



BENFLEET BULLETIN



Issue 23: February/March/April 2020

Website: U3Asites.org.uk/benfleet

FROM THE CHAIR: Happy New Year to all members.

Yes, I know this Bulletin comes out in February but as I was away for the January meeting this is my first chance to wish you all a happy and healthy year ahead; a year in which you might explore new horizons, new challenges and new interests.



I hope by now you are thinking of areas to develop in new interest groups. How about restarting a lunch group, forming a creative writing group or developing your artistic talents?

For some of our members, who may have lost loved ones or are coping with serious illnesses, 2019 was not a good year. I send you the very best wishes from us all. I know our members are so good at spreading their friendship or messages of support. Should you find yourselves alone or in need of comfort, we are here to help in whatever way we can.

Looking ahead, the Castle point group of U3A branches are coming together to run an Activity Day on "**Ageing well**". This will take place on **April 17th at King John's School**. This is an opportunity to participate in a wide range of exciting experiences. More details will follow but please note the date.

Wishing you all the very best for 2020.

Marion (Chair)

Benfleet Christmas Lights

It was very pleasing to have lights again this year funded by local donations.



SPEAKERS & EVENTS AT FUTURE CLUB MEETINGS

Last Tuesday every Month (except December)

2020

28 Jan. **The Treasures of our local Coast. Graham Mee, RSPB**

25 Feb. **Haven Hospices. Sally Bridger**

31 March **Tutan Khamun's Egypt. Janet Brewer**

28 April **Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies. Martin Lloyd**

26 May **A Woman in Fleet Street. Deborah Brady**

See the full 2020 meeting speakers at <https://u3asites.org.uk/benfleet/events>



SCAM ALERTS Sorry to say but the scammers are in full flow just now. The latest is a recorded message supposedly from Amazon [it's NOT] about your 'Prime subscription', which most people don't have anyway.

Please just put the phone down and

Never be tempted to press the 1 button as requested.

2020 cheques: when signing cheques and maybe other legal documents it has been recommended that we date with the full year 2020, not just 20, which can be modified.

Many, many scams:

The Essex Police Fraud Office have provided a summary of many types of scam and things to look out for. This is available on the Benfleet U3A website at:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/benfleet/links> and select "**Common Scams**"

No reputable organisation or Government body like HMRC will cold call or email and ask for details of bank accounts or your PIN or access numbers. The best thing to do is put the phone down but if you are worried, then phone that organisation on a number on your card or available on their website and preferably on a different phone.

Community News - non-U3A activities

Items listed are for your information only and are not U3A organised.



CPBC and livewell

MAN WITH A PAN

Male, over 65 and keen to learn basic cookery skills?
Come along to this new course on how to make simple, tasty, affordable meals and enjoy what you make together.

From MONDAY 10 February – every Monday for 8 weeks.
10:15 to 12:45pm Hadleigh Baptist Church, Hadleigh SS7 2SE
£3 per week. To book call **CLARE on 07583 049376.**

SOCIAL OUTINGS

To **book** or for further information on Outings please visit:

u3asites.org.uk/benfleet/page/19756 - or contact **Maria Kelly** via the 'Outings' page or via email at [Outings Organiser](mailto:Outings.Organiser)

- ❖ If interested in any trip marked '**FULL**', contact **Maria** for any cancellations.
- ❖ Coach excursions are generally limited to **48 places**: therefore seats will be allocated strictly on a first come, first served basis.
- ❖ **Where food is included, please advise Maria of any dietary/allergy requirements when booking.**

Thursday 12 March 2020

Outing: **ELY Cambridgeshire**

Status: **OPEN for booking**

Contact: **Maria Kelly** via email at [Outings Organiser](mailto:Outings.Organiser)

Cost: **£15 per person coach and gratuity only**

Last Payment Date: **To be advised**

Pickup: **To be advised**

Visit the old city of Ely, which gets its name from the 'Island of Eels' and Oliver Cromwell was its MP. You can visit his house, which is the tourist information centre.

Lots to see but the main attraction may be Ely Cathedral, which also houses the **Gowns and Crowns exhibition** open on our day plus a **Stained Glass Museum**.

Tickets to visit the Cathedral range from £8 to £19pp depending what you include.

Cathedral tickets are NOT included in the U3A price.

Visit elycathedral.org to see information on the cathedral and possibly book tickets.

Visit visitely.org.uk for other information about what to see in Ely.



Tuesday 5 May 2020

Outing: **PASHLEY MANOR GARDENS, East Sussex**

Status: **OPEN for booking**

Contact: **Teresa Sergeant** via email at [Garden Visits](#)

Cost: **£24-50 per person coach/gratuity and entrance to the gardens/Tulip Festival**

Last Payment Date: **To be advised**

Pickup: **To be advised**

Pashley Manor hosts a spectacular **Tulip Festival**. See this garden, on the border of Sussex and Kent, carpeted with over 35,000 tulips, creating stunning scenes for visitors to enjoy.



Winners of sixty eight Chelsea Gold Medals, are on hand sharing their knowledge of these beautiful bulbs and to take orders from those inspired by the spectacle.

With a café serving locally sourced and homemade cakes, scones and light lunches. Pashley's Tulip Festival makes a superb day out.

Visit: www.pashleymanorgardens.com for more information about the gardens.

Wednesday 1 July 2020

Outing: **THAMES BARGE CRUISE from IPSWICH**

Status: **ADVICE ONLY – not booking yet**

Contact: **Maria Kelly** via email at [Outings Organiser](#)

Cost: **£TBA** coach/gratuity/4 hour cruise/Ploughman's Lunch/Fruit Crumble

Last Payment Date: **TBA**

Pickup: **TBA**

Further details to be completed before booking opens

Other planned trips in 2020: Maria has had some difficulty in tying down costs and booking dates, so below is a list of proposed trips **JUST** to give an indication to members regarding what is being planned. **NOT firm and NOT booking.**

MAY: Watercress Line, Hampshire- enthusiast railway line.

JUNE: Visit Whitstable, Kent.

AUGUST: Visit Hastings, East Sussex.

SEPTEMBER: Visit Highclere Castle, Newbury, Hampshire.

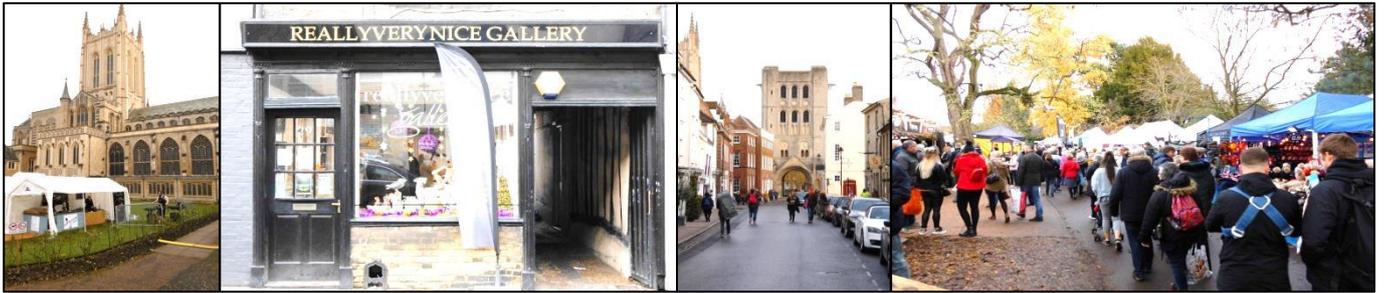
OCTOBER: Brogdale Fruit Farm, Faversham, Kent - National Apple Festival.

NOVEMBER: Visit to a Poppy Factory.

DECEMBER: Christmas at Hever Castle – near Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

RECENT OUTINGS

Bury St. Edmunds



The Tower of London



Thames River Cruise



To view all photos of these trips and other outings visit <https://u3asites.org.uk/benfleet/page/19756> and select trip from right hand menu.

Benfleet U3A NEW YEAR LUNCH At the Arlington, Leigh; Friday 17 January 2020

Our grateful thanks to Jill Parr for organising the event accommodating 95 of our members. Its a tremendous amount of work. Well done Jill.



50s/60s Dance with The Beaucrees Saturday 18 April 2020 at Richmond Hall

The 2019 dance with the Beaucrees was a great success and by popular request we are repeating the event in April 2020.

Final price is £15 pp but all the tickets are now sold.

Our thanks to **Mavis Regan** for organising this event – again lots of effort and time needed.



GROUP NEWS

A full list of group contacts is given on page 11

NEW GROUPS?



Your suggestions for new activities/groups are always welcome. Iris has a suggestions list at each member's meeting and is happy to discuss ideas – as are any of the committee members.

GRUMPY OLD MEN/WOMEN groups are still on offer. Sign up at the members meeting or contact **Iris Mead** via email at [Interest Groups Coordinator](#)

BUS and BEER

For Gentlemen and Ladies (you can drink something other than beer), this New Group will visit different pubs using their bus passes to enjoy a drink, chew the cud and enjoy each other's company.

Sign up at the members meetings or contact

Iris Mead via email at [Interest Groups Coordinator](#)



WOMEN IN HISTORY now has a waiting list as the existing group is full.

Members wishing to start a second group can sign up at the member's meetings or should contact **Iris Mead** via email at [Interest Groups Coordinator](#)

The existing group will be able to offer advice on things they have done to help get started.

YOUR GROUPS:

Do you enjoy seeing photos of the group activities on the website, this bulletin and the film shown at the New Year Lunch BUT do not see your group represented?

There is a reason! We need details of your activities - photos, short write-ups, etc.

If you wish to encourage new members you can take part in our '**In the Spotlight**' articles to showcase what you are doing.

Please contact or forward information to:

Alan Aldridge via email at [Bulletin Editor](#)

PROJECTOR and SCREEN – are available for group use.

Please contact **Sheila Sears** via email at [Vice-Chair](#)

SPOTLIGHT



For the next few bulletins we will look in more detail at one of our groups. So now the spotlight is on.....

Family History Group

The Benfleet U3A Family History group is led by Grahame Harris, who in a previous life was the Historical Services supervisor at the Essex Record Office for several years.



The group is a small and a very friendly assemblage. Meetings take place on the first Tuesday of every month between 2pm and 4pm.

We have access to [Ancestry.co.uk](https://www.ancestry.co.uk) and this is the main source of investigation. Our group does not have a fixed agenda and the meetings are very informal. The team decides whether a short talk on different aspects of research is required such as overseer accounts or parish registers. Or each will each bring a personnel genealogical problem for the group to brainstorm and hopefully resolve.

The group have varying degrees of experience and new members are always welcome even if they have no previous knowledge.

Several members have found Germanic threads to their family lines or resolved long standing mysteries and many discovered relatives they were not aware of.

One particular colleague that we investigated found that in 1884 he had a relation whose death certificate gave the cause of death as "wilful murder by the Husband". The Husband who was found guilty of the crime had on his death certificate, death by "dislocation of the neck by hanging"

Each month members expand their awareness of where they come from and how they got here and always in a friendly and good humoured way with mandatory tea and biscuits.

If you are interested in exploring your family history and/or learning about the techniques for family research then please contact:

Grahame via email at [Family History](mailto:Grahame@FamilyHistory.org)

Thoughts for a genealogist:

My ancestors are so hard to find,
they must have been in a witness protection program!

Only a genealogist views a step backwards as progress.

Genealogists: The only people who are excited to read obituaries.

Recent Group Activities

Wildlife: Ingrebourne Valley/Hornchurch Country Park



Walking over 5 miles: Priory Park and Southend Seafront



French – lunch



Wildlife: Benfleet Downs



Photography: IMAGE OF THE YEAR 2019

A non-competitive, competition to bring forward the best of members work through the year.

**The Winner:
Steve Dimon:
Foggy Church**



**Joint 2nd
place:**

**Peter Lewsey
Ulting Church**



Lee King: London Eye

**Joint 3rd place:
Terri Waters: Watercress Line**



Fred Jacques: Dragonfly



All other 17 entries can be viewed at:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/benfleet/page/101596>

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Monthly unless specified

SUBJECT	CONTACT	MEETING DATE
<u>Badminton 1</u>	<u>Brian Boyce</u>	Mon. pm weekly
<u>Badminton 2</u>	<u>Robert Gray</u>	Thurs 7.30pm weekly
<u>Book Club</u>	<u>Pat Cluness</u>	Monthly: variable
<u>Card & Board Games</u>	<u>Ann Sayer</u>	2 nd Wed. pm
<u>Comparative Religion</u>	<u>Cheryl Kirby</u>	2 nd Tues. pm
<u>Culinary Experience</u>	<u>Barbara Webb</u>	4 th Mon.
<u>Darts</u>	<u>Chris Hicks</u>	Last Wed. pm
<u>Discussion 1</u>	<u>Jenny Brown</u>	2 nd Mon. pm
<u>Discussion 2</u>	<u>Jenny Brown</u>	1 st Tues. am
<u>Family History</u>	<u>Grahame Harris</u>	1st Tues. 2-4pm
<u>Flower Arranging</u>	<u>Brenda Liberty</u>	2 nd Fri. am
<u>French</u>	<u>Linda Aldridge</u>	2 nd Wed am
<u>Garden Visits</u>	<u>Theresa Sergeant</u>	Various
<u>Gardening</u>	<u>Jenny Brown</u>	Monthly: variable
<u>Keep Fit</u>	<u>Suzanne Worland</u>	Mon pm. Evening term time
<u>Knit & Stitch</u>	<u>Pauline Everett</u>	2 nd Tues. pm
<u>Local Interest</u>	<u>Sue Lewsey</u>	1 st Wed
<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Iris Mead</u>	On hold [see group note]
<u>Meditation</u>	<u>Richard Newall</u>	Tues. am; weekly
<u>Naval & Military History</u>	<u>Phil Lloyd-Worth</u>	2 nd Wed. 2pm
<u>Paper Craft 1</u>	<u>Ann Sayer</u> <u>Sheila Sears</u>	1 st Fri.am
<u>Paper Craft 2</u>	<u>Ann Sayer</u> <u>Sheila Sears</u>	3 rd Fri. am
<u>Photography</u>	<u>Sue Lewsey</u>	3 rd Mon. pm
<u>Scrabble</u>	<u>Doreen Curran</u>	Alternate Mon/Thurs weekly
<u>Sewing</u>	<u>Joan Daly</u>	On hold - restart soon
<u>Singing</u>	<u>Linda Burdett</u>	2 nd & 3 rd Thurs.
<u>Spanish</u>	<u>Sheila Radford</u>	Wed. pm weekly
<u>Ten Pin Bowling</u>	<u>Jim Regan</u>	3 rd Fri. am
<u>Walking Group upto 5 miles</u>	<u>Eve Burgess</u>	1 st Thurs. am
<u>Walking over 5 miles</u>	<u>Doreen Wiggans</u>	4 th Thurs. am
<u>Walking over 5 miles-Group 2</u>	<u>Freda Antoniou</u>	3 rd Wed. am
<u>Wildlife</u>	<u>Janet Humphrey</u>	2 nd Thurs. am
<u>Women in History</u>	<u>Jean Askew</u>	3 rd Fri

To join a group please call the contact number given above. If full, or for any queries, please contact **Iris Mead** via [Interest Groups Coordinator](#)



Committee Members

<u>Chairperson</u>	Marion Coleman	
<u>Vice-Chair</u>	Sheila Sears	
<u>Treasurer</u>	Jill Parr	
<u>Business Secretary</u>	Mavis Regan	
<u>Interest Groups Coordinator</u>	Iris Mead	
<u>Membership Secretary</u>	Bob Munson	
<u>Outings Organiser</u>	Maria Kelly	
<u>Bulletin Editor</u> and <u>Webmaster</u>	Alan Aldridge	
<u>Committee Member 1</u>	Philip Lloyd-Worth	
<u>Committee Member 2</u>	Suzanne Worland	
<u>Committee Member 3</u>	Lee King	

Bereavement and Unwell: Please contact Suzanne Worland via email at [Committee Member 2](#) to confirm details of any bereavement or illness, and an appropriate card will be forwarded.