

## February 2023 Bulletin

### MONTHLY MEETING

14th February 2023

St Johns Church at 2pm

#### **A very secret war: Bugging the Nazis**

During WW2, British intelligence bugged the conversations of thousands of German prisoners-of-war at three stately houses: Latimer House and Wilton Park in Buckinghamshire, and Trent Park in north London. Hitler's Generals, captured on the battlefields, were housed in luxurious conditions and lulled into a false sense of security. They relaxed and became unguarded in their conversations, little realising the house was 'wired for sound'. They inadvertently gave away from of Hitler's most closely guarded secrets.

For over 60 years the secret listeners never spoke about their work, not even to their families. They died, little knowing that they, alongside Bletchley Park, not only shortened the war but helped toward the victory on VE Day. Helen has researched and written about it for the first time.



# **NOTES FROM THE CHAIR**

*The Social Team will be organising an Afternoon Cream Tea and Quiz on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March at the Culverstone Village Hall. We will be circulating all members full details shortly by email. Tables of 6 per team. Why not get a team together from one of your groups? Alternatively, we can find individuals a team on the day.*

The team also are investigating coach trips and a local vineyard tour, and again we will be circulating details once they have been firmed up.

I'm pleased to say the Meopham u3a Facebook group now has now got over 60 members and details of various meetings have been posted. If you're on Facebook please join the group and look for opportunities to post reports of your meetings.

## **Apprentices Wanted**

As you know it takes a lot of **willing volunteers** to ensure the Meopham U3A runs smoothly. As four of our volunteers will shortly be standing down, they will need to be replaced. I thought it would be a great opportunity for anyone interested in stepping forward to help, to have the opportunity to shadow them for the rest of the u3a year.

The positions are: –

1. Group Coordinator. Sue Bates will sadly be stepping down in July as Group Coordinator but is prepared to offer as much help as her replacement will need. This is a vital role within Meopham U3A as well as keeping in touch with group leaders the group coordinator, also helps set up the new groups.
2. Meeters and Greeters Coordinator. You've probably all been greeted by Heather Snelling's warm and friendly smile if you have attended a monthly meeting at the Church. Her job is to ensure that there are enough Meeters and Greeters in her team at each monthly meeting and make all new members attending feel welcome. Again, Heather will be able to offer all the help a replacement needs.
3. Bulletin Editor. Carol Dickenson has done an excellent job looking after the Bulletin over the years and she would appreciate some help. Gus and Lesley Reid have kindly volunteered to edit the bulletin in February and March and if I can't persuade them to take it on full-time we will need to find someone who can.
4. Tea and Refreshments Coordinator. As you may know all the Groups share the job of helping with teas and coffees at each monthly meeting. We still need someone to make sure we have all the supplies we need and are available each month. Lynda Bolton has done this for some time and needs a break.  
Please let me know if you think you might be able to help or contact Sue, Carole, Heather or Lynda for further information on what each job entails.

**Regards Mike Chantry**  
**Chair 07969 931108.**

# **GROUP REFRESHMENTS ROTA**

## **14th Feb, CANASTA GROUP**

We have reverted to the old system whereby each group in turn helps set up, serve the tea/coffee/biscuits and clear up after the Monthly Members' meeting.

Lynda Bolton will bring the supplies and guide the groups in the use of the dishwasher and kitchen facilities.

We ask for at least 4 volunteers for the appropriate month. Please arrive about 1.30 to help set up. Even if you do not usually go to the monthly meeting please make the effort to attend when it is your groups turn.

Please contact Sue Bates, Groups Co-ordinator on [mepgroups22@gmail.com](mailto:mepgroups22@gmail.com) if you have any questions regarding this rota.

## **14th Mar, CHESS GROUP**

## **11th Apr, CIRCLE DANCING GROUP**

## **MODERN JIVE DANCE GROUP**

### **7:30 Every Monday Evening**

This friendly group is open for new beginners and it's also ok to join if you haven't danced for a while or experienced. No need to register - just turn up and have fun.

Group is led by Lynne and Alan Scott CEROC Modern Jive coach at Istead Rise Community Hall for 15 years, regularly have over 30 member and there is room for many more on this large dance floor.

Come on your own or with friends as we change partners regularly while we walk through 4 moves then slowly progress to dancing to music before a freestyle session.

Dancing to music from your youth to more modern tunes, it is ok to miss some sessions without being left behind as we repeat moves often.

This group is suitable for those that cannot dance have 2 left feet or no rhythm, sometimes called walking jive it can also be ok for those with new knees or hips, all you need is enthusiasm.

### **Christ Church Hall, Old Rd East, Gravesend DA12 1NR**

7:20 for 7:30 pm start.

Parking on-site, Old Road East.

Free refreshments.

**Only £2**

**Alan Scott** Chairman

**U3A Gravesend, Northfleet and District**

## **Golf group**

### **Beginners Welcome**

March sees the start of the Meopham U3A golf group year with a gentle 9-hole round at a local course. Most members don't have an official golf handicap and aren't likely to enter the Open anytime soon. So, if you haven't played golf in a while, or have always wanted to play but never got round to it, now it's a good opportunity to give it a try. Please contact Mike Chantry for more information at [mikechantry@mail.com](mailto:mikechantry@mail.com) or call on 07969931108

## **BEGINNER PATCHWORK – UPDATE**

This stunning Lama cushion was designed and made by Sue Martin who is a member of the Beginner Patchwork group.

The group is full but if there is sufficient interest a new group can be formed.

If you are interested in joining a new group contact Beryl Connelly.  
[berylconnelly@btinternet.com](mailto:berylconnelly@btinternet.com)



## Canasta news

The Monday afternoon Canasta players group as **moved**, we are now meeting at The Hartley Country Club in Hartley, **1.15 for a prompt start 1.30** .

We have a jolly time ,breaking for tea or coffee, and a very casual chat, if you are a member of the U3A and would like to join us, there is a charge for a casual player of £2,

There is no need to know how to play the game, if you do not try it you will never know .

**Please let me know before you come.**  
**Penny.**

## Sign Language Group News

If you were at the December general meeting, you may remember the short piece on aspects appropriate to the Season presented in British Sign Language, by our comparatively new group which holds monthly meetings – presently at the 'Tin Tabernacle, Sole Street, which is accessible to all – generally on a topic or area decided at the previous gathering.

**We are a sociable group** of a dozen or so in total, wishing to learn the basics – or in the case of a couple of members, progress – communication with those having a hearing impairment (selective hearing by spouses excluded).

We are still at an early stage, and gained a few new members in the latter part of last year, so if you think you might be interested, please join us for a 'taster' session: you never know!

For more information please contact me (Roy) via the Bluebird symbol on the website.

Thank you  
**Roy**

## **Needlecraft / Post Box Toppers**



### **We are Back and looking to the future!!**

After the success of the Christmas postbox toppers a group of “crafters” from Meopham U3A would like to form a new group dedicated to decorating the Meopham postboxes at different times of the year.

The obvious starting point for 2023 is the Coronation and we have a few ideas but would like help from anyone willing to knit, crochet, felt or sew royal regalia to go on top of the postboxes.

The idea is for these to be a **communal effort** so there is no pressure to complete individually.

Please contact group leader **Helen Pearce** for details of the first meeting on **Wednesday 8th February** or for a list of items needed.

## Great news!! Archaeology, up and running

The group after a slow start now has 13 members and we all very keen to get going. Our first meeting was on the 20th January it was decided to meet on **the third Friday of the month** in the morning.

We have set a provisional programme with plans for speakers, visits and hands on experiences.

Until we get properly established we will be running a waiting list but don't let this put you off from applying – who knows we may even have to start a second group.

Check the website for all contact details.

**Carole Baylis**

# **PUBLICITY**

If u3a's are going to stay lively, relevant and vibrant they need to regularly attract new members .Mu3a is no exception.

I am sure there are many people in our area that would find the u3a just up their street but may not have even heard of us. So we would like to spread the word as far and as wide as possible. You may have seen us on Facebook or in local publications ...well that was just the start

To that end you may remember that a call was put out in September for volunteers to help with publicity – to refresh our leaflet and once produced for volunteers to help with their distribution.

Jane Challis and the rest of publicity team have now finished the new design along with a complimentary poster and they will go into print this month. A big publicity drive is planned for early next year culminating in an open day in the spring-details to follow.

We already have 17 volunteer distributors but we still need some more particularly in these areas:

- Istead Rise
- Cobham and Luddesdown area
- Meopham Green
- Longfield and Hartley
- New Ash Green
- Ash
- Fawkham
- Culverstone and surrounding hamlets
- Stansted, Fairseat, Hodsoll Street
- Vigo
- Wrotham
- West Kingsdown

We would be extremely grateful for any help even if it is just a small amount of your time. As with everything if lots of people volunteer no one has to do too much so please think about offering to do just a few streets near where you live when you go for a walk.

**Please contact me:**

**Andrew Morgan**

[meophamu3amembsec@gmail.com](mailto:meophamu3amembsec@gmail.com)

Very many thanks.



## News from the groups:

Many of our groups are now posting information about their activities on the Mu3a **Facebook** page. This is a private group and you will have to ask to join. Why not ask to join the Facebook group at <https://en-gb.facebook.com/groups/298950500570080/> or click on the link on our website

### New Groups

I am very pleased to tell you that **THREE new groups** were launched on Thurs 26 January 2023 at a meeting held at The Cricketer's Inn. These are Art Appreciation (2nd Group); Writing; and Weekend Meetings. There was a lively buzz as the groups decided upon their initial start dates, venues, and activities, and appointed a Group Contact. It's not too late to join one of these groups. Just let me know on [mepgroups22@gmail.com](mailto:mepgroups22@gmail.com) and I will put you in touch.

**The following new groups are also in the pipeline for 2023:**

Group	Number on list (27.1.23)	
Local History	6	
Citizen Science	7	
Wine Appreciation (4th Gp)	6	
History (2nd group)	4	
Beginner's Patchwork	1	
French Chatting	5	
Tue Needlecraft	1	
Current Affairs (3rd group)	Proposed	
Italian 2nd group)	Proposed	

If you want to put your name down for any of these groups just email Groups Co-ordinator on [mepgroups22@gmail.com](mailto:mepgroups22@gmail.com) or sign the list on the table in the hall at the Monthly Members' Meeting.

## **Is the group you want to join marked 'FULL'?**

This can be for a number of reasons, often primarily because the group sessions are held in people's homes and there is limited space, chairs etc. for the group meetings. If you come across this situation this is what you should do: Inform the Groups Co-ordinator at a Monthly Meeting or via the website [www.meophamu3a.org.uk](http://www.meophamu3a.org.uk) or email [mepgroups22@gmail.com](mailto:mepgroups22@gmail.com) to let the Groups Co-ordinator know that a list for another group in the same subject can be created and a new group formed (this may take several weeks, but bear with us, it happens 95% of the time, if enough interest is generated).

Please don't give up. It is highly probable that there are like-minded people out there also wanting to join your preferred group type. If you don't tell us, your committee can do nothing to resolve the issue, so just get in touch. Remember, you are not committing yourself to anything, only showing interest.

In the meantime, would you consider joining a different group and expanding your horizons? Many groups have no maximum because they take place outdoors or in a hall eg How Things Work, Cycling for Everyone, Bee Watch etc. (Please consult the website [www.meophamu3a.org.uk](http://www.meophamu3a.org.uk) for comprehensive list of current Interest Groups).

## **End of Bulletin**