

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3 Bird Watching Beeleigh
4 Maritime	5 Table Tennis Snooker	6 Ten Pin Bowling Meteorology Wine Circle	7 Poetry Discussion Scottish Dancing	8 Botany Family History(2) Canasta	9	10
11 Table Tennis Beg. Handicrafts German Whist Table Tennis Beg.	12 Table Tennis Snooker	13 Ten Pin Bowling Swimming Bridge Painting	14 Ballroom Dancing French Conversation Reading	15 Mah Jong	16	17 Strollers Heybridge
18 <b>Meeting 1.30 pm</b>	19 Table Tennis Snooker Aviation	20 Ten Pin Bowling Clock Repairs	21 Ballroom Dancing Scottish Dancing	22 Canasta	23	24
25 Local History Handicrafts German Whist Table Tennis Beg. Astronomy	26 Table Tennis Snooker	27 Ten Pin Bowling Swimming Family History Bridge Painting Writing for Fun	28 Ballroom Dancing Computers Music Appreciation French Conversation	29 Mah Jong	30	

**I try my utmost to get the calendar correct each month, but I would advise you to always check with your co-ordinator as to the date of your next meeting.**

Newsletter Editor: Mrs. Jan. Robertson, 6 Blenheim Close, Danbury, CM3 4NE Tel. 01245 225657 email Jan8085@aol.com

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The University of the Third Age

# MALDON AND DISTRICT



Good Wishes for Christmas  
and the  
New Year

DECEMBER 2009

VOLUME 1X NO. 7

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

Web Site: [www.maldon3a.co.uk](http://www.maldon3a.co.uk)



## FROM THE CHAIR

As the end of another year will soon be upon us I have taken time out to reflect on our achievements over the last twelve months. The entertainments put on by the social committee were all very successful and I hope we will show continuing support for next year's events.

The group activities are still as strong as ever and we are still maintaining 40+ activities which proves, once again, that our co-ordinators are doing a good job.

It is pleasing to see that new members appear to be joining in the various group activities as well as the social events.

All that remains for me to say this year is Janet and I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Alan Buck

### *Family History*

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 27th January, at 2.30 pm and will be held at 15 Peartree Lane, Bicknacre. Please bring your queries, researches and personal histories.

### NEW GROUP

Our next meeting will be on Friday, 8th January at 2.00 pm and will be held at 56 Augustine Way, Bicknacre. Frank Stokes.

**Good Companions** has been renamed **Weekenders**

## CO-ORDINATORS

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Alan Buck</b>	<b>01245 227709</b>	Luncheon Club	Mike Wood	01245 222839
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	<b>Beryl McDonell</b>	<b>01621 842093</b>		Paul Costa	01621 853893
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Pamela Turnbull</b>	<b>01376 510084</b>			
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Rosemary Case</b>	<b>01245 329435</b>	Mah-Jong	Molly Polden	01621 856507
<b>Membership Sec.</b>	<b>John Robson</b>	<b>01621 828236</b>			
<b>Speaker Sec.</b>	<b>Joyce Cotterell</b>	<b>01621 858287</b>	Maritime History	Malcolm Case	01245 329435
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Paul Costa</b>	<b>01621 853893</b>			
	<b>John Almond</b>	<b>Ex. Dir.</b>			
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	<b>Jan Robertson</b>	<b>01245 225657</b>	Meteorology	Malcolm Case	01245 329435
<b>WebMaster</b>	<b>John Bowen</b>	<b>01245 224677</b>		John Robson	01621 828236
<b>Social Committee</b>	<b>Dorothy Denmark</b>	<b>01245 223960</b>			
Astronomy	Molly Tring	01621 854732	Music Appreciation	Enid Hall	01621 891618
				John Skuse	01245 224059
Aviation	David Arnold	01621 853866	Painting	Eileen Lane	01621 816181
	Fred Lane	01621 816181			
Ballroom Dancing	Jo Robson	01621 828236	Petanque (Boule)	Barbara Arnold	01621 853866
Bird Watching	Pat Clements	01245 223427	Poetry	Jo Robson	01621 828236
Botany	Veronica Smith	01621 828176	Reading 2nd Thursday	Sheila Epps	01621 850467
Bridge	Sheila Epps	01621 850467	Scottish Dancing	Shirley Grummett	01621 853288
Canasta	Marian Manning	01621 828605	Sing for Pleasure	Sylvia Carpenter	01621 854905
	Margaret Dale	01268 765239			
Clock Repairs	Stanley Clements	01245 223427	Snooker	John Williams	01621 828461
Computers	Jan Robertson	01245 225657	Strollers	Gill Stone	01621 853948
Desk Top Pub.	Jan Robertson	01245 225657	Swimmers	Gill Rowsell	01621 740619
Discussion	Ray Harman	01621 891736	Table Tennis	Gordon Hardy	01245 223012
Family History	Frank Stokes	01245 223579		Julie Doidge	01621 841205
Continuing French	Sylvia Carpenter	01621 854905	Beginners	Beryl McDonell	01621 842093
French Conversation	Bill Stichbury	01621 855828	Ten Pin Bowling	David Arnold	01621 853866
Gardeners	Jan Robertson	01245 225657	Theatre Group	Enid Hall	01621 891618
German	Jenny Plumb	01245 226112		Sheila Epps	01621 850467
Handicraft	Marian Manning	01621 828605	Weekenders	Beryl McDonell	01621 842093
Local History	Mary Burd	01621 843020	Whist	Molly Polden	01621 856507
	Alfred Couldrey	01245 226259	Wine Circle	Graham Boswell	01621 828874
			Writing for Fun	Pat Sizer	01621 892201

### **FREE**

As a result of changing printers I have black and colour ink cartridges suitable for a Canon Stylus Photo printer 700 or 750 - free to anyone who can use them. Harry Bacon Tel; 01621 853291 or hrbacon@aol.com

### **FOR SALE**

Heated Chrome Towel Rail 60cm x 80cm £50 (10 months old)  
Ring Mike/Liz Wood 01245 222839

### **Old Tennis Rackets for Africa?**

Does anyone know of a Charity that sends old tennis and squash rackets to Africa. If so please telephone: Anne Harrison on 01621 891195

### **Wanted---A discarded computer**

If anybody has bought a new computer recently or is thinking about it in the near future and wishes to dispose of their old one, I might be interested. It does not have to have a large memory or high speed as requirements for its use are quite simple.

If so please contact Ray Harman tel: 01621 891736

#### **BLACKWATER U3A**

Contact:  
Dorreen Linton, Chairman  
01621 853428

#### **SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS U3A**

Contact  
Heather Richardson Chairman  
01245 320205

#### **HEYBRIDGE U3A**

Contact  
Ruth Tyler, Chairman  
01621 869865

#### **NATIONAL OFFICE**

19 East Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1QH  
Tel 020 8466 6139 Email national.office@u3a.org  
Web site www.u3a.org.uk

Deadline for next newsletter: Friday, 8th January

### ***Local & General History***

Christmas Greetings to all our members.

The programme for 2010 is printed in full in the newsletter. Page 14  
The important change for 2010 is we have a new venue:

#### **MALDON TOWN HALL**

Our first meeting of the year will be on Monday 25 January when our speaker will be Adrian Wright and his talk is entitled "The Growth of Essex Railways".  
2.00 pm at the Town Hall – cost £1.50 – All members are welcome.  
Mary Burd

### ***Swimming***

Our dates for Swimming until Easter are:

13th & 27th January                      10th & 24th February                      10th & 24th March

If you would like to join us at the Blackwater Leisure Centre, Maldon on Wednesdays, 9.0 to 9.45 am, please let me know on 01621 740619 the day before. Pay on entry and meet us in the Flume Pool. Non or nearly swimmers welcome, we do have fun and meet for a cuppa afterwards.

Gill Rowsell

### ***Wine Circle***

The new group has now held its first two meetings, both of which were very well attended. At the first meeting we went back to 'basics' by comparing three pours of different wines to find out how to appreciate a glass of wine by its appearance, aroma and taste.

The second meeting was the first in a series of five looking at the wines of France's Loire Valley.

Although the group is full, I am prepared to start a second one if anyone is interested.

Graham Boswell on 01621 828874

### ***Singles Dining***

The singles dining has come to an end. I would like to thank all the members especially Ray White whose baby it was. We had some good times and fun.

Sue Oram.

## ***Gardening***

I have had confirmation from Bowens Travel that we are booked for our Rutland four day trip on the **13/16 July**. Please put these dates in your diary and contact me if you are interested in joining us. Full details in January newsletter. I will not need deposits until February 2010.

Jan Robertson on 01245 225657

## ***Maritime***

The next meeting will be on **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010**, at The Little Ship Club, starting at 10.00 am. There will be an illustrated talk by Malcolm Case and John Robson on "The History of Navigation". All members are very welcome. See 2010 Maritime Programme on Page 15

Malcolm Case

## ***Meteorology***

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January**, at The Little Ship Club, starting at 2.30 pm. There will be an illustrated talk by John Robson on The British favourite topic of conversation, our weather. Where does it come from? All members are very welcome.

Malcolm Case and John Robson

## ***Strollers***

### **Sunday 17th January 2010.**

There will be a meeting at 8 Beeches Road, Heybridge @ 11a.m. to plan the programme for the year.

Please let me know if you are able to attend/ unable to attend but willing to lead a walk. No walk this month.

Gill Stone - 01621 853948

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### **MARITIME GROUP DINNER APRIL 12<sup>th</sup> 2010**

To be held at the Blackwater Sailing Club, commencing 1900 hrs for 1930 hrs The theme for this Dinner is the "Royal Yacht Britannia", there will be a four course dinner with wine followed by an after Dinner Speaker. The idea is that the Royal family have invited dignitaries from various counties to dine on board.

The cost of the Dinner will be between £25-£30, if you would like to come please contact Malcolm Case on 01245329435 for further details; a £15.00 deposit will be required.

## **MALDON DISTRICT HERITAGE WINTER TALKS 2010**

VENUE: Methodist Church Hall High Street Maldon

7 pm Doors Open 7.30 pm Talks start 9 pm Finish

5 January 2010 The Development of Radar in WWII – Mary Wain

2 February 2010 Stow Maries WWI Aerodrome – Ivor Dallinger

2 March 2010 Local social history of the parishes around Beacon Hill based upon the photographs of Thomas Hammond – Clive Potter

## **Computer Virus**

If you receive panic messages from friends about a computer virus, I would suggest that you look up the following websites on hoaxes before passing it on to your friends.

<http://vil.mcafee.com/hoax.asp>

[www.hoaxslayer](http://www.hoaxslayer.com)

Jan

### ***LUNCHEON CLUB VENUES—January***

**TUESDAY No meeting**

Co-ordinator: Mike Wood Tel. 01245 222839

**WEDNESDAY 20th January at Izumi's, Chinese Restaurant**

Co-ordinator: Paul Costa Tel. 01621 853893

Note: If you sign up for the lunches and then find you are unable to attend for any reason, can you please notify the Co-ordinator as soon as possible, as places have to be booked at the venues.

## Bird Watching Group

Visit to Hythe Quay Maldon

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December started with a beautiful clear bright morning, the last of the tide was ebbing away as the group gathered the Hythe to start our epic journey to Byrhtnoth's statue.

The retreating water had left the usual expanse of mud where we hoped to find birds feeding. A flock of Black Headed Gulls were occupying a stretch of water close to the opposite bank and were obviously engaged in fishing for fry as they were continually diving into the shallows following the shoal as it moved up and down the river.

Again on the far bank was a large roosting flock of small plump bodied waders, it took some time to determine that these were Golden Plover with Lapwings around the edges of the flock. Standing nearby just on the waters edge was a tall white heron with black bill and legs and yellow feet stooping occasionally with its long bill darting into the water to bring out small fish this beautiful bird was a Little Egret (*Egretta Garzta*)

My 1974 Book of British Birds describes the Little Egret as an occasional summer visitor wintering south of the Mediterranean. In my most up to date book the Egret is described as resident and increasing in numbers. Maldon has quite a large population which according to one of the many locals who stopped to talk to us tend to roost in or on the mud flats opposite the Queens Head.

We made our way to the point and Byrhtnoth where we observed flights of Canada Geese keeping very low following the course of the now incoming tide only rising as they turned to skim the sea wall and presumably land on the gravel pit lakes. Returning to the Hythe we witnessed the flock of Golden Plover rise and perform an aerial ballet right in front of us before heading out towards Northey Island.

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**January Meeting**  
**Wickham Bishops Village Hall at 1.30 pm**  
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Speaker  
**'Flora, Fauna but mainly fun in New Zealand'**  
by  
Dudley Chignall  
.

## Botany Group report 6.11.09

Members of the group have continued to be enthusiastic and very active since the summer, covering in recent meetings some background on Trees, identifying trees from their leaves, and something of their physiology. Some field work was undertaken during a visit to the former Stow Maries Halt, where a nature reserve has been established incorporating the disused railway line. As always with our outdoor visits, we had excellent weather. We have also studied and constructed Keys, and carried out a different way to preserve specimens for identification. Although they are not strictly speaking plants, we wanted to include Fungi in our brief, and were fortunate to have a guest speaker, Tony Boniface, who brought along many and varied samples to go with ones we found. The weather seems to have been suitable for them over the last week or so, and with his very expert and informed guidance, he encouraged us with the use of a key, to identify the specimens we had. Our next session will include Fruits and Seeds, and a review of our Fungi theory.

New members are always welcome. No prior knowledge is necessary. We meet between 10.00 and 12.00 am every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday at WMCC. Please contact Veronica Smith on 01621 828176 for more details. Our last meeting will be on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. We shall resume again on the 8<sup>th</sup> Jan.



**MARITIME GROUP**  
**Hartlepool Maritime Experience Trip**  
**from June 22<sup>nd</sup> to June 26<sup>th</sup> 2010**

Cost is £398.00 per person. This includes:  
4 nights Dinner Bed and Breakfast at the Durham Marriott Hotel Royal County to include portorage of luggage.  
Entrance to Hartlepool's Maritime Experience – a full day at this Maritime Museum, to include a visit to the oldest floating wooden warship HMS Trincomalee; built in Bombay, India in 1817 it came to Hartlepool in 1987 where it has taken 10 years to restore it. The ship was Nelsons last frigate. The museum and quayside recapture the atmosphere of a seaport of the era, there are period shops etc together with Guides.  
Entrance to Beamish Open Air Museum, a full day will be spent here, giving plenty of time for our group to find out all that is on offer in this fascinating museum.  
A cruise with "Prince Bishop River Cruises" – currently no further details available on this.  
Entrance to "Locomotion". This is a museum dedicated to all things "Steam".  
A guided tour of Durham Cathedral  
A Blue Badge guided tour of Durham itself – this will be by coach.  
Use of Executive coach plus courier/driver throughout.  
We will depart from and return to Maldon. Suitable comfort stops would be taken on the journey up and back.  
Anyone interested please contact Malcolm Case on 01245329435.

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**FILM SHOW**  
***Britain at Bay***  
**Maldon Town Hall**  
**Monday, 1st February**  
Doors Open 1.30 pm Commence 2 pm  
Price: £2

**U3A members only!**

**Film Show on Monday, 1st February 2010**

Please reserve me ..... Ticket(s) @ £2.00 each I enclose my cheque for £.... made payable to 'Maldon & District U3A'

Name(s) of Member(s) .....

**MARITIME GROUP –2010—2011 Programme**

**January 4<sup>th</sup> Monday** – Meeting at 10:00 at The Little Ship Club, illustrated talk "Navigation through the Ages" by Malcolm Case and John Robson.  
**February 1<sup>st</sup> Monday** – illustrated talk by Stephen Nunn on "Barges on the Blackwater" (to be confirmed)  
**March 1<sup>st</sup> Monday** – talk by Graham Smith about "Customs & Excise".  
**April 5<sup>th</sup> Monday** – Easter Monday – No meeting.  
**April 12<sup>th</sup> Monday** – Four course Maritime Dinner at The Blackwater Sailing Club; theme "The Royal Yacht Britannia" and the Royal family entertaining dignitaries from Foreign lands. !900 hrs for 1930 hrs. Deposit of £15.00 please, total cost will be £25.00 - £30.00. Please see Malcolm Case for further details.  
**May 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday** - Bank Holiday- No meeting.  
**May** – Date to be advised - Sail Taster Day – John Robson arranging  
**June 7<sup>th</sup> Monday** – Trip on the River Thames, Fred Lane arranging.  
**June 22<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday** – Five day trip to Hartlepool's Maritime Experience. Cost £398.00, staying at the Durham Marriott Hotel Royal County on a Dinner, bed and Breakfast basis. Price includes entrance to the Maritime Experience, a river cruise, the Beamish Open air Museum, Locomotion, Guided tour of Durham Cathedral, half day escorted Blue badge Guide of Durham. For further details and a booking form please see Malcolm Case.  
**July 5<sup>th</sup> Monday** – Trip which Ken Cocks is arranging, as details become known, they will be published.  
**August 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday** – trip to Felixstowe Docks – John Robson arranging.  
**September 6<sup>th</sup> Monday** – illustrated talk by A. Cuthbert on "The Royal Yacht Britannia".  
**October 4<sup>th</sup> Monday** – Maritime Maldon, a walking tour by Stephen Nunn (to be confirmed)  
**November 1<sup>st</sup> Monday** – Meeting at 10:00 am at The Little Ship Club to discuss the programme for 2011.  
**December 6<sup>th</sup> Monday** - Meeting at 11:00 am at The Little Ship Club, short Maritime DVD followed by Christmas Buffet.  
**2011**  
**January 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday** – Bank holiday – No meeting  
**February 7<sup>th</sup> Monday** – meeting at The Little Ship Club, talk on "Sailing around the World".

**MALDON U3A**  
**VENUE: MALDON TOWN HALL**  
**LOCAL & GENERAL HISTORY GROUP MEETINGS 2010**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	
25 Jan	The Growth of Essex Railways	Speaker: Adrian Wright
22 Feb	Historic Treasures of Essex	Speaker: John Drury
22 Mar	Olympic London	Cost £26.00 Pick up 9.00 am
26 Apr	Life & Times of Matthew Hopkins The Witchfinder General	Speaker: David Cooper
25 May Tuesday	Historical walk around Maldon	Christine Gorringe Cost £3.00 Meet 2.00 pm in Butt Lane Car Park
28 June	Visit to Ely	Oliver Cromwell's House & Ely Cathedral Cost £18.00 Pick up 9.00 am
26 July	Marsh Fever in the Thames Estuary	Speaker: David Petts
August	No Meeting	
27 Sept	Visit to Penshurst Place and Hever Castle	Cost £26 Pick up 9.00 am
25 Oct	History through Essex Blue (or other) Plaques	Speaker: Keith Lovell
2 Nov	Essex at War	Speaker: Doug Killick
Dec	No Meeting	

**Note: All meetings will be held in Maldon Town Hall. Commencing at 2.00 pm. Price £1.50. All U3A members welcome.**

**For coach trips the price includes coach, entrance fee and driver gratuity. Pick up points West Maldon Community Centre and Danbury to be confirmed.**

**Further information from Mary Burd 01621 843020 email: maryburd43@yahoo.co.uk and Alfred Couldrey 01245 226259**

## 2010 CALENDAR—Dates for your Diary

List of Events and Outings during the year.

Fri. 8 Jan	Ceilidh - Social
Mon. 1 Feb	Film Show—"Britain at Bay" - Maldon Town Hall
Mon 22 Mar	Olympic tour - Local History
Wed. 24 Mar.	Tea Dance - Social
Mon. 12 April	Maritime Dinner at Blackwater Sailing Club
Fri. 23 April	Social Evening - Social
Tue. 25 May	Historic Walk round Maldon - Local History
Sun. 6 June	Shuttleworth D Day Air Display - Aviation
Fri. 18 June	Cockney Evening - Social
Tue/Sat 22/26 June	5 Day trip to Hartlepool and area - Maritime
Tue. 28 June	Visit to Ely etc. - Local History
Tue/Fri 13/16 July	4 Day trip to Rutland and area - Gardeners
Thur. 22 July	Barbecue - Social
Sun 15 Aug	Rougham Air Display - Aviation
Sat 4 Sept	Duxford Battle of Britain Air Show - Aviation
Fri.. 24 Sept.	Beetle Drive - Social
Mon 27 Sept	Visit to Penshurst Place & Hever Castle - Local History
Fri. 29 Oct.	Hallowe'en Party - Social
Thurs. 25 Nov.	Quiz - Social

Further details of the above events available from your Co-ordinator or in the Newsletter.

### Social News

It's scary how quickly the seasons come round again at our age. However, they do say that time flies when you are enjoying yourself, so perhaps we shouldn't complain..

There are still a few tickets available from Janet for the Ceilidh. At the December meeting the box will be out for your reservations for the film show on the afternoon of **Monday 1 February** at the Town Hall. This year the film is called *Britain at Bay* - another exercise in nostalgia for the Britain in which we grew up, warts and all. *Britain at Bay* is a programme of films from the BFI National Archive, some rarely screened, others rightly celebrated. They vividly capture the transition from optimism to high alert as the nation faced up to another momentous conflict. Afterwards there will be an opportunity to discuss it over a cup of tea - and, naturally, cake! And all for just £2 - what a bargain!

In March a little more physical effort will be required for the Tea Dance - very "Strictly".

The members of the Social Committee wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy and uneventful 2010.

## ASSOCIATION OF U3As

I would like to bring this Association to the attention of you all.

Some eleven years ago Local Associations were set up around the U.K, on the suggestion of National Office, to enable groups of local U3As to support each other, to share ideas and to organise Study Days. Essex was in the vanguard of this movement under the chairmanship of Shirley Thew of Basildon and Billericay U3A. During the ensuing years the Association has met twice yearly, with two or three representatives from each U3A being invited to attend.

These meetings have provided a platform for the exchange of ideas and the solving of problems which occur from time to time. We have also been fortunate enough to have had members of National Office offering us assistance on such matters as finance and legal requirements.

The committee has, over the years, held Study Days and Coordinators' Meetings all of which have been well attended.

At this Autumn Meeting four members, who had attended the Edinburgh Conference, were invited to speak on their experiences, and, all the representatives present, were left with the feeling that they had missed out on a great opportunity to see another side to our National movement.

In the afternoon we welcomed four group coordinators from Roding Valley, Blackwater, Harwich and our own U3A to tell us about their more unusual groups. Yes, we had invited Stan and his clocks! Unfortunately, a speaker on Sign Language was unable to attend, and so we missed hearing about what must be the only really quiet group in our organisation!

All this has been achieved over a decade with a lot of difficulties. The main one being the lack of successful communication from the individual U3As back to this Committee and, indeed, it would appear, lack of it within each U3A, so that often ordinary members never hear of us!. Since the advent of E.Mails information seems to be constantly lost!

Unbelievable but true! Without rapid replies, we, as an organisation, are really doomed to failure and without Essex members putting themselves forward to serve on this committee we are unable to give you the service you all deserve and have paid for in the annual fee.

Thus this Committee needs to know that if the association is to continue can we bank on your support?

1. Would you consider attending a Study Day or similar event? (A Creative Arts' Day has been suggested for later in the year of 2010)
2. Would Coordinators like the chance to meet with their opposite numbers across the County?
3. Would you all like the chance to hear the National Chairman speak or to be able to share in the Edinburgh experience, or indeed to be told about the National Summer Schools
4. Could you spare some time to sit on the Essex Committee

## Christmas Lunch

The two luncheon clubs met together again for their annual Christmas feast on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at the Warren Golf Club in Woodham Walter. After the usual bun-fight at the bar for pre-dinner drinks, we were called to the colours around 12:45 and scabbled to find a seat in the impressively timber beamed dining hall. Mike Wood opened proceedings by asking who had forgotten their tickets. Amongst others, Georgie rashly raised her hand and was promptly given an envelope, which instructed her to write this report for the magazine; which is how I got the job.

A cacophony of cracker pulling followed, attended by the ritual reading of appalling cracker jokes and miserable attempts at solving the puzzles, contained in the crackers, that a three year old could master in seconds.



Very soon the starters arrived and the babble of noise gradually diminished as serious noshing got under way. Then a couple of chefs appeared and began dissecting chunks of turkey, beef and ham, and we were called forward, one table at a time, in an orderly fashion to collect our meals. Puddings were rounded off with coffee, mince pies and mints.

Meanwhile, the scene outside the hall was becoming rather festive when two chaps turned up, dumped a Christmas tree on the lawn, stared at it for a while.... and went away. They were followed by three peacocks who inspected us through the French doors. It is difficult to know whether they were lamenting the demise of their feathered friends being consumed by the people inside, or whether they were emulating waifs and strays peering in at the rich folks feasting.

At 2 pm Paul Costa announced the raffle, the drawing of which was supervised by Mike Wood. Jan Robertson won first prize with Mick Englefield, who chooses to dub himself the unluckiest man in U3A, won the 10<sup>th</sup> and last prize. So maybe he has lost his title; but then again he was only 10<sup>th</sup>.

Alan Buck offered a vote of thanks to Mike & Paul for organising the affair and also to the chefs and staff of the Warren for such a splendid meal. He also sought permission from the masses to re-book the venue again for Christmas 2010 and was met with loud cries in the affirmative. It was, after all, a very decent meal in an extremely attractive setting. The booking was later confirmed for Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

Alan Clarke



## Postal Scam

This scam keeps coming up so this is a reminder for the Xmas post.- it has been confirmed again by Royal Mail.

A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 (a Premium rate number).

**DO NOT** call this number, as this is a mail scam originating from Belize.

If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message you will already have been billed £15 for the phone call.

If you do receive a card with these details, then please contact Royal Mail Fraud on 020 7239 6655.

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## Aviation Group

Our January meeting is on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>. at the Maldon Little Ship Club. It will start at **2.30 pm** as there is a clash with the co-ordinators meeting. We are still hoping to move our meetings to the Stow Maries Airfield as soon as the facilities there are ready but there is no more news on this yet.

We are arranging outings to Shuttleworth on Sunday June 6<sup>th</sup> - for their D-Day Air Display. Also to Rougham Air Display on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August and to Duxford on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September for the Battle of Britain Air Show. This could be special as it is the 70<sup>th</sup>. anniversary event. We may have a joint outing with Maritime group to Wroxham where some of us may want to visit the Radar Museum but we will all be interested in a trip on the Broads.

Please come along to our meetings.. All members of our or other U3As are welcome.

Interested? Contact David Arnold on 01621 853866

If any of these suggestions are to come into fruition then we need your support for this Association or Network (The latter is the INWORD nationally!!)

However, some U3As think that Essex is too large an area to support such an organisation and that smaller cluster groups are the answer.

Remembering of course that even these smaller groups would need committees and funds and that agreement would have to be reached as to who goes with whom, do you think they have a better chance of survival than our large Network?

If you hope to attend the Monthly Meeting on Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup> then there will be the opportunity for you to make your choice. If you cannot come to this meeting, please let me know your choice by phone or email.

Beryl McDonell on 01621 842093 email Twomcads@aol.com

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## Family History Event at Olympia

The Third Age Trust is taking a stand at the "Who Do you Think You Are" event which is taking place at Olympia from 26-28 February 2010. It is the country's biggest and most comprehensive family history event and they would like an input from U3A family history groups, particularly if there have been any interesting discoveries made. If this is the case, national office would like a short report, ideally as an e-mail attachment, and they will then try to incorporate as many of them as possible into the exhibition.

Volunteers are also required to help man the stand, so please contact national office if you could offer some time.

## National Residential Schools

Details and booking forms for the national Summer School will be on the notice board at the forthcoming general meetings. There will also be details of the North West Residential School, which will be held in Preston in April, and the South East Forum Summer School in Chichester to be held in July.

### THE BEETLE DRIVE – NOVEMBER 2009

What is it that persuades 64 people to descend on Langford Village Hall on a very wet November night? Yes – the yearly Beetle Drive!

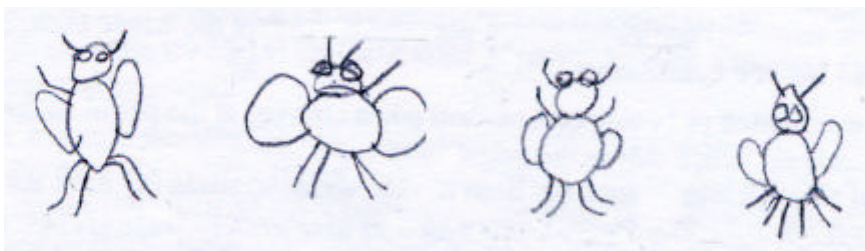
Having been the winner twice previously people were very interested in my scores during the evening and my partners had high expectations! However as anyone who participates knows there is absolutely **NO** skill in throwing a dice! The noise level and excitement of trying to get a final leg, wing or other part of the beetle was tremendous only silenced by the whistle to stop the game.

After twelve games we stopped for refreshments including home made cakes. Another session followed and then final scores were declared. The winner this year was Rosemary Case with a score of 243. I couldn't make it a hat trick!

Our thanks go to the Social Committee for all their hard work and to Mick for attempting to keep order!

Mary Burd

PS If you've never tried it come along next year – it's great fun!



They came in all shapes and sizes

### Christmas Past

Christmas memories long since past  
For `Third Age` members they seem to last  
With tiny tots all eyes aglow  
And tinkling sleigh bells in the snow  
Christmas carols at the door  
All sung in good voice much adored  
Mums and Dads awake at dawn  
Christmas day has surely spawned  
Those tiny tots now heard and seen  
Utter cries "He`s Been, He`s Been"  
Small presents strewn upon the bed  
And wrapping paper torn to shreds  
The Christmas tree in corner lies  
Stands sparkling there for all to sigh  
The branches sway with simple toys  
Tailor-made for girls and boys  
No mobile phones, nintendo games  
But greatly valued all the same  
Today those gifts would strain the bough  
Those tiny tots are bigger now  
No self-made games around the room  
But T.V on and `Boom, Boom, Boom`!  
`Third Age Members` sit and stare  
And wonder if they should be there  
That travel voucher looks divine  
You could be sailing on the Rhine  
So have good heart `Third Agers` do  
And say farewell to hullabaloo  
Pack your bags and` Have a `Ball`  
Merry Christmas to one and all !!

Ray Harman