

THE THIRD AGE TRUST



SHEPWAY AND DISTRICT

www.u3asites.org.uk/shepway

Registered Charity No. 1149472

Newsletter

May 2024

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

This will be the last time I will be completing the Chair's notes before I stand down at the AGM on the 8th May. It has been a good year, very busy and I thank everyone for their support throughout the year, it is what makes our u3a.

In the April Newsletter, I explained that there were three officer posts to fill at the AGM, - Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary - and four ordinary Committee posts, as Roger Curd, Linda Fellows, Gehad Homsey, and Eileen Hubbard were either coming to the end of their terms, or stepping down. I am grateful to them all for their contributions to the smooth running of the Committee over the last year.

I am pleased to say that Steve O'Neill has agreed to take my place and stand as Chair, and Katherine Robinson to stand again as Treasurer. That means that if they are elected to these posts there will be a secretary vacancy. Would anyone be interested in taking on this role?

The following people have offered themselves for election or re-election as committee members: Linda Fellows, Gehad Homsey, Helen Peverett, and Roger Wood.

The closing date for nominations is Wednesday 24 April. Please do contact me or Steve if you are interested in coming on to the Committee. The Committee itself under our constitution can coopt two people between AGMs, so there will also be two places available after the AGM if anyone wishes to join.

The AGM agenda contains reports and elections, as you would expect. You will find the agenda and the minutes of last year's meeting at the end of this newsletter. Copies will also be available at the meeting. I encourage you to come along to hear what we have been doing during the past year, and vote in the new committee members. The meeting starts at 2.00 pm on Wednesday 8 May at the Tin Tabernacle and will end with a cup of tea an hour or so later. We look forward to seeing you there.

Last month, I also asked for volunteers to fill specific roles as Newsletter editor and Website support. I am very grateful to all the responses I received, much appreciated. We will confirm the appointments immediately after the AGM.

Last month, our Music and Drama group held their show at the Saltwood Hall. What a show it was! It was very well attended and enjoyed by all. A big thank you to all the members of the group, performances and the hard work organising such a show.

This month we have several events for you to attend. Our Swing Band is performing a concert 'Swing into Spring' on Sunday Afternoon 28th April at the Tin Tabernacle, our first day out of the year to the Historic Chatham Dockyard on Monday 29th April and a visit to Emmetts Garden at

Sevenoaks on Friday 31st May. More details and booking information in this newsletter.

Finally, thank you again for your support

John Hubbard shepwaybeacon@gmail.com

New Members Support

A thank you to all the new members who have joined during the year, it has been enjoyable meeting everyone especially at coffee mornings. I am standing down from the role after several years and I wish my successor, Linda Fellows, all the very best.

I hope to continue to meet you all at meetings during the year.

Best Regards

Eileen Hubbard

COFFEE MORNINGS

Dates for the next month are

Wednesday 15th May – Clifton Hotel, Folkestone 10.30am

Friday 24th May– Tin Tabernacle, Hythe 11am

Friday 31st May– Ship Hotel, New Romney 10.30am

It would be very helpful if those attending can bring the correct money for their coffee i.e. £2.50 for one, £5 for two etc. at the Clifton and Ship Hotels and £2 each at the Tin Tab. This will ensure that there will be no problem with providing change.

You will be able to register for groups, book for events, and discuss anything with the committee. If you have friends interested in joining, please bring them along. New members are always welcome. Remember if you haven't yet renewed your membership subscription you can renew at any coffee morning.

VOLUNTEER LIST

We are looking for more members to join our Volunteers List. Volunteers help us out at u3a functions when we need extra pairs of hands, but only when it is convenient for them to do so, i.e there is no compulsion. Join us and enjoy making new friends around our u3a when you have the time. Thank you to all our existing members who have already helped us out. Contact Linda Fellows on linda.fellows1@ntlworld.com or leave message on 07976 512 332.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you haven't renewed your membership of Shepway & District u3a this will be your last Newsletter and your membership will lapse at the end of the month.

Included in this Newsletter is a renewal form. Renewal forms can also be downloaded from our website: www.u3asites.org.uk/shepway.

You can renew by BACS, by cash or cheque at coffee mornings or by cheque posted to the Membership Secretary (address is on the form).



Shepway and District

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of Shepway & District U3A will be held on Wednesday 8 May 2024 at the Tin Tabernacle at 2.00 pm.

Agenda

1.	Welcome	John Hubbard
2.	Apologies	John Hubbard
3.	Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 10 May 2023	John Hubbard
4.	Matters arising	John Hubbard
5.	Chair's report	John Hubbard
6.	Treasurer's report	Katherine Robinson
7.	Membership Secretary's report	Tony Scofield
8.	Election of Chair and new Committee members New Chair takes over	John Hubbard / Steve O'Neill
9.	Group Coordinators' report	David Warren
10.	Members meetings report	Nick Taylor
11.	Film matinees report	Eileen and John Hubbard
12.	Events and Visits Report	Jacqueline Mack
13.	AOB	Chair
14.	Meeting Close	Chair
15.	Tea	Jacqui Bray

SON 21.02.24

EVENTS

A full programme of events has been drawn up for 2024, which I hope you will enjoy. These will require advance bookings and, in view of that, it has been decided that we should have an expressions of interest notice in the Tin Tabernacle and at coffee mornings. Please do send me an email and thank you to those who have already done so.

Upcoming events

May

- **On 31st May in time, hopefully to see the rhododendrons at their best we can take a coach to National Trust –Sevenoaks Emmets Garden**
- **Charming Emmetts Garden is an Edwardian estate that was owned by Frederic Lubbock, becoming both a plantsman's passion and a much-loved family home. The garden was laid out in the late 19th century, and was influenced by William Robinson. It contains many exotic and rare trees and shrubs from across the world. Standing on one of the highest spots in Kent, Emmetts Garden offers panoramic views over the unspoilt Weald as well as some great walking opportunities. However this is a fairly rugged site and may be too challenging for some. Entrance will be free for National Trust members. The cost for the coach will be about £20.**
- **Booking form in this newsletter on page 7.**

June

- Visit the Queen's house Greenwich on 28th June, with art architecture and sublime views: discover Greenwich's hidden gem today. But also history making discoveries and cutting astronomy at the home of Greenwich meantime. This will be coach only and will cost about £20

July

- Bella Vita Dover. This is an Italian restaurant which seats up to 120. The food is excellent and we can take over the restaurant if there is enough interest. The evening will include a performances by musicians and an opera singer between courses Approx. £50 pp. Parking is easy outside the restaurant and travel will be independent, or, by sharing cars

August

- On the 30th of August which is a Friday we are planning to provide a trip on the river Medway from Maidstone with Fish and Chips. The price for this is not available yet

September

- Chagall Windows All Saints' Church, Tudeley, Tonbridge TN11 0NZ 1 hour 15 from Folkestone. Then Lunch and shopping in Tunbridge Wells. Leave 11.00 Return 16.30. This will cost about £20.00.

October

- British Museum. Visit the Museum and the Great Court Restaurant, you can enjoy a refined dining experience with a casual feel. This atmospheric restaurant is perfect for marking a special occasion or treating yourself when you visit the British Museum. Or, Enjoy afternoon tea including cream tea, a selection of sandwiches and delicate cakes. £35.00. Or, have a three-course lunch? Coach hire will be about £25.00.

November

- Thursday 21st November is Beaujolais Nouveau day and time to party in the Tin Tabernacle. The plan is to enjoy Beaujolais Nouveau with a buffet and French cheeses. We will be self-catering this time.

December

- Festive Lunch
- Trip to the Brick Lane Theatre and Panto.

Jacqueline Mack

Contact – jacqueline.mack@blueyonder.co.uk

Shepway u3a Swing Band Concert

Swing into Spring

with a delightful selection of music from their fantastic Swing Band repertoire

- TIN TABERNACLE, HYTHE
- SUNDAY 28 APRIL from 3-5.30pm

- Tickets only £8 to include refreshments.
- Booking form is included in this newsletter



BOOKING FORM

Shepway u3a Swing Band - Swing into Spring Concert

Sunday 28th April 3-5.30pm at Tin tabernacle, Hythe

Name/s:
.....

Payment and booking (Cheques payable to 'Shepway & District U3A')

- £8 per person
- By cheque or cash at coffee morning
- By post: send booking form and cheque to 'The Organiser, 52 Lower Corniche, Hythe, CT21 5TP'
- Online: Pay through your bank, to 'Shepway & District U3A', Sort code: 40-52-40, account number: 00031591 and clearly state in the reference field 'Band 'your name/s'. Separately email names and dates to shepwaybeacon@gmail.com.

Bookings close on the Friday 26th April or earlier if fully booked.

Afternoon Film Matinee

We mix the latest films with some golden oldies, dramas, musicals, and good entertainment are important ingredients, and your requests and suggestions are always appreciated.

We meet on the first Wednesday through to July 2024 at the Tin Tabernacle, Hythe usually starting at 2pm.

The format for the afternoon is the showing a feature film preceded by tea and cake, allowing us all time for some chat with our friends. It will be necessary to book your place in advance. Each session will cost just £6.

You can book at coffee mornings, online or by post. Details on the booking form in the newsletter and on our website. Closing date for bookings is Friday before the Matinee date. Cancellations also accepted up to the Friday before.



Wednesday, May 1st Film: I Daniel Blake

A 59-year-old carpenter recovering from a heart attack befriends a single mother and her two kids as they navigate their way through the impersonal, benefits system. With equal amounts of humour, warmth and despair, the journey is heartfelt and emotional until the end.

Set in Newcastle, Intensely Moving and Utterly Heartbreaking! A Ken Loach film



Wednesday, June 5th Film: Priscilla

When teenage Priscilla Beaulieu meets Elvis Presley at a party, the man who is already a meteoric rock-and-roll superstar becomes someone entirely unexpected in private moments: a thrilling crush, an ally in loneliness, a vulnerable best friend. Through Priscilla's eyes, Sofia Coppola tells the unseen side of a great American myth in Elvis and Priscilla's long courtship and turbulent marriage, from a German army base to his dream-world estate at Graceland, in this deeply felt and ravishingly detailed portrait of love, fantasy, and fame.

BOOKING FORM

MEMBERS AFTERNOON FILM MATINEE

1st Wednesday starting at 2pm

I / we wish to attend the Afternoon Film Matinee

- May 1st – I, Daniel Blake
- June 5th - Priscilla

Name/s

.....
.....

Payment and booking (Cheques payable to 'Shepway & District U3A')

- £6 per person per film
- By cheque or cash at coffee morning
- By post: send booking form and cheque to 'The Organiser, 52 Lower Corniche, Hythe, CT21 5TP'
- Online: Pay through your bank, to 'Shepway & District U3A', Sort code: 40-52-40, account number: 00031591 and clearly state in the reference field 'Matinee 'your name/s'. Separately email names and dates to shepwaybeacon@gmail.com.

Bookings close on the Friday before each matinee.



Shepway & District u3a

BOOKING FORM

Friday 31st May - Emmetts Garden

Name/s

.....
.....

Are you a National Trust Member? Yes / No. Please indicate whichever of these applies to you and each of your party.

Coach Pickup – Folkestone Bus station 10.30am / Hythe Red Lion 10.45am

Payment and booking (Cheques payable to 'Shepway & District U3A')

- Tickets are £37.50 for those who are not National Trust members and £24.50 for NT members.
- By cheque or cash at coffee morning
- By post: send booking form and cheque to 'The Organiser, 14 Radnor Cliff, Sandgate, CT20 2JJ'
- Online: Pay through your bank, to 'Shepway & District U3A', Sort code: 40-52-40, account number: 00031591 and clearly state in the reference field 'Emmetts 'your name/s'. Separately email names to Jacqueline.mack@blueyonder.co.uk

u3a Friends Extra

Extra benefits for u3a supporters

The Third Age Trust are delighted to announce a new range of services to those who sign-up to receive the u3a Friends newsletter.

u3a Friends Extra is a benefits website developed exclusively for members of the u3a Friends newsletter community. The website provides access to a wide range of offers, discounts and additional services.

Friends Extra is completely free to access. Anyone signed up to the u3a Friends newsletter can now also make savings on well-known brands, shopping, travel, days out and more.

Offers and services on Friends Extra include:

- Health and wellbeing
- Shopping savings on major brands and retail discounts
- Travel and holidays
- Leisure offers, like family days out, trips to the cinema and theatre
- Insurance offers on car, travel, and medical insurance
- Access to financial advice and a legal helpline.

To become a 'Friend', simply sign up to receive the Friends Newsletter on the u3a website: <https://www.u3a.org.uk> Each issue of the Friends Newsletter will include a link to the Friends Extra benefits website and highlight one of the offers.

This is just one element of the u3a Friends newsletter, which brings together stories from local u3a groups, learning opportunities and news of upcoming events to highlight the fun and learning within the u3a community.

CONTACT DETAILS

Membership and General Enquiries

Telephone/Text: 07871 774 831

Email: shepwaymembership@gmail.com

Events and Trips – Booking and Enquiries

Telephone/Text: 07938 999017

Email: shepwayevents@gmail.com

Joining Groups and Enquiries

Telephone/Text: 07938 999 015

Email: shepwaygroups@gmail.com

Disability Contacts:

Telephone/ Text: 07871 774 831

Email: shepwaymembership@gmail.com

Member Contact Details

If you change your address, telephone number or email address please let the Membership Secretary know as you may not get notifications, the Bulletin or the U3A news.

shepwaymembership@gmail.com

June Newsletter

If you have any material about group activities or other pieces that may interest members, including poems, quizzes etc, please send them to Tony at shepwaymembership@gmail.com by the **21st May**.

GROUP NEWS

CALENDAR OF GROUP ACTIVITIES

Download the May group calendar here: [May Calendar](#)

Group Information

A reminder that for insurance and administration purposes members of each Group need to be registered as such on our Beacon system.

If you are interested in a particular Group, you can, with the Group Leader's permission, attend a meeting as a guest, on a single occasion but if you wish to continue you must register your interest by contacting shepwaygroups@gmail.com or leave a message on 07938 999015 or register at a coffee morning.

The Group Leader will be informed and add you to the list or put you on the waiting list if the Group is already over-subscribed. Either way they will let you know.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, please always let the group leader know in advance as it helps them with arrangements

If you belong to a Group which you are no longer able to attend please inform the Group Leader so that your place can be given to someone else.

When you apply to join a group make it clear which group you wish to attend by giving the **exact** name and the timing.

Establishing a new group

Our u3a has always been proactive in assisting with new group subjects. If you would like to start up a new group, we can offer help with materials, venue and publicising the group to the membership as a whole. Just email Christine Hughes on hughesc1@hotmail.co.uk or speak to a committee member at a coffee morning. We will be pleased to help.

Short Walks (West)

The short walks will take place on the second Tuesday of each month, commencing April, meeting at 10.45am for setting off at 11am. They will end with refreshments at a suitable pub or cafe whenever possible. The walks will be approximately 2 miles long and should take around an hour.

The walks are mostly on the Romney Marsh, which is an excellent place to explore on foot, given its flat and unique landscape. There will be walks in the countryside, along the coast and maybe even in some of the towns and villages which have a rich history dating back to Medieval times.

If you would like to register for this group, please send an email to: shepwaygroups@gmail.com or text 07938 999 015. For any other information contact Bryony Taylor-Youell at bryonytee@outlook.com

Bryony

Short Walks (East/Central)

These are monthly on the 4th Tuesday and about 2 - 2½ miles long departing from different locations in our area at 11.00 finishing with refreshments in a pub or cafe whenever possible. Contact Linda Fellows on linda.fellows1@ntlworld.com or 07976 512 332.

Long Walks

Friday 3rd May at 10.00 a.m.

Members will receive details of the walk by email before the walk..

Led by Tony.

Ten Pin Bowling

The meetings of the Ten Pin Bowling groups for April and May at the AMB Hollywood Bowling Centre, Station Road, Ashford are as follows:

MAY

Friday 10th 10.30am

Tuesday 28th NA

JUNE

Friday 14th 10.30am

Tuesday 25th 11.00am

Any member/s of Shepway U3A wishing to join one, or both, of the Ten Pin Bowling groups and for more information please contact:- shepwaygroups@gmail.com

We look forward to welcoming new members to the group

I very much appreciate the continued support received from members of both groups.

Doreen Bishop

Science, Philosophy and Spirituality

The group held its delayed third session of Season 2, "The Hellenistic World", on Wednesday, 17th April. We discovered the significance of this somewhat neglected period. Alexander's era was more than just a series of conquests; it was a profound fusion of cultures that set the stage for the Silk Roads and the intellectual endeavours of Islamic science. His influence was pivotal in creating a cosmopolitan world where Eastern and Western ideals merged, paving the way for scientific advances and the ethical frameworks that underpin modern Western civilization.

You can read my justification for saying that at [Alexander the Great: Architect of the Modern World? - In Search of Wisdom](#)

You can read a summary of what we discussed by clicking [The Hellenistic World - In Search of Wisdom](#).

The resources on which the session was based can be viewed at [2.3 The Hellenistic Period - In Search of Wisdom](#).

Our next topic is "The Rise of Christianity" in which we will discuss the historical Jesus, the spread of Christianity, and Christianity in the Roman Empire up to the fall of Rome.

The next meeting will be at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, 15th May at the Tin Tabernacle.

Terry Cooke-Davies

Email: terry@insearchofwisdom.online

Tel: 01303 470 971

Mob: 07917 818 917

Classical Music

We covered a wide range of different styles at our last meeting from a piano quartet by Fanny Mendelssohn to a symphonic movement by William Grant Still, the first African American to gain widespread recognition as a composer/conductor of US orchestras, and composers whose anniversaries fall this year - the prelude to Charles Villiers Stanford's (d 1924) Stabat Mater, two sections of Gabriel Faure's (d 1924) Requiem, the tone poem 'Vysehrad' from My Country/Ma Vlast by Bedrich Smetana (b 1824) and the opening movement of the Eighth Symphony by Anton Bruckner (b 1824). Our next scheduled meeting will be on Thursday 9th May 2pm at the Tin Tabernacle. New members are welcome.

Michael (Group Leader)

Family History Group

It has been the practice of the Family History Group not to meet on those Mondays that fall on Bank Holidays and this year we find that we are impacted by no less than three, 1 January, 1 April and 6 May! So sadly the next meeting of the Group will not be until 3 June 2024.

With the number of other Groups meeting in the Railway Hall and the commitments of members who belong to other Groups, there are no easy answers to this situation. In order to try to reduce the impact, we have recently re-launched the "Shepway u3a Family History Forum". This will enable members to raise queries about genealogy with Group Leaders, as well as to exchange information with the rest of the Group about interesting items they come across in their research. This forum was a popular innovation during periods of Covid lockdown and a wide variety of messages were sent and enjoyed by many members, so we are hoping it will prove equally popular this time around.

More details about this idea have been sent via Beacon to all current members of the Group. If you wish to join but have not done so already, then just reply to this Beacon message and instructions for joining will be sent direct to you.

Richard Andrews & Wendy Williams

Earth Science

At our recent meeting we were pleased to welcome four new members, and were enthralled by Ian Stewart's account of The Deep. By this he meant deep under the earth. Perhaps the most riveting images were of crystals larger than he was that had formed deep underground in a drained cave that was so hot and wet he had to wear a special cooling suit and have an air supply! He also went on to describe the catastrophic volcanic eruption at Santorini that devastated the advanced civilisation that had developed on Crete.

Dr Stewart explained that many cities had developed at sites where the tectonic plate activity caused minerals to come to the surface, the exploitation of which led to major developments and economic growth. But he pointed out that there was a price to pay, think the San Andreas fault in California...

At our next meeting on Monday May 20th Ian Stewart will deal with the Wind, and if this month's meeting is anything to go by, it will be enthralling. It will be followed by another popular re-run from our Geology series – the Rift Valley.

Gillian Bond

Photography

Photography Groups 1 and 2 continue to flourish and keep busy. We have just completed our "architecture" challenge and are now on to our most challenging assignment yet. We have each been allocated a polite four letter word and have to find an image beginning with each of the four letters. Luckily we have freedom to choose categories of subject matter. Follow us to find out how that works out - Pete Savage's current thinking is to find four industry photos beginning with the letters GOLF! Meanwhile Peter Carroll is going to use the category, Water, using the letters from the word QUIP.

The groups' work for 2024 can be viewed in the usual place - [Photos](#)

Both groups have spaces and cater for photographers at all stages in the hobby and who use any digital equipment. Group 1 meets on the first Tuesday of the month in the Light Railway Hall at Hythe, whereas Group 2 meets on the first Friday in the Tin Tabernacle. Both groups meet in the morning.

Pete Savage & Peter Carroll

England: From the Fall of Rome to the Norman Conquest

We are progressing through this period in our history with the Anglo Saxons firmly integrated into British life, a united England being established, and now facing the new threat of the Vikings. The lectures continue to help understand what happened.

We meet each month at the Tin Tabernacle on the 4th Wednesday starting at 10.30am. The next scheduled meeting is May 22nd

You can still join us, just please register at coffee mornings or email shepwaygroups@gmail.com

John Hubbard

Climate in Crisis

Much of our discussion of behavioural and lifestyle change in our April meeting was structured around a recent survey study from the USA in which people were classified into four groups in respect of their behaviour in response to the climate crisis:

- Believers do everything they can to minimise their carbon footprints
- Motivated do only those things which they believe have most impact
- Cynics know they should but do nothing
- Doubters do not believe their lifestyle impacts the future climate

One of many puzzles which surprised us all was the number of elderly people who deny that our climate has warmed in their lifetime. After the meeting I asked an AI chatbot whether us long-lived baby boomers are the first generation to experience an observable changing climate. The answer was: "... there's a strong argument to be made that Baby Boomers are the first generation to experience significant climate change through their own senses...".

We went on to share the actions we have taken in response to the climate emergency. Probably the most difficult choice to be made was over air travel: while one member whose work had involved global travel saw no sacrifice in eschewing flying, a second who had not enjoyed such opportunity felt conflicted by a wish to see a little of the world beyond our shores.

Roger Wood Group Leader

Cribbage

We have welcomed several new members recently. If you'd like to join us as well our next meeting is 21 May. Beginners, refreshers and card sharks all welcome.

David Denyer

FLORA, FAUNA AND FORAGING

18th April, Reinden Wood

We embarked on some “forest bathing” at Reinden Wood, Densole, mostly to see the bluebells but were also greeted by a variety of woodland plants and flowers. The intent of forest bathing is to put people in touch with the present moment in a deep way. The sights, sounds and smells of the wood take us right into that moment, so our brains stop worrying, recalling, ruminating and generally wearing us down! There is beneficial bacteria to be found in our woods and gardens – they are in the air we breathe and the soil we touch. But apart from all the mental and physical health benefits in walking through the woods, it is all so pretty to look at!

Reinden Woods did not disappoint! Carpets of bluebells contrasted with the variety of acid and soft greens appearing on the multitude of different tree species in this mixed deciduous woodland (characterised by some trees that are more than 5 m high when mature, young and old living together, some low branches, undergrowth of shrubs and woodland plants all of which increase biodiversity) – we found sweet chestnut, oak, rowan, ash, goat willow, beech, sycamore, rampant hazel and birch trees, holly, field maple, redcurrant, honeysuckle and some we couldn't quite name. We saw evidence of previous coppicing which is when the tree is cut to the base periodically and stimulates growth of long straight poles which would have been used for fencing and building. Also creating various clearings allows more diverse plants to get their share of the sunshine. We saw such a spot where the number of flowering plants were double those elsewhere in the woods.

FLORA

The bluebells hadn't quite reached their peak by today. Perhaps it has been too cold – it certainly was this morning – but nevertheless they were a treat for the senses and the wind wafted their scent through the trees and straight into our childhood memory banks. It's astonishing how many plants are already in flower in our woods – all thriving in dappled light and somehow so very “English”. Here we go – wood anemone, greater stitchwort, celandine, wood spurge, bugle, ramsons, red campion, speedwell, white and red dead nettle, dog mercury, sweet violet, buttercups and daisies (of course), primroses, garlic mustard, herb Robert, all surrounded by ferns well and truly on the unfurl, graceful penduline sedge and leafy patches of willow herb, cow parsley, nettles and plantain all promising much more to come.

FAUNA

A male cabbage white and a peacock butterfly got us all excited (well it has been very wet and dull

outside for months!). A squirrel scampered across our path and the trees were alive with birdsong – we heard, and sometimes spotted, - nuthatch, bluetit, great tit, robin, pheasant, crow, blackbird, chiffchaff and the machine-gun drilling call of a wren. All going about their mating and nesting business. Along the path an air raid shelter has been blocked off to provide roosting for bats and a habitat for other creatures including cave spiders. Brown long-eared bats are present in the structures which should allow numbers to increase and prevent disturbance.

FORAGING

Well you probably all know about nettle leaves which are delicious as a tea drink when young and very beneficial to our health because of their high antioxidant levels. Wood anemones look very pretty but apparently taste appalling – so don't try. They are poisonous to humans, although hoverflies are particularly fond of this species which says more about them than us. Ramsons (wild garlic – *Allium ursinum*) are safe to eat for most people, although not those amongst us on blood thinning meds or who are affected by onions generally. With its pungent smell it is very hard to confuse this plant with anything else although it does look like Lily of the Valley which IS poisonous so please make sure.

We rounded off our morning with a quick coffee at the Folkestone Garden Centre just up the road where we were shocked at the price of almost everything! Remember – forest bathing is FREE.

MAY MEETING

This will take place on Thursday, 23rd May and will be our second attempt at the cliff tops of Capel Le Ferne. Meet at the Battle of Britain Memorial, New Dover Road, Capel-le-Ferne, Folkestone CT18 7JJ at 10.30. Quick look around the memorial followed by a cliff top walk along to the Cliff Café and back along the Old Dover Road. Spring has sprung!

Briar Ellis-Blake

PS. For those of you interested in rhododendrons and azaleas there are two gardens open in April and May in the area as follows: The American Garden 26th, 27th, 28th April; 2pm – 5.30 then every Friday, weekend and Bank Holiday in May. Then Sandling Park Open Garden on Saturday 11th May in aid of Pilgrims Hospices, Admission £6. 10 – 5 pm.

Meditation Group

Our meditation group has now started on Monday mornings in the Tin Tabernacle.

We have discussed and practised a few methods of meditation, and discovered that, although meditation is not the same as relaxation, meditating often results in feeling more relaxed.

People are already finding that some ways of meditating suit them better than others, and we shall continue to explore different methods, so that we can have a 'toolbox' ready for us to use at different times.

We have also found that meditation is available to all, and can be practised sitting at home, lying down, walking, and even on a bench by the sea.

The group is still open to anyone interested, and even though we have had a couple of sessions, it's not too late to join. Just please be aware that, due to earlier reservations for the room, we won't be there every Monday - contact me via Beacon to check dates.

Carolann

Music and Drama Group

I hope that some of you saw the recent 'Off the End of the Pier Show' in Saltwood. I have had several people come up to me to say not only did they enjoy the show, but how they could see that we, the cast were enjoying it too.

Indeed, as a group we do have a lot of fun presenting the show and in the run up to it. If you think you would like to join the fun why not come along and meet us?

I, and a couple of group members will be attending the coffee mornings across the three venues and will be giving a 'shout out' for new members. So please come up and talk to us if you are interested to join. Or contact the Group Co-ordinator who will send your details to me. If you would like to know a little more about the group before committing, we are planning to hold an Open Day during July. The exact date will be published in the June Newsletter, this will be held during our regular planning session to give you a feel of the group.

No talent is required, just a zest for fun and the odd bit of hard work. I look forward to meeting you.

Bron Drake

Poetry Group

When we discussed the poems of Clive James back in February we learned that Philip Larkin's "The Whitsun Weddings" was one of Mr James' favourite volumes of poetry. So we decided we would devote our two meetings on 4th and 18th April to this, Larkin's third collection.

By the time "The Whitsun Weddings" was published, on 28th February 1964, Larkin was enjoying considerable success both as a poet and professionally. (He was Chief Librarian of Hull University.) "The Whitsun Weddings" was the first of his volumes to be published by Faber, who at that time were the leading company for poetry with a list that embraced the major English language poets of the 20th century.

"The Whitsun Weddings" was a commercial success, by the standards of poetry publication, with the first 4,000 copies being sold within two months. A US edition appeared some seven months later. Larkin celebrated 28th February 1964 by purchasing his first car. And he had now settled into long-term accommodation, instead of living in digs like his sad poetic creation Mr Bleaney.

Among the 32 "Whitsun Wedding" poems we find three that have a positive message. This is a good total for Larkin. "For Sidney Bechet" celebrates the founder of New Orleans jazz. "Water" takes a positive view of religion: "If I were called in/ To construct a religion/ I should make use of water" he says, going on to speak of a kind of baptismal "sousing" and a raising "in the east" of "A glass of water/ Where any-angled light/ Would congregate endlessly." This is different to his later dismissal of religion in "Aubade" (1977) as "That vast moth-eaten musical brocade/ Created to pretend we never die." (Unfortunately water seems always to have been less important to Larkin than alcohol.) The third positive poem "First sight" is about new-born lambs who are going to discover that the unwelcoming snow will give way to the waking world of Spring: "earth's immeasurable surprise."

To some readers, "The Whitsun Wedding" represents the best of Larkin. In her book "The Philip Larkin I knew" his friend Maeve Brennan says that in "The Whitsun Weddings" she sees "warmth and compassion" but she describes his next volume "High Windows" (1977) as "angry, iconoclastic" and "loveless".

Group members selected 10 poems for discussion over the two meetings, including "Love songs in age" which expresses compassion

for life's disappointments. A widow "looking for something else" finds the sheet music of the love songs of her youth, which she had kept because "they took so little space". (Perhaps she is in a nursing home, where space is limited.) One is water-stained, one was scribbled on by her daughter, and "One mended, when a tidy fit had seized her." Momentarily, the music brings back to her a "sense of being young", "As when she played them first." It re-awakens "The glare of that much-mentioned brilliance, love" "Still promising to solve and satisfy." As she puts the music back in its place, she reflects that love had not solved anything then, "and could not now".

Another poem discussed was the well-known "Arundel Tomb" in which the poet meditates on a mediaeval sculpture in Chichester Cathedral of a recumbent knight and his lady hand in hand. Larkin would like to see their 600 years of hand-holding as a symbol of the durability of love. He reflects on how the world around them has changed during their "supine stationary voyage". Time may be slowly eroding the sculpture, this relic of their earthly identity, but it is also transforming the couple into an icon - a symbol of the triumph of love over death? This is what Larkin might want to believe but can't quite. The poem ends in carefully worded ambiguities: "Time has transfigured them into/ Untruth. Their stone fidelity/ They hardly meant has come to be/ Their final blazon, and to prove/ Our almost-instinct almost true: /What will survive of us is love."

Frank Shepherd

Petanque (Folkestone)

The Folkestone Petanque Group had their very first game on 11th April in Radnor Park. The weather was definitely arctic but a good number turned up with members who had never played at all and some who were very expert.

Here's to everyone becoming expert and the weather becoming warmer.

Christine

Local History 3

The last Local History 3 meeting went well with a good number of members present. The prearranged topic was the history of the Elham Valley Railway which turned out to be a good choice because a number of us had studied the subject and were able to contribute to the lengthy and interesting discussion which took us through to tea break. I think we all learnt something.

We then had two presentations: the first on a series of Country houses and their owners in the Enbrook valley (where the Saga Building in Sandgate is now) and the Second on Amy Johnson the pilot who recently became topical to local history, when a small piece of wreckage from the plane she was flying that crashed in the Thames Estuary came up for auction and was purchased by the Hawkinge Battle of Britain Museum.

John Anstiss Group Leader

Line-Dancing Group

I am sorry to tell you that the Beginners Class set up recently has been abandoned due to lack of support. Our normal Line-Dancing Class proceeds as usual from 0930 – 1045 am at Newington Village Hall on Monday mornings.

Ros Battrick and Barbara Moscrop.

NEW GROUPS

Possible New Recorder Group?

There has been several enquiries as to whether we have a Recorder Group from people who can already play. Are there are other people who would be interested? Is there someone among our Members who would like to be the Leader?

For more information e mail Christine Hughes: Hughesc1@hotmail.co.uk

Jigsaw library trial

I have always enjoyed jigsaw puzzles, and have noticed (from the exchanges that go on in the local charity shops) that I am not alone in this! Sometimes I'll be busy enough that it takes me a couple of weeks to complete one, or if the weather's bad, a couple of days.

Studies have shown that jigsaws can help improve short-term memory, problem-solving skills, and combat cognitive decline...or simply be a bit of fun. Mine are fairly straightforward, that I get a sense of satisfaction in making progress.

I wondered if it might interest members to be able to borrow / swap puzzles, and would be happy to bring a dozen or so to some coffee mornings, and see how it goes ?

If you are interested I will be at the coffee morning at the Tin Tabernacle. Do come and bring jigsaws along.

Caroline Edmond

Courses and Events being held by the Third Age Trust On Line

The Third Age Trust have arranged an ongoing series of online courses and single events which members of any U3A in the UK can join. To review the current schedule please go to the Third Age Trust website on u3a.org.uk/events where you can also book your place. The majority are provided free as part of your membership. They will also be reviewed at the coffee morning.

Jane Mackenzie 24/7 Online Pilates – U3A Members Offer

Jane Mackenzie, who was our guest speaker at a members meeting has made a special offer to all members to join her Online Pilates Classes, Details are set out below.

For online purchase of this offer, please click here: (At checkout, you can either pay online or request to pay via bank transfer):

<https://www.janem.co.uk/shop/u3a/24-7-online-pilates-u3a-12-week-offer/>

- **Half-price membership of Jane Mackenzie's 24/7 Online Pilates.**
- Single payment of **£36 for 12 weeks membership** (normally £72). Works out at **just £3 per week.**
- **Over 130 full hour Pilates classes** recorded in high-definition video, with a new class released every 2 weeks. Take as many classes as you want, whenever you want!
- **ALL classes are taught by leading Pilates instructor, Jane Mackenzie**, one of the UK's most experienced and highly qualified fitness professionals.
- Classes categorised by type, including lots of easy **Beginner, Chair-based and Stretch/Relaxation Pilates classes.**
- **Your own online membership account**, enabling you to keep track of the classes you have taken.
- Plus, **four Live Zoom Pilates classes with Jane per week**, all free to members.
- **Email support from Jane Mackenzie** to help you if you have any problems or questions.
- Jane's unique **Back health Toolkit**, comprising 50 instructional videos to help you safely strengthen and protect your back from injury.
- Jane's own **Pilates Exercise Database**, comprising 'how to' videos for over 80 Pilates exercises, plus own Jane's special variations.
- **Weight control resources.**

OTHER LECTURES MEMBERS CAN ATTEND

The Society of Retired Engineers in Kent (SREK) TALKS

Meetings are normally held at The Burlington Hotel, 3-5 Earls Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2HR near the Leas) on the second Tuesday of each month (except during July and August) at 10.00am for coffee or tea before a talk on an engineering related topic at 10.30 am. Meetings normally close about midday,

MAY 14. 2024

Further Reflections on the Diplomatic Service.

Brian Banks a retired British Diplomat who was active in Russia, Africa and Washington gives various anecdotal examples of his wide ranging, eye opening and often amusing experiences encountered during his working life in the foreign branch of the civil service.

JUNE 11. 2024

Captain Cooks first voyage to Tahiti.

Brigadier Hugh Willing's presentation concerns Captain Cook's voyage to Tahiti made ostensibly to track the transit of the planet Venus but which included sealed Admiralty orders to be opened following completion of the appropriate scientific experiments.

Ageing Without Children East Kent: Next Hythe Meeting

The next free quarterly meeting of Ageing Without Children East Kent (AWOC East Kent) will be on Tues 14 May from 10:30am-12:30pm at the Open Door Project, 101 High St, Hythe. We will discuss what happens and what we can do if we don't have a younger family member or friend to be our Lasting Power of Attorney. The meeting is open only to people who are ageing without the support of adult children. There is no advance registration; the room can hold up to 24 people. For details, contact Penny at awoceastkent@gmail.com.

Coach trip to Leonardslee gardens, lakes and sculpture park. 14th May. Set in a wooded valley with specialist rhododendrons and azaleas. Dolls House museum and wallaby enclosure. Cream tea. Payment by 1st May, latest.

Full details 07860 243119. Sally Starbuck..

South East u3a Forum Summer School 2024

Monday 2nd – 5th September – University of Chichester

You will be able to peruse the fourteen subjects on offer for Summer School 2024.

There are many new subjects, such as:

- Art & Mythology, Photography, Crochet
- Living History, Patchwork, Philosophy
- Latin Remembered, Bridge, Politics
- Illuminated Manuscripts and Science



Also, on the agenda are the returners:

- Cycling, Mah Jong and Mathematics

Please be patient, as **no places can be reserved**, prior to the initial booking date going 'live', see below - thank you.

The costings for this year are:

- Residential En-suite - **£390**
- Residential Standard – **£360**
- Non-Residential with dinner - **£195**
- Non-residential no dinner - **£140**

There will also be entertainment on campus, each evening, which is included in the price. But, if you would like to attend the theatre on the Tuesday evening, this comes at an extra cost – ticket price unknown at present.

The next phase will be the Booking Information sheet and the Booking Form; they will be going 'live' from **Thursday 11th April 2024 @ 10:00am**; a date for your diary - just Google - [se u3a forum](#) and they will be accessible to download.

The Forum's web address is - <https://u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/contact>

As we progress towards September more information will continue to be added, on a regular basis, to the Summer School webpage on the South East u3a Forum website.

The Summer School Team 2024, South East u3a Forum



All images are from Summer School 2023

Shepway and District U3A

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 10 May 2023 in the Tin Tabernacle

Present: Committee: Officers: Linda Fellows (Chair), John Hubbard (Vice Chair), Steve O'Neill (Secretary), Katherine Robinson (Treasurer)
Members: Roger Curd, Gehad Homsey, Christine Hughes, Eileen Presland, Tony Scofield, David Warren
Others: 45 other U3A members attending.
Apologies: Jacqui Bray (Committee member), and 10 U3A members

1. Welcome

Linda Fellows welcomed everyone to the AGM, and thanked everyone for coming.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 11 May 2022

The minutes of the 2022 AGM meeting were agreed as a correct record

3. Chairman's report

Looking back over her time as Chair of the U3A, Linda Fellows expressed her thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make our U3A a success – the group leaders, those who take on extra jobs as needed, and fellow committee members. She was stepping down as Chair with some sadness, but confident that the U3A would continue to meet the challenges ahead, as it had done in the past year with for example rising costs, and rebuilding the membership after Covid.

4. Treasurer's report

Katherine Robinson's report for the year ending 31 March 2023 was approved, although it was noted that the accounts were still with the auditors. Total income was: £49,457. Total expenditure was £48,788. This resulted in a surplus of £669. The end of year reserves amounted to £24,282.

Katherine discussed some key income headings. Subscriptions amounted to 52% of our income, in the sum of £25,722, course materials and fees £9841, income from events £6169, Gift Aid amounted to £4,311, and the film matinees brought in £1038. As regards expenditure, hall hire cost us £33,650 (69% of our expenditure), events £4052, our Third Age Trust membership fees £2,988; admin (including our accountant) £1799, direct mail £1,684, postage and printing for the newsletter £1,024. Katherine was thanked for her presentation and good work.

5. Membership report

Tony Scofield said that membership at 31 March was 775. This had since reduced to 708 because just under 10% of members had not yet renewed their subscriptions. This percentage was not unusual and renewals were still coming in. Nearly half of members were from Hythe. 69% were women, and 31% men. 95% were on email. The Linda thanked Tony for his report, and work during the year.

6. Election of Committee members

There were vacancies for the officer positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Business Secretary. Nominations had been received and seconded as follows:

Chair – John Hubbard – eligible for a 3 year tenure

Vice Chair – Tony Scofield – eligible for a 3 year tenure

Treasurer - Katherine Robinson – eligible for a 1 year tenure due to previous service in this role

Secretary – Steve O'Neill – eligible for a 1 year tenure due to previous service in this role

There were no other nominations for these officer roles.

There were also four ordinary committee member vacancies, two for 3 years, one for 2 years and one for 1 year.

Nominations had been received and seconded as follows:

Eileen Presland, David Warren, Linda Fellows, Jacqueline Mack

There were no other nominations for these posts.

As the number of nominations equaled the vacancies, all the candidates would automatically join the committee, but the AGM confirmed its unanimous endorsement of them with a show of hands. The four ordinary members would decide how long they would serve for at the next Committee.

Under the constitution, the Committee was able to coopt two additional members for up to a year. One individual had offered to join in this way. Any one else interested was welcome to talk to the Chairman.

7. New Chairman

John Hubbard took over the chairmanship of the meeting, and thanked Linda Fellows for all she had done over the last two years as Chair of the U3A. He stressed that our philosophy was that members ran the U3A for the members.

8. Groups report

John Hubbard reported that there was a total of 83 registered groups. Most were meeting in halls – mainly the Tin Tabernacle or the Light Railway– but a few were meeting in other venues because of their special requirements, others in members' homes, others on line, and others on location. There were 1980 registered places. Average group membership was nearly 24 members. John gave an analysis of the wide range of groups available, and thanked the group leaders for their commitment and hard work. He also thanked Gehad Homsey for handling the registration side of the groups.

9. Members meetings report

Roger Curd reported on the members meetings that had been held over the last year, and thanked the speakers involved. The current year's programme was in preparation.

10. Film Nights

John Hubbard reported on behalf of himself and Eileen Presland that the afternoon film matinees had been very successful since they were introduced. Each month had been fully booked. The last of the current season would be in June, after which there would be a break until October.

11. Events report

Linda Fellows reported on the various events that had been held throughout the year, and thanked Veronica King for organising the U3A tea in September, the members dinner in October, and the Christmas lunch at the Clifton Hotel. Thanks were also due to Pat Beatty, who in April, had organised a successful trip to Pashley Manor, and to Jeff Bonner for a swing band concert in the same month, which had raised money for the Turkey / Syria earthquake appeal.

12. AOB.

- John Hubbard mentioned that 2023 was the 15th anniversary of Shepway and District U3A. Ideas to celebrate this were being considered
- He also mentioned that the Committee was looking for more helpers –people who were prepared to undertake one off jobs. It was intended to maintain a list of names of those who could be called upon when needed. He encouraged people to register if they felt they could help in this way.
- RHDR. Some concerns were expressed about the changes at the Light Railway particularly as regards car parking, access, and catering. John offered to talk to individuals privately, but explained that we were very much in the hands of the railway, and the constraints under which they now had to work. The catering service should improve, and the heating was much better. The restricted car parking still allowed for disabled parking, deliveries, and dropping off.

13. Closure of the meeting

The meeting was closed, to be followed by refreshments and a discussion about the future

14 Discussion about the future

The meeting reconvened to share ideas for the future in a discussion led by John Hubbard:

- Coffee mornings were thought to be fine as they were, and other social get-togethers a good idea
- Events and trips – people would welcome more trips out, for example to the theatre or to garden shows. A list of possibles could be put in the newsletter to establish levels of interest
- There was a question as to whether we needed more venues in Folkestone, eg church halls
- Evening dinners – more of these would be welcome
- The Christmas lunch was always popular
- More leaders were needed for group subjects, eg architecture, and languages

GROUPS

Afternoon Tea on the Marsh
Art - Mixed Media
Badminton
Bird Watching
Bolivia (Canasta alternative)
Book Circle - 1 - Hythe
Book Circle - 2 - Folkestone
Book Circle - 3 Romney Marsh
Bridge
Canasta 1
Chess
Climate in Crisis
Computer Users
Cooking Live
Cribbage
Critical Analysis of Poetry
Current Affairs - Folkestone
Current Affairs - Hythe
Current Affairs - New Romney
Cycling
Dance
Earth Science
England-Roman to Norman Times
Family History
Flora, Fauna and Foraging
Flower Arranging
Food-Cultural Culinary History
French - Beginners
French - Conversation
French - Intermediate
Gardening 1
Gardening 2
Golf
Italian Beginners
Kurling
Late Middle Ages
Line Dancing
Local History 3
Local History 4
Mahjong
Mid Week Supper Club
Mixed Craft - Romney Marsh
Music - Classical
Music and Drama
Novels 1
Out and About
Patchwork & Sewing
Petanque - Elham
Petanque - Folkestone
Philosophy
Photography
Photography 2
Pickleball
Play Reading - Folkestone
Play Reading - Hythe
Poetry
Rummikub
Saturday Dining
Science, Philosophy, Spiritual
Scone Rangers
Script Writing
Sewing Workshop
Shakespeare
Singing for Life
Sunday Lunch
Swing Band
Table Tennis
Tai Chi - Class 1 - Form
Tai Chi - Class 2 - Qigong
Tai Chi - Class 3 - Qigong
Tai Chi - Class 4 - Sticks
Tai Chi - Class 5 - Form
Ten Pin Bowling (Friday Group)
Ten Pin Bowling (Tuesday Group)
Ukulele
Walks - Long
Walks - Short - West
Walks - Short - East/Central
Whist & Other Card Games
Writing Circle 1
Writing Circle 2
Your Favourite Poems



Shepway & District U3A Membership Renewal Form

(Registered Charity no. 1149472)



Please fill in details CLEARLY in CAPITAL LETTERS especially the email address.

You may pay by cheque, cash or bank transfer (BACS). See below for details and check the relevant box if using BACS. Email: shepwaymembership@gmail.com

YOUR DETAILS

Title	First Name	Surname
Email*	Please ensure your email address is easy to read	Home Phone
		Mobile
Address		Post code
Emergency contact	Please enter name and contact phone number	

*To reduce costs, the committee will communicate with you via email where possible. **By default the bulletin will be emailed to you unless you notify us to the contrary.**

Where possible I would appreciate support for the following disability: *Hard of hearing* *Impaired vision* *Mobility*

Gift Aid: I am a UK taxpayer and I want to Gift Aid my donation (my membership dues) and any donations I make in the future to Shepway & District U3A (please tick box if applicable, see note below). You **must** let us know if and when you no longer qualify for Gift Aid as Gift Aid will continue until such time.

GIFT AID: Under the Gift Aid Scheme we may reclaim tax on subscriptions and donations if indicated in the tick box above. For S&D-U3A to reclaim tax, you must pay, or have paid, an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year that is at least equal to the amount of tax that will be claimed on all your charitable gifts for that year.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All members must:

- Abide by the Principles of the U3A movement. Always act in the best interests of the U3A and never do anything to bring the U3A into disrepute. Abide by the terms and conditions of the constitution. Treat fellow members with respect and courtesy at all times. Comply with and support the decisions of the elected committee. Advise the committee of any change in your personal details.

Signed Date.....

MEMBERSHIP FEES

The subscription is £35 from 1st April 2024 until 31st March 2025.

For those joining on or after 1 February, the full membership subscription will run until the end of March of the following year. These fees include a contribution paid to our National Organisation, the Third Age Trust, which provides a wide range of services and benefits, including liability insurance cover. It also covers hire of venues for groups.

Please complete, sign and send to Membership Secretary, Flat 3, 1-3 Broadfield Road, Folkestone CT20 2JT together with your cheque (made payable to 'Shepway & District U3A') for the relevant fee.

***I have paid my subscription by bank transfer to: Acct name: U3A Shepway Main. Bank Sort Code: 40-52-40. Account number 00031591. CAF Bank. Use reference 'SUBS' followed by all your initials and your membership number or postcode. Surname is not normally required.**

PRIVACY STATEMENT

Shepway & District U3A processes member information so that we can keep you informed about events, groups and activities as part of your membership.

This is done in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. Our Data Protection and Privacy policies can be viewed on our website

www.u3asites.org.uk/shepway. Shepway & District U3A's lawful basis for collecting this information is **contract**. In processing your information Shepway & District U3A will:

- Store it securely. Use it to communicate with you as a U3A member. Share your information with group leaders/conveners for those groups that you are a member of. Send you general information about the Third Age Trust (The Third Age Trust are the national office to which all U3As are affiliated).

As part of your membership third party contractors will send you the Third Age Trust publication – Third Age Matters and the bimonthly Bulletin if you receive it by post. Please be advised that you can request for your data not to be used for the direct postal mailing of Third Age Trust magazines or the Bulletin at any time by contacting the membership secretary in which case you will not receive the former and the latter will be available by email or from the website only.