



Chair Chat

March is the month of the “Mad March Hare”. We often refer to someone as being as mad as a March hare. The expression comes from the leaping, boxing and chasing in circles of the hare in the mating season, which is March.

We refer to animals in everyday speech – Bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, locking the stable door after the horse has bolted, the cat that got the cream, busy as a bee, calling someone a silly goose.

Elephant in the room means an obvious problem in a situation, which no one wants to talk about – why an elephant? Is it just the size?

White elephant means an extravagant but impractical gift. Historically it comes from the King of Siam (now Thailand) who gave rare albino elephants to his courtiers who had displeased him, so they might be ruined by the cost of the upkeep of the animals.

Dog in a manger comes from a Greek fable that is known in various versions, in all cultures throughout the world. The metaphor is now used to speak of someone who spitefully prevents others from having something, even though they themselves don't want it. Why dog? Why manger?

I am sure that sometimes, we have all wished to be “a fly on the wall” so we could observe a situation without being noticed.

How many of us are guilty of acting like a “Bull in a China Shop”, when a situation needs careful thought and we just barge in.

I am sure you can think of lots of other expressions that use animals, but meanwhile we should look out for Mad March Hares, both human and animals!

Sandra Goulding



Monthly Meetings and Speakers:

The main meeting is held on the 2nd Thursday of every month at 2 p.m. (be there by 1.45 pm to get a seat!) at Roberts Hall behind Christ Church, Bexleyheath Broadway.

March 12th	Nick Dobson	A funny thing Happened on the way to the Potting Shed
April 9th	Pauline Martindale	Behind Closed doors. The Personal Experiences of a Prison Officer
May 14 th	Ian Keable	Charles Dickens – Conjuror
June 11th	TBA	TBA

From Terry: On a very wet and extremely windy night in February, people were arriving to hall in Bexleyheath wearing check shirt, jeans and good shoes for dancing. What were they doing braving the terrible weather in true British Spirit, coming to the Second Bexley U3A Barn Dance!

Amazingly most people turned up despite the conditions. They were armed with their favourite Tipple and nibbles, set to enjoy themselves and they did!

Skinner's Rats, Our local band, again managed to get everyone dancing straight away. Some people got it right some, including myself, not always!

However, a lot of laughter, some singing, and a very warm atmosphere made the evening go far too quickly. What is it about barn dances that can be so much fun and can get people on the floor dancing with sometime total strangers? I think it is because it is a very social activity no matter what your ability, perhaps there should be more of them.

I was really pleased to see so many there and enjoying themselves. I for one would not have gone out that night if I had not had this event on.

Local Lights

An opportunity to see Peter Andre star in

'Grease' at The Orchard

2.30pm on Saturday 10th October.

I booked the Saturday matinee because the weekday matinees tend to host school parties.

Come and enjoy classics such as Greased Lightning, Hopelessly Devoted to You, You're the One that I Want... to name but a few.

Group rate £44.50 (expensive but worth it) and still saving £££.
Please book and pay at our U3A meeting today Thursday 12th March.
U3A members cash/cheques to U3A Bexley

Carole Alleway

SUMMER SCHOOL 2020

This year's theme: The Twenties - A Dynamic Decade

21st, 22nd and 23rd July 2020

*St Bride Foundation, Bride Lane, off Fleet Street
(Easy access: 5 mins from Blackfriars underground station or City Thameslink)*

BOOKINGS NOW BEING TAKEN

Choice of over 30 different talks & workshops and 6 guided walks
Broad range of subjects including: Art, Current Affairs, History, Literature, Music, Science, Social Studies, and Travel

Non-residential: Attendance can be for one, two or three days
Tickets £38 per day; refreshments and cold buffet lunch included
Programme & applications available via Events page of London Region
website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/london-region/events>
Book online (recommended) or use a postal application
Contact: Catherine Ware chair.londonregionu3a@gmail.com 020 8879 0352

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Please could you remember to fill in the back of your membership cards? It is advisable to keep the cards at the back of your Freedom Pass as this is where Paramedics and the Police will check. You must bring your Membership Cards to every U3A meeting and when attending House Groups. Thank You. **Sandra Goulding, Chairman**

Advance Notice

Saturday 19th September 2020. A 52-seater has been booked to take us to Visit Chatham Dockyard "Salute to the Forties Day" Departing Bexleyheath Library 09.15 returning around 18.00. The cost to you is £15. This is the entrance fee to the site normally £19.50 on the day. The coach is being paid for by Bexley U3A.

If you have never been before then you in for a treat. The Headline act on this Saturday is the D Day Darlings and they are excellent. There is plenty to do and see with entertainment all day.

There are plenty of refreshment outlets but if you want, you can bring your own. Wear good strong shoes as the walkways are a little uneven. Bring warm clothing as it can get a bit chilly, however we hope for a fine day, it has for the last few years I have been going.

Details later on how to pay the entrance fee. You cannot get this price on the day!

Don't be disappointed - put the date in your diaries now!

From the Third Age Trust - U3A National Office have asked us to circulate this advice. We feel it is good to have this information, but please do not be alarmed or overly concerned

Coronavirus Advice

The Government and NHS have issued advice for members of the public following the confirmed cases of coronavirus in the UK. Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever and a cough that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. The UK Chief Medical Officers are advising anyone who has travelled to the UK from mainland China, Thailand, Japan, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia or Macau in the last 14 days and is experiencing cough or fever or shortness of breath, to stay indoors and call NHS 111, even if symptoms are mild. More information about the virus, as well as symptoms and advice, is available to view at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public> or on the NHS England website at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2020/02/statement-from-nhs-england-and-nhs-improvement-on-coronavirus/>

Group Vacancies

Amblers - 2 vacancies. Contact Stan Hutson; **Life Story** - 1 or 2 vacancies. Contact Group Leader Jo Livingston; **Armchair Travellers** - 4 vacancies & **Play Readers** - 1 vacancy. For either of these contact Carole Hunt; **French Intermediate** - 1 or 2. Meets every Monday 1:45-3:45pm Welling Library. Cost approx. £8 per month to cover room rental. Group Leader Elizabeth Dearing; **Greek** - 4 vacancies & **Backgammon** - 5 vacancies. For both contact Lynne Brown; **Holidays** - 4 vacancies Richard Flatt; **Jazz Appreciation** - 1 vacancy - Jackie Harvey; **Listening to Music** - 3 vacancies - Patricia Kay; **Mah Jong** - 1 or 2 vacancies Christine Kitchen; **Photoshop 1 or 2** - Len Morgan; **Reading for Pleasure** - 1 vacancy Lynn Fish; **Friday evening Rummikub** - 2 vacancies Val Dean; **Spanish Conversation** - possibly one more - Christine Kitchen; **Stitchers** - could take a few more - Maureen Hinton;

Open Groups: **Town & Around & Decorative Arts Visits** - Group Leader Margaret Collins. **Micropubbers** - Derrick Allen; **Strollers** - Barbara Wheeler; **Jigsaw Swap** - Maureen Wilkins; **Evergreen Revellers Choir** – Terry Moseley; **Local Lights** (local theatre trips) - Carole Alleway;

If there are no contact details for the group leader, please contact Cynthia Allen, Group Liaison.

Rummikub There is a waiting list for Rummikub, but no vacancies in any daytime group. If you would like to start such a group, Maggie Ellis has offered to pass on her games and Suzette Higgins has kindly said she will help the new leader set it up. If you are interested, contact Cynthia Allen (Group Liaison).

Golf

Two new members of the Bexley U3A have asked about the possibility of a Golf group, as they used to be members of such a group in Tunbridge Wells U3A. They have told me that the group consisted of a weekly booking on a set day at a local golf course. This was as much a social as a golfing set up.

If you would be interested in such a group, please let me know and I will pass on your contact details to them, in the hope that you can arrange something between you.

Cynthia Allen

TOWN AND AROUND
FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ALL VISITS AT YOUR OWN RISK, AND YOU WILL BE ASKED TO SIGN A DISCLAIMER.

Monday 30th March 2020. Trinity House. Meet at Cannon Street Station 10.15/10.30 then District Line to Tower Hill. Guided tour of this historic institution, which has been dedicated to looking after Lighthouses, Lightships, Buoys and other navigational aids for seamen since 1514. £10.00

Thursday 23rd April 2020. Standen House and Garden - Tulips. East Grinstead. Coach trip. Meet at Townley Road opposite Library at 9.15. Lovely Philip Webb Arts and Crafts House with William Morris furniture, and William de Morgan ceramics. Wander the hillside gardens with Tulip borders and spring flowers. Café or bring a picnic. NT members £18, non-NT members £28.

Thursday 21st May 2020, Oxford by Oxford Tube (a double decker bus). Meet Victoria Station 10.15/10.30 by platform 7 gate. Buy own ticket on board bus £13.00 return. 2-hour journey. Once there choose own itinerary to visit Botanical Gardens, Ashmolean Museum, River Cruise and many other places of interest. Details will be provided. Return at own pace. Please book place with Maire.

Organiser: Margaret Collins		
Bookings: Maire Carr		
Money: Sabine Wayt		

TOWN AND AROUND

Visit to Apothecaries Hall

By Margaret Collins

On a blustery February morning, we made our way to Blackfriars Station and then a short walk to Black Friars Lane and up to the ancient Apothecaries Hall said to be the oldest Livery Company Hall in the City of London. Just a few minutes' walk brought us to the narrow Medieval Lane and through an archway into a pretty courtyard, which incorporates some of the 13th century original walls, which was originally part of the Dominican priory of the Black Friars. The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries is one of the livery companies of the City of London with over 1,600 members. During the 14th and 15th century, it was part of the Grocers,

Pepperers, Spicers and Apothecaries Livery Company. They split to form their own Livery Company in 1617 and were housed on this site in what had been the guesthouse for the Friary. Once Catherine of Aragon stayed here. The Company obtained a Royal Charter from James I and later further rights to practice medicine, meaning that they were the forerunners of present-day general practitioners.

We were welcomed by Janet the Archivist and taken on a tour of this impressive old building that was purchased in 1632. Sadly, much of the building was destroyed by the Great Fire in 1666, including the Friary Gatehouse, but some parts are original. The Hall was rebuilt in 1672 to include an "Elaboratory" where they manufactured drugs and medicines that were sold on site to the public as well as The Army, The Navy, The East India Company and the Crown Colonies. This continued until 1922. Major restoration and an external building programme were carried out in the 1780s and again in 1980s, but the building remains much as it was in the 18thc. The Apothecaries' Gardens were established in 1673 by the Society to grow plants to be used as medicines, with members travelling by Barge up river to Chelsea to collect plants, and this still exists today as the Chelsea Physic Garden on land originally rented from Sir Hans Sloane.

The entrance hall was a lovely space, with cabinets showing off some of the precious items donated to the Society. In one cabinet was exquisitely embroidered male court outfit worn by the then Master when attending George IV and other members of the Royal Family at Court. Another cabinet had treen items as the Turners Guild shares these premises for functions. We went up a fabulous 15thc oak staircase, lined with portraits of old Masters of the Livery Company staring down on us. Over the fireplace, was a huge painting of the Spanish Armada, thought at one time to be painted by Hilliard, but later found to be by another.

Then into the Parlour with its lovely stained-glass windows and again portraits of past masters of the Company. A print of the extent of the Black Friars Dominican Order land and buildings was on display which showed how much land they once occupied right down to the riverfront including the ceremonial barge houses. It was tradition that past masters would give a gift to the hall when they had finished their one-year term. The Hall cannot now receive large portraits as gifts from previous worthies as there is no wall space left, so the more modern ones have been giving miniatures of themselves. The whole wall was covered in cases with Apothecary Jars of various dates, some going back to 1500. There is to be a lady Master later this year. The Company was at one time an examination board as well, with Medical Doctors, Pharmacists and other qualified members coming here to receive their licence to practice. They currently also run courses for HIV and Conflict injuries for Doctors.

The Court Room was where the apprentices would take their exams, and also if any misdemeanours occurred they would be dealt with in this room. Beautiful stained-glass windows which showed the Worshipful Society coat of arms with Apollo astride a mythical beast, with a rhinoceros on the top, and on the second window the Royal Coat of Arms with the Lion and Unicorn. Again many portraits of past Masters adorning the walls. There was a portrait of the Huguenot founder of the Society who was appointed to James I as his apothecary. Elizabeth Garret Anderson the first female Doctor received her Licence here and John Keats studied here, but then decided that poetry was his area of choice.

The double height Great Hall with its plaster work ceiling has panelling in dark Irish Bog Oak with lovely stained-glass windows on both sides and many huge portraits of past masters. Each past master may show their coat of arms on a small glass window. At the end of the room was a fabulously carved coat of arms again with Apollo and the Rhino at the top. This wood is very hard so must have been a difficult job to carve. The Society has had over the years barges on the Thames, however, this was long ago but the banners taken from the Barges were on display.

We then made our way back down the stairs with Royal portraits and photographs lining the walls. On the landing was an interesting case which showed that Agatha Christie studied here as a dispenser, and now we know why she used so many strange poisons in her novels. A really interesting Hall to visit with an excellent guided

tour. When we left, it was pouring with rain so we hurried to lunch and a warm drink away from medieval London back to the new.

Executive Committee 2019- 2020

Chair	Sandra Goulding		
Vice Chair	VACANCY		
Secretary	Maureen Wright		
Treasurer	Ron Clayton		
Membership	Douglas West		
Speakers	Terry Moseley		
Group Liaison	Cynthia Allen		
E-mail & IT	Nino Parascandolo		
Social Secretary	Thelma Wilkes		
Catering	Vi King		
Hall Manager /Database	Nino Parascandolo		
NON-COMMITTEE ROLES			
Meet & Greet	Edna Sutton		Please let Edna know of personal events e.g. significant birthdays, anniversaries, condolences, etc. so that she can send cards.
Newsletter Editor	Mary Jupp		

All contributions for April newsletter to be submitted by Midday Monday 23RD March

Please ensure you contribute before the cut-off and have an email acknowledgment from me that I have received your contribution! Thank You