Learn, Laugh, Live

# MALDON AND DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

**Geese and Swans -Spotted at Heybridge**
**by Andy Simmonds Bird Watcher**

**Virtual AGM on**
**Monday, 21st September 2020, at 2pm**

August 2020

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

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

## *FROM THE CHAIR*

Hello,

Here we are again, and another month has flown past. As always, I hope you all are keeping well and have been able to get out and about a bit more. I have heard from some of the groups who have managed to get together, albeit in a limited way. Unfortunately, I don't think there will be any significant changes for some time yet.

Last month I made mention of our AGM, which should have taken place in June. However, as we were unable to hold a meeting then and this is still not a viable proposition, the Committee have decided to go ahead with a virtual AGM, using Zoom. Both Malcolm Case and I have attended a virtual training session presented by The Trust and, following discussion with the rest of the Committee, it was felt we could go ahead with holding our AGM in September. You will find in the newsletter the AGM Official Notice, giving the date and time. This will shortly be followed by all the other relevant information. One item which may be of interest is the question of membership. Due to the current situation, your committee have agreed that our current Membership Year will continue until the 31st August 2021 with the next Membership renewals being due by no later than the 1st September 2021.

There has recently been some relaxation of the restrictions around the opening of halls and civic centres. From information I have seen, the individual halls are putting in place their own preventive measures and it might be that these are too restrictive with regard to numbers allowed in at any one time for some of the larger groups to start meeting up again. It can also put a lot of pressure and responsibility on those that run groups and, of course, not everyone is yet feeling ready to meet others in an enclosed environment. Holding meetings in homes is off for the time being, until this restriction is lifted.

Sorry this isn't a jollier message; I'll try to do better next time. One positive thing I can say is well done and thank you for keeping Maldon & District U3A going.

Shirley Macro

*Below is the Official Notice advising that we will be holding a*
***virtual AGM on Monday, 21st September 2020, at 2pm.***

*Voting forms will be available on our website, www.maldonu3a.co.uk from the 28th August.*
*You will receive all supporting documentation by email or post by 1st September 2020. Voting forms will also be included in the documentation circulated but it would be greatly appreciated if your votes were sent using our website to simplify collating the results.*
*We look forward to receiving your votes, whichever method you choose to use.*
*Thank you. Shirley Macro*

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the twenty second Annual General Meeting of Maldon & District U3A will be held on **Monday 21st September 2020 at 2:00 pm** by using virtual, digital, telephone and postal means (Virtual means using Zoom, digital means using email, for those members without computers, then post and/or telephone will be used).

Any items that you wish to be included on the Agenda must be notified to the Business Secretary by no later than Thursday 28th August 2020.

The decision to go ahead with the AGM has been taken, following Charity Commission guidelines, to allow us to complete the Annual Return on time and ensure that our U3A is ready to go ahead with all activities as soon as we are able to do so.

A voting form will be sent to all members by September 1st together with all supporting documentation. The form is also available on our website www.maldonu3a.co.uk . **The voting form MUST be returned to the address shown on the form by NO LATER than the 7th September 2020**. On this form you will be asked if you will be attending the AGM by Zoom.

Members without email can vote by phone if necessary, however voting online or by post is preferable as votes received can then be stored in case of future scrutiny.

Eligibility for Office and to vote – All fully paid-up members for the year 2020/2021 are eligible to stand for Committee, and to vote; except under the terms of our Constitution, where only one member from any one household shall serve on the Committee at one time.

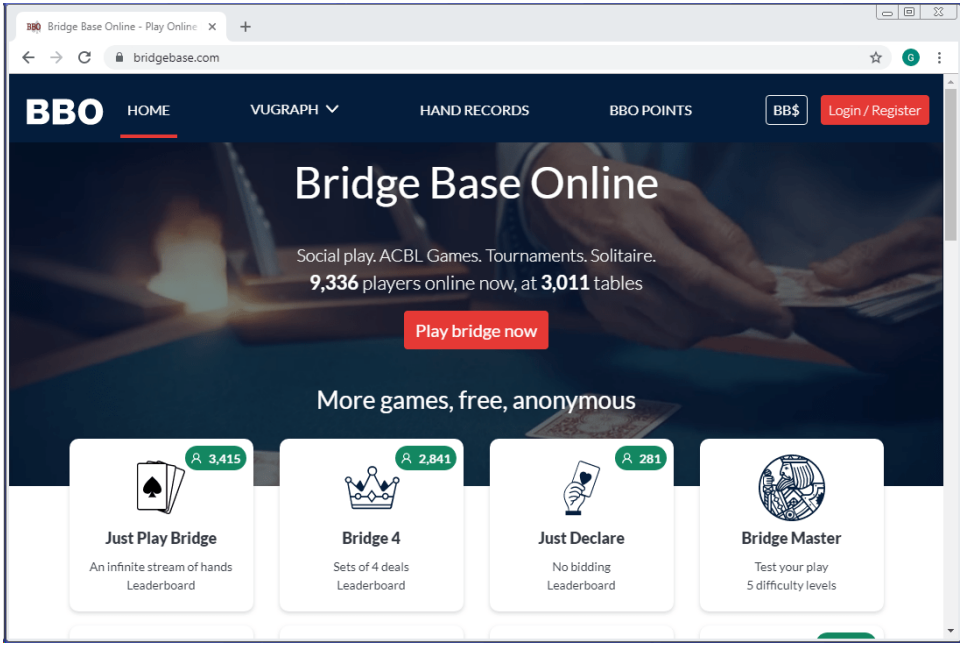
Judith Johnston
Business Secretary

## BRIDGE GROUP

As far as I recall, we've been playing online since somewhere around mid-April. **Bridgebase** has provided us with the vehicle, and we've taken the ride. We're still journeying, and likely to be doing so for some time unless ''social distancing'' eases sufficiently for us to return to playing face-to-face. The online contests that we have enjoyed have allowed about ten of our strength to play regularly, thanks to the administrative and technical skills of Jean Healey, our indefatigable online organiser. Apart from a few initial teething problems, we seem to have all mastered the technology, to the extent that most of us can now simply concentrate on our game, rather than having to think also about whether we're doing things right or wrong in other respects.

It appears that our Bridge skills are benefitting from more frequent play. At first that seemed somewhat counter intuitive as we weren't playing ''for real''. But on reflection, it isn't at all. Our online games are every bit as competitive as those we enjoyed when we could play face-to-face. In fact, it could be argued that playing online is harder than face-to-face, as there are none of the usual tics and tells that we all make unconsciously when playing ''live'', and that can - if picked up on - give a small but perhaps crucial insight into a partner's or opponent's thinking. To begin with, it seemed as though a particular partnership would romp away with our matches - two very seasoned players amongst a sea of mere mortals. However, after a little judicious juggling by Jean, the partnerships now seem to be more balanced, and all of us have been able to experience the joy of a win.

In common with other card games, Bridge has a high degree of luck attaching to it. That said, the skill of the game is making the most of the cards one has been dealt: knowing bidding conventions, understanding your partner's and opponents' bidding, then - after the auction - playing the cards as effectively as possible to try to achieve your contract, or defend against your opponents' contract. Online play can be enhanced from being a simple mechanical process by observing a few of the niceties common in ''live'' play. Our group has graduated from the stage of having been complete online novices (mostly) to now being relaxed enough with the technology to even manage a little light banter now and again as we play. If we find that our matches are insufficient for our needs, we can always play the computer: as it is US based, the conventions it follows seem a bit different to ours, but can be picked up with relative ease.




If this article inspires you to try your hand at Bridge, or pick up where you left off some time ago, we would be delighted to see you once we're back at West Maldon Community Centre on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 1:30. Although ours is an established group, we welcome players of all skill levels from beginners upwards. Equally, if you are missing Bridge to the same extent, we all were, feel free to join us online. It's not at all threatening in any way shape or form. You don't need high level technical skills to get to grips with it, and bear in mind: if I can do it, you can!

To become involved, in the first instance please email Sheila. That will get you through to Sheila Epps our group coordinator, who will be pleased to help you.

Pete Hughes

**SEAFARERS CENTRE TILBURY**
**CHRISTMAS APPEAL**

The Centre are asking for donations for Seafarers for Christmas this year. They are asking for knitted hats, gloves, scarves, socks and jerseys, any size any colour, also toiletries suitable for male and female and for sweets which must have a long use by date.

The centre will make up parcels for the seafarers and distribute them during December.

If you are able to help, then please let me know and I will arrange to collect any items from you.
On behalf of the Centre and seafarers, thank you.

Malcolm Case.

## How well do you know the United Kingdom?

**Answers to the quiz –**

1. Baran
2. Cairngorms, Scotland
3. Thomas Hardy
4. Tiddlyfoot
5. The Ceremony of the Keys
6. No one actually lives there
7. King Arthur
8. Glasgow
9. 874
10. 58

## MARITIME - RNLI 5p & 20p Collection Pots!

Hi Everyone,

Although not much cash is being used currently I have just forwarded a cheque for £29.40 to the local RNLI branch from the pots Malcolm and I have received. To date we have raised £129.10 - a great amount from small pots!!!

If you have any that need collecting please let Malcolm or myself know and we can arrange to pick them up.

I will have pots available at my Macmillan coffee morning on **25th September!!**

Stay safe and keep collecting!!

Mary Burd

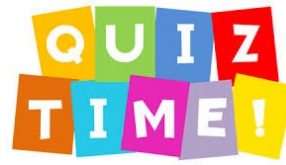
## COVID –19 SCAM WARNING

There is now a link from our website for **COVID-19 Scam warning.**

The information in this is supplied by Essex Police and is currently shown on Essex Association of U3A's website (Tony has put a link in for us).

A member of the Association committee Barry Linton is associated with the Police cyber and scam warning team.

## How well do you know England's Counties?




***from Malcolm Case***

**1. Of England's 48 ceremonial counties, how many do you think are 'shires'?**

14
19
25
34

**2. In which county would you find the picturesque village of Clovelly?**

Cornwall
Devon
Dorset
Hampshire

**3. England's smallest county is technically City of London. But do you know the smallest historic county?**

Wiltshire
Tyne & Wear
Berkshire
Rutland

**4. Which English counties share a border with Scotland?**

Northumberland and Cumbria
Cumbria and Tyne & Wear
Northumberland and Tyne & Wear
Northumberland and East Riding of Yorkshire

**5. In which county would you find the city of Liverpool?**

Merseyside
South Yorkshire
Cheshire
Nottinghamshire

**6. In which county would you find the coastal town of Cromer?**

Cornwall
Essex
Norfolk
Kent

**7. Which of these English counties is NOT landlocked?**

Worcestershire
Lincolnshire
Staffordshire
Northamptonshire

**8. Which of these English counties does NOT share a border with Wales?**

Shropshire
Gloucestershire
West Midlands
Herefordshire

**9. The Peak District reaches into five counties. Which of the below ISN'T one of them?**

Derbyshire
Cheshire
Greater Manchester
Leicestershire

**10. How many counties called 'Sussex' are there?**

Just East
Just West
East and West
East, North and West

**11. In which county would you find the Cheviot Hills?**

Northumberland
Suffolk
North Yorkshire
Somerset

# BUYING A SMALL TELESCOPE

## a few tips to get you started

By the U3A Astronomy Subject Advisor

With an amateur telescope you cannot see big coloured images of stars, planets and the Moon like in books and on TV, but you will get the satisfaction of seeing things you have found in the night sky for yourself.

USING A TELESCOPE IN THE UK REQUIRES A LOT OF PATIENCE AS CLEAR DARK NIGHTS IN THE UK PER YEAR ARE LIMITED.

- Contact your local U3A Astronomy Group or local Astronomical Society for advice, and to see various telescopes. There are more than 200 Societies in the UK, so there is one near you.
- Do a lot of research: Internet, magazines, books.

A cheap 'toy' 'scope will be very frustrating. A quality small starter 'scope costs £50 to £150 from specialist dealers. If you can pay £300 or more, you will get something better.

A good starter telescope for children is this one:
https://www.firstlightoptics.com/heritage/skywatcher-heritage-76-mini-dobsonian.html

A good starter for anyone over 10 years of age is this one:
https://www.firstlightoptics.com/dobsonians/skywatcher-skyliner-150p-dobsonian.html

NEVER LOOK AT THE SUN WITH BINOCULARS OR A TELESCOPE - THIS WILL CAUSE INSTANT AND PERMANENT BLINDNESS

### Telescopes have 4 main parts, from the ground up they are :-

1. **Tripod.** Must be very steady. Cheap ones wobble a lot and make telescopes very difficult to operate.

2. **Mount.** This is the part between the tripod and the telescope tube. It must be strong enough to carry the weight of the telescope and be readily adjustable. Motorless mounts are common, but an "RA" motor (which compensates for the Earth turning) makes a big improvement. Without an RA motor everything you look at drifts quickly out of view, and constant manual adjustment is needed. A second "Dec" motor is needed if you want to take long exposure photos. A further choice is whether to have a "GoTo" computerised mount or not.

3. **Telescope.** The main designs are Reflector, Schmidt Cassegrain ("SCT") and Refractor. The Reflectors and SCTs are sized by the diameter of their main mirrors. Refractors are sized by the diameter of their objective lens – the bigger one at the front end. All designs have their advantages and disadvantages. Bigger mirrors/objectives gather more light allowing fainter objects to be seen. Smaller scopes are quick to set-up and so get used more. Big ones are heavy: For example, a 300mm SCT needs two people to carry the parts and assemble them in the field.

4. **Eyepieces**. Eyepieces determine the magnification. A basic set should include 6mm, 9mm, 15mm, and 32mm. Buy the best you can afford – the best are "Multicoated" and are made to high specifications from special glass. Good ones are expensive but are perhaps the most important part of a whole telescope assembly.

You can buy kits, which include all of the above, or you can buy all these parts separately, new or second hand.

Accessories include Star Charts, Planisphere, reference books, red dot finder, filters etc, etc. A useful book for starting observing with a small telescope is "Turn Left At Orion" by Br. Guy Consolmango and Dan M. Davis published by Cambridge University Press.

When you get a 'scope, practise assembling and using it in daylight, so you don't drop and lose bits in the dark at night! When operating at night wear very warm clothes and use a red head torch. Store the 'scope outside in a shed, where it will always stay at the ambient air temperature – taking it in and out of the house will cause condensation on the glass.

Further reading : "Buying your telescope" from www.fedastro.org.uk booklet.

## A very brief visit to The Egyptian Museum in Cairo

*Pictures taken by Sue Robinson*

The Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Egypt, is home to an extensive collection of ancient Egyptian antiquities. It has 120,000 items, many in storerooms. Built in 1901 by the Italian construction company Garozzo-Zaffarani to a design by the French architect Marcel Dourgnon, the edifice is one of the largest museums in the region.

In 2020 the museum is due to be superseded by the new Grand Egyptian Museum at Giza.

Described as the largest archaeological museum in the world, construction on the museum was set to be complete in the first quarter of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum is now scheduled to open in 2021. The museum plans to exhibit the full Tutankhamen collection with many pieces to be displayed for the first time. The museum is sited on 50 hectares (120 acres) of land approximately two kilometres from the Giza pyramids and is part of a new master plan for the plateau.

Statuettes of Tutankhamen, one of which was stolen in the Revolution 2011, found in a Cairo underground station in bits and fully restored. The alabaster vessel is a perfume jar.

A ceremonial shield bearing the name of Tutankhamen written in hieroglyphs.

Tut's bed (the images of the falcon god Horus at the head of the bed and legs represented in the form of lions' feet).

Tutankhamen's toy box with some remaining objects recovered from inside the box.

The Royal chair of Tutankhamen as a child.

A single glove and pair of sandals from Tutankhamen's Tomb.

Alabaster carved objects to accompany Tutankhamen to the afterlife.

## LOCAL HISTORY

Hello Everyone
We trust you are well and continue to enjoy the nice weather.
To date we have heard nothing from the Town Hall regarding meetings but we will continue to monitor the situation.
We hope you enjoyed the Quiz and found it useful revision!
Best Wishes
Kathy, Jane and Sylvia

### LOCAL HISTORY QUIZ 2020 ANSWERS

1. Edward Bright died weighing 44stone or 280Kilos.
2. There are two connections with Edward Bright and our U3A
    a. The bronze relief "Seven Men in the Waistcoat of Edward Bright" displayed on the wall in the Kings Head Centre in Maldon was created by the well-known sculptor Catharni Stern who was a member of our U3A until 2015.
    b. The Town Hall where we have our meetings was built over the site of Edward Bright's candle making shop. His house and grocery business was in the High Street at Nos 57 and 59.
3. Maldon's Borough Charter was granted in 1171 in the reign of Henry II.
4. An etched image of a shotgun can be found in the wall of the exercise yard of the former prison in the Moot Hall.
5. The tower of All Saints Church is triangular; the only one of its kind in the world.
6. Maldon Promenade Park was opened on 26th June 1895.
7. Prior to its move to St Peter's, Maldon Workhouse was at what is now the Hillside Apartments on Market Hill.
8. Local "Petrified Oaks" can be found on private land at the back of St. Mary's Church, Mundon.
9. The two unique semi-detached bungalows on Acacia Drive were originally classrooms from Langford Place.
10. The Battle of Maldon was on August 11th 991.

# Macmillan Coffee Morning September 2020

Once again I am planning to host my annual coffee morning. However this year because of social distancing I need to spread people coming to my garden and I am limiting each hour to 10 people!

**Friday 25 September** is the day and I am giving timed slots from 10am to 1pm!

If you think you would like to come along please contact me to arrange a convenient time to arrive!

Obviously everything is weather dependent on the day!!!

I hope some of you will feel able to join me to support this worthwhile charity.

Mary Burd

## CANCELLED V&A TRIP

I have refund cheques for the following people who signed up for the May 20th trip which I hope to run at some future date. (The original cheques were banked at the time).

Neil Butler, Valerie Bliss, Chris Robinson, Liz Samson, Ken James, Kathy Goff, Janice Rayment, Joyce Cotterell, Sylvia Cousins, Patricia Sheehy, Shirley Macro, Gay Liddle, Barbara Grimason, Velda Waddilove, Jenny Barclay, Gill and Cyril Bridle, Lesley and Alan Brown, Margaret Harker.

I would be grateful if you would contact me to collect your cheque at a convenient time. Maybe collect a friend's one too. I live in Maldon.

Sheila Epps

## A survey request from a PhD student

Following our Committee meeting, we agreed to include a survey request from a University of Hertfordshire PhD student in our Newsletter.

The survey is titled:
**A new online study on everyday memory in the general population.**

***If members wish to participate*** in the survey the details are below and there is a link on our website. **www.maldonu3a.co.uk/**

## A new online study on everyday memory in general population

**Invitation to take part in a survey about everyday memory errors across the life span**

Do you know how good is your memory in everyday life?

Can you tell us how often you forget to do things (e.g., make a phone call) or facts and episodes from your past?

- Do you know how good are people in other age groups, than yours, at these tasks?

Research team at the University of Hertfordshire (UK) invites you to take part in a new online survey that focuses on people's everyday memory errors and their knowledge and beliefs about the frequency of these errors in different age groups. The study can be completed from a laptop or mobile phone and takes about **30-40 minutes** to complete. **No identifiable information will be collected.**

**The link to the survey can be accessed by clicking on the link below:**
https://herts.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3eZn0v07OxIj2fP
This study has received ethical approval from the UH ethics committee. Protocol Number: **LMS/PGT/UH//04180**

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact the principal investigator below:
PhD Student Brigita Brazauskiene at b.brazauskiene@herts.ac.uk

*I picked up this timely email from the U3A Newsletter Express. Many will already have seen it, but if not it is worth a visit. (The Editor)*

## Extract from U3A Newsletter Express 5 08-07-20

## Guidance from the Trust

"We are looking at how the advice on meeting as U3A members changes day by day and across the four nations."

**YouTube question and answer session** for U3As with Jane Bailey, Advice and Volunteer manager for the Third Age Trust. This is based on the current government and NHS guidance as of 7 August 2020.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?

There is also a link on our website at www.maldonu3a.co.uk/

## Risk Assessments

"We are doing our best to keep you up to date with the latest Government and NHS Covid-19 guidance as it relates to U3A. We are sending this via a Newsletter Express so that it is widely available across the movement.

We are making this advice web-ready and it will go up early next week on the advice pages on the website behind the ***members' login***."

**Link below** to "the most recent guidance about restarting U3A activities in your region".

**Advice for Restarting Groups in England: 7 Aug 2020**

| 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<br>Alec Fraser |
| Web Master | Tony Groves |
| Social Group | Michael Childs |
| AV Equipment | Mike Flack |
| Essex Assoc. of U3A's Committee | Malcolm Case |

**NATIONAL OFFICE**
52 Lant Street, London, SE1 1RB

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

Website https://www.u3a.org.uk/

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<br>Graham Evans |
| Bird Watching | Peter Gaywood<br>Michael Bagshaw |
| Botany | Veronica Smith |
| Bridge | Sheila Epps |
| Canasta | Iris Slaney |
| Cribbage | Pat Clements |
| Croquet | Jean Healey<br>Shirley Macro |
| Discussion | Bryan Jones |
| Egyptology | Kathleen Goff<br>Sue Robinson |
| Family History | Alan Buck |
| French Conversation | Ann Lester |
| Geology | Enid Hall |
| Handicraft | Marian Manning |
| History—Stuarts | Beryl McDonell |
| Just Jazz | Jim Light<br>David Coombes |
| Local History | Sylvia Cousins<br>Jane Coombes<br>Kathleen Goff |
| London Theatre Outings | Rosemary Case<br>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<br>John Skuse |
| Petanque (Boules) | Jack Veash |
| Poetry | Jo Robson |
| Reading | Sheila Epps |
| Rummikub 1<br>Rummikub 2 | Colin Beckett<br>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<br>Wine Circle No. 3<br>Wine Circle No. 4 | Graham Boswell<br>Mary Burd<br>Paul Costa<br>Ann Goody |
| Writing for Fun | Patrick Forsyth |

*Some useful contacts*

Latest U3A News **www.u3a.org.uk/** **www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter**

## Spotting TV Licence scams

Be cautious about any emails from TV Licensing that ask you to update your personal or banking details. There are numerous reports of people receiving scams.

TV Licensing will only ask you to pay using the following options:

- By post using the address: **TV Licensing, PO Box 578, Darlington DL98 1AN**
- Online at **tvl.co.uk/75pay** or **tvl.co.uk/75apply**
- Over the phone on **0300 790 6151**

If you are contacted and asked to pay for your TV licence using a different phone number, a different website or by posting your details to a different address **you have been contacted by a scammer.**

TV Licensing have also been clear that they will not come to your doorstep to collect the licence fee if you are over 75, so anyone who claims to do so is also a scammer.

If you're unsure about anything, you can call TV Licensing on **0300 303 9695** to speak with someone who can help.

### 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 your contributions for this newsletter. I have appreciated the many and varied articles and enjoyed having first read. Please keep them coming. Any suggestions, articles, useful tips etc. most welcome.

Liz Samson