

A very Happy & Healthy New Year to all our members



2025 is a blank page.
The pen is in your hands.
Write something beautiful!

We start the new year with the hope that it will be a happy one for everyone but, sadly, this is not always the case. Many will have lost a loved one and are wondering how they will cope. Our thoughts are particularly with the friends and family of our members, Georgie Adams, Helen Coates, Marianne Creedy, Maxine Hardway, Carol Marsh, Mary Oliver, Sheila Turner and David Wells, all of whom we lost in 2024. If you know of anyone who may be feeling lonely and sad, please reach out and introduce them to u3a as an excellent way to rebuild their social life.

The next Coffee Morning is on Wednesday 5th February at 10.30am

There is no Coffee Morning in January

The next Open Meeting is on Thursday 9th January at 2pm

‘Surviving 60 years in journalism’ by Nicholas Owen

Starting on a local newspaper he became a TV Presenter and Correspondent which included covering the Royal “beat” in the Diana years and appearing on ‘Strictly’! He has had many ‘mad telly moments so you are guaranteed a laughter filled afternoon!



Dates for your Diary

February 13th Thursday - Open Meeting ‘The String of Pearls’ by Bob Evans

March 24th Monday - A ‘u3a Wellbeing’ afternoon on the theme of ‘Ageing Well and Wisely’.

The session will include presentations from eminent speakers on relevant topics, including Healthy Lifestyles and Lasting Powers of Attorney. Admittance is free - thanks to our grant from the National Lottery Communities Fund - with tea and cake included! This promises to be a very interesting and helpful event so do join us, you are welcome to bring a friend.

Christmas Lunch



The Christmas meal this year was again held at Westerham Golf Club and was attended by almost 100 members. Several who had not attended before were very impressed by the restaurant arrangements; the circular tables made getting to know their neighbours so much easier. The varied menu was much enjoyed with quite a few ‘doggy bags’ being ordered when tummies were full! A highlight of the afternoon was the quiz, brilliantly organised by Colin as always, with a prize generously donated

by Hilary. The raffle was well supported with numerous prizes on offer. However, the big mystery remains – where were the brussels sprouts? Maybe by next December they will have been found?

Westerham Christmas Tree Festival, Westerham.



St Mary’s Church was filled with trees, beautifully decorated by various local organisations and families. Our u3a tree was bedecked in blue and gold, thanks to the efforts of Anita and her team. The Flower Arranging & Wine Groups also had trees, but the latter seem to have taken the idea of ‘Christmas Spirit’ literally as the theme for their decorations!



'Help with Computers' Session 1 - Emails on Monday, February 10th



Those of you who signed up will have received an email concerning the first computer help module on February 10th concentrating on emails. Even if you feel confident about sending, saving moving, attaching and receiving, don't be put off! One of the commonest comments on the recent questionnaire was "I want to know what I don't know I don't know"! – so you may well learn something new! After the introductory meeting Lorna booked a 1:2:1 session with Ian as she lacked confidence and this is what she found: *Ian was welcoming and reassuring. I had an hour of his undivided attention as I needed help with an iPad, Tablet, Android phone and Laptop. We covered access to the Cloud, security issues and even got my tablet up and running! I am making progress and will certainly repeat the exercise.* For anyone who feels they would benefit from a face to face session it is possible to have a free hour session at Oxted library on Thursdays (10.00-13.00). Call the library to book your slot - 0345 600 9009.

News from the Groups

Potential New Group 'Tai Chi'

Tai Chi is an ancient Chinese martial art, initially developed for combat and self-defence, but has evolved into a sport and form of exercise. New member Lionel has studied Tai Chi and Qi Gong for more than seven years and he will bring his experience to this new group, starting in February. Often referred to as "meditation in motion", it will involve coordinated body movement, focused breathing and meditation, all combined to improve mental health and general well-being, but classes will be light and engaging, allowing each to move according to their personal capabilities.

Travel Book Club

Do you enjoy travelling or reading/watching about adventurous travellers? If so, then consider joining our group. At our meetings we discuss the current chosen book, along with any issues, observations, opinions or personal experiences members wish to share. We consider a wide variety of books from which to select our next good read. Recent books include 'Country Driving' (China), 'Into the Heart of Borneo', 'The Places In Between' (Afghanistan), 'Why the Dutch are Different' and 'The Dark Heart of Italy'. Meetings are bimonthly, on Wednesday mornings, contact Sue for details.

London Explorers



Our outing this month took us to Spencer House which overlooks Green Park and is a short distance from Buckingham Palace. It was commissioned in 1756 by the 1st Earl Spencer and is testament to Palladian architecture and the grandeur of the Georgian age. Among the many highlights is the Palm Room in neo-classical design and the walls are lined with paintings, some on loan from various galleries and stately homes. Today, the house is owned by Lord Rothschild's RIT Capital Partners and receptions, dinners and cultural events are frequently held there. A very enjoyable and informative afternoon was had by all attendees.

Advanced French



'The Bourgeois Gentlehomme' by Moliere, has been entertaining the Advanced French conversation group over three recent meetings. Written in the 17th century, Moliere's plays are as amusing now as they were then! Mismatches in love, pretentious behaviour and financial intrigue are the cornerstones of his plays! We are a large group of fluent French speakers and there was a reading part for us all!

(By Sarah Darby)

