

# Tunbridge Wells

Newsletter no. 200, 18 March 2010



Designed and Edited by Colin Huggett

Charity No. 1018835 Website address: <http://u3atunbridgewells.pbworks.com>

## Chairman's Column



I KNOW THAT it is still only March, but time marches on and the committee is very much aware that half of us will be standing down in June, including all the officers. In last month's newsletter we gave a list of the posts that will have to be filled if we are to continue in business. Please don't wait too long before volunteering to help run the TWU3A. You can make your interest known to a committee member at any time. Remember that if you are interested but unsure, you can attend a committee meeting without obligation.

In addition, as I have mentioned before, we need more volunteers to form a technical support group to help set up the equipment once a month for the monthly talks.

By comparison with other U3As we are, with nearly 700 members, a large branch and, on that basis, there should be no difficulty with volunteers for the various areas in which we need help.

The Development Subcommittee has been meeting at regular intervals to examine ways for assessing the feelings of the membership as to the way things are run now, and what changes we might be able to make to accommodate the wishes and ideas of members. We will be approaching everyone in due course with a questionnaire inviting comments. I hope that there will be a good response.

*Michael Polkinghorne*

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## THE FEBRUARY TALK

### 'Toulouse-Lautrec and Bohemian Paris

Martin Heard

IN MARTIN HEARD'S fascinating talk Toulouse Lautrec and Bohemian Paris were cleverly interwoven as if, it seemed, to underline the interdependence of one on the other. Almost as both

Next Monthly Talk is

**Thursday 15 April**

**2.30pm at the Camden Centre**

**Rogues, Rascals and Rebels**

by

**Chris McCooley**

*The Bloomsbury artists who lived and loved in their remote Sussex farmhouse, the Eastbourne GP suspected of mass murder, Alan Clark legendary lothario, Grey Owl the Hastings Red Indian, Blackheath tramp Smokey Joe, Charles Dickens' double life, Dirk Bogarde's 'love affairs without carnality' and Cynthia Payne aka Madam Sin.*

creature and documenter of late 19th Century Paris low life, Lautrec has left a rich legacy of paintings and posters depicting the time.

Son and heir of aristocrat Comte Alphonse-Charles de Toulouse, Henri was the last in the family line. Weak and sickly as a child he had nevertheless by the age of ten begun to draw and paint. But, at the age of 14 he fractured his legs leaving him permanently stunted. After studying in Paris with academic painters he had a brief relationship in 1886 with the painter (and model) Suzanne Valadon and during this period his first drawings were published in magazines.

After an orthodox start to his career, with exhibitions in Brussels and the Salon des Independants, he began frequenting the Moulin Rouge and other cabarets of the Montmartre district (where he also displayed his work) as well as the theatre, circus, bars, dance-halls and brothels. In 1894 he took up residence in the brothel in the Rue des Moulins by which time he was fully immersed in the drinking and debauchery of this seamier side

of Parisian life, and his subject matter became intimately connected with the life he led. Works such as 'Les Deux Amies' (c.1894) and 'La Goulue Dancing' (1895) for example are just two of the many paintings he produced that documented these 'fin-de-siècle' scenes.

His lifestyle took its toll and, becoming increasingly dependent on alcohol, he collapsed in 1899 and was taken to a mental hospital in Neuilly. However, he continued to drink and, in 1901, he suffered a partial paralysis and died at his mother's château.

Toulouse-Lautrec painted with verve and excelled in graphic art. His lithographs and posters are still being copied today. Only lightly touched by Impressionism, his work has a stamp of its own, characterised by his handling of line and the dynamic use of colour.

The extraordinary characters in his paintings from clowns to aristocrats, from sportsmen to prostitutes cover a vast social spectrum. His works were always striking with bold forms and colours. His influences probably came from Goya in his etchings, and from Degas in his painting. A friendship with Gauguin certainly led Lautrec in a particular direction in his lithographs, inspired by Japanese colour prints.

Despite his short life, Lautrec managed to produce some 737 canvases, 275 watercolours, 368 prints

and posters, and 5,084 drawings which, provide an amazing document for, and evoking the atmosphere of, the 'la belle époque' years, 1880 to 1900.

*Michael Polkinghorne*

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## Tunbridge Wells in Bloom

**T**HE ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS in Bloom competition has been brought back to life this year. It is a great opportunity for the Royal Tunbridge Wells community to get actively involved in improving the local environment.

The Campaign encourages individuals to participate in the various competitions for Best Basket, Planter, Tub or Container; Front Patio, Balcony; Front Garden; Café, Pub or Club; Shop Front and Street. (Competition entry forms are available at Gateway, the Museum or cafés at Dunorlan and Calverley Grounds.)

Various Groups may have their own environmental schemes ranging from spring cleaning of public grounds/premises to increasing recycling and environmental activities. Also there are various levels of sponsorship opportunities.

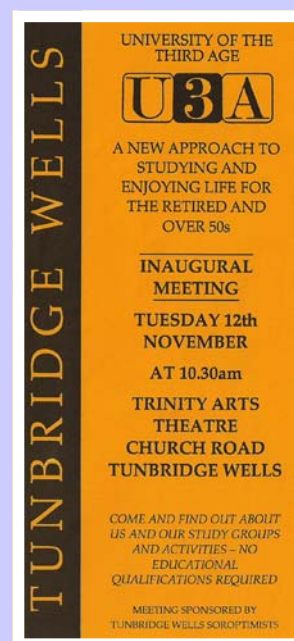
## TW U3A March 2010 Newsletter No. 200

As I wrote all the early TW U3A Newsletters Maggie has asked me to contribute a paragraph to Newsletter 200.

I'd forgotten how primitive things were in 1991. Early Newsletters were prepared on an Amstrad with miniscule memory and printed on a 9-pin matrix printer using a pattern of pins that still struck a ribbon. Later Newsletters show progress to a 21-pin matrix printer with better typefaces, then to Windows, then to include regular and frequent technical improvements as personal computers became bigger and software more advanced.

Newsletter No.1 was issued in December 1991 so that everyone knew the results of the Inaugural Meeting at Trinity Arts Centre on 12 November after which we had about 35 members. A few groups had already started and we needed leaders to start more groups. We were looking forward to our first Monthly Meeting in January when Jasper Ridley, who lived in Tunbridge Wells, was going to speak about writing his historical books. We had booked the Monson House meeting room, but our membership had rapidly increased to more than 100 so we had to change the venue to the Council Chamber. Our first outing was to be a half-day trip in February to the Dulwich Art Gallery. The present Committee will recognize that these are the sort of subjects that still appear on most monthly agendas.

*Peter Batts*



Councillor. Dr Ronen Basu, Chairman of the Royal Tunbridge Wells in Bloom Committee and a member of our U3A, would be grateful if Tunbridge Wells U3A Members would join him in the project and bring back the **sparkle to our town**. For further information on how you can be involved please contact Ronen via the campaign's website:

[www.royaltunbridgewellsinbloom.org.uk](http://www.royaltunbridgewellsinbloom.org.uk)

## News from the Groups

### The Amblers

One of our roving reporters saw Elsie Emes in Rusthall the other day. She told him there had been an accident (broken ankle) on a recent walk and the Air Ambulance came to the rescue. However, it couldn't land due to fog! The unfortunate person had to make do with an ordinary ambulance. We trust the ambler is recovering well.

### Whereabouts is this?

Another obscure photo of somewhere in Tunbridge Wells. Answer in April



### Answer to the February Where is This?

Cottage in London Road, Southborough, next to petrol Station

### Video Arts Group

**Group Leader:** Harry Fenton, 01892 653842

**Host:** June Jones, 01580 211403

June and Harry would like to welcome back the members of their Video Arts Group to the 2010 season of programmes, the first of which will be held on Friday 26 March at 2.00pm. We look forward to seeing you then.

#### Programme for 2010

<b>Mar</b>	Nureyev Defection from Russia	1hr 30
	Schubert: <i>The Trout</i> , Jacqueline du Pre and Friends	1hr
<b>April</b>	The Ballets Russes – A Profile	1hr
	A Portrait of Scotland (Scottish Artists)	1hr 30
<b>May</b>	Le Jeune Homme et la Mort (Ballet)	15 mins
	Nathan Milstein and the 'Kreutzer' (Profile and Recital)	1hr
	An Ideal Husband (Oscar Wilde play)	1hr 30
<b>June</b>	Masterpieces of Vienna	30 mins
	The Merchant of Venice	2hrs 15
<b>July</b>	L'Ange Bleu (Ballet)	1hr 45
	The Art of Russia. Part 2 of 3	1hr
<b>Aug</b>	Rome – A Profile	30 mins
	Tea with Mussolini (TV Film)	2hrs 15
<b>Sept</b>	Korngold – Composer Profile	1hr 30
	Evelyn Waugh – Author Profile	1hr
<b>Oct</b>	Le Diable Amoureux (Ballet)	1hr
	Max Beckmann – Artist Profile	30 mins
	Mr and Mrs Mackintosh (Architect and Artists)	1hr
<b>Nov</b>	T S Eliot – Poet Profile	1hr 30
	Edward Hopper – Artist Profile	8 mins
	Botticelli – Artist Profile	1hr

Please let **June** know if you are **unable** to attend

Meetings will be held on the 4th Friday of the month at 2.00pm until approx 5.30pm, from March to November inclusive

### Chicago Bridge Group

We celebrated our first anniversary in February with a repeat of January's attendance of 7 tables – all we can squeeze in! This small hall provides us with a comfortable venue easily accessible to those on foot as well as by car. The kitchen is well stocked so that we can enjoy a good cup of tea and biscuits half way through the afternoon and short work is made of the washing up by "dummies" afterwards!



We change partners every four hands and consequently everyone now knows each other and the afternoon is relaxed and sociable. The membership has gradually increased and all seem to enjoy this monthly bridge gathering. Pleasingly diaries are much in evidence as other bridge dates are fixed with old and new friends.



Regrettably we cannot take any more members at present though I will be pleased to hear from anyone else who would be interested. If necessary I could then explore the possibility of finding larger suitable accommodation.

*Di Brown*

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### **20th Birthday?!!!**

Following on from Peter Batts' recollections of the early days of the Newsletter, memories returned of when Mike Miller and myself took over the joint editing when the then incumbent, Kevin Wilkinson, retired and moved to France to run a hotel.

## **TWU3A – COMMITTEE STATUS POST AGM 2010**

Oh no, not again I hear you mutter! Afraid so, it's coming to that time of the year when the plea goes out for volunteers to help run YOUR U3A. The following list shows the positions that **will** become vacant at the AGM. **Your help is essential.**

### **Standing down at 2010 AGM**

Chairman  
Vice Chair  
Business Secretary  
Hon Secretary  
Hon Treasurer  
Speakers' Organiser

### **IN MEMORIAM**

I must apologise for the incorrect name spelling in last month's Newsletter of the late

Mrs Mary Woodruffe's

I hope this did not cause too much embarrassment to family and friends.

I was relying on a skimpy knowledge of MS Word and a lifetime in the printing industry. I'm not sure what motivated Mike other than an interest in keeping the Newsletter alive. Neither of us knew which program was used only that it wasn't MS Word. We resorted to copying the previous edition onto our hard drives, subsequently overwriting each new edition. This caused numerous alarms with material disappearing inexplicably and Mike being placated with "Never mind, it's there somewhere". Eventually I acquired a publishing program and John Cunliffe became joint editor and finally, me.

As I said I was relying on my printing experience to carry me along little realising that my mathematics would come under scrutiny when I claimed that November 2010 would be the TWU3A's twentieth birthday! Fortunately, not too many people have taken me to task over that mental aberration, for which I thank you very much.

I had been hoping to for a few recollections from other long serving members of the early years but none as yet has been received. That is the main reason why you are having to read this diatribe and why we have a blank page this month.

*Colin Huggett*

## COFFEE MORNINGS

These gatherings, are held at the Nutmeg Tree in the Victoria Centre, taking place on the last Friday of the month at 10.30am. They provide an excellent opportunity for members to get together for a chat, more particularly for enabling new members to get to know people.



### New Members

Mr Paul Plumley	.	..	TN2 3NY
Mrs Rosalind Plumley	.	..	TN2 3NY
Mrs Elaine Mimms	.	.	TN2 3RL
Miss Pat Dennis.	.	.	TN2 5QX
Mr Robert Green	.	..	TN2 3SQ
Mrs Anthea Green	.	.	TN2 3SQ
Mrs Pamela Young	.	.	TN2 4UJ
Mrs Alison Cresswell	.	.	ME18 6JD
Mrs Avril Jones	.	.	TN4 8AL
Mrs Claudette Law	.	.	TN4 8ED
Mr John Styles	.	.	TN2 5XH
Mrs Berenice Styles	.	.	TN2 5XH

### THE WEAKEST LINK (BBC2)

**Anne Robinson:** In traffic, what 'j' is where two roads meet?

**Contestant:** Jool carriageway?

## Tunbridge Wells U3A

### Talks for 2010

- Thursday 15 April – **Chris McCooey**  
*Rogues, Rascals and Rebels*
- Thursday 20 May – **Pat Mortlock**  
*Tonbridge: the Growth of a Market Town*
- Thursday 17 June – **AGM**
- Thursday 15 July – **TBA**
- Thursday 19 August – **John and Sue Pearce**  
*Flowers For Emma*
- Thursday 21 October – **Monty Parkin**  
*The Art Game*
- Thursday 18 November – **TBA**
- Thursday December – **TBA**

**Assessment for Old Age Home.** On visiting his doctor, a patient asked him, "How do you determine whether or not someone should be put in an old age home?"

"Well," he said, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the retiree and ask him or her to empty the bathtub."

"Oh, I understand," I said. "A normal person would use the bucket because it is bigger than the spoon or the teacup."

"No," he said. "A normal person would pull the plug. Do you want a bed near the window?"

## Your Committee

Chairman	Michael Polkinghorne	01892 539320
Vice-Chair	Maggie Fraser	01892 523858
Hon Secretary	Robby Holmes	01892 544095
Hon Treasurer	George Bicknell	01892 545725
Membership Secretary	Lynda Aldred	01892 537033
Newsletter Liaison	Lis Clare	01892 527587
Groups Co-ordinator	Joy Stacey	01892 522653
Social Events	Bunty Mason	01892 513125
Business Secretary	Maggie Fraser	01892 523858
	Di Brown	01892 529999
Monthly Speakers	Michael Polkinghorne	01892 539320
Outings Co-ordinator	Dennis Turner	01892 526693
	* * * * *	
Technical Liaison	Tom Guy	01892 533634
Webmaster	Brian Barrett	via email
Newsletter Editor	Colin Huggett	01892 532928
Newsletter Mailing	Di and Tony Brown	01892 529999

### All contributions for the April Newsletter to

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colinhuggett5@hotmail.com

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### Copy required

for the next Newsletter by

**7 April at the very latest**

Tunbridge Wells U3A

**ELY CATHEDRAL - THE LANTERN OF THE FENS**

Tuesday, 18 May 2010

On our journey we will be passing through some delightful East Anglian countryside en route to the magnificent Ely Cathedral with its Octagon Lantern Tower dominating the landscape. At this time of year there should be blossom to see as the terrain changes to the flatter vistas of Fenland.

A 1-hour guided tour of the Cathedral is included in your visit. There is also the chance to see Ely Museum (a short walk from the Cathedral) which is the history centre for the Isle of Ely and also Oliver Cromwell's house.

St. Etheldreda (a daughter of the King of the Angles) built a convent here c.673 and gave the whole of the Isle of Eels [Ely] to the foundation. Destroyed by the Danes it remained in ruins until 970 when the Bishop of Winchester founded a Benedictine monastery here. Under the Normans Abbot Simeon began to rebuild the Abbey, which eventually became a Cathedral in 1541 after the dissolution of the monasteries.

There will be a brief coffee stop en route and time to have lunch at a variety of places (details will be given on the coach) before the guided tour. A longish coach journey, but an interesting day.

**ITINERARY**

- 9.15 Coach departs Crescent Rd (opposite Assembly Hall)
- 9.30 Coach departs Southborough Fountain
- 10.45 Coffee stop at M11 Service Station (NOT included)
- 12 noon approx. Arrive Ely in time for lunch (NOT included)
- 2 p.m. Guided tour of Cathedral
- 4.30 p.m. Leave Ely
- 6.45/7.15 p.m. Arrive Tunbridge Wells (depending on traffic)

**COST: £17.00** to include coach, Cathedral entrance fee & tour and driver's tip. Cheques payable to "Tunbridge Wells U3A" **and s.a.e.** to:- Mrs. L. Monckton 214 Forest Rd, Tunbridge Wells TN2 5JB.

Tel: 01892 533652. (Mobile on the day only - 07944364622)

*Please understand that a front seat is reserved for the tour organiser, allowing access to the microphone as it is illegal to use this from a standing position whilst the coach is moving. Members are advised that neither the TWU3A nor the outings organizer will accept responsibility for any mishap of whatever nature during the outing. Members are advised to consider personal insurance cover.*

**Ely Cathedral, Tuesday 18 May 2010**

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ place/s for this visit. I/we enclose a cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ plus s.a.e.

I/we will join the coach at: \*9/15 a.m. Crescent Road \*9.30 a.m Southborough Fountain

Name/s \_\_\_\_\_ Membership No/s \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_