



The peach tree on the southern wall
Has basked so long beneath the sun,
Her score of peaches great and small
Bloom rosy, every one.

A peach for brothers, one for each,
A peach for you and a peach for me;
But the biggest, rosiest, downiest peach
For Grandmamma with her tea.

'The Peach Tree on the Southern Wall'
From Sing Songs, by Christina Rossetti, published 1893

Our monthly meetings are held on the first Friday of every month in the Village Hall, Arcadia Road, Burnham-on-Crouch CMO 8EF. List of dates: page 3

Email: info.u3a.boc2@gmail.com

Telephone: 07388 153930 Website: www.bocu3a.org

Facebook  Burnham-on-Crouch u3a

From the Chair

Hello Members,

We have just waved goodbye to the longest days of the year, and unlike previous years this one has been fabulous weather, the school holidays are just around the corner which is a time when many of you will be called into service as child minders, which I am sure that you are all looking forward to!

On a different note, our Sutton Hoo trip has only a hand full of seats left so if you still want to go you need to get in quickly, I am sure it will be a great day out. Unfortunately, the interest in the Chatham Dockyard trip was very poor so reluctantly we have had to cancel that one, but we will be organising more trips in the future.

The committee have been discussing holding a Cheese and Wine afternoon, with Peaberries providing a selection of cheeses, cold prosciutto meats, grapes etc. and a local vineyard coming along to do a wine tasting. Details of the afternoon will follow, along with the ticket prices which we think will be in the order of £10pp, so watch this space!

I will not be with you for the July meeting, I am away visiting family and friends, I will however be leaving you in the capable hands of David who I am sure will look after you all. I have left instruction for our tea princesses that no Jammy Dodgers are to be served until I get back.

See you all at the August Talk, which should be an interesting one!

Carl

Monthly Meeting Dates

(2.15 for 2.30 pm)
Burnham Village Hall CMO 8EF

Dates (Fridays)	Speaker	Subject
3 rd July 2026	Andrew Babicz	<i>Great Gardens of Great Britain Part 2</i>
7th August 2026	Lindsey Barrel	<i>Burlesque</i>
4th September 2026		<i>Social Afternoon</i>



U3a Photography Group

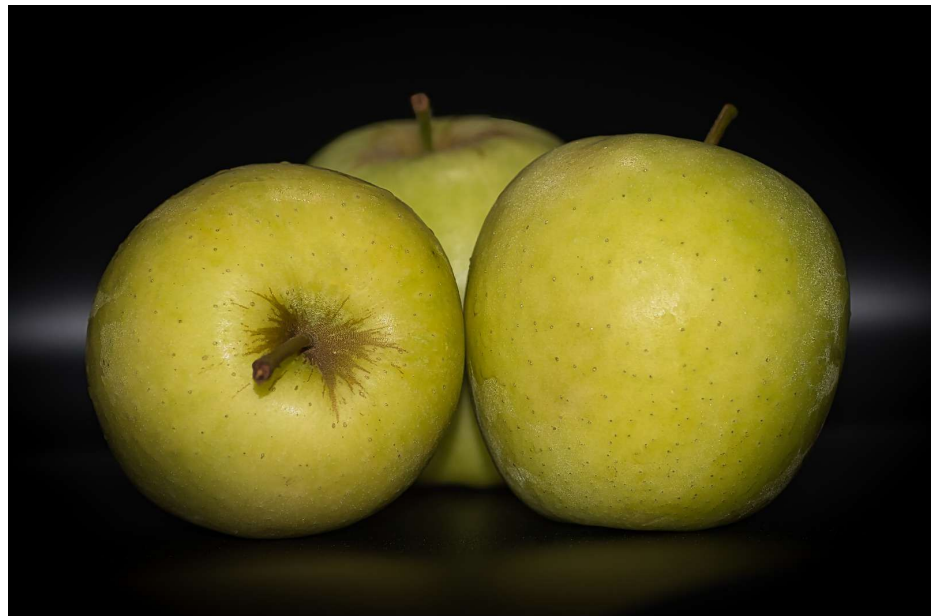
At our June meeting, we asked members to submit their images on the theme of "Flowers".



With such a lovely subject we had some beautiful photos to enjoy and supply friendly critique.



The theme for our June meeting was Flash Photography. We took our cameras and flash guns and had a go at photographing some still life images indoors.



For our May outing we made a repeat visit to The Chatham Historic Dockyard. We watched a rope making demonstration, wandered amongst the historic warships and interactive galleries, walked around the film set of "Call the Midwife" and enjoyed the Commissioner's Garden. Even though we had some rain showers it was a very enjoyable day. Coming up next is our outing on Friday 26th June to London's South Bank.

Our July meeting's topic will be Portraits and images taken on our last outing to Chatham. We will also have a presentation on using post processing software. We are a very friendly group, and new members will receive a warm welcome. You do not need a big camera to join, our members use a wide range of equipment, from SLR cameras to smartphones.

We would love you to join us at our next meeting, from 10:00 to 12:00 on **Monday 13th July** at the **URC, 53 Station Road, Burnham CMO 8HF** – we look forward to seeing you.

Jacqueline Mills

ART ARCHITECTURE and DESIGN

There will be no June meeting as the museum hosts the exhibition for the Burnham Art Trail which, Roger Barcroft told the group is “bigger and better this year with more exhibitors, a series of talks and take-what-you-make workshops”. Look out for the brochure or visit the [website](#).. There are also details on Facebook and Instagram – just search Burnham Art Trail. Our next meeting will be on July 17th when we shall look at the life and work of Gertrude Jekyll who was so much more than a gardener! This talk has come about from the research that was necessary for the Lutyens talk. Gertrude Jekyll was such a big part of Lutyens's career that she really deserves more credit than just mentioning her alongside Lutyens. Added to that her life story and work are compelling. As regards 'I Collect...', well we haven't decided on that subject as yet, so keep an eye on the u3a Facebook page found as 'Burnham-on-Crouch u3a' where all things u3a can be found.

Delia and Mike Allen – Group Leaders.

Gertrude Jekyll

*Artist, Craftswoman ...
and then there was
gardening*



BURNHAM ON CROUCH u3a
An illustrated talk
Friday July 17th 10.30am
Burnham on Crouch Museum Lower (The Cole) Gallery

The Medway Queen Paddle Steamer

A presentation by Mark Bathurst

Carl welcomed new members and remarked "had we enjoyed the summer" as after a week of blissful (if somewhat too hot) sunny weather we were back to rain, winds and jumpers. We were introduced to Mark whom, when had retired from the Kent Fire Service, joined the Medway Queen Preservation Society where Mark and his wife Pam serve and continue to serve to raise the profile of this little ship.

The Medway Queen was launched in 1924 as a tourist attraction taking visitors to paddle steam around the Kent and Essex Coast. She was just one of several 'Queen' steamers working at that time, but she was the first that was specifically built for pleasure outings. It was a big day out for day trippers and a real treat, going to Margate, Southend or Clacton. Built to a very high standard she could achieve a speed of 15 knots, with the steam driven engine driving the huge pistons to turn the paddle wheels. *(When on a trip on the Waverly, the only steam driven paddle steamer still working, the spouse spent most of his time gazing at the engine room engineering in awe and wonder)* So the Medway Queen served tourists well during the 20s and 30s, but war was looming. On the screen Neville Chamberlain appeared with the speech that still haunts ... "we are at war with Germany". In 1939 the 'Queen' was painted battleship grey and fitted out with machine and 12 pounder naval guns thus equipped she began work as a minesweeper.

In the spring of 1940 Germany was pushing through France and hundreds and thousands of troops, British, French and Belgian were trapped on the beaches of Dunkirk facing total annihilation. On the eve of 27th May the Medway Queen travelled across the channel to help with the evacuation of the retreating troops under code name Operation Dynamo. Many, many ships both big and small made the journey to rescue the embattled troops. Mark advised us that three ships from Burnham were amongst this armada. It was an enormous operation trying to rescue thousands of beleaguered soldiers lined up on the beaches. The German Luftwaffe was dropping bombs on the retreating troops who were fatigued and many were sick and dying. The horror of this situation cannot be imagined and poignantly Mark played a video of the Dunkirk evacuation to the music of Dancing with Wolves. This was exceedingly moving, comparable to when heart-breaking music is played at a funeral- which for many of those soldiers it probably was.

Over the next few days, the Medway Queen made 7 journeys, both day and night, under fire from the air and land, back to the French beaches rescuing over 7,000 men. Being a paddle steamer, she made distinctive copious amounts of white water which was a target for enemy aircraft. The crew lowered bags of oil over the side to slick over the sea and hide the wash. With Lewis and Bren guns on board 3 enemy aircraft were brought down by the fire power on the ship. When one of the other rescue ships, the Brighton Belle, hit an

underwater obstacle and sank the Queen rescued all those on board without any loss of life and by now, heavily overloaded, she made it safely back to harbour.

We heard about Dunky a tiny puppy that was rescued from the beach by the captain Alfred Cook. On the Medway Queens final voyage to the sands of Dunkirk, she picked up French troops, one of the first ships to arrive and the last to leave. After the rescue mission was over, she returned back to being a minesweeper and a training ship. So great was this little steamer's effort that she earned the title 'the Heroine of Dunkirk'

The 1950s saw the return of the pleasure trip paddle steamer but in 1963 she was withdrawn from business and sold for scrap, she was however rescued from this ignominy and became a night club. In the 1970s she fell into disrepair and although she was later purchased by a private buyer she eventually semi sank in the River Medina when her hull sprung a leak. A sad end for a heroine.

But all was not lost as in the 1980s the importance of this historic ship was recognised, and she was salvaged and towed to Damhead Creek near Cooling Church where incidentally Magwitch scared the living daylights out of young Pip in Great Expectations. Thus, the Medway Queen Preservation society was born. Restoration on this massive scale cost money, lots of it, but in 2006 the society received a lottery fund grant that enabled them to start the project in earnest. The hull however was felt to be past restoration and, as it needed to be a riveted hull, a specialist company was needed, and the job went to Abels Shipbuilders in Bristol. Hulls these days are welded and plated which is much quicker and more efficient than the old-fashioned rivet. The Queen was part deconstructed and towed on a pontoon back to Chatham. Whilst in Abels dock in Bristol the reconstructed hull sat adjacent to Brunel's SS Great Britain another historic ship –though rather larger– which had been rescued and returned to its former glory. In 2013 the new hull was towed down the Bristol Channel and back home to Kent where more extensive refurb continues to this day with many ardent volunteers and apprentices learning their craft and helping to rebuild this significant vessel.

The Medway Queen, now moored at Gillingham Pier, is still not under steam power as to refit the boiler (rivets again) would cost over a million pounds. The Society holds many events including music evenings and ghost hunts to continue to fund the restoration. Opening times: · Date: Every Saturday from February 15th to December 6th · Time: 11am to 4pm (last admission strictly 3pm) · Address: Gillingham Pier ME7 1RX. A very interesting talk by an enthusiastic Mark whose interest and care for the Heroine of Dunkirk shone through.

Your Garden in July

July brings the height of the British summer, with long warm days and borders full of colour. It's a month for gentle maintenance rather than heavy work, making it ideal for relaxed gardening at your own pace.

Plants Looking Their Best

Dahlias are now coming into their stride. From small pom-poms to dinner-plate blooms, they add bold colour right through to autumn. Keep them flowering by removing spent heads.

Hydrangeas are another July favourite. Mopheads and lacecaps thrive in part shade and provide generous, long-lasting blooms. Remember: don't prune them now — wait until spring.

Daylilies (*Hemerocallis*) offer cheerful, trumpet-shaped flowers that open fresh each morning. They're hardy, reliable, and excellent for low-maintenance borders. Herbs such as mint, rosemary, and thyme are at their most fragrant. Regular picking keeps them tidy and encourages new growth.

If you grow vegetables, peas, courgettes, beetroot, and early potatoes are all ready for harvesting. Picking little and often keeps plants productive.

Jobs for July

- Water deeply once or twice a week rather than little and often. This encourages stronger roots and saves effort.
- Feed containers and hanging baskets every 7–10 days. Plants in pots quickly use up nutrients.
- Trim hedges lightly if needed but avoid disturbing nesting birds.
- Cut back faded perennials such as hardy geraniums to encourage a fresh flush of leaves and late flowers.
- Keep lawns healthy by raising the mower blades. Slightly longer grass copes better with dry spells.
- Watch for heat stress in newly planted shrubs. A good soak and a layer of mulch can make all the difference.

Enjoy the Height of Summer

July is a wonderful month to enjoy the garden at its most generous. A shady seat, a cool drink, and the hum of bees can be just as satisfying as any gardening task. Whether you're tending a large plot or caring for a few pots on the patio, take time to appreciate the colour, scent, and wildlife that make this month so special.

Bird and Wildlife Group

Cudmore Grove, East Mersea, Wednesday 10th June.

Six of us met for a morning coffee at Mersea Barns Coffee shop prior to driving to the country park. It was a cloudy but rain free morning fortunately. Having navigated the complexities of parking at Cudmore Grove we wandered down to the hide. There was a pleasant mix of birdsong including skylarks, reed warblers and a persistent cuckoo. Birds are not that visible at this time of the year, but a couple of reed warblers were spotted as well as moorhens and coots with their chicks. We then wandered down to the shore where there was an abundance of oystercatchers but not a lot else. We had hoped to see sand martins nesting in the cliffs, but they must have changed their nesting site. However, we were rewarded with close-up views of linnets which was a bonus. Additionally, there was quite a range of wildflowers but not many butterflies – not sunny enough for them. After a pleasant morning, we adjourned to Mersea Barns for lunch.

Next meeting: Wednesday, 8th July. Meet at the Parlour Café for a local ramble hoping to see butterflies, various insects and flowers and perhaps a few birds.

<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Birds</u>	<u>Other</u>
Bramble	Blackbird	Holly blue butterfly
Bulrush	Cetti's warbler	
Cleavers	Chiff chaff	
Common lime	Common gull	
Common sorrel	Coot	
Cow parsley	Cormorant	
Creeping buttercup	Cuckoo	
Daisy	Herring gull	
Dandelion	Moorhen	
Dog rose	Oyster catcher	
Elder	Pied wagtail	
Germander speedwell	Reed warbler	
Hedge mustard	Robin	
Herb robert	Skylark	
Meadow buttercup	Wood pigeon	
Mouse-ear hawkweed	Wren	
Scentless mayweed		
Sea beet		
Sea lavender		
Sea plantain		
Smooth sow thistle		
St. John's wort		
Stinging nettle		

Maldon Cluster Group

(Maldon & District, Blackwater, Limebrook, Dengie & District,
Burnham-on-Crouch, Crouch Valley and South Woodham Ferrers u3as)

As a member of Burnham-on-Crouch u3a, you are free to attend Interest Groups, including theatre trips and outings, organised by a number of other u3as in the area, if there is space.

Follow this link for more information about Interest Groups across the Maldon Cluster Group:

<https://bocu3a.org/go/pdf>



Third Age Trust – the u3a nationally

As a member of Burnham-on-Crouch u3a you also have access to:

Offers and discounts via 'u3a Friends Extra'

(<https://bocu3a.org/go/extra>)

The '**u3a Friends**' (sign up to the newsletter)

(<https://bocu3a.org/go/friends>)

A **u3a podcast**

(<https://bocu3a.org/go/podcast>)

Online learning via Zoom

(<https://bocu3a.org/go/online>)

'Third Age Matters' magazine – you can read the latest issue via the link below

(<https://bocu3a.org/go/magazine>)



Winter Readers Group

Our Winter Readers group, as its name suggests, meets during the cooler months, between about October and April. There should be room for one or two new members when the group re-starts later this year. If you are interested, please contact the group leader Bev Abbott (<https://bocu3a.org/go/winterreaders>).

Pete Wardle
Groups Co-ordinator

Interest Groups

Day	Interest Group	Group Leader	Tel.	More Details & Contact Online
Mon 10.00am (2 nd)	Photographic	Diane Raddon	01621 861899	More Details
Mon 2.00pm (2 nd & 4 th)	Recorders	Linda Baxandall	01621 782298	More Details
Mon 2.30pm (weekly)	Table Tennis 1	Eric Tremlett	07936 172582	More Details
Mon 2.30pm (last)	Garden Views *	Margaret Heel	01621 785846	More Details
Mon 2.30pm (3 rd)	Book Lovers *	Frances Harris	01621 783770	More Details
Tue (am) (4 th)	Walking	Diane Caulkett	01621 783786	More Details
Tue 2.00pm (weekly)	Badminton	Julie Thomas-Page		More Details
Tue 5.00pm (weekly)	Line Dancing *	Anne Dowman	07753 121119	More Details
Tue 2.00pm (2 nd)	Literary *	Sue Holmes	01621 782610	More Details
Tue 7.00pm (weekly)	Bridge *	Liz Smith	07790 384005	More Details
Wed 10.00am (weekly)	Archaeology	Sue Spiers	01621 776570	More Details
Wed (am) (2 nd)	Bird & Wildlife	Lynda Ewers	01621 741577 07467042654	More Details
Wed 10.00 (1 st)	Genealogy & Family History	Caroline O'Neill	07484 269215	More Details
Wed 10.30am (3 rd)	Garden Topics *	Pamela Burton	01621 779575	More Details
Wed 2.00pm fortnightly	Scrabble	Sandra Stocker	07535 651491	More Details
Wed 2.30pm (4 th)	Winter Readers	Bev Abbott	01621 786005	More Details
November - April				
Wed 2.30pm (weekly)	Table Tennis 2 *	Roy Hutchins	07710 534709	More Details
Wed 2.30pm (last)	Our Ancestry *	Peter Banham	01621 772668	More Details
Wed 3.00pm (1 st & 3 rd)	Pétanque	Gwen Pocock	01621 740703	More Details
Thur 10.00am (weekly)	French *	Pam Eastham	01621 783453	More Details
Thur 1.00pm (3 rd)	Company of Crafters	Julie Cleverley	07961 496296	More Details
Thur 2.00pm (fortnightly during school terms)	10-Pin Bowling	Diane Caulkett	01621 783786	More Details
Thur 3.00pm (2 nd)	The Literati	Phyllis Brame	01621 785669	More Details
Fri 10.30am (3 rd)	Art, Architecture & Design	Delia & Mike Allen	01621 784955	More Details
Fri 10.30am (2 nd)	Pitch and Putt	Ian Parrott	07890 600153	More Details
Fri 12.00pm (4 th)	Luncheon Homebirds *	Diane Raddon	01621 861899	More Details
Fri 12.30pm (3 rd)	Luncheon Explorers	Josie Scroggs	01621 740457	More Details
Fri 2.00pm (weekly)	Mah Jong *	Terry Sims	01621 784102	More Details
Fri 2.30pm (2 nd & 4 th)	Alternative Therapies, Practices & Beliefs	Julie Thomas-Page	07771 611038	More Details
Sat 10.00am (weekly)	Archaeology	Sue Spiers	01621 776570	More Details
As Arranged	MOTO (Members On Their Own) *	Liz Smith	07790 384005	More Details

* The Line Dance group is very well-attended at present, so please contact the group leader to check on availability before turning up; you may be asked to go on a waiting list.

* - Groups marked with an asterisk are currently so popular that we need to set up extra groups in these areas: if you'd like to be part of new group (perhaps even help to organise it) please let the current group leader, or the Groups Co-ordinator, know. There is a lot of support to help new groups get started.

Committee

Position	Telephone	Name
Chair	07714 481205	Carl Hughes
Vice-Chair	07734 445452	Dave Rae
Secretary	07801 555026	Jo Gray
Membership Secretary	07989 713218	Jac Mills
Groups Co-ordinator	07788 566103	Pete Wardle
Treasurer	01621 861899	Diane Raddon
Webmaster	07746 958690	Graham Newman
Events Co-ordinator	07793 056313	Marilyn O'Doherty
Communications Co-ordinator	07788 907846	Phil Flack
Speaker Co-ordinator	07969 617403	Maureen Rae
New Members Ambassador	07340 522439	Margaret Lambert

Committee members may be contacted individually via our website.

<https://bocu3a.org/organisation/#committee>

For general enquiries, please use following email: info.u3a.boc2@gmail.com

Committee meetings are held at the Olde White Harte Hotel on the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 10.00am. Members are very welcome to attend; if you plan to do so, please let our Secretary, Jo Gray, know in advance.



Upcoming Committee Meetings

16th July; 20th August; 17th September



The deadline for copy for the August newsletter is NOON on Friday 24th July. Please email your contributions to newsletter@bocu3a.org. Photos are very welcome, but please email them separately from the text you are sending.

Burnham-on-Crouch u3a, Registered Charity Number: 1091017

Where appropriate, images are licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported Licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.