

# u3a learn, laugh, live

Maldon and District

## Newsletter



**Subscription Renewal Time**  
- see page 3 -

**June 2021**

[www.maldonu3a.co.uk](http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk)

Registered Charity 1086182

## FROM THE CHAIR



At last Summer has arrived and it's lovely to be sitting writing this bathed in early evening sunshine, just hope that by the time you are reading this the weather is still good and you have been able to meet up with friends and family or, maybe, some of the interest groups have managed to get together other than by Zoom. Please let me know how you are getting on and what plans your group/s may have made. When I took over as Chairman, I had intended to try and visit all the different interest groups, but something got in the way, perhaps now I might be able to start visiting groups again.

Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, was the first National u3a Day. As part of promoting the u3a, the local Cluster group decided to produce a leaflet and tri-fold brochure to send out to local community providers, along with an accompanying letter giving details of what the u3a is, how it is organised and the benefits to being a member. Let's hope that next year we will be able to have a public Awareness Day event of some kind.

As mentioned in earlier newsletters, the monthly meetings will continue via Zoom for the next couple of months. However, we are hopeful that the August meeting will be back in the hall at Wickham Bishops, and we are making plans accordingly. The Committee and I have discussed this at some length and, providing all the signs are right and restrictions are lifted or eased more, we thought that we should make the move back to the hall. Further details will be given nearer the time.

The next monthly meeting on **Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> June at 2.00pm** is a presentation by Roger Browne on The Great American Songbook. As well as tracing the history and music of this genre, Roger will illustrate his talk with live examples on the piano. I'm looking forward to joining this meeting. Zoom details for the monthly meetings remain as usual and will also be included in the email sent out with the newsletter.

Best wishes,  
Shirley Macro,

## Maldon & District u3a 2021 - 2022 Membership Subscription Renewals

**Subscriptions are due by no later than 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.** Please use our website MaldonU3A.co.uk and complete the forms under “Membership Renewal”. If you are unable to do this then renewal forms are available from the Membership Secretary. Each member must complete a separate form. **Annual subscription is £20.00 per person**, which can be paid by Bank Transfer into Barclays Bank, account name – **Maldon U3A**; **sort code 20-54-30**; **Account number 53198995**, the reference you use **MUST be your forename and surname – with no space e.g., johnsmith**; or if you wish, you can still pay by cheque which should be made payable to **Maldon & District u3a**. **Using the web site and paying by Bank Transfer is the preferred way.** The completed form(s) together with your payment must be made before the **31<sup>st</sup> August 2021**. We do not accept cash. **The forms together with your cheque (if paying by cheque) MUST be returned to the Membership Secretary.**

**Data Protection Law and Data Base:** The renewal forms are used to check our database, please indicate on the form if your details are unchanged from your original renewal. Any changes then please advise the Membership Secretary.

**Emergency Contact:** Where couples are both members, please avoid using each other as emergency contacts. Please also ensure that you have the consent to use the name and telephone number of the person/s named as your emergency contact.

**Gift Aid:** Please indicate on the form “I want to Gift Aid” if you able to gift aid your subscription.

**DO IT NOW: You do not have to wait until the end of August.**

Please send your cheque and completed forms (one form per member) and return to the Membership Secretary at the address given above. **Or use the web site MaldonU3A.co.uk and pay by Bank Transfer – this is the preferred way.** Membership cards have already been sent to you (white plastic bar coded credit card size sent to each member 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020).

**If you have not renewed your subscription by the 1st September 2021, you will no longer be a member.**

**This link takes you straight to the form on our website**

**<http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk/renewal.php>**

## MARITIME GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 5th July** at 10:00 am.

If Covid-19 restrictions allow then this meeting will be held at The Blackwater Sailing Club, Basin Road, Heybridge Basin, Maldon, CM9 4SD.



This is a talk by Dr Andrea Raiker of the Maldon and Heybridge Heritage Harbour Association (MHHHA) which has been created and established to promote, preserve, and secure a future for our maritime heritage. Walking down from Fullbridge to the Byrthnoth statue at the end of Promenade Park in Maldon, and about a kilometre or so along the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation canal from the Heybridge Basin, makes the reason for our purpose obvious: the heritage ships, boats, yachts, buildings, and quays are fascinating!

This talk will show how the maritime history of Maldon and Heybridge began as separate towns, but interestingly they began to be brought together through conflict from the 14th century, resulting in the establishment of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation in the late 1700s. This caused the prosperity of Maldon to decline. But in 1848, the Maldon and Heybridge railway station brought the two towns together and soon after, Heybridge joined Maldon's district council. Now, councillors from the Maldon District Council and Essex Waterways are working with the MHHHA to promote and preserve Maldon and Heybridge's current and future maritime heritage.

I will confirm the meeting venue as soon as I know. Should we not be able to meet at the Club, then the meeting will be by Zoom. Any u3a member is very welcome to join the meeting, if you would like to, then please contact me.

Malcolm Case

## Proposed MARITIME GROUP Programme 2021 (subject to change)

<b>Monday 5th July</b> <i>The Blackwater Sailing Club</i> or <span style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">zoom</span>	talk by Andrea Raiker ' <b>The Maldon and Heybridge Heritage Harbour Association (MHHHA)</b> '.
<b>Monday 2nd August</b>	trip, to be decided
<b>Monday 6th September</b>	Due lack of numbers, holiday cancelled
<b>Monday 4th October</b>	David Griffith's talk, Part 3, " <b>Life aboard a submarine</b> ".
<b>Monday 1st November</b> <span style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">zoom</span>	talk by Dr Megan Barford on ' <b>Maps and Cartography</b> '.
<b>Monday 6th December</b>	talk by John Rayment on " <b>The history and restoration of the SB Pudge</b> ", followed by discussion on the 2022 programme.

Malcolm Case

## ASTRONOMY GROUP

We had our first very successful "In person" group meeting on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May, this was our first "In person" meeting since March 2020. We had a very interesting talk on "Aviation and Space Insurance", this was followed by a lively discussion on various Astronomy subjects.

**Our next meeting is on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June, at 7:30 pm** at Chigboro Fishing Club, Chigborough Road, Heybridge. CM9 4RE.

We will have a PowerPoint presentation on "Space X – the preparation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Operational Crew Dragon Mission".

Any u3a member is very welcome to join, if you would like to then please contact me.

Malcolm Case

## MONTHLY MEETING



**2.00pm on Monday 19th July 2021**

This will be a **“Live” presentation on Zoom**

by Steve Price on

**Close-up Magic**



Steve is one of the UK's busiest and most well-established magicians and is a Gold Star member of the Inner Magic Circle. He has won the Magic Circle's Originality Prize, and for three years he served as the Magic Circle's Honorary Secretary, leaving the post only when the sheer quantity of his professional engagements made it impossible for him to give enough time to the role.

Steve has more than 15 years of performing experience and has worked at thousands of events in a host of venues. His unique blend of laughs, mystery and stunning sleight of hand has taken him all round the world. Now, he entertains audiences around the world without leaving his front door. Be sure to join us for an afternoon that promises both amazement and amusement.

**Click on the link to join the Zoom session**

Session opens at 1.50pm for a 2pm start

## MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2021

**Initially via Zoom, subject to change**

July 19th	Steve Price	Close-up Magic
Aug 16th	Simon Waterfield	Historical talk in costume
Sept 20th	Andy Bennett	Blacksmithing
Oct 18th	AGM	
Nov 15th	Sue Handscombe + 1	Sonority Recorder Consort
Dec 20th	tba	

## CROQUET GROUP

At last, some decent weather! Still, croquet players are a tough bunch and despite being soaked by heavy rain and hail, we valiantly returned for the next session and were rewarded with a beautiful afternoon of warm sunshine. Having missed the whole of last season it was good to see many of the original group return. Their croquet skills have returned and are improving all the time, and our new members are quickly picking up the game and finding their way round the lawns.

As the number of people allowed to meet has increased and if you think you might like to have a go at croquet, please get in touch and we will add you to our list. All equipment is included in the hire fee of £5.00 per session, you just need to wear closed in shoes – croquet balls are very hard! We meet on the **1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday afternoons at 2.00pm** at Forrester Park Golf Club, Great Totham. Hope to see you there.

Geoff and Shirley Macro

Jean Healey





## OUR **u3aday** ACTIVITY

Your Committee have prepared these posters jointly with the other local u3a groups as our activity for the national u3a day on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June. We have sent this poster to nearly 40 medical centres, churches, local councils, and other organisations in our area.

However, it isn't a one-off exercise: when we resume the monthly meetings in person, the posters will be available for you to take if you can arrange for it to be displayed on a noticeboard in a public place. The poster is A5.

**u3a** **learn, laugh, live**

**No longer in full-time employment?  
Retired or about to retire?  
Join a local u3a for new interests,  
new friends, and a bigger, better social life!**

**learn**  
Participate in as many of our activity groups as you wish.

**laugh**  
Dozens of informal activity groups make exploring new topics fun.

**live**  
Social gatherings, card games, ten pin bowling, walks, theatre, and more...

**Google® these websites for more information:**

Maldon u3a	South Woodham Ferrers u3a
Heybridge u3a	Burnham-on-Crouch u3a
Blackwater u3a	Crouch Valley u3a
Limebrook u3a	Dengie u3a

**u3a**

## Maldon and District u3a Leaflet

We also have a specific Maldon and District u3a tri-fold leaflet.

If you think that you can use some of these to advantage, please contact the Membership Secretary.

### POETRY GROUP

The next meeting of the group is **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July at 2:00 pm.**

If the weather forecast is good then we will be meeting in a member's garden, if the forecast is poor, then the meeting will be by Zoom.

The poet for discussion is Maya Angelou (1928 – 2014).



Any u3a member is very welcome to join, if you would like to then please contact :

Jo Robson



## MEET AND EAT

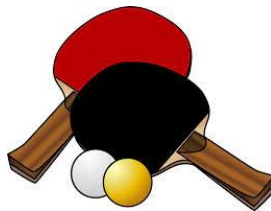
Our grateful thanks to Joyce who, after ten years as co-ordinator of this very enjoyable group, has stepped down. We have had some very different lunches but all have been enjoyed by everyone.

Joan Cummins has kindly taken on the co-ordinator's role and we look forward to many more lunches together in the future.

Joan Cummins

## TABLE TENNIS

It has been over a year and finally the Table Tennis Group is going to re-start table tennis, without restriction on **Tuesday 22nd June**.



On reflection it will be sad to be missing table tennis players not only in the u30s, but other table tennis organizations, due to age, health or other reasons. As a result it does provide opportunities for new participants.

We meet at 2.30 pm and we have use of four tables until 4.30, playing mainly doubles in a socially friendly environment i.e. we do laugh a lot. We stop at around 3.30 pm for a coffee break and whatever biscuits and cakes that have been brought in.

The cost is £3.00.

What happens if you've never played and wondered what it's like? Just come along and try it as I normally carry some spare bats for newcomers to try out. For anyone who wants help in improving, I am able to help in that department as I am a qualified coach and prior to COVID used to run the junior group at West Maldon Table Tennis Club.

You can get in touch with me Louis Gunn on:

## BIRD WATCHING GROUP

### Back on the road

As we tentatively emerge from lockdown, ten members gathered on 6th June in Shut Heath Wood in Great Totham for the group's first outing of 2021 and indeed since all u3a activities were radically curtailed last year.

The wood is known for its bluebells, but they can no longer be seen – and neither, it seemed could the birds. Resident wren, robin, chaffinch, bluetit and blackbird, plus summer visitors chiff-chaffs, could be heard in the canopy overhead but remained elusive to the eye.

The most abundant creatures making themselves known were the thousands of wood ants teeming on the ground. But the outing made for a pleasant walk round ancient woodland.

Let's hope we have better luck bird wise later in the year when autumn and winter visitors return to our shores!

The group's next outing will be to the Phyllis Currie reserve Great Leighs, CM3 1PE on **Sunday 4th July**, meeting at 10am in the car park.

Mike Bagshaw

## HISTORY GROUP- STUARTS

The group will hope to start up again in the West Maldon Community Centre on **Thursday 9th September at 10am**.

We also intend to have coffee morning on **Thursday 12th August at 10.30am** to refresh members about our previous sessions.

If members are planning to come on either dates could they please email Brenda at

Lastly could you each bring your own mug as the centre is only allowing us the use of a kettle.

Beryl McDonell

## SOCIAL ORGANISING GROUP

The u3a Social Organising Group has planned



# A FREE ZOOM QUIZ NIGHT

**Thursday 22nd JULY at 7.00 for a 7.30 Start**

**It's for Teams up to 6**

u3a Members, Zooming from your own home or if COVID rules allow, from one address. If you haven't got a team but still want to join in please do, we will put you into a team to join with.

**Register your interest by 10th July** and we will send you all the details and rules. By registering your interest you are giving permission for the organisers and your team to use your email address.

This Quiz is for fun only, using your brains and NOT using Google etc.



We are hoping to make this a regular event, so get yourselves organised and have a fun evening.

To register

Mike Childs SOG Co-ordinator

## WILD FLOWER AND TREE WALKS

### Wild Flower Walk

In glorious weather the first group for many months enjoyed finding and identifying several wild flowers growing in the graveyard of the Old Chapel, Little Baddow, which is managed for exactly that purpose.



Although complete beginners, they soon found their way around the flora that we used. We identified Stitchwort, Chickweed, Herb Robert, Tufted Vetch, Forget-me-not, Wild Garlic, Cow Parsley and Red Campion, plus of course well-known plants like Buttercup, Daisy and Hawkweed, not only using English names but the botanical names as well. We also found a mystery plant which turned out to be the now rare Meadow Saxifrage. Apparently, this site is one of the best in the country for this plant.

It is hoped to repeat the exercise in a month, possibly at the same venue. Incidentally, very little walking is done on wild flower walks, as much of the time is spent sitting looking through our books once we have found the specimens.

Anyone, beginner or not, is very welcome to join us.

### Tree Walks

I have been asked to lead a tree walk and intend to do that very soon. Again, anyone can join us beginner or not.

Please contact me, preferably by email, if you are interested in either or both of these.

Veronica Smith

## READING GROUP

*There's nothing quite like curling up with a good book.*

Since childhood I have always felt this. I was definitely dependent on the local library for books since during the war owning books was difficult. Fortunately, my father always read to me as a small child, so I developed the book habit early. It was quite along walk to the library, but it was always a journey I made with a smile on my face because I knew that I'd return home with treasures in my hand. Of course, Enid Blyton played a huge part in my reading life. Also, Richmal Crompton's Just William stories. I still love hearing these on Radio 4 from time to time beautifully read by Martin Jarvis. And in turn I've had much pleasure introducing books to both my own children and grandchildren.

I can't imagine being without a book on the go and my range is fairly wide enjoying fiction and nonfiction. That's private reading. Another kind is when you join a Book Group. Then the focus changes slightly since the book of the month might well be something I would never have picked up. Sometimes I have loved it and been delighted to be introduced to a new author. At other times it's not love at first sight, but the ensuing discussion can often illuminate aspects of the book I might have missed.

So, this then is what a Book Group can do. It's fun and often unexpected. The most interesting discussions often arise after quite polarized opinions from members. Of course, we all carry on reading our other books and there is a lot of lending of books between members.

If you are a Reader and would like to try us out, we are hoping to **resume meetings in July**. We meet in each other's homes on the **second Thursday** of the month. Please contact me

Sheila Epps



## STROLLERS/STROLLERS TOO

### NEW CO-ORDINATOR NEEDED



I know that we are all looking forward to the relaxation in the rules, thus enabling us all to meet up and become involved in u3a activities again.

This pandemic, with its restrictions, has given me time to pause and consider what I wish to do in the future .....

As a result, I have decided to stand down as co-ordinator of both walking groups. I have done this for more years than I can count, and I think it is time for someone else to take it on.

For the groups to continue, another member or members needs to come forward, otherwise the groups will have to close.

If you are interested in becoming the co-ordinator of both or either group, please contact me and I will explain what it entails.

See the Strollers section on the website to get an idea of the way it was run previously. <http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk/activitygroups/activitygroups1.php#strollers>

Gill Stone

**Note from the Editor** - we have all been taking extra walks during lockdown, why not share some of these walks with others.

## TEN PIN BOWLING

Ten pin bowling is due to start again on **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July at 10.00**. This is for a combined meeting for both the Wednesday and Thursday groups. This very first meeting will be more of a social get together to catch up, with as much bowling as you can manage and with coffee and cake. We do not know the exact rules on masks and social distancing, but we will do what we have to.

Now we have heard that this may all change AGAIN because of the India variant, and we will not know for some time what is going on. There may be another variant before then, who knows?

This is how it stands at the moment and let's hope we can get back to some normality soon.

If you would like to join our group or have any questions, please ring me (this an intercepted number but just say your name when asked).

David Arnold



## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The photography group meets via Zoom on the **third Thursday evening** each month **at 7:30pm**.

To see the subject for July, visit the photography page on our website.

[www.maldonu3a.co.uk/photography/photography.php](http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk/photography/photography.php)

We welcome pictures of any standard that you have taken yourself.

This is one of our June Transport pictures.



Tony Groves

## FILM GROUP

Our latest meeting provided some interesting and amusing discussion points on the merits, or maybe not, of the two film choices of Vivienne and Alan Lane.

Both films were from the 1940s and we started with *Hotel Reserve*. This was a 1944 spy film starring a young James Mason as an innocent man caught up in pre-WW2 espionage. It was based on Eric Ambler's 1938 novel *Epitaph for a Spy*. It's probably fair to say that it isn't a classic with extremely wobbly sets, a poor plot and a cartoon villain in the shape of Herbert Lom. It was obvious from the outset that he was the baddie. Even so, it was fun to watch a film nearly 80 years old! We gave this a score of 6/10.

The second choice was *Suspicion*, a 1941 romantic psychological thriller directed by Alfred Hitchcock and starring Cary Grant and Joan Fontaine as a married couple. A romantically inexperienced woman marries a charming playboy after initially rejecting him. He turns out to be penniless and a bit of a scoundrel. She comes to suspect that he is also a murderer, and that he is attempting to kill her too. This was a much better-quality film with good acting, but the ending was a bit of a let-down as they sailed off into the sunset all happy ever after – but did they? It's quite something to think that this film is actually 80 years old and still being watched. Scored 7/10.

Barry Keusch has chosen two films for this month.



**"Once"** – a 2007 Irish romantic musical drama



**"Testament of Youth"**, a 2014 film based on the First World War memoir written by Vera Brittain.

He also included another one called **"Britt-Marie Was Here"**, a Swedish film comedy drama, but with subtitles.

If you would like to join us, please get in touch. We meet by Zoom on the **last Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm**.

Shirley Macro

# YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Shirley Macro
Vice Chairman	Malcolm Case
Secretary	Carol Bates
Treasurer	Geoff Cory
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case
Newsletter Editor	Liz Samson
Speaker Secretary	Veronica Smith
Groups Co-ordinator	Malcolm Case
Committee	Alec Fraser Tony Groves Judith Johnston Andrew Simmonds
Webmaster	Tony Groves
Social Group	Michael Childs
AV Equipment	Mike Flack
Essex Assoc. of u3a's Committee	Malcolm Case

Contact the u3a Office

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live

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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	Joan Cummins
	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	tba
Family History	Alan Buck	Rummikub 2	Beryl McDonell
Film Club	Shirley Macro	Scottish Country	Shirley Grummett
French Conversation	Ann Lester	Dancing	
Geology	Sylvia Cousins	Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
Handicraft	Marian Manning	Strollers	tba
History—Stuarts	Beryl McDonell	Table Tennis	Louis Gunn
Just Jazz	Jim Light	Ten Pin Bowling	David Arnold
	David Coombes	Tree Identification	Veronica Smith
Local History	Sylvia Cousins	Weekenders	Beryl McDonell
	Kathleen Goff	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

## Beacon Hill Sports Association Summer Fayre in Wickham Bishops 24/25 July

We'll have to wait a couple more months before we can return to our traditional monthly meetings in the Village Hall in Wickham Bishops. Meanwhile, BHSA (the charity which runs the Hall and sports fields) is holding an open-air Summer Event on the Sports Field in Wickham Bishops. It's the Centenary of the Football Club and Beacon Hill Rovers will be showing off their spanking new Clubroom. This has been created in lockdown with a lot of skilled hard work by members and friends.

BHSA has decided to give all their Clubs, **u3a** included, the chance to participate. The idea is for clubs to run a stall on one or both days with a simple game or activity to engage the younger age groups and raise money on behalf of BHSA.

Why should **u3a** help with this? BHSA has lost a great deal of their hall revenue due to the pandemic and we have been fully credited for our cancelled meetings.

What's in it for us? An opportunity for recruitment using our display material, handiwork, or photos and to publicise our many activities. (We had originally planned a **u3a** event in Maldon Town Hall, similar to the successful one a few years ago).

If anyone is willing to help or show off their activity group, please contact me or any Committee member with ideas.

Alec Fraser

### FROM THE EDITOR

Many thanks for all your contributions for this newsletter. Members and co-ordinators have sent in some interesting articles and suggestions. Please keep them coming.

I am pleased to see that many of our groups are planning to hold events in person as soon as we are able. In the meantime all u3a members are welcome at all Zoom meetings.

Don't forget to keep looking at our website for any updates in-between newsletters. [www.maldonu3a.co.uk](http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk)

Liz Samson