

No. 102
March 2011



**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
CRAWLEY**

Registered Charity No. 1029004

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U3A Crawley - Officers & Committee

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Speakers for our Friday afternoon meetings at
the Friary Hall, Haslett Avenue
2.30 p.m.**

2011`

11th March

Roger Hind

“A musical sentimental journey”

8th April

Mark Perry-Nash

“Some ‘what-ifs?’ of history

13th May

Peter Young

“Blue plaques in Crawley”

10th June

CRAWLEY U3A AGM

8th July

Dr. Pennington

“History of Sussex inn signs”

9th September

Open Day and Enrolment

14th October

Nick Thomas

“Life as a free-lance comedy writer”

Study Days

Please refer to your printed programme and take a look at the Notice Board at Friday meetings in the Friary Hall. There are often additional days and events displayed there.

Booking forms for all Study Days are available from Brenda Broom who can be contacted on : 01293 882674.

Enclosed with this Newsletter:

1. Notice of AGM and Proposal Form
2. Booking form for Summer Outing
3. Poster of “Sun Fun Day”

A Letter from the Acting Chairman

March 2011

On 26 January 2011, I was very pleased to receive a "Thank You" card from Margaret Earl and Family in which she sends their thanks for the generous donation of £196.70p to the Boy's Brigade, the chosen organisation in memory of Arthur. She went on to say that "his involvement with the Boy's Brigade had a great influence on his life and all that he did". They wished Crawley U3A continued success, as they felt that Arthur would too.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 10th June 2011 and proposals will be needed for the role of Chairman, other Officers and Committee Members. Please give this your serious thought. Our U3A cannot operate without Officers and Committee members. An Agenda and proposals form is included with this Newsletter. Recently I had reason to look at a copy of the 'U3A Objects and Principles' as accepted by the Founding Committee of the University of the Third Age. I quote from it 'The University shall consist of a body of persons who undertake to learn and help others learn. All members of the university shall be expected to offer voluntary service to it and to its activities'. Crawley U3A needs your help in many aspects of our activities. In addition to a Chairman, we need a Minute Secretary for Committee Meetings and additional members who would help occasionally with refreshments at Monthly Meetings. Do get in touch if you could help in some way.

One of the things I do in my elected role as Vice-Chairman is to represent Crawley U3A at the monthly meetings of Crawley Older Persons Forum, held at the Crawley Community & Voluntary Service (CCVS) premises in Brighton Road. Here matters that relate to older people are presented and discussed. There is usually a presentation regarding some aspect affecting the lives of the older generation.

At the December meeting, David Cumberland, the business manager of the Crawley Health Centre was the speaker. The centre is run by a consortium of ten of the twelve medical practices in Crawley. It started in the urgent treatment centre of Crawley Hospital but in March 2010 it moved to its own premises at 14. Hazlett Avenue, Crawley RH10 1HS, Tel: 0300 999 3000. This is a "walk in" centre available to everyone between 8.00a.m. and 8.00p.m. any day of the year. No registration or proof of identity is required but patients can register with the clinic if they wish.

At the January Meeting there were three presentations. The first was by Therese Brooks, the County Catering Advisor and a dietician on the recently improved "Meals on Wheels" service. It is provided by WSCC (but is not a statutory service) and WRVS. It can provide main meals, desserts, afternoon teas, salads and special diets on a temporary or more permanent basis. The second was by Anita Wright of Anchor Homes on the "Crawley Wellbeing Partnership". She presented a draft action plan with the aim of ensuring that "Older people are happy, safe and living independent lives in their own homes and communities". The changes to the National Health Service set out by the current government seemed to be part of this. The third presentation was by Brian Edgill, 2011 Census Area Manager who spoke about the 2011 Census day on 27 March 2011. The forms will be delivered to every home by post. They can be returned by post or, for the first time, they can be completed on-line. He spoke of the importance of the information each census shows. More information can be found at: www.census.gov.uk

I also brought back a few copies of an up-dated "Directory of Services for Older People in Crawley". Additional copies are available from Crawley CVS, The Orchard, 1-2 Gleneagles Court, Brighton Road, Crawley RH10 6AD. Tel: 01293 657000. Email: admin@crawleycvs.org

At the February Meeting, the speaker was David Rees, Programmes Manager Sussex & Surrey, the Environment Centre. His title was Fuel Poverty, which refers to 19% of the population, and the factors which cause people to be living in such unhealthy conditions because they are not able to afford sufficient heating, their homes are in need of help with double glazing, removing mould, cavity wall insulation and out of date heating equipment etc. His concerns were for the health of people living in what is termed Fuel Poverty.

From each of these presentations I collected informative documents which are displayed at our Monthly Meetings. I look forward to seeing you at our AGM.

My very best wishes to you all,

Mary Russell

YOUR COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU

We are looking for members who would be interested in shadowing certain positions within the Crawley U3A Committee with a view to taking up the task when the current incumbent retires. A number of officers are reaching the end of their term and it is important that there should be someone to carry on after they have left. Although most officers and ordinary Committee members are prepared to carry on for the time being, it is felt that we need new blood and a fresh impetus. The situation has already arisen with our loss of Arthur Earl, our late Chairman who will be a difficult act to follow.

If we are unable to replace Committee Officers and Members, the situation may well arise when Crawley U3A grinds to a halt and, ultimately, closes. This is obviously the worst projection to put on the current position and I am sure that, in that case, members of Crawley U3A would not let that happen.

What is involved in joining the Committee? Well, it meets on a regular basis every four to six weeks for approximately two hours. It is entirely voluntary although expenses for the usual sort of thing, i.e., postage, telephone, stationery, are covered. Each member has a specific job but help is at hand and no-one is left to flounder on their own.

PLEASE GIVE IT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. As you already know, U3A members are a friendly bunch and the same applies to the Committee.

If you are interested please don't hesitate to contact Beryl Sinclair on 01293 513825. You will not be committing yourself if you feel it's not for you but we would be so pleased to hear from You.



SOUTH EAST FORUM

Conference: Wednesday 30th March 2011 Meridian Hall, East Grinstead

As an additional attraction at the Conference, there will be an exhibition of work done as part of U3A activities. We are looking for items which are likely to be of interest to those attending. These might include paintings, needlecraft, photographs, books, reports on studies, wood or metal craft, archaeology, geology etc., etc. What fascinating things do U3A members do in their groups? The exhibitions have been significant features at previous Conferences.

Please give details about your proposed exhibit on the form below and return to Arthur Browne, 34 Blundell Avenue, Horley, Surrey, RH6 SAY. Further information from the above on 01293 771794.

There will be tables and display boards and offers of the latter will be welcome. Provide your own name labels and descriptive information. Items will be brought to the meeting on the day and set up in the main room where members will be present at all times.

If you would be interested in this event, forms will be available at the Friday meeting, or from Brenda Broom, 01293 882674

Growing Up In The East End Of London 1940/50

Our speaker, Bernard Lockett, was born in St. Andrew's Hospital, Bow and lived with his parents and grandparents in the basement of a large detached house nearby. One thing he particularly remembered in this house were 28 sets of windows which had just been cleaned - the same night a bomb blew them all out. His grandfather was a painter and decorator and keen Gilbert & Sullivan fan, which meant that the family frequented local theatres quite often.

Bow had trolley buses plying the main route from London to Essex. Bernard recollected the great sense of community in the 40's - everyone lived, went to school and worked all within a one mile radius. There was a dairy where you collected real milk, a butcher who wore a straw hat and cut the local meat just how you liked it. A fishmonger, also wore a straw hat and served all fresh fish, and a greengrocer provided locally grown vegetables - rather like a farmers' market today. Bernard recalled his first and second schools at Bromley-by-Bow and Mile End, also rows of Victorian cottages in which lived tenants who, in spite being very poor, looked after their homes with care and pride. Alas these cottages are no more, replaced with flats, and the house in which Bernard grew up has been refurbished and his basement apartment was sold for around £600,000. The petrol station opposite is now a Porsche Dealership!

For a treat, Bernard would be taken 5 minutes on the bus to Stratford which was the posh bit of Bow. Of course, the Olympic site has changed the area completely, except for the Theatre Royal which still remains. Another good day out was to the Isle of Dogs - green fields and river boats - now Canary Wharf. Bow people went away for the week-end "over the water" (the Thames) and if they moved, it was always to Basildon or Harlow in the North.

Before TV, Bernard recalls the radio, or should I say, wireless - "This is the BBC Home Service" - Littlewoods and Vernon's Football Pools - his Grandfather would study the teams and a man would collect his predictions on Thursday and on Saturday the family would listen eagerly to the BBC results - "Not this week" Grandfather would say! As a real treat on a Saturday Mrs. Butler's Fish Shop sold the left over salmon tails and sometimes lobster - after 70 years the shop was moved and sold to make way for the Olympics. Other favourites around this time were jellied eels, pie and mash and salt-beef sandwiches.

The East End of London has seen an enormous transition of course - sadly it is no longer the happy, safe and comfortable place with a sense of community that once flourished there. It remains to be seen whether the after-effects of the Olympics will give the area new heart for the 21st century.

Bernard recalled many fond memories of the old days in a most amusing way and we all thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon.

Irene Fairbourn

National Summer Schools

Summer School 1: Harper Adams University College,
Newport

Monday 18th July - Thursday 21st July 2011

Summer School 2: Royal Agricultural College,
Cirencester

Monday 22nd August - Thursday 25th August 2011

Details and application forms can be downloaded from our website (member's area/events) or are available on request from the National Office.

Tel: 020 8466 6139 website: www.u3a.org.uk

email: national.office@u3a.org.uk

U3A explores science at the RI – Tuesday 29th March 2011

Programmes and application forms available at the Friday meeting on 11th March or can be obtained by contacting Brenda Broom on 01293 882674. The titles of each talk have yet to be decided. If you are interested you are advised to apply as soon as possible as the tickets quickly sell out.

University of Brighton

The U3A are offered an opportunity that will bring them together with sixth formers for an exciting day as part of National Science Week. Organised by Margaret Allen and Colin Whiteman at the University of Brighton.

Science Communication and the Media

Huxley Lecture Theatre, Cockcroft Building, University of Brighton, Lewes Road, Brighton BN2 4GJ

Tuesday 15 March 2011, 2.45pm-7pm

Speakers:

Iain Stewart, Professor of Geosciences Communication, TV Presenter (The Power of the Planet' etc)

Robin McKie, Science and Technology Editor for *The Observer* ('Face of Britain - How our Genes Reveal the History of Britain').

Evan Harris, Doctor and former MP interested in science policy

Quentin Cooper, Producer and Broadcaster (BBC's 'Material World')

Registration: £5

Send cheques, payable to the 'University of Brighton', to P.A. Harwood, Watts Building W409, University of Brighton, Lewes Road, Brighton BN2 4GJ. Please state which U3A you are from.

For more information contact m.j.allen@brighton.ac.uk or c.a.whiteman@brighton.ac.uk

THE OPERAS OF MOZART :: MIRRORS OF THE TIMES

This was a day of Enlightenment and a truly enriching experience.

The U3A Study Day at Broadfield on the 22nd January 2011 was under the guidance of Peter Medhurst. A singer, a musician, and a music and arts lecturer, he



Leopold Mozart with Wolfgang and Nannerl, November 1763

was very well qualified to speak about the operas of Mozart and the time in which they were written at the end of the 18th. Century and the Enlightenment era.

Using projected images of portraits and of music scores, DVDs of operatic performances, singing and playing the piano, he set the man Mo-

zart in this period as a real human being.

We saw an early portrait of Mozart as a seven year old boy, dressed in court clothes, when he was travelling with his father, mother, and sister to the Courts of Europe to play music to royalty in 1763. Two years later they were holding open house in London. On request the nine year old boy was able to immediately produce operatic music to convey a particular atmosphere.

When Mozart was writing operatic arias he insisted on writing music to embrace the particular qualities of the voice of the singer, saying it must fit like a suit of clothes, and he made the music the slave to the words. We heard recorded examples of this from his opera Mitridate, and could follow the words and music from the score projected on the screen. Another example was from the opera Lucio Silla written in 1772 for the renowned soprano castrata singer Venanzio Ranzzini.

We saw another portrait of Mozart when he was aged twenty-two just after his mother died. He was always a very prolific letter writer to his father which is why we know so much of the background thinking to his work.

The social hierarchy of the late 18th century class sys-

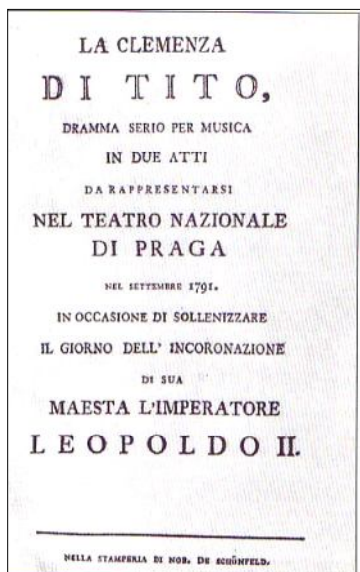
tem was very rigid, and musicians were rated as in the servant class, above valets but below cooks. Mozart who had been indulged by royalty as a boy found this very difficult to accept, and this is reflected in the content of his operas, particularly The Marriage of Figaro. When this was performed in Vienna in 1786 the portrayed character of the servant Figaro lost Mozart many supporters.

The opera The Magic Flute was written as an allegory of the spirit of Freemasonry which was banned in Austria from 1791. On the bottom rung of society in this opera is the bird catcher Papageno. The Countesses music is set in E Flat, a device he used to symbolise the presence of the Divine and the clarinet signifying True Love. When the Countess forgives the Count, Mozart restores order to the world.

Mozart wrote for his own time, but understands his characters so well, that his work is able to bridge the gap to the 21st century, and we are still emotionally involved and identifying with the people in his operas. All his operas have a moral code message. Idomeneo - the sin of pride. Don Giovanni - everything has a price to pay. Cost - Don't tamper with emotions. La Clemenza - Forgiveness. The Magic Flute - Ignorance and Fear prevent man from fulfilment.



Announcement of 1st performance of "the Magic Flute"



In the 18th and 19th centuries there was a fascination with the supernatural, magic and horror or Gothik, and Mozart included examples in his operas. Remembering how he used E Flat settings to symbolise Light and Heaven, when he wanted to symbolise darker forces he set it in D Minor. We saw and heard the supernatural in the Don Giovanni performance of the scene where the statue comes to dinner and Don Giovanni is consigned to the flames of Hell. The judgment scene reminding us that we all have choices.

The last session was on connecting Mozart to the 21st century. After extensive research many of the 19th century additions to the original scores have been removed, but today's instruments and singing produce different sounds at different speeds to that of the Enlightenment. We have a different approach to life and how we view characters, but we can still appreciate the genius of Mozart.

Mary Plastow

SUN FUN DAY AT STANMER PARK. BRIGHTON.

WEDNESDAY 13th July. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This day is FREE

*A day for all Sussex U3A members to join in the fun.

Stanmer Park is part of the Stanmer House Estate purchased by Brighton Council for public enjoyment, located on the main Lewes Road, adjacent to the University of Sussex. Good bus and train access and parking.

In the Park there is a Church, the Stanmer Preservation Society Rural Museum, the Brighton and Hove Nurseries (plant sales), a Donkey Well, an eco. 'Airship', a working Forge, lovely (flat) walks, a small cafe.

*This day is free to enjoy and sample a range of activities and also for those who have participated in the **BIG SUN WALK** to meet together.

There will be space for U3A interest groups who have followed the 'Sea' theme to display their efforts (photographs, collections from the beaches, shells, flora and fauna, seaweeds, fossil hunting, local history, paintings etc.)

Singing groups are welcome to give us some sea shanties to sing along with.

There will be Croquet, Tai Chi, Boules, Stoolball, Nordic walking taster sessions, Poetry, Painting, Kite flying, Photography.

*(Bring your own chair!)

Offers of help on 'the day' are very welcome or you may have an activity to offer. Contact Nova Brookes on 01903

U3A Signpost

History and Garden Groups: Lullingstone Castle and the legendary World Garden is an exciting and informative part of any group's itinerary, be their interest horticultural or historical. Lullingstone Castle, situated in North West Kent, dates back to the 15th century and remains in the same family. It boasts Henry VIII and Queen Anne amongst its royal visitors and more recently, was home to the Lullingstone Silk Farm that produced silk for Queen Elizabeth II's coronation robes. The current heir Tom Hart Dyke, after his kidnap ordeal in Colombia in 2000, has created a garden in the shape of the world, containing some 8,000 unusual plants, some of which have been collected on his modern-day plant hunting expeditions. Also on site is a wacky Hot & Spiky Cactus House, a temperate House with the deadly stinger plant, and a National Collection of Eucalyptus. We offer guided tours of the House, Church and Garden, April - September, as well as Garden-only tours, April - October, and discounts for unguided groups. Groups may be interested in visiting when we have one of several special tours and events in 2011.

Every Friday, Saturday and Sunday (and Bank Holiday Monday) in April, Tom Hart Dyke will lead free guided tours of the Garden at 2 pm.

Current Affairs Groups: What does it mean to be 'modern'? The World Values Survey (WVS) is the world's most comprehensive investigation of Political and Sociocultural change. See:
<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>

It comprises a worldwide network of social scientists studying changing values and their impact on social and political life.

Click on <http://www.wordmapper.org> for maps on dozens of socially-related categories – e.g. births, deaths, water, education etc etc.

Embroidery Groups: The Royal School of Needlework's website is the international centre for teaching, practicing and promoting hand embroidery across a wide range of techniques. They offer hand embroidery courses for all levels; conservation and restoration historic needlework or creation of new embroideries and tours. to see some of their needlework Collection and more.

<http://www.royal-needlework.org.uk>

The Hand Embroidery network is a new exciting community for contemporary hand embroiderers across the globe:

<http://handembroidery.ning.com>

Current Affairs Groups: for similar maps on dozens of categories - births/deaths/water/ education/ wealth/work/ religion/language/disease. The population increase shown here is a measure how many more births there are than deaths. Every region of the world is experiencing overall natural increases in population size; just a few countries have natural decreases in population size.

The United Kingdom currently has more births than deaths. In recent years 645,000 people were born in the same year that 600,000 people died. Thus there was a net natural population growth of 45,000 in just one year.

Notes on Northern Australia

On a miserable November day we gathered for our Friday monthly meeting, a talk by Robert Fromow on Northern Australia. The subject of the talk appealed being about more sunny climes, and we weren't disappointed.

As an introduction to his talk Robert Fromow's first slide was of the Australian Flag; made up of the stars of the Southern Cross, the Union Jack in the top left hand corner under which there is a seven pointed star representing the six States and one Territory which make up Australia. "Australia Advance" has now been chosen as the National Anthem; God Save the Queen only being played if Royalty are present. The Australian coat of arms has an Emu on the left side and a Red Kangaroo on the right, with the words "Advance Australia" underneath. The animals were not only chosen as being native to Australia but also because they cannot walk backwards, hence "Australia Advance"! It is difficult to comprehend the vastness of Australia: it covers 3 million square miles and Great Britain could be fitted into it 35 times over. About half the country is still untouched wilderness. The Northern Territories covers 17% of landmass but the population is only 1%. It can be divided into two zones, wet in the north, dry in the south. Temperatures can reach 110F degrees

In 1837 a young man, John McDouall Stuart arrived in Adelaide from Scotland. He was to be the first white person to cross Australia from south to north. He and ten companions set out from Adelaide in January 1862 and reached Darwin in July, a distance of 3,400 kilometres. Stuart made careful maps and notes of the terrain encountered. He disproved the theories held that there would be a huge lake and lost civilization in the middle of Australia. They did the return journey to Adelaide arriving there in December 1862. Stuart was in a bad way and had to be carried for the latter part of the journey, but all the party survived. It is thanks to him that the way was opened up, and the Stuart Highway now runs from Adelaide to Darwin.

Stuart returned to England and died at the age of 53. He is buried at Kensal Green Cemetery. It is surprising that in spite of his bravery and achievements only seven people attended his funeral, one of whom was the Duke of Sussex.

Stuart's findings paved the route for an overland telegraph line. Charles Todd, a brilliant meteorologist, born in Islington, was fascinated by technology. He had completed some overland telegraph projects in Australia, and a proposal was put that if a telegraph line was built between Adelaide and Darwin it could link up with existing line from Djakarta to Cornwall. This momentous task was undertaken and as far as possible the route Stuart followed was used but a way through the McDonnell ranges had to be found. Poles were erected every 100 metres, wooden poles at first but it was soon found that these were susceptible to damage so metal poles were used instead. Eleven repeater stations were erected. The line stretched for 3,178 kilometres and the work was completed in two

years despite scorching heat, the temperature reaching 45 degrees, with mosquitoes and heavy rains. Morse code messages were passed along the line from one repeater station to the next, and the first telephone message to the outside world was sent in 1872. This work would not have been achieved without the use of camels which were imported from the Middle East. When they were no longer needed these camels were released into the wild and it is a surprising fact there are more camels in Australia than anywhere else. Some are even exported back to Saudi Arabia where they are valued as racing camels. Alice Springs was named after Charles Todd's wife Alice.

The Ghan Railway was commenced in 1880 but at first it ran only as far as Oodnadatta. The line was extended to Alice Springs and was in use by the 1930s. Work on the section Alice Springs to Darwin was difficult because of weather conditions, frequent flooding being a problem. It was finally built and completed in 2003.

Mr Fromow used photos to illustrate his talk, showing pictures of men working on the telegraph line, the country traversed, dusty red deserts, rough vegetation but also some incredibly beautiful water holes. There were photos of the modern Darwin and the lovely George Brown Park, with native animals and birds. Pictures of the giant termite hills were amazing. An amusing photo was shown of "Henley Regatta" which takes place annually in Alice Springs. Lack of water is not a problem as the competitors run with their legs through the bottom of the boat.

Mention was also made of Qantas (Queensland and Northern Territories Air Service), the Flying Doctor Service, thought up by George Flynn, a Presbyterian Minister, to give medical aid to both white and Aborigine people, and the School of the Air to teach children of the outback. All necessary with such a huge, lightly populated land mass. Two lady aviators were named Amy Johnson, and the less famous Jean Batten, a New Zealander, who broke Amy's record for the flight from England to Australia; she was also the first woman to fly solo from New Zealand to England. Sadly she died, in poverty, in Majorca as a result of an infected dog bite.

Robert's talk was informative and amusing, with great photos. Thank you for a very pleasant afternoon

Sheila Leedale.

From Chris Senior : to Colleagues

Following our last SUN meeting a new website has been established. We are grateful to Ian Buckingham for establishing the new site. He will give a short presentation at the next SUN meeting (as part of the AGM event on 18th February).

You are encouraged to use the new site which can be accessed through:

u3asites.org.uk/sussexu3anetwork and

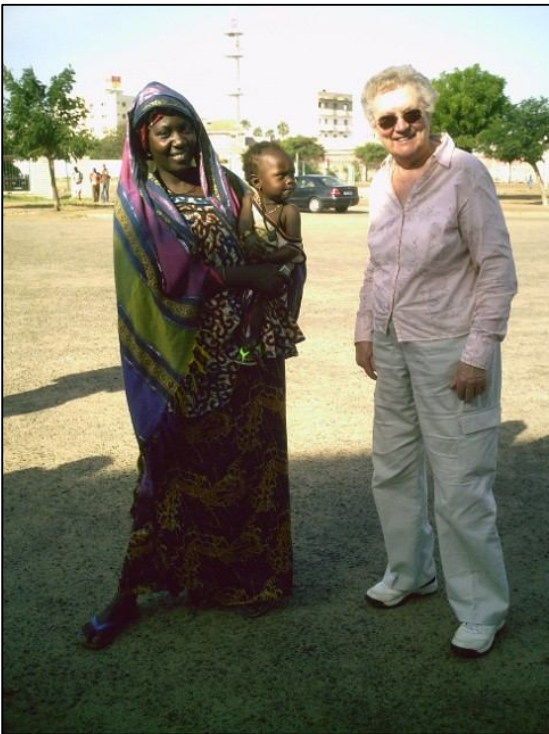
www.sussexu3anetwork.org.uk

<<http://www.sussexu3anetwork.org.uk>



Some of Judy Rayner's lovely photographs which she took during her trip to Africa last year. You can see these in colour on the U3A website.

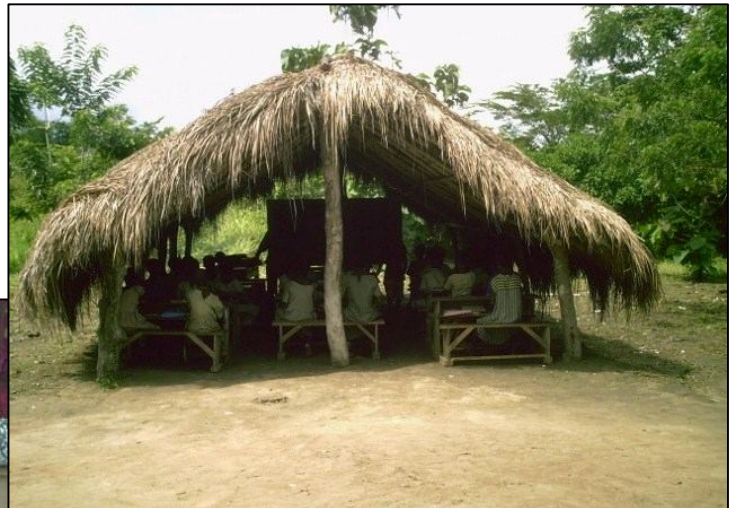
On board the mv Saga Ruby



Lady with baby, Dakar, Senegal



Ewe village Togo



Classroom in Ewe village, Togo



The Chief welcomes us at the Royal Palace, Tema, Ghana

Our Geological Heritage
Study day 20 November 2010

Most of us going to this study day thought of geology as something that was underground and out of sight. We were therefore pleasantly surprised to see and hear a presentation of rock formations above ground and how various layers had become distorted over the years.

The oldest rocks in the British Isles are Lewisian, found on the isle of Lewis. The most congested area of rocks, also in west Scotland, are to be found on the isle of Islay, now more famous for its whisky production, which has no bearing on the subject but was close to the heart of our tutor, Mick Wright. He also spoke of the best pies in the world obtained from the Lochinver pie shop in Precambrian country. He displayed images of the formation of the various continents over the millions of years showing how they had moved and we were surprised to find that the British Isles had started life near the Antarctic. Scotland seemed to have the greatest variety of rocks and had many fault lines apart from the Great Glen of Loch Ness. The island of Skye had two distinct features, the Black Cuillins of gabbro and the Red Hills of granite and on the west coast, isolated spires of rock having been left after coastal erosion.

We were told that the land mass of Scotland was rising whereas southern England was sinking. Over the years the experts had given names and ages of the various strata from Precambrian times. They had therefore some problems when it was found that in some areas older strata was found above younger. Subsequently it was determined that this was caused by a series of gigantic overthrusts. In fact the rocks beneath our feet are constantly on the move and the experts are still learning.

Cornwall and Devon had a number of granite outcrops, but the main geological feature in this area were the minerals which had leached out of the rocks producing a multitude of mines extracting tin, lead, zinc and copper for which there was a world wide demand. Also in Cornwall is found china clay which is really a soft rock associated with granite.

The day finished on a nostalgic note with Mick having started with train spotting and picking pebbles from Durham's beaches to world wide involvement with geology. He was obviously dedicated to his subject and produced this presentation with a series of wonderful photographs.

He in fact brought to the surface ——— underground geology.

John Martin

Group Leaders Please Note:

All Operating Procedures and the forms requesting refunds from the treasurer are available on the Crawley U3A website. Otherwise, please contact a member of the committee who will be pleased to help you.

Group News

Of interest to Out and About groups - The Water Board offers tours of their works to interested parties. These are held nearly every day and are free. The Water Board sites are very local e.g. there is one at Horsham. For further details, contact Mr Nick John on 01903 272107.

Swimming Group – Evelyn Toleman has now retired as leader of this group. Her place will be taken by Pat Bethel who can be contacted on 01293 419612.

Out & About Group Five – Group Leader: June Britton, 15 Bancroft Rd, Maidenbower, Crawley RH10 7WS. Tel: 01293 885378 The treasurer is John Crippen, 19, Bowater Rd, Maidenbower, Crawley RH10 7LF. Tel: 01293 886350.

Creative Writing -A study Day "Writing a short story for publication" will be held on Saturday 28th May 2011 at Ringmer Village Hall. Details from your group leader.

Group Leaders Meeting Venue - There is a change of venue for the next meeting which will be held at the Baptist Church, Crabtree Road, West Green.

Scrabble Group - Anne Finlay is the new leader of this group. Her phone no. is 01293 410355.

The current membership of Crawley U3A on 1st March 2011 was 533.

My Life as a Circus Performer - Part 2
Diana Keevil - December Meeting 2010

A large audience, whose appetite had been whetted by last year's talk, came to listen to the second instalment of Diana's eventful life. By now, just before the war, she and her group of fellow dancers were in Berlin. They worked very hard to earn the equivalent of half a crown a week in the local currency. Tension was rising as the country prepared for war and the girls were advised by the British Consul to leave and get back to England.

At first there was no work but Diana was noticed by the manager of the Walthamstow Granada and employed to do acrobatic stunts on the roof of the cinema to advertise the film "100 Men and a Girl". Rather scary, Diana said, but it paid well. She performed in the first televised variety show at Alexandra Palace where her costume caused problems as not one inch of flesh could be shown or the censor was down on you like a ton of bricks. How times change! She was in the last act to be televised on the day war was declared.

Crawley U3A Web Site.

She played at the Windmill Theatre and at theatres all over England, during the height of the bombing. They were playing in Plymouth when the city was subjected to 2 days and nights of bombing. The group retreated under the stage and stayed there until the attacks ceased; when they finally emerged they found that the theatre was the only building left standing. They managed to get out of the devastated city in a lorry. One of the points Diana made that struck me as very sad – she said neither of her parents ever came to see her in any of her shows. The only reason she could think of was that by making such a success of her chosen way of life she had ignored the firmly-held East End belief that “you should stay in your place – do not step out of your class”.

As the war went on, all the men in the group were called up and it became more difficult to find work, although Diana was often lucky and she was able to carry on, doing stunt work as a stand in for various stars who were not as agile and daring as she was. She was also in demand as a ‘leg model’, when the star’s own were not up to screen exposure.

Diana’s infectious sense of humour and fascinating glimpses of what seems to us to be a glamorous way of life – but must in reality have been hard and at times dangerous - gave her audience a really entertaining afternoon.

Jean Kirby

Film Group 1 - Christmas Get-together

As our November meeting of the group was the last one before Christmas we decided to make it a little bit special.

Margaret Shaw was able to get a DVD from the U3A Resource Centre in Bromley of "Silent Britain - First Three Decades of Silent Cinema in Britain" a DVD which covered the way the silent cinema evolved over a 30 year period. It featured items such as the early career of Ivor Novello to the beginning of the career of Alfred Hitchcock, just briefly touching on the impact that the talking pictures had on silent movies. Lots of interesting interviews with vintage silent movie stars and some very interesting and funny moments in the making of the films.

After the film we had a Christmas tea with Christmas cake, chocolate log and mince pies which were enjoyed by all the group.

Margaret had brought an old dustbin which she covered with a Christmas cloth, filled with reams of shredded newspaper and used as a bran tub. We thought she must have been up all night preparing this! Each member placed in this an anonymous wrapped present up to the value of £5.00. So each member was able to go home with a small gift and a full tummy. A lovely way to spend an afternoon as a build up to Christmas.

Carole Walsh

Just a few words about our Crawley U3A Web site if I may. As most of you will know, I run and maintain the web site for our U3A, a task I quite enjoy. But it would be even more satisfying for me, and of more use to Crawley U3A, if there were some input from the membership and groups.

From the visitor counting device on the site it seems a fair number of people do look at the site, and a fair number of new members join us via the site, but very rarely does anyone from within our U3A send in comments or suggestions regarding the presentation or content, both of which would be most appreciated. I will always consider any suggestions you might have to improve the format. One recent suggestion was to provide access to recent Crawley U3A newsletters, this I have done and the latest five newsletters are now available to read or download, which also gives you the opportunity to see the photos in colour.

It would be helpful if group leaders or someone within the groups would prepare a concise write up on the aims and happenings of their particular group. General information about the group, i.e. meeting times and venue, are you looking for members? Do you keep a waiting list?

It would be nice to have photographs of your members at a group meeting, or at an outing. These photos could also be used on our display boards which we exhibit at local venues, such as the Town Hall, Library etc.

Just a very few of our groups have submitted articles to the web site regarding their group activities, and they make interesting reading, and we do need more of the same please.

Please do give some thought to the above, and deluge me with articles, information, suggestions and photographs.

I'll be glad to receive any of the above via e-mail to don.sadler@blueyonder.co.uk, or by post as typed or handwritten notes. If you can send photos in JPEG format, all well and good, if not, if I can borrow them I'll copy and return them to you.

Thank you for letting me bend your ocular ear as it were.

Don Sadler, 01293-531526.

YOUR U3A

Reminder:

Crawley u3a website:

www.crawleyu3a.org.uk



Friday meeting 11th February 2011
Speakers: Dr. Geoff Doel & Dr Mick Lyon

Outlaws, highwaymen, poachers and smugglers – these were the evildoers who kept us company during this afternoon's entertaining talk by Geoff and Mick. They started off with Robin Hood, the original freedom-fighter, who became a popular folk hero over the centuries, a symbol of hope for the oppressed. Nick read us a nice account from the days of Henry VIII, round about 1519, of an encounter between the monarch and the outlaw in the forest at Shooter's Hill. Apparently they had a pleasant picnic and got on very well.

Smuggling began to be a serious problem by the 17th C, when England was importing vast quantities of luxury goods as well as more everyday must-haves, such as brandy and tobacco. These were all subject to heavy import taxes, and the game of eluding the excise men at the Cinque ports and other places all round the coast became big business. It was dangerous and often very violent as the penalty if you were caught could be death. Soldiers and Riding Officers ran protection rackets, and young men could easily be persuaded to smuggle goods in with the promise of money, often, like the drug mules of today, with fatal consequences. Nick sang us Kipling's poem about steering clear of "The Gentlemen" " Face the wall my darling, when the Gentlemen go by".

Then we came to poaching, which has a long history starting, as so much of our history does, with the Norman invasion. While the Saxons were a tolerant

lot and the peasants could take rabbits for their stew-pots without comeback, the Norman's were cruelly oppressive and woe betide some starving peasant who poached on their land. Many songs and ballads portrayed the poacher as the hero, the landowner as the villain. Attitudes to poaching eased off over the centuries but even in the 18thC and 19thC you could still be transported to Tasmania or Australia if you were caught bagging a hare on the landlord's fields.

Finally we came to that character beloved of the ballad maker and romantic novelist – the Highwayman. Although in fiction he was glamorised, in fact he was generally a vicious thug who terrorised travellers on the roads all over the country. After the



Civil War many Royalist soldiers turned to highway robbery. In the 18thC Dick Turpin had his lair in Epping Forest through which ran one of the highways into London, and he preyed on the coaches and riders passing through. Many people who could afford it would hire bodyguards to try and ensure safe passage. In 1735 the King offered a reward of £50 for Turpin's capture.

As well as robbers on land there were of course robbers on the sea – pirates. Piracy has a history that stretches back as far as there have been cargo boats on the sea, from the corsairs in Roman times sailing all over the Mediterranean, to Drake capturing Spanish galleons laden with silver and gold, up to our present times when Somali pirate ships are operating with great success off the African coast.

By the end of the talk we had run out of villains, but thanks to Geoff and Mick with his little accordion, we had all had a most amusing and informative afternoon.

Jean Kirby

U3A Crawley—Officers and Committee

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Art Appreciation 3	Ann Flack	
Bamboo Pipes	Patsy Edmond-Smith	
Book Circle 1	Eunice Clement	
Book Circle 2	Jean Austin	
Book Circle 3	Jo Slack	
Bridge for Fun 1	Betty Dowty	
Bridge for fun 2	Pauline Rigby	
Circle Dancing	Audrey Gwynne	
Craft	Sheila Newble	
Creative Writing	Pat Bethel	
Digital Photography	Edwin Cowley	
Family History	Jo Meek	
Film Circle 1	Margaret Shaw	
Film Circle 2	Jennie Connell	
History	Elizabeth Robinson	
Italian	Lorenza Davis	
Literature	George Redgrave	
Mah Jong	Jane Guest	
Music Appreciation	Henry Lyons	
Out and About 1	Sheila Leedale	
Out and About 2	Winifred Waterworth	
Out and About 3	Irene Fairbourn	
Out and About 4	Maggie Berrill	
Out and About 5	June Britton	
Painting & Drawing	John Martin	
Play Reading	Shelagh Smith	
Plays, Poetry & Prose	Keith Bergin (contact)	
Poetry	Joan Harding	
Science	Douglas Somerville	
Scrabble	Anne Finlay	
Singing for Pleasure	Eileen Thompson	
Story Telling	Jo Slack	
Swimming	Pat Bethel	
Topical Discussion	Maureen Dawkins	
Walkers	Mavis Liddell	