

**\* Monthly Meeting – Thursday 23rd February \***

Please join us at our next members’ meeting.  
It will take place at **2pm** on **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February** at **Minster Club**

**DICKENS IN KENT**

**Christoph Bull**

Christoph is a tour guide and speaker who has entertained many local Kent groups with his illustrated talks and walks. Christoph was our guest speaker last March when he gave an entertaining and well received talk about Pocahontas.



Christoph returns this month where, through illustrations, readings and quotations from the works of Charles Dickens, Christoph will speak about the life and times of the author in Kent. Christoph, as a former librarian, can confirm that Dickens is the one author that everyone knows; and that most people can also name at least one of the books that he wrote.

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

**\*Save the date for next month: Thursday 23rd March\***

**Paul Robbins – ‘You Stupid Boy!’ - History of the Home Guard**

**DAVID’S RAMBLINGS**

*Heather is taking an occasional well-earned break from her Chairman’s Rambling so, this month, Isle of Sheppey u3a member David Jones, a retired newspaper editor, laments that the old adage: “What can go wrong, will go wrong” is alive and well!*

Scottish poet Robbie Burns couldn’t have put it better; the best-laid schemes o’ mice an’ men gang aft a-gley.

In other words, things can still go belly-up with even the most carefully planned projects and especially so when the printed word is involved.

After nearly 60 years as a journalist, I have lost count of the number of times where the finished product ended up as a travesty of the original, usually through human error or simply a case of “too many cooks” being involved. The journey from conception to birth can be full of hurdles in the media world.

Typewriters may now be museum exhibits, but computers haven’t helped much – every sub-editor still thinks he or she can improve on the author’s original. Bad mistake!

Long experience should have taught me not to count my chickens when I sent what I thought was a perfectly honed article to the u3a’s Third Age Matters magazine about our wine appreciation group’s visit to Sheerness Dockyard Church, hosted by Will Palin, son of Michael.



Not only was the article cut back drastically (I prefer the word butchered) I was horrified to see that the caption I sent to accompany the photo I took of Will Palin and group members had also been butchered. Heather, the wife of our wine group leader Ken Pugh, had been cut out of the photo completely and my wife, Lynda, became Heather. This meant that, nationwide, Ken has now been labelled as a bigamist, while to our friends, Lynda appears to have divorced me, changed her name to Heather and quietly married Ken.

We are now awaiting some, “What a shame, and so soon after your Golden Wedding” emails. Oh, the scandal of it all!

But, dear readers, don’t believe all you read in the newspapers - and certainly not the u3a magazine. Ken is still happily married to Heather and I am still hitched to Lynda.

Robbie, you were spot-on about best-laid plans, even 240 years ago.

I was thinking of suing, but I have settled for an apology from Joanne Smith, the magazine’s editor. A bizarre twist to this tale is that, to my astonishment, Joanne Smith turns out to be the very same Joanne Smith who was one of my reporters some 35 years ago.

Joanne, you’re fired!



Editor, Joanne Smith – She’s sorry!

*\*The full version of my article can be viewed on the Isle of Sheppey u3a’s Website\**  
<https://u3asites.org.uk/files/i/isle-of-sheppey/docs/sheernessdockyardtamarticle.pdf>

**COMMITTEE NEWS**

**AGM – MAY 2023**

The committee wish to give advanced notice that they have agreed to hold the 2023 AGM on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May at Minster Club at 2pm. This will be followed by the usual member’s monthly meeting.

More information about our AGM will be notified closer to the date.

**BRING YOUR REUSABLE COFFEE CUP**

You might remember, before covid, we asked you to bring your reusable coffee cups and many of you did so. Now we are back to collecting our own tea/coffee, we would be grateful if you could do this where you can. Not only is it more environmentally friendly to reduce our use of these single use cups, but reusable cups are also nicer to drink out of and can save our u3a some money on the increasing cost of these consumables. We will, of course, continue to have plenty of disposable cups on hand.



**MEMBERSHIPS SUBSCRIPTIONS**

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.

Our next renewal date will be 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and the committee have agreed to keep the subscription at £20 for the year 2023/24.

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

**MONTHLY MEETING DATES 2023**

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

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|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> March    | 27 <sup>th</sup> July      | 26 <sup>th</sup> October  |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> April    | 24 <sup>th</sup> August    | 23 <sup>rd</sup> November |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> May -AGM | 28 <sup>th</sup> September | 14 <sup>th</sup> December |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> June     |                            |                           |

## INTEREST GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

### HATS FOR UKRAINIAN BABIES

Hats for new-born babies may be life- saving. Their heads are relatively larger than bodies compared to older children and adults and a large source of heat loss. Mild increased heat loss may be associated with poor feeding and growth. Larger losses may be associated with decreased body temperature and increased chance of death.

Rotary clubs across the UK have been helping the people of Ukraine who have been affected by the war, so with our links to our local Minster Rotary Club, who act a collection point, they have asked us to let our members know about this project.

If you are feeling crafty, have a bit of time and can knit, perhaps you can produce a new-born baby hat or two to be sent out to Ukraine. One of our crafty members Linda, has already knitted several. Click here to find a pattern on our website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/files/i/isle-of-sheppey/docs/newborncapforukraine.pdf>



### SINGING FOR FUN INTEREST GROUP

We are pleased to inform you that we now have a volunteer to get a Singing for Fun Group up and running. Our member, Pam Boston is a talented musician, you may have seen her wonderful performance at our Christmas meeting, playing her electric violin. Please let us know if you are interested in this group so we can add you to the group list, Pam is hoping to start once the better weather is here in the Spring.

### HISTORY INTEREST GROUP

We have been approached by a member who is interested is starting up a History group – if you are interested to find out more, please let us know.

### WILDLIFE GARDENING WORKSHOP **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May (All Day)**

We are very fortunate to have an active member of Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT) as one of our members. Helen Knell has been keeping us well informed, since 2021, of all the actions we can take to encourage wildlife into our gardens (all articles are available on our website). Following on from our very successful meeting last month, with the talk by Victoria Golding from the KWT, Helen is currently in the process of organising a workshop to take place at her property, with a view to learning more about the practical aspects and designing and planning changes you can make to your own garden. More information to follow.

### ART FOR FUN WORKSHOP

This session was a great success. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed getting together and taking part in the Pastels Workshop. Much discussion took place on the interpretation of the sunset and everyone produced some amazing work. Advice was given by Debbie Adams who is a well-known local artist.



### FLOWER ARRANGING DEMONSTRATION – Postponed

The Flower arranging demonstration on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February had to be cancelled, due to unforeseen circumstances, we are hoping to be able to rearrange at a later date.

## \*FREE WORKSHOPS\*

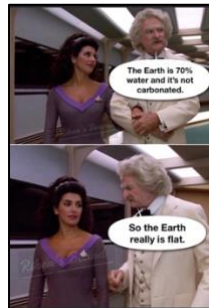
Several our current and future events and workshops are being part funded by grants we have been able to secure and are open to all members. These events and learning opportunities are being supported by our successful local grant applications to Minster Parish Council and Swale Borough Council for improving cultural and leisure opportunities for seniors.

**Please let us know** if you are interested in any of the advertised events/activities:

Email us on [isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com](mailto:isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com)

## KEEP SMILING

I got my friend a telepathic abacus.  
It's the thought that counts.



### NATIONAL u3a - <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>



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

**Have you signed up for the NATIONAL u3a NEWSLETTER?** Get the most up to date news from National Office and find out about learning events as they are added.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/contact>

### Information & Contact Details

You can contact us here:

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

Find our website here:

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

Email us to join our WhatsApp Group:

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

Our Facebook Page is:

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

Our members only Facebook Group is:

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

Interact with u3a members around the country on the u3a: Keeping in Touch Facebook group:

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

u3a YouTube Channel

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

### 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