

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2 Maritime	3 Table Tennis Snooker Luncheon Club Reading	4 Ten Pin Bowling Wine group	5 Discussion Continuing French Poetry	6 Canasta	7	8
9 Handicrafts German Photography Whist	10 Table Tennis Snooker	11 Ten Pin Bowling Spanish Painting Gardening-Mundon Essex Rivers Open day	12 French Conversation Ballroom Dancing Country Dancing Reading	13 Mah Jong Sing for Pleasure Bridge	14	15 Strollers
16 Meeting 1.30 pm	17 Table Tennis Snooker Aviation	18 Ten Pin Bowling Luncheon Club Clock Repairs	19 Continuing French Ballroom Dancing	20 Canasta Social Evening	21	22
23 Astronomy Handicrafts German Whist	24 Table Tennis Snooker	25 Ten Pin Bowling Apsley Hse Bridge Painting Spanish Writing for Fun Family History	26 French Conversation Ballroom Dancing Computers Music Appreciation Country Dancing "Humble Boy" Civic Theatre	27 Mah Jong Sing for Pleasure	28	29
30	31 Table Tennis Snooker					

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, Tel. 01245 225657 email Jan8085@aol.com

NEWSLETTER



The University of the Third Age

MALDON AND DISTRICT



Visit to St. Pauls
Tuesday, 17th February

FEBRUARY 2009

VOLUME VIII NO. 9

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

Web Site: www.maldon3a.co.uk

FROM THE CHAIR



The past week or so has seen us having to deal with “SNOW”, and, as the media advised us not to make unnecessary journeys, many just stayed indoors for the two days. Some of our members did venture out to attend group meetings but attendees were lower than normal. By Wednesday things were back to what we deem normal for the time of year and members were once again in full flow.

We might be classed as senior citizens but there is not much that can deter us from our U3A activities. To my knowledge the only cancellation was the Social event “Bombs at Tea Time” and this has been rearranged for Thursday 19th February.

Heybridge U3A is progressing well and holds its first general meeting on Friday 13th February at Plantation Hall, Heybridge.

Subscriptions have been increased to £16.50 for the coming year and are due to be paid by the 1st May.

Alan Buck
Email: alan-buck@talktalk.net

Maritime

Our next meeting is on **Monday March 2nd starting at 10:00 am at the Little Ship Club**, it will be an illustrated talk by Dr Tim Voelcker on **Admiral Saumarez at the time of Admiral Nelson**. Dr Tim Voelcker has given the Maritime Group an extremely interesting talk in the past and this talk on Admiral Saumarez should be just as fascinating. All are very welcome to attend.

We are currently planning a trip to Agde in the South of France, leaving May 31st and returning June 6th, cost still to be advised, but we plan to visit the port of Agde, have a trip on the Canal du Midi, visit Pont du Gard and Nîmes, visit Saint Thibery and view the production of liqueurs and also visit Marseillan to view the production of Noilly Prat along with several other excursions. We will be travelling by Eurostar and TGV. If you would like to join us, then please contact Malcolm Case on 01245 329435.

Could those members of the Group who have signed up for the trips to Trinity House, Harwich on May 14th and October 15th, please let me have their cheques for £16.00 by no later than the 1st March.

Malcolm Case

CO-ORDINATORS

Chairman	Alan Buck	01245 227709	Mah-Jong	Molly Polden	01621 856507
Vice Chairman	Beryl McDonell	01621 842093	Maritime History	Malcolm Case	01245 329435
Secretary	Pamela Turnbull	01376 510084	Music Appreciation	Enid Hall	01621 891618
Treasurer	Rosemary Case	01245 329435		John Skuse	01245 224059
Membership Sec.	John Robson	01621 828236	Painting	Joyce Stokes	01245 223579
Speaker Sec.	Joyce Cotterell	01621 858287	Petanque (Boule)	Barbara Arnold	01621 853866
Committee	Paul Costa	01621 853893	Photography	Mary Richardson	01621 857829
Newsletter Editor	John Almond	Ex. Dir.	Poetry	Jo Robson	01621 828236
	Jan Robertson	01245 225657	Reading 1st Tuesday	Christine Elgin	01621 858146
Social Committee	Dorothy Denmark	01245 223960	2nd Thursday	Sheila Epps	01621 850467
Astronomy	Molly Tring	01621 854732	Scottish Dancing	Shirley Grummett	01621 853288
Aviation	Bill Fancourt	01245 225569	Singles Dining	Sue Oram	01621 856899
Ballroom Dancing	Jo Robson	01621 828236	Sing for Pleasure	Sylvia Carpenter	01621 854905
Bird Watching	Pat Clements	01245 223427	Snooker	Bill Fancourt	01245 225569
Bridge	Sheila Epps	01621 850467	Spanish Conversation	Wilma Turner	01621 851510
Canasta	Marian Manning	01621 828605	Strollers	Gill Stone	01621 853948
	Margaret Dale	01268 765239	Swimmers	Gill Rowsell	01621 740619
Clock Repairs	Stanley Clements	01245 223427	Table Tennis	Gordon Hardy	01245 223012
Computers	Jan Robertson	01245 225657	Beginners	Julie Doidge	01621 841205
Discussion	Ray Harman	01621 891736		Beryl McDonell	01621 842093
Family History	Frank Stokes	01245 223579	Ten Pin Bowling	David Arnold	01621 853866
Continuing French	Sylvia Carpenter	01621 854905	Theatre Group	Enid Hall	01621 891618
French Conversation	Bill Stichbury	01621 855828		Sheila Epps	01621 850467
Gardeners	Jan Robertson	01245 225657	Whist	Molly Polden	01621 856507
German	Jenny Plumb	01245 226112	Wine Circle	Zandra Cardy	01621 828984
Good Companions	Beryl McDonell	01621 842093	Writing for Fun	Pat Sizer	01621 892201
Handicraft	Marian Manning	01621 828605			
Local History	Mary Burd	01621 843020			
	Alfred Couldrey	01245 226259			
Luncheon Club	Mike Wood	01245 222839			
	Paul Costa	01621 853893			

If for any reason you do not receive a posted newsletter within a week of the Meeting, (if you did not attend the Meeting) please contact John Robson on 01621 828236

Found

at the January Meeting

Book "The Savage Garden" contact Jan Robertson 01245 225657

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## CD's

Joyce Cotterell has been sorting out all their old CD's and wondered if anyone would like them and perhaps bring some of their own to swap?

They will be on show at the next Monday Meeting.

If you bring some you must be prepared to take home any of yours that are left

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W.I. Event

Saturday 4th April

Town Hall

Ray Spiller presents

"AN ABBA EVENING"

7.30 pm till 11.00 pm.

£5.00 per ticket, bring your own drinks and nibbles.

Promoted by Maldon Wycke W.I.

Box office: 01621 854924/ 01621 850321

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Witham & Braintree U3A Branch

Coach trip to theatre "**Carousel**" on Thursday, 5th March £36.50

Leave 10.30 am Witham.

Contact Irene Irwin on 01376 342885

They have a few seats left.

## NATIONAL OFFICE

19 East Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1QH

Tel 020 8466 6139 Email national.office@u3a.org

Web site www.u3a.org.uk

Resource Centre: email: resource.centre@u3a.org.uk

Deadline for next newsletter: Friday, 6th March

## Local & General History

We meet on **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2.00 pm** at The Maldon Little Ship Club. Our talk is by Roy Walters and his talk is entitled "Stand by your beds".

All members are welcome.

There will be no meeting in March as we have a visit to Apsley House and the Geffrye Museum – this trip is fully booked.

On **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March** the coach will leave the West Maldon Community Centre at 9.00 am. If anyone has not paid for this outing can they please let Alfred Couldrey have a cheque for £23 asap

Mary Burd

## Astronomy

We had a most successful meeting in January, using a BBC programme about Time. This prompted some very erudite discussions, including The Big Bang, black holes, Relativity and String Theory! Cutting edge stuff!

Next month is more down to earth-Wrong expression! Its called "The Outer Limits" and is about the Solar System. Our friend Andy Mowbray from CPAC will give it, so we know it will be interesting. All welcome. **Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>**, 7.30 pm, W.M.C.C.

Molly Tring

## Wine Group

Can any members of the Wine Group that would like to continue with the group, please come to Cold Norton on the 4<sup>th</sup> March at 2 pm.

We can then see if there are enough members to continue the group, in whatever format, or bring it to a conclusion.

Zandra

## Bridge Club

Change of date.

We shall be playing bridge on Friday March 13<sup>th</sup> and not on our usual Wednesday of that week.

Sheila Epps

## Ballroom Dancing

Ballroom Dancing will be running until Easter when we will close down until September.

## Poetry

The Poetry reading group will continue to meet on the first Thursday in the month, please check with me for subject and venue.

Jo Robson

## Ten Pin Bowling

Unfortunately there will be **NO** bowling on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> Feb., due to closure of the lanes to us.

### **Petanque**

We are looking forward to the spring when we will get out on the new terrain again. Maldon District Council will be trying to give us better access and more seating. They are hoping to put on a proper opening ceremony before Easter. We have been asked to do some demonstration events and also been challenged to some friendly competitions through the summer. Make sure that you are ready and your boules cleaned and polished!  
Barbara Arnold 01621 853866.

### **Gardening**

Our first meeting this year will be at Mundon Village Hall on **Wednesday, 11th March** at 2.30 pm. The new programme will be available. Corinne Layton has offered to give us a talk on their entry at Chelsea Flower Show in 2007.

### **Strollers**

**Sunday 15th March** - 3.75 miles South Woodham Ferrers - River and Creeks.  
Meet in the riverside car park at 10.30 am.  
Lunch available.  
For further information contact Gill Stone: 01621 853948

### **Aviation**

**Tuesday 17th March** 2 pm  
There will be talk on Air Marshall Sir Hugh Dowding who led the RAF Fighter Command through the Battle of Britain and his strategy. We will also be booking for some of our events and discussing where to go. The MLSC has been booked for the third Tuesday afternoon all through the summer. Please contact me if you want more information.  
David Arnold 01621 853866

Notes

#### **BLACKWATER U3A**

Contact:  
Dorreen Linton, Chairman  
01621 853428

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

Contact  
Rosemary Dorado, Chairman  
01245 321102

#### **HEYBRIDGE U3A**

Contact  
Ruth Tyler, Chairman  
01621 869865

### **Our U3A**

If you look at the latest edition of the U3A News [Page 20] you would see a group playing for a Jazz Talk and the photo shows the profile of *our* guest clarinet player for the last two Jazz Evenings - John Crocker. Also we read, in the same article, about the trip to Ghent and they will be staying at the same hotel that we did when went to the European Parliament in Brussels with the European Studies Group. We have also been as far as Strasbourg to see the Parliament there.  
When I read this magazine I feel that the groups and events they are reporting as breaking news, we did ages and ages ago. Are our groups leading where others can just try to follow? Are we the best U3A around? Of course we are!  
Be sure to make the most of it. But *never* any reports in the U3A News for us!  
David Arnold

### **LUNCHEON CLUB VENUES -**

**TUESDAY March 3 The Royal Oak, Woodham Mortimer**  
Co-ordinator: Mike Wood Tel. 01245 222839

**WEDNESDAY March 18 The Bull, Gt. Totham at 12.30 pm**  
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.

**Report from the January Committee Meeting**

A new local U3A group has now been formed, which will meet in Heybridge. This will help reduce the increasing numbers on the waiting lists for Maldon and Blackwater and provide further opportunities for new members in the area. It has become necessary to replace one of the microphones for the hall, and it is hoped that the new one will help reduce the feedback problems that have occurred in the past.

It has been confirmed by national office that any paid speaker who gives a talk to a group on a 'one-off' basis is covered by the U3A insurance.

With effect from the commencement of the new membership year on 1 May, all members will be provided with badges which they can retain and bring to each meeting.

Plans are underway for the Open Day to be held on 20 April. Further information will be available next month.

The two national summer schools will take place at Harper Adams University College, Newport from 20 - 23 July, and at The Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester from 24 -27 August.

A range of topics will be covered at each event, and full details, together with application forms, are on the notice board, so do take a look

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Photographers

This is a plea to anyone who is an active digital photographer to come to my assistance to help me just sort out Archie's equipment, so that I can find a new home for it. To have it just sitting here in a cupboard is not what he would have wanted.

Beryl McDonell

.....
Meeting
Wickham Bishops Village Hall at 1.30 pm
Speaker
“Childhood at the Tower”
Mrs. Helen Lennard
.....

Aviation Trip to Hendon

On 20th January 47 members of Maldon U3A visited the R.A.F. Museum at Hendon. On arrival we were split into three groups and allocated a guide apiece. We had a very enthusiastic gentleman who took us first to the Graham White workshop where we saw some of the earlier planes on display. From there we went to the hall where planes were from the early to the very latest models. There was a gondola from an airship to the latest missiles. Next we went to the Bomber display where we saw Wellingtons and Lancasters, plus the burnt out Halifax bomber which was retrieved from a fiord in Norway. After that we went to the main hall where we had a break for lunch and a look round the shop. After lunch we went to the Battle of Britain Hall, where we saw several tableaux from the second world war and also a video 'Our Finest Hour'. We also saw a Spitfire, a Hurricane and a Messerschmitt.

A very enjoyable visit.

Eileen Lane

~~~~~

**ESSEX RIVERS' OPEN DAY.  
WEDNESDAY MARCH 11th at 2pm**

For the past 18 months a group of people from Maldon and Blackwater U3As has been looking at the estuary of our River Blackwater, and before lodging its findings with the Essex Records' Office, would like to share them with you and visitors from other U3As in Essex, in the West Maldon Community Centre. There will be an entrance fee of £1 which will cover the cost of hiring the hall, but there will be tea and cakes! Any surplus money will be donated to charity. We guarantee that you will be amazed by the river's importance to our community!

**PLEASE PUT THIS EVENT IN YOUR DIARIES!**

~~~~~

**Astronomy Group
Coach Trip to the Royal Institution in Albemarle St. Piccadilly
Monday 27th April**

Price: £25 for Tour and Coach, including refreshments
Coach only £15, cheaper if we fill the coach

The RI has had a £22m refurbishment, and contains many original scientific apparatus and images. Humphrey Davy's miners lamps, the first electric transformer and generator made by Michael Faraday are among the many exhibits.

Phone Molly Tring 01621 854732 or Malcolm Case 01245 329435.

Good Companions

" Hope around the ingle bleezing
Wha sae happy and sae free
Tho'the northern wind blows freezing
Frien'ship warms both ye and me."

Words of the bard, Rabbie Burns, which we found the truth of on the 25th of January, when 15 of us met together to celebrate the 250th anniversary of his birth with a traditional meal, at the home of one of our members, With everything Scottish, from a wee dram, scotch broth, the haggis, neeps and tatties, traditional desserts, oatcakes and cheese washed down with a nip of drambuie, served on a tartan tablecloth ,this was a great meal.

Mary told us a little of his very short life (only 37 years), Val said the grace, and after the HAGGIS had been piped in, Joyce addressed it and later Mary read his poem "To A Mouse"

The meal was rounded off with coffee and shortbread in the lounge, whilst looking at Scottish books and photos and having a great "blether" with friends.

Annette Porte

Good Companions

Good Companions appears to be going from strength to strength as our numbers grow. As already reported there have been coffee mornings, a cinema trip and more recently an outing to Bury St. Edmunds Christmas market. Games afternoons, a trip to Perrywoods and Birthday lunches have all been enjoyed. On Sunday 25th January we celebrated "Burns Night" (only at lunchtime) in Joyce's home where we were all made very welcome, in preparation for a superb afternoon. Our menu was traditional - Haggis, mashed tattie and neeps etc.. A poem about a "Mousee" by Rabbie Burns was read by Mary Hughes, the Selkirk grace by Valerie Lyndon and we were all given a short history of the poets life. There followed "Ode to the Haggis" from Joyce which was "piped in" accompanied by a "wee dram". There was plenty of talk and laughter which always accompanies U3A events. Many thanks to Joyce, Beryl, Barbara K. Barbara T. and Mary H. for all their help in making the day such a superb event and in excellent company. We are indeed the Best if Good Companions.

Carol Priest

EXERCISE FOR PEOPLE OVER 50

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side.

With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer. After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags.

Then try 50-lb potato bags and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute.

(I'm at this level.)

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.

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## SHAKESPEARE'S GLOBE.

### " TROILUS and CRESSIDA "

It is, apparently, Shakespeare's least classifiable play being at once comical, farcical, satirical, heroic and even tragic.

A lot for our money and it needs to be, because prices have risen yet again. We will be offered a few seats @ £20, about 24 seats @ £27 and a few at £33.

I will put out a preliminary list at the Feb Meeting so that you can indicate what you will be willing to pay. Of course we are usually given a few free seats, the price of which I deduct from the cost of the coach so that we all receive the benefit.

Possible dates for going are Aug 13th or 20th or Sept 4th or 9th.

If you were unable to sign up at the meeting then ring me.

Beryl McDonell

01621 842 093

## 0844 AND 0845 TELEPHONE NUMBERS IN THE NHS

The Department of Health has a nationwide consultation out (to 31<sup>st</sup> March) on the use of 0844 and 0845 telephone numbers in the NHS. The use of 09 numbers was banned several years ago, and the Government is now considering banning the use of 084 numbers too. This is an opportunity to "have your say".

Our local hospitals and many GP practices use 0844 numbers which offer "enhanced facilities" – ie an automatic switchboard from which you press 1, 2, 3 or whatever for the service you need. It costs us more to phone 0844 numbers than it does to phone 01 or the recently available 03 numbers, and of course we pay all the time we are in the queue and also when they tell us they are very busy and ask us to ring back later. The hospital or GP practice also has to pay a sum to their service provider.

The Government believes that people should not be charged more than the cost of a local rate call (ie 01) to access NHS services. The consultation is about whether you agree with that, and what are the alternatives – 01 or 03.

03 numbers offer "enhanced facilities" the same as 0844 numbers but cost the same to the caller as 01 (including "free" via your internet phone package), but the hospital or GP practice has to pay a sum to their service provider. At present the hospital or GP practice can enter into an arrangement with their provider to share the "profits" and so get back some of the costs, but with 03 numbers that is not allowed.

The consultation booklet is available in GP surgeries and online at: [www.dh.gov.uk/en/consultations/liveconsultations/index.htm](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/consultations/liveconsultations/index.htm) - or you can just key in Department of Health consultations and follow the links from there. I've not tested the availability in GP surgeries.

The consultation booklet is short and easy to read, and there is a form (Annex A) for your answers – just 3 questions and space for comments – and you don't even have to give your name and address. The email address for replies is [084consultation@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:084consultation@dh.gsi.gov.uk). This is our opportunity to make our views known to the Government.

Eunice Legerton

## 2009 CALENDAR—Dates for your Diary

List of Events and Outings during the year.

|               |                                                          |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Tue 17 Feb    | Visit to St. Pauls Cathedral - S. Epps                   |
| Thurs 19 Feb  | "Bombs at Teatime" - Town Hall, - Social                 |
| Thurs 26 Feb  | "Billy Elliott"—Victoria Palace Theatre, Beryl McDonell  |
| Wed Mar 11    | Essex Rivers Group - Open Day                            |
| Fri. 20 Mar.  | Social Evening with a difference - Social                |
| Wed. 25 Mar.  | Visit to Apsley Hse & Geffrye Museum — Local History     |
| Thurs. 26 Mar | "Humble Boy" Civic Theatre—Sheila Epps                   |
| Mon 20 Apr    | OPEN DAY                                                 |
| Fri. 24 Apr.  | St George's Day celebration — Social                     |
| Mon 27 April  | Trip to Royal Institution, London—Astronomy              |
| Mon 4 May     | Trip on the River Crouch—Maritime                        |
| Thurs. 14 May | Trip to Trinity House, Harwich - Maritime                |
| Thurs. 14 May | Concert featuring Saxology - Social                      |
| Tue. 26 May   | Visit to New Hall School, Chelmsford — Local History     |
| 31 May/6 June | 7 day visit to Adge, France - Maritime                   |
| 9/12 June     | 4 day trip to Worcestershire to view Houses and Gardens  |
| Fri. June 19  | Hi-di-Hi Evening—Social                                  |
| Mon. 22 June  | Visit to Dedham & Sir Alfred Munnings museum –L. History |
| Mon 6 July    | Trip on the River Thames from Tilbury - Maritime         |
| 20/23 July    | U3A Summer School - Harper Adams College, Telford        |
| Mon 3 Aug     | Trip to Wivenhoe Barrier & Nottage Institute - Maritime  |
| 24/27 Aug.    | U3A Summer School - Royal Ag. College, Cirencester       |
| 11/13 Sept    | Trip to Poole/RNLI/Bournemouth etc. - Maritime           |
| Mon. 28 Sept  | Visit to Copped Hall & Waltham Abbey—Local History       |
| Thurs. 15 Oct | Trip to Trinity House, Harwich - Maritime                |

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

### ~~~~~ "Bombs at Teatime"

Has been rescheduled, due to recent bad weather, to

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19**

**Town Hall**

**Doors open 1.30 pm Film starts 2 pm**

## APRIL OPEN DAY 2009

To all members please make a note in your diaries of this event **Monday April 20th**. Even if you do not usually attend our Monthly meetings do try and come to this one. It will be a great opportunity to see what our U3A has on offer, because please do remember that the U3A's raison d'etre is its groups.

Could all co-ordinators please return their booking form as soon as possible after reading this notice if they have not already done so,

Beryl McDonell.

Open Day Coordinator

### *Social News*

Our next social event is the **Social Evening on 20th March at the West Maldon Community Centre**. We have made an admission charge of £1 this year in order that we can better calculate the catering. We challenge you to find better value for money anywhere in Maldon, Essex or the Universe!

Tickets are still available from Janet.

In April it will be the turn of the English to celebrate their National Day - admittedly a day late - on Friday 24th, again at the West Maldon Community Centre. "There'll always be an England" says the song, and there certainly will, even if it isn't quite the same England as it was when the song was written.

Come in national costume, however you interpret that. Do you have a rugby shirt? Your grandchildren must surely have England football kits of varying sizes. What about a Morris dancing uniform? Failing all else, come dressed in the national colours of red and white.

The entertainment will be provided by Dave Sealey, who performs the repertoire of Stanley Holloway. Dave comes to us under the sponsorship of ESSEX ON TOUR, who memorably sent us ShooShoo Baby a couple of years ago. There will be a Ploughman's Supper and you are invited to bring your own liquid refreshment. Tickets are now available at £8 per person.

Looking ahead, on 14 May there will be a concert featuring Saxology, and on June 19th is the Hi-di-Hi Evening. Watch this Space!!!

## LOVESTRUCK!

Steven McLean, a partner in a law firm, admitted to himself that he had become fusty and self-opinionated. He wouldn't admit that his girth was growing. He had been widowed for two years. His daughter dutifully clucked around him once a week and his son sent him blogs from Bolivia where he and his girlfriend had been travelling as part of their world tour. Recently Steven had been blogged, skyped, digitalised and would like to be wire-less and routed if only he knew how. He felt sure that one day his daughter would find him trussed like a chicken behind the television. Last weekend he attempted to connect the VHS metal box to the TV with a scart lead to watch "Casablanca" (his wife's favourite film). He was so exhausted after he'd disentangled himself from all the wires and thankful that he hadn't electrocuted himself, that even the charms of Ingrid Bergman in his grainy video, couldn't keep him awake.

Tuesday afternoon he was to give a talk to university students about law in the real world as opposed to academe. He'd been contacted by the Chair (no! no! no! ChairMAN) of the Law Faculty to contribute to a series of lectures. At the end of the lecture, during questions, a youngish lady had queried a statement with such vehemence he was quite taken aback. The chairman interrupted to ask for more questions from the floor. As Steven exited from the lecture theatre, the young lady approached him. "I don't think we settled our discussion Mr McLean, do you have time to come back to my flat to clarify the matter? I'm completing my Masters and it's vital I solve this problem". Her boldness shook Steven and he muttered about commitments, then stopped, "why not!" he answered. "I'm Diana" she continued, "Diana Webster", she held out a hand. He shook it and noticed her determined brown eyes. Her curly dark hair was flecked with grey and framed a pretty, photogenic face. At the flat Diana headed to the open-plan kitchen. "I'm starved - like some pasta?" Without waiting for his reply, she busied herself. Inviting aromas of bacon, mushrooms, garlic, herbs and coffee met his nostrils and over supper he ironed out her queries. He was enjoying her undivided attention, the way her eyes burned into his soul - he felt he was melting. The sudden rattle of a key in a door jolted him from his reverie. A tall, tanned man strode into the flat. "Richard! Hi!" she said, "meet Steve McLean, Steve, Richard". Steven rose from the table "must be off - places to go, people to meet". Sitting in his car he felt shaken. Stupid old fool he thought to himself. The feelings that had crept up on him in Diana's flat, he'd not felt for years. In fact, he'd dismissed any such thoughts - they would never return. He'd been mistaken. A week later, as he walked up the steps to the university library, Diana touched his shoulder - "Steve! hello! I was hoping to see you again - would you pass a professional eye over my dissertation?" Again Diana's boldness had caught him unawares. "I'm having coffee in the music room in half-an-hour" Steven replied "meet you there?" "No probs" she responded. He felt more in control this time.

Richard, Diana's brother, was temporarily housed with Diana having returned from South Africa. Diana scrubbed up well, dressed in non-stereotypical university uniform. Steven was impressed and was impressing his colleagues with his joie de vivre. He and Diana were an "item" so she said.

Christine Benner Writing for Fun Group

***Bird Watching Group***

Visit to Northey Island

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2009

At 10:am on that Sunday morning six hardy some would suggest f\*\*lhardy souls left the warmth of their cars situated in the relative shelter of the sea wall and ventured out across the causeway to the National Trust's Northey Island The wind which it seemed had no effect on the joggers, dog walkers, cyclists and young people walking hand in hand along the sea wall, attacked our intrepid band of ornithologists crossing the causeway ,dispelling any thoughts of lingering to view the many birds feeding on the mud flats.

Once on the island, sheltered from the wind, we began watching in earnest, a large flock of Brent Geese stood resolutely at the waters edge some distance across the mud.

The sky suddenly darkened and it became clear that it was about to snow,. fortunately we were now safely inside a hide from where we had close up views of hundreds of Dunlin interspersed with Red Shank, Black Tailed Godwit, Lapwing, Curlew and Shelduck, all feeding on the mud flats apparently oblivious to the wind blown snow.

Leaving the shelter of the hide we set out towards the wardens house and on the way saw a solitary Ringed Plover on the edge of another flock of feeding Dunlin.

Time, if not the tide, had now caught up with us so we made our way, heads down, across the causeway back to our cars, having had an interesting and for us new comers an informative morning.

Peter Gaywood



SOCIAL

EVENT

**ST. GEORGE'S DAY  
CELEBRATION**

***Friday, 24th April***

***West Maldon Community Centre***

***Start 7.30 pm***

***Price £8.00***

***Includes a Ploughman's Supper and  
Suitable English entertainment***

Tickets will be issued on a first come, first served basis upon receipt of booking form in the current newsletter, together with your cheque made out to 'Maldon & District U3A'. U3A Members only.

Tickets available from:

Janet Buck

01245-227709

Enquiries:

Dorothy Denmark

01245-223960

**St. George's Day Celebration on 24th April**

Please reserve me ..... Ticket(s) @ £8.00 each

I enclose my cheque for £..... made payable to 'Maldon & District U3A'

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

PhoneNo.....

## THE AVIATION GROUP VISIT TO THE RAF MUSEUM, HENDON

Take a left at South Mimms, and then A1 to Hendon  
for a trip back in time in the skies of the past.  
All the names that you've heard in the wars some have lived through;  
collected, restored, recreated to last.

From the start we all saw the fragile beginnings  
with wings that like moths were not built to endure,  
and the hundreds of young lives that were lost every sortie;  
sobering thoughts were evoked as we passed through that war.  
Then for many the memories of our World War II childhoods,

I remember the bombers all off on a raid  
as I sat on a hill top, along with my mother;  
the sound of their engines, and how we all prayed.

The clever invention of radar, our saviour;  
Barnes Wallace another who's designs helped us through.

The Battle of Britain's dramatic presentation  
reminded us how much was owed to so few.

We went through a Sunderland, imagining the journey,  
with depth charges hung on a rail overhead.

The versatile Spitfire and Hurricane fighters;  
the bombs and the missiles, sent visions of dread.

The guides all equipped with their personal stories  
enhanced what we saw, and for us made it feel  
like a step back in time, but within our existence;

A step back for me that was all very real.

Jo Robson

## SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2009/2010

Your membership subscription is due at the end of April and a renewal form has been included with your newsletter. If for any reason you do not receive a form, please phone me on 01621 828236

I would like to remind you that all Members must complete a form if they want to continue their membership. Couples however can both be entered on the same form.

**The annual subscription is £16.50 per member and payment must be made by cheque, payable to Maldon and District U3A, before the 1st May.**

I will be happy to receive forms and cheques from February onwards at the main meetings or by post; but cheques will not be paid into the bank before the 1<sup>st</sup> May.

Anyone who has not renewed his or her membership by the **1st May** will no longer be a member.

The Gift Aid Declaration applies only to members who have not previously signed the declaration.

John Robson, Membership Secretary  
Tel. 01621 828236