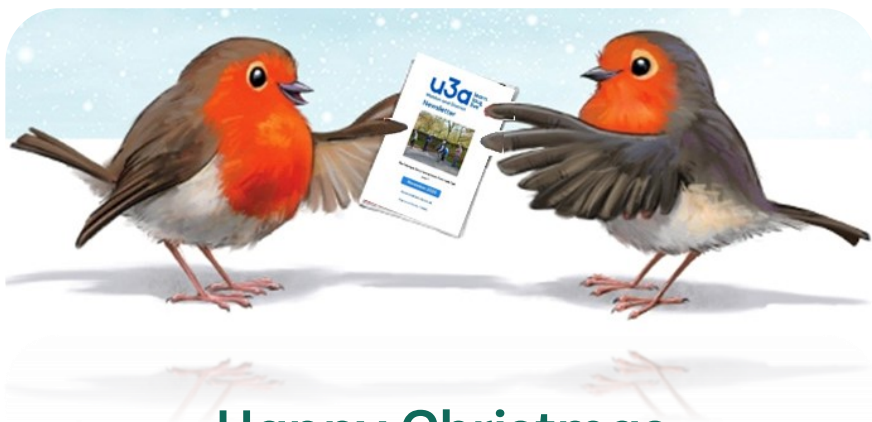


u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Maldon and District

Newsletter



Happy Christmas

Robins courtesy of Tony Groves

December 2020

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Registered Charity 1086182

FROM THE CHAIR



To start this month, I would like to say welcome and thank you to the new members who have taken the plunge and joined us. Despite being unable to offer them our usual access to the various activities available, I hope you have enjoyed reading the newsletter and have taken the opportunity to contact any of the co-ordinators of groups you may be interested in. We will be back up and running properly as soon as we can.

Some of the interest groups have been “meeting” using various methods, mostly Zoom, especially as any contact outside has recently been curtailed. This is not always possible but thank you to everyone for keeping going as best we can.

Our first attempt at a monthly meeting via Zoom went well and we had an interesting talk from Andy Thomas on a Celebratory History of Christmas. We had over 60 log-on and, as some of these were two watching, I think the numbers were around 75. This month there is a live presentation by Ian K Davidson – Christmas Fun Talk and Quiz. Please join us if you can. Thanks to Tony Groves for all the technical wizardry.

As I write this, it is just a month away until Christmas Day. I know that for some of us it will not be Christmas as usual and the new restrictions allowing three households to gather for a five-day period will be welcome news. However, I expect there will still be some who will not be able to see families or friends and I would ask that if you know of anyone in this position that would just love to have a chat on the telephone, don't hesitate to give them a call.

Wishing you all the absolute best, Season's Greetings and let's look forward to 2021 and better things. Cheers!

Shirley Macro,

MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND HOLIDAY
CHEERS TO
YOU!



MARITIME GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 4th January 2021** starting at 10:00 am, as we are unable to meet as normal then this talk will be by virtual means using "Zoom".

The talk is by Julian Wong who is Regional Port Chaplain for the Seafarers Centres in our area. His talk will last for some fifty minutes and there will be the opportunity to ask questions by using the "Chat" button. Julian's talk will include information and details on the work of Chaplains and also the current plight of "Stranded Seafarers".

"The Apostleship of the Sea is now officially known as **Stella Maris***. It celebrated its Centenary on 4th October 2020. Ship visiting by Stella Maris port chaplains during the current Covid-19 pandemic continues but is currently



restricted to visiting seafarers at the bottom of the gangway. We maintain contact with them via social media, taking their requests for items such as mobile phone sim cards, shopping etc so these are delivered to them upon their arrival. They continue to suffer from piracy and tragedies of being lost at sea. It has been reported by the International Maritime Organisation that up to 400,000 seafarers are still stuck at sea and up to 400,000 are unable to join their vessels to earn money. Seafarers from countries like Samoa and Kiribati are still stuck on board after 18 months at sea. Stella Maris chaplains, volunteer ship visitors and supporters are doing all we can to support them as we have always done over the last 100 years".

Details on how to join the meeting by Zoom will be sent out nearer the date. Any u3a member is very welcome to join in, for details please contact me.

Malcolm Case

****Stella Maris is the largest ship-visiting network in the world, and the official maritime charity of the Catholic Church. "We improve the lives of seafarers and fishers through our network of local chaplains and seafarer centres, expert information, advocacy, and spiritual support."***

WINE GROUP 3

As until the latest lockdown was implemented only groups of 6 have been allowed to gather in gardens Wine Group 3 have continued to meet up via Zoom usually for a chat, quiz and discussion of the wines we are sampling! The best we are able to do currently.

However when restrictions lifted we did manage to have a couple of enjoyable lunches at Crouch Ridge Vineyard, suitably distanced of course. We are hopeful that this can be repeated in the not too distant future.

We wish everyone a Happy Christmas and hope that in 2021 we are all able to meet up again face to face.

Mary Burd

SOCIAL ORGANISING GROUP

Hi to all u3a members, it's now much too long since we have met to have a social event, it was very frustrating to have to cancel and postpone all of our plans for this year but as we all know it had to be done.

As we come up to Christmas and the New Year we thought it would be good to let you know what we have planned for 2021.

In **July** we will have our BBQ at Langford, at the end of **September** we have our Posh Frock 3 Do at the Bull and in **November** we have a booking at Maldon Town Hall.

We know this is only 3 events but we are prepared to fill in the gaps as and when we are able with old favourites and new events that we already had planned.

Take care, stay safe, we are looking forward to seeing you in 2021.

Mike Childs

WRITING FOR FUN GROUP



IN AID OF FARLEIGH HOSPICE

Patrick Forsyth, Coordinator for this group, has recently had a two-page spread published in the December edition of "Essex Life" magazine.

The article is about Farleigh Hospice (for which he is an Ambassador). This is just one of many charities which have seen their income plummet during the COVID-19 crisis. Hospices are often misunderstood and the article points out just how much good Farleigh does across a whole range of services and links to the current campaign aiming to equip and open the new Farleigh centre recently purchased in Maldon. Much of the service they offer is dependent on fundraising- all contributions gratefully received.

POETRY BY ZOOM

"Poetry by Zoom" started Thursday 3rd December.

It will continue on the first Thursday in the month at 2:00 pm. Next session **Thursday January 7th 2021.**

For details contact:

Malcolm Case

u3a in the Time of Corona



This book is based on the Diary Project using contributions from u3a members all over the country.

It chronicles our reactions to coronavirus and isolation, as well as how to get a supermarket delivery, how to cut your own hair and what to do with all that free time.

If you would like to order a copy, please go to the national website www.u3a.org.uk/advice/shop/

See the link on our website www.maldonu3a.co.uk

MONTHLY MEETING



2.00pm on Monday 18th January 2021

This will be a "Live" presentation on Zoom by

Lindsay Whitehouse who it could be said has had a life steeped in crime. He was until recently Deputy Governor of HM Chelmsford Prison and is now Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex. He will be talking about the difficult challenges presented within a prison and how these challenges can be resolved.



Click on the link to join the Zoom session

Session opens at 1.50pm for a 2pm start

Here is the title of the book **Andy Thomas** wrote with the information that he used in last month's talk:

Christmas: A Short History from Solstice to Santa

It is available from Amazon for £7.99

WATCH ZOOM ON THE TV

It is possible to connect your laptop or tablet to watch Zoom talks on the TV. You will need to check your individual equipment but an easy way to connect a laptop is using a 2 metre or longer HDMI cable. These are available from Amazon or PC World. For an iPad you will need an additional connector.

Examples



FILM CLUB

I was recently listening to the u3a Radio podcast and one of the contributors was talking about a film club which his u3a had set up and wondered whether it was something we could try out. It runs somewhat like a book club, a film is chosen and then we get together to discuss its merits, etc. We could choose films covering different themes or genres, golden oldies or more modern ones, using those available on the free to view services on the television. It is a way of watching films I may not have otherwise bothered with – romcoms not being something I would usually tune in to, love a western though.



Once the film has aired and been watched by the group, we could then get together via, sorry to say, Zoom, and have a talk about it and come to an overall opinion, maybe even give them star ratings. If you're not a "Zoomer", you could still take part and could either give your views by email or a telephone call. That way everyone can be included.

If you think you would like to join in, please let me know and if there is enough interest I will select a couple of films to start with once the television schedules are available and then get in contact with you. Once the first meeting has taken place, group members could then take it in turns to make the film selections.

Shirley Macro

EDWARD JENNER

With the announcements recently about the progress and predicted successful development of the vaccinations to combat Covid-19, one name that has been mentioned is that of Edward Jenner.



1749-1823

Edward Jenner was an English physician and scientist who put forward the ideas of vaccines including creating the smallpox vaccine, the world's first vaccine. In Jenner's time smallpox killed around 10% of the population and as high as 20% in towns and cities. It is possible that as many as 60% of the population caught smallpox at this time.

Inoculation was already standard practice at this time, having originated as a method of prevention of smallpox by the deliberate introduction of material from smallpox pustulates into the skin. This would generally give a less severe infection than naturally acquired smallpox, but immunity to it was still induced. Inoculation has ancient origins and was known in India, Africa and China. In 1721 its use had been introduced here by Lady Mary Wortley Montague, after having seen it used in Constantinople. It had been observed that a person previously infected with cowpox rendered a person immune to smallpox. However, it was not until Jenner's work that the procedure became widely understood. Jenner put forward the theory that the pus in the blisters that milkmaids received from cowpox protected them from smallpox. Cowpox is a disease like smallpox, but much less virulent.

Now comes the bit that would certainly not happen nowadays – at least I like to think to so!

14th May 1796, Jenner put his hypothesis to the test by inoculating James Phipps, an eight-year-old boy. He was the son of Jenner's gardener. He had scraped pus from cowpox blisters on the hand of milkmaid Sarah Nelmes. James had been inoculated in both arms that day, resulting in a fever and some uneasiness, but no full-blown infection. He later injected James with variolous material, the routine method of immunization as mentioned above. No disease followed. This test was repeated and again James showed no sign of infection. Lucky for him!

By the way, Sarah Nelmes caught cowpox from a cow called Blossom, whose hide is now hanging on the wall of St. George's Medical School library in Tooting.

Shirley Macro

ASTRONOMY GROUP

We held our first meeting on Monday 23rd November by using Zoom. Seven members of the group met and each gave a short presentation on an Astronomy subject.

We have agreed to meet again on **Monday 25th January 2021** at 2:00pm, by using Zoom, details will be sent nearer the date. However if the restrictions allow, then we will meet at our usual venue, Chigboro Fishing Club, Chigborough Road, Heybridge, CM9 4RE at 7:30pm for an evening of observing the night sky.

If you would like to join our next meeting, then please contact me and I can give you the Zoom details.

Malcolm Case

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Edna Hutchinson has very kindly sent a contribution, which we hope you will enjoy and maybe visit over the Festive Season.

We wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year

Kathy, Jane and Sylvia



MALDON'S NEW SCULPTURE

Recently I was invited to St Mary's Church in Maldon for a very special occasion – the unveiling and blessing of a beautiful sculpture. A new memorial garden has been created in the Churchyard and the sculpture is the centrepiece.

The sculpture by John Doubleday (who designed the Byrhtnoth statue which stands at the far end of the Town's Promenade) is a truncated pyramid depicting reliefs of the River Blackwater from its source to the open sea and incorporates aspects of the river's wildlife. The pyramid is surmounted by a sundial in the form of an anchor. The sculpture is a metaphor of life's journey with the open sea representing the community of saints. In the years to come this sculpture will be seen as part of Maldon's heritage.

Whilst Byrhtnoth's statue is tall and can be seen from quite a distance, the one at St Mary's is at eye level, so the workmanship is clearly visible.

Do take a walk that way; the Churchyard is always open.

Edna Hutchinson

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The first meeting took place on 4th December by Zoom and we discussed our **Autumn** photographs.

The pictures are now on our website, take a look on:

www.maldonu3a.co.uk/photography/photography.php

The theme next month is **Winter**.

You must email your entries to webmaster@maldonu3a.co.uk **before Monday 4th January**.

We will have a Zoom viewing and discussion at **11am on Friday 8th January 2021**.

Open to everyone, all standards, up to three photos per member. The only criterion is that you have taken the photos yourself.

Tony Groves webmaster@maldonu3a.co.uk



AN EASY QUIZ FOR BOXING DAY



- 1 What is the capital of Turkey?
- 2 Grayson Perry, who used to live in Bicknacre, often dresses as his alter ego. What is her name?
- 3 Les Misérables – wonderful show, a great success all round the world. Who wrote the book on which Les Mis is based?
- 4 Back in the days of black and white television, Dr Finlay's Casebook was required viewing. Who wrote the short stories on which Dr Finlay's Casebook was based?
 - a) Who played Dr Finlay?
 - b) Who played Dr Cameron?
 - c) What was the name of their housekeeper?
 - d) Where did they live?
- 5 Who created the Angel of the North?
- 6 In the Beatrix Potter stories, what kind of animal is Mr Todd?
- 7 Who decided not to go home at a Paris airport in 1961?
- 8 Who wrote "Gone with the Wind"?
- 9 What is the nom de plume of Samuel Langhorne Clemens?
- 10 Plus or minus 3 days, how long did Pope John Paul I hold office?
- 11 How many letters are you given in a game/hand of Scrabble?
- 12 What was the name of the hurricane which devastated New Orleans in 2005?
- 13 We all know the story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. How many of the dwarfs had beards?

- 14 What is a taipan?
- 15 What was the secret identity of Don Diego de la Vega?
- 16 What was the original name of the Goon Show?
- 17 What was the name of the 1973 film about an escape from a penal colony?
- 18 How many miles long is the Channel Tunnel?
- 19 What was the real name of the Red Baron?
- 20 In which Scandinavian country is the euro not the unit of currency?
- 21 In which modern country is the site of the ancient city of Troy?

Answers next month

NEW – JIGSAW PUZZLES ONLINE

A member at Cheltenham u3a has been creating virtual jigsaws with a general theme of Cheltenham or Cheltenham u3a.

This seems a fun idea so we are trying it on our website as well.

You can select a puzzle with just a few pieces or up to 1000.

Have a go with a couple on our website.

<http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk/jigsaws/jigsaws.php>

If you have any comments or photos, especially of your groups' activities, which you think would make a suitable jigsaw, email webmaster@maldonu3a.co.uk



THE NIGHT SKY – MID DECEMBER

The Geminids meteor shower, usually one of the most spectacular showers of the year, runs from December 4th to the 17th annually. In 2020, the shower will peak before dawn on Monday, December 14th. Geminids meteors are often bright, intensely coloured, and slower moving than average because they are produced by particles dropped by an asteroid designated 3200 Phaethon. The best time to watch for Geminids will be from full darkness on Sunday 13th until dawn on Monday 14th, up to 120 meteors per hour are possible under dark sky conditions. They will appear to radiate from a position in the sky above the bright stars Castor and Pollux, but the meteors can appear anywhere in the sky.

The annual Ursids meteor shower, produced by debris dropped by periodic comet 8P/Tuttle, runs from December 17th to December 23rd. The shower will peak during the early hours of Tuesday, December 22nd, when seeing 5 to 10 meteors per hour is possible under dark skies. The best time to watch will be the hours before dawn. Ursids will appear to radiate from a position in the sky above the Little Dipper (Ursa Minor) near Polaris.

In the southwestern sky after sunset on Monday, December 21st Jupiter's faster orbital motion will bring it within 0.1 degrees of slower Saturn, causing the two planets to appear, to the unaided eye, as a single bright object. The two planets have not been as close together since Galileo was using his spyglass in 1623 – and they will not meet so closely again until 2080. You will need to start observing them as soon as you can find them in the darkening sky, because they will set in the west at about 7:00 pm. Do not wait until December 21st as they are both visible now in a south westerly direction.

Winter in the Northern Hemisphere officially commences on Monday, December 21st at 10:02 GMT. At that time, the sun will reach the solstice, its southernmost declination for the year, resulting in the lowest noonday sun and the shortest amount of daylight of the year for us in the Northern Hemisphere.

GEOLOGY GROUP

Temporary change: Now Zoom meetings on the 3rd Wednesday each month at 2pm. Next meeting **Wednesday 20th January 2021**.

Sylvia Cousins

ADVANCED GENEALOGY STUDY SESSIONS

The Genealogy Study will take place over four days – see dates below.

1. Tuesday 12th January 2021

2pm Getting The Most From The Census

2. Tuesday 19th January 2021

2pm Breaking Down “Brickwalls”

3. Tuesday 26th January 2021

2pm Dating Old Family Photographs

4. Tuesday 3rd February 2021

2pm Introduction To DNA For Family History

If you would like to attend the above sessions book on –

aofe.u3astudy@gmail.com

Confirmation of your place will be notified directly to you by email.

Please supply the following information when booking:

Your Name –

Email –

Telephone Number –

PS. Only one application required for each Zoom connection, for all four sessions.

If you have any queries, you can contact us at

aofe.u3astudy@gmail.com

Items from u3a National Newsletter—November

Direct links below and also via our own website

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

u3a Radio Podcast



[Click here to listen to the second national u3a podcast.](#)

[There is also a link on our website](#)

The podcast is made by talented u3a members, Ela, Nick and Peter, who all have experience in radio. In this episode, they talk to the winner of the National Creative Writing competition, a u3a member and author who refers to herself as the 'real Joan Collins' and other amazing members who make up our movement.

Your Battle of Britain Stories

Do you or your friends and family have a story to share on **Battle of Britain and the Blitz?** u3a members from across the UK have been contributing their experiences.

Remember the interesting stories from our own members in the June 2020 newsletter.



National Winter School

The Winter School follows on from the success of our online Summer School earlier this year, and the National Summer School programme that we have run for over twenty years.

This is a wonderful opportunity for peer-to-peer learning. Each week you will virtually meet u3a members from across the movement and learn together.

From law to gardening, our courses have something for everyone. There are nine courses ranging from four to six weeks in length. Each course is designed to be as interactive as possible, with the opportunity to ask questions.

Spaces on these courses are limited, please ensure that you can commit to **all the dates** outlined in the event description provided.

<https://u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ



ANSWERS

- 1 How many teeth does an adult human have? **32**
- 2 What is the largest bird of prey in the world? **Andean Condor**
- 3 In which sport would you use a shuttlecock? **Badminton**
- 4 Who is fifth in line to the British throne? **Prince Louis**
- 5 What is the biggest state in America? **Alaska**
- 6 Who wrote Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs? **The Brothers Grimm**
- 7 What is the capital of Hawaii? **Honolulu**
- 8 Enchiladas originated in which country? **Mexico**
- 9 In Dirty Dancing, what is Baby's first name? **Frances**
- 10 How many eggs does the average chicken lay per year? **260**

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman Shirley Macro

Vice Chairman Malcolm Case

Secretary Carol Bates

Treasurer Geoff Cory

Membership
Secretary Malcolm Case

Newsletter Liz Samson

Editor

Speaker Veronica Smith

Secretary

Committee Alec Fraser

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Judith Johnston

Andrew Simmonds

Webmaster Tony Groves

Social Group Michael Childs

AV Equipment Mike Flack

Essex Assoc. Malcolm Case

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CO-ORDINATORS

Art Appreciation	Andy Simmonds	London Theatre	Rosemary Case
Aviation	tba	Outings	Joyce Cotterell
Astronomy	Malcolm Case	Luncheon 3rd Wed	Paul Costa
Balti Night	Bob Gowers	Meet & Eat 2nd Wed	Joyce Cotterell
	Graham Evans	Mah-Jong	Molly Polden
Bird Watching	Peter Gaywood	Maritime	Malcolm Case
	Michael Bagshaw	Music	Enid Hall
Botany	Veronica Smith	Appreciation	John Skuse
Bridge	Sheila Epps	Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash
Canasta	Iris Slaney		Geoff Macro
Cribbage	Pat Clements	Photography	Tony Groves
Croquet	Jean Healey	Poetry	Jo Robson
	Shirley Macro	Reading	Sheila Epps
Discussion	Bryan Jones	Rummikub 1	Colin Beckett
Egyptology	Kathleen Goff	Rummikub 2	Beryl McDonell
	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	Weekenders	Beryl McDonell
	David Coombes	Wine Circle No. 2	Graham Boswell
Local History	Sylvia Cousins	Wine Circle No. 3	Mary Burd
	Jane Coombes		Paul Costa
	Kathleen Goff	Wine Circle No. 4	Ann Goody
		Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH INDEPENDENT AGE



This winter u3a have a partnership with Independent Age to provide our members with quick access to their free and confidential advice line.

To access the Independent Age helpline, call freephone 0800 319 6789 or email your query to advice@independentage.org

If you know what you want to talk about, say the codeword 'u3a' when you call or email and you will be put directly through to an advisor.

As well as their advice line, Independent Age provide a series of free guides which can be found on [their website](#).

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

Hope you are getting used to the new look.

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