women – by ticket</td>
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<tr>
<td>20th June</td>
<td>AGM followed by strawberries and cream</td>
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<tr>
<td>19th July</td>
<td>BBQ at the Nevill Golf Club – by ticket, details later</td>
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<tr>
<td>13th August</td>
<td>Seminar: David Southwood (The Race to the Moon) – details later</td>
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<tr>
<td>7th Sept.</td>
<td>Games Afternoon – details later</td>
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<tr>
<td>28th Oct</td>
<td>Study Day: Various speakers (Art) – details later</td>
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<tr>
<td>12th Dec.</td>
<td>U3A Christmas Lunch at the Masonic Hall – details later</td>
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**New Members**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terry Coulthard</th>
<th>David Firth</th>
<th>Elizabeth McLaren</th>
<th>Elaine Smith</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pauline Courivaud</td>
<td>Helen Firth</td>
<td>Charles Neve</td>
<td>Mervyn Worsell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alex Finnie</td>
<td>Anne Hopkins</td>
<td>Sandra Neve</td>
<td>Rita Wotton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margo Finnie</td>
<td>Ann-Pauleen Jenner</td>
<td>Simon Parker</td>
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**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**: Joan Young, 01892 546687
- **Business Secretary**: Adrian Twiner, 01892 459352
- **Newsletter**: Eryll Fabian, 01892 513805
- **Short Breaks & Holidays**: Sandra McDonald, 01892 752196

**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. All contributions to the May Newsletter should be e-mailed to Eryll Fabian by 30th April (earlier submissions will be welcome!) or phone 01892 513805.

**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.
Cunning Regal Women: English queens before Elizabeth I
The most famous iconic queen in our history is surely Elizabeth I, but what of the women who came before her: Matilda, the daughter of Henry I; Eleanor of Aquitaine, wife of Henry II; Isabella of France, wife of Edward II; Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry VI; and Mary Tudor, Henry VIII’s daughter? During this seminar we will examine their legacy and evaluate their relationships, marriages, successes and failures and the context in which they found themselves, heiresses or married to ruling kings.

The speaker for this seminar is Dr Julia Cruse, who spoke to us two years ago about Tudor England and we are delighted she has agreed to return.

Date: Tuesday, 11th June 2019
Venue: The Main Hall, The Camden Centre, Tunbridge Wells
Cost: £6 per person

Programme:

**from 2.30 p.m. Registration**

2.45 – 3.45 The first lecture, **Three Domineering Queens**. Acknowledged as Henry I’s successor Matilda failed to secure the crown. Was she unfortunate or was it because she was a woman? Eleanor was powerful and ambitious while Isabella was cruel and manipulative. We will consider whether we can separate the myths surrounding these royal women to evaluate the truth behind their control and power

3.45 – 4.15 Tea Break

4.15 – 5.15 The second lecture, **Two Militant Queens**. Margaret of Anjou lived through turbulent times, played a significant role in the Wars of the Roses and due to Henry’s bouts of insanity at times ruled in his place. Was she indeed a woman with ‘a tiger’s heart wrapped in woman’s hide’? Mary was a severe monarch and a military failure but does she deserve the sobriquet ‘Bloody Mary’ or is it fairer to see her as a pioneer who courageously fought for her right to be Queen?

Organiser: Adrian Twiner 01892 459352 adriantwiner@gmail.com

N.B. This seminar is open to U3A members in West Kent

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, which will be sent out from late April.

Please retain for information.

I/We wish to attend the Tunbridge Wells U3A History Seminar on Cunning Regal Women 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)
The outing for June takes us to Polesden Lacey, the lavish country retreat of Mrs. Greville, a vivacious socialite who rubbed shoulders with the best in Edwardian high society. Polesden Lacey was a party house. Set within a quintessential English garden, it speaks of the many aspects of Edwardian social life, from the art of royal hospitality to life in service. The future King George VI and Queen Elizabeth spent their honeymoon here.

Indoors, there are opulent collections of Fabergé, maiolica and fine art, including a world-renowned collection of Dutch Old Master paintings. Outside, the rose garden, herbaceous borders and the Long Walk offer opportunities for gentle exploration.

On arrival at Polesden Lacey, there will be time for a coffee, before the first guided tour of the house at 11.15 am. The second tour will commence at 11.45 am. Lunch will be free flow. The Granary Café and Cowshed Coffee Shop offer seasonal dishes, snacks, coffee. The afternoon is free for you to explore as you wish.

9.30 am Coach leaves Crescent Road, Tunbridge Wells.
9.40 am Coach leaves Southborough Fountain.
10.45 am Arrive at Polesden Lacey.
11.15 am and 11.45 am Guided tours of the house.
12.30 pm Lunch in The Granary Café or Cowshed Coffee Shop.
4.15 pm Coach departs for Tunbridge Wells.
5.20 pm Arrive back at Southborough Fountain.
5.30 pm Arrive back in Tunbridge Wells.

COST (for National Trust members) £12.00 which covers the cost of the coach and gratuities. (You must bring your National Trust card).
OR (for non National Trust members) £24.50 which covers cost of entry into the house, gardens, coach & gratuities.

Please note that members will need to pay for their own drinks and lunch in the Granary Café/Cowshed Coffee Shop.

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

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