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Welcome to our newsletter for the month of July. I do hope you are all enjoying the sunny days, whether staying here or going on holiday, but please be aware of the health warnings and take precautions if the heat starts to get too much for you.

Inside this newsletter you will find news about future planned events and outings, reports from some of our interest groups and general u3a information. It was good to see 120 of you, including 2 visitors, at our June meeting. I hope you all enjoyed our harpist, Margaret Watson. We received some good feedback at

the meeting and as she has several presentations in her repertoire, we will look to invite her again in the future. I would also like to thank the gardening group who brought an excellent selection of plants, flowers and herbs for our gardens. I know several of you made purchases to take home.

Unfortunately for the second month in a row an outing has been cancelled. Barbara Garrod booked the City View Restaurant in Greenwich several weeks ago for our date in October and was told they could cater for a full coach. Frustratingly, the restaurant has now cancelled telling her she cannot have the date booked and they cannot accept a group of more than 30, making a coach trip financially non-viable. We are sorry to have to disappoint you again, but no money had been collected for this trip and Penny is instead offering a trip to the Butterfly House at Hall Place on October 15th. More details inside this newsletter.

We have a team of 3 speakers from the KCC Safer Road Users group for this meeting on the theme Driving For Mature Persons. They are looking for a pre-talk evaluation from a few members. Details of this are inside this newsletter.

Unfortunately Penny and I will not be with you at this meeting as we will be returning from a few days away in Suffolk. He's back! John Baker has kindly agreed to lead the meeting in my place. I look forward to seeing you in August.

Finally, a reminder that the date for our July meeting has had to be moved from the usual first Friday of the month. It will instead be on Friday July 18th at the usual time and place.

Dave Collins Chairman

Swanley and District U3A Monthly Meeting Friday 18th July 2025 at 10.30am
At the Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Road, Swanley BR8 7BU

18th July Kent County Council Safer Road Users Team

They will deliver a road safety video presentation specific to the needs of mature drivers & their passengers. The presentation is delivered as a seminar encompassing general road safety advice for all road users, smart motorway driving, motorway breakdowns, eco driving and pedestrian safety. It also covers topics such as decline in peripheral vision, reduced mobility, and various forms of impairment.

The KCC Safer Road Users team will be present during and after the presentation to answer questions from the group.

Attendees will receive a free copy of the new highway code and other useful advice, information and driving literature.

To help the Team evaluate, develop, and improve the presentation going forward we have been asked to circulate the link below for anyone who is attending the presentation and is both willing and able to complete the questionnaire online. This is the pre-presentation evaluation link:

[Mature Drivers & Passengers - Pre-Evaluation \(2025\)](#)

The Team will also issue paper copies of both pre & post presentation evaluation forms to a sample group of 10 people before the start of the presentation and afterwards once the presentation has been delivered. We will be asking for volunteers to do this on the day. Thank you for your help.

Both the pre and post evaluation forms consist of 10 identical road safety questions that are related to the Mature Drivers & Passengers presentation. The format of the questionnaires is multiple choice answers, and the questions are answered by ticking boxes – there is no writing of answers required, and the forms should take only a couple of minutes to complete.

After the presentation has taken place, the original group of volunteers will be asked to complete the post-presentation questionnaire.

The pre-evaluation form includes questions to identify the demographic of the group, but not the individual. The evaluation process is anonymous, and data will NOT be shared outside of the KCC Safer Road Users Team.

We hope you will find this talk informative and useful.

1st August Professor Mark Donnelly “I think I was better off in the trenches”: Noel Coward, The Great War and the veteran mentality.

This talk will explore the depth and breadth of Coward's interpretation of The Great War and the imprint it left on the lives of ex-servicemen and home front civilians. Although Noel Coward never saw full service in the Great War, and his extremely brief experience of army life was somewhat traumatic, he nonetheless managed to achieve an amazing insight into the soul and temperament of the soldiers, understanding the value of camaraderie and how the war should be remembered. He not only explored the 'khaki' view of the war but also that of the civilian.

Mark Connelly is Emeritus Professor at the School of History, University of Kent, and is a specialist in the way Britain, the former empire and Commonwealth commemorated the two world wars.

Nicola Teoh

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES – During the Coming Month(s)

Bridge Club

Hi folks, the Bridge group meets on the first Wednesday of the month. The next monthly meeting is on Wednesday 2nd July, 10.00am at the Howard Venue, Hextable. See the Bridge group page on our website for further details https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/bridge/.

Carolyn & Colin Chapman

Board and Card Games

PLEASE NOTE NO MEETINGS JULY or AUGUST

We restart again on the 22nd September at the Howard Centre in Hextable BR8 7LG. There is a charge of £3 which is used for hire of the room and buying games.

Everybody is welcome we are a friendly bunch. We have a wide selection of games codenames, Sequence, scattergories, Yahtzee, Boogle, Crowns, UNO, cribbage, Linkee, scrabble, etc. Just come along on the day bring any games you would like to play or email me via the Board & Card group page on our website for further information

(https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/board-card-games/)

Joyce Wood

Members on Their Own

The next meeting will be on Thursday 17th July at 12.15.

For more information see our website group page https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/moto-members-on-their-own/.

Madeline Opitz

Walking Group

Thursday 3rd July 2025 10.00 for 10.15

Meet Julia at “The Greyhound”, Commonsides, Keston BR2 6BP for a walk of about 4.5 miles around Nash, through attractive woodland, farmland and Hayes and Keston commons. Please note there is one steep uphill climb, one steep downhill descent and one stile.

Directions: By car: Take the A21 away from Bromley and as you go across Bromley Common, turn right into Oakley Road. When you reach the traffic lights, turn right onto the Croydon Road (A222) then take a left after the 40mph speed limit sign, into Commonsides and after a short distance you will reach the pub on the green where you can park in the public car park just before the pub.

By public transport: The pub is about 1.3 miles south of Hayes station. It is also served by 146, 246, 320,353, 654, 664 and R2 buses. Please contact Julia at:

https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/walking-group-as-notified/ to let her know you are coming and say whether you will be staying for lunch in “The Greyhound” after.

Clive Rayner

QUIZ DATES

Just ONE quiz dates for this month’s Quiz afternoons (£3 per person with all profits going to the RNLI):

Tuesday July 1st - 2pm.

Please join us at the **Howard Venue** if you would like to join a U3A team on either of these dates.



David Collins

August NEWSLETTER

For the August newsletter can you please send articles and photos to ahayward530@gmail.com

*Please note the closing date is one week early than usual on
Friday 18th July 2025*

Alan Hayward

Events and Outings

Cancelled William Morris trip

Please collect your refund at the July meeting if you have not already done so.

Miriam Crump

September

Tuesday 9th September THE SUFFOLK COASTAL TRIP

Cost: £62

**PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU PAY AT THE JULY MEETING
at the very latest.**

The list is full so if you are not able to go, please let me know so I can offer the seats to someone else. The meal is fish and chips --please let me know if you are vegetarian.

Our first stop will be near the Orwell Bridge, where we pick up our guide. I will keep you informed of exact departure times nearer to the date but it's likely to be around 8:30/8:45 am. Should be a very good day!

If you need further information, please contact Sandy via our website: https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/the-suffolk-coastal-trip/



Sandy Treloar

October

City View Restaurant, Greenwich; This trip has been cancelled by the restaurant as they can no longer do the date booked nor take more than 30 people.

Wednesday October 15th: A visit to Hall Place Butterfly House- Instead

Meet at Hall Place outside the Butterfly House at 10am.

Please contact Penny (https://swanley.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/a-visit-to-the-butterfly-house-at-hall-palce) if you need a lift by car or can offer a lift.

If you haven't visited the Butterfly House then this is a marvellous experience. The Conservatory has been upgraded and made into a wonderful Butterfly House with huge colourful butterflies flying past your nose or even landing on you.

Please pay on the day- £7.50 and enjoy a stroll round the gardens and take tea and cake in the cafe.

Penny Collins

November

Tuesday November 25th Arrive 11:30am Depart 3:30pm

Tereza Joanne Matinee Christmas Divas Party at London Royal Docks

Two course Christmas lunch and tea/coffee included Licensed bar on.

Enjoy the chart topping hits of the best female vocalists of the 50's to 70s in a show full of nostalgia.

Cost approx.: £69 (includes coach)

I can confirm that places have been reserved for everyone who has registered their interest for this event, including those on the waiting list.

Please can anyone who hasn't given their contact details provide them at the next U3A meeting. Payment to be taken at the September meeting. Please let me know if you will not be at this meeting or need any further information.

Pick up times to be confirmed nearer the date.

NB This is a coach outing completely separate from our U3A Christmas Dinner.

Elaine Nixon

Membership for 2025-2026 Please encourage friends and family to join us!

Our new membership year begins at the beginning of April 2025 and runs until March 2026. The cost is £20.

Thank you to all those people who have renewed or who have joined for the first time this year. It means that our organisation will be financially viable for 2025-2026.

Anyone who has not renewed, has now been removed from the database. They will no longer be eligible to attend the monthly meeting, nor any interest groups, outings or events.

However, they are welcome to rejoin at any time if their situation changes.

We are still looking for new members. If you know anyone who wants to join us, please tell them that they can come to any monthly meeting to see what we do before committing to membership.

If they decide to go ahead, they can fill in a form with their contact details. Forms are available from me at a monthly meeting, or by contacting me via the Membership page of our website.

Payment Methods:

a) Our preferred option is that you pay your £20 renewal subscription by bank transfer.

The bank details are:

Bank: Natwest

Account number: 51170027

Sort code: 60 21 10

Account name: Swanley & District U3A

IMPORTANT When your bank asks you to insert a **reference**, please put your **surname and membership** number so we know who made the payment! (For example - **BAKER**).

PLUS Please confirm that you have made this payment by emailing Gill Baker at gillbaker@talktalk.net If you are paying for a spouse or partner in addition to yourself, please provide both names and membership numbers in the email.

b) If you prefer, pay by cash or cheque at one of the monthly meetings. Cheques made payable to **Swanley and District U3A** please.

The membership card will be available at the monthly meeting.

I hope this covers everything – please contact me if you need any clarification.

Gill Baker Membership Secretary

GROUP / EVENTS NEWS

Bridge

Do you want to keep your brain active? Are you a keen card player? Bridge is a great way to keep the grey cells ticking over. Why not come and join us? New members welcome.

This month's question:

♣ AJ9 ♦ KQ84 ♥ A43 ♠ Q63

You are the first player to open the bidding. What will you bid? If your partner replies 1 spade; what is your second bid? What information have you given your partner? How many points would your partner need to have to consider bidding a game bid?

Answer next month.

** Reminder and answer to last month's question.

♣ AQ8 ♦ AK4 ♥ 43 ♠ 9753

Here you can see the dummy hand. Your opponents' contract is 4 spades. You have won the first trick. The dummy hand is to your left and you are leading through it. What will you lead?

From the left lead a suit that has high cards in the dummy hand.

As long as you do not have the K of clubs in your hand the best lead is a small club. You are hoping the declarer will play the Q and your partner may have the K. If the declarer has the K of clubs in his hand - no harm is done.

Second best lead is a small diamond. You are leading into dummy's strong suit.

Worst lead is a small heart as you force your partner to play a high card before the declarer plays. Try to avoid leading towards low cards on the table if you are sitting to the left of dummy.

Carolyn & Colin Chapman

Digging4cake

Gardening group visit to Silk House, Paddock Wood on 28 May 2025

Our May adventure was a visit to a Japanese style garden, near Paddock Wood.



The current owners, Silke and Adrian have lived in this house for over ten years.



When they first moved in, the garden was just a grass field bordered by neighbouring tall trees used as hedges. The first year was spent clearing up as the previous owners had been breeding dogs, chickens and other animals within the garden area.

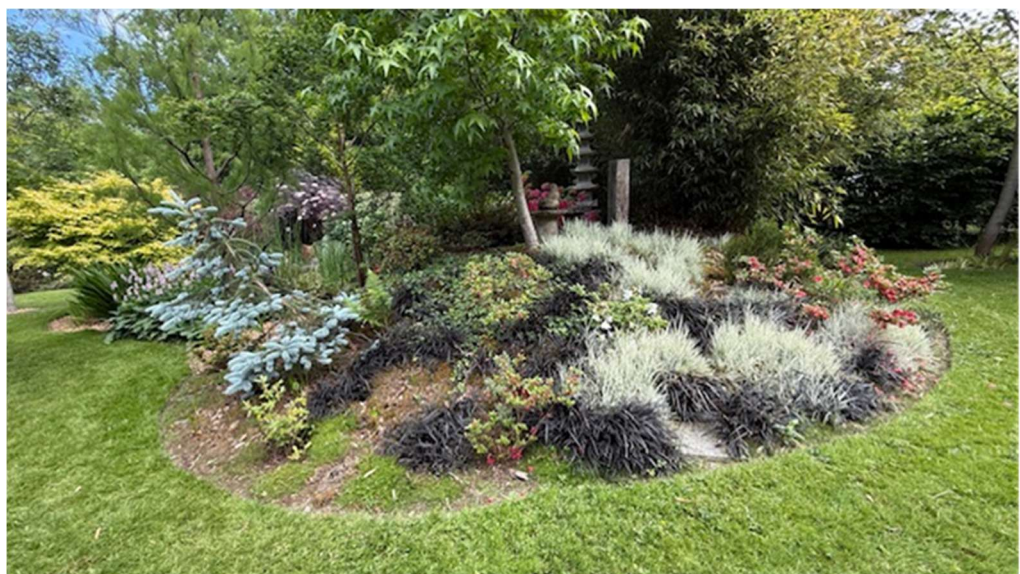
Having travelled several times to Japan, Adrian had a vision of how he would like a serene Japanese garden and then set about designing it. Silke in the meantime studied for her RHS qualifications at Hever and once completed they both started working towards their dream garden.



Their garden now consists of beautiful mature acers, precisely placed around the garden, including a fantastic specimen that came from the Chelsea flower show. Bamboos and other trees from all corners of the world are also included to round off the serene atmosphere. There is also two large ponds with a beautiful selection of koi carp, swimming gracefully

around.

The garden had been divided into rooms which included a well-stocked kitchen garden, primarily used for providing vegetables for their private dining restaurant, which is also available on site.



There were a selection of bonsai trees and cloud trees, scattered around, all of which had been elegantly shaped and trimmed.



Silke gave us a very informative tour throughout our visit and we ended the visit with our usual tea and cake, within their private dining area, which was absolutely delicious. A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon was had by all and a big thank you goes to Adrian and Silke for allowing us to visit their beautiful garden.



Sue Saunders

Antiques and Collectables Group

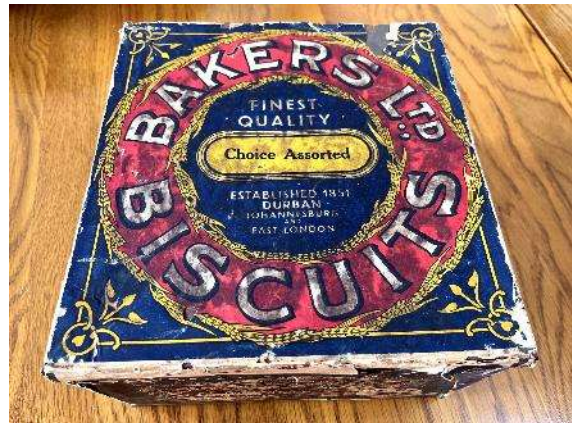
Our theme this month – Kitchenalia, eating and drinking. Eight of us gathered to show and tell our antiques/vintage items.

Judy brought along six little silver spoons which belonged to her grandmother. They are from Sheffield, possibly dated 1868 and made by Thomas Bradbury and Sons. Judy's grandmother was in service until she got married in 1903, so the spoons may have been given to her and her husband as a wedding present. Judy remembers them being used at their house, with small glass dishes containing salt.



Tony showed us some wooden boxes made by W & A Smith in Scotland, known as Mauchline Ware. He has a cylindrical box from the Isle of Wight and a small rectangular one depicting Ramsgate. This company manufactured wooden goods as souvenirs from the 1820s until 1933 when the factory burned down. They used sycamore wood with images of views transferred onto them, which were very popular tourist pieces.

I have a number of biscuit tins and other biscuit related items. One of my favourites is the large Baker's Biscuits Ltd tin which my father and mother brought back from South Africa after working there in the 1950s. I found it when clearing my mum's house. The South African company was originally called Baumann & Co. but changed their name to Baker's after anti German riots in 1915.



I also have a tiny Huntley and Palmer's tin which was used for samples

and some lovely circus themed biscuit cutters from 1930s



We admired Wendy's fine china tea cup and saucer from the Star China company, later renamed Paragon China. Wendy purchased them from an antique fair and believes they are from the 1920s. The company was founded in 1897 and traded successfully all over the world until the 1960s when it was subsumed by Royal Doulton.



Madeline's mother passed on some blue and white Cornish ware pottery made by T G Green. Madeline has a jam pot and an egg cup. Thomas Green bought the pottery while he was on honeymoon, having made his money in Australia as a builder. He married Mary Tenniel, the sister of illustrator John Tenniel (Alice in Wonderland). The pottery continued until 2007.

Chrissy brought her collection of Devon Motto ware which she has collected for a number of years. This was made in potteries in Torquay and used the distinctive red clay of the area. The items usually have sayings and humorous texts, often in a Devon dialect. The jug has 'Do not burden today's strength with tomorrow's loads'. Chrissy also has a salt and pepper set, an egg cup and a small vase.



Dave has a collection of beer Steins which he has picked up on his travels. Of the two he brought along today, one is German, by the company of potter Simon Peter Gerz which traded from 1857 to 1999. It depicts scenes from Bavaria and the Black Forest. The larger Stein was made in the Czech Republic and was handmade and painted as a tourist piece. Steins were originally made of pewter, but later mainly made of stoneware. The introduction of lids was to prevent insects and contamination.

Finally, we looked at John's ale drinking vessel, which we brought back from Norway recently. It dates from 1864 and is made of turned wood. Traditionally, since the 17th century, pots like these were passed around at family and festive gatherings as a symbol of welcome and union. They are usually decorated with flowers and colourful patterns called rosemaling and drinking verses. We asked for a translation, and we think ours asks people to enjoy a drink at Christmas, but not too much!



Gill Baker

Theatre Trip to: FIVE MISTAKES THAT CHANGED HISTORY

A group of u3a members made the short journey to the Churchill Theatre in Bromley to see “Five Mistakes That Changed History”. The show was presented by the writer/comedian/historian Paul Coulter. It was a thoroughly energetic performance which raced through history from ancient times to the twentieth century. The presentation is based on the premise that historical events often have an element of “what if”, “if only” or “you shouldn’t have done that” about them.



We began with the death of Alexander the Great and the battles which followed soon after. His fault! We moved onto the story of Annie Oakley whose rise to fame seemed to be based on someone else’s error. We listened to stories of Winston Churchill’s exploits in South Africa during the Boer War. His early train related mistake ultimately resulted in fame and political success. Paul also recounted the story of a young girl who changed Japanese social history. The link to a mistake here seemed a bit tenuous. There was also a short story about a once misguided belief that tomatoes were poisonous. Consider the humble tomato. Is it a fruit or a vegetable? Both apparently. The pace continued in the second half with a story concerning the unfortunate Marie-Antoinette. Her somewhat naïve gullibility resulted in the loss of the most expensive necklace ever made. It also led to the downfall of the French monarchy.

The final story, probably my favourite, was about the Titanic. Whose mistake was really to blame for the tragedy? Spoiler alert! It was someone who was not even on board the doomed ship. (Ask me if you want to know the answer). It was an entertaining evening with something for everyone - lovers of comedy, lovers of history or people who enjoy a conspiracy theory. Many thanks to Penny and Dave for organising this trip to the theatre.

John Baker

Group Leaders Get Together

As a way of saying thanks to all our Group Leaders and various helper at our main monthly meeting a buffet lunch was organised recently at St Peters church hall Hextable just to say:

THANK YOU



Swanley and District u3a Committee Members 2025/2026

			
Dave Collins Chair	John Baker Vice-Chair	Carol Willingham Business Secretary	Clive Rayner Treasurer
			
Gill Baker Membership Secretary	Gill Morrin Minutes Secretary	Penny Collins Social Secretary	Alan Hayward Newsletter/Website
			
Nicola Teoh Speaker Organizer	Jacky Taylor Publicity Secretary	Sandra Evans Group Co-Ordinator	Susan Baugh Assisted Treasurer

Contact Details

Chair

David Collins

Vice Chair

John Baker

Business Secretary

Carol Willingham

Membership

Gill Baker

Social/Outings Coordinator

Penny Collins

Group Co-ordinator

Sandra Evans

Newsletter and Website

Alan Hayward

You can contact any of the above committee members by going to the Swanley & District Website committee page at <https://swanley.u3asite.uk/contact/> and clicking on the appropriate name.

Website: <https://swanley.u3asite.uk/>

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Swanley u3a Groups Timetable

Group	Leader	Meeting Day
Antiques and Collectables	Gill and John Baker	3 rd Tuesday Morning
Art and Craft	Penny Collins	2 nd Tuesday Afternoon
Art Appreciation	Margaret Austin	1 st Monday Morning
Art/Painting & Drawing Art Outdoors	Gill Baker	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday Evening
Art – Looking at Art	Gill & John Baker	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Bird Watching		Not meeting at Present
Board & Card Games	Joyce Wood	2 nd or 4 th Mon pm Howard Cen Hex
Book Group	Sue Scott & Wendy Keable	2 nd Monday pm Swanley Library
Bowls (Indoors)	Bob Mellor	4 th Thurs pm at the Whiteoak's
Bridge	Carolyn & Colin Chapman	1 st Wednesday Morning
Chess	Terry Bennet	4 th Wednesday Morning
Creative Writing	Penny Collins	1 st Thursday Morning
Croquet	Bill Hammond	Every Tues at 2pm Swanley Rec Gardens
Gardening	Sandy English	4 th Wednesday Afternoon
Geography	Penny and Dave Collins	3 rd Friday Morning
History Modern	Jackie Griffiths	4 th Tuesday Afternoon
History of London 1	John Baker	2 nd Thursday Morning
History of London 2	John Baker	4 th Thursday Morning
Kurling	Bill Hammond	Every Mon 10—12. White Oak
Let's Speak French	Barbara Ramsey	1 st & 3 rd Wednesday Morning
London History Walks	Alan Hayward/John Baker	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
MOTO (Members on their own)	Madeleine Opitz	3 rd Thursday at 12.15 Elim Church Swanley
Music Making	Mark Fittock	Every Tuesday Morning
Petanque	Bill Hammond	Weds 2pm Princes Park Dartford
Photography (Digital)	Alan Hayward	2 nd Friday Afternoon
Play Reading	Penny Collins	4 th Friday Morning
Quiz Team	Dave Collins	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Rugby-Walking & Appreciation	Alan Hayward/John Baker	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Spanish	Ruth Wilkinson	Every Thursday Morning
Strollers		Not meeting at Present
Table Tennis	Bill Hammond	1 st & 3 rd Friday 2-3.30pm White Oak
Outings and Theatre Trips	As Notified by the Social Committee	
Word Magic on Zoom	Gill Heath	2 nd Wednesday Morning
Walking Group	Clive Rayner	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Wine and Dine	Santha Blankley	As Notified in Newsletter/Website
Wine Tasting	Robert Brickell	4 th Wednesday Evening