



Chair Chat September 2018

We live in a country with a temperate climate which means that the temperatures are generally moderate, neither too hot nor too cold. But as we have just been experiencing we do occasionally have extremes of weather.

We had very hot weather in 1976 which resulted in a drought until the end of August, 1947 was the snowiest winter since the mid-19th Century and 1963 was one of the coldest winters on record when even the sea froze!

And who could forget the floods in Somerset in 2013-14, and I can remember the floods of 1953 when many people were killed here and in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.

Now with the resulting Thames Barrier in place such flooding should be prevented.

Now we have meteorologists and very high tech equipment to forecast the weather but years ago, people relied on folk lore passed down through the generations. We still use these sayings today – ne'er cast a clout until May is out, is that the month or the flower? opinions differ - Red sky at night shepherd's delight, red sky in the morning shepherd's warning first appeared in the Bible in the book of Matthew – rain before seven clear before eleven (I would like that one to be true, that's good for me and my garden!), and of course the old proverb about St Swithun's Day on 15th July – if it rains on that day then it will rain for the next 40 days, apparently that has some scientific basis depending on the position of the jet stream which should be holding a steady pattern until the end of August.

We are influenced by the weather every day, what we wear, where we go and what chores we do.

So our temperate climate is always interesting and what would we talk about if we didn't have the weather!

Sandra Goulding

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*For those members who **do not** receive U3A information by email please remember to pick up your October AGM printed letters etc. at the September monthly meeting. If you are not attending, your letter will be posted on to you.*

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## Monthly Meetings and Speakers:

The main meeting is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month at 2 p.m. (be there by 1.45 pm to get a seat!) at Roberts Hall behind Christ Church, Bexleyheath Broadway.

|                     |                         |                                 |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>September 13</b> | <b>Reptile Recue</b>    | <b>Lucas Rudge</b>              |
| October 11          | AGM                     | with The Play Readers Group     |
| November 8          | London Transport Museum | TBA                             |
| December 13         | Christmas Social        | With Ukulele Group Tuning Fluid |

At last, the weather has cooled down a bit!

Sadly, it changes when we do not want it too. A few of us from Bexley joined Welling U3A on a coach outing to Eastbourne to see the Air Show and it rained. I went to my friends in Devon for the weekend to go to the local Country Fair, which would have been great except it rained. It is a shame we cannot turn rain on and off like a tap!

On the brighter side, the weather was very kind to us for our Picnic / Croquet afternoon at Hall Place. Twenty Four members and Guests turned up and what a great afternoon we had. A great deal of laughter could be heard from the enclosed Topiary. Everyone parted asking when the next one was being held, if you were not there, shame you missed a brilliant afternoon.

We learnt the art of Croquet (although not exactly to the official rules) we had a great laugh living the experience. What more could you ask! All with our picnics to enjoy in the sunshine and the lovely setting of Hall Place.

October of course is our AGM with our play reading group entertaining us after the "Serious bit".

I have tried to make the Programme varied and interesting for you and I hope you have enjoyed it.

Please make sure you are there on Thursday October 11<sup>th</sup>. It is your U3A and it is your chance to put questions to the Committee.

I have enjoyed being on the Committee this year.

Terry Moseley – Social Secretary

### **Local Lights**

Your next trip to

### **The Orchard**

### *'The Case of the Frightened Lady' by Edgar Wallace*

2.30pm Wednesday 7th November 2018

The star cast includes John Partridge, Deborah Grant, Robert Duncan, Philip Lowrie, Matt Lacey, Scarlet Archer and Matt Barber.

*Don't miss this chilling masterpiece!*

Group rate: £20.50

Book and pay at this meeting please, note cheques now payable to **U3A Bexley**

**Organiser Carole**

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I feel sure that other group leaders of "Visiting Groups" would like to join with me in thanking Sandra Goulding and Ron Clayton for all their time and hard work given to arranging the required financial procedures that allow our members to safely continue outings with our Bexley U3A groups.

Many thanks to you both. *Maureen Wright - "More of London" Visits.*

ELIZABETH BROMBY LEGACY

Bexley U3A were kindly left a gift of money in Elizabeth Bromby's will. We have spent some of it but we are keen now to spend the rest. We have one or two ideas which we would like to share with members and value your comments and thoughts. A) At Hall Place there is a project to create a path leading to the planned Sensory Garden. This would be a meandering path enhanced with azaleas, winter crocuses and snowdrops. They would be grateful for any contribution towards this project. B) Perhaps a bench or something for the patients and relatives at Demelza House Children's Hospice. We would need to talk to them if members wish. There would still be some money for a third donation for a local resource. All of these would have a plaque or some acknowledgement of Elizabeth Bromby and Bexley U3A. So thoughts, ideas, suggestions on our ideas, and any new ones you may have, please. Thank You  
Sandra Goulding

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*From Derek Allen*

***New U3A Group seeks members - 'The MicroPubbers'***

*20-30 pubs close every week yet Micropubs are a growing phenomenon and 9 have opened locally in the last 3 years. I propose to start a U3A Micropub group with monthly afternoon visits to local ones, (all on bus routes), for conversation, company and to sample some of the real ales from small breweries.*

*For an educational aspect, I also hope to arrange future visits to local breweries to learn about the brewing processes, the reasons behind the growing popularity of Micropubs and the history of breweries in our area.*

*If you are interested in joining the group, please email me stating any preference for a day on which to meet.*

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**TOWN AND AROUND**

*All outings at own risk*

**THERE APPEARS TO BE A MISCONCEPTION THAT OUR OUTINGS ARE ALWAYS FULL. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO COME TO THE MEETINGS YOU MAY PHONE OR E MAIL MAIRE CARR ANY TIME**

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October. The Grand Order of Water Rats Museum. Meet Cannon Street 12.00/12.15. Bus onwards, time for lunch, and entry at 2.00pm for our guided tour followed by included refreshments. The Water Rats are a theatrical charity and the museum has interesting displays of theatrical costumes and artefacts. £16.00**

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November. Tallow Chandlers Hall.** Meet Cannon Street 10.15/10.30 for a guided tour of this interesting Hall, the original was burnt down in the Great Fire and the present building dates from 1672. £6.00

**NO OUTING IN DECEMBER**

**PAYMENT, PREFERABLY BY CHEQUE MADE OUT TO U3A BEXLEY, MUST BE MADE AT TIME OF BOOKING.** See notices in Roberts Hall for more details. **If you are on the reserve list for a trip please keep day free, or let Maire know as soon as possible if you are unable to come.**

Please make a note of our Mobile telephone numbers, which are printed in the Newsletter so we can be contacted by phone or text even on the day of the visit.

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|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Organiser: Margaret Collins</b> |  |  |
| <b>Bookings: Maire Carr</b>        |  |  |
| <b>Money: Sabine Wayt</b>          |  |  |

## TOWN AND AROUND

### Visit to Frogmore House and Savill Gardens

By Margaret Collins

On yet another very hot August day and loaded with water we made our way by coach to these two Crown Estate properties set in Windsor Great Park. The coach ride, although with delays on the M25, was lovely as when we left the motorway we travelled alongside the river at Runnymede looking at the river life, beautiful boats and of course, plenty of wildlife, before arriving for security check and being ushered along a tree-lined avenue to the house. Frogmore House was glowing white in the sunshine and welcomed us. It was Frogmore House and gardens that had been the venue for Harry and Meghan's evening reception in May and is often used for informal Royal events.

We were welcomed to Frogmore and our group split into three and the excellent and informative guides took us through this most interesting house. The main block was built in 1680, lived in by the Duke of Northumberland in the early 1700's but about 1780 Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, purchased the property to use as a day retreat from Windsor castle to allow her daughters the space and privacy to enjoy their pastimes of painting, drawing, needlework, reading, or music. Queen Charlotte was an avid gardener and it was she that created the gardens we see today. The house was extended with wings either side and a beautiful open colonnade at the rear overlooking the lake and extensive gardens was added. The Queen left the house to Princess Augusta one of her unmarried daughters on her death in 1818. The Princess Louise daughter of Queen Victoria was a talented sculptor and one of her busts was on display here. She also sculpted a statue of Queen Victoria, which is in Kensington Gardens. The next Royal resident was Queen Victoria's mother, the Duchess of Kent using it regularly until her death in the house in 1840. Queen Mary, wife of George V, was the next royal to use the house, which housed part of her extensive collection of "souvenirs" in several of the rooms. The Queen was known to acquire items she fancied from her visits to friends. The house has had its structural problems over the years, the latest renovation taking place in the 70's and 80's, so it is hoped this will ensure it survives another few hundred years.

Our tour started in the wonderful hallway, with its sweeping staircase, and fine wall paintings which were completed in the 1680's. They had been covered over and were only rediscovered in the 1980's renovation. We ascended this beautiful staircase to the Cross Gallery, a double aspect hall which had been skilfully decorated with painted panels of fruit, flowers, garlands, and birds viewed through illusionistic windows created in the 1790's by Princess Elizabeth daughter of Queen Charlotte and George III. We returned to the ground floor to see Queen Mary's Flower Room. This was one of the rooms that Queen Mary used to display her collection of wax and silk flowers under glass domes.

Alongside them were displays of beautiful workboxes, tea caddies, and of course masses of clutter!! The next room was called the Black Museum because of the black japanned and papier-mache furniture, and boxes. Many other rooms followed, including the Duchess of Kent's Sitting Room decorated and furnished as near as possible to original with guidance from paintings or drawings. The Green Pavilion, which between 1902 and 1910 became the schoolroom for the future Kings Edward VIII and George VI which led onto the Colonnade. This by 1818 had been glazed, carpeted and furnished. Marble busts of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their children were displayed in this space. The Mary Moser Room, named after the artist, was beautifully decorated with exquisite flower paintings on the ceiling, walls, and framed flower paintings which made it look like a beautiful summer garden. The Duchess of Kent's Drawing Room which Queen Victoria and her children would often visit was next. The dining room, known as the Britannia Room, overlooking the garden is furnished with the huge table, chairs and side tables used on the H.M. Royal Yacht Britannia which the Duke of Edinburgh had installed here as a reminder of this well-loved vessel. The paintings around the room were all of various royal yachts, and two smallish shovels used by the young Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret to shovel coal into Britannia's vast boilers were also on display.

We were invited to visit the garden, and I just loved Queen Victoria's teahouse. Two small pepper pot buildings with tall chimneys, straight out of Hansel and Gretel, covered in wisteria, consisting of a small kitchen in one building, and a sitting room and WC in the other. Apparently, Her Majesty has been known to sit here after walking in the grounds. The Royal Mausoleum, created for the burial of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert was under scaffolding and cladding whilst urgent repairs continue. However, we could see from the outside the Mausoleum for the Duchess of Kent which is a lovely resting place. A Gothic folly near the lake was a most romantic setting and was used as a studio and breakfast room by Queen Victoria and her family.

We boarded the coach again to take us to Savill Gardens not very far away and still part of the Crown Estate and one of the finest royal gardens of Windsor Great Park. It was created in the late 1930's by Sir Eric Savill, under the patronage of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth covering some 35 acres.

The very first thing we saw was the fabulous wild planted entrance. This was wonderful with cosmos, poppies, many different summer flowering plants, and we were all most impressed. We made a quick stop for an ice cream in the new Savill building which houses the restaurant, café, plant sales, and of course shop, before our exploration of these fabulous gardens. The map enticed us to view the summer garden which was spectacular. The planting in the herbaceous borders took your breath away. Strong yellows, orange and reds made up one border. Another was of purple, mauves and pinks, some dahlias, cannas and other exotic flowers filled these 10 foot wide borders – just wonderful. I loved the agapanthus border with so many shades of vibrant blue. Then a quick look at the rose garden however this hot weather had made it all look very parched. The Jubilee garden, all soft pinks, blues and silver created a gentle garden after the amazing brightness of the borders. The temperate house was just right temperature wise, and we enjoyed just watching the water feature cooling the air. The heat in the garden was intense but we managed to find shade amongst the trees, stopping to sit on benches to cool down before exploring further.

Then back to the Savill building for a cup of tea and a piece of cake, a visit to the shop for plant sales before returning home. It really was a super summer day out in wonderful surroundings, enjoyed by all.

**Executive Committee 2017 - 2018**

|                            |                       |  |                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chair                      | Sandra Goulding       |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Vice Chair                 | <b><u>VACANCY</u></b> |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Secretary                  | Maureen Wright        |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Treasurer                  | Ron Clayton           |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Membership                 | Douglas West          |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Speakers                   | Terry Moseley         |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Group Liaison              | Pat Fearnside         |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| E-mail & IT                | Nino<br>Parascandolo  |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Social<br>Secretary        | Thelma Wilkes         |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Catering                   | Vi King               |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Hall Manager<br>/Database  | Nino<br>Parascandolo  |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>NON-COMMITTEE ROLES</b> |                       |  |                                                                                                                                  |
| Meet & Greet               | Edna Sutton           |  | Please let Edna know of personal events e.g. significant birthdays, anniversaries, condolences, etc. so that she can send cards. |
| Newsletter<br>Editor       | Mary Jupp             |  |                                                                                                                                  |

***Please submit all contributions to October newsletter by***

***Midday - Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September***

***Please ensure you contribute before the cut-off***

***and have an email acknowledgment from me that I have received your contribution! Thank you***

***Mary Jupp***