



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Newsletter May 2019

Registered Charity number 297529

Chair's message

From the feedback we get, particular from the recent Survey and the Group Leaders and Really Useful Group meeting, the general consensus seems to be that we are a pretty efficient organisation. This is down to the quality of the volunteers who manage all aspects of U3A life.

The danger is that it becomes comfortable and we assume that those filling those roles will simply continue. The health of the organisation however depends on there being a constant turnover with some people changing their roles and new people stepping up to volunteer.

We are at one of those change over moments. Jan Brown has done excellent work in setting up the systems for managing the groups and keeping it all running so smoothly, many thanks to her for all that work. She is handing the role to Hilary Loney, our vice chair, and other changes of role are in the pipeline.

Although many people do volunteer, we still have some difficulty with in some areas. One particular example is managing the parking assistance for the Friday meetings. From the recent survey we know that this is much appreciated but in spite of several appeals we have not been able to recruit people to a reliable rota. The fact is that without volunteers the car parking help will simply stop and chaos will return with members driving into the parking area when there are no spaces.

There is a similar difficulty in recruiting people to the committee either as full or associate members. It may be that people might be willing but are not sure what the commitment might be. If anyone is thinking they might want to take a more active role in some respect then please contact me or any other member of the committee and we can arrange an informal conversation.

Now it is a really beautiful Spring Day, so I intend to get out and enjoy it.

Mike Cockett



A brief analysis of the **Membership Survey** is on page 8. The full report can be read by clicking [here](#) or in the [About Us](#) section of the website.

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Committee 2018-2019

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Welcome to new members



We would like to welcome the following new members who have joined recently:

Martine Beagley, Christopher Benefield, Suzie Cousins, Lynne Davies, Fiona Dear, Barbara Duff, Shirley Eason, Pam Garbett, Janet and Nigel Gocher, Gillian Haines, Annette Harmath-See, John Harwood, Margaret Hennessy, Christopher Hull, Philip Jones, Christine Kirby, Tony Larraz, Ann Lawrence, Janet Lee, Brian Lomas, Marie Madden, Avril Moore, Christopher Packham, David and Lisbet Paxman, Janet Rimmer, Hannah Robertson, Brenda Robinson, Helen Rorison, Pauline Rowley, Geraldine Shepherd, Alan and Angela Smith, Jenny Smith, Cheryl Stevens, Alison Suttie, Alfredo Taqueban, Keith and Mary Vickers, David Watson.

We hope you enjoy the learning opportunities and friendship that U3A offers. If you have any questions please ask any of the Committee, who can be identified by their badges at the Friday meetings, or contact them directly.

Welcome and information meetings for new members

Welcome meetings are held regularly for new members to meet the committee, to hear in more detail about what U3A has to offer and to get to know other new members. All members joining since March will receive a personal invitation to the next meeting at 10.00am on **Wednesday 17 July** in the meeting room at Reigate Park Church.

We would love to hear from you if you joined Reigate and Redhill U3A recently, have not yet attended a meeting and would like to attend the meeting in July. Please contact Elizabeth Gurteen on elizabeth.gurteen@rru3a.org.uk or 01737 247791 and she will put you on the list.

Friday meetings

At Reigate Park Church, Park Lane East, Reigate RH2 8BD at 2 pm

Friday 7 June: The Excavation of the Mary Rose - Dawn Perrier Baker



The Mary Rose was the flagship of Henry VIII's naval fleet. In a battle with the French Armada just outside Portsmouth Harbour, she sank suddenly with 700 men on board. She remained mostly untouched for 500 years when a team of divers and marine archaeologists embarked on a project to excavate the contents of the ship and bring to the surface the remains of the hull.

This was successfully achieved in 1982. The personal possessions and even the men on board remained intact, preserved in the soft mud of the Solent, providing a 'time capsule' of life on board a Tudor warship.

Dawn Perrier Baker was a young diver and part of the team involved in this fascinating excavation. Dawn will give her personal experiences of the original dives and excavation work and talk about what the Mary Rose Project has taught us about Tudor life.

Friday 5 July: The Real Dad's Army/ Home Guard - Mike Brown



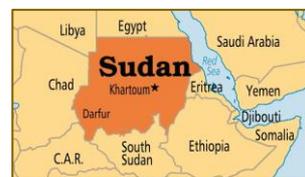
Most of us now think of the Home Guard in terms of Captain Mainwaring and the Warrington on Sea Platoon - truly a great programme, but just how accurate was it? In his talk, **Mike Brown** looks at the history of the Home Guard, from its formation as the Local Defence Volunteers in May 1940 through to its disbandment in December 1944 and compares reality with the TV programme.

He will describe the early days with France falling, the difficulties of lack of uniforms and equipment after Dunkirk, early attempts at home-made, or re-cycled ancient weapons - all of which added to the comical view of the first Home Guards, resulting in the name 'Dad's Army'. The story continues through invasion scares, road blocks and pill-boxes, and the now-famous training school at Osterley Park, through anti-aircraft and coastal defences, to its very-little known reformation in the Cold War.

Mike Brown retired from teaching History and now works full time writing, giving talks and doing research. He has worked on several TV programmes about the Home Front.

Friday 2 August: Sudan – its joys and sorrows - Jan King

Jan King was a teacher in Croydon. After retirement at the age of 62, she felt a call to go to Sudan. While she was in Africa, the northern government of Sudan had declared war on the south, where she was working. Her main task was teaching English to teachers and also to church leaders. She also taught literacy to Sudanese women, most of whom were totally illiterate, but very keen to learn.



She was based in Nairobi, Kenya, as it was considered too dangerous to live in the south of Sudan. In her early years, she and two colleagues were flown in by the United Nations, in a six-seater plane and was collected after three weeks 'in the bush'.

She felt it a great privilege to work with many wonderful Sudanese people and learned a lot from them.

Bring a friend

Just a reminder – if you think friends might be interested in the topics of the Friday meetings they are welcome to attend. They will be offered a visitor badge and asked to sign in so that we have a record of attendance.

Groups

No one was more surprised at Jan Brown's decision to relinquish her Groups Coordinator role than me! It was Jan who helped me to set up the London Leisure 2 Group and she has always been there for me if help has been needed, especially when I first began to use Beacon, our administration program. During her time as Groups Coordinator, Jan has set up systems which have very much eased my take-over of the role. Jan, many thanks for all that you have done, and I strongly suspect that I speak for many group leaders and other members too.

It was good to meet so many of the group leaders at our recent "Thank you" meeting at Reigate Manor where many issues were raised and discussed. I'm just sorry that I wasn't able to speak to all of you individually, but I do hope to rectify that within the next few months.

We have several new groups which are in the process of being set up:

Ukulele 2: This has been formed due to the popularity of Ukulele 1

Boules in Priory Park

Occasional Ladies' Golf

The new **Ballet and Opera Cinema Broadcast** group has been an instant success with many members joining in order to see ballet/opera and the occasional play transmitted live in local cinemas from prestigious venues.

Further details regarding these groups will be displayed on the notice board at the monthly meetings, and on our website. You can also contact me by filling in the form on the website and sending it to the Groups Coordinator's email address.

Visit our [website](#) to see all the group possibilities and then make your choice.

Contact Hilary Loney on groups@rru3a.org.uk

Visit the [Groups page](#) of the website to find out which groups are looking for new members.



Coffee Mornings and Computing Help

**St Joseph's Community Centre,
Ladbroke Road, Redhill, RH1 1LF**

Everyone is welcome to attend the coffee mornings held once a month from **10.15am to 11.30am** on different days of the week to avoid clashes with group meetings.

There is usually a theme for each meeting and there are **Help with Computing** tables at each meeting. So, bring your mobile computing device with you if you need some advice.

Tuesday 7 May Plant and Cuttings swap

The dates for the rest of the year are as follows: Thursday 13 June, Tuesday 9 July, Tuesday 10 September, Thursday 17 October, Wednesday 20 November.



Friendly technical help available

- Do you have a problem with your computer, tablet or phone that you can't solve?
- Have you bought a new device and you need help to get started?
- Do you need help to decide which device to buy, or which type of contract to sign?
- Are you unable to attend the coffee morning help sessions?

If so, contact techhelp@rru3a.org.uk and we can supply a friendly advisor to help you with a phone-call or face-to-face at a venue of your choice, e.g. your home, their home, or a café with wi-fi.

Social Events

Outings

Wednesday 29 May



**A Day at the Seaside -
Creeks and Cockles - £54**

Starting at Hadleigh Farm overlooking Hadleigh Castle, We will visit the creeks and landscape around Canewdon. Lunch in Southend on Sea with free time afterwards before visiting the cockle sheds in Old Leigh on Sea.

Dates for later in the year

**Wednesday 24 July
Chichester Theatre – sold out**

**Wednesday 25 September
Hidden London and Canal
Cruise - £58**

**Tuesday 5 November -
please note change of date
Square Mile Curios - £42**

Tuesday 2 July



**Bombay Sapphire Gin and
Houghton Lodge Gardens -
£47**

Self-discovery Distillery tour with interactive map, and a 15-minute guided tour through the Still including complimentary drink in the Mill Bar. Laverstoke Mill in beautiful rural Hampshire, is situated beside the River Test with riverside walks. You will have time to buy refreshments and lunch. The afternoon is spent strolling through the delightful gardens of Houghton Lodge, where tea and homemade cake is included in the cost.

**Very advance notice for
outing in 2020**

**Tutankhamun Exhibition
- Treasures of the Golden
Pharaoh**

Saatchi Gallery - Tuesday
31st March 2020

Approx £57 with £21
deposit due in June this
year

This worldwide exhibition is selling out very rapidly and we have taken the unusual step of reserving places a year ahead of time. Please register your interest **as soon as possible**

To register an interest in any of these outings please contact Jane Rayner on jane.rayner@rru3a.org.uk or 01737 240973

U3A Evenings

Reigate Manor Hotel, Reigate Hill, Reigate RH2 9PF
7.30pm to 9.30 pm Doors open at 7.00 pm.

Programme for 2019

Tuesday 28 May	A Taste of Surrey	£10
	Come, taste and discover some of the food and drink produced in Surrey. Find out more about the fascinating county in which we live.	
Tuesday 18 June	An evening with Gilbert and Sullivan	£7
	Led by our own 'Wandering Minstrel'	
Tuesday 16 July	Mr Porter and Mr Coward	£7
	The lives and music of Cole Porter and Noel Coward	
Tuesday 24 September	Murder at the Manor	£7
	Detectives at work	

Tickets are available at the monthly meetings or from Sally Baker on sally.baker@rru3a.org.uk or 01737 221766

Study Days

Organised by the Surrey Network of the U3A

Friday 17 May

People and Places of Surrey



Why the Alice stories are still important. Lewis Carroll was the pen name of the author Charles Dodgson, who died and was buried in Guildford in 1898. **Steve Folan** examines the influences on the author, which may have fashioned the Alice stories, and how aspects of the stories can be seen in modern themes and behaviour.

Jane Turner presents a comprehensive view of the Watts in Compton, their home and studios, the Potters Arts Guild and the **Watts Gallery**.

Preserving the Past for the Future - Matthew Piggott discusses the work of the History Centre in Woking in locating, preserving and presenting a vast collection of documents recording Surrey's history from the Middle Ages to the digital age.

The **Cathedral Church** of the Holy Spirit, Guildford. **Janet Mathews** outlines the cathedral's history, the architect Edward Maufe's brief "to build anew on tradition" and considers how successful he has been.

SOUTH EAST U3A FORUM SUMMER SCHOOL 2019

The Annual South East Forum Summer School will take place at the University of Chichester 24 June to 27 June 2019

There are places still available
Click [here](#) for details

Planned Study Days for 2019

**Friday 20 September
Human Genetics
Developments**

**Friday 18 October
Current Affairs in the
Nineteenth Century and
Twenty First Century**

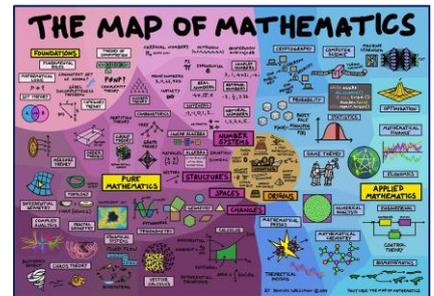
**Friday 15 November
UK in a Changing Europe**
Dr. Simon Usherwood, Surrey University

Study Days are usually held at the Menuhin Hall, Stoke d'Abernon from 9.30am to 4.00pm. To reserve a place, complete the slip on a Study Day form by downloading one from the [Surrey Network website](#). Send the slip with a cheque for £10 (£12 for non-members) to the address shown on the form enclosing a SAE or email address for confirmation.

Friday 21 June

Mathematics in Action

Dr. Roger Luther, Sussex University and U3A Member



In this study day, we will look at a number of ways in which mathematics - often at a fairly elementary level - can be applied to real world situations. As part of this, we'll look at the lives of two famous mathematicians - Kepler and Ramanujan. Also, there will be the opportunity to do some maths puzzles, so you may wish to bring pencil and paper!

Roger Luther is a part-time lecturer in Mathematics at Sussex University, having taught in secondary schools for the first half of his career. He is active in his own local U3A, running maths and physics groups, together with a monthly pub quiz. He runs a maths course each year as part of the South East U3A Forum Summer School at Chichester - to be held in the week following this study day.

National U3A offers for members

Renaissance Treasures at the National Gallery

Thursday 20 June 2019 from 11:00 – 15:45
£25 per person (lunches & refreshments **not** provided)



The Italian Renaissance saw the creation of some of the finest art works ever made, and some of these are now held in trust for the British nation, within the collection of The National Gallery.

Join National Gallery experts for a day of talks on iconic paintings and hidden gems of the Italian Renaissance, by artists such as Botticelli, Leonardo and Titian, as well as some less well-known artists. We'll draw on a range of devotional and secular paintings to introduce the greatest innovations and stylistic developments in Italian painting c.1250 – 1560 and learn some tools for looking at paintings.

To book click [here](#)

National Summer Schools

Monday 12 to Thursday 15 August 2019

Aston University, Birmingham

Subjects include art history and archaeology - ancient civilisation of the Americas; creative writing - the big novel; International films; Italian language and culture; linguistics; literature and philosophy; ukulele; jazz - the sound of surprise; singing for pleasure.

Tuesday 10 to Friday 13 September 2019

Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester

Subjects include cryptic crosswords; drama; garden history; history - Bede and the conversion of England; Latin for Roman Britain and beyond; Shakespeare and the props department; surprised by maths; opera; introduction to philosophy.

Bookings for both National Summer Schools are now open at u3a.org.uk

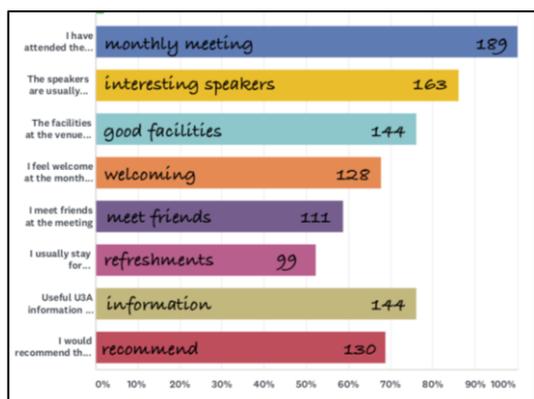
London Region of U3As Summer School - 23-25 July 2019

St Bride Foundation, Brid Lane, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8EQ.

28 different talks, 4 workshops, and 6 guided walks around the City of London. There is a wide range of topics taken from the themes of Art, Current Affairs, History, Literature, Music, Science and Travel. This year we have also selected 'Celebration of the Sea' as a general theme.

Programme and applications are available via the Events page of the London Region website: <http://u3asites.org.uk/london-region/events> and through individual U3As

Membership Survey 2019



Thank you for all your responses to the survey sent out in February. We had a response rate of over 25% and analysis of the responses reveals an overall high level of satisfaction among members for the range of activities on offer – monthly meetings, coffee mornings, outings, U3A Evenings, holidays, Christmas Tea Party, U3A Surrey Network Study Days and transport, and, U3A Summer Schools.

A full report and all the charts are available by clicking [here](#).

An analysis was presented at the recent **Group Leaders** and **Really Useful Group** meeting and the discussions that took place have produced interesting ideas some of which have already been implemented.

Key issues being addressed are as follows

Monthly meetings: The presence of the parking team in letting members know when the car park is full is valued by members, but more volunteers are needed to maintain a viable rota. Please contact Mike Cockett for more details.

To attempt to ensure that everyone feels welcome, several members have volunteered to wear Welcome lanyards at the Friday meetings and to act as contacts at the welcome table in the hall. Visitor badges will also be available on the sign in table.

Coffee mornings: The acoustics at the current venue are difficult and a search is on for an alternative that has sufficient parking, good acoustics, wifi and café facilities – preferably in Redhill. If you know of anywhere suitable, please let us know.

U3A Surrey Network Study Days and transport: Over 105 members expressed an interest in some arrangement for shared transport to Study Days and the committee is exploring ways of making this happen. Suggestions and offers of help would be most welcome.

All offers of help and suggestions should be sent to Mike Cockett - chair@ru3a.org.uk

Wireless Technology

We have been contacted by several members concerned about the accuracy of statements made at a recent monthly meeting on the subject of Wireless Technology.

We wish to make it clear that the scare stories relating to the effects of electromagnetic radiation were not based on any evidence in spite of extensive published independent research in the field.

Some of the specific advice given, such as switching off all electricity at night, was actively dangerous. There are two pieces of advice which should be noted. If you use your phone for very long periods each day, don't hold it close to your ear all the time and don't carry your phone all the time in a pocket which is close to the skin.