

Chairman's Update March 2024

u3a Epsom & Ewell

<https://epsomandewellu3a.co.uk/>

Email enquiries to: u3aepsom@gmail.com

LEARN, LAUGH & LIVE

Welcome to our March newsletter.

Our February speaker was a last-minute change but obviously very popular. Louise Camby has entertained us twice before and this time 197 members came to enjoy her presentation about Spring. Our March speaker proved very popular last time he entertained us in 2022 with his talk on Sir Joseph Bazalgette and the London Sewers.

On that note, we are aware that when the speaker is popular the car park fills up very quickly. Please note there are two other car parks in the village, both only approx. 7 minutes' walk away and both cheaper to park. Both car parks are in Cheam Road, one is behind Sainsburys and the other is next to Christchurch.

Also, it is that time of year again. Peta will shortly be sending out the annual renewal notices. Please help by paying online if possible and remember to quote your membership number as the reference.

Thank you.



Our social committee have been very busy this month planning 2024.

We now have day trips by coach, sometimes with lunch as well. A couple of trips to London, Ticket only theatre trips as well as Andrew's Magic Moments offering of theatre with coach travel.

Lots to enjoy!!!

Our visits to the Baitul Futuh Mosque started on February 8th when the first 20 members were welcomed by Farukh and the team.

Obviously, we all knew the drill as quite a few members have previously visited the Neasden Temple and the Bhaktivedanta Manor – Hari Krishna Temple with us.

Shoes off and neatly stored on the racks which were everywhere in the building.



The rooms are very simply decorated, unlike some of the other religious buildings that we have visited, but there is something very serene and peaceful about them which was lovely.

Our members asked numerous questions and learnt a lot.

At the end of our tour, we were served refreshments and shown a short 10-minute video showcasing how the mosque promotes peace and harmony within the wider community.



February 10th saw group two being welcomed to the mosque.

Everyone enjoyed it and commented they learnt a lot.



After refreshments we went up to the balcony to look down on prayers for 1.30. When everyone had left, we went down on to the mosque floor for a group photo and see the dome.

There were comments as to the lack of decoration knowing our churches and having visited the Hindu temple.

The kind guy who then took the photos didn't manage to include all. He took photos with a dozen different phones!!



Above is the Mosque Museum which is on two levels and members were free to explore and ask questions.



Exploring London Group 13

At the beginning of February, we met at Marble Arch station for a tour of the north side of Oxford Street. Marble Arch is currently 'under wraps' but from there we crossed to see the site of the Tyburn tree, where mass executions took place. Luckily all members left safely and instead of baying crowds we only had to deal with noisy traffic.

We explored side streets and learned of where many rock stars stayed at the Cumberland Hotel, now the Hard Rock Hotel. We learnt of the history of the flagship M & S store, of the building of Selfridges and the temper of John Lewis, amongst other things.

Many of us reminisced on the changes that have occurred in our lifetime, many possibly not for the better. We finished our day with a lunch at the Salvation Army café on the south side of Oxford Street, well worth a visit.



Alresford Watercress Festival

Sunday May 19th 2024 from 10.00 – 16.00



**£29.00 per head
includes return coach
travel, driver gratuity
and coach parking at
the festival**

Nationally acclaimed Annual festival attracting thousands of visitors to New Alresford in Hampshire to celebrate all things watercress.

Every year on the third Sunday in May the streets of this Georgian town are closed to traffic to transform the town into a family-friendly FREE festival.

From street markets, food & drink stalls, cookery demonstrations with renowned world class chefs, the Hampshire Farmers Market, a "Kids Zone" featuring Falcon Displays and Circus Skills, there really is something for everyone. For many the highlight of the day is the Watercress Eating Championship which takes place at 15:00 on the main stage - a must see event hosted by our very own redoubtable Paul Rees keeping the participants in order and the crowd in stitches.

The festival opens at 10:00 and closes at 16:00, with the streets of New Alresford being returned to normal within a few hours.

The theme for our February 2024 Flower Arranging class on Friday meetings was “Celebration of the Chinese New Year “.

Below are our displays for this year, created by Pauline our group leader, Valerie, Wendy, Susan, Dot, and myself with my Chinese dragon, fortune cookies & chopsticks.

Mala Lockmun – Group member



A big thank you to Pauline for sharing her immense knowledge of flower arranging....

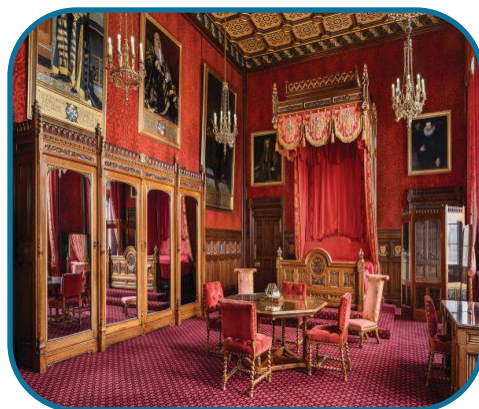


Explore the State Apartments inside Speaker's House, including a special display for this year only.

We have booked two visits. Thursday April 11th at 3.30pm and Thursday August 22nd at 11.30am. We are strictly limited to 16 members per visit. Tickets £20 per person

This year marks 75 years since the Commonwealth of Nations was established. Our special display features fascinating archival documents, photographs, and past and present gifts, many of which have never been put on display before. They tell the story of the Speaker's and UK Parliament's diplomatic relationship to other Commonwealth countries and its significance around the world today.

Displayed within the beautiful surroundings of the Speaker's State Apartments, visitors will see photographs of the late Queen Elizabeth II's address to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Assoc. in Westminster Hall, behind the scenes guests lists and menus from State Dinners held in the State Dining Room, the gold and black robe of state worn by Speaker Hoyle to King Charles III's Coronation and this year's international Commonwealth anniversary events.



The Church Crawlers have had a few months off during the colder weather and we restarted in February with a very well attended visit to St Peter's in Woodmansterne.

Twenty-four members were welcomed to the church Bus Stop community café, coffee, biscuits, and warm sausage rolls for £2 per person, a good start to the day. The church had set up additional seating for our group and once suitably refreshed we wandered over to the church for our visit.

St Peter's was built in 1877-8 although there has been a church on this site since the Domesday book. Most unusually this church is not a listed building (thankfully said the rector, Revd. Alison Elson).

St Peter was the leader of the apostles, and is the patron saint of among other things Locksmiths as he was given the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The porch of the original church was moved outwards when the 1961 extension was built to accommodate the growing local population. The font was made in 1845 and some mystery is attached to its whereabouts after 1870, it was possibly abandoned in the churchyard, which is a similar story to the font at All Saints Kingston where the font had been used as a bird bath before being reinstalled in the church.

The church also has a most unusual bell ringing arrangement which was very difficult for some members to resist playing with!!!





Wednesday May 22nd 2024 - 2.30pm matinee – £29.50 per person – Ticket Only Event – we have 24 stalls tickets in rows F-J

WICKED, the West End and Broadway musical sensation, is the winner of more than 100 global awards, including three Tony Awards on Broadway, two Olivier Awards, eleven WhatsOnStage Awards, and a Grammy. Currently starring Alexia Khadime as Elphaba with Lucy St. Louis as her counterpart Glinda.

WICKED is the 11th longest running production in West End history. This spellbinding show has been seen by over 12 million people, and it remains '*one of the most successful musicals of all time*' (BBC News).

What is Wicked about? When Dorothy famously triumphed over the Wicked Witch of the West, we only ever heard one side of the story.

WICKED is based on the 1995 novel by Gregory Maguire – Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West. It takes a look at the Land of Oz with new eyes and creates a parallel journey to the familiar The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum.

At the core of WICKED is friendship, in this case a very unlikely one. The blonde and very popular Glinda and a misunderstood green girl, Elphaba. They first meet at school and after a bumpy start, they form a strong friendship. Their journey takes a turn during a visit to Oz to meet the Wizard where during that encounter their lives take very different paths. Glinda is lured into a powerful and public role while Elphaba remains determined to be true to herself and the people in her life, whatever the cost – both paths seeing them fulfil their destinies as Glinda The Good and The Wicked Witch of the West.

Running Time

2 hours 45 minutes including interval

EPSOM HOT JAZZ CLUB

(Sponsored by Epsom & Ewell u3a Jazz)

****26 March 2024 (4th Tuesday) ****

The Hot Teapots

(from Verona, Italy)

9 April Graham Hughes Sunshine Kings

Graham Hughes trombone; Tom Dennis trumpet.
Michael McQuaid reeds; Colin Good piano; Nick Ball drums

14 May The Pete Rudeforth Band

Pete Rudeforth - trumpet; David Horniblow - clarinet Andy Flaxman - trombone
Tim Huskisson- piano Sandy Burnett - double bass John Ellmer - drums

11 June The Forest Hill Owls

*Chris Lowe trombone; Tom Dennis trumpet; Michael McQuaid reeds;
Martin Wheatley bjo/gtr; David Horniblow bass sax; Nicholas D Ball drums*

9 July Rico's Hot Five – Jazzing Jolson

*Enrico Tomasso trumpet; Julian Marc Stringle reeds; Paul Morgan - bass,
Richie Bryant - drums, and Liam Dunachie - Keyboards*

Tickets £15 (£17 non u3a members)

free parking & tea break refreshments

All Saints Community Hall, Fulford Road, West Ewell KT19 9QY

Doors 1.40 - Music 2 - 4.20 pm - Info 0791 3655

458 m.stevensatlap@gmail.com

Website: epsomandewellu3a.co.uk/jazz/

**Hever in Bloom
Thursday June 27th
2024**

£54.00 per person



Our trip to Hever Castle includes return coach travel and driver gratuity, admission to the castle and gardens, a self-guided garden tour and a two-course lunch.

Itinerary for the day: Arrive at Hever Castle at approx. 10.30am. Time for a coffee and a comfort break before our self-guided garden tour at 11.00, lunch served at 13.30 in the Pavilion restaurant and head for home at 16.00.

Hever in Bloom showcases the glorious award-winning gardens at the height of their summer beauty. You will be able to enjoy one of the finest displays of more than 5,000 roses in Kent, the Garden of England.

The roses at Hever are particularly admired, with more than 5,000 beautifully displayed bushes creating a kaleidoscope of colour and wonderfully perfumed aromas. As the days lengthen, the Mediterranean-style planting within the Pompeiian Wall bursts into life and the herbaceous border displays hundreds of different perennials, each vying for attention.

Head into the Castle and you will see wonderful floral displays in selected rooms that simply enhance the beauty of the historic Castle.

We recommend that you allow 1.5 hours to explore the gardens.

Exploring London 8

This month it was Carmel's turn to lead and we welcomed a new member, Anita. We started at Waterloo and made our way over to St Johns Church.



The church is very simple but stunning and due to the excellent acoustics, they hold regular concerts that are very well attended. The church can seat 350 for a concert.



It was Valentine's week and we thought we would share a lovely story with members.

The pictures below were taken in Roupell Street. We got talking to this lovely lady and her grandson who were visiting number 15 where she lived during her married life. She shared the story that the barbers on the corner was where her late husband kissed her for the first time 70 years ago. ❤️



The lady's grandson informed us that his grandfather had been offered the house for £200 but couldn't afford it at the time.

Its value now is £1.4m

(Permission was granted to share their photo)



REGENCY DANCE GROUP MEETING FOR U3A MEMBERS

Have you ever watched *Pride and Prejudice* and looked on in envy as Elizabeth moves across the dance floor with Mr Darcy?

Here's your chance to learn the genteel etiquette and lively dancing of the Regency era ballroom!

No costume or partners. Flat non-grip footwear is best!


Date: Tuesday 19 March 1.30 - 3pm

All Saints Community Centre,
Fulford Rd, West Ewell KT19 9QZ

Cost £3



Contact: Libby on 020 8391 1215

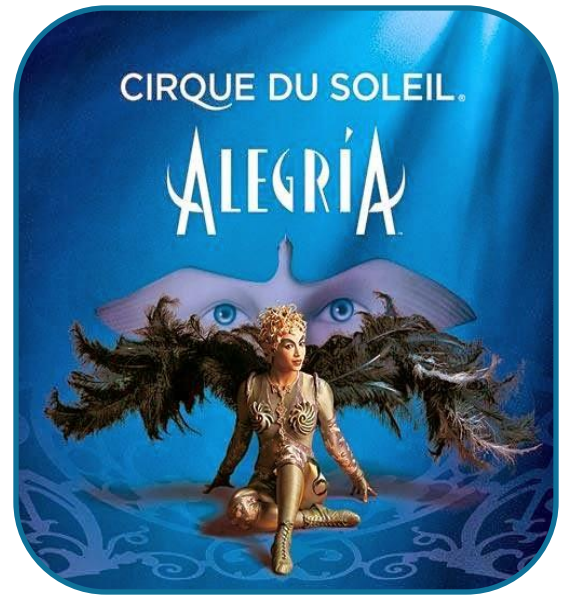
 MrsBennetsBallroom

email: mrsbennetsballroom@gmail.com

In February 26 members headed up to The Royal Albert Hall in London to see Cirque Du Soleil – Alegria

We will start by saying that the seats were very!! high up in the auditorium and four of our party who were not comfortable were very quickly moved to the stalls by the staff. It was very efficiently managed.

The show itself was amazing. The clowns, acrobats, gymnasts, singers, and musicians were all excellent.



The show is now celebrating its 30th anniversary. The show is about a mystical world sprinkled with visual poetry and acrobatic extravagance. At the heart of a once-glorious kingdom that has lost its king, Alegria – In a New Light witness the power struggle at play between the old order and the youth as they strive for hope and renewal. As the court jester clumsily tries to take the throne, a growing desire for change emerges from the street to defy the status-quo and bring joy to the world.

Beer Tasting Group

Our group continues to meet each month, both formally for blind tastings, & informally for social nights. We would like to invite those of you who are not currently members to come along to our May 23rd social, which will be at the Kingston Beer Festival. For more information, please contact the leaders through the group's webpage.



Route 406 heritage day

Sunday 9 June 2024

IT'S
FREE

- Kingston, *Cromwell Road* ⇨
- Surbiton Hill
- Tolworth Broadway and station ⇨
- Ewell Village
- Epsom town centre
- Tattenham Corner
- Tadworth ⇨
- Reigate ⇨
- Redhill *bus station* ⇨

We will be running buses from the 1940s to the 1990s from about 09:00 to 17:00, which will be joined by other buses from private owners. It's completely free and you can ride with us all day.

This special service is not part of Transport for London but will run alongside the regular TfL route 406 on which normal fares apply.

Come for a ride on heritage buses through Kingston, Ewell, Epsom, Reigate and Redhill as part of our programme of bringing buses out of the Museum to run again in and around London



Please support our volunteers by visiting the London Bus Museum. We are open Daily and located within the Brooklands Museum,

LONDON
BUS
MUSEUM

Brighton Pavilion

Wednesday

July 10th 2024

£39.00 per person

Price includes return coach travel, driver gratuity, entry to the Pavilion and a self-guided audio tour.



Join us for a day trip to Brighton. We plan to arrive in Brighton at approx. 10.30am to give members time to enjoy a coffee and a comfort break.

At 11.30am we have booked an audio tour of the Brighton Pavilion in order that members can move around at their own pace rather than being hurried along in a group.

After your tour there will be free time to enjoy lunch and hopefully a stroll in Brighton in glorious sunshine (British weather permitting).

We will then head for home at 4.00pm



Exploring London 11 and the Ad Hoc groups are always out and about somewhere. The pictures on this page show some of their recent outings. Coal Drop Yard, the Xmas Lights, Canary Wharf in January, and the Battersea light festival in February.



Jan Caruth – Group leader



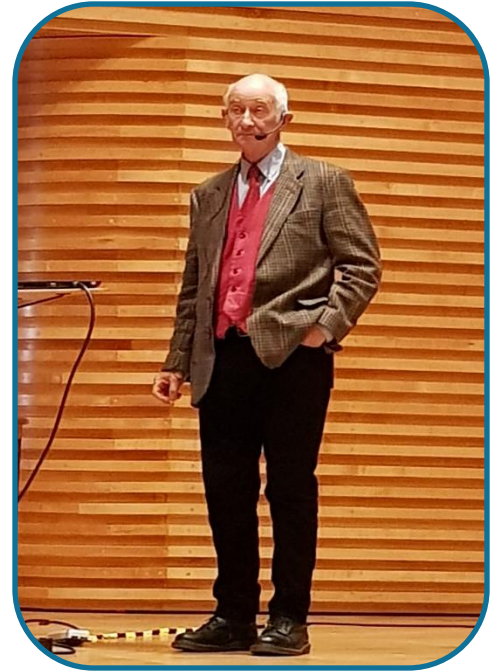
This month a number of our U3A members went to the Yehudi Menuhin Centre in Cobham to hear the TV antiques expert & railway author Paul Atterbury talk to us in four one-hour sessions focusing on his railway knowledge, both personal & formal history were discussed, and the depiction of the railways in art & poster form.

A really experienced public speaker, supported by many well researched slides, he made the subject come alive & evoked many memories for those in the hall.

Some of us were first time visitors to the Surrey U3A study days, it was a full house & very impressively run. It was clear that many first-time attendees enjoyed themselves and will be back for more.

Surrey Network Study Days see their page on our website.

**Members £12 per person
Guests £15 per person**



The garden wanderers have been out in February to see the winter garden & the snowdrops in flower at Polesden Lacy. It was a wet day, but we managed to visit in a break between the clouds and then dash back to the café to warm up with tea & cake.

Next month we plan to seek out the orchids at the RHS orchid festival.

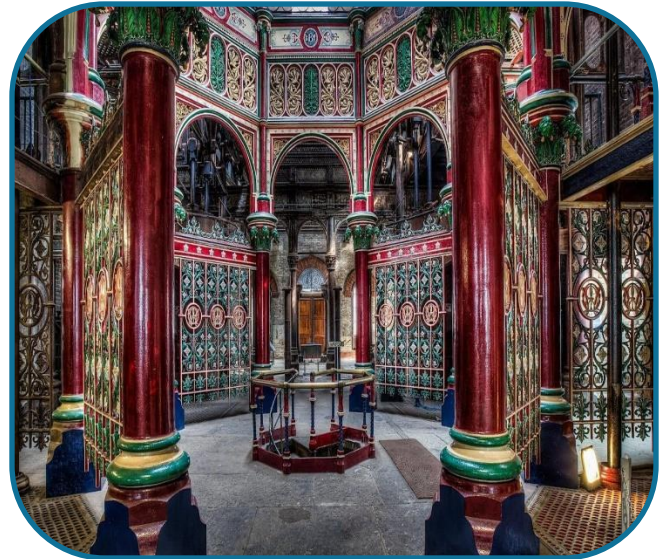


Crossness Pumping Station

Sunday September 22nd

£43.00 per person

(includes return coach journey, driver gratuity and entrance to the museum for a Steam Up day)



Come and join our volunteers for an entertaining visit of exploration, discovery, and learning. Visit our three listed buildings and see the four Victorian beam engines, one of which has been fully restored and will be steaming throughout the day.

You can explore the history of this iconic location, learning more about the crucial role it played in London's 'ground-breaking' sewerage system which continues to serve the capital today, and visit the "The Great Stink Exhibition" which shows why this feat of Victorian civil and mechanical engineering was so badly needed.

Light refreshments will be available from our Coffee Shop and the shop will offer some interesting items for sale – some of which are made by volunteers at Crossness.



Gertie's Gardeners have been back to work.

For February we decided that we needed to do some heavy pruning to let some air and light into the shrubs.

Our new wisteria has been trained along the railings at the back and we are hoping it will provide colour and scent during the coming years.

Six of us spent a very busy hour cutting and clipping and adding a lot of material to our ever-growing compost heap which is helping us to create a sustainable garden before we adjourned to Mandolina's for some well-earned coffee and sweet treats.



Spring



Wednesday September 25th 2024

2.30pm matinee - £35.00 per person

Ticket Only Event

(we have reserved 20 stalls tickets in rows W-X-V)

Set against the majesty of the Serengeti Plains and to the evocative rhythms of Africa, Disney's multi award-winning musical THE LION KING will redefine your expectations of theatre.

Brilliantly reimagined by acclaimed director Julie Taymor, Disney's beloved film has been transformed into a spectacular theatrical experience that explodes with glorious colours, stunning effects, and enchanting music.

At its heart is the powerful and moving story of Simba - the epic adventure of his journey from wide-eyed cub to his destined role as King of the Pridelands.

Please note the Lyceum Theatre is a cashless venue.

Running time 2 hours 30 minutes with a fifteen-minute interval.

The Architectural Explorers

This winter our group has braved the weather, umbrellas in hand, guided by our well-informed leaders on visits to Guildford Cathedral and Shad Thames.

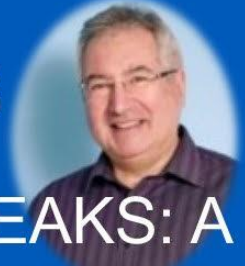
Both places are well known to many of us, but we found that there was so much more to them, seen from an architectural perspective. A close study of the cathedral offered many unexpected vistas and surprises.

We looked at the regeneration of the Shad Thames area from the early 1980s to the present day, focusing on repurposed Victorian architecture and 19th and 20th century warehouses. Pioneered by property developers of the 1980s, Terence Conran and Andrew Wadsworth, this was also a period of onstruction of new properties designed by modernist innovative architects such as the CZWG practice and RIBA gold medal winning Michael Hopkins. Next month, our group will be investigating the Piccadilly area.





LAURENCE SCALES



BALLOONS, BOILERS AND BEEFSTEAKS: A CANTER THROUGH GEORGIAN SCIENCE

“Balloons, Boilers & Beefsteaks” covers subjects ranging from astronomy to the kill or cure world of medicine, via new plants, new elements and new inventions. This talk is a compendium of anecdotes and curious characters from the 18th and early 19th century world of science. Laurence last joined us in 2022 and presented his talk on “Sir Joseph Bazalgette and His London Sewers”.

Bourne Hall Monday 4 March at 10:30



PAUL BARWICK



ALEXANDER LITVINENKO: THE SPY WHO SOLVED HIS OWN MURDER

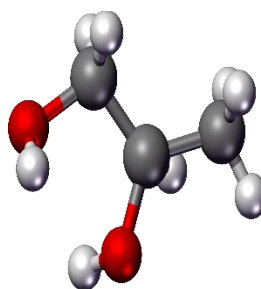
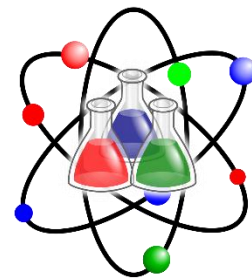
The 2006 assassination of ex-Soviet spy Alexander Litvinenko involved a rare radioactive poison, Polonium 210. Our presentation looks at the life of this Russian intelligence agent and the reasons why a vengeful president wanted him silenced. We examine the mission of the two Russian agents sent from Moscow and the Police operation to track down his killers. Finally, we ask if Mr Litvinenko’s family will ever see proper justice for this hideous crime.

Bourne Hall Monday 8 April at 10:30

Science Group – shared by Epsom & Ewell, Sutton, and Banstead – The Future

Martin Eales from Sutton u3a has offered to take over the Science group but naturally he needs help with organising meetings, and speakers. Several members from our u3a have expressed an interest in the Science group restarting. In addition, there is a new Chairman, Jennifer Russell, at Banstead u3a who is also keen on the Science group getting up and running again. She has suggested that the meetings could be held at Banstead Community Hall where there is free parking. This is very much in the planning stages and will only be possible with the help from members. Working from experience I am sure that if a couple of members from each of the 3 u3as could get together then the Science group would be possible. Anyone interested in helping could contact me and I will either pass their details to Martin or give them Martin's email.

Thank you - Jenny Powell alanjennypowell@ntlworld.com



In February, the Baitul Futuh Mosque welcomed four groups of our members. We still have two more visits to plan which will be after Ramadan and the Peace Symposium which is in March.

This issue of the Newsletter has been filled with so many items submitted by our group leaders which we hope you have enjoyed.

The social committee have a packed programme for 2024 and are also investigating the possibility of a short residential break in September which will hopefully go on sale on April 1st.

Take care and stay safe,

Tony