



Learn, Laugh, Live

MALDON AND DISTRICT

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September 2020

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

website: www.maldon3a.co.uk/

FROM THE CHAIR



Hello,
As always, I hope this finds you all fit and healthy.

Depending when you get round to reading your newsletter, the virtual AGM will either be about to happen or will have already taken place. I will let you know how it goes in next month's message. I was already quite nervous about standing on a stage with a room full of people had the AGM gone ahead as normal, but just looking into a computer camera seems even stranger. Anyway, never too old for a new experience, this is just not one I would ever have expected – equally though, I have no wish to skydive!

I trust you thoroughly enjoyed reading all the paperwork sent out recently, from which you will have noted that the membership subscription will carry over until 31st August 2021 and that the fee itself will remain at £20 for the 2021-22 period. This has been done to reflect the current situation whereby many of the groups have been unable to meet as they would normally do. This means that the membership period has been extended to sixteen months, in effect giving a £5 refund. I do really hope that come next renewal we will be back up and running, and that we can maintain our membership numbers.

Thank you to the co-ordinators who have been keeping me informed of their plans for resuming meetings or why this might not be possible now. However, all decisions made are dependant on the restrictions put in place by the Government and, as you know, these change as the circumstances change. Let's just enjoy ourselves as best we can for the time being.

Please keep the articles, stories, quizzes etc coming into Liz, and if you have been meeting, virtually or otherwise, please let us know.

Shirley Macro

WRITING FOR FUN

Lockdown result

As we head towards the end of the year, we are all doubtless looking back on a very different kind of year from what we expected and wanted. The “Writing for fun” group has been keeping in touch but like so many others unable to meet.

One member has certainly used some of this time constructively.

With more time on his hands in March, Patrick Forsyth set regular hours aside and got down to some writing. Having previously had two novels published (as well as travel books and other non-fiction) he created a new writing regime.

He says: “I quickly realised how much time I spent out and about at meetings and social events that the new circumstances now ruled out. Something constructive was called for to fill the time. I’d had ideas for a third novel gathering dust for a while. I got these ideas sorted out and settled down to what many writers call the BOSHOK stage (Bum on seat, hands on keyboard), which is in any case a solitary occupation. It kept me both busy and motivated. Now, I am delighted to say that a publisher welcomed this and my third novel ***A Rather Curious Crime*** is scheduled for publication early in November and will be available to one and all.”

Any member wanting to give it a go and get a copy should contact Patrick. The published price will be £8.99 - but just £7.99 *post free* to U3A members (or £6.00 if collected).

V&A REFUND CHEQUES

I have cheques for the following people:

Gill & Cyril Bridle, Joyce Cotterell, Ken James, Chris Robinson, Valerie Bliss, Jenny Barclay, Lesley and Alan Brown.

Please arrange to collect from me or send SAE to
Sheila Epps

WINE GROUP 3

This month we have a wine quiz produced by Bob Brooks, one of our group. All the answers begin with the same letter! We tried it at one of our Zoom sessions with mixed results! Answers next month.

1. British term for red Bordeaux wine.
2. What is the major white champagne grape.
3. Name two port producers of the Douro Valley.
4. Main wine of Tuscany.
5. New Zealand Marlborough area wine producer.
6. Name four black grape varieties.
7. Spain's traditional method sparkling wine.
8. Where is Otard brandy produced.
9. What is the name of the specially graded Riesling from the Rheingau region of Germany.
10. Name two wine regions of Chile.



Bonus question for our group members:

Name two white grape varieties not including Chardonnay.

Good luck – keep safe and drinking the wine!!

ART GROUP

I am hoping to reschedule our aborted meeting to view the 'Mrs Lowry And Son' DVD at West Maldon Community Centre, where the Jubilee Room can take a maximum of 15 socially distanced members, and the Covid-19 guidelines are applied.

(The Rule of 6 does not apply to us as we are an 'Educational Group').

One other Maldon U3A group of 13 has already met here recently, and another is starting up this week.

Please let me know if you want to attend a 'real' meeting, and I will arrange for a Tuesday afternoon in the near future, if there is enough interest.

Andy Simmonds

LOCAL HISTORY

Hello everyone. We trust you are well and enjoying cooler weather.

The Town Hall is now open for meetings but with a strict protocol. With social distancing of two metres numbers will be limited to only 30 people which is not viable long term. Places would need to be booked and would you be willing to pay extra- at least a £1?

The Hall would need to be ventilated and although heated in the winter months, inside doors might be left open. Hand sanitisers would be available on entry at the Front Door and everyone would leave by the Back Door.

In its current format, the Local History Group may have difficulty obtaining a speaker and technical help.

As the current Covid situation appears to be worsening, we are not proposing to meet on our usual 4th Monday until at least November, maybe later.

Please feel free to send comments to either me or Kathy, either by phone or e-mail so that we can assess the general feeling of the Group.

Meanwhile Keep Well and Stay Safe.

PS

Maldon Town Hall is waiting to hear if the Government's latest Covid Restrictions starting Monday September 14th 2020 will affect their current Protocol.

Sylvia

Kathy

THERE WAS A LITTLE SPIDER

When autumn appears, spiders start scuttling around the house again

Apparently, it is the male spider looking for a mate

I wonder why they can't do it on line like everybody else

After all, they did invent the web

Malcolm Case



REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

1. Am I correct in thinking that the hulk of Darwin's HMS Beagle is in a mud berth along the Essex coast in the Tollesbury direction? If so, any history as to how it got there etc? Where can one learn more?
2. Along the footpath NE of the Blackwater Sailing Club, before the Saltcote Sailing Club there are the remains of what I think is a WW2 high speed Coastal Water type vessel. I have walked that area since the early '60s and it was there then, virtually complete and am sure was even lived in at that time. Does anyone know of its history? It is all timber, carvel exterior skin most likely had three engines, there used to be three large holes in the transom for the exhausts, no torpedo deck cut outs and to me had the hallmarks of Vosper.

Any information to the editor please.

Bemused of Bicknacre



Swans near Beeleigh Falls - Andy Simmonds

PETANQUE



Regular members of the Petanque group have been meeting at the gravel pitch at the Promenade Park, Maldon, and have enjoyed several games in, mostly, lovely weather – a quick dash had to be made one afternoon. As seems to be the way nowadays, numbers must be limited, and all social distancing regulations need to be kept in mind. We only pick up our own balls and each team brings its own jack.

Despite this, it has been great to get back out and meet everyone and only hope we can continue to do so until the chilly weather sets in and the equipment is put back into store again.

If you would like to join the group, please contact me beforehand to check availability of spaces.

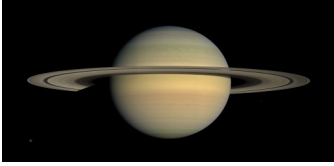
Jack Veash

Meetings in Community Halls

Graham Webster had an email from West Maldon Community Centre at the beginning of September about air conditioning, heating and face masks. It gives a good idea as to what can be expected when we are eventually able to meet in halls.

Website link www.westmaldoncommunitycentre.co.uk/coronavirus.

ASTRONOMY



Both Saturn and Jupiter are now visible to the South from about 8:00 pm until very late. They are both fairly close together and are moving towards the South West.

Both should be visible without using binoculars or a telescope but if you have either of these then use them to have a look at both planets. Hopefully you will see the rings on Saturn and possibly three or four of the moons around Jupiter.

Malcolm Case

Answers to the quiz –

How well do you know England's Counties?

from Malcolm Case

1. 25
2. Devon
3. Rutland
4. Northumberland and Cumbria
5. Merseyside
6. Norfolk
7. Lincolnshire
8. West Midlands
9. Leicestershire
10. East and West
11. Northumberland



WINE GROUP 4

I would like to report that Wine Group 4 is alive and kicking. We restarted our monthly meeting in July outside under two awnings. Everyone brought their own nibbles and their choice of wine to share. Each person introduced their favourite summer tippie. I have to say a fantastic evening with more wine than we usually have although taxis were booked. We did this as we had missed so many meetings; at least it gave everyone the chance to introduce their own wine.

For the August meeting, we assembled again this time in the Wakefield's garden with one of our pop-up awnings. Once we secured the awning (remember those storm force winds), we very nearly lost the awning altogether. We reverted to our usual format with the hosts providing their choice of wines and us all tasting and contributing. We were also spoilt with sausages and onions from the BBQ, a great evening.

For September our present plan is for our hosts to rent their village hall - shows just how determined we all are to have our wine evenings.

Hope everybody is keeping well and staying safe in these challenging times.

Cheers
Ann Goody



POETRY READING GROUP



Here is a sort of quiz I thought some might like to do to while away an hour or so, or who knows it might even catch your imagination and introduce you to what we do in the Poetry Group:

Q1 The current Poet Laureate wrote a series of poems that have been carved on rocks on a nature trail.

What is their theme, and what are they called?

Q2 This poem was adopted by Violetta Szabo GC as her code when she was a secret agent against the Germans in World War II.

What was the name of the poem and who wrote it?

Q3 Which famous poet sent his son to fight in the 1st World War.

What was his most famous poem?

Q4 This poet was killed just before the end of WWII. The last line of the poem is ...'Put out my hand and touched the face of God.'

Who was he and what was he?

Q5 Which of Shakespeare's plays is known for its being written in verse?

- Q6 Which Prime Minister's wife wrote poetry? and where did they spend their last years?
- Q7 Which poem about a dying bird was written by the author of 'The Mayor of Casterbridge' and 'Far from the Madding Crowd'
What is his name? and the name of the poem?
- Q8 It's a good thing these creatures can't talk, as it would change the shape of a Festive meal for some.
What are they, and who was the poet?
- Q9 First line - 'Let us not speak, for the love we bear one another - Let us hold hands and look'
What is the poem entitled and who wrote it?
- Q10 David Attenborough was not the first to warn us!
Who wrote this first line - 'I thought it would last my time'?
- Q11 A poem called 'One Art' mastered by most of us sooner or later!
Who wrote it?
- Q12 A modern poet who died in 1973 and lived in Valparaiso? An uplifting poem for anyone who has lost a dear one.

It would be rewarding if you can read all the poems concerned, and I hope you enjoy them.

Answers will follow, next month.

Jo Robson



GEOLOGY GROUP

Our latest venture as part of the Church Walls Survey, was to visit St Peter's Church at Goldhanger. Yet again, we were surprised at how different all these churches appear to be regarding the materials used in their constructions.

One wall at St Peter's was mainly constructed with ferricrete, which is a hard, erosion-resistant layer of sedimentary rock, a brown to black conglomerate of flint, pebbles and fragments set in a "rusty" sandstone.



Ferricrete

Other walls comprised of cobbles of some vein quartz or quartzite and, of course, the ever-present flint.

One artistic touch to the front of the tower is a chequered pattern and a band of what looks like flints. Someone obviously took a lot of pride in their work and the church to spend time sorting out the right building materials to use.



**Decoration on the
Church tower**

On our walk round St Peter's, one thing we did notice was a downpipe with the initials "CBL" and dated 1853. It would appear that a certain Revd C B Leigh in 1851 built the "New Rectory", now Goldhanger House, and in 1853 paid for the extensive refurbishments of the Church and had "CBL" as a dedication cast into the downpipes.

He also instructed that red brick walls be built around the Church and encouraged parishioners to build them along the streets to keep farm animals from entering their front gardens. At this time there were two farms in the middle of the village which both had animals that would be driven along the main streets to the fields. A possibly unique feature of the village, as they are not seen at other locations locally or elsewhere.



**One of the downpipes
dedicated to Revd C B
Leigh in 1853**

It can be amazing how looking at the construction of church walls can lead on to other interesting and, for me, otherwise unknown pieces of local information. If anyone would like to read more about the Church's history, go to www.churchside1.plus.com/Goldhanger-past/

Shirley Macro

"A youth group for older people"

Pat Clement was watching "Who wants to be a millionaire" recently and U3A was described as "A youth group for older people".

A good description worth sharing!

Thanks Pat

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
Web Master	Tony Groves
Social Group	Michael Childs
AV Equipment	Mike Flack
Essex Assoc. of U3A's Committee	Malcolm Case

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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	London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Joyce Cotterell
Aviation	Brian Johnson	Luncheon Groups	Paul Costa
Astronomy	Malcolm Case	3rd Wed. Meet & Eat	Joyce Cotterell
Balti Night	Bob Gowers Graham Evans	2nd Wed	
Bird Watching	Peter Gaywood Michael Bagshaw	Mah-Jong	Molly Polden
Botany	Veronica Smith	Maritime	Malcolm Case
Bridge	Sheila Epps	Music Appreciation	Enid Hall John Skuse
Canasta	Iris Slaney	Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash
Cribbage	Pat Clements	Poetry	Jo Robson
Croquet	Jean Healey Shirley Macro	Reading	Sheila Epps
Discussion	Bryan Jones	Rummikub 1 Rummikub 2	Colin Beckett Beryl McDonell
Egyptology	Kathleen Goff Sue Robinson	Scottish Country Dancing	Shirley Grummett
Family History	Alan Buck	Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
French Conversation	Ann Lester	Strollers	Gill Stone
Geology	Enid Hall	Table Tennis	Louis Gunn
Handicraft	Marian Manning	Ten Pin Bowling	David Arnold
History—Stuarts	Beryl McDonell	Tree Identification	Veronica Smith
Just Jazz	Jim Light David Coombes	Weekenders	Beryl McDonell
Local History	Sylvia Cousins Jane Coombes Kathleen Goff	Wine Circle No. 2 Wine Circle No. 3	Graham Boswell Mary Burd Paul Costa Ann Goody
		Wine Circle No. 4	
		Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

Some useful contacts

Latest U3A News

www.u3a.org.uk/

www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter

Energy Advice Line Scam

Malcolm had a call from a so-called Energy Advice Line

I have just had a telephone call from “Matthew” of the Energy Advice Line based in Oxford (so say), he said that the loft insulation which I had installed several months ago (it was installed years ago) causes condensation and mould and that it needs inspecting. The number shown on my phone was a Chelmsford number not an Oxford number, I told “Matthew” this and strangely the line went dead, I then tried phoning the number put guess what, it is unobtainable.

It is a SCAM – best just to hang up.

Malcolm Case

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.

Don't forget to keep looking at our website for any updates in-between newsletters. www.maldonu3a.co.uk/

Liz Samson