

Sidcup u3a Newsletter August 2026

u3a

Sidcup & District U3A



St. Lawrence Church Hall

Next Talk : Christoph Bull - General Gordon, a man of many titles

Date : 20/8/2026

Door open at 1.15 pm

Meeting starts at 1.45 pm

NOTICES :

- Editor is looking for someone to help with Website & Newsletter, but does not need to be IT proficient. But in addition, the committee would like more IT help.
- First meeting of Mahjong Group as part of Games Group @ Queensgate, Thursday 13th August, 2.30pm
- Research Opportunity for u3a members : hearing issues (*see attached note*)

New on the website. <https://sidcup.u3asite.uk> this month:-

- Events : report & photos : York National Festival July
- Architecture DVDs : Chartres Cathedral, Northumbrian Castles July
- Art Appreciation, July
- Book Group : Miss Benson's Beetle by R,Joyce, July
- Churches/Cathedrals : report & photos :Lesness Abbey, July
- Family History : update, July
- Freedom Pass : report : Woodberry Down Reservoir
- Local History : report & *photos* :Freemasons Hall, July
- Ramblers 2 report & photos : Avery Hill, July
- Ramblers 3 : report & *photos* : Scadbury

Groups Round up

'The World's Greatest Churches'. Val Gosden "We shall be starting a new course,

This course will include churches in caves, painted churches, Stave Churches, amongst others, many of which will be quite unlike those we can now see in many an English town. This new course will be on the 4th Wednesday of each month – please contact me (ray.gosden@zen.co.uk) or our Group Co-ordinator Pat Laughton, if you are interested in joining us.

Art Appreciation: leader Val Gosden

Our July viewing was in two parts, the first showing items in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. We were shown several pictures of Photography when the art was in its infancy, the lecturer explaining the different methods used to produce the pictures. We then moved on to another room in the museum. Within this one room were several smaller rooms displaying furniture and artefacts from different countries and at different periods of time.

For the second part of the afternoon's viewing we watched the first lecture of a new series 'Dutch Masters: The Age of Rembrandt'. This gave us the background to art in 16th century Netherlands, a time which produced many artists, such as Hals, Vermeer and Rembrandt. We plan to continue watching both series of lectures in coming months.

Country Houses, Castles & Cathedrals

For this our final session we watched two distinctly different DVDs. One was of Chartres Cathedral, 'A Sacred Geometry'. As you can imagine there is much to see in this splendid cathedral, from the many stained glass windows to the numerous sculptures (a good pair of binoculars needed for seeing up high). Also of note is the large 12th century labyrinth in the nave.

In complete contrast was our other DVD, 'Northumbrian Castles'. The narrator first explained that the reason for building castles was both offensive and defensive. Starting with building near Hadrian's Wall, (the final extent of Roman rule in the country), we were shown various castles in the north of the country, and their development and importance over time.

Book Reading: Leader Kate Berry

Miss Benson's Beetle by Rachel Joyce, chosen by Chris.

This book has darkness, hopelessness and danger - but mostly humour and joy.

Margery and Enid are both deeply affected by their pasts, but an unlikely friendship emerges through their misadventures travelling to New Caledonia to find a very small gold beetle, that may not even be there.

We all loved this book. 8-9/10

Churches and Cathedrals Group: various leaders – contact Julie Flynn for details of next outing flynnfamily90@hotmail.com

The Churches and Cathedrals July outing was finally made to Lesnes Abbey; after being delayed in May due to torrential rain. Brave members endured a scorcher of a day which was made very worthwhile by a guided tour from Anne-Marie Brennan and author Chris Hawkins, both Friends of the Lesnes Abbey Charity. Fabulous history, picturesque location and palpable atmosphere. Next outing to All Saints, Margaret Street, W1 and the Ukrainian Cathedral, W1 - Friday 21st August. Sue Amphlett.



Family History: Leader Kate Berry

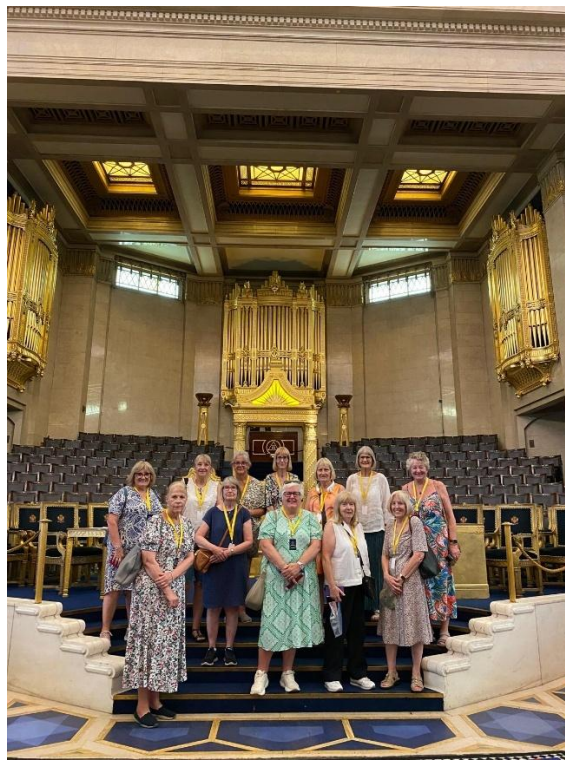
In July we brought along photos of family weddings - our grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles, and our own. We looked at how the fashions had changed over 100 years, especially the brides' dresses and bouquets. Another enjoyable, nostalgic look back.

We have vacancies in Family History.

Local History: leader Lynn Plumer

On an extremely hot summers day the local history group visited the Freemasons' Hall in the heart of London. The stunning building is an Art Deco masterpiece. It was built in 1927, although the site has been used to hold meetings for Freemasons since 1775.

We had a guided tour of the building where we visited the museum and the Grand Temple. We discovered the fascinating history of Freemasonry from the early days. The Grand Temple is a magnificent centrepiece of the hall which has a capacity of 1700. This is where large meetings, events and filming take place. It is a very popular building for film crews. A most interesting visit. - Sue Amphlett



Needlecrafts: leader Val Gosden

Our July meeting saw the completion of two items: a knitted dancer with tutu & ballet shoes, and an 'Embroidery on Paper' card of a Riviera garden flower tub.



Parks and Gardens: leaders Rinka Halliday and Jill Bryant

This month's outing was led by Helen Salmon to Morden Hall Park. Owned by the NT there is a garden centre and café there and an old mill where they once ground snuff.

Pot Pourri: leader Pat Laughton

Sue Mantle was our leader for the 14th July visit to the Guildhall Art Gallery.

There are some lovely paintings including Pre-Raphaelite artists. There is also a Roman Amphitheatre in the lower floor.

Ramblers 2: Leader Helen Salmon

On May 25th we met up on a very hot day but everyone agreed to continue our walk, which I had shortened by a considerable distance, to and across Footscray Meadows and ended with lunch in the air-conditioned White Cross Inn. **Well done all**



RAMBLERS 2 – Tuesday 28 July 2026 – leader Helen Salmon A small group of us met up before heading off on a very sunny and warm day. We walked through parks following the River Shuttle and came across a very dry 'wetland area' in Parish Park! On entering Avery Hill Park we made our way to the café for a well-deserved sit down and lunch.

Ramblers 3: Leader Trevor Ford

Shaded Scadbury shamble (*short ramble*) saved the day.

Abandoning (temporarily) our planned waterfront walk, I opted to lead a woodland walk, starting & finishing early (before the main heat of the day). Only 2.5 miles, taking in the Nature Reserve & the Moated Manor.



11:15 am: Sandra as a living sundial

Group vacancies: See handbook for contact details or website:-

Bridge

Classical Music

Creative Writing

Family History

Mahjong (Games)

Play Reading

Quilling

Facebook : U3a Sidcup members will be interested to know that we have a site on FACEBOOK Search Sidcup U3a and District for all the latest news and events

National & Regional

- National Friends Newsletter link "<D:\u3a\Newsletters\26-08 August\your-u3a-friends-newsletter-july-2026.htm>"
- The Third Age Trust has recently launched u3a getaways in partnership with The UK Holiday Group. Each break offers a unique opportunity to laugh, learn, and enjoy shared experiences
- on a range of individually designed holidays created exclusively for u3a members and their friends.

u3a getaway breaks are designed for independent travellers, but we know that many u3a

- branches prefer coach inclusive breaks for their members. Our justforgroups! brand organises
- bespoke group holidays, including coach travel, for more than 50 u3a branches throughout the
- country. We can replicate u3a getaways with transport from your local branch, for groups of 20
- or more or create entirely new holidays based on the interests of the local u3a group.

London Region of U3As

Walks and Gallery visits September/October 2026

- We are delighted to announce the next full programme of walks and gallery visits for
- September/October. All events are £10, no refunds.

The programme can be found on the [events](#) page of the website.

The sessions for September/October will launch on

Thursday 20th August 2026 from 10.00

All of our walks/gallery visits have proved very popular and been fully booked almost as soon

- as advertised. So don't delay book up on launch day. There will of course be waiting lists for
- each session.

Please remember that the London Region events team cannot book or reserve places

- **on your behalf.**

Events bookings.lru3a@gmail.com