

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

Welcome to the March U3A - which helps) Newsletter. By the time you read this we will be 8 or 9 weeks into 2024. I wonder how many of you have managed to keep at least one of the New Year's resolutions that you made so earnestly on New Year's Eve? I know some people have done "Dry January" - which is laudable. I have done "Dry February" for the past few years (fewer days than in January

If you have any friends who are about to retire, or have recently done so, don't forget to mention U3A to them. There is always room for new blood in any organisation

Enjoy this month's Newsletter .

Maybe some of you want to start a new hobby that isn't currently within the Sevenoaks U3A ambit? Perhaps you want to refresh a language that you once spoke well, or to engage in another pastime? Please give it some thought and let Group Development know. Keep an eye out for our Open Day when you meet members of existing groups.

David Gardner (on behalf of Ken Brown) [chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:chairman@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## MARCH MONTHLY MEETING

**Wednesday, March 27th 2024 at 2pm in the Bat and Ball Centre, Sevenoaks.**

Our speaker this month is **Imogen Corrigan**, who is well known to our members through the range of talks she has given to us previously. We are delighted to have her back again and this time she will be telling us about **The Bayeux Tapestry**.

The tapestry is not just a narrative of the most famous battle in English history, it also depicts the events leading up to it. The images tell of the struggle for power and the claims to the throne of England, eventually leading to the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, led by William Duke of Normandy challenging Harold II, King of England and culminating in the Battle of Hastings.



**We look forward to welcoming you to the Bat & Ball Centre, with tea and biscuits being served afterwards.**

**I do hope you will join us.**

Barbara Coleyshaw [speakers@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:speakers@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

**Group Organisers** – every year we need to update our Beacon membership database with the current members in each group, in order to ensure we have the most up to date information, in line with GDPR. One of the benefits of Beacon is that different people can have access to different parts of the database, according to need. In many u3as, the Groups Organisers update the membership of their group(s) themselves and we will be rolling this out in Sevenoaks u3a in the coming months.

The training will be piloted with EC members who are also Group Organisers and then rolled out to Group Organisers who are interested. If you shop and manage other accounts online, then, with training, this should present few problems for you and you will be able to update your group membership yourself as it changes in future. We will also demonstrate other features which GOs have found useful.

If you are interested in participating, then please email **Sue Christy** at [groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupdev@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## SCIENCE OPEN GROUP

Our next Science Open meeting will be on **Monday 11th March** at **Otford Village Memorial Hall**, starting at **14:00hrs**. A door charge of £2.50 is made to cover hire costs.

The talk will be – ‘**Making Sevenoaks Greener**’ **By Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet**

Sevenoaks Town Council has been planning to improve its assets and the local environment for over 10 years.

Following the elections in May 2023 a new community Investment Plan has been created. The Green Community Investment Plan aims to put in place affordable and practical initiatives with long term green benefits for the local community.

Marilyn has lived most of her life in Sevenoaks and is currently one of our Town Councillors. During her terms of office, she has been involved in many projects to improve facilities and services in Sevenoaks such as the Bradbourne Lakes, better sports facilities at Greatness, and the rebuilding of Bat & Ball Station and other projects.

The meeting will provide the opportunity to discuss the Green Community Investment Plan.

For the forthcoming season we have additional talks organised and details will be published in future newsletters or via Beacon

**Bob Ruffles for the Science Committee**

[science@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:science@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUP VACANCIES

The Science Discussion Group meets on the **first Monday morning** of each month (Public Holidays permitting) between **October and May**.

The group covers a wide range of scientific disciplines. In addition to looking at the latest science and technology discoveries which challenge society, we also address the history of discoveries and personalities that have shaped the world in which we live.

This year we have looked at Mathematics before the Renaissance, The History of Atomic Physics from Dalton to CERN, Alternative Energy sources, Voyager 1 & 2 space probe status, Norman Lockyer (An unknown British Scientist). In our forthcoming programme we will be addressing

- critical materials that may disrupt the UK plans for going green,
- Gut health & Dementia and
- Animal Welfare.

In the group, each member presents a topic which the whole group can discuss. You do not need to be an expert but just have the enthusiasm to get involved. For more information, please contact me via the phone number in our handbook, or by email below.

**Bob Ruffles**

[sciencediscuss@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:sciencediscuss@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## EUROPEAN AFFAIRS GROUP VACANCIES

This lively Group is in its 5th year and has members from both Knole and Sevenoaks u3as. In the last year we have covered:

- Literacy and numeracy in the EU
- The Ageing Population in Europe
- Living on the Norway-Russia border in the 1960s
- Growing up in Ireland on the border
- Science: the UK versus EU catastrophe
- The award winning Polish film 'Ida'

We meet on the afternoon of the first Monday of the month and we now have 2 vacancies for anyone who is interested. Our range of topics follows our members' suggestions and could for example include, music, geography education, politics, current affairs, arts and artists, or anything that sounds interesting in all Europe (ie: the EU and beyond)

Please contact **Rob White** on [euroaffairs@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:euroaffairs@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk) [REDACTED]

### BRIDGE FOR PLEASURE

**Next sessions : 28th February, 13th and 27th March 2024**

The Group plays at **Oxford Village Memorial Hall** on the **2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings** of each month from October to the end of July, from **9.45 a.m. until 12 noon**.

Our numbers are holding up quite well but 5 full tables still elude us! We had 17 on 24th January and 19 on 14th February which is probably quite good for half term week. The winners were Colin Butson and Pat Lowe respectively. Congratulations to both of them.

New members are always welcome. We are an "open" group so new players can just come along on the day. We play ACOL in a 'Chicago' format so you do not need a regular partner or to come every time. We change partners every 4 hands so you experience playing with 4 or 5 different people during the morning.

For more information, please ring **John and Sue Christy** [REDACTED] email [bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:bridge@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk).

### DUTCH/FLEMISH LANGUAGE GROUP

Probably several of us have visited, lived or worked at some time in the Netherlands and Belgium, learned the language and experienced the culture – including the renowned frieten, with many varieties of frietsaus. My kids loved them.

It's a pity if the language and experiences become rusty. However, there appears to be nowhere to continue using Dutch back home. This is a suggestion to set up a Dutch /Flemish conversation group to remove the rust. It would be very good also, if there are any Dutch or Flemish native speakers who could join and keep us honest by stopping us straying too much into "Dutchlish".

Please contact **Bob Darby** at [bobdarby@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bobdarby@hotmail.co.uk) if you might like to join such a group, so that we can discover if there is enough interest for this.

## MONTHLY CALENDAR – MARCH

<b>11th March</b>	Science Open Meeting	<b>13th March</b>	Bridge for Pleasure	<b>25th March</b>	Computer Open Meeting
<b>27th March</b>	Bridge For Pleasure	<b>27th March</b>	Monthly Meeting		

## BEACON FOR GROUP ORGANISERS

In last month's newsletter Sue Christy (Groups Co-ordinator) indicated that we would offer training on managing your group using the Beacon u3a database system. A training session has been arranged for **Thursday 14th March** in the **afternoon** and there are still a few spaces available. The session will cover:

- introduction to Beacon,
- group details and venues,
- managing members of a group,
- emailing from Beacon and
- other group features.

If you are interested in joining the session, please email [beacon@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:beacon@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk) and I will send you details.

**David Lowe**, Beacon Administrator

## LITERATURE GROUP

Would you like to discuss books like Anne Enright's "*The Wren The Wren*", William Faulkner's "*As I Lay Dying*", Calvino's "*If On A Winter's Night A Traveller*" or Gurnah's "*Paradise*" with a friendly group of like minded people? Members take turns to choose a book and lead a discussion on it. Recently we've been exploring Irish writers but have now moved back to whatever interests us. We find our appreciation of the books chosen is considerably enhanced by our discussions. We meet at members' homes in the **afternoon** of the **fourth Tuesday** of the month.

For more information contact **John Clark**  
[literature@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:literature@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

## SMARTPHONE, TABLET AND COMPUTER GROUP

Computer group will be held on **Monday 25th 2024** starting at **2pm**. Admission has been kept at £2 per person. The talk will be given by an **officer from Kent Police** who will be **helping us to avoid internet fraud**. At the end of the talk the committee members will be available to talk to anyone wanting advice.

**Please note that this meeting and the meeting on April 29th will be held in the Otford Village Memorial Hall** as the car park at the Methodist Hall will be closed for repair work.

I am happy to report that the continuation of the group looks much more likely as we have found some members to help with the running of the group. We had a very useful meeting recently and we hope the program that we are putting together will encourage more members to attend our meetings.

The committee feels that the new title of the group "Smartphones, Tablets and Computers" will better reflect the desire to help members in utilising their devices to maximum effect.

The disguised email for the group is still [computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:computing@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk) and this is available to any member who needs assistance.

**Mike Davies**

## GERMAN CONVERSATION GROUP

The **German Conversation Group**- the name of the group says it all - needs **two** new members. We meet round the lunch table twice a month, taking turns to host and bringing our own food. To keep everyone in the conversation the group limit is eight. The size of members' tables also puts a practical limit on numbers that can attend. The tone is informal and language level fairly basic. Conversation is as it happens, with no structure and no material prepared, so you need at least to be able to string a sentence together! Group membership only changes slowly over time so we meet as friends and incidental learners rather than students with language goals. Present members have all spent time in German-speaking countries – mostly a long time ago – so meetings offer a chance to keep some of the rust off our knowledge or reawaken it.

Please contact **Nigel Britten** at [german@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:german@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk)

If you would like to include any items in the **April newsletter**, please send them to [news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk](mailto:news@sevenoaksu3a.org.uk) by **March 15th**.



### Kent Network U3A Booking Form

**Study Day to be held at Aylesford Priory, ME20 7BX, to be held on Wednesday 27th March 2024 from 9.30 for 10am start to 3.30 pm**

This year's theme is the membership journey – Recruitment, Engagement and Participation. It will provide an active platform for attendees to learn from one another and present their success in finding and retaining new members, welcoming them into the u3a and its interest groups and encouraging them to run groups and support the u3a.

I would like to book \_\_\_ place(s) for the Kent Network Day at a cost of £10 per person.

u3a

<b>Name (details for each please)</b>	<b>Email address</b>	<b>Phone No.</b>
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<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black;"/>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
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**Cost £10 per person (which is subsidised to include lunch and refreshments)**

**Payment by BACS: A/c U3A Kent Network Sort Code 40-43-44 A/c No. 51491164**

or

**Cheque enclosed for full amount £..... made payable to U3A Kent Network.**

Please return form (or simply give the required information) to the Treasurer by email to

**[Redacted]** or post to **Angela Howe, [Redacted]**

If you are posting this form and do not include an email address, **please enclose a stamped addressed envelope** for the confirmation and receipt.

**If e-mailing, you will get confirmation by email.**