

**\* Monthly Meeting – Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August\***

Please join us at our next members' meeting. It will take place at **2pm** on **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August** at **Queenborough**.

**PICNIC in the PARK**

This year, our Summer – PICNIC IN THE PARK – will again be held at Queenborough in the Queenborough Park - ME11 5AA (also known as The Elephant Park). This is a lovely small, enclosed park close to the harbour at the end of the High Street opposite the Old House at Home pub, there is also a handy toilet block.

Come and join us for a fun filled sociable afternoon with your fellow members. We have arranged a variety of entertainment together with stalls displaying some of our activities that members have been involved in over the past year. Don't forget to bring along your picnic and a picnic chair. Everyone is welcome so please bring along any friends or family members (including children) who would like to spend a sociable afternoon together.

**Non-members are welcome – Come and see how we “learn, laugh and live”**

**\*Save the date for next month: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September\***

Chris Reed – The life of Lady Hamilton (Warts and All!)

MONTHLY MEMBERS MEETING

**Chairman's Ramblings**

At the time of writing, we have had one long awaited downpour (hurray), which hopefully will revitalise our sad and ailing gardens. With buckets, watering cans and any other available receptacle that was not already holding the washing up water, hubby and I raced to collect this precious commodity; the neighbours must have thought we were demented, running hither and thither trying to fill up the water butts – just in case another drought was on its way! Really, the whole water thing has been enough to make you spit (but only if there was a drought hungry plant in sight I hasten to add).

The garden was to be a showstopper this year. My sister (from Surrey) is the Carol Klein of her neighbourhood and has always – diplomatically - suggested I make a better effort where I can, but sadly any green fingers I did have at the beginning of the year have decidedly turned into a poor shade of brown!

As a hint during last year's Christmas festivities, she kindly wrapped up numerous envelopes of seeds harvested from her garden, neatly handwritten with the name of the seed and its approximate height together with numerous other cryptic notes which would need to be decoded by Bletchley Park – however, being horticulturally challenged this of course meant absolutely nothing to me! I was also told that these exotic species and wildflowers would transform my humble patch into a mini Kew Gardens. So, I sowed them with wild abandon with the eager enthusiasm of a small child, even the nooks and crannies were not left out from my discerning eye. The mixture would not only brighten up the neglected areas of the garden but offer a peaceful haven for wildlife and a summer full of wildflower meadows and the beginning of a quintessential traditional cottage garden. Painstakingly watering and nurturing over the past few months had become a mission, the rigorous growth I put down to my unfaltering care and attention, but what

have I got – hundreds of tomato plants - absolutely everywhere!! In fact, I could probably go into business. Not only have I spent at least one week of my life intensely cultivating my dream garden but they have drunk my water butts dry, craving their daily fix of the liquid stuff like an alcoholic with no arms!

My “Gardening Success” book tells me that every garden should be full of surprises. Well, it certainly has done that!

### INTEREST GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

#### PANTOMIME – ALADDIN - January 2023

One of our members, Elsa, is also a member of RATS – Rainham Amateur Theatrical Society. Elsa has offered to coordinate an outing to the next RATS pantomime for u3a members.

The pantomime, ALADDIN, will be held in January 2023 at the Oasthouse Theatre, Stratford Lane, Rainham, Gillingham ME8 8AG. The exact dates and cost are yet to be confirmed, but we are expecting tickets to be released for sale in October. We will review transport arrangements once we have an idea of numbers of people interested. Let us know if you are interested in finding out more by emailing us on [isleofshepeyu3s@gmail.com](mailto:isleofshepeyu3s@gmail.com)

#### INTEREST GROUP DISPLAYS

Photo displays of some of our interest group meetings and some of the projects completed by our members are displayed on our communications board at our meetings. There is also a booklet “Wildlife Gardening” created from all the articles written by Helen. Photos and articles written by our members can also be found on our website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/isle-of-sheppey/home>

Several of our interest groups have taken a break during the summer months, so we are looking forward to our return to more normal activities in September. If anyone has any ideas for new groups and are willing to help facilitate them, the committee would be pleased to provide advice. All you need are a few people with similar interests and an organised get together and you can create your very own bespoke interest group!

If you are interested in joining any interest group, please sign up at one of our meetings or email us on [isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com](mailto:isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com) We will be reviewing all sign ups in the next few weeks once the summer holidays are behind us.

#### LULLINGSTONE CASTLE WORLD OF GARDENS

Six of our members responded to last month’s email regarding joining the Faversham u3a on their trip to Lullingstone Castle World of Gardens. The trip was an exclusive private guided tour around the Gardens by Tom Hart Dyke (the future heir, botanist, plant hunter who was kidnapped by guerrilla fighters in Columbo whilst looking for a rare orchid in 2000). All the members had a great time and enjoyed meeting the Faversham members.

INTEREST GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

### NATIONAL u3a

**Have you seen** what is offer on the National u3a website: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>. There are lots of different things you can read about and get involved with ranging from online events and tutorials to the National Learn Programme. It is highly recommended to sign up for the **national newsletter** to get regular updates as new content is uploaded frequently. – More info below.

**Have you signed up for the NATIONAL u3a NEWSLETTER?** <https://www.u3a.org.uk/contact>  
(Click on the link then scroll to the bottom of the page and enter your details to subscribe)

## LOCAL NEWS AND EVENTS

The Isle of Sheppey has some great history – have you visited any of these local museums?

**Minster GateHouse** - <https://www.minstergatehouse.co.uk/>



The Minster Gatehouse Museum is housed in the 12th century gatehouse building, which was originally gatehouse to the Minster Abbey of SS Mary and Sexburga. The Gatehouse is a Grade 1 listed building and has been a museum since it was first leased to the Sheppey Local History Society by the council in the late 1970's when the hard work began to convert the old building into a local history museum. The Minster Gatehouse Museum opened its doors to the public in 1982

**Queenborough Guild Hall** - <https://www.queenboroughguildhallmuseum.co.uk/>

This small museum tells the fascinating story of the historic town of Queenborough with hundreds of photographs of naval vessels and images of Queenborough in days gone by. . From a small Saxon settlement to a wealthy Borough and Royal Castle built by Edward III, Queenborough is full of Victorian industrial heritage still evolving to this day. You can also view the court room of the Guildhall, the first on the Isle of Sheppey, then maybe a look into the dungeon!



**Rose Street Cottage of Curiosities** - <https://www.rosestreetcottage.co.uk/>



Rose Street Cottage and its two neighbouring properties are the only remaining homes of a number that were built for Sheerness Dockyard workers in the 18th and 19th centuries – often using timber “Chips” from the docks. They are weather boarded, roofed with Welsh slate and are Grade II listed. The museum is an intimate and intriguing space where you will experience vibrant Arts events and workshops in a cottage atmosphere and enjoy the changing monthly Gallery exhibitions.

**Eastchurch Aviation Museum** - <https://eastchurchaviationmuseum.org.uk/>

The Museum's aim is to preserve and maintain the rich history of aviation on the Isle of Sheppey, so why not take a tour around this museum and learn about Sheppey's pioneering aviation heritage.



**The Criterion Bluetown** - <https://www.thecriterionbluetown.co.uk/>



All are welcome to the little gem hidden in Blue Town, Sheerness. They are a community cinema, music hall, museum and show destination right here on the Isle of Sheppey.

The Criterion Bluetown encompasses Bluetown Heritage Centre, Criterion Music Hall and Criterion Community Cinema. The centre has several displays showing the vast historical significance of the area.

## KEEP SMILING



This picture was given to Class II Children and they were asked to suggest a headline. The winning entry was:

'Never swallow your chewing gum'.

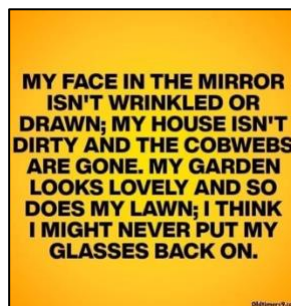
I'm a multi-tasking procrastinator. I can put off all kinds of things all at once.



ROTTENCARDS

I thought the dryer made my clothes shrink. Turns out it was the refrigerator.

The man that invented the Ferris wheel never met the man that invented the merry go round. They traveled in different circles.



## NATIONAL u3a



Have you listened to the monthly **u3a Radio podcasts** on YouTube?

Podcasts are uploaded on 17th of every month. Click here to listen to the August edition: [https://youtu.be/MzRXtAx\\_yg](https://youtu.be/MzRXtAx_yg)

Click here for the full list of radio podcasts since they started in September 2020:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLsB2t41TNozHSJ4fvod\\_yjxrUJDzqbDD](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLsB2t41TNozHSJ4fvod_yjxrUJDzqbDD)

### NATIONAL u3a Online Learning events

There are a number of workshops, webinars and interactive sessions delivered by members for members which are free to join. Find out more here: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

### National u3a Learning Programme

There is also a wide range of learning programmes available on the national u3a website.

Click here to find out more: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>

## Membership Subscription

Our membership offers great value for money so, why not bring along a friend to the next meeting. Membership is currently £20 per year and includes entry to the monthly meetings with refreshments and a national magazine 'Third Age Matters' delivered to your home, five times a year.

We are moving our membership year to run 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March, so our next renewal date will be 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. Members joining now will pay a reduced fee of £10.

Non-members are welcome to our monthly meetings for a small fee of £3 so they can see if they'd like to join.

### Monthly Meeting Dates 2022

Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month at 2pm until 4pm at Minster Club, (except in August & December). Free refreshments are provided.

22<sup>nd</sup> September

15<sup>th</sup> December meeting

27<sup>th</sup> October

Christmas Social Get Together at Minster Club (NB one week earlier than usual)

24<sup>th</sup> November

### Information and Contact Details

You can contact us here:

[Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com](mailto:Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com)

Email us to join our WhatsApp Group:

[Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com](mailto:Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com)

Find our website here:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/isle-of-sheppey/home>

Interact with u3a members around the country on the

u3a: Keeping in Touch Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/U3AKeepingInTouch>

Our Facebook Page is:

<https://www.facebook.com/isleofsheppeyu3a>

u3a YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/user/TheU3a/videos>

Our members only Facebook Group is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/384159678869515>

### Diversity & Inclusion Statement

Isle of Sheppey u3a recognises that everyone is different and aims to create an environment that values and treats all members fairly. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity and to ensure that u3a membership is as accessible as possible to different groups within the community