



Bearsted & District u3a Monthly Reminder for March 2024

Welcome to the March 2024 Monthly Reminder, which is being distributed to all members either via e-mail or paper copy. This month's meeting will be held in Detling Village Hall on Thursday 14th March starting at the usual time of 2 pm.

From the Rockin' Chair

So looking forward to Spring. Fed up with the rain. Even the new daffodils are sodden along with our hardy outdoor groups. However, have a look at the lovely photos on our Facebook page of the Hidden London Walks (Swims?) last week (see also below). Well done to all.

I have met with a couple of groups recently and am pleased that the ethos of U3A is alive and well in Bearsted and District. You get out of the U3A what you put in with no teachers or learners just contributors. It's good to see so many active participants.

Finally welcome to our newest committee member Alan, who is also a leading light in Local History 2. That only leaves one vacancy on the committee could it be for you? Go on why not.

Please get in touch with me if you have any problems with, or suggestions to enhance, our U3A.

Live, Laugh and Learn.

All my very best wishes

Graham

Chair - Bearsted & District u3a



Speaker Secretary (Rick)

February's speaker, Major Paul Whittle, gave his talk entitled "Land of the Gods – Discovering Eritrea".

A travelogue filled with historical content, this was a fascinating talk about the development and subsequent deterioration of a reclusive country as Dictatorship took over from Democracy, with students leaving the education system being compulsorily recruited into the army for an unspecified period of time. Failure to comply would result in the lives of their families and friends being jeopardised.

Paul showed pictures of Asmara, the Capital, part of which is a World Heritage Site due largely to its Italianate architecture and the railroad that linked with the coast, crossing a variety of terrains.

Amusingly, we saw pictures of the cable car system, built and used to move fruit and produce that monkeys regarded as a moving buffet until preventative measures were taken.

Paul's advice for anyone thinking of visiting this country at this time, is a decisive "No!".

In March, we will be joined by Geoffrey Mead, a retired Associate Tutor with the geography team at the University of Sussex. His talk is entitled "Channel Landscapes – Rye to the Hoo Peninsula".

This talk takes us on a coastal journey, starting from Rye in Sussex and following the Kent coast as far as the Hoo Peninsula. Geoffrey will be looking at some of the social history, geography, geology and `sense of place` of the various landscapes seen on the journey.

Transport

Those who regularly attend monthly meetings will know that parking in Detling can be difficult. It would therefore be helpful to others if members would consider whether car sharing is an option. Perhaps you know another member who lives near to you and also attends meetings. We know that some of you already do this but many may not have considered this as an option. Car sharing would not only benefit members but also the local community.

Note of Temporary Road Closures in the Area and Alternative Routes

Included with this newsletter is a note issued by Kent County Council concerning road closures and alternative routes. These may affect members when they are travelling to Detling to attend u3a events. Of course, they will have an impact at other times as well!

Share your Knowledge!

We know that many of you have hidden talents and so we would be interested to know whether anyone would like to make a presentation at our monthly General Meeting. Full support will be given so if you would like to share knowledge accrued in your working life or that reflects your interests, please let Richard or Graham know through the usual channel

Interest Group Co-Ordinator's Update (Linda)

Following on from last month's Reminder I am pleased to be able to tell you that several of our new groups are now planning their first meetings.

Diane, who is a new u3a member, has offered to be co-ordinator for **Local History 3**. There are already eight names on the list so you'll have to be quick if you want to join.

Planet-friendly Gardening, coordinated by Elizabeth (new member) and Maureen, will meet once a month to discuss gardening topics. There will be an emphasis on how we can all support the planet whilst having a garden that is attractive for the owners. The topics are chosen by the members. As gardeners they are keen to share plants, seeds, ideas and knowledge. Any member can share their garden as host but there is no obligation. They hope to plan several garden visits during the summer months. Meeting on 1st Tuesday of the month 2.00-4.00pm. First meeting in April. Details of the group are now on the website.

Elizabeth and Maureen will be at the April Open Day so be sure to speak to them there. Amanda and Marilyn will also be there as they will be coordinating a new **Floristry** group. They would love to tell you some of their ideas and there may be a couple of arrangements too. They have found a suitable venue and there are already four names on the list.

Kevin, who has only recently taken on the **Gardening** group, has now agreed to start a new **Astronomy** group. It too has four members who are now planning their first meeting.

Carol would like to start a **Patchwork & Quilting** group. She will also be at the Open Day so be sure to speak with her if you are interested in joining.

One of our new members, Fiona, would like to start a **Cookery for Beginners** group but we need to find suitable premises. Does anyone know of a venue that has a minimum of 3 stoves? Please let me know if you have any ideas.

As always, I can be found at the back of the hall at our monthly meetings in Detling. Come and talk to me if you want any information about groups, or you can contact me via our Bearsted & District u3a website.

[Show and Tell \(Thursday 11th April\)](#)

The committee has been making plans for our Show and Tell day on Thursday 11th April. We would like as many groups as possible to be represented as this gives an opportunity for prospective members to see



what we are about. It only needs one or two group members to be present at a table: bring along anything which shows what the group is about and what they have been up to. Would Group Co-ordinators

please let Linda, our Interest Groups Co-ordinator know if your group would like to be included, either in person or via the website. Alternatively let any member of the committee know and they will pass the message on.

[Group Activities](#)

Lunch Bunch (Nigel)

The next Lunch Bunch event will take place on Tuesday 26th March 12:15 for 12:45 at the Plough Inn, Sutton Rd, Langley ME17 3LX.

Hidden London Walking Group (Patricia and Richard)

The year started with a well-attended get together In Weaving Street.

Our first walk in February, concentrated on the Spitalfields area, where the City of London meets the East End of London. Over the last few hundred years the area has been moulded by migrants hoping to find a better life. Initially the Huguenots, then the Jewish community, and more recently the Bangladeshi, Bengali and Somali communities.



The history was fascinating and we were introduced to modern mosques, the pub where Jack the Ripper selected his victims, the silk trade areas and architecture that reflected the different occupants. We heard about the history of Bishopsgate, the outer area in earlier centuries which was outside the London city boundary. The beautiful St Botolph's Without Church – Bishopsgate, as it is known, houses a stained-glass window commemorating the bombing by the IRA of the area around the Baltic Exchange Building at 24 St Mary Axe and St Mary Axe church during The Troubles, in April 1992. Huge damage was caused over a wide area.



The huge matriarch with 20 elephant calves was moved from Marble Arch and relocated to Spitalfields in early 2021. The Herd of Hope depicts the plight of elephants in Africa, and the sculptures are of actual young orphaned elephants who have been rescued and are looked after by the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust in Africa. These sculptures are placed throughout the market area and surrounding streets. Artists Gillie and Marc have also placed a new sculpture 'Dogman and Rabbitwoman on a Vespa' at the Old Spitalfields Market.

Despite the rain, we had a very good walk, and we look forward to March.

Special Events (Maureen)

WE ARE CURRENTLY TAKING BOOKINGS FOR THE FOLLOWING 3 EVENTS:

TUESDAY 26 MARCH 10.30am to 12.30pm

GUIDED WALK WITH THE MOTE PARK RANGER, KAREN THORPE.

She will cover both the history & natural history of the park. We will mainly walk on paths but may take the odd diversion over grass to look at interesting features. Some areas will be uneven with slopes. Participants are advised to wear stout footwear & dress appropriately for the weather.

There is no charge for the walk but **numbers are limited to 15 participants**. If you choose to park your car inside the park there is a £2 charge for up to 6 hours. There are WCs near the cafe.

To book, please contact Maureen via the website.

TUESDAY 21 MAY 2 – 4.30pm

VISIT TO THE HEROINE OF DUNKIRK, THE MEDWAY QUEEN PADDLE STEAMER IN HER 100TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR.

This is not a boat trip. The Queen stays moored alongside Gillingham Pier. You will be served a cream tea in the recently renovated saloon and volunteers will be on hand to talk about the history & restoration of this grand old lady.

ACCESSIBILITY – there are steps leading down to the saloon & lower decks.

PARKING – there is limited free parking adjacent to the pier. Car sharing highly recommended.

WCs – either on the ship or in the workshop.

COST - £6 per person for the cream tea plus £7 entry (tickets valid for 1 year). If you already have an entry ticket, there is no need to pay again.

Proceeds go towards the Medway Queen Preservation Society.

PAYMENT – by bank transfer to The Bearsted & District U3A account No 81627254. Sort code 51 70 55 (Please quote your name plus MED Q in the reference) or by cheque to the treasurer.

SATURDAY 27 JULY 2-4pm

GRAVESEND POLLINATOR GARDEN VISIT

£7.50 per head (including tea/coffee & cake)

Numbers restricted to 20 so book early to avoid disappointment.

Stunning private garden featured on BBC Gardeners' World in 2022. Designed to provide year-round habitat for all wildlife, especially pollinating insects. See which moths visit after dark and pick up tips as to how to make your own garden nature friendly.



ACCESSIBILITY - most of the rear garden is level but there are 14 steps with handrail leading from the drive to the house and terrace. Some narrow footpaths and steps in terraced side garden.

PARKING - street parking - please aim to car share.

Sorry no dogs allowed.



PAYMENT - by bank transfer to The Bearsted & District U3A - account No 81627254 - sort code - 51 70 55 (Please quote your name plus POL GDN in the reference) or cheque to the treasurer.

IN THE AUTUMN:

WEDNESDAY 30 OCTOBER 1-3.30pm

TOUR OF GURDWARA SIKH TEMPLE GRAVESEND

Booking details to be advised nearer the time.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE EVENTS AND/OR OFFERS OF HELP
IN ORGANISING MUCH APPRECIATED

[Membership Secretary \(Claire\)](#)

Emergency contact details

Members are reminded to keep their emergency contact details up to date. Please note that if a couple attend a group together their emergency contact should be a third person not each other. If you need to make any changes, please let me know via the website.

Third Age Matters Magazine

Should anyone no longer need their copy of the Third Age Matters magazine, you can drop them off at the monthly general meeting at the new members table, new members coffee mornings or at our 'show and tell' afternoons. You will find Claire at the Membership desk.

[Photographs](#)

Any member wishing to photograph other members should **ensure that all those in front of the camera are happy to have their photograph taken**. This is **especially important if it is intended to publish the photograph in any way**, particularly on the website, in the Reminder or otherwise make it publicly available.

[Contributions from Members](#)

This month's Quiz (Damian)

- 1. Beethoven used the words “Be embraced, ye millions, I embrace you. This kiss to all the world” in his 9th Symphony (Choral). Who wrote these words?**
- 2. Who famously said, “But it does move” about the Earth?**

3. The advice “never eat more than you can lift” was given by whom?
4. “Some people think that football is more important than life or death. I can assure them it is much more serious than that.” Who made this statement?
5. Who said “History is about arrogance, vanity and vapidty. Who better than me to present it?”
6. Which Prime Minister said “My policy on cake is pro having it and pro eating it”?
7. “I sing all kinds” and “I don’t sound like nobody” were the words of a completely unknown singer shortly before making his first demo recording. Who was he?
8. Who said, about France, “How can you govern a country which has 246 varieties of cheese?”
9. “Two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I am not completely sure about the universe” was said by whom?
10. “...an altar upon which are placed the choicest offerings of my mind” was said by whom about what?

Answers to last month’s quiz

1. Which Beatles’ single only reached No 2 in the charts because of the popularity of “Release Me” by Englebert Humperdinck? **Penny Lane/Strawberry Fields Forever.**
2. Which of The Beatles’ No 1 singles was recorded with only two members of the group in the studio? **The Ballad of John and Yoko (George and Ringo were absent).**
3. Which character from Lewis Carroll’s “Through the Looking Glass” did John Lennon erroneously portray as a ‘good guy’ in one of his most famous songs? **The Walrus.**
4. Name the drummer Ringo Starr replaced. **Pete Best.**

5. In what year did John Lennon and Paul McCartney meet?
1957.
6. What was the name of the group John Lennon was playing in at the time? **The Quarrymen.**
7. On 4th April 1964 The Beatles occupied the top 5 places in the US's *Cashbox* chart. What was the No 1 song? **Twist and Shout.**
8. Who did The Beatles meet on August 27th 1965? **Elvis Presley at Elvis's home in Beverley Hills.**
9. Which Beatles LP was the last to feature a song not composed by one of the Beatles? **Let it Be (Maggie Mae, though it was arranged by them).**
10. Which Beatles' song did William Shatner cover? **Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds.**

Website

Dan, who is responsible for our u3a's publicity, would like members to send him any particularly attractive photographs of Bearsted that they think would be appropriate for the Welcome page of the Bearsted and District u3a website. If you have any, please contact him using the publicity link on the contact page of our website. He will give instructions on how to submit them.

Up-to-date details of our u3a are on our website. For access use the link: <https://u3asites.org.uk/bearsted/home>

The national u3a newsletter is full of useful and interesting things you can become involved in, including podcasts. All u3a members can now obtain access to national newsletters from the u3a website available at <http://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>. It is easy to create an account to use it. If you want to listen to u3a radio podcasts, you can do so by accessing the [u3a YouTube channel](#). **Please note: should clicking on any link not work simply cut and paste the link into your browser.**

Request for Contributions

Everyone is invited to make a contribution to the next Reminder or to comment on this one. Please contact Damian via our website. Book groups might like to send a photograph of the cover of a book they have been reading; or you might like to submit a picture of a member carrying out a u3a activity.

Many of you subscribe to “Third Age Matters”, the magazine of the national u3a. Members are invited to contribute their thoughts to The Reminder on any interesting articles they read there. If you wish to do so, please let Damian know via the website.

Deadline for Contributions to the April 2024 Reminder (Damian)

Please note that the **deadline** for contributions to the April 2024 Reminder is Friday **22nd March**. This is early as Damian is away at the beginning of April. The committee will need to scrutinise a draft before issue so prompt responses would be appreciated. Also, some of our members are not online and time needs to be allowed for them to receive paper copies by post. It would be appreciated if any contributions could be submitted in WORD format.

Members will not need reminding (although we are going to do so), that we do not use members’ surnames in The Reminder for privacy reasons.