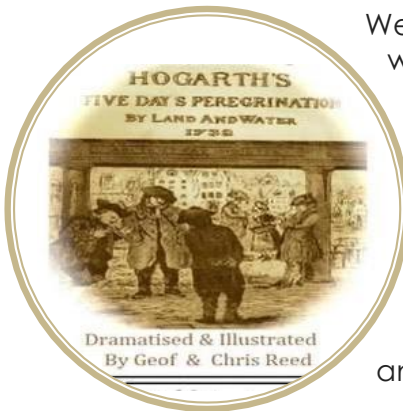


*** Monthly Meeting – Thursday 23rd January***

Please join us at our next **Member’s Monthly** meeting.
It will start at **2pm** on **Thursday 23rd January** at **SHEPPEY HALL, QUEENBOROUGH**

Hogarth’s Peregrination
Chris & Geof Reed

PEREGRINATION: *A long and, usually, meandering journey.* Our thanks to the Cambridge Dictionary for this definition of a word we rarely, in fact never, hear these days.



Well, we shall be hearing the word a lot more at our meeting, when Chris Reed of Island group Big Fish Arts, will be making her third visit to the Isle of Sheppey u3a to tell us all about Hogarth's Peregrination.

This was a five-day Grand Tour of Sheppey by land and water which William Hogarth, England's best-known satirical artist made in 1732 with his wife, Jane, and four friends.

After stopping off in the Medway Towns, they made their way to Sheppey, where their Grand Tour took in Queenborough and Minster Abbey.

Their trip has been dramatised and illustrated by Chris and her husband, Geof, their presentation includes a re-telling of Hogarth's famous series of etchings, *The Harlot's Progress*.

Save the date for next month: Thursday 27th February

Passports, Assassins, Traitors & Spies – Martin Lloyd

COMING UP...

David’s Slice of Life	Page 2	David sees in 2025 in his own indomitable fashion.
Interest Groups & Activities	Page 3	See what members have been doing recently and what’s coming up. Register for any groups you are interested in joining.
Membership Subscriptions	Page 3	Advanced warning that memberships will be due for renewal by 1 st April.
National u3a	Page 3/4	There’s a wide range of national online talks, workshops and courses available, included in your membership for FREE! These change monthly so register for the u3a Friends newsletter for all the up-to-date information
Keep Smiling	Page 5	A little humour.
2025 Meeting Dates Information & Contact details	Page 5	Put these dates in your diary, so you don’t miss a meeting Let us know if you want to join our members only Facebook Group and/or u3a General WhatsApp Group?

David's Slice of Life

Oh, well, nearly the end of January, almost another year older and my right knee is playing up no end.

On the inside, I'm just 25, but occasional aching joints and dodgy knees tell a different story. Don't get me wrong- I haven't written myself off yet! Most parts are still working!

But you know when you're getting old when you stoop down to tie your shoelaces and wonder what else you could do while you're down there.

I wish I could claim the credit for that great one-liner, but I can't. The plaudits go to veteran comic George Burns, who was spot-on when he cracked that joke. I know exactly what he means! In fact, we all do, don't we? Well, most of us, anyway.



George was still poking fun at old age well into his nineties. He made it to 100, so maybe laughter was his recipe for longevity.

"At my age, flowers scare me," George would often joke on his long-running TV show with his wife and comedy partner Gracie Allen. He wasn't averse to a bit of black humour, either.

Well, 2025 is here and the usual well-intentioned New Year resolutions we all make will probably have been abandoned by now. January just seems to have flown by. Odd, isn't it how time appears to roll past with ever-increasing speed as we get older.

Months seem to go by in a matter of what feels like a few weeks. The countdown to Christmas is a good example of this syndrome. As children, the last few days before Christmas seem to drag on interminably, yet as adults, come November, we're counting the weeks to Christmas and can't believe it's come around again so fast.

The internet is filled with dozens of explanations as to why time appears to go faster as we get older, but a common theme is that, as we age, we have fewer new experiences to look forward to as we've done most of it before, thus time appears to pick up speed. It's Christmas; it's New Year's Eve; it's Mother's Day; it's Easter; it's Father's Day; it's summer. They all go past in a flash. Before we know it, we're another year older.

One remedy, apparently, apart from building a time machine, is to re-invent oneself or start doing something completely different. That way, the passage of time will slow down. Or so it's claimed!

I have a T-shirt which proudly proclaims, "It's weird being the same age as old people." It always gets a laugh, but how true is that sentiment. There's always a younger version of ourselves inside us, pretending that we're pretty much the same as we always were. We look into a mirror and convince ourselves that some older person, who looks a bit like us, but isn't really us, is staring back.

I got a harsh dose of reality just before Christmas. We were in London on a very crowded Tube train. I couldn't get a seat and was clinging for dear life to one of those handholds which drop down from the roof. A young woman offered me her seat. How kind, I thought, but surely some mistake. She can't mean me. But she did, because, clearly, I looked to her like a white-haired pensioner who needed the seat more than she did.

It made me admit to myself that I am indeed a white-haired pensioner approaching 79, however much I might think I am still young and trendy. Sometimes, the truth really hurts!

I hope my offering this month hasn't been too depressing, but it's good to occasionally take a step back and accept the inevitable about the ageing process as another year gets under way. To repeat a well-worn cliché, age is just a number.

George Burns, may he RIP, has a bit of advice for those of us who despair at the rapidly passing years. "You can't help getting older but you don't have to get old."

Well said, George.

May everyone in the Isle of Sheppey u3a enjoy a Happy and Healthy 2025.

INTEREST GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

Each interest group has its own communications list so, if you are interested in joining any of our interest groups, please sign up at one of our meetings or email us at: isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com

If you would like help to start up a group or arrange an outing, please let us know.

Find out more about our groups on our website: [Isle of Sheppey u3a Interest Groups Information](#)

CHRISTMAS MEETING



Our last meeting of 2024 was our Christmas meeting. This was another successful meeting with more than 70 members attending.

As usual we had a speaker and this year as our speaker's subject was all about Champagne, everyone was offered a complimentary glass of fizz in the form of prosecco to sip during his talk. This was followed by a complimentary light buffet Christmas tea.

We also have a free Christmas raffle each year, the main prizes are provided by the u3a and this year several members also donated raffle prizes. Once again Santa came to visit (AKA member Mike) to present the prizes. Congratulations to all our winners of the Christmas raffle.

Special thanks go to all our committee members who were involved in organising the buffet food, the raffle prizes and helping in setting up the hall.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Our membership year runs from 1st April to 31st March. Membership is currently £20 per year and includes entry to the monthly meetings with refreshments and a national magazine 'u3a Matters' delivered to your home, five times a year.

Our next renewal date will be 1st April 2025 and the committee have agreed to keep the subscription at £20 for the year 2024/25, despite continued rising costs so we hope you agree that this is excellent value for money. Information as to how you can pay your subscriptions will be detailed in next month's newsletter and we will be collecting subscriptions at our March meeting.

New members joining from January will be charged £20 for the year 25/26 and so will receive the rest of this membership year for free.

NATIONAL u3a – RADIO PODCAST



Have you listened to the latest monthly **u3a Radio podcasts** on YouTube? On the 17th of each month a new episode is uploaded. Click here for the latest edition as well as the full list of radio podcasts since they started: [u3a Radio Podcast Playlist](#)

NATIONAL u3a

Have you looked on the National u3a website? There's so much u3a members across the country are getting involved with

ONLINE LEARNING EVENTS

There are numerous and wide-ranging learning events and short courses (usually free online using zoom),
Coming up soon in January/February: [u3a online events](#)

- Staying Safe Online – A u3a Presentation with Q&A
- BT Digital Voice: An Introduction to AbilityNet/BT Group Partnership
- Choosing Your Next PC or Laptop
- Things you didn't know you could do online, for older people
- An Introduction to AI for Older People
- Artificial Intelligence News: January
- Artificial Intelligence News: February
- Secrets of the Human Brain: How can we age better?
- Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk One
- Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Two
- An Introduction to Vedic Maths
- Agritech: Technology enhancing Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability
- Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: February
- Sociology, Gender Inequality and Feminism
- Philosophy as a Way of Life Hadrian's Wall – A Celebration
- Penguins; Icons of Antarctica
- A Few Small Nips: Frida Kahlo and the Art of Pain
- Claude Monet's Garden in Giverny
- Introduction to Cryptic Crosswords
- Meditation & Mindfulness Series
- Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie
- Laughter Yoga with Judith
- Bollywood Laughter Yoga Dance

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Enter your poetry and short stories in the competitions, submit your paintings/drawings and photographs to be featured in the online galleries. See what other members across the country have already submitted and see if you can spot anything from our of our Isle of Sheppey u3a members. Take part or just browse other members' submissions. Get involved by clicking here: [u3a National Programmes](#)

Enter Your Photography & Art

- Paint or Draw – New theme each month
- u3a Eye – Themed Photography Project
- Found in Nature – Photo Gallery of all things weird and wonderful in nature

Puzzles & Games

- Logic Puzzles
- Maths Challenge
- Aileen's Game
- Where Am I?

Share Your Memories

- Write a Letter to your Younger Self
- All our Yesterdays
- Photos of World War II War Memorials

Writing Competitions

- Poetry Competition 23-24
- Short Story Competition 24 – Theme 'Escape'

Connect with Members

- u3a Air Fryer Community
- u3a Walkers' Exchange

u3a SOURCES

Read the u3a blog dedicated to sharing, inspiring and learning. Interesting and thought-provoking articles from around the country, giving insights into other u3as doing what all u3as do best 'Learn, Laugh, Live'. Find the blog on the national website, click here: [u3a Sources](#)

"u3a Friends" NEWSLETTER

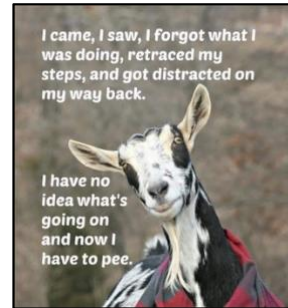
Sign up to get the most up to date news from National Office and find out the latest news and learning events as they are added.

Click here to find out more about what there is on offer nationally [National u3a](#). New events added monthly so, have a look and see if there's anything interesting that you'd like to join with in the next few weeks.

KEEP SMILING



Chocolate is vital for our survival. Dinosaurs didn't have chocolate and look what happened to them...



MONTHLY MEETING DATES 2025

Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month starting at 2pm until 4pm (except in December) at the Sheppey Hall in Queenborough. Refreshments are included Doors open 1.40pm.

27th February	22nd May	28th August	27th November
27th March	26th June	25th September	11th December
24th April	24th July	23rd October	

Information & Contact Details

You can contact us here:

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

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.