

TUNBRIDGE WELLS U3A NEWS

May 2018



THE UNIVERSITY OF
THE THIRD AGE

www.tunbridgewellsu3a.org

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

I'm writing this at the end of April, checking out the weather forecast for the next few days and wondering what to pack for our Liverpool trip. This is our first venture into a Tunbridge Wells U3A short break and I look forward to an update and photos in the June newsletter.

April has been a very busy month in the U3A calendar. We held our rescheduled second trip to the Royal Albert Hall and our new member's meeting. It's ironic that they were cancelled due to snow and then we had the exceptional hot weather during the month. The new members' meeting was as busy and popular as ever and it looks as if we'll be opening more groups in the next month or so.

We also held our annual Group Contacts lunch at the Nevill Golf Club, which is our way of thanking them for all the hard work they do for us all. We can't set up a group without a Group Contact and we are very grateful for their continuing efforts and their roles as ambassadors for new members.

The annual well-being survey from the Office of National Statistics reported this week and said that pensioners were happier, have a greater sense of self-worth and are less anxious than other age groups. Unsurprisingly though, they were the group most concerned with their health. Obviously this is a generalisation but it did say that pensioners were faring better on many measures including social wellbeing. I think many of our members will agree with this and that belonging to the U3A and our groups reinforces that feeling of being part of a community.

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

COMING UP

MONTHLY MEETINGS

at 2.30pm at the Camden Centre

Thursday 17th May
Alfred Nobel and his legacy
A talk by Grace Davies

Thursday 21st June
AGM
followed by strawberries and
cream and a glass of bubbly

MONTHLY COFFEE MORNINGS

at Trinity from 10.30 – 12.00



Friday 25th May

Friday 29th June

OUR OUTINGS

There will be outings on:

15th May

**Cressing Temple and the
Layer Marney Tower**

last minute places possibly available
see Outings Report in
[April Newsletter](#)

20th June

Historic Rochester
waiting list available

12th July

Richmond and Syon House
application form on page 10

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REMINDER

The AGM will be held at the Camden Centre
on Thursday 21st June 2018 at 2.30pm

Nominations are sought for the position of **Treasurer**, **Vice Chairman**
and **Membership Secretary**.

Nomination forms can be downloaded [here](#).

A proposal about a minor change to the constitution will be made at the meeting.

All AGM documentation will be downloadable from our website no later than 31st 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 21st May 2018.

The AGM will be followed by strawberries and cream and a glass of bubbly with a
background slideshow of photos taken during the year.

**We hope as many people as possible can attend.
Please send apologies for absence to the Hon. Secretary**



OUTING NEWS

Due to ill health I was unable to make the outing on 17th April.
Thank you to Lorna, Lyn and Christine for ensuring everything
went smoothly. (see separate article and photos).

The outing to **Rochester** on June 20th is full with a waiting list.
Please contact Rosemary for your name to be added.
Tel: 01892 541517

On Thursday 12th July we head to **Richmond and Syon House**. The application form is at the
end of this newsletter.

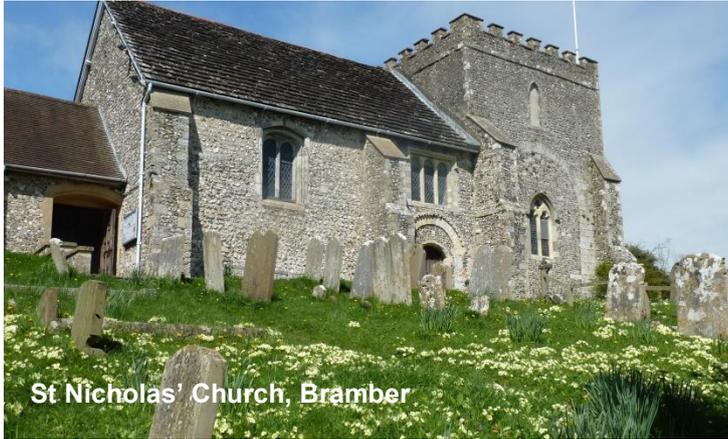
August 14th takes us to the **Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum and Morden Hall Park** (NT)

In September our outing is to **Arundel Castle**.

The one night stopover on 11th October to **Blenheim Palace and Oxford** which was advertised in
the [April Newsletter](#) still has places. Please email twu3atours@gmail.com for the itinerary and
application form, (also available at the monthly meeting). We will visit two National Trust
properties.

[Sandra McDonald](#) Outings Co-ordinator

Report on the Outing to some Sussex Coastal Curios



St Nicholas' Church, Bramber

The April outing to **Bramber**, **Lancing** and **Goring** was a great success. We had a full complement of 49 people and the weather was very kind to us. Our Blue Badge guide Gillian was both informative and friendly.

Bramber is a small village with interesting architecture from timber to flint cottages. We enjoyed morning refreshments and a delicious lunch.

After many years of driving along the A27, often wondering what the inside of Lancing College's chapel looks like as it dominates the hill overlooking Shoreham, I finally got

to see inside. It appears far too grand for a chapel, and yet not grand enough. It deserves a tower and although one was included in the original design it was never built. Inside is remarkable with soaring Gothic architecture and sun streaming through many windows. I was particularly taken by the simplicity and poignancy of the Trevor Huddleston/Archbishop Desmond Tutu window depicting the divisions of apartheid and yet a sense of hope.

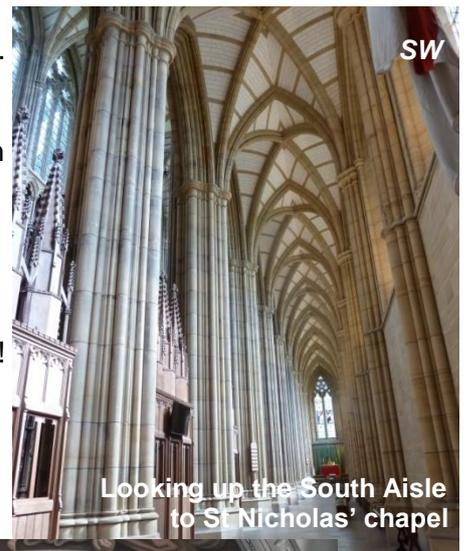
In the afternoon we went to Goring's Catholic Church with its amazing ceiling murals painted by a local artist depicting the Sistine Chapel without the expense and crowds of Rome!

Christine Dove



The largest rose window in England

SW



SW

Looking up the South Aisle to St Nicholas' chapel



MD



SW



Photos (including the seagull on page 2) by Stella Westrup and Mike Duncan

GROUP REPORTS

Digital Imaging Intermediate Group II

On Wednesday 18 April, having emerged relatively unscathed from the snow and cold snaps of Winter, our group members fortified themselves with coffee and biscuits before venturing forth, on a warm sunny day, to **Smallhythe Place**.

Little is known of the house's history but the style suggests it is early 16th century. Even its purpose has proven to be something of a secret although two front doors and its unusual internal layout suggests it was for semi-public activity such as an Inn or a Courthouse. Other educated guesses have been that it was built by Dutch settlers, the residence of a local priest or a port reeve's house but although no substantiating evidence



of the latter has ever been found, it is possible because the River Rother once flowed through Small Hythe allowing a major shipyard to thrive; both Henry V and Henry VIII had large ships built there.



Despite now being smaller than the original build, outbuildings were constructed in the 17thC when it became a farm. One of these has since been converted into a theatre which still holds performances to this day and the list of artists who have performed there could not be more impressive.

In 1899, the property was purchased by Dame Ellen Terry, the doyenne of Shakespearean drama. She had first seen it when riding on her pony and trap from Rye to Tenterden with Henry Irving. It was love at first sight so she arranged to be told if or when the house became available for sale. Some years later, she received a postcard at her home in Chelsea which simply said "House for Sale". Her purchase was virtually immediate and she lived there blissfully for 30 years with family and friends regular visitors.

Upon her death in 1928, she left the property to her daughter Edith and when a national appeal to preserve the house as a memorial to Dame Ellen failed, Edith herself used her own money to turn the house into a museum and the barn into a theatre. However, the subsequent maintenance costs were well beyond Edith's means so she approached the National Trust. An agreement was reached whereby she would retain a life interest in the property whilst she lived in the nearby Priest's House. However, she agreed to the transfer in 1939, eight years before her death in 1947.

Smallhythe Place is without question one of the most beautiful, warped and distorted old thatched buildings you are ever likely to see. As you explore the wonders within, the delicious creaking underfoot culminates upstairs where you will find horizontal stanchions that literally prevent the building from falling apart.

Our day finished, as is customary, with lunch at a local hostelry – this time at the Star Inn at nearby Rolvenden.



Tom Guy
Group Contact

London Explorers Group 4 had an interesting day in Putney ...



... walking along the Thames path, into Fulham Palace gardens, lunch at the Boathouse and visiting St Mary's Church. The photo was taken along the Thames beside a sculpture of Punch & Judy.

Suzette Elliott-West, Group Contact

So did the Bus Pass and Railcard Explorers in Lewes



photo by Irene Cornell

We had a walk around the historic town, guided by the knowledgeable Jane Hughes, which included Anne of Cleves' House, the Priory ruins and herb garden, Southover Grange and a viewpoint across the site of the Battle of Lewes. Lewes is very hilly, with many fascinating little alleys and steps which gave us lots of interesting and unexpected views. By the end we felt we had earned our pub lunch at the White Hart, one of the haunts of Tom Paine, probably Lewes's most famous son, before he headed off to become "the father of the American Revolution".

Carol Boyd, Group Contact

Update on Groups

Groups ready to start – Dates soon to be posted on the website:

Beginners Italian An invitation to learn a new language together with other enthusiasts, using books and CDs

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



New Proposals:

Folk Singing Group Bob Kenward of the Abbey Capers band has offered to run a Folk Singing group with the emphasis on chorus songs and maximum involvement for all. No experience or sight reading necessary; song sheets will be provided, and you'll know most of them anyway. Probably one Tuesday afternoon a month, venue to be decided according to numbers.

Cycling Group Morning rides of about two hours plus a cafe stop (if available), sometimes on the National Cycle routes that run through quieter roads in town and in local parks and sometimes branching out into the countryside. Maybe even a short train journey to a nearby beauty spot when we've exhausted local options. No special stamina or lycra required! Just a bike, a spare inner tube and a water bottle. We'll cycle at the pace of the slowest and wait at the top if you have to walk up hills. Ideal rides for chatting and making new friends. The group will be run by new members, Roy and his partner, Lisa, who moved to Tunbridge Wells three years ago. They both have lots of experience of leading rides and being led and would love to be part of a cycling group in Tunbridge Wells. They'd welcome your own local knowledge and ideas for rides.



Know your friends, Know your Foes Jonathan Farley has offered to run another of his very popular short courses. Talks will involve a cultural, political and sociological analysis of a number of countries important to the UK, viewed from a historical perspective. The intention is to run 6 meetings in total from the 18th June to the 23rd July on Monday afternoons
Please contact [Jonathan Farley](#) Tel: 01892 325270

Designing the Future – A new discussion group Are you intellectually curious, reasonably well informed on a range of topics and tolerant of the opinions of others?
Are you interested in what the future might bring in such fields as politics, technology, life styles, social developments, education, science, commerce? Typically for each meeting a specific subject is agreed and the main proposer circulates materials i.e. questions and/or short articles ahead of the meeting to provide a starting point for discussion. Please contact [David Greenhaugh](#)

Groups ready to receive new members

Latin Solo Dance classes at the Medway School of dancing in Tonbridge on Thursday afternoons, from 2.30 to 3.30. Sylvia has 8 people signed up for the first 6 week course which started at the end of April. She is now taking names for the next course beginning in July. The cost for the 6 weeks will be between £36.00 and £45.00 per person – less with a larger group.
Contact [Sylvia Joyce](#) Tel: 01892 319070

Ten Pin Bowling Bowlers meet every Tuesday morning at Knights Park. Please contact [Lynn Brown](#) or phone 01892 543756 for more information.

Spanish Intermediate This group meets on 1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoons and uses a variety of materials and activities to improve fluency. We would love some help from anyone fluent in the language. The contact is [Helen Bright](#) Tel: 01892 527527

Wine Appreciation Two 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 contact [Ian Seddon](#) Tel: 01892 527047
Military, Aviation and Maritime Histories meets in the morning on the 2nd Thursday of the month. Please contact [Michael Polkinghorne](#) Tel: 01892 539320

Book Group 2 The new contact for this group is Jean Deas and there are spaces for new members. Please contact [Jean Deas](#) or phone 01892 524667

Discussion Group Angela Tutin's discussion group has room for new members. See below.

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

Jan Sumner, Groups Co-ordinator

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING A LIVELY DISCUSSION GROUP?

Angela Tutin has written to say that new members interested in contributing to a lively welcome would be most welcome in her Discussion group. The group meets on the second Friday in the month in each other's houses and covers a variety of subjects. This month, for example, they will be discussing Gangs and how they might have changed from the Montague and Capulets, the Sharks and the Jets, the Mods and the Rockers. Previous topics have included a mini-Desert Island Discs; If I had been born now; A slogan a day...?; Your most influential historical figure; What has particularly incensed you in the last year? For more information please contact [Angela Tutin](#) Tel: 01892 724458.

A TRIBUTE TO ALISON TURNER OF THE ART APPRECIATION GROUP

Maggie Fraser has asked us to print the following tribute to Alison Turner, the organiser of the Art Appreciation Group. Thank you, Maggie, Alison well deserves it:

"For very many years I have attended the Art lectures, organised by Alison Turner. I am sure I talk for all the attendees, when I express my thanks for all the efforts Alison has put in to make these such a success.

Over the years the attendance has grown greatly and now numbers over one hundred, at any meeting. I do hope she feels able to cope with all the arranging for some more years." Maggie Fraser

THERE IS STILL TIME TO BOOK FOR THE TW 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, now best known for his photography, who was a significant contributor to the **Dada** and **Surrealist** movements. 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.

Full details of the seminar can be found in the application form attached to the [April Newsletter](#) or from [Adrian Twiner](#), phone: 01892 459352. Application should be made as soon as possible but will be accepted (if places remain) up to 31st May. **Members may bring a friend.**

Report on the April Monthly Meeting

The Social and Political Satire of Gilbert and Sullivan: a talk by Bernard Lockett

In April, we were entertained to a very well structured and interesting talk, illustrated with film taken from five of the 'shows' Bernard Lockett talked about.

Bernard Lockett describes himself as a lifelong Gilbert & Sullivan enthusiast. He has written 2 books on the subject and since 2005 has been a trustee of the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival based in Harrogate. He works with the National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company which is often likened to an updated version of the original D'Oyly Carte Opera Company established by Gilbert & Sullivan almost 150 years ago. It is the UK's leading professional opera company dedicated to performing the works of Gilbert & Sullivan. Established in 1994, it has performed each year to high acclaim and outstanding press reviews and is celebrating its 25th season in 2018. It will be performing for three nights in September at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford.

W S Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan collaborated on 14 shows between 1871 and 1896. An important element of their work is their reflection and comment upon the social conditions of the mid/late Victorian era, especially the wry satire of Gilbert's words. The Yeomen of the Guard (the subject of the Gilbert and Sullivan Group's last meeting) is the only show with no satire or topsy-turvy. Normally the operas are presented with the exact words written by Gilbert, as he would have wished, and which so often have equal relevance today. Mr Lockett highlighted some of these in the excerpts from the various shows that we were shown. The only song which is usually changed, to be relevant to the specific audience of the day, is the 'Little List' from the Mikado. In all the shows, Sullivan's superb music compliments Gilbert's words perfectly.

In addition to being performed in the USA and Australia, Gilbert & Sullivan shows have become popular in some unusual places like Hungary, Germany and Russia where they are sung in English. Translation was attempted in Hungary but was so complex that it was not continued.

Mr Lockett has been talking to the Assembly Hall, so some of us are hoping they will be persuaded that there are enough Gilbert & Sullivan lovers in Tunbridge Wells to add us to the 10 venues already on the tour.

Mary Duncan

Forthcoming Monthly Meetings

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.

21st June: AGM followed by strawberries and cream and a glass of bubbly with a background slideshow of photos taken during the year.

19th July: Ian Keable: "The Vanishing Maidservant: an 18th century mystery told through contemporary prints". In 1753 Elizabeth Canning caused a sensation when she claimed she was kidnapped. Henry Fielding the author of *Tom Jones*, became embroiled in the controversy. Was she a blameless victim; or was she sending an innocent woman to the gallows?

16th August: Russell Bowes: "Food of the Gods: the utterly delicious history of chocolate".



Events In May and June



We have the following events arranged for May and June

17 th May	Monthly Meeting: Alfred Nobel and his Legacy
25 th May	Coffee Morning at Trinity
5 th June	Art History Seminar – Lee Miller and Man Ray: A Surreal Partnership
21 st June	AGM followed by strawberries and cream and a glass of bubbly
29 th June	Coffee Morning at Trinity

Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

17 th May	Monthly Meeting: Alfred Nobel and his Legacy
19 th July	Monthly Meeting: The Vanishing Maidservant: an 18th century mystery told through contemporary prints
16 th August	Monthly Meeting: Food of the Gods: the utterly delicious history of chocolate
22 nd Oct.	Science Study Day – further details will be in a later Newsletter
7 th Dec.	Christmas Lunch

Useful Information and Important Messages

New Members

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

Chris Banwell
Marie Banwell
Colin Bowen
June Bowen
Peter Braun
Gill Brown
Brian Delaney
Sue Delaney
Patricia Hill
Yvonne Massie
Brenda Sheaky
Gloria Thorpe
Michael Thorpe

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 **June** Newsletter should be e-mailed to [Eryll Fabian](mailto:Eryll.Fabian@u3a.org.uk) by **31st May** or phone 01892 513805.

Science Seminar at Sevenoaks U3A

Sevenoaks U3A is hosting a seminar on "Technology meets Medicine - Bio-Engineering & Robotics" on Wednesday 13th June 2018. Full details can be found online at [Sevenoaks Science Seminar](#) or from Ann Andrews, 39 Brittain's Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 2JW. e-mail scienceday@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk. Tel: 07881 944319. The last day for applications is 18th May.



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



Once in the website, you can elect to receive the national newsletter which is full of information. There is a lot about data protection in April's edition which, among many other things, contains a useful reminder about using BCC (blind carbon copy) rather than CC (carbon copy) when e-mailing more than one person as **this is an important part of the compliance with data protection.**

A Visit to Richmond and Syon House

Thursday 12th July 2018

We will meet our Blue Badge Guide in **Richmond** for coffee and a gentle stroll through the town after which we will be able to have lunch. We then take the coach to visit **Syon House** via **London's Arcadia** where we will see the only view in the UK protected by an Act of Parliament. The house is the spectacular London home of the Duke of Northumberland and was built on the site of the mediaeval Syon Abbey. It came to the present owners in 1594. Syon has seen many changes over the centuries and we will be able to see the splendour of the interiors including Cipriani's amazing painted ceiling. It has also been the location for many films including Gosford Park and the BBC drama The Lost Prince and there is a café where one can buy refreshments.

Itinerary

- 8.30 am Coach departs Crescent Road Tunbridge Wells
- 8.50 am Coach departs Southborough Fountain
- 10.30 am Arrive Richmond for a coffee stop (not included) and a walking tour
- 1.00 pm Lunch (not included)
- 2.00 pm Depart and drive via London's Arcadia to Syon House.
- 4.45 pm Depart Syon House arrive Tunbridge Wells approx. 6.30 pm

Cost £40.00 Price includes Blue Badge Guide, entry ticket, coach travel and driver's gratuity.

Applications including cheque made payable to "Tunbridge Wells U3A" and stamped addressed envelope to Linda Trowell, 20 Norfolk Road, Tunbridge Wells TN1 1TD
Queries to Linda Trowell 01892 528680 or Jenny Jessup 01892 530012
Mobiles on the day only 07984031129 or 07958926220

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

(Please note that once we are committed to paying out money in advance refunds will only be possible if your place can be taken by another U3A member)

.....
Please reserve places for the outing to Richmond and Syon House on Thursday 12th July 2018

I/We enclose a cheque for £..... plus s.a.e. I/We will board the coach at.....

Crescent Road at 8.30am **or** Southborough Fountain at 8.50am (please delete as appropriate)

Name/s.....

U3A Membership No/s.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Tel.No.....

Signed

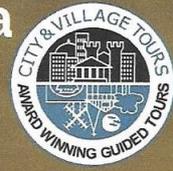
.....Date.....

Web application

Syon House & London's Arcadia

Tunbridge Wells U3A

Thursday 12 July 2018



Syon House, home to the Dukes of Northumberland, Syon house is the last ducal residence to survive in the Greater London Area. This awe inspiring house has been the favourite retreat for the rich, the famous and the Royal over the years.

Meet our Blue Badge guide in Richmond at 10.30am for morning refreshments and enjoy a gentle stroll though the timeless town, passing beautiful period houses. With plenty of pubs and cafés it's a great place for lunch or to stroll around and take in the sights and charms of this elegant Thames side town.

Our Arcadian coach tour includes the only view in the UK protected by an Act of Parliament and some beautiful houses including Noel Coward's childhood home.

At Syon house we will take in the grand scale and splendour of the interiors resembling the Imperial Rome of a Hollywood epic, including the Red Drawing Room displaying Cipriani's amazing painted ceiling of 239 medallions but Adam's true genius is revealed in the 136ft Long Gallery where the original Jacobean wood panelling was replaced by delicate plasterwork and *"finished in a style to afford variety and amusement especially for the ladies"*.

Syon house is, understandably, a very popular filming location and you may recognise some of the rooms from the BBC drama "The Lost Prince" or the acclaimed film "Gosford Park". Next to the house there is a beautiful café which we will pop into for a tea before heading home at 4.45pm

Coach Company
Hams Travel

Coach pick ups are as follows:
Departing Crescent Road Tunbridge Wells 8.30am and Southborough Fountain 8.50am