

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Greetings all

By now we are well into the 'new' year. I do hope members had pleasant times over the festive season, and now look forward to a happy year ahead. I was pleased to see many of you at the both the Christmas Lunch in early December and the festive meeting & quiz later in that month (Santa and his elf enjoyed greeting you).



January's monthly meeting (18th): Our new talks organiser, Craig Forster, introduced speaker Simon Mott who spoke on what he had learned about attaining personal success, from musician Mantovani (b1905, Italy), who moved to England in 1912. He was a conductor and composer, and had a very distinct sound with his well-known strings-dominant orchestra. Simon used a largely visual presentation with a good number of video inserts. It was very well received. In his conclusion, Simon surprisingly revealed that he was a grandson of Mantovani, who died in Tunbridge Wells in 1980.



Volunteers: I would like to thank all members who volunteer; there are nearly 150 of us who in some way or other help to run our activities and events.

Old Auction House coffee morning: I do hope to meet some of you at the new coffee morning on February 12th (10:30) taking place in the Old Auction House near the Pantiles.

Chris (07788 598472)

Coming up

Monday 12th Feb 10:30

Coffee morning at the Old Auction House

Thursday 15th Feb 2.30:

Monthly Meeting: Victorian Wonderlands of Craggs, Caves and Cascades

Friday 23rd Feb 10.30:

Coffee morning at Trinity



Thursday 21st Mar 2.30:

Monthly meeting: The History of London Shopping

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Please note that photos taken at u3a events are often used in publicity material. If you do not want your picture used in such ways please make a member of the committee aware of this at the event you are attending. Thank you.

**Monthly Meeting: Thursday 15th February
2:30pm Christian Fellowship Hall**

**Jane Scotchner : Victorian Wonderlands of Crag, Caves
and Cascades**

Wealthy Victorians were often passionate about gardens and would use their wealth to create extravagant and elaborate ones. These gardens were often inspired by their travels, hobbies, literature as well as their own imaginations. Jane's talk is about how they used rockwork on a grand scale to create these fantasy worlds, taking us through a marvellous selection of gardens with stories about their creation and their fascinating owners.



One for the landscape gardeners!

Message from the T Team



If you prefer a plant based milk substitute, you are welcome to bring some to meetings in a small container, to put in the fridge and have with your tea/coffee. But please remember to take it home with you.

The fridge at the Christian Fellowship Hall is used by other groups we are not able to leave milk there.

Tunbridge Wells u3a New Event

WINE TASTING



DATE: TUESDAY 26th MARCH 2024 at 2:30PM

VENUE: SEA CADET UNIT,

ALBION ROAD [off Camden Road], TUNBRIDGE WELLS, TN1 2PF

TICKETS: £17.50 PER PERSON

THEME: WINES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

WHICH COUNTRIES PRODUCE THE MOST WINE? WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF WINE? WHICH GRAPES ARE THE MOST COMMON?

This will be a fun and relaxed event and no special knowledge is required, just an interest in finding out more about wine and tasting various types and grapes!

There will be cheese platters included to accompany the wines.

Please find the application form at the end of the Newsletter

Looking ahead... March's Monthly Meeting is on the 21st And look who's back!



Caroline Piper
Blue Badge Tourist Guide
<http://pipertours.com>

Please follow me on
www.facebook.com/pipertours
Or see Tripadvisor for reviews

Many of you will remember Caroline who has previously delivered in-person talks to Tunbridge Wells u3a and she also presented a programme of regular virtual tours and talks during the Covid pandemic 2020-21, and considers all those virtual attendees to be great friends!

A History of London Shopping

Discover why Britain is a "*nation of shopkeepers*". Marks and Spencer, John Lewis, Fortnum & Mason, Harrods..... We take these brand names for granted now, but how did it all start and why were they so successful?

Last month's talk



Simon Mott : What Makes A Superstar

Simon had us all guessing who this might be. An Italian, having a poor upbringing in an attic in Soho, who became the best-selling musical artist of the 1950s?

Annunzio Paolo Mantovani.

The talk was based around 10 secrets of success.



- 1. Have the courage of your convictions** — Mantovani knew at an early age that he wanted to be a musician, despite his father's misgivings.
- 2. Learn your craft** — At 18 he moved to Birmingham and formed his own dance band.
- 3. Perform with passion** — Early film clips confirm this.
- 4. Find a mentor** — at 20 he joined the Emilio Columbo dance band in London where he learned how to perform, record and broadcast. The BBC were just setting up their radio station.
- 5. Seize the day** — on his wedding day he rehearsed for a BBC broadcast before the ceremony and played for the recording before going on his honeymoon.
- 6. Be flexible** — When the restaurant where his dance band played closed, he went on tour and became known all over the country. He also advertised Shredded Wheat.
- 7. Take a risk** — in 1936 Mantovani controversially removed the whole brass section from his band which, during the following year engendered a lot of press coverage improving sales no end.
- 8. Form shrewd collaborations** — because Mantovani was Italian, during the war years he could not front the Entertainment Corps band so he collaborated with the likes of Noel Coward and Vera Lynn.
- 9. Create a signature sound** — he used a multitude of strings to produce a unique 'cascade of sound'.
- 10. Embrace modern technology** — as TV became more popular through the 50s, stereo sound was introduced and Mantovani was the first to use it on a record; going on to be the first to sell a million stereo records.

And interesting to us locals - Mantovani died in Tunbridge Wells in March 1980 and Simon's claim to be his No 1 fan is because he is Mantovani's grandson!



Christmas with u3a



A few double rooms left! Waiting list only for singles.

SHORT BREAK to KYNREN & NORTHUMBERLAND

Wednesday 11th September 2024

5 days/4 nights duration 4* Redworth Hall Hotel



HIGHLIGHTS

KYNREN a spectacular **outdoor** theatre show with 1000 cast and crew telling the 2000 year tale of the history of England. Dazzling pyrotechnics, beautiful choreography, amazing stunts.

Hardwick Hall (NT)

Bamburgh Castle

Alnwick Gardens

Angel of the North

Beamish Open Air Museum

Bowes Museum

Raby Castle

Harewood House

For more information please contact

[Sandra McDonald](#)

Short Breaks Organiser



Outings Coordinator

Our next outing is to Basildon Park on Wednesday 17th April. Many of you will remember we were planning to go in April 2023 unfortunately the trip was cancelled with a week's notice due to a lucrative filming contract that was agreed by the National Trust (they need these monies to keep going) and we managed to change our booking to Greys Court, so it all ended well on the day. Basildon Park estate was bought by Francis Sykes in 1771 from the fortune he made with the East India Company. He demolished the house and employed architect John Carr to build the Bath stone building you see today. The house was owned by the family until 1838 when it was sold to the Morrison family who owned it from 1838 to 1928. The house was badly damaged—even partly destroyed—during the war but after being de-requisitioned it was sold to Lord & Lady Lliffe.

The 18th century house was lovingly restored by Lord & Lady Lliffe in the 1950s, and dressed with fine antiques and paintings and all the comforts of a house of the time. Outside there are informal gardens and 400 acres of parkland to explore.

There is a tea room serving hot drinks and light meals—alternatively you can bring a picnic. There is a book shop, a gift shop, and a plant stall.

The cost of this trip is £19 to include coach and the driver's gratuity. If you are not a member of the National Trust there will be an entrance fee of £15 (at the time of writing) to pay when we get to the house.

If you wish to go on this outing the application form is at the end of the newsletter.

Please note that our outing to Borde Hill Gardens in March still has a few places available, details were in December's newsletter or contact [Stella](#) on 01892 523413 or by email,

Joan Young 07504 919081

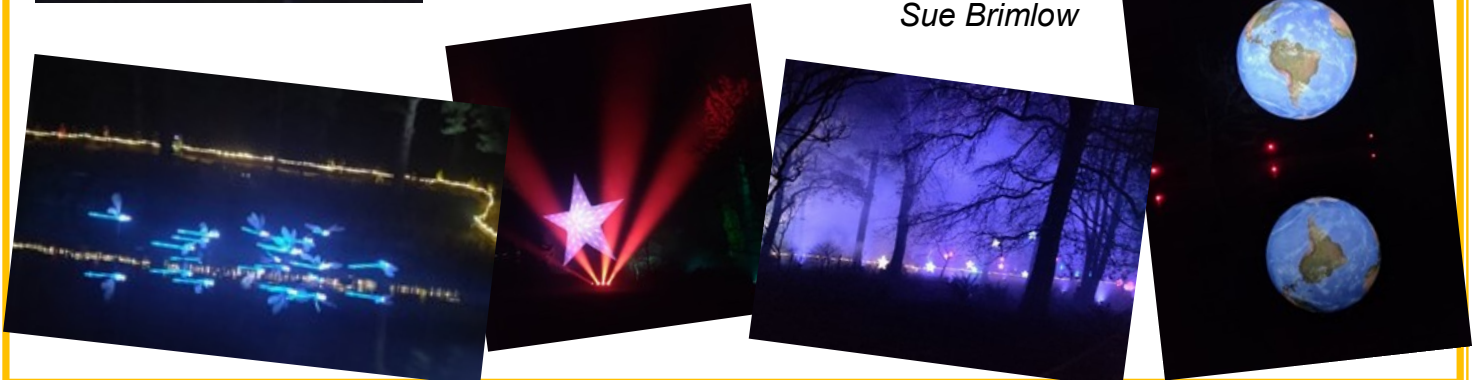
Leonardslee Illuminations



I think we must have picked the coldest day in December for our trip to Leonardslee; in fact, there was a brief flurry of sleet at the St John's pick up. Luckily, there was a warm tent with hot drinks and food to keep us warm, once we'd arrived. They'd really used the lake to good effect with large globes of the Earth and Moon suspended above the water, with other imaginative lights and music. It was a long walk round though, with a final steep climb back up, which did at least get the circulation going.



Sue Brimlow



Groups Coordinator's Notes

TW u3a groups.....by the members, for the members

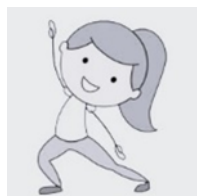
If you would like to register your interest in any of the groups mentioned below please contact the groups co-ordinator groupstwu3a@gmail.com

Our thanks to members who have offered to be group contacts or suggested ideas for new TWu3a groups. January has been a busy month!

NEW GROUPS STARTING:

The Evening Diners met for the first time this month. Since the group is full someone has offered to be the contact for **EVENING DINERS TOO**. There are currently spaces.

The **KEEP MOVING** group will hold its first session on Wednesday 21st February 2.15pm at the Camden Centre. A block of 6 Wednesday sessions will cost £18. There are spaces (payment at the 1st session in cash or BACS transfer to TWu3a)



The class will consist of a warm-up, some teaching of dance steps and putting those steps into a routine to pop music, and finishing with some stretches. You will need leggings or joggers, t-shirt or vest, trainers or non-slip canvas shoes and a bottle of water. The aim of the class is to increase flexibility, stamina and balance and is also a good brain workout.

We need a few more members for a 2nd **CANASTA** group, planning to meet at Trinity.

IDEAS FOR NEW GROUPS:

A **SPANISH CONVERSATION** group with an offer from a native speaker to be the group contact.

There is an offer from a new member who comes from another u3a and has published books on Roman History to be contact for a **HISTORY** group. There is so much scope for such a group to cover and it would be a very welcome addition to our TWu3a interest groups list.

The 2 existing Family History groups are well established but full. One of the existing group contacts is willing to help start a 3rd **FAMILY HISTORY** group (to replace the Beginners group).

DESIGNING OUR FUTURE SOCIETY

This group (non-political in nature) might suit you if you sometimes think "Is there a better way of doing things than under our traditional Westminster System of Central Government?" An alternative governance framework could improve our democracy in the driving of ongoing socioeconomic improvement, including to our healthcare, transport, water and other infrastructures. Maybe one enabling AI to later be deployed for the optimization of policy and taxation value?

If this might be of interest, please email Lindsay Hassell for emailed further information.

GROUPS THAT ARE (RECENTLY) FULL: *Would you like to offer to be the group contact for a new group? Both the **Table Tennis** and **MOTO2** groups are now full.*

A new idea for 2024 is to organise one-off 'meetings' to see if members are interested in the topic.

Would you like to find out more about **AI (Artificial Intelligence)**. How is it being used and introduced? How might it impact on our lives? Are you using and in favour of AI?

Would you like to come along to an informal introduction to **TERRARIUMS**? What are they, what's their history and how are they created? (Any illustrating photos do not do such miniature eco-systems justice!)

Group News

The **Crochet Group** were extremely busy before Christmas and this is the collection of items they have donated to the Hospice in the Weald for their Christmas Market.

Blankets/throws	= 7
Baby Blankets	= 4
Baby Jackets	= 5
Girls ponchos	= 2
Adult poncho	= 1
Scarfs/shawls	= 8
Bags	= 2
Various Christmas Decorations	

Sue Bareham



ONLINE LEARNING 1

Collaborative, independent, online learning sounds like an oxymoron, but it could be great resource for our u3a. There is a wide variety of free online courses available. Groups could be set up for a few weeks at a time, choose a course that interests them and meet at intervals to discuss their progress and possible further study.



For example, Trinity College Dublin has announced “*The Book of Kells Experience*”, a new immersive exhibition that will digitally transport visitors into the illuminated pages of the 9th century manuscript. During lockdown one Twu3a member joined some **FutureLearn courses**, including one on the Book Of Kells. **FutureLearn courses** are free online courses that you do at home at a time that suits you. This particular course would take 4 hours a week over 4 weeks, the sessions are quite short so it's easy to fit them in and there are hundreds to chose from.

The next steps could be to approach the TWu3a [groups co-ordinator](#) if this interests you, to see if there's a consensus on the first topic to study.

ONLINE LEARNING 2

*Some members are happy to join in shared learning sessions with other u3as around the country and a very wide variety of over 90 topics are on offer. Have a look at the u3a **Interest Groups Online (IGO)** Membership is currently £6 until April and then £12 for the year April-March 2024*

More Group News

10 Milers Group



“The Intrepids”

Despite our better judgement, we walked from Ide Hill to Sevenoaks Weald, with lunch in the Windmill pub (much needed) and back up the long hill to Ide Hill. The flooding was spectacular in places, the grass very boggy but we always managed to get through, despite only one member walking in wellies! Considering in the last 4 days, we have had Storm Henk with very strong winds and rain, and yesterday with torrential rain (like driving through a car wash) today, we even managed to get glimpses of the sun. You may recognise Bough Beech Reservoir in the background.

Angela Tutin



The Art Appreciation Group

February & March Meetings

On **Wednesday, 14th February**, Liz Strang is going to talk about **Picasso and the Influence of women on his life and art**. Picasso changed the direction of art in the twentieth century with his controversial paintings. He showed talent from an early age and as he lived until he was 91 his role in painting, sculpture and ceramics was significant.

On **Wednesday 13th March**, another member, Andrew Marriott will give a talk; **Automobile and motor-racing art – a history**. Most of us have owned a car at some point in our life and see the car magazines in the shops or adverts in the Sunday supplements, but have you ever thought about how this has changed over the years? This should be an interesting topic to find out about.

Both meetings 2.30 p.m. at the Camden Centre Victoria Suite. £1 at the door.

Enquiries : [Elaine Royal](#)

London Explorers 7 start up meeting.



The Amblers

Christmas lunch
at the Vauxhall
Inn

Susan Westlake



Important information

Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

15 February 2024	Monthly meeting: Victorian Wonderlands of Craggs, Caves and Cascades
18 March 2024	Monthly meeting: The History of London Shopping
26 March 2024	Wine Tasting afternoon

New members

A big welcome to the **20** new members who joined in Dec/Jan

Your Committee

Chairman	Chris Woodward	07788 598472
Deputy Chair	Fiona Findlay	07872 169146
Secretary	Sian Shaw	07835 300193
Treasurer	David Brimlow	01892 860598
Group Coordinator	Lindsay Hasell	01892 673180
Membership Secretary	Judy Horwood	01892 537601
Outings Coordinator	Joan Young	0750 4919081
Events Coordinator	Philippa Bernstein	07788 498606
Newsletter	Bridget Sands	01892 546161

A Message from the Editor

Any publication is only as good as its contributors and I do hope you will continue to support the Newsletter as it is such an easy and effective way to communicate u3a matters with you all. If anyone objects to their photo being reproduced in this Newsletter, please contact me as soon as possible.

All contributions for the **March** Newsletter should be e-mailed to [Bridget](#) by February 29th at the latest (**earlier submissions are very welcome!**) or phone 01892 546161.

u3a Office



Keep up to date with u3a Office news on the website:

www.u3a.org.uk or write to:

The Third Age Trust, Room 104, Lenta Business Centre,
156 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8EN

Tunbridge Wells u3a Event Application Form: WINE TASTING

EVENT NAME: WINE TASTING

EVENT CODE: WINE

ORGANISER: [Philippa](#)

DATE: TUESDAY 26th MARCH 2024 at 2:30PM

**VENUE: SEA CADET UNIT, ALBION ROAD [off Camden Road],
TUNBRIDGE WELLS, TN1 2PF**

TICKETS: £17.50 PER PERSON

To apply please email Philippa and include your name, mobile/home phone number, date of payment with the Name of the Event and Code (as above).

To pay by BACS: make an online transfer to: **Tunbridge Wells u3a**

Sort code: 40-52-40

Account No: 00024097

Reference: WINE Your Surname

To pay by cheque: please post your application & cheque to
U3a Wine Tasting, 89a Powdermill Lane, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9ED
Add your email or telephone number for confirmation of receipt.

.....

APPLICATION FORM

Event name and Code: WINE TASTING

I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to Tunbridge Wells u3a

Name and mobile/home phone number

.....

If you are paying for another u3a member, please include their details below

Name and mobile/home phone number

BASILDON PARK WEDNESDAY 17th APRIL

For u3a Members only. A fair amount of walking. Please wear suitable footwear and clothing.

OUTING CODE: G2 OUTING ORGANISER: JOAN YOUNG TO EMAIL CLICK [HERE](#)

Basildon Park estate was bought by Francis Sykes in 1771, from the fortune he made in the East India Company. He demolished the house and employed architect John Carr to build the Bath stone building that you see today. The house was owned by the family till 1838 when it was bought by the Morrison family who owned it from 1838 to 1928. The house was badly damaged in the war.

The 18th century house has been lovingly restored by Lord & Lady Lliffe in the 1950s dressing it with fine antiques and paintings, and all the comforts of a 1950's home. Outside there are informal gardens and 400 acres of parkland to explore. There is a tea room serving hot drinks and light meals, plus a book shop, a gift shop, and a plant stall.

The cost of the trip is £19 to include coach and driver's gratuity. Any non-members of the National Trust will pay an entrance fee on arrival £15 (at the time of writing)

To pay by BACS please email: [Joan](#) and include your name, mobile/home phone number, date of payment and Name of Outing and Code (Basildon Park G2). Plus, where you want to board the coach.

Then: Make an online transfer to: **Tunbridge Wells u3a** Sort code: **40-52-40** Account No: **00024097**
Reference: OUTING CODE G2 Surname

To pay by cheque: please post the application below to:

u3a outings, 21 Coniston Avenue, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9SP

Add your email or telephone number for confirmation of receipt.

[illegible]

APPLICATION FORM

Outing name and Code: G2 Basildon Park

I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to Tunbridge Wells u3a

Name and mobile/home phone number

.....

If you are paying for your partner or a u3a friend, please include their details below

Name and mobile/home phone number

Please tick where you want to board the coach.

Crescent road opposite the Assembly Hallat 9.00am.

St Johns opposite Sainsburys local.at 9.10am.

Southborough Fountainat 9.20am.

We expect to be at Basildon Gardens at approximately 11.00am. ***We will leave at 15.30pm . And hope to arrive back in Tunbridge Wells around 17.30pm .***

My contact number for any enquiries regarding this trip is 07504 919081

Please note that once money has been paid in advance full refunds will only be offered if your place can be filled by another u3a member. Members are advised that neither the TWu3a nor the outing's organiser will accept responsibility for any mishap of whatever nature during the outing. Members are advised to consider personal insurance cover and reminded to bring any necessary medication with them.

IF YOU HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY GIVEN US DETAILS OF YOUR NEXT OF KIN OR PERSON TO BE ADVISED IN AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE LET US HAVE A NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER. THIS WILL BE STORED ON TWU3A'S SECURE DATABASE.