

*** Monthly Meeting – Thursday 23rd March ***

Please join us at our next members' meeting.
It will take place at **2pm** on **Thursday 23rd March** at **Minster Club**

YOU STUPID BOY – History of the Home Guard**Paul Robbins**

Step Back in Time is a programme of historical talks presented by Paul Robbins, an experienced presenter, historian, and author. Indeed, it is history with a difference, history with a passion! The combination of fascinating subject matter, great content, and a unique style of presentation has meant that Paul has entertained groups and organisations both large and small throughout the country.

Step Back in Time offers an exceptional and entertaining range of historical talks, including the incredibly popular and amusing "Great British Eccentrics and Rogues" talk, the "You Stupid Boy" talk which looks at the real story of Britain's Home Guard, through to his compelling and moving presentation on the life and career of Sir Winston Churchill.



This talk will take a look back at Britain's real Home Guard, originally called the Local Defence Volunteers. Were the Home Guard a group of dodderly old men with a few stupid boys thrown in? Or, were they Britain's last line of defence to protect against the German invasion in the summer of 1940?

The talk features the testimony of those who served in the Home Guard during these early days of the Home Guard and how for some of them, the role of a Home Guardsman became something very different from what they expected. One of the weapons that the British Government used to very great effect all through the Second World War was propaganda, and you will see some unique examples of it during this talk.

This is however primarily a talk about a time in British History when many expected to see the Country invaded and defeated by an all-powerful enemy.

Non-members are welcome – Come and see how we "learn, laugh and live"

Save the date for next month: Thursday 27th April

Dave Brown – Sheppey Hulks around the Island

SUBSCRIPTIONS 2023/24

Subscriptions for the year 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024 will be £20. We will be collecting subscriptions at the March meeting, you can pay with cash, cheque or by card.

You can also pay by bank transfer at any time, please enter your name as reference and confirm by email that you have paid so that we can track the payments more easily.

PAYMENT DETAILS

Cheques payable to: **Isle of Sheppey u3a**

Bank Transfer: **Account Number 33003361** **Sort Code 20-54-25** **Reference: Your Name**

David's Slice of Life

Chatting to my barber the other day as she attempted to cut what's left of my fast-diminishing hair, she told me she recently had to decline a neighbour's request to mind her dog for two weeks.

I realise I am at risk of upsetting lovers of man's best friend, but the conversation served to remind me that, for most of my life, dogs have not really been my thing. Surprising, really, as I grew up with my parents' pet pooch called Fluff. More than 65 years on, I still remember the overwhelming sense of sadness in our house when poor Fluff, aged 16, made her final journey to the vets.

I suppose my antipathy towards canines started when I was about 17, as I walked home one afternoon. A small dog started snapping at my heels – it was a Jack Russell – and as I attempted to shoo it away it jumped up and took a lump out of my backside. Much pain, a visit to my doctor and a tetanus jab followed.

I have had numerous encounters with dogs since those days, including some confrontations with owners who believe everyone also loves their dog, even if it is sticking its nose in the ham sandwiches you are trying to eat on a beachside picnic or getting uncomfortably close to a delicate part of one's anatomy. Then there's the issue with dog poo in public places, but I can't really blame Fido for that – there are still thoughtless idiots around who believe it's OK to leave their pets' mess on the pavement or playing field for everyone to step in. I can't make up my mind whether it's the dogs or their owners who are my problem.

Anyway, fast forward to today. My wife has been on at me for the last couple of years for us to buy a dog. I point out how restrictive dogs are if you are a retired couple like us and like to go away as much as we can. Someone also has to take Fido for a walk twice a day – and I know who that will be!

It got worse the other day when my wife returned from a visit to her hairdresser and told me how she had enjoyed cuddling the woman's dog, a cockapoo, and how much she would like one. I wasn't convinced. However, my wife is insistent she would still like a dog and now says that if and when I pop my clogs, she would probably get one for companionship.

The import of this is still sinking in. I am not sure if it is good or bad that after 50 years of marriage I am to be replaced by a cockapoo. But, hopefully, she'll call it David.



COMMITTEE NEWS

AGM – MAY 2023

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

Our Isle of Sheppey u3a can only continue with the support of our members. Expressions of interest from members who feel that they could contribute to the running of our u3a either by joining our committee or more informally will be gratefully received.

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.



NEW INTEREST GROUPS

SINGING FOR FUN INTEREST GROUP

Pam Boston has now confirmed that her group will be starting shortly. Members who are interested in joining this group and have registered with us will be invited to a coffee afternoon to discuss how this group will be running. This is expected to take place on Wednesday afternoon April 19th 2-4pm at Minster Working Men’s Club. Please let us know if you are interested so we can ensure you receive up to date communications.

HISTORY INTEREST GROUP

Celia Dutton has confirmed that her History group will also be starting shortly. Her coffee afternoon is currently planned for Friday 14th April 2-4pm at Minster Working Men’s Club. If you are interested in joining this group, please make sure you contact us first to be added to the group for communications purposes.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

FLOWER ARRANGING DEMONSTRATION – Tuesday 23rd May – Minster Working Men’s Club

This demonstration has now been rearranged for Tuesday 23rd May. Phillipa Doucy is a professional florist, she will be showing us three different arrangements over a period of around 1 ½ hours. This demonstration will be an inspiration to all members with hints and tips on how to design your own superb arrangements. This demonstration is open to all members so register your interest so that we can ensure we have sufficient space and that you are put on the communications list. Donations at the end of the demonstration to the **Wisdom Hospice** would be appreciated.

WILDLIFE GARDENING WORKSHOP - Monday 22nd May (All Day)

We are very fortunate that one of our members, Helen, who is also an active member of Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT), has been keeping us well informed in encouraging wildlife into our gardens (all articles are available on our website). Helen has kindly organised a Wildlife Gardening Workshop that will take place in a Sheppey garden, with a view to learning more about the practical aspects and designing and planning changes you can make to your own garden. We are now pleased to confirm this workshop will be taking place on Monday 22nd May. Places are limited to 10 so if you are interested, please let us know as soon as possible. For more information, please see the attached poster.

FREE WORKSHOPS

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

Workshop places are limited so please let us know if you are interested in any of the advertised events/activities: Email us on isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com

Wildlife Gardening Workshop 



**Monday 22 May
10.30am to 4pm**

The workshop will take place in our Sheppey garden which is designed and managed to encourage wildlife. Volunteers from KWT’s Wild About Gardens team will be present to give you advice.

In the morning you will explore the garden, looking for features which are beneficial for wildlife. We will discuss what you have found and answer your questions. In the afternoon you will apply what you have learnt to your own gardens. By the end of the day you should have a plan for making your own garden more wildlife friendly. Advice will be available on planting, building ponds and other features and on how to manage your garden to encourage wildlife.



We will provide tea, coffee, cold drinks and homemade cakes. Please bring a packed lunch.



We have limited numbers to 10 so that we have enough indoor space in case of bad weather and can give you plenty of help.

This event is funded by u3a. To book a place, contact

isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com

ACTIVITIES

COBHAM HALL VISIT – Thursday 13th July

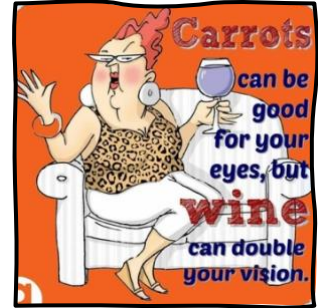
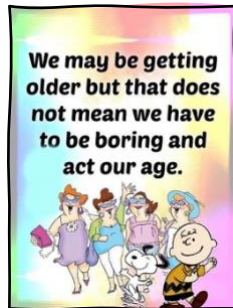
Our very entertaining speaker last month, Christoph Bull is also a guide at Cobham Hall, he has offered to provide us with a tour of the property which is only open a few days a year. This tour will cost £12 and will include a cream tea. We are unable to provide transport but maybe some of those driving will be able to offer to take others. We do need to confirm our numbers as soon as possible to secure our slot so if you are interested, please email us in the usual manner or sign up at the meeting.



HATS FOR UKRAINIAN BABIES

Thank you to our members who have knitted new baby hats. We have been able to pass on another eight new baby hats to be sent out to Ukraine via Minster Rotary Club.

KEEP SMILING



I USED TO ENVY PEOPLE WHO COULD DO A CARTWHEEL BUT NOW I'M JEALOUS OF ANYONE WHO CAN GET UP OFF THE FLOOR WITHOUT MAKING GRUNTING NOISES AND HOLDING ONTO FURNITURE



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.

27 th April	27 th July	26 th October
25 th May -AGM	24 th August	23 rd November
22 nd June	28 th September	14 th December

[NATIONAL u3a - https://www.u3a.org.uk/](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

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

Our members only Facebook Group is:

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

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>

Email us to join our WhatsApp Group:

Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com

u3a YouTube Channel

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

Our Facebook Page is:

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

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