



Our meeting in September will be our usual Signing-up day for you to look at and join other groups, but it will also be an Open Day where we will try to attract new members. I have already sent you the Open Day poster which I hope as many of you as possible, in the West Malling District, will be able to display. I also have flyers which will be available at the August meeting, please take some

and deliver to those around you. If you are coming, please try to bring along friends/neighbours who aren't members.

The Hall will have tables around the edge with the information about the groups, and we hope most of the convenors will be there too.

There will be tea/coffee & cakes for refreshments and the Singing Group will be there to entertain you.

The updated short handbook will also be ready by then. Let's make it a grand social afternoon getting back to normal!

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Anne Sargent, Membership Secretary

The Short View

"A number of members have said that they would like more social or other activities. More than happy to try and accommodate but it would be helpful to have some ideas of the activities that members would be interested in and also whether you would be prepared to help organise or run these. A couple of things have been mentioned already – a cream tea and a quiz evening but I am sure that there are more. Please email me with your suggestions."

Chrys Short, Chair

65 years in Horticulture

The subject for this month's talk is '65 Years in Horticulture', and the speaker, Jim Buttress, is generally known as 'the people's gardener'. Jim is a highly regarded celebrity horticulturalist, a renowned RHS judge, holder of the Victorian Medal of Honour for horticulture who judges at Chelsea and Hampton Court with his trademark bowler hat and clipboard, is a former manager of the Central Royal Parks, and was also the late Queen Mother's gardener. He also judged the Britain in Bloom competition for over twenty-five years, and was watched by millions on the BBC's The Big Allotment Challenge. But how did this practical gardener from Purley go on to have one of the most impressive careers in British horticulture?

Well, come along and find out! This is a 'straight talk' with no slides but will be zoomed to those unable to be there. I hope that most of our members, though, will do their best to be present, for Jim is a highly entertaining and knowledgeable public speaker: his book, 'The People's Gardener', was published in 2016.

Derek Carpenter, Speaker Secretary

Monthly meeting – attend in person or view on Zoom
23 August at 2pm, Ryarsh Village Hall



Tea Rota

August: Maggie Bishop, Judy Barnsley, Janet Smith.

September: Rosemary Lea, Christine Hewitt, Isobel Macdonald.

Christine Barrett

Fill your own: Help the environment & our volunteers by bringing a reusable cup.

Climate Change

Please find poster attached with details of a Paddock Wood u3a Study Day entitled 'The Natural World Under Threat.'



Handlebars and the Crab & Winkle

The Crab and Winkle Line runs from Whitstable to Canterbury and is about seven miles long. It is the route of the very first railway line in the country, so I thought it would be nice and flat – how wrong I was! It certainly was a railway line, but the train was hauled up the long inclines by a stationary steam engine at the top of the hill – the ride involved several long and fairly steep inclines, and must have used very long chains!

This ride was led by Tony, who had discovered a good and free place where we could all park our cars, not too far away from Canterbury. From this brilliant spot we unloaded our bikes and set off for Whitstable. In some ways this was a testing ride because of the gradients and also the loose surfaces – but it was almost entirely traffic free, apart from a few dog walkers and a couple of cyclists from Holland, who joined us for the last couple of miles into Whitstable.

We passed the famous Canterbury University, with its beautiful green playing fields, and several other lovely schools too. We had a lovely view of the Cathedral, far below us, gleaming in the hot sun. We saw the spot where the stationary steam engine had stood, together with the rather brackish pond which had supplied the engine with water. (How did this water get there?)

As we got into Whitstable, we saw the building which had had the fire, with its blackened timbers and tattered paper flapping in the light breeze. We had tea/coffee and buns at the Lifeboat station, which we always like to support whenever in Whitstable. Several seagulls were watching us carefully but we gave them no chances to grab our snacks.

The ride back to Canterbury was fairly uneventful, but we stopped for this picture of one of the Sustrans signposts, which mark cycle routes all over the country. They are not all as beautifully painted as this one.

I am now looking at a possible ride around the City – on the wide bike lanes, built to encourage cycling in London – some built when Boris was Mayor, some added later. That will be another interesting ride!

Barry Evans, Convenor



I was delighted to discover the u3a and find so many like minded people. I enjoyed the stimulus of groups and meetings but as I became less mobile steps and slopes into houses became a problem and eventually I needed a wheel chair.

Covid made a great difference because Zooming began and I could still take part in groups and meetings. I have particularly

enjoyed the Poetry for Pleasure because seeing each other face on we seemed to get to know each other even better than sitting round a room.

As things are gradually becoming more normal there is less Zooming. So this is my plea, please don't stop it altogether. There are others, I am sure, who are no longer able to attend in person and for whom the interest and fellowship of the u3a brightens the day.

Pat Head



Interest Groups: Latest news & views

A monthly feature to spotlight the interest groups and activities available to Malling u3a members.



The Latin Group

We are a small group who have carried on meeting via Zoom throughout the Pandemic. And we are coming to the end of the GCSE course.

We have been enjoying using the Cambridge Latin Course, which tries to make this language relevant for students today, with background information on Roman culture and civilisation and references to named people as subjects for the stories.

However there is still the grammar to be wrestled with. Most of our group have a spattering of Latin, remembered from over 50 years ago and remarkably, some comes flooding back. Ablative absolutes caused a slight hiccup and there are still the principle parts of irregular verbs to be learned.

We have explored the comparative benefits of city and country life: the impressive skills of builders and craftsmen who, using concrete and cement and with the help of man-powered cranes, lifted huge blocks for the grander buildings, which were usually faced with marble. And in between they crammed in homes for ordinary people, which were "often propped up, with sticks".

We have read the descriptions of Roman entertainment, both the popular chariot racing and the gladiatorial combats watched by thousands of spectators.

There were also the theatre performances of a "pantomimus", a one man show of mime with masks and dancing, a crude and generally obscene slapstick,

which was becoming more popular than traditional drama.

Rich Romans enjoyed presenting private shows of these along with jugglers, acrobats and musicians and sometimes introducing more serious entertainment. In one of our stories, there was a lecture on Stoicism and in another the brave interruption by a Christian at the end of a performance of Dido and Aeneas. Both these appeals for changes in society fell on deaf ears.

The stories touched on the stark differences between rich and poor, the necessary system of patronage and the fact that the economy depended on slaves who had been taken prisoner in the many battles in foreign parts. However there was a system whereby a slave could be set free and serve his ex master as a freedman and make an independent living, some rising to positions of power.

Those who have visited Pompeii will remember some of the richly decorated interiors of the wealthy. These we read about in the extraordinary descriptions of a banquet, which in one story ended with the cook bringing in a whole wild boar. As soon as he began to carve, a group of singing birds flew out, to the amazement of the guests!

However the poor in first century Rome often went hungry and had to depend on handouts of grain or the generosity of their patron, if they were fortunate enough to get an audience.

We are often asked why we choose to study Latin, which is after all a dead language. But as our own language is littered with words closely based on Latin words, we have been helped to recognise the meanings of these as well as the words that have filtered from Latin into English via European languages.

Rosemary Lea, Convenor



The Elementary German Group

We began meeting again in person earlier this year. We meet twice a month on the second and fourth Mondays at two pm. Over time, we have lost a few members and gained a few and presently there are five of us keen to hone our German skills.

Recently we have been preparing items of personal news in German to present to the group hoping that it makes sense. Our leader wrote a most interesting piece describing a holiday on the Greek Island of Lemnos. We had great fun translating it into English.

We often have an item taken from German news to read, translate and discuss together. To help with grammar and vocabulary, we have been following a beginner's course called Willkommen! This is very easy to follow and provides lots of activities to practice speaking.

Occasionally we have attempted reading and translating German songs, hymns and popular musical pieces. We also have a German Scrabble game which is fun but can be challenging.

We have been known to resort to using a dictionary!

If you are new to German or feel you would like to improve or refresh your knowledge, we would be very pleased to welcome you. Please contact Peter Story

Peter Story

Elementary German Group



Anne's knee slappers



I duck my head down while driving into underground parking garages to make my car fit, in case you were wondering what kind of superior intellect I've passed down to my kids.

FAMOUS TOPICS IN ART HISTORY:



HERCULES ATTEMPTING TO GIVE HIS CAT A PILL

WHY ENGLISH IS HARD TO LEARN

We'll begin with *box*; the plural is *boxes*,
But the plural of *ox* is *oxen*, not *oxes*.
One fowl is a *goose*, and two are called *geese*,
Yet the plural of *moose* is never called *meese*.

You may find a lone *mouse* or a house full of *mice*,
But the plural of *house* is *houses*, not *hice*.
The plural of *man* is always *men*,
But the plural of *pan* is never *pen*.

If I speak of a *foot*, and you show me two *feet*,
And I give you a *book*, would a pair be a *beek*?
If one is a *tooth* and a whole set are *teeth*,
Why shouldn't two *booths* be called *beeth*?

If the singular's *this* and the plural is *these*,
Should the plural of *kiss* be ever called *keese*?

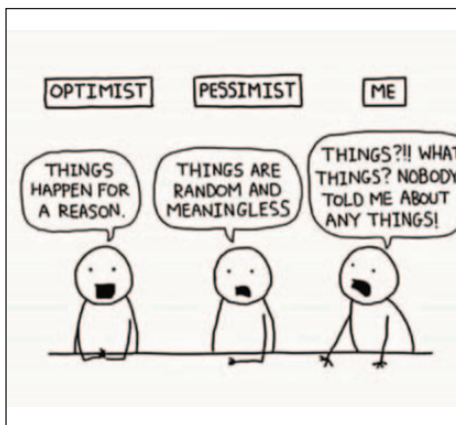
In the 1980s, A&W tried to compete with the McDonald's Quarter Pounder by selling a 1/3 pound burger at a lower cost. The product failed, because most customers thought the 1/4 pound was bigger.

This is why I don't argue online.



William Shatner has discontinued his new line of lingerie. Apparently, Shatner panties wasn't the best choice for a name.

Funnies supplied by
Anne Sargent



Tonight we're having Himalayan rabbit stew for dinner.

We found himalayan in the road.

