Learn, Laugh, Live

MALDON
AND DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

October 2019

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

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

FROM THE CHAIR

Hello Everyone
I thought I would start off with the most important part first. I have mentioned a few times that we will need to have a new Treasurer in place by the time of the next AGM. Graham, our present Treasurer, has prepared an "advert" which appears further in the newsletter. Please read it and, if you would like to put yourself forward for this role, contact either Graham or myself. You will see from the final paragraph that it is very important that we fill this position.

However, if you don't feel being Treasurer is a role for you, we will also be in need of a Business Secretary to take over from Judith next year. This is another position that must be filled if we are to continue to function as a U3A. If you feel this is a position you could take on, please speak to either myself or Judith Johnson for more information.

Let's now move on!
Firstly, I have been asked by a member if there is anyone who would like to start up a Tai Chi group. They had recently been to a class elsewhere and thoroughly enjoyed it – can anyone help?

Our U3A is part of the Essex Association and they have study days which are open to members. Please check out the Essex Association website for further information. If you like the look of any of these study days, please book through the Association website – see page 4.

I went along to the recent Beetle Drive organised by the Social Group. This was my first experience of one and I thoroughly enjoyed it – it was great fun. Thanks to everyone in the Social Group for organising this event, including the excellent Ploughman's Supper.

Finally, just a couple of housekeeping matters.
At some time, there will be a fire drill at the Wickham Bishops Village Hall, which we will have to follow. Apart from knowing there will be one, we won't be informed when. This is something being arranged by WBVH themselves as part of their safety procedures.

We still have quite a few membership cards not yet collected – so if you haven't yet picked yours up, they are at the entrance table with Malcolm Case at the monthly meetings, or you could ask someone going to the meeting to collect it for you.

Shirley Macro

MARITIME GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 4th November**, James Byam-Shaw will be giving a talk on "Boat Building and development of sail techniques". Please note that for this meeting and this meeting only the venue will be the Little Baddow Memorial Hall, North Hill, Little Baddow, CM3 4TA. The meeting will start at the usual time of 10:00am.
All U3A members are very welcome to come to the meeting.
Malcolm Case

ASTRONOMY GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 28th October**, meeting at the Chigboro Fishing Club, Chigborough Road, Heybridge. CM9 4RE at 7:30 pm. Weather conditions allowing then we will be night sky observing, there will also be a fun astronomy quiz run by Joe Marshall. If you have a telescope or binoculars then please bring them with you. Any U3A member is very welcome to join us.
Malcolm Case

GILBERT & SULLIVAN

Here we are the four 'opera buffs' pictured in the scenic Abbey Gardens in Bury St Edmunds. We had a lovely, if tiring day with a long round trip via Maldon, but it was well worth it for the show.
We saw a wonderful production of the Mikado in the Apex Theatre, by the National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company.

Thanks to Veronica for organising the trip in the first place.
Andy Simmonds

U3A 2020 DIARIES
Available at the October meeting
Price £2.75, correct money please
Colour: Purple
If ordered, please collect
Jan Robertson

U3A CLUSTER GROUP

I am pleased to announce that Burnham-on-Crouch and Dengie & District U3As have joined our local Cluster Group. Along with Blackwater, Limebrook and Heybridge U3As, we meet every four months or so to discuss matters that affect us, exchange views and share ideas. We also have a reciprocal arrangement whereby members can go to the different groups, providing there is room within that group.

As part of the Cluster, we are organising another Cyber Crime event for **Wednesday, 13th May 2020**. This was very well received last time and it gives those who were unable to attend a chance to see this excellent presentation. Details of time and venue yet to be finalised but make a note of the date.

We will also, from time to time, give details of events or outings arranged by the Cluster Group U3As, which you may be interested in taking part in.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION OF U3As

Maldon & District U3A is a member of the Essex Association of U3As. You can visit their web site at https://u3asites.org.uk/essexassociationu3as/welcome

Please see the events page for information on forthcoming Association Study/Workshop days. If you would be interested in attending any of the days then please contact Malcolm Case.

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

The next meeting of the Local History Group is on **Monday 28th October** at 2pm at the Maldon Town Hall.

Our speaker is Neil Wiffen from the Essex Record Office for his talk ***"October 29th - One day in the Battle of Britain".***
Neil is an excellent speaker so do come along and enjoy the afternoon.

There has been a very positive response to Chelmsford Museum so do make an effort to visit next time you are in Chelmsford, if you have not already done so.

Kathy, Jane and Sylvia

FAMILY HISTORY BEGINNERS

The next meeting will be on **Friday 25 October** usual time and place.
Please let me know if you will be attending.

Alan Buck

TEN PIN BOWLING - Balls

If you have a bowling ball that is no longer any use to you, then we would be pleased to take it off your hands and find it a good home.

Unfortunately they do not have much value and the new owner will be asked to give £10 to a charity of your choice. Can you help?

David Arnold

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jan has finally passed me the baton after many years of sterling work. It will be a very hard act to follow as the Newsletter was Jan, but the apprentice has to start sometime, so here goes. Please bear with me as I ask what will seem obvious questions, as to Jan it was second nature.
Feel free to contact me with any comments, suggestions etc.
Liz Samson
PS Jan is still on the Committee so will be keeping an eye on me.

Sponsored *STROLLERS* in aid of Children in Need
Sunday 17th November 2019
10:15 for a 10:30 am start.

After our successful stroll last year, we are repeating it for this year.

Please meet in Daisy Meadow Car Park, Heybridge Basin for this circular walk of some 3.5 miles, along the canal towpath. We will meet by the steps leading up to the canal. This sponsored walk is open to **ALL** U3A members and their families. Dogs on leads are welcome.

If you would like to take part or sponsor us, then please contact either Gill Stone or Malcolm Case for further details and sponsor forms.

CANASTA GROUP

We are a friendly group who meet on **alternate Friday afternoons**, between 2pm and 4pm, at the West Maldon Community Centre.

We currently have space to welcome new members into the group. If you are interested in playing the game, but not familiar with the rules, we are willing to teach you to the best of our knowledge. We play a type of Canasta called Bolivia, using 3 packs of cards and playing in partners, where numbers permit, on tables of 4 people. You do not need a partner to join as we randomly select partners before playing.

If you are interested and wish to know more, please contact Iris Slaney on I look forward to hearing from prospective Canasta players. Thank you. Iris.

Macmillan Coffee Morning - September 2019

Many thanks to everyone who came and donated to my coffee morning. The rain held off until the afternoon which was very kind!! The total raised this year is £460 - another great result.

Mary Burd

2019/2020 CALENDAR—Dates for your Diary

Events and Outings during the year

29th November	Film Show and Afternoon Tea at WMCC

2020

7th February	Call My Wine Bluff, Maldon Town Hall
17th April	St Georges Barn Dance, Maldon Town Hall
2nd July	Barbecue, Langford Village Hall
29th October	Posh Frock Do at The Bull, Great Totham

Further details of the above events are available from your Co-ordinator

STROLLERS TOO

Tuesday 26 November 2019 – Stow Maries

As my September stroll was cancelled due to bad weather, I have been 'persuaded' to have another stab at it.

This is a 4 mile circular walk around the villages of Stow Maries and Cold Norton on paths, bridleways and some minor roads. It is easy walking and there are no stiles.

We will meet in the car park at The Prince of Wales, Woodham Road, Stow Maries, CM3 6SA at 10.15 for 10.30 start. Lunch must be pre-ordered at the pub on the day. Please let me know if you are coming on the walk and whether you want lunch no later than Monday 18 November when I have to confirm lunch numbers.

Sometimes, for reasons beyond our control, the venue of a walk or lunch has to be changed after being advertised in this magazine. If you don't tell me you are coming I cannot advise you of any last minute changes.

Alan Clarke

JUST JAZZ

The next meeting of Just Jazz will be on the **21st October** at 7.30pm at the Maldon Little Ship Club. There will be a Bar.
Jim Light

COMPUTER GROUP – do we need one?

I have been enthusiastically working with computers for a long time, becoming familiar with a good deal, but not knowing or having experience of everything. Giving back by volunteering to help both organisations and individuals is what I do, being both enjoyable and learning a lot along the way.

Whether we need a Computer Group just to give it a name, in our U3A, is where I am at. Do we have a need to become more familiar with computers? Do we have issues that need to be fixed with smart 'phones, tablets, laptops, desktops or smart televisions - in fact, anything that feels like a computer. I'll draw the line at computer-controlled cookers, maybe.

There are people that will help, for example, AbilityNet (https://abilitynet.org.uk/), Digital Buddies (https://www.maldoncvs.org.uk/digital-buddies/) or even your local computer shop. On the other hand, there is nothing like group sharing and self-help for a way to learn and socialise.

I would like you to consider whether some form of "Computer Group" is needed – the title could be something else. If so, what should it look like for us. Please send your opinions, suggestions, views or questions to me Henry Harris.

I will digest them and after discussion that the need for a U3A group is warranted, then I will put forward my ideas for such a group at a separate meeting with tea, coffee and biscuits at an appropriate time and place.

Maritime Group Holiday to North Wales – 9 to 13th September 2019

Day 1 Bleary-eyed but enthusiastic, we left Danbury soon after 7.45 for a rainy drive to Coventry where we visited the Coventry Transport Museum. What a splendid collection of vehicles! Starting with Victorian penny-farthings via the invention of the internal combustion engine to cars and motor bikes of every shape and size right up to the present era, many of them having a particular association with Coventry whose auto industry has all but completely disappeared. Cries of "I remember having one of those!" My little red Mini was there, and royal Daimlers and so many more. A real dose of nostalgia.

Lunch, and on in the rain to our teatime stop at the British Ironwork Centre – doesn't sound particularly exciting but it turned out to be a fascinating collection of life-size animals in a park – deer, hippos, rhinos, zebra, lions, pigs, ponies, several gorillas, not to mention the odd dinosaur and the huge spider that was once at the Tate Modern. I saw Spiderman too, and a vast collection of colourful insects etc. in the shop. The tea and cakes were good too.

On to the Bulkeley Hotel in Beaumaris on Anglesey – a Grade I listed building with an interesting history which we will tell you at a later date. Very posh for the likes of us but we appreciated it.

Day 2 A beautiful day with what I suspect was un-Welsh weather. We drove to Blaenau Ffestiniog to the Llechwedd Slate Caverns through the most magnificent scenery. I had no idea Wales was so beautiful – bare, craggy mountains, stone walls, sheep everywhere, the occasional house or two, boulders, waterfalls – all part of the Snowdonia National Park. On arrival we were split into groups for the guided tour.

Sixteen of us climbed on to a heavy wooden truck with wooden seats nailed to the wooden floor, open sides, a lap seat belt and not a single spring. Zero elf and safety but soooooo exhilarating! No roads, of course, just pot-holed tracks and terrifying gradients in both directions. And from our guide we learned about the lives of the men who lived in the valley and worked in the mines until as recently as the 1960s.

From there we went to Portmeirion, a designer village with a distinctive Italian feel. A complete contrast – it was civilised and much more suitable for a bunch of senior citizens! Nice ice cream too!

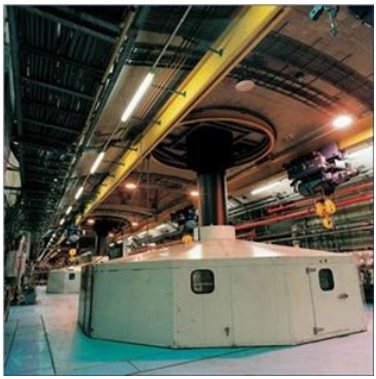
On our return to the hotel, we stopped at Caernarfon Castle for a photo opportunity. This castle is where the investiture of the Prince of Wales took place on the 1st July 1969.

Day 3 We set out for Conwy Castle armed with rainwear but didn't need it. The castle was built in the 1280s by Edward I. It was severely damaged in the English Civil War and is now a pretty substantial ruin, well worth a visit.

We also went to the local RLNI lifeboat station where we learned that the volunteers have only six minutes from the time the alarm sounds to get to their station, fully dressed in their gear. (Basically, a onesie undergarment and an all-enveloping top suit with built-in boots). The current boat is an Atlantic 75 D765 which takes a crew of three and is not fit for deep sea work.

Next stop was the National Slate Museum at Llanberis where we had an opportunity to find out more about the lives of the miners and watch a craftsman splitting slates.

We also went in shifts to Electric Mountain.



This is an amazing feat of engineering. Dinorwig Power Station, opened in 1984, has 16km of underground tunnels deep in Elider Mountain and there are no visible signs on the outside apart from two lakes where the water is stored. We were driven in a small bus and wore protective helmets. (Everyone had to wear a hairnet under the helmet and that was a sight for sore eyes!) Our guide described in detail the workings of the turbines and how the water comes down a chute and is pumped back up again at night, and all the engineers in our group understood what he was talking about. I did not! But what I did appreciate was the gobsmack factor as I stood in that massive cavern where the six turbines were located. It was like something in a James Bond movie and, for me, a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Day 4 At last, some genuine Welsh weather – wet and windy!

We went to Barmouth Sailors' Institute, a rare survivor from the days when the families of seafarers always had a meeting place where they could get the latest news about the voyages. The Institute is still open **every day** for local people to meet and read the papers.

We then visited Ty Gwyn: in 1565, there were only four houses in Barmouth and Ty Gwyn was one of them. Ty Gwyn means the White House. It is now the oldest building in Barmouth appearing in the archive record and fittingly it occupies a key location down on the harbour. The building now houses the Bronze Bell Shipwreck Museum, this is about the 1709 wreck and recent salvage operation.

Marble was salvaged from this shipwreck, with some of this marble being made into a statue entitled "The last haul". In both Ty Gwyn and the Sailors' Institute we had very knowledgeable guides who gave us a lot of information.

Then on to another lifeboat station, but this one had a much larger Shannon Class heavy-duty all-weather boat with an enormous tractor from which it could be launched.

On the way back to Beaumaris we had a photo opportunity at the railway station at Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgo-gerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogogoch – which means St Mary's Church in the hollow of the white hazel near the rapid whirlpool of Llandysilio of the red cave.

Day 5

Sad to be leaving but still things to look forward to, first to Swallow Falls at Betws-y-Coed, and then the chance to enjoy the drive through the mountains for the last time on our way to a leisurely Canal cruise from Llangollen to Froncysyllte on the "Thomas Telford" with a nice ploughman's lunch served on board and the added treat of being on the aqueduct at the end with a view in both directions.

Then it was full steam ahead for Maldon. I expected delays on the motorway, but impressively we arrived in Danbury just ten minutes after the scheduled time, with a brilliant orange harvest full moon overhead. Frankly, we were all bleary-eyed again, worn out, but what a wonderful holiday – the best yet!

Thank you, Malcolm, Rosemary, Alan and Janet.

Surprise Heights - Maritime Trip to North Wales
Thanks to Malcolm

I think the surprise was how we all felt reacting to being treated like capable adults and not cossetted like incapable, past it, geriatrics (as normal) by our driver cum guide. The military type vehicle was like something from a Mel Gibson movie, with no frills, but 'what the hell' I thought as I clung to the metal structure of the framework. It was very bumpy to say the least, but the young man in charge oozed enthusiasm and pride as he educated us on the story of the heritage of slate. Boys from the age of eight worked the slopes and breathed the dust into their lungs with a life expectancy of maybe thirty years. We were assured that this was a man's world. Very much the home of male voice choirs and brass bands, a very proud legacy. The silicon content making slate good for 300 years on the roofs of the world. I managed to find a fine example of quartz and slate to take home as a souvenir from the tons of explosion debris that was everywhere, destined to be minimized into various grades for road surfaces, so nothing would be wasted. Coming down from the top was as much fun as the driver seemed to let off the brake after every bend and I shut my eyes and screamed like a kid. Since becoming an octogenarian, and one thing after another I must admit to almost giving up, but this little trip has proved there is still life in the old girl and that's due to special friends, and the lovely people in our U3A.
Thank you Malcolm, I think you did a marvellous job, as always.

Jo Robson

HEYBRIDGE U3A

FESTIVE DINNER, SHOW &

OVERNIGHT EVENT – TILBURY

CRUISE & MARITIME VOYAGES

THURSDAY 19TH DECEMBER

Back by popular demand!

Due to the success of last year's event on board 'Magellan', here is a fantastic opportunity to step aboard her sister ship, 'Columbus'. Enjoy a delicious five-course dinner, evening show plus an overnight stay with breakfast the following morning. Included in the price are welcome cocktails and half a bottle of wine per person with the meal.

This visit makes a wonderful start to your Christmas celebrations!

Standard Twin Inner – £99.00 **Standard Twin Ocean View – £109.00**

Standard Single Inner – £129.00 **Standard Single Ocean View – £139.00**

For more details:

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

The group will restart after the extended summer break on **Tuesday 5th November** at 2pm with a DVD dedicated to Peter Paul Rubens the celebrated Dutch Baroque painter.
Angie and Tony Bowler in Woodham Mortimer have kindly offered to host, but this could change depending on numbers.

Please let me know asap if you wish to attend.
Andy Simmonds

Situation Vacant
With effect from mid-June 2020
TREASURER, MALDON AND DISTRICT U3A

After four years in position, Graham Webster will be stepping down from his role as our Treasurer, immediately following the AGM on 15th June 2020.

We need someone to replace Graham immediately following the AGM, as no Local U3A is permitted to operate without a Treasurer in position.

The person who takes on the role needs to feel comfortable in dealing with numbers, but does not need any accounting or financial qualification; and does not need to have any training or background in finance though the latter would, of course, be useful.

An ability to use basic computer software (e.g. *Excel* and *Word*) is needed and full guidance will be given on how to use the *VT Cash Book* software on which our financial transactions are recorded. The new Treasurer will also need to have an email address and will be given a Laptop Computer for use on Maldon U3A business.

The new Treasurer will, on taking up the role (and ideally for a few weeks beforehand), be free to seek help and guidance from Graham Webster for as long as it is felt necessary.

If you are interested in taking on this role, then please, in the first instance, contact Graham Webster for further information.

And don't forget, if there is no Treasurer in place after next June's AGM, there can be no functioning Maldon and District U3A!!

Graham Webster
Treasurer

A NOSTALGIC FILM SHOW with AFTERNOON TEA

FRIDAY 29TH November 2019

1.45 for 2.00 till 4.00

At WEST MALDON COMMUNITY CENTRE

We are showing two short films from the

U3A Resource Library

Tickets only £8

ON SALE AT OCTOBER MAIN MEETING

Available from Rosemary Case -

Monday 18th November Meeting
Wickham Bishops Village Hall at 1.30 pm

Speaker
Fran Sandham
My Solo Walk across Africa

Fran is an explorer and professional speaker who writes and talks about his adventures.

FUTURE SPEAKERS

December 16th 2019	Christmas Meeting
January 20th 2020	Veronica Smith – Russia
February 17th 2020	John Pierce – "Painterotti"

The above events may be subject to change.

Bob and Graham's Big Balti Night

Monday 9th December
7:00 for 7:30pm.
At Balti Bhujon 24 Mill Rd Maldon

Please contact

Graham Evans or
Bob Gowers for details

LUNCHEON CLUB VENUE

No meal in November due to the proximity of the Christmas Lunch on the 5th December at Forresters

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.

CROQUET GROUP

The season has now closed and we will have to wait until Spring 2020 to start again. We have initially pencilled in the date of **Thursday, 23rd April**, but, as with all outdoor activities, this depends entirely on the weather and condition of the lawns. We've had a regular band of members coming along to play and all have improved their skills, while still having fun and with a very small element of competition too. Everyone likes to win occasionally. The afternoon always finishes up with a cup of tea/coffee in the Forrester Park Clubhouse and a chat.

We are planning to meet for the occasional get together during the winter months, so if you think you would like to join us next season, please look out in the newsletter for when we plan to meet and come along and join us.

Please contact either Jean Healey or Shirley Macro for more information.

Your Committee	
Chairman	Shirley Macro
Vice Chairman	Malcolm Case
Secretary	Judith Johnston
Treasurer	Graham Webster
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case
Newsletter Editor	Liz Samson
Committee	Andrew Simmonds Alec Fraser Penelope McAvoy Jan Robertson
Web Master	John Bowen Tony Groves
Social Group	Michael Childs
AV Equipment	Mike Flack
Essex Assoc. of U3A's Committee	Malcolm Case

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

Deadline for next newsletter: Friday, 9th November 2019

CO-ORDINATORS

Antiques	Awaiting new members
Art Appreciation	Andy Simmonds
Aviation	Brian Johnson
Astronomy	Malcolm Case
Balti Night	Bob Gowers Graham Evans
Bird Watching	Peter Gaywood Michael Bagshaw
Botany	Veronica Smith
Bridge	Sheila Epps
Canasta	Iris Slaney
Computers	Awaiting new Co-ordinator
Cribbage	Pat Clements
Croquet	Jean Healey Shirley Macro
Discussion	Bryan Jones
Egyptology	Kathleen Goff Sue Robinson
Family History	Alan Buck
French Conversation	Ann Lester
Geology	Enid Hall
Handicraft	Marian Manning
History—Tudors	Beryl McDonell
Just Jazz	Jim Light David Coombes
Local History	Sylvia Cousins Jane Coombes Kathleen Goff
London Walks & Talks	Awaiting new Co-ordinator
London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Joyce Cotterell
Luncheon Groups 3rd Wed. Eat & Meet 2nd Wed	Paul Costa Joyce Cotterell
Mah-Jong	Molly Polden
Maritime	Malcolm Case
Music Appreciation	Enid Hall John Skuse
Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash
Poetry	Jo Robson
Reading	Sheila Epps
Rummikub 1 Rummikub 2	Colin Beckett Beryl McDonell
Scottish Country Dancing	Shirley Grummett
Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
Strollers	Gill Stone
Table Tennis	Louis Gunn
Ten Pin Bowling	David Arnold
Tree Identification	Veronica Smith
Ukulele	Jenny Plumb
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 Ann Goody
Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

PROGRAMME – November 2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1 Mah Jong	2	3 Birdwatching
4 Maritime Whist	5 Table Tennis Art Group	6 Ten Pin Bowling Wine Group 1	7 Ten Pin Bowling Petanque Discussion Poetry Rummikub 2	8 Canasta Sing for Pleasure	9	10
11 Handicrafts Whist	12 Table Tennis Egyptology	13 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge Luncheon Group	14 Ten Pin Bowling French Conversation History—Tudors Scottish Country Dancing Petanque Reading Rummikub 1	15 Mah Jong	16	17 Strollers
18 **Meeting 1.30** Just Jazz	19 Table Tennis Geology	20 Ten Pin Bowling Luncheon Group	21 Ten Pin Bowling Petanque	22 Canasta Cribbage Sing for Pleasure	23	24
25 Astronomy Handicrafts Local History Whist	26 Table Tennis Strollers Too Wine Group 4	27 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge Writing for Fun Wine Group 2	28 Ten Pin Bowling French Conversation Music Appreciation Scottish Country Dancing Petanque Wine Group 3	29 **Film Show** Mah Jong Family History	30	

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.

Newsletter Editor: Liz Samson