



Summer 2026 Magazine



Croydon u3a

Croydon u3a Registered Charity Number 1029466

www.croydonu3a.org.uk

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Croydon u3a Management Committee 2025-2026

Chair: Jenny Wilson

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Travel Team and Bulletin	Linda Grigsby
Publicity & Community Outreach	Maggie Chan
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Interest Group Assistant	Fenella Cardwell
New member support &	Anne Tanner &
Welcome Team Co-ordinators	Angie Stagg
Travel Team	Karen Hook

Croydon u3a has an army of volunteers apart from the members above, who have taken on various roles to make our u3a run well. See some of them on the Committee Support Team page on the website:

We must include our Group Leaders and their assistants, for without them we would literally fall apart.

We are always looking for volunteers to discuss starting a new group or offering a taster session or a short course. Please contact Trisha Holmes: trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk if you would like to discuss this. The guiding principle of the u3a is:

Run by the Members for the Members

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Foreword

Hello all,

I am sorry for the delay in getting this edition out. I had hoped to issue it much earlier in May, but life got in the way....

I hope you have all been keeping cool during the recent hot weather. Of course, with the start of meteorological summer, we will probably soon see a return to grey skies and lots of rain.

In the hope that this does not happen, there are some tips on keeping cool in this edition. Meanwhile, have a lovely summer and if you are going away, enjoy your holidays.

There is also a Quiz (Please feel free to use this wherever you like) and our usual puzzles.

Many thanks for your contributions, this magazine could not exist without them.

All contributions for the next edition will be gratefully received. Please send to: tess.smith@croydonu3a.org.uk by 20th September 2026.

Editor – Tess Smith

Letter from the Chair

Dear Member of Croydon u3a,

I constantly think how lucky we are to have this wonderful organisation, where we can dip into all sorts of interesting events. There are new Interest Groups being formed, lunch dates, outings, holidays and on-line talks all for the taking.

I have been banging the drum lately about the HUGE importance of SOCIAL INTERACTION. A number of good quality studies have shown that getting out and mixing with people is a top indicator for good mental and physical health especially in later life. This variable 'trumps' (sorry) others such as weight, exercise, alcohol consumption, smoking and getting a Covid jab. So, we are out there – no prescription necessary.

Straying slightly, I joined a u3a on-line event from the Future Lives team, about how AI can help us. Apart from helping with identifying accessible routes, step free access and so on, I was particularly interested in the information about hearing. Half of people over the age of 50 have some hearing loss and 80% of those over seventy are affected. Modern hearing aids are customised to the person's individual loss. This is why standard cheap versions are not useful. But unaddressed hearing loss causes the brain to work harder, trying to decode the mumbles. The technical term is cognitive overload! Eventually people withdraw and become isolated and there is a link to dementia. It's not causal, but there is a connection.

If you can't hear me clearly, get a check-up. It could save your future!

Very best wishes,

Jenny

Jenny Wilson (Chair of Croydon u3a)

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News from the Groups

Exploring the World One Plate at a Time

The Taste of World Cuisine group started off as seven curious diners gathering in a small restaurant on Streatham High Road before Covid and has grown into one of Croydon's most sociable and flavour filled Interest Groups with around 30 enthusiastic members regularly joining our monthly culinary adventures.

The group was started for people who enjoy trying new foods, discovering unfamiliar flavours and sharing good conversation around a table. Since those early days, we've travelled the globe without ever having to queue at Heathrow airport.

From Far Eastern Street food to South American specialities, Polish comfort food, vegetarian delights in Brighton and everything in between. Our group has enthusiastically tried many dishes which we would not normally have ordered – sometimes not even knowing how to pronounce them.

One member describes it perfectly-“An excellent way of getting together – a highly diverse range of food and experiences”

Another said-“ I've visited a vast range of establishments and tried cuisines I'd never tasted before, with a lovely and diverse group of people”

That really captures the spirit of the group, yes, the food matters but the people and what we share and learn from each other matter more. There is lively conversation, often wandering from travel stories and unusual ingredients to cultural traditions, funny misunderstandings over menus and the occasional debate about how hot and spicy we like a dish.

What makes the group for me is the warm welcoming atmosphere. New members are quickly made to feel like regulars and every visit becomes a chance to mix, mingle and share experiences. As one member put it” We welcome new members with open arms.”



Our recent lunch time visit to Box Park in Croydon perfectly reflected what the group has become – a table full of different dishes from around the world, lots of smiling faces and people enjoying each other’s company.

You don’t need a passport to explore the world anymore – sometimes all you need is curiosity, a healthy appetite and a willingness to try something you can’t pronounce.....and perhaps a spare napkin.

Jacqueline Harriott

Taste Of World Cuisines

Looking at London

As we do not have a meeting in the month of May members of the Looking at London group went out for afternoon tea at Croydon Clocktower Café.

The cafe supplied a lovely spread of sandwiches, quiches, scones with cream, mini cakes and tea and coffee, you could also have a glass of Prosecco if needed.



It is lovely to have some social time together and it gives everyone a chance to chat and find out more about each other and what other groups they are involved with.



We still have plenty of London outings to come in the remaining year; Kings Gallery, Kensal Green Cemetery, Pocket Parks and Thames Clippers. Each month except May and August, when we go out and socialise, we have a speaker at our monthly meeting and we can look forward to The First Museum of London; Medieval Graffiti; A History of Truth; and The English in India.

Please come along and give the group a try, you would be most welcome

Fiona Bowles

Notable dates in May and June throughout history.

1st May 1707

The Act of Union comes into being. This unites England and Scotland to form the Kingdom of Great Britain.

1st May 1840 The Penny black is issued as the first adhesive postage stamp in the world.

3rd May 1921

The UK Government of Ireland Act partitions six north-eastern counties to form Northern Ireland.

3rd May 1951

The Festival of Britain and the Royal Festival Hall opens in London.

4th May 1780

The first Derby at Epsom is run. The winning horse is Diomed.

4th May 1979

Margaret Thatcher becomes the first woman Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

6th May 1954

Roger Bannister becomes the first man to run a mile in under four minutes.

7th May 1945

Nazi Germany surrendered to the Allies, ending the war in Europe.

8th May 1945

VE day is celebrated across Europe and North America.

10th May 1940

Winston Churchill replaces Neville Chamberlain as Prime Minister, forming an all-party war coalition.

12th May 1926

The TUC called off the nine-day General Strike which had paralysed the nation.

19th May 1536

Anne Boleyn was beheaded at the Tower of London.

29th May 1660

King Charles II is restored to the monarchy, following the interregnum of the Commonwealth.

31st May 1902

The Peace of Vereeniging ended the Boer War in South Africa.

1st June 1946

The first Television Licences were issued in Britain at a cost of £2.

2nd June 1953

The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II at Westminster Abbey. True to form, the summer started with cold and wet weather.

3rd June 1162

Thomas Becket was consecrated as Archbishop of Canterbury.

6th June 1944

The invasion of Normandy – D-Day – started, to liberate Western Europe from the occupation by Nazi Germany.

7th June 1329

Robert the Bruce, King Robert I of Scotland, died.

9th June 1870

After touring England and the USA, Charles Dickens died suddenly of a stroke at his home in Kent.

10th June 1829

The first ever Oxford and Cambridge University Boat Race was held. Oxford were victorious.

13th June 1944

The first V1 flying bomb, known as a doodlebug, was dropped on London, sparking a new terror.

15th June 1215

The Magna Carta was signed by King John at Runnymede.

20th June 1756

Over 140 British subjects were imprisoned in the “Black Hole of Calcutta”. This cell measured just 18 x 14 feet (5.4m x 4.2m). Only twenty-three people came out alive.

22nd June 1814

The first ever cricket match at Lord’s Cricket Ground was played between the Marylebone Cricket Club and Hertfordshire.

26th June 1483

Richard III begins his reign, having been proclaimed King by parliament after his nephew, Edward V, was declared illegitimate.

28th June 1838

Queen Victoria is crowned at Westminster Abbey, having succeeded to the throne a year earlier. She was just 19 years old and was to reign for almost 64 years.

29th June 1613

The Globe Theatre in London was destroyed by fire, caused by flames from a cannon used to announce the entrance of the King in Shakespeare's Henry V.

30th June 1894

Tower Bridge was officially opened by the Prince of Wales. After the ceremony, a flotilla of boats and ships sailed down the Thames and the new bridge opened its bascules to allow them to pass through.



Reclaiming pride

The closure of five of 13 Croydon libraries has meant the dismantling of precious places of easy public access, amenity, recreation, culture, knowledge and inclusivity.

These were places where gnawing hungers were met, idle curiosity satisfied and the constant thirst for refreshment quenched. Above all, they met the need for social contact, human company and conversation. They had a profound effect on people's daily lives. What was lost with their closure is incalculable in terms of access denied to this gateway into information, literature, learning, online research, board games and a quiet corner to meet, read, do homework, or talk with friends in book, writing and poetry groups.

The promised "comprehensive and efficient" service required by law has been withdrawn and communities are left bereft of priceless assets. In the longer term, these cuts will prove to have been a false economy as the true cost will come to be measured in declining literacy in the young, limited opportunities for social contact, loneliness in the elderly and distress in the less mobile and mentally fragile members of the community.

Croydon Council's approach to the problem of its bankruptcy is entirely rational and pragmatic, if not also entirely short-sighted. The best hope of any restitution of the service lies squarely with Central Government to honour its statutory pledge to maintain libraries and their funding. "Levelling up" means not just more even investment in regional infrastructure and housing, but crucially a lifting of the level of attainment in literacy and knowledge acquired through education, raised expectations and the creation of that fuller, richer life of wider opportunity and choice that people naturally aspire to.

To this end, it is the libraries which meet our basic compulsions to seek knowledge and information to furnish our minds. Here we

have access not just to the printed and spoken word of the ages, but also to that human contact which may point us and even inspire us in hitherto unconsidered directions.

We live in a democracy in which we are all bidden to participate - not just with the vote, but through the process of calm deliberation and discussion of priorities in the choice of those public services most essential to providing meaning and purpose to our private lives as individuals who strive and struggle to achieve a satisfactory level of life and a living.



In the face of such losses, we volunteers must band together to bootstrap our way out of the current 'Slough of Despond' which a run-down Croydon has become. We must take ownership and help revive the use of those vital amenities like libraries that enable people to move on from raw opinion to confident self-expression and judgment.

In his great pivotal and seminal work, "The Uses of Literacy", the writer and teacher, Richard Hoggart describes how the working classes yearn to break free of their servitude, to capture the spirit and gaiety of the nation under their own strenuous devices and to find routes to fulfilment of their desires and ambitions. At the centre of these storms and struggles stand the libraries, citadels and beacons of hope where people can dream awake and discover life's infinite possibilities.

Happily, the Clocktower building on Katharine Street houses a huge trove of knowledge in its over 6,000 library books; the Museum of Croydon; a splendid photographic collection from Croydon's past 100 years; its Riesco collection of Chinese antiques; its café and art gallery; its classes and its wonderful David Lean Cinema, showing many of the most recently released films as well as classics.

It is time for the hollowing-out of the local environment to be checked and the once-vibrant feel of Croydon's spirit to be recaptured and restored.

Barnaby Powell

General Knowledge Quiz -

Round One – *Bad Movie Descriptions*

1. “Idiot ginger and mouse violate 8 health code regulations.”
2. “Older sister ruins younger sister's chance to be on nationally televised game show.”
3. “Woman abandons all her standards to win back a horny teenager with greasy hair.”
4. “Drunk guy keeps losing his transportation.”
5. “Story of a boy so annoying his parents abandon him every Christmas, hoping somebody will kill him.”
6. “A series of naps.”
7. “Miserable billionaire terrorizes mentally ill man.”
8. “A love triangle between an eighteen-year-old girl, a hundred-year-old guy and a dog.”
9. “Girl has to pretend she’s a man to be taken seriously.”
10. “A film about how true love conquers the fear of getting syphilis.”

?????

Round Two – *Name the year.*

1. The pound note was finally withdrawn from circulation.
2. Food rationing in Britain ended when restrictions on the sale and purchase of meat were lifted.
3. Death of Sir Winston Churchill.
4. Blackpool Tower opened for the first time.
5. Decimal currency was introduced.
6. Assassination of President Kennedy.
7. The birth of Prince Harry.
8. Falkland's War.
9. Maradona's 'Hand of God' goal in the World Cup.
10. The Brighton hotel bombing during the Conservative Party Conference.

?????

Round Three – Chain wipeout.

In this round, each question (apart from No1) begins with the last letter of the previous answer. Get one wrong and lose all your points for this round. Answers can be left blank if you are unsure.

1. What is the name of the US State that has a climbing plant named after it?
2. What type of chemical can be used to neutralise an acid?
3. What abbreviation is used as the numbering system for library books?
4. What is the French word, meaning new, that is a style of cooking that emphasises fresh ingredients and attractive presentation?
5. Name the evergreen tree from who's leaves a strong-smelling oil is obtained?
6. What was the original name of Leningrad?
7. First name of the 22nd and 24th president of the USA and a blue muppet.
8. Who was the twin brother of Remus?
9. What is sodium chloride commonly known as?
10. A quadrilateral having two parallel sides?

Answers on Page 26

Missing Camera Pack Mystery Colin Read

A few years ago, I regaled you with the story of the missing mobile. This year it was the turn of a frequent companion of said mobile, a small zipper bag containing my small camera and associated memory cards, to do a disappearing act.

I had used it at the end of March to photograph the Palm Sunday procession from St Matthews Church (Park Hill) to Lloyd Park, complete with the Bishop of Croydon and a real donkey.

I showed the photos at my Rotary Club the following day, especially as the Secretary is married to a vicar, but by the middle of that week, discovered that the camera and its bag were missing.

I searched the house, (all right, maisonette) checking everywhere where it should be, but no trace. I checked the car several times and the garage: nothing.

Thinks:

“Did I leave it at the sports club where our Rotary met?”

Check lost and found. No joy.

“Did it get swept up at the end of said meeting with the Rotary property?”

I’d have to wait two weeks to find out: No, no trace.

And still nothing in their lost and found. A forlorn hope, anyway.

“Had I left it at Brooklands Museum (Weybridge), where I’m a volunteer?”

Remarkably, one had been found but it was not mine.

By this time, some three weeks after discovering it was missing, I decided to replace it. I reluctantly splashed out on a new camera. No harm in having a spare.

Precisely four weeks had now passed since I last used the missing item and I was convinced that it had gone for good.

I have no idea why, but that Sunday afternoon, I slid my hand down the small gap between the arm of the sofa and the end cushion but what should I espy but the camera pack and its contents, completely intact! It must have slid from my lap and gradually worked its way down there, just inches from where I normally sit.

Deep joy.

Now I have two small cameras!



Puzzle pages

Sudoku – easy

		4			6			
				9		2		
			2	3			5	
								6
3	2		8			5	7	
	4			7		8		
	3							4
6	5	1	7	2				
	9			1				

The numbers 1-9 must appear in every row, column and 3x3 square

Sudoku – medium

	5							
7	8		6		1			
	6		4	9				
		4		3			5	
				7	6	3		
	3	6	9			2	8	
8			7		4			
			8			7	2	4
		7					9	

A bit trickier....

Sudoku - Hard

			4				2	1
4		7						9
		6			8			
		5			3	2		
	1							
9								5
	9				5	7	1	
7		2		4				
	4		6				3	

Well done if you complete this one first time!

Word Sudoku

This puzzle contains the letters of the word FLOWERING.

Normal sudoku rules apply.

W					L			
F	G							
	W	E		I	R	F		
				L		O		
		F	N		G	L		
		W		O				
		I	W	N		G	R	
							F	W
								O

Stay Cool!

Tips for surviving the hot weather, without air-conditioning.

1. Keep hydrated. Water is best for hydration, whether plain and still or fizzy and flavoured. Add ice cubes if you have remembered to make them...
2. Keep curtains, blinds, or shutters closed during the times the sun is on your windows. Open the windows only once the sun has lost its power, preferably on both sides of your accommodation.
3. Place ice blocks in a bowl or other container and place in front of a fan so that you have cold air being moved around, not hot.
4. Although it seems a shame to miss the few days of sunshine we have each summer, you are better staying indoors between 11am and 4pm.
5. If you must go outside, wear a hat (preferably wide brimmed) and keep in the shade as much as possible. Always wear sunscreen!
6. Avoid strenuous exercise during the heat of the day.
7. Take tepid showers, not too hot or cold.
8. When driving, open the windows for the first few minutes of your journey to cool the car, then close them and use the air-con (if you have it).
9. If using public transport with no air-con, try to sit by an open window.
10. Most supermarkets and large shops have fierce air-conditioning, so take a light jacket or cardigan (the staff will all be wearing fleeces) to wear in the store or you may get too cold, so when you leave, the outside temperature will seem much higher.

Answers to General Knowledge Quiz.

Round One

1. Ratatouille
2. Hunger Games
3. Grease
4. Pirates of the Caribbean
5. Home Alone
6. Inception
7. Batman
8. Twilight
9. Mulan
10. Pretty Woman.

Round Two

1. 1984
2. 1954
3. 1965
4. 1894
5. 1971
6. 1963
7. 1984
8. 1982
9. 1986
10. 1984

Round Three

1. Virginia
2. Alkali
3. ISBN
4. Nouvelle
5. Eucalyptus
6. St Petersburg
7. Grover
8. Romulus
9. Salt
10. Trapezoid.

How did you do?

Score:

30 – Fantastic

25-29 Excellent

20-24 Very Good

15-19 Getting there