

# TUNBRIDGE WELLS U3A NEWS

## MARCH 2017



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

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
THE THIRD AGE

### CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

There has been quite a bit in the media recently about Age UK's latest Wellbeing Index. They identified these 4 main factors in improving peoples' wellbeing:

- having an open personality and being willing to try out new things
- being physically active
- having a good memory and thinking skills
- a good social network and lots of warm relationships

Interestingly, however, the Index found that taking part in 'creative activities' such as the arts had the most direct influence in improving a person's wellbeing in later life. The activities that older people took part in included dancing, playing a musical instrument, visiting museums, photography, singing, painting and writing. You can find more details on their website [here](#).

I think we would all agree that this sums up what the U3A can provide. Our members are doing a great job at spreading this message, which is reflected in our growing membership and correspondingly the number of groups that we offer. I was delighted to announce that we'd reached our 1,000<sup>th</sup> member last October and since then another 85 people have joined.

Over 40 new members came to our new member's meeting last month, which was judged to be a great success, with lots of interest in potential new groups – more later on that from Jan. One comment I received afterwards summed it up – "It was lovely to feel part of something so proactive and motivating".

Sue Brimlow,  
Chairman  
01892 863691  
[suebrimlow@btinternet.com](mailto:suebrimlow@btinternet.com)

### COMING UP

**MONTHLY MEETINGS**  
at 2.30pm at the Camden Centre

16<sup>th</sup> March  
"The Tale of the Tulip"  
A talk by Russell Bowes

20<sup>th</sup> April  
"Casanova in London"  
A talk by Philip Bret-Day

**MONTHLY COFFEE  
MORNINGS**  
at Trinity from 10.30 – 12.00

on  
Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April



### OUR OUTINGS

the March outing will be to  
*the St Pancras Hotel*  
& *British Library*  
on  
14<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March

there will be no outing in April

on May 2<sup>nd</sup>  
there will be an outing to  
*the Hindu Temple,*  
*Neasden*

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## **SOME INFORMATION ABOUT OUR U3A SUBSCRIPTIONS**

We have had a very successful Anniversary year and are confident that we will soon exceed 1,100 members. Our subscription free year (for existing members) and reduced rate of £8 for new members has succeeded in reducing our large reserves to a more manageable amount. This will bring our reserves to a reasonable level to allow for most contingencies that may arise.

The Committee are now proposing maintaining the previous subscription level of £16 per member. This is based on our detailed budgeting and factoring in potential inflation, Gift Aid changes and other anticipated costs. This proposal will be voted on at June's AGM.

We are aware that as our membership increases and if inflation and other costs do not grow in proportion then it is quite possible that our reserves will start to grow again. However, the new payment methods (see background in the article about **Beacon** below) that we are bringing in should make it much easier to vary rates or postpone the start of the subscription year should it become appropriate. The previous system of Standing Orders did not provide this flexibility.

We will be issuing more updates throughout the next few months. In the meantime, could anyone who is interested in finding out what is involved in being a **Champion** (see below) please contact David Scott (our Treasurer and Beacon System Manager – contact details on the next page). We will of course continue to have a process for those members who don't have computers.



*David Scott  
Treasurer and Beacon System Manager*



*Sue Brimlow, Chairman*

# **BEACON WILL HELP YOUR COMMITTEE BUT THE COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP**

Read on ...

## **Membership System Champions**

We are eagerly looking for several people willing to be Membership System Champions – to help and encourage members through the Membership Renewal Process using the new **Beacon** system. The more Champions we have the more we can share out the task of helping those members who feel less confident on the web to renew their subscriptions.

**No computing knowledge is necessary** – provided you feel reasonably comfortable helping people and using the internet to buy something on-line. Training will be given on how to use the system and how to guide members to their own records and renew their subscriptions. We will also be looking for ideas of how best to introduce the system to all our members.

**Please let David Scott, our Treasurer, know if you can assist:  
01892 517989 [u3a.tw.finance@gmail.com](mailto:u3a.tw.finance@gmail.com)**

**Background:** Over the past 12 months we have successfully implemented '**Beacon**' – a custom-built extensive U3A system – built totally by U3A members in record time. The system has modules covering Membership, Accounting, Groups and other U3A functions. It allows individuals to access their own membership information (after appropriate security controls). This will allow them to switch to our Bank to enable secure payments to be made by Direct Debit, Debit or Credit cards, PayPal or cheque. Our bank will then confirm to our Beacon System that the bank has received payment and our records will be updated. No financial bank or card details are available or held in anyway on our systems but kept by the banks concerned within their secure systems.

## Outing News

*(Please note outings are only open to members of Tunbridge Wells U3A)*

Firstly thank you to Sue and Di for organising the trip to see **The Nutcracker**. Despite Storm Doris threatening to disrupt, a great day was had by all. (see the report which follows)

The outing to **The Neasden Temple** on May 2<sup>nd</sup> now has a waiting list. Please phone Stella Westrup Tel: 01892 523413 for your name to be added. This is worth doing as we do get cancellations.

On **Friday 9th June** we have our outing to **Herstmonceux Castle and Gardens** which will include a tour of the Castle, followed by a visit to **Herstmonceux Observatory/Science Centre** in the afternoon. Details and application form will be in the April newsletter.

There is no outing in April but members might like to take themselves along to **Pashley Manor Gardens** for their **Tulip Festival** from 21<sup>st</sup> April to 6<sup>th</sup> May. It will be carpeted with over 30,000 tulips! Entry is £10.50.

### FURTHER PLANNED OUTINGS

**JULY 12th** Weald & Downland Open Air Museum near Chichester  
**AUGUST** Quex Park & Powell Cotton Museum (historic country estate near Margate)  
**SEPTEMBER** Hampton Court  
**OCTOBER 18th** Brooklands Motorsport and Aviation Museum (home of Concorde)

Remember you can book for our outings **when fully advertised in the newsletter** by posting the application form, or in person at our monthly meetings at The Camden Centre.

*Please note that once we are committed to paying out money in advance for outings, full refunds will usually only be possible if your place can be taken by another member.*

*Sandra McDonald on behalf of the Outings Committee*

### The Nutcracker



Our February outing – first of the year – was a most successful trip to see the Moscow City Ballet dance The Nutcracker at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley.

The music, the dancing, the costumes – such lovely colours – were all magic! We had excellent comfortable seats and everyone came out of the theatre with smiles on their faces.

Our two New Enterprise drivers were more than helpful – particularly on the homeward run when we did a mini-tour of Tunbridge Wells town so many of us were able to alight close to home.

The windy conditions made life a little uncomfortable – particularly for one of our members whose glasses were blown off her face in the middle of Bromley by a massive gust of wind leaving her unable to see! Thankfully another shopper retrieved them for her undamaged and all was well!

It was unfortunate that a few people were unable to come after all – winter coughs and colds – and, sadly, the afternoon performance was not a sell-out so we were unable to persuade the theatre to refund.

*Diana Brown*

## Study Days and Seminars

I had hoped to announce a date for a seminar in this Newsletter but although I have been in discussion with both an Art and a History lecturer I am not yet in a position to confirm a date for our first seminar.

I am hopeful that I will be able to give further details in the April Newsletter.

*Adrian Twiner*



## Group Reports

### ART APPRECIATION GROUP

At our February meeting our very large and enthusiastic audience enjoyed Sarah Stopford's absorbing study of David Hockney's multi-faceted talents, ranging from collage, portraits, landscapes and his later electronic paintings/photographs – there'll be a mad rush to book at Tate Britain before the exhibition closes on 29th May!

Liz Strang's final talk this session will be on **21st March** at 2.30 p.m. when we will go on a virtual tour of Tate Britain.

In the meantime PLEASE contact Liz ([liz@lizstrang.name](mailto:liz@lizstrang.name)) re the questionnaire which was handed out at the meeting – We would be very grateful to have your ideas ideally before then so that we can plan for her 6 talks for 2017/18 beginning on **Tuesday 19th September**.

***A reminder:*** Please do not arrive before 2.10 p.m. so that the chairs can be set up and ***PLEASE REMEMBER TO REGISTER***. Several people slip by without registering and ***this contravenes the Fire Regulations*** as we do now know how many are in the hall.

Thank you!

*Alison Turner (Group Co-ordinator) 01892 526693*  
[dennisandalison@sky.com](mailto:dennisandalison@sky.com)

## Update on Groups

### New Groups

We now have a number of exciting new groups ready to roll out. A lot of new members have expressed interest in the following and we shall meet in the café at the Trinity Theatre over the next month on the dates shown below to set these up.

<b>Stately Homes</b>	March 7 <sup>th</sup> at 10.45am
<b>Craft Beers</b>	March 21 <sup>st</sup> at 10.30am
<b>Garden Visits</b>	March 22 <sup>nd</sup> at 2.30pm
<b>Arts and Crafts</b>	March 28 <sup>th</sup> at 10.45am

Please let me know if you would like to come along to any of these. It would be good to prepare early in the season for both the Stately Homes and the Garden Visits and some of these offer special discounts for U3A groups.

### More New Groups

#### **Gilbert and Sullivan Appreciation**

One of our members has offered to lead a group which would meet on four afternoons throughout the year to read and enjoy an operetta, reading the words aloud and listening to the music. Numbers will need to be restricted so please contact me as soon as possible if you would like to join.

Would anyone be interested in any of the following?

**A Beginners Spanish Group**  
**Floristry**  
**Cribbage**

And if anyone is qualified to lead a **Yoga or Pilates** class, they would be greeted with great enthusiasm.

### Groups looking for new members

**Golf** : A small and friendly group who play for pleasure are seeking new members, both ladies and gentlemen. Contact Graham or Jeanette Brown [g.brown2@btconnect.com](mailto:g.brown2@btconnect.com) or 01892 524251

**Circle Dancing**: A group which meets twice a month to enjoy traditional, community dancing. Just turn up or contact Prisca Cardon [priscacardon@gmail.com](mailto:priscacardon@gmail.com)

**French 1**: Intermediate standard. This friendly group works together to improve their communication skills. Contact Jenny Evans [evans@colinandjenny.co.uk](mailto:evans@colinandjenny.co.uk)

### Group Contacts Lunch    **Save the date!**

On April 21<sup>st</sup> there will be a buffet lunch with welcome drink for all group contacts. This will be held at the Nevill Golf Club.

For further information on any of the above or to join a new group, please contact *Jan Sumner Groups Coordinator* by [email](#) or phone 07900 974684



## Events In March And April

We have the following events arranged for March:

14 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Outing to the St Pancras Hotel and the British Library
16 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Monthly Meeting – Russell Bowes on “The Tale of the Tulip”
22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar	Outing to the St Pancras Hotel and the British Library
30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Outing to the St Pancras Hotel and the British Library
31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	Coffee Morning at Trinity
20 <sup>th</sup> April	Monthly Meeting – Philip Bret-Day on “Casanova in London”
21 <sup>st</sup> April	Group Contacts Lunch at the Nevill Golf Club (by invitation)
28 <sup>th</sup> April	Coffee Morning at Trinity

## Some Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

15 <sup>th</sup> June	Annual General Meeting at the Camden Centre
24 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>BREAKING NEWS</b> Midsummer Barn Dance – details to follow later
13 <sup>th</sup> Sept	New Members Meeting (by invitation)
12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Open Day
8 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Christmas Lunch at the Masonic Hall
20 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Christmas Meeting

## New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who joined in February:

Gill Batt	Valerie Hurditch	Kate Shea
Doris Berrett	Hilary Kearney	Kenneth Skirton
Pamela Bristow	Richard Martin	Robert Slater
Lawrence Brooks	John Pontet	Brian Tasker
David Bryant	Monica Richardson	Valerie Woodhouse
Molly Bryant	Marian Richman	
Anthony Ham	Michael Satchwell	

## Useful Information

Your Committee		
Chairman	Sue Brimlow	01892 863691
Vice-Chairman	Alison Grace	07900 974684
Secretary	Wendy Maher	01892 325272
Treasurer	David Scott	01892 701950
Group Coordinator	Jan Sumner	07900 974684
Membership Secretary	Ruth Johnson	01892 523097
Outings Coordinator	Sandra McDonald	01892 752196
Business Secretary	Adrian Twiner	01892 459352
Newsletter	Eryll Fabian	01892 513805



All contributions to the next newsletter should be e-mailed to Eryll Fabian by 31<sup>st</sup> March at the latest.

[fabiantwells.t21@btinternet.com](mailto:fabiantwells.t21@btinternet.com)



## ARE YOU MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR U3A MEMBERSHIP?

From time to time we publish details of events which are being organised by the Head Office of U3A and which are open to all members. However, very often they are fully booked by the time this Newsletter reaches you. To avoid disappointment, those of you with access to the internet should check the U3A website [link](#) to find out what is available.

If you have not already done so, you will need to create an account in order to access information for members. This is simple:

- On the U3A Home Page click on Create Account in the top right hand corner,
- Complete the form with full name, e-mail address, and your U3A i.e Tunbridge Wells, plus user name and password of your choice.
- Click on Create Account.

Your user name and password will then be confirmed and you can log in to the Members' Area Home Page where you will find information about Events, Offers, Summer Schools and many other useful and interesting aspects of U3A.

Why not explore the site? At the bottom of the Events page, for example, you can join the **U3A Events Mailing List** in order to receive information and updates regarding U3A events straight to your e-mail inbox.

**Those without internet access can also subscribe by writing to:  
The Third Age Trust, 19 East Street, Bromley, BR1 1QE**

## SPECIAL OFFERS FOR U3A MEMBERS

U3A Members can purchase a **3-month National Art Pass for just £10**. Visit [artfund.org/u3a](http://artfund.org/u3a) click [here](#) for more information. You have until **20th March 2017** to take advantage of this offer. As it gets you in to most exhibitions at half-price you would quickly recoup the outlay.

Additionally, use the discount code U3A2017 for 10% off all services at [my-history.co.uk](http://my-history.co.uk).

## SOME NATIONAL EVENTS PAST AND FUTURE

The video recording of our Celebration of 1,000 U3As is now available to view on U3A's [YouTube Channel](#). Click the underlined text to be directed there. It is also available from the home page of the website.



**Details of the following events in London can be found on the website:**

16 March 2017	U3A Explores Science at the RI at 13.15 at the Royal Institution of Great Britain
25 April 2017	Spring Concert – Brandenburg Festival Chorus at 1400 at the Temple Church
9 May 2017	West End Sing Out at 11.00 at the Savoy Theatre

In addition, U3A members in Kent are invited to join other U3A Study Days, including the Sevenoaks U3A Science Group Study Day, Climate Change, Fact, Causes and Consequences, on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June. This is the [link](#) to the Science Study Day and their [website](#) for details of other days.