

MALLING NEWS

U3A The newsletter of the Malling District U3A

Eruditio et Amicitia

Chairman's letter

U3A has announced a very first National U3A Day, which will be held next year on Wednesday, 3rd June. We are being invited to mark the day ourselves by celebrating and showcasing what happens in our own U3A. This will be a day dedicated to learning, staying active and having fun in our 'third age'. It will be not just an opportunity for members to showcase some of the amazing things that we do, but a way to challenge negative perceptions of older adults and a chance to invite other 'Third Agers' in the community to learn about the contribution U3A makes to the quality of life for retired people. Your committee will be considering how best to take part, but in the meantime please put your thinking caps on and develop ideas. You will be able to read more about this event on the national U3A website - go to our own website to find the link at the top right-hand corner of the page. Finally, we still have vacancies for committee members and we do need to plan ahead for when several of the present committee come to the end of their terms of office; so, if you would like to take part in continuing the good work of our U3A please do get in touch and we can give more detail of what is involved.



- Mike Rowe



The Last Dornier

You may have some knowledge about the rare German WWII bomber, nicknamed the flying pencil, which was raised from under a sandbank off the Kent coast. The twin engined Dornier 17 was shot down over Goodwin Sands on 26 August 1940, during the Battle of Britain.

The October speaker, John Franklin, has a short video of the aircraft as it was found in 2010 as part of his presentation. The talk begins with information about the aircraft and its crew as it takes off from Belgium to bomb airfields in Britain, its shooting down by British fighters on a summer day and subsequent discovery some 70 years later. It continues with a picture of what was found and how a dive team worked in collaboration with RAF Hendon in monitoring the wreck over several years and until its eventual recovery in June 2013.

The talk is supported by a display of 'before' and 'after' photographs showing the cleaned aircraft as it is today and the unique video mentioned above.

MAKE TEA NOT WAR

October:

Patricia & Richard Meehan, Jenny Tomlin and Sally Brailsford.

November:

Alan & Linda Bramley, Stephen Hatfield and Rosemary Lea.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Friday 15 November.

Copy deadline for next month. Please limit contributions to 300-400 words in length, with a photo where possible. Email S Sangha at: newsletter@mallingdistrictu3a.org.uk



The Quintain was used by mounted knights of old to practice jousting

Cyclists jousting the Quintain and tip the windmills

On a perfect morning eight of us set off from Asda car park to explore the beautiful Kent countryside, away from the traffic.

Once away from Kings Hill we climbed towards Offham

and the Quintain, where we stopped for our photograph. The Quintain, as I am sure many of you will know, was used by mounted knights of old to practice jousting. I suppose it could be done on a bicycle, but we would need a

Perhaps there was a windmill here once, and there are some interesting looking footpaths off to the left which might hide one, so I will come back and have a look.

We continued in a clockwise direction, across the A20 -

lower quintain. We dived off to our left down a very quiet road which has

recently been resurfaced. Here we only met two vehicles which were very polite and actually stopped to let us past. We passed some very nice houses here, with spectacular views across the valley and up to the North Downs. The fates were with us, as Seven Mile Lane was clear and we rode on past the gardens at Great Comp - well worth a visit.

Shortly after Great Comp we turned right and climbed up Windmill Hill.

which was clear for us, and then over the M20 and down to Ryarsh, where we stopped for a cuppa at the pub. Then on towards Birling, where we stopped to admire the De Lorean car which is usually parked in a garage there. No sign of time travels today!

Once over the M20 in the homeward direction we turned to the right and went through the new estate, where the surface was smooth and the gradient was easy. I chose this route because the entry to the A20 was easier than other compatible routes. To stay away from the speeding traffic, we rode on the pavement to West Malling, then Laven- ders road and home along- side the A228 - a beautiful smooth surface.

En route, Trevor said to me that everything had gone so well that something was sure to go wrong! This brought back memories of falling off and breaking my collar bone eighteen months ago - something I would rather forget - but the ride ended with no mishaps. Just 15 miles this time, with a few climbs but nothing too steep, and mainly good road surfaces.

- Barry Evans

giftaid it

When you joined our U3A you filled in a form with your details and at the bottom of this was a Gift Aid form. Gift Aid allows us to claim from the taxman 25% of your subscription every year - if you are a UK tax payer. When you add this up over the membership, it's worth quite a bit to us. I've a suspicion that there may be some who hadn't noticed this part of the application form, and we could be missing out on some free income. So if you are a UK tax payer and haven't registered with us to reclaim Gift Aid, I do urge you to "sign up". It won't cost you anything, but it would benefit your U3A. If you aren't sure whether you are registered or not, just ask me.

- Ray Lawrence

Solution in next month's issue

The University of the First Age



The Glittering Prizes: Remembrances of things past, lush lawns and Alumni weekends; Brian can be seen bottom right with arms folded and light jacket [above left]. Cambridge's modern intake of students with women in the ascendancy [above right].

Over the last thirty years there has been a wide movement to keep ourselves active physically and mentally in later life. About thirty five years ago the U3A began and a few years after Cambridge University was the first to host alumni weekends where lectures, dinners, musical events and exhibitions were open for former members. Oxford was one or two years behind. All have fed off each other.

Shortly after joining the Malling U3A I was encouraged to go to an alumni weekend in Cambridge. I loved it and I have been to about five now. The numbers have grown and this year 1,800 people attended in the last weekend in September. Other conferences go on at the same time. When Celia and I stayed in St Catharine's College once we were enjoying a full English breakfast when a young man

sat beside us with only coffee and a ciabatta. We asked where he was from and which conference he was attending. He was from Istanbul and he was part of the conference on 'Obesity.' We felt we were specimens for him. We have sung in the Alumni choirs in King's College chapel - late in the evening as we have to practice first. These concerts have capacity audiences. One year there was an exhibition in King's College library of Jane Austen first editions. It was there because Jane's nephew was Provost and left these books and other memorabilia to King's. I went along to a lecture by the Professor of Veterinary Science on genes on dogs, hoping I would be helped to cope with our Labrador's greed. Sadly it is affected by a gene which has not been able to be outbred. This year there were a number of lectures on how genes affect our growth and ill-

nesses. A fascinating one was by Professor Ashok on 'The origins of Cancer : what's in our genes and what isn't.' How do we stop cells multiplying out of control? A packed hall heard Dr Sadaf on 'Why do some people gain weight more easily than others'. Another seminar was on plastic waste. There was a lunch meeting for cricketers and another for rowers. There is a friendly atmosphere and many of the attendees we chatted to were members of their local U3A. One lady told us that the Cambridge U3A was among the biggest in the country. I loved the lecture on the Chronophage on King's Parade - the golden clock with a locust eating up time. Thanks to our genes we still have time and opportunity left to us to enjoy the overlap between the universities of the first and third ages.

- **Brian Stevenson**

Puzzle corner



You are the only survivor drifting in the dark in a lifeboat towards a mysterious island which is inhabited by two tribes who have never intermarried but who co-exist happily. You know that the two tribes are called Shortmen and Tallmen. Shortmen always tell the truth, but Tallmen have developed a language where what they say is always completely wrong! Neither tribe welcome strangers, but strangers may visit if they can identify the ritual reception party accurately. You also know they are cannibals!

As you approach the shore you hear three voices. The first voice says "Hello! I am a Shortman." The second voice says "He's wrong. He's a Tallman. I'm a Shortman." The third voice says "He's wrong. They're both Tallmen. I'm a Shortman."

You don't know the make-up of the reception party as nobody has survived to bring back the information. So who are the Shortmen and who the Tallmen?

- **Ray Lawrence**

Solution in next month's issue

Malling Interest Group Trivia

My thanks to all the Convenors that have already submitted five questions related to their subject areas together with the answers.

There has been an excellent response so far and the idea appears to have captured your imagination. It is intended as a bit of fun for the different interest groups to showcase what they do and engage with the wider membership. So please consider putting pen to paper and share your passions! I look forward to hearing from those of you that are yet to respond.

- S Sangha, Editor

Book Circles 1

- courtesy of Valerie Willsher

Q1. Which famous novel begins with the words "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness"

Q2. Only four people have ever won the Booker Prize twice. Who is the only British author who has achieved this?

Q3. Who wrote the book on which the film *The Children Act*, starring Emma Thompson, is based?



Q4. What connects the novels *Savrola*, published 1900, and *Coningsby*, 1844?



Q5. Joe Swift, the gardening expert & TV presenter, is the son of actor Clive Swift (aka Mr Hyacinth Bucket) and which literary Dame who is a novelist, biographer and critic?

Answers next month

Answers to last month's Lunch Group

quiz: Q1 *Papas, Ditton*. Q2 *The Wealden Hall Larkfield*. Q3 *The Spitfire, Kings Hill*. Q4 *The Hop Pole Nettlestead*. Q5 *The Sino Liberty Square Kings Hill*

Kings Hill holiday to Potters Resort, Norfolk

Kings Hill U3A have a few places left in double or twin-bedded rooms for their holiday to this 5* holiday village in Norfolk, from June 1st - 5th 2020

A wide range of activities is on offer: swimming; craft workshops; ten pin bowling; tennis; dancing; bowls, Segway; archery; and walking routes. Full board; entertainment or simply lounging.

Provisional all-inclusive cost £320 approx, according to numbers

Transport NOT included. Use your own vehicle, or, if enough people are interested, a coach can be provided at extra cost.

Please contact Maggie Hall if you are interested: maggie.hall@gmx.co.uk

- Dianne White

Malling U3A Diary

your monthly guide to what's on locally and further afield

22 Oct | Speaker's Corner

'The Last Dornier' with John Franklin

26 Oct | Empowering Images: Tudor to Jacobean Portraiture

Julia Cruse: Discover the importance and historical legacy of the era's magnificent individual, family and political portraits.

9 Nov | The Spanish Civil War:

Causes & Course: Edward Towne

Civil war gripped Spain from 1936 to 1939. We consider the instability and why the authoritarian regime lasted until 1975. Booking & details:

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/tonbridge/s hort-courses/medway.html>

18 Dec | Malling U3A Xmas Lunch

SOLD OUT

Contact Anne Sargent if you would like to be placed on the reserve list

19 Dec | Sound & Light Spectacular at Leonardslee Gardens

An evening outing to enjoy the spectacular illuminations at Leonardslee Gardens, leaving Ryarsh at 3.30 pm and returning by 10.30 pm. The cost per member is £25.50 to include coach travel, entry and driver's tip.

Full details, and booking form, are on the flyer with this newsletter.

20 Apr 2020 | La Boheme

Joint trip with Kings Hill to the Churchill Theatre. Contact Dianne White

1-6 June 2020 | Kings Hill trip

Kings Hill U3A have a few places left for their holiday to Potters Resort, Norfolk. Please contact Maggie Hall if you are interested:

maggie.hall@gmx.co.uk