The University of the Third Age

MALDON
AND DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

Flanders Field Visit
Maldon U3A members at Essex Farm Cemetery

MAY 2015

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

Web Site: **www.maldonu3a.co.uk**

FROM THE CHAIR

Marrie Webster, our Vice Chairman, has to stand down at the AGM in June. As required by our constitution, we have to have a Vice Chairman to allow us to continue. If anyone feels that they would like to take on this role, could they please contact me.

Our representative on the WMCC management committee, Robin Goody, has decided to stand down. If anyone would like to take on this role, which involves attending one meeting a month on the second Thursday in the evening, then please contact me.

Following consultation with the Third Age Trust, we have amended our constitution, which will be voted on at the AGM in June. The amended constitution is, to all intents and purposes, just the same as the old but the wording and the organisation of the clauses are up to date to make them easily readable and bring it into line with current Third Age Trust advice. Should you wish a copy of the amended constitution, then please contact Jan Robertson who will send you an electronic version.

If any member has any constructive comments to make on any U3A issue, please do not hesitate to contact either me or any Committee member or use the comments book which is available at the main meeting.

Our website has recently been updated and now includes a diary of events, as currently known, meeting times and meeting days of all of the interest groups.

Left behind at the April main meeting at Wickham Bishops Village Hall, pair of sunglasses, a ladies coat, scarf and a cardigan; please contact me to reclaim any or all of these items.

Malcolm Case

Art Appreciation Group.

The new Art Group had a successful inaugural meeting and we have over 25 interested members, ready to view and discover paintings.
The Group will meet regularly at 2pm on the first Tuesday of each month.
There will be a house meeting on **Tuesday 2nd June** where members will discuss 'My Favourite Artist/Painting'.
This will be followed by a gallery visit on **Tuesday 7 July**.

Local & General History

Our next meeting is on **Tuesday 26 May** when David Newman is coming to tell us about the History of Salt Extraction around the Blackwater.

All members are welcome to join us - the cost is £2 per session.

This will be followed on **Monday 22 June** with a talk on The Great War - Mobilization & Local Defences.

The visit to Saffron Walden & Audley End is full but I am holding a waiting list if you want your name added to it.
Co-Ordinators Mary Burd and Michael Blackwell

Strollers

The next walk is on **Sunday 21st June.** Please meet at Danbury Sports and Social Club Car Park (post code CM3 4NQ) at 10.15 for a 10.30 start. The walk is approximately 4 miles long and we will lunch at 'The Griffin'.
Contact: Colin Beckett

Strollers Too

Walk is on **Tuesday,23rd June** at Heybridge Basin.
Meet at Meadows Car Park 10.15 for 10.30 start, lunch will be at
The Jolly Sailor.
Please let me know by Monday,15th June if you want to have lunch.
Patricia Riddell

Aviation Group

Our first meeting back at Stow Maries First World War Aerodrome went very well. We had an excellent lecture from Peter Bickers on the Wright Brothers which had been very extensively researched and was very well received.

At our next meeting, on **Tuesday 19th May**, we will have a talk from Roger Smith called "Stow Maries, A Place in History". Some members will have heard him before but this is an update and will cover what is new and what is to come. It should also create the right atmosphere for future meetings.

Will those members who are going on the trip to Bentley Priory and the de Havilland Mosquito Museum, who have not paid for the coach, please do so as soon as possible by giving or sending your cheque to Mave Studholme. There are still a few places left on the trip so if you wish to come please contact her ASAP. The total cost is £33-50.

There are still a few places available on the above Clacton Airshow visit.

Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Brian Johnson

Astronomy

Monday June 22nd – meeting at Stow Maries Aerodrome at 7:30 pm for an illustrated talk by Peter Bassett on "Are we Alone". With all the 200 billion stars in our galaxy, a large proportion now known to have planets, surely there must be other civilisations out there somewhere asking the same question... "Are we Alone?" The talk includes Crop Circles, a fair consideration of UFOs and other fringe subjects on this popular matter. Props include an alien, a model flying saucer, and radio telescope demo.

Malcolm Case

Bird watching

The Phyllis Currie Nature reserve is is situated just off the Gt. Leigh Felstead Road and it has meadows, woodland and a lake. The group visited the reserve and observed Gadwell (anas strepera) often described as an undistinguished duck. The male has finely barred plumage, the rear and tail are black but with a bold white speculum. At the lake, walking through the woods, a pair of Long-tailed tits were observed in the process of building a nest, which is a domed shape and can be lined with 2000 feathers. The pair were robbing an old nest and taking material to its new location. The Long-tailed tit is 14 cm long, 9 cm of which is tail. It is a round bodied bird with rounded wings and a stubby bill. It is pinkish brown above and pinkish white below with dark marks on the side of its head and a white crown. It is a gregarious bird usually seen in family flocks made up of the last year's offspring and additional helpers.

Sunday June 7th the group is visiting Rye Mead in the Lea Valley with the hope of seeing Kingfishers.

Peter Gaywood and Pat Clements.

Maritime

May 24th – May 27th, trip to Liverpool to see the "Three Queens" all together in the River Mersey, to celebrate 175 years of Cunard Line. We will be staying in Chester at the 4* Best Western Premier Queen Hotel. Depart Maldon (Bus stop opposite Wickes and adjacent to Morrison's) at 8:10am, depart Danbury (Eves Corner) at8:20am, and depart Great Baddow (The Vineyards) 8:30am.

Monday June 1st meeting at The Blackwater Sailing Club, Heybridge Basin at 10:00 am for an illustrated talk by Trevor Sapey of the Mary Rose Trust. The talk will consist of a PowerPoint Presentation on the history, sinking and raising of the Mary Rose along with the conservation and the new museum. Trevor will talk briefly about costumes (as he will be wearing one!) and its importance at this period of time. Finally he will hand around some real and many replica artefacts to discuss life on board.

Midsomer Murders Country & Goring Gap Tour - September 7th

The coach fare for this trip is now due. The cost is £12.00 per person. Fred Lane will be available to collect your cheque at the June Maritime meeting or June Monthly meeting. If you cannot make either of these meetings please forward your cheque to Fred Lane

Malcolm Case

Family History Group 1
There will be no meeting in May.

Family History Group 2 (Beginners)
Next meeting will be on **Friday 29th May** commencing 10.00am

Antiques
Andy Turle came this month to give us more information on our treasures which included a pretty trinket box with inlaid mother of pearl of intricate design, most likely from the Middle East. This was followed by a walnut miniature long case clock, possibly an apprentice piece. A set of silver spoons dated 1897 together with coffee spoons 1935 created much interest. This was followed by a large cheese dish with oriental decoration, possibly Minton. Finally a souvenir counter box marked "Deal" made in Scotland. Another interesting afternoon— we cannot wait for her return.

London Walks & Talks
The next meeting is on **Wednesday, May 20th** in MALDON TOWN HALL.
Our speaker will be Maggie Piper, who will be talking about "Royal Residences" and showing how they have developed over the years.
As usual the talk will begin at 2.30 p.m. and the entrance fee will be £2.
Wednesday 17th June we have a guided morning tour of the Bloomsbury area of London. In the afternoon, a guided tour of BBC Broadcasting House has been arranged for the group. Bookings and further details of this visit will be available at the May meeting.
Janeen Trew
Christine Speed ***Gardeners***

Tuesday, June 9 Plant Swap and Afternoon Tea at the home of Mike and Liz Wood, 49 Hopping Jacks Lane, Danbury, CM3 9PJ at 2.30pm.
Please bring your surplus plants and your own chairs and cakes.
Always an enjoyable afternoon, open to everyone, please join us.
Jan Robertson

Date for your Diary—Social
BBQ at Langford Village Hall, Wednesday, 29th July—£12
Book now, numbers restricted
Contact: Barbara Byam Shaw on

2015 CALENDAR—Dates for your Diary

Events and Outings during the year

24/27 May	4 day trip to Liverpool—"Three Queens" - Maritime
Sat. 30 May	Visit to Bentley Priory Museum - Aviation
Wed. 3 June	"Gypsy" Savoy Theatre Evening Visit - Theatre
Thurs. 11 June	Magna Carta visit to British Library—Plantagenet History
Wed. 17 June	Walk thru. Bloomsbury & BBC Broadcasting Hse—Ldn Walks
Fri. 26 June	Backstage Tour of the National Theatre—Ken Cocks
Tues. 7 July	Essex U3A Assoc. Essex Quiz Night at URC, Chelmsford
7/10 July	4 day trip to the Midlands—"Places of Interest"
Mon. 27 July	Guided walk in Saffron Walden & visit Audley End—L.Hist
Wed. 29 July	BBQ at Langford VH - Social
Wed. Aug. 19	Walk thru. Clerkenwell—Ldn Walks—Ldn Walks
25/27 Aug.	U3A Nat. Conference & AGM, East Midlands Conf. Centre
Thurs. 27 Aug.	'Miss Saigon' Prince Edward Theatre, London—Theatre
Fri. 28 Aug.	Clacton Air Show—Aviation
Mon. 7 Sept.	Midsomer Murders Country & Goring Gap Tour—Maritime
Mon. 21 Sept.	Maldon U3A Open Day, Town Hall
Mon. 28 Sept.	Monuments & public art of London & Olympic Park—L.Hist
Web. 11 Oct.	Walk in Lambeth & tour of Lambeth Palace—Ldn Walks
Tues. 24 Nov	Cockney Evening—Social

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

Geology

Members of the Group have paid a second visit to the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences in Cambridge. We were met by Douglas Palmer, a senior palaeontologist, who was most amenable to our suggestions of what we would like to do. Accordingly , he took us to the exhibits illustrating the very beginnings of earth as we know it so far, and then on to the Whewell Gallery with its fascinating examples of minerals, crystals and their structure. Dr. Palmer's erudition and ease of language made a very interesting and thoroughly enjoyable morning.

After lunch in nearby restaurants, most of the Group returned to the Museum to spend a further hour or so to recapture all, or at least some, of what we had experienced earlier.

Enid Hall

A MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER TO ALL COORDINATORS USING THE WMCC

Please note that, due to a change in procedures at West Maldon Community Centre, in future all invoices for room hire will be sent directly to me, as the U3A's Treasurer and not to Coordinators.

On receipt of an invoice I will contact the Coordinator concerned to confirm that the amount charged is correct and to arrange payment.

Martin Cook
Treasurer

Trees

Tuesday, June 2. The next meeting will be starting from David's house (contact me for details) at 2.00 pm on and we shall wander through the nearby Danbury woods. Join us even if it's just a 'one off' for you.

Veronica Smith

Theatre Group
The popular musical

'MISS SAIGON'.
Prince Edward Theatre, London.
Thursday 27 August at 2.30 pm
Leaving WMCC at 10.00 am

Cost is £43.50 per member which includes coach fare.
Cheques made payable to Maldon & District U3A to Barbara & David Arnold.
As we can only have tickets on hold for 28 days,
prompt payment is essential

IMPORTANT CHANGE
JUNE 3rd 'GYPSY' Coach pick up point changed to
TESCO'S Maldon at 3 pm

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the seventeenth Annual General Meeting of Maldon & District U3A will be held on **Monday 15th June 2015** in Wickham Bishops Hall at 2:15pm. Any items that you wish to be included on the Agenda must be notified to the Business Secretary by no later than **Monday 1st June 2015.**
The Nomination form is below and, if you wish to nominate someone as an Officer or Committee member, please complete the form and return it to the Business Secretary by no later than **Monday 1st June 2015**.
Forms will be available at the May meeting or, if requested, by post.
The Vice Chairman has completed her term of office this year and will be standing down as will one member of the Committee, one committee member was co-opted and must be elected to the committee at this AGM.
We will have vacancies for Vice Chairman and one committee member.

Kym Marshall
Business Secretary

Eligibility for Office and to vote – All fully paid-up members for the year 2015/2016 are eligible to stand for Committee, and to attend and vote; except under the terms of our Constitution, where only one member from any one household shall serve on the Committee at one time.
Ordinary June monthly meeting – this will take place before the AGM at 1:45pm for the purpose of announcements and registering for events.

Nomination Form for Officers & Committee Members 2015

Position	Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by	Nominee's Signature

(Vice Chairman, one committee member and one co-opted member)

Chateau de Grand Bigard

Menin Gate, Ypres

Tyne Cot Cemetery

U3A Local History Group Trip to Flanders April 2015

The trip started with a test of nerves for our intrepid leader, Mary, when the coach failed to appear at ETA. It was at Tesco's , we were at Morrison's. Matter resolved we started off, a bit later than intended!

The highlight of Day One was the visit to Floralia Brussels, a wonderful display of spring flowering bulbs in the grounds of a fairy tale chateau. Although cool, the sun shone and the sight of over 1 million bulbs, some in formal beds, others in multi coloured drifts in woodland settings, was indeed lovely. Every tulip you could imagine was there! An enthusiastic and delightful botanist guided us through, and we all learned something from the tour.

We started Day Two by driving to Nieuport to take a river boat trip on the Yser River, which took us along the banks of the battlefields of World War One. Our excellent guide explained how the war started and how Belgium fared in the war.

There were three main battles around Ypres in the period 1914/1918. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers of both sides were killed or wounded together with an unknown number of civilians. Nearly all the buildings were destroyed and these have been rebuilt largely in their original style. It is estimated that 12 shells were fired every second over the four and a half years of the war. Some 3,000 explosive devices are still found each year causing yet more casualties.

Following lunch we then visited the 'In Flanders Field Museum' in Ypres. This enhanced our talk of the morning with pictorial and video presentations of the horrors of the war. It is hard to conceive the hardship of the trenches and how the soldiers suffered. After the Museum visit we had a three hour tour of the battlefields with an excellent Guide. She explained about the cemeteries and the role of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The first cemetery we visited was the 'Essex Farm Cemetery'. It was here that John McCrae, the Canadian Surgeon and Poet who at age 41 volunteered to join the Canadian Expeditionary Force being sent to fight in Europe, wrote in May 1914 the stirring poem 'In Flanders Fields' following the death of a close friend. The site of the cemetery was a battlefield station treating the injured and we were able to see the bunkers where the soldiers were treated. Being a battlefield cemetery the graves are not set out in a regimented fashion but reflect the haphazard way the soldiers were buried as they died.

There are over 100 War cemeteries scattered over Flanders. The largest Commonwealth cemetery, Tyne Cot, has a memorial for 35,000 soldiers with no known grave together with nearly 12,000 graves. The Commonwealth Graves are pristine with white grave stones set in flower beds. The Guide explained how the religion, rank and regiment of each soldier is etched on each grave stone. All the grave stones are the same style and size, as all men are deemed to be equal in death. The German cemetery we visited at Langemark was in stark contrast to the Commonwealth cemeteries, in that black stones with details of the soldiers buried are placed flat on the ground (similar to our cremation stones), together with a mass grave containing some 25,000 soldiers. After an evening meal we attended the nightly Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate Monument in Ypres, listing the names of a further 55,000 soldiers with no known grave.

Altogether it proved to be a very moving and poignant day contemplating the sadness of death and injury of so young and so many people.

Day 3 started with a visit to Tournai on the River Schelde, one of the oldest cities in Belgium, and once an important centre for the cloth industry with wool from England. In the Tourist Office, a video presentation showed a brief history of the city starting from Roman times. Occupied by various countries over the centuries, including England from 1513-1518, Tournai became part of independent Belgium in 1830, but was occupied by Germany from 1914-1918, when larger houses were used as hospitals. In WW2 it was reduced to ashes by firebombs in May 1940 and liberated in September 1944. Beautifully restored to its former glory, Tournai is dominated by the five towered Notre Dame Cathedral, built in Romanesque and Gothic styles of the 11th and 12th centuries, but currently undergoing restoration after a tornado in 1999 destabilised one of the towers.

Continuing on Le Petit Train, our enthusiastic guide showed us other interesting historical buildings, including the Town Hall in the Abbey grounds, the remaining Round Towers and medieval bridge along the boulevards outside the one time city walls, the huge 19thC Railway Station and finishing in The Grand Place alongside the 12thC Bell Tower. Here free time allowed us to explore further this delightful city which rightly deserves to be a UNESCO World Heritage Site. And so to our last excursion, to a small village called Ploegsteert – too hard for the British Tommies to get their tongues around, so it will forever be Plugstreet. The "Plugstreet 14-18 Experience" tells the story of the fighting, the suffering and the military losses on both sides and also the fears and hardships of the civilians. A couple of days before our visit having been Anzac Day, the wreaths that were laid at the memorial there were flowers from Australia and New Zealand. It was a calm and peaceful setting, far removed from the mud and horrors of the trenches, and it gave us an opportunity to reflect on what we had learned about the Great War. We were now ready to go home.

Theresa Byles

Urgently wanted

Liz Wood supplies plants for the Danbury Garden Open day in June and is short of 3" pots. If you have any spare can you please contact her. She would be most grateful.

A Perpetual Calendar for Members

At a recent meeting of the computer group, one member asked if anyone had a perpetual calendar in which you can enter regular events and print out each month's diary. As a result, a special calendar has been developed in Microsoft Excel. You can now download this from our website. You must have Microsoft Office on your PC, but you don't need to be an experienced Excel user. The calendar has a virtually unlimited number of entries, with provision for regular weekly, fortnightly, monthly and annual events (such as birthdays and anniversaries). It displays 13 months (January - January) . At the end of December, you simply click on a button and it sets up the following year. It has been pre-loaded with the regular dates for the main monthly meeting and those of each of the activity groups, so you can customise it to your individual requirements before adding your personal appointments. Each month can be printed in five different layouts to suit your personal preference.

Do try it - many of us lead busy lives and this may help you to keep it organised! There is a link on the home page, or you can go to the computer group's page.

15th June Meeting
Wickham Bishops Village Hall at 1.30 pm

AGM

plus

Strawberries and Cream

Blackwater U3A

6 day holiday to Derbyshire
24th to 29th September
Price £459—Half Board
Single Supplement £75 and Insurance £10
Full details, itinerary and booking form from
Mrs. Dawn Munday on 01621 854065
dawnrosemary@fsmail.net

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Braintree Museum

are holding two exhibitions

History of the Magna Carta
22nd September to 30th January 2016

World War II
The Peoples Story
4th July to 12th September

Leaflets available at the Monday Meeting

LUNCHEON CLUB VENUES

Times 12.15 pm

Luncheon Group

TUESDAY 2nd June at New Times, Tiptree
Co-ordinator: Mike Wood

WEDNESDAY To be advised
Co-ordinator: Paul Costa

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.
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BLACKWATER U3A	HEYBRIDGE U3A
Contact	Contact
Peter Holmes, Chairman	Joyce Woodham, Chairman
01621 854108	01621 841 066

THE LIMEBROOK U3A
Contact
Paul Madge, Chairman
01621 855 883

Your Committee

Chairman	Malcolm Case
Vice Chairman	Marrie Webster
Secretary	Kym Marshall
Treasurer	Martin Cook
Membership Sec.	Alan Clarke
Newsletter Editor	Jan Robertson
Committee	Fred Lane
	Andrew Simmonds
	Judith Johnston
	Sylvia Beckett
	Veronica Smith
Web Master	John Bowen
Social Committee	Michael Childs
AV Equipment	Jim Light

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Web site www.u3a.org.uk
Resource Centre: email: resource.centre@u3a.org.uk

Deadline for next newsletter: Friday, 5th June

CO-ORDINATORS

Antiques	Liz Wood
Architecture	Judith Johnston
Art Appreciation	Andy Simmonds
Astrology	Liz Jones
Astronomy	Malcolm Case
Aviation	Brian Johnson Mave Studholme
Bird Watching	Pat Clements Peter Gaywood
Botany	Veronica Smith
Bridge	Sheila Epps
Bridge for the Curious	Gill Stone
Canasta	Elaine Bane Geraldine Brooks
Computers	Jan Robertson
Cribbage	Pat Clements
Discussion	Ray Harman
Egyptology	Joyce Cotterell
Family History	Alan Buck
French Conversation	Ray Harman
Gardeners	Jan Robertson
Geology	Enid Hall
Handicraft	Marian Manning
Just Jazz	Jim Light Peter Beckett
Local History	Mary Burd Michael Blackwell
London Walks & Talks	Christine Speed Janeen Trew

Luncheon Group 1st Tues 3rd Wed. Eat & Meet 2nd Wed	 Mike Wood Paul Costa Joyce Cotterell
Mah-Jong	Molly Polden
Maritime	Malcolm Case
Music Appreciation	Enid Hall John Skuse
New Friends	Liz Robson
Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash
Plantagenets	Beryl McDonell
Poetry	Jo Robson
Reading	Sheila Epps
Rummikub 1 Rummikub 2	Colin Beckett Beryl McDonell
Scottish Country Dancing	Shirley Grummett
Sing for Pleasure	Sylvia Carpenter
Snooker	John Williams
Strollers	Gill Stone
Table Tennis	Gordon Hardy
Ten Pin Bowling	David Arnold
Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Joyce Cotterell
Trees	Veronica Smith
Weekenders	Beryl McDonell
Whist	Molly Polden
Wine Circle No. 1/2 Wine Circle No. 3 Wine Circle No. 4	Graham Boswell Mary Burd Paul Costa Alan Clarke
Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

PROGRAMME – JUNE 2015

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Maritime Whist	2 Table Tennis Snooker Geology Luncheon Club Theatre "Gypsy" Art Appreciation Trees	3 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge for the Curious	4 Ten Pin Bowling Petanque Poetry Rummikub 2 Scottish Country Dancing	5 Canasta	6	7 Bird Watching Rye Mead
8 Astrology Handicrafts Whist	9 Table Tennis Snooker Egyptology Gardeners	10 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge Luncheon Club	11 Ten Pin Bowling Petanque Plantagenets Visit—Magna Carta Reading Rummikub 1	12 Architecture Mah Jong Sing for Pleasure	13	14
15 **Meeting 1.30 pm** **AGM** Just Jazz	16 Table Tennis Snooker Aviation	17 Ten Pin Bowling London Walks Bloomsbury & BBC Luncheon Club	18 Ten Pin Bowling Antiques Bridge for the Curious Petanque Scottish Country Dancing	19 Canasta	20	21 Strollers
22 Astronomy Handicrafts Local History Whist	23 Table Tennis Snooker Strollers Too	24 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge Family History	25 Ten Pin Bowling Computers French Discussion Music Appreciation Petanque	26 Mah Jong Cribbage Family History Sing for Pleasure Visit National Theatre	27	28
29 Whist	30 Table Tennis Snooker					

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