Learn, Laugh, Live

MALDON AND DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

Danbury Woodland
Bluebell Drift with Wood Anemone
by Veronica Smith ***See article on pages 10 and 11***

May 2020

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

website: **www.maldonu3a.co.uk/**

FROM THE CHAIR

We've managed to complete a few weeks of restrictions now and I hope you are all keeping well, managing to stay in touch with your families and friends, and have kept yourselves occupied. It may be that by the time this newsletter comes out some of the restrictions may have been lifted but I think it will be quite some time before we are able to start meeting again.

You will see from the newsletter that some of the groups have found ways to stay active using various online platforms. They have been quite inventive, and it is good that they are making the best of things.

The Committee has had a couple of meetings using the Zoom app, and these went very well. You may think there's not a lot we can discuss or decide but we seemed to manage to do so, even if it mostly was a question of future planning when everything, eventually, returns to some sort of normal. One item we did talk about was renewing your membership and, if you haven't already done so, please would you contact Malcolm Case to confirm you are doing so or go to the website, www.maldonu3a.co.uk. We need to have everyone's support to continue financially into the future, and as mentioned last time, the idea is to push back the renewal date in 2021 to allow for the postponement of group activities and monthly meetings so far.

As far as the AGM for 2020 is concerned, at the present time we feel this will have to be postponed. In accordance with our Constitution we should hold an AGM within fifteen months of the previous one and this takes us to the 14th September 2020. However, nothing can be properly planned or arranged until much nearer the time – it's a case of wait and see. If we still can't hold the AGM at this time, we will just have to hold off until such time that we can. I trust you will all agree that our health and wellbeing and following all the guidelines is much more important than an AGM. This means that the current Committee will continue in their roles for the present.

On a more personal note, I have been keeping myself busy with doing lots of little jobs around the house and keeping fit doing some yoga, walking and a keep fit routine. My only complaint is that it never seems to get easier and once the housework is done, it needs doing again! Dearest one, Geoff, has pretty much turned some of the garden into a building site. We have had two water features which we purchased several years ago buried in the shed but they are now being installed as, having just fully retired and now not being unable to go out and about, he has time to install them. So, there's always a positive to every negative.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the newsletter and hope you enjoy reading it. I'm particularly looking forward to seeing the answers to last month's quiz – I'm not very good at cryptic questions but when I see the answers, it then seems so obvious I can't understand why I found it difficult, very frustrating.
Take care and my very best wishes to you all. Stay in touch.

Shirley Macro

U3A BRIDGE

During these challenging times, some of us are playing bridge on line. It's good fun and it keeps us on our toes.

Sometimes we play as a pair and join up with others, sometimes they are very good and from all over the world, but recently 4 of us played together and this has become a regular, early evening session.

If you have yet to play on line, I recommend www.bridgeclublive.com/ – we have paid a subscription of £25 for 3 months (as it can be difficult to get a table), here you can play together as a pair and then take on all comers.

If you prefer playing as a 4, try www.bridgebase.com/ this is FREE. Here you can reserve seats for your friends, you will still be playing against others in the sense that you know how you have scored against an unseen group playing on the same site.

There is also the opportunity to follow Bernard Magee, who is giving seminars. This is excellent and free, go to www.youtube.com/channel/UC1g-0QEEjjYEZ6fiYg-VDUw

Any queries or technical advice, please contact Jean Healey, and she will endeavour to help you.

Gill Stone

Visit to V & A May 20th

Sadly, with so much else, this trip will not take place but I hope to re-schedule it for a date in October if it is possible. In the meantime all cheques have been safely paid in to the Treasurer and I will re-open this booking with an option to everyone to reapply to join it.

In the meantime there is so much streaming from all the big institutions to look at and listen to wonderful things. I am in danger of getting square eyes coping with it all.

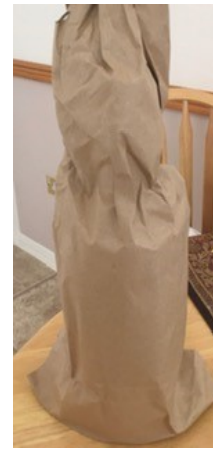
Keep well and safe until we meet again.

Sheila Epps

WINE GROUP 3

On a monthly basis at our meeting one member produces a surprise bottle suitably covered for people to guess! Normally of course it can be tasted.

In March having had to cancel our meeting a photo of a covered bottle was sent to all members for them to guess what it was. It took about 20 minutes to get the correct answer - causing much hilarity!



I attach the photo and if any member wants to have a guess please email me with an answer.

There is no prize but the correct answer will be given in next month's newsletter!!

Keep safe and well.

Mary
Wine Group 3 Coordinator.

VIRTUAL KEEP FIT SESSION on a TUESDAY MORNING

Sammy, our Tuesday Keep Fit leader from St Peters held in the old chapel is running a virtual Keep Fit session on Tuesday morning by using "Zoom".

A laptop/PC/ipad or iphone with a camera and microphone are required, the session will start at 10:00 am and last for no more than 40 minutes and cost £3.50.

If you would be interested in joining in then please contact Mrs Sam Birch, for further details on the type of exercises and how to join in using "Zoom". She is more than happy for anyone to join in.

Active Essex has compiled some ideas and videos on how you can keep active when you're at home, if you are well enough.
www.activeessex.org/keep-essex-active/
Staying active is really important for mental health and wellbeing.

TO MAKE US SMILE *sent in by Jean Cuthbert*

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s -
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full
But to bury us before we're dead
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside
For 4 weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me
I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no bloody flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this bloody virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates!

Anon

(Sorry not to find the author, but thanks for making us smile)

Visit to Lake Nasser in Egypt and to see the resituated artifacts after the flooding.

By Sue Robinson Egyptology

The Aswan High Dam was a mega-project launched by the Egyptian government to construct a massive dam on the Nile river to generate hydroelectric power and to reduce the frequency and strength of the floods downstream of the river.

Our trip to Lake Nasser started at Aswan, capital city of the southernmost governorate of Egypt, on the east bank of the Nile.
The surroundings of Aswan, including the island of Elephantine were called Jebu - " Elephant Land", in ancient times because this is where the Egyptians first saw elephants, another idea is that the dark smooth river rocks look like a herd of partially submerged elephants.
Jebu was of strategic importance to the Egyptians since it controlled the Nile Cataracts & river flowing between Egypt and Nubia. It was also the starting point of the major caravan routes to Nubia - famous for its goldmines- source of Pharonic gold, into Sudan, known at that time as the land of Kush.

Welcome to Aswan - city of the hottest Summers and mildest climate in Autumn, Winter and Spring- beloved of the Brits during their colonial period. It was popular as a spa centre and a haunt of Agatha Christie, who it is said was inspired to write " Death on The Nile" whilst staying at the Cataract Hotel overlooking Elephantine Island. She had a special table on the Cataract Terrace - we occasionally have lunch there, imagining.....

Three miles upriver, south of Aswan, the first dam was built between 1898 and 1912, designed by a British engineer Sir William Willcocks, only a few decades later its regulatory effect on the Nile was less than adequate.

President Nasser supported a joint proposal in which UK, USA and the World Bank promised him financial support for the project. In July 1956 both nations cancelled the offer after learning of a secret Egyptian arms agreement with the USSR. In response, Nasser nationalized the British and French-owned Suez Canal, intending to use tolls to pay for his High Dam project. This act precipitated the Suez Canal Crisis, in which Israel, Britain, and France attacked Egypt in a joint military operation. After the backers pulled out Nasser sought a new partner - the Soviet Union gave Egypt aid with credit, 2,000 engineers and technical workers and in May 1964 the Aswan High Dam (Sadd-el-Ali) was opened. It is said that 35,000 workers and engineers participated in its overall construction.

The downside was the rising flood which covered 35 Nubian towns and villages, requiring resettlement of 60,000 people including Sudanese, as well as one of the most remarkable international rescue programmes for the preservation of ancient monuments- (I have the video).

Numerous monuments were removed from their original locations and were rebuilt alongside what is now Lake Nasser.

> Its surface area is 2,025 square miles, its breadth is 22 miles.
> One third of the Lake lies within the territory of Sudan.
> It is one of the largest man-made lakes on the planet and can be seen from space.
> Egypt receives 55.5 billion cubic metres of water, Sudan 18.5, six billion cubic metres of water evaporates annually - Whew!!

Our aim was to visit the resituated sites - Kalabsha, Valley of the Lions, Amanda and Wadi-al Sebua, each ticket representing three temples. All very individual, each touched in some way by the great Pharaoh Ramses the Second, who during his sixty-seven-year reign commissioned half the temple complexes still preserved and visited today.

Details of the sites visited in next month's newsletter.

Answers to last month's Maritime Quiz

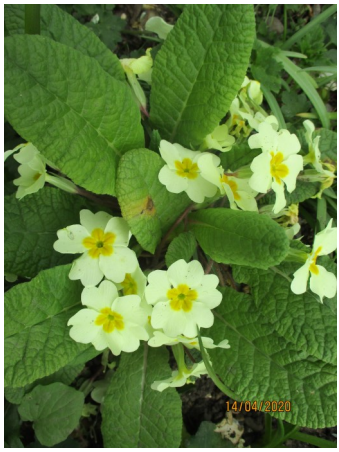
by Gordon Davies

1. John, Susan, Titty, Roger and Bridget, the children in Arthur Ransome's 'Secret Water' refer to cows as buffalo. Titty's kitten was called Sinbad.
2. Eric Arthur Blair, author of 'The Road to Wigan Pier', wrote under his pen name of George Orwell, taking the name from the River Orwell.
3. Paul Gallico, sports writer on the New York Daily News. Sparred with Jack Dempsey to see what it would be like. The story is 'The Snow Goose'.
4. Sarah Perry's novel "The Essex Serpent". Cider made with pears is perry.
5. Peter Grimes is best known through Britten's opera, but the story came from George Crabbe's poem 'The Borough'. Ellen Orford is a key character in the story.
6. Daniel Defoe wrote 'A journal of the plague year'. In 'A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain, divided into circuits or journies' he writes about the two many-married men on Candy (Canvey) Island, the result of the Essex ague.
7. Joseph Conrad (author of 'The Secret Agent' and 'Lord Jim') lived in Lowestoft at the same time as Edward Fitzgerald, translator of 'The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam'. Gulliver is the name of the prominent wind turbine by the harbour.
8. Dame Nellie Melba made the first live broadcast of a singer using the magic of radio, June 1920, from the Marconi station in Chelmsford.
9. Fred Hoyle held the Plumian Chair of Astronomy at Cambridge University. (He coined the phrase Big Bang, but did not believe in that theory.)
10. Lord Rayleigh. He was awarded a Nobel Laureate for the discovery of argon, but he also made many important advances in physics (including the physics of why the sky is blue). Milk from the Rayleigh estate went daily from Hatfield Peverel to London; a commercial success that saved the estate.
11. The Deben. John Selwyn Gummer was Minister for Agriculture in the 'Mad Cow' episode. He fed a burger to his four year old daughter to show how safe beef was. Gummer is now Lord Deben.
12. In 1967, Roy Bates, from Westcliff-on-Sea, declared the redundant Roughs Tower, a Second World War gun fort off Harwich, to be the Principality of Sealand. The attack in 1978 resulted in the Bates' son being held prisoner. The fort lay outside UK jurisdiction, hence the diplomatic problem.
13. Yes, the clues are worthy of a big groan. The Isle of Thanet was an island into the middle ages, with the major port of Sandwich behind it. The island was separated from the mainland to the west by the Wantsum Channel, and the coast is well marked today by the two towers of Reculver Abbey (known as the Two Sisters).

14. In 1659 there was a major fire in Southwold. Tally Ho!, Wild Hop and Blackshore are the names of some of the beers brewed there today by Adnams.
15. Orford castle was built in 1165 to defend the then important port at Orford. A considerable amount of top-secret military research has been carried out on the Ness, including development work for the first British nuclear bomb, the Blue Danube. Some of the buildings had an open roof structure, familiarly known as the Pagodas, in case the conventional explosive in the bombs detonated.
16. Lowestoft used to be famous for its herring boats, historically known as 'herring busses', and in the mid-20th century a major employer was a bus and coach builder.
17. Byrhtnoth. When he had been killed in the Battle of Maldon, Godric fled on Byrhtnoth's horse.
18. Dunwich. May have been the capital of the Saxon Kingdom of East Anglia. Now a victim of coastal erosion.
19. Orford Ness (Ness = nose) Lighthouse, now disused and about to be demolished before it falls into the sea.
20. Osea Island was used as a place to "dry out". The local fishermen hid alcohol near the beach for the patients.
21. The Dutch Admiral de Ruyter sailed from the Scheldt to the River Medway, where a chain had been strung across the river in an attempt to block it.
22. Mersea Island. The hymn 'Onward Christian Soldiers' was written at East Mersea. The fort was at Mersea (Stone) Point, at the east end of the island, overlooking the Colne, and the besieged town was Colchester, which claims to be the oldest town in England.
23. RAF Bawdsey. The remains of the Martello tower are in the gardens of Bawdsey Manor. A chained dog was the emblem of the Radar Research Group which worked in the Manor. In the 1970s, the base was a site for anti-aircraft Bloodhound missiles.
24. Osea island. Early motor torpedo boats were based there. A boat dropped its torpedo over its stern and then swerved out of its path.
25. Sadds of Maldon were general woodworkers. Companies like them (as well as boatbuilders) assembled kits to make naval vessels in the Second World War.
26. King John besieged Rochester Castle in 1216, starting by burning the bridge over the Medway.

SOME SPRING FLOWERS

This very strange spring has been brightened by several spring flowers blooming earlier or in greater abundance than is usual.



One such is **Primrose**, which forms low-growing clumps. Our native primrose (Primula vulgaris) is a very pale yellow, but breeders have developed coloured ones for the garden. There is a single flower on each stalk, which grows directly from the rosette of crinkly leaves at the bottom. The five petals are fused for about half their length forming a tube. Native Cowslips (P. veris) and Oxlips (P. elatior) which have several flowers at the end of each stalk, have been bred to produce bright coloured and multiflowered Polyanthus. All of these are hardy and help to start our flowering season in the garden.

Did you know that there are two forms of Primrose flower? The **Pin-eyed** has one female stigma on which the pollen grain lands, higher than the end of the tube and it looks like a yellow blob, but in the other type, called **Thrum-eyed**, the stigma is way down the tube and the male stamens stick up instead, making it look fluffy.

Bluebells

The wild English Bluebell (botanical name Endymion non-scriptus) is usually carpeting our woodlands in May, but this year they are much earlier. These bluebells are sometimes almost more violet than blue. They have between 4 – 7 flowers along one side only of a thin bent stalk, so that the bells hang down, and the fused petals turn up at the edges. There is a native bluebell in Scotland which is quite different and we call it Harebell.

Unfortunately, over the years, the tough Spanish Bluebell has been introduced into gardens. These have flowers all-round the stalk, which is dead straight and much thicker than the native one. The flowers are paler blue as well, and the petals do not curl. Over the years, these sturdy bluebells have become invasive and can hybridise, so although looking very pretty in their own right, we should be careful to eradicate this alien species to keep our native species pure.

Spanish Bluebell **Native Species**

Did you know that England has more than half of the world's bluebells, and that there are so many growing in Essex woodlands that it was voted the county flower.

Veronica Smith

POETRY GROUP

I have been in touch with everyone in our Poetry Group, either by phone or email. and most are enjoying Radio Four's poems that have been broadcast most days just before nine.
The Darkling Thrush by Thomas Hardy, being one of my favourites. www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44325/the-darkling-thrush

I do love this time of the year and I am feeling so lucky to live on the edge of where so much is going on with Spring bursting with life. I have Robins nesting right next to my french windows. Blackbirds at the bottom of the garden, just forty feet away, and Blue Tits in a box on the garage wall. A hedgehog calls each night from where it wintered underneath next door's shed but I have never seen it although it leaves messages across the lawn. I am going to walk up to the lakes, about two hundred yards past the houses to see if I can hear if we have Cuckoos yet. One of my daughters heard one yesterday, and the other one told me she saw the first Swallow, which surely means Spring is really here.

Jo Robson

HUGLESS

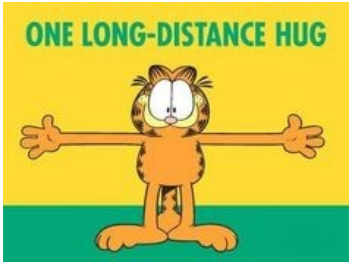
I live alone, I am 85 and am therefore deemed "vulnerable". I have been on my own for many years and am used to dealing with whatever life has thrown at me so this is a new experience. My family are 5,000 miles away and generally leave me to my own devices.

However, my lovely next-door neighbours have adopted me as a kind of Rent-a-Granny and since the current crisis began I haven't been near a shop. My newspaper appears on my doorstep every morning, together with milk and any other sundries required. Once a week they take my shopping list and credit card to Aldi and they bring everything I need – and because it is only what I need and not what I think looks interesting and I might just try for a change (and because I'm only cooking for myself too), my bills are considerably lower! What's not to like?

I started out with lots of good intentions and plans for sorting out paperwork, spring cleaning a room each week, reading several improving books. But hey, I'm "vulnerable", so I mustn't overdo it! To be frank, I've completely lost all motivation to do anything useful. I spend a huge amount of time on the phone - not good at social media (I can't even find my way round YouTube), but I can manage emails and WhatsApp and I do keep in touch with people. And I go for my prescribed walk every day, trudging round the streets of Danbury, enjoying other people's gardens and getting fitter by the day. What took me 40 minutes on the first day now takes about 20!!!

I guess this is going to go on for quite a while and watching repeats and old movies on TV may pall after a few months. But there is light at the end of the tunnel and there will be meetings of the U3A with real people. And then maybe someone will give me a hug, because what I crave now more than anything else is a proper HUG!.

dd



IN PRAISE OF JAKOB *the auto steering on my yacht*

Boat owners tend to be strange people. They have little superstitions (that they never admit), and they even have emotional relationships with things land-lubbers say are inanimate, such as the electronic gizmos on their boats.

Like most couples, Alison and I always sail as a threesome. Our first assistant was a very old, world-weary character we called Jim. Jim gave us a lot of help in our first years of sailing, but eventually old age caught up with him. One night, in the middle of the North Sea, he had some sort of seizure and gybed the boat. The mainsheet threw Alison across the cockpit. Fortunately she was not seriously hurt, but it was the end of the road for Jim. As soon as we reached the Netherlands he was thrown off the boat.

Jim was succeeded by a much more polished, smarter individual, who knew how to do all sorts of things. This was no Jim, more a James. James could steer well, and we got on with him fine, but we never came into a close relationship with him. When we sold the boat we let him go too.

Jakob entered our lives when we bought our current boat in Germany. He lives somewhere under the cockpit, but like all good servants he is ready to do our will at the touch of a button. Jakob is a phenomenon at the helm. He is utterly accurate and tireless. Tell him to steer 265 degrees and you get 265 degrees, for ever. We have learned to have total confidence in his steering and will leave him in charge when both of us have to do a job on the foredeck. But his obsession with precise steering comes at a price. Jakob is so totally focussed on his compass that he simply does not recognise the existence of tidal streams or waves. We have tried to show him how to steer to the wind but it seems to be beyond us to teach him. Jakob's dedication to steering is combined with enormous strength. No matter what the crisis, it is impossible to grab the tiller from him. Until he is told to rest, he just responds quietly, determinedly, and with increasing strength to maintain the course he has been given. He has a total lack of fear. He happily ignores shoal water. He is unfazed by container ships, or by large steel buoys, and is even happy to try to sail between waypoints regardless of any obstacles, like dry land, along the path. But Jakob does have a weak spot. Once we passed over a power cable in Lübecker Bucht, in 24 metres of water, and Jakob turned us through ninety degrees. He evidently disliked it intensely. We hoped that it was a sign that he was starting to be more aware of his surroundings, but it's the only time that we have had a reaction like that from him. Maybe we need to talk to him in German?

Gordon Davies

ASTRONOMY INFORMATION

Venus - Just after the sun sets, the first thing you can see now is Venus, which is very bright in the south west. It's so bright you can see it even while the sky's still blue. As the sky darkens, Venus gets even brighter to the point where some people can't believe that it is not a UFO, because it is so much brighter than anything we are used to. The reason why it is so bright is that Venus is just catching up with us. It orbits the sun more closely than we do and so it catches up and overtakes us on the inside and that means it is getting closer to the Earth day by day. If you look at it with powerful binoculars or a small telescope you can see that it looks like a roughly half phase moon rather than just a single point of light. We can see that detail because it is that near and quite large now.

The Plough - Look to the north northwest where you will find the most popular constellation of all, the Plough or the Big Dipper, or The Saucepan. If you follow along the handle of The Saucepan there are three stars making up the handle, you will see that the middle one is a double star, you can tell that even with the naked eye. These stars are called Mizar and Alcor and if you have binoculars you will see them even better, they really are a pair orbiting around each other. But it takes them about 400,000 years to do an orbit because they are quite a long way apart.

The North Star - Go to the bowl of the Big Dipper, the far end of it - use those as pointers to find the Pole Star or North Star. Sweep left from the two stars at the far end of The Saucepan, sweep across the sky and find your way due north to the Pole Star, about halfway between the ground and directly overhead. It is a lowly modest star on its own and that's the Pole Star. It is called that because if you stood at the North Pole and looked up it would be directly above your head. Around 5,000 years ago the earth's axis was pointing at a star called Vega instead. That was the Pole Star then which was about the time the pyramids were being built so the pyramids are all aligned with where the stars were 5,000 year ago, not as they are now. It has all moved over 5,000 years, which confused people for a long time.

The Moon - The Moon can be looked at with the naked eye but with binoculars you can see the craters and the seas of the Moon, which are just giant impact craters, but they look dark. The dark bits that you see on the Moon are very old and the light bits are very new and that's because the solar wind from the sun gradually makes everything go darker and darker. The older it is, the darker it is. The light bits are where there has been a new impact of a space rock which crashed into the moon and turfed up fresh material from underneath. You can see how from night to night the phases change. As for supermoons, we wish that term had never been invented because there is only about 11 percent difference in size so you can't tell.

Malcolm Case

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

The meeting for 7th April to view the DVD of 'Mrs Lowry and Son' was sadly cancelled by 'you know what'. However we will of course attempt to reschedule the showing, probably at WMCC as and when 'you know what' has passed and 'you know who' allows us to gather once more! Nearly 20 had already applied to attend, so watch this space.

Andy in a queue for the chemist, reading Pam Ayres!

Stay safe
Andy

SOCIAL ORGANISING GROUP

The Barbecue at Langford Village Hall, planned for **2nd July** has now unfortunately been cancelled due to the current circumstances.

Mike Childs

Deaf Awareness Week 4 to 10 May

A reminder to include our members with hearing loss. The latest U3A TAM magazine reminds us to make sure we recognise that even with hearing aids it can sometimes be difficult to follow the conversation in groups when everyone speaks at once! It can also be an issue on the phone.

RIVER QUIZ

By Malcolm Case

answers next month

Which of these is the world's longest river?	*The Yangtze* *The Amazon* *The Nile* *The Mekong*
Which of these is the world's widest river?	*The Yangtze* *The Amazon* *The Nile* *The Congo*
Where would you find the Irrawaddy River?	*Cambodia* *Myanmar (Burma)* *Laos* *Bhutan*
How long is the River Nile?	*6,650km* *7,286km* *4,485km* *5,539km*
In which African country would you meet the tribes who live alongside the Omo River?	*Ethiopia* *Tanzania* *Kenya* *Botswana*
The Tigris River runs through which three countries?	*Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon* *Libya, Egypt and Algeria* *Iraq, Turkey and Syria* *Syria, Lebanon and Israel*
Australia's longest river shares a name with a famous tennis player. Name that player…	*The Murray, shared with Andy Murray* *The Seles, shared with Monica Seles* *The Ashe, shared with Arthur Ashe* *The Nadal, shared with Rafael Nadal*
The USA's Mississippi River runs through or borders 10 of the country's 50 states. Which of these states is NOT on that list?	*Tennessee* *Missouri* *Louisiana* *Georgia*
27 rivers flow into Lake Titicaca, but only one flows out from it. Can you name that river?	*The Vilcanota, Peru* *The Amazon* *The Desaguadero, Bolivia* *Nice try! The question contains a fib*

Which of these is Europe's longest river?	*The Volga* *The Danube* *The Seine* *The Elbe*
How many European countries does the Danube run through?	*6* *7* *9* *10*
Where does the Dnieper River run through?	*Hungary, Serbia and North Macedonia* *Russia, Ukraine and Belarus* *Ukraine, Moldova and Romania* *Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus*
Which of these is the UK's longest river?	*The Thames* *The Mersey* *The Trent* *The Severn*
Several countries in the world have no rivers. Which of these countries DOES have a river?	*Malta* *Bahrain* *Vatican City* *Morocco*

STROLLERS

This morning, Wednesday 22 April, I took my usual daily stroll in Elm's Farm Park, Heybridge. I like to go early to miss the dog walkers/ joggers etc. Today it was exceptionally glorious, the sun was shining, the sky was a clear blue, it was warmer and as it was low tide, there were many waders about, plus a cuckoo was in full flow. My route took me beside the golf course and up to Beeleigh Falls, the route that the Tuesday group did just before the shutdown, and reminded me of them all. I'm hoping that you are all managing to get out and walk on a regular basis. We are so fortunate to live in such a beautiful area!

Keep well, keep safe, keep fit.
More reports from fellow Strollers next month.

Gill Stone. Strollers Co-ordinator

Your Committee	
Chairman	Shirley Macro
Vice Chairman	Malcolm Case
Secretary	Judith Johnston
Treasurer	Graham Webster
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Newsletter Editor	Liz Samson
Committee	Andrew Simmonds Alec Fraser Jan Robertson
Web Master	Tony Groves
Social Group	Michael Childs
AV Equipment	Mike Flack
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Resource Centre: email: resource.centre@u3a.org.uk

Deadline for next newsletter: to be advised, just send contributions

CO-ORDINATORS

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
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—Stuarts	Beryl McDonell
Just Jazz	Jim Light David Coombes
Local History	Sylvia Cousins Jane Coombes Kathleen Goff
London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Joyce Cotterell
Luncheon Groups 3rd Wed.	Paul Costa
Meet & Eat 2nd Wed	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	Colin Beckett
Rummikub 2	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
Weekenders	Beryl McDonell
Wine Circle No. 2	Graham Boswell
Wine Circle No. 3	Mary Burd Paul Costa
Wine Circle No. 4	Ann Goody
Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

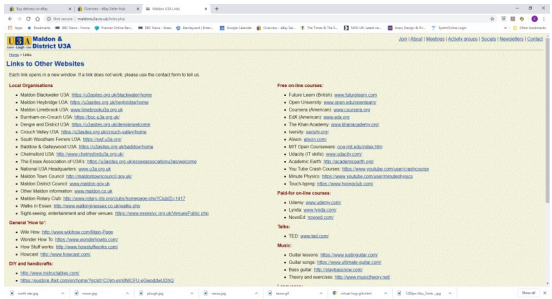
Some useful contacts

U3A newsletter express **www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter**

www.u3a.org.uk/

Latest U3A News

The "Links" page on our website has links to lots of platforms which offer free on-line courses on a huge variety of topics. Many are short non-academic courses. **www.maldonu3a.co.uk/links.php**



The **National Maritime Museum** and the **Imperial War Museum** are both running, free of charge, virtual tours and information. To access them, just google either or both and follow the directions.
www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum
www.iwm.org.uk/

The Silver Line

The Silver Line is the only free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
0800 4 70 80 90 **www.thesilverline.org.uk**

From the Editor

Many thanks for all the contributions for this newsletter. I have saved some articles over for next month, but please keep them coming.
I am pleased to hear from you with any suggestions, articles, useful tips.

Liz Samson