NEWSLETTER FOR

March 2026

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Greetings, U3A members!

Please diarize 13 April because that's the date of our Annual General Meeting. You should have received your package of AGM documentation which was emailed to all members using the email addresses that we have on record. If you didn't get the package, then please make arrangements to get it as a matter of urgency. One very important item on the Agenda is the election of a new Committee. Some members of the current Committee are standing down, having served Plett U3A well, and we need new members to step up. If you are new to Plett U3A then you would be especially welcome as we always appreciate fresh insights. So, if you feel you would like to get involved please approach a Committee member.

On a cautionary note: on the 31st of March nonpaid-up members will be removed from our database. They will also not appear on the door list. Please wear your nametags to our meetings. This means that as from 1 April 2026, those nonpaid-up members will no longer receive emails or WhatsApps and if they arrive at the door for a U3A event they will need to pay their R 30 as a visitor, or pay their subs for the year which are R 200.

This coming month we will enjoy two presentations.

The first of these will be on Wednesday 8 April, where Peter Grube will give a presentation titled " Humour – a serious analysis. " Refer to the outline below.

Second: After the AGM on the 13th Rhian Berning, will describe the Eden to Addo Corridor and the various conservation initiatives; full details below.

We don't usually report back on outings or similar events in this news letter but we have made an exception in the case of the outing to Diepwalle last week which was hosted by Dalena Wolmarans. This outing was such a success that we have included a report below, with some pictures.

We will continue showing videos on the South African shoreline. The first of these videos dealt with the Namaqualand coast and was well received by all those present. The programme for the month is given in the Calendar but note that Monday 6th is a public holiday and no video will be shown on that day.

Peter mentioned to me that 77 members are still not on the WhatsApp group despite 13 reminders and so once again the Committee appeals to those members to join. You do this by clicking on the link https://chat.whatsapp.com/J0LhJe7OHct4vzbhlECoH2

Tis very easy.

Philip M

1 CALENDAR

Here is is a calendar indicating the planned events for April 2026 and beyond.

DATE			EVENT	TIME	LOCATION
Fri - Mon	*3-6*	*Apr*	*Easter Weekend*	*All day*	
Wed	**8**	**APR**	**The Serious Side of Humour - Talk by Peter Grube**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**13**	**APR**	**Eden to Addo Corridor: Importance of Alien Vegetation Clearing. Talk by Rhian Berning (plus AGM).**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**20**	**APR**	**South African Shoreline - Yzerfontein to Robben Island**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	*27*	*Apr*	*Freedom Day*	*All day*	
Fri	*1*	*May*	*Workers' Day*	*All day*	
Mon	**4**	**MAY**	**Jonathan Shapiro + The miraculous life of a Humming bird.**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Sun	*10*	*May*	*Mother's Day*	*All day*	
Mon	**11**	**MAY**	**Malcolm Gladwell: Talking to Strangers - What We Should Know About the People We Don't Know + Monica Lewinsky: The Price of Shame**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Wed	**13**	**MAY**	**The diversity of flower visitors to Southern Cape forest trees. Talk by Rudi Crispin Swart**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**18**	**MAY**	**Dr Jane Goodall: Famous Last Words**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**25**	**MAY**	**Robson Green: Forgotten Stories on Hadrian's Wall (Part 1)**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Membership

The Plett U3A membership increased with eight new members coming on board during the month of March.

They were: Isabella Stroiazzo, Eleanor and Leon Pitallo, John Constable, Alastair Gordon-Forbes, Clifford Elk, Erika Emdon-Elk and Jill Maree. We welcome them all to the Plett U3A.

Our records show that 64 members have not yet paid their subs for 2026. The deadline is the 31st of March. We don't want to lose you! As mentioned on page 1, nonpaid-up members will be taken off the database on 31 March.

3 FORTHCOMING EVENTS

3.1 Wednesday 8 April: PETER GRUBE – HUMOUR A SERIOUS ANALYSIS

Pete is a stalwart of the U3A committee and he will be very familiar to regular attendees as he very ably manages the membership and the remote control for the dvds! He has been in this role for the last four years.

The talk on humour that he is presenting on the 8th April is meant to address one of the three principles of u3a's motto **'Learn, Live and Laugh'**.

3.2 Monday 13 April: Rhian Berning – Presentation on the Eden to Addo Corridor Initiative

Report by Anne Clarke

The AGM on Monday 13 April will be followed by a presentation by Rhian Berning who is an environmental scientist, systems thinker, and social innovator working at the intersection of ecological restoration, community resilience, and landscape-scale conservation. She is the CEO of the Eden to Addo Corridor Initiative: an ambitious long-term effort to restore ecological connectivity across South Africa's southern landscapes by linking fragmented habitats between the Garden Route National Park, Baviaanskloof World Heritage Site and Addo Elephant National Park.

Rhian brings together farmers, conservation organisations, local communities, scientists, restoration workers, and government partners to co-create solutions that allow both ecosystems and people to thrive. She holds a B.Sc. in Environmental Science and a Postgrad in Education and has a background spanning environmental education, community mobilisation, and strategic programme development.

Through the Eden to Addo vision, Rhian is helping to catalyse a growing movement of "Guardians of Eden": a community of people who are committed to restoring living landscapes, where rivers flow freely, wildlife can move across connected habitats, and communities are active stewards of the natural systems that sustain life.

Talk outline: Rhian will take the audience on a journey through the Eden to Addo Corridor exploring why connectivity between ecosystems and landscapes is so critical and explaining ways in which land can be protected and restored for the continued integrity of our living systems upon which we all depend. She will outline why activities such clearing invasive aliens from river catchments is paramount to our water security, fire security and to the rich biodiversity of our indigenous birds, animals and plants. The talk will explore how our challenges can also be our solutions and create jobs and sustainable livelihoods, and how you too can participate in the solutions that will lead to a future where nature and people can thrive.

4 Review of the Wednesday 25 March outing to Diepwalle Forest

Review by Beth Hackland

We had a fascinating outing to Knysna on Wed 25 March. Forty members travelled to Dalena Wolmarans' Mill. Dalena took over her father's sawmill twenty years ago and has continued to operate it masterfully. She demonstrated to us how huge tree trunks are manipulated and then cut into planks using the large electric saw which runs on railings. Then she led us into the Diepvalle forest where she regaled us with stories going back a hundred years, relating how her father and grandfather grew up in that forest.

Dalena devoted most of the day to our group and is passionate and animated about her family's history. She went beyond expectations and everyone was enthralled with her enthusiasm. We have made a donation to her from club funds, in recognition of her time and effort. "



Above: the Plett U3A members in the timber yard. In the foreground is a stack of logs from indigenous trees, which will soon be sawn into planks. Pic by Peter Grube



Above: Dalena, in the pink shirt, introduces U3A members to the timber mill and gives an overview of how it operates. Pic by Peter Grube

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