

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Maldon and District

Newsletter



December 2022

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Registered Charity 1086182

FROM THE CHAIR

At our November meeting, before learning about who built King Tut's tomb, we had a fairly detailed description of how to carry out the mummification process for which the ancients allowed 70 days. Happily, there were no slides. This, like a lot of knowledge, is not likely to have any practical application. It is the sort of knowledge that might be needed for quizzes – and it so happens that we are having a quiz with our Christmas Social on 19th December. Perhaps this will be the sort of quiz where one knows the answer, but it takes a little time for the little grey cells to be searched – for some of us overnight.



We look forward to seeing you there: not only for the quiz but seasonal food, our very own entertainment and the marvellous Christmas feeling of togetherness in a warm environment.

As we are approaching the end of the year, we can reflect on a post-lockdown year when most of us have had two more vaccinations. Some have been fortunate and have not suffered from Covid, but I know a number of people who have had it at least once, and some of the symptoms seem to drag on.

This has affected our u3a as some of us have modified our way of life and are more inclined to stay at home. However, our u3a has fared well and, although the number of members has diminished, numbers are now recovering, and I think we are more confident to join in our various group activities.

The festive season is particularly a time for friends and family to get together and I hope that our u3a will play its full part in achieving this.

While we are not yet quite at the shortest day, sunset is already getting later, so we can now look forward to lengthening afternoons and longer days.

Wishing all of you a Happy Christmas.

Ken Hazell

WITH REGRET

Beryl McDonell

Many of us will have heard of the recent death of Beryl. It is with gratitude to her that we have a thriving u3a – the first in this area.

Back in 1998 I was in a History class alongside Beryl at The Friary, and she told me about the u3a organisation and thought it would be a good idea for Maldon. She then went ahead in her resolute way, collected a few interested friends, and held a public meeting, and so Maldon and District u3a was born.

Very quickly, people put forward ideas for interest groups and volunteers stepped forward. I must have joined at about the third meeting and started the Bridge Group.

Later social events, outings and holidays followed and continue to make up the fabric of a healthy organisation. Friendships flourished and we eventually had to set up a waiting list for new members since our meeting place was too small to cope with the numbers. However, this situation has been resolved with many other u3as setting up shop and prospering as we had. This area of Essex now has branches in all directions.

The strength of u3a is its democratic structure, and long may it continue.

Thank you, Beryl, for leading the way.

Sheila Epps

PADEL TENNIS

The intention is to play every Wednesday from 1430 – 1600. The cost is £3 per head.

If anyone else would like to give Padel Tennis a try, then do let me know.

Ken Hazell



Wool Alert



I continue to knit
Teddies for charity.



They go to children in distress of various kinds and hopefully bring some smiles and comfort. I am always looking out for wool and would be happy to have any odds and ends you may have.

I am usually at the Monday meeting at Wickham Bishops but if you can't get there then please ring me and we can arrange to collect.

Many thanks

Sheila Epps

LONDON THEATRE GROUP

We held our first post-COVID trip with a very successful visit to the Savoy Theatre to see "Pretty Woman".

It was an excellent show based on the film of the same name.

If you would like to be advised by email as soon as we book a show then please send your email address to:

Rosemary Rosemary & Sheila

POETRY GROUP

There will not be a meeting in January, the next meeting will be on **Thursday 2nd February**, further details will be in January's Newsletter.

Jo Robson

The Big Balti

We had a very successful curry night at the Balti Bhujon restaurant on November 28th.

Father Christmas found the time to visit and hand out presents to nearly forty u3a members.



The next curry event will be held on **Monday 30th January** at the Balti Bhujon restaurant
Mill Road Maldon
6:30 start

To add your name to the list please contact the following.

Graham Evans

Bob Gowers

Note new contact details for Bob

THE SILVER LINE

0800 4 70 80 90 www.thesilverline.org.uk

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.

MONTHLY MEETING

Monday 16th January 2023

Wickham Bishops Hall Doors open at 1:30 for 1:45 start

Graham and Mary Brace Wildlife

Photographers and Conservationists
will be giving a talk on:

The Wildlife of Brazil

They will be sharing more than one hundred of their own photos taken in the Pantanal region of Brazil, which is the largest wetland in the world.



Please remember your Membership Card

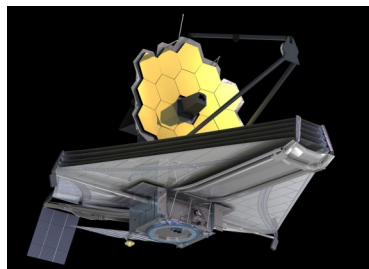
MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2023

Feb 20th	Alistair Hodgson	The de Havilland Museum
Mar 20th	Nicholas Alston High Sheriff of Essex	The history of this title and what it means now
Apr 17th	Our 25th Anniversary Celebration	
May 15th	Dr James Taylor	Dazzle: Disguise and Disruption in War and Art
Jun 19th	Fran Sandham	Dr Livingstone I Presume?

If you know of any speakers you can recommend, please contact me.
Veronica Smith, Speaker Secretary

ASTRONOMY GROUP

The next meeting is on **Wednesday 18th January** and is a talk by Dr Alister Glasse of the Royal Observatory on: **“Space – The James Webb Telescope”**.



This talk is being held at **Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford** from **7:30 to 9:00 pm**.

If you would like to come please contact Malcolm.

At the group’s meeting in November, we had clear skies so were able to do some observing of the stars and planets.

Jupiter with four of its moons was very clear to the south-southwest.



Mars was also easy to spot to the east.

Due to trees obstructing our view to the west we were unable to observe Saturn. **Betelgeuse** was just visible to the southeast, but we were unable to observe Orion as there were trees obstructing our view.



Malcolm Case

BIRD WATCHING GROUP

December visit to Hanningfield Reservoir

Ten members braved a chilly Sunday morning to see what could be seen at Hanningfield Reservoir only to be told we had missed an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) by four weeks. This fish-eating bird of prey, with a 6ft wingspan, is a summer visitor and was probably heading for its winter home in West Africa.

And so on to the hides overlooking the reservoir, which at 870 acres is England's 11th largest. Out on the water were a multitude of Canada and Greylag geese. Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*) were introduced in the reign of Charles II as an ornamental bird in parks, but have become so numerous they are now considered a nuisance because of the damage flocks do to crops. The Greylag (*Anser anser*) is our largest native goose and the ancestor of most domestic geese.

Among them bobbed a variety of ducks including Shoveler, Wigeon and Tufted Duck, watched over by a motionless Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) on the lookout for a passing fish. Shovelers (*Anas clypeata*) use tiny spines in their broad bills to filter water for minute animals and plant remains which make up their diet. By October, most of the Shovelers which breed here have flown down to France, Italy or Spain to be replaced by birds from northern Europe and Russia.

Few vegetarian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) breed in Britain. Those seen in winter are mainly migrants from Iceland, northern Europe or Russia. Some are seen following Swans for scraps of food the larger birds have pulled from deeper water. Tufted Ducks (*Aythya fuligula*) can dive more than seven metres for the molluscs on which they feed. The ducks are resident all year round, but their numbers are swelled in winter by migrants from Iceland, Scandinavia and northeast Europe.

Finally, we headed to the visitor centre cafe for a welcome hot drink. On the bird feeders outside, the many Great and Blue Tits were joined by a solitary Coal Tit (*Parus ater*). A common winter visitor to gardens, it is the smallest of our tits but with its distinctive black cap with white stripe an attractive bird to end our visit.

Mike Bagshaw

Birdwatching Group Programme 2023

No meeting in January. The next visit will be to Abberton Reservoir on **Saturday February 4th**, meeting at 10am in visitor centre car park.



	No meeting in January	
4th February	Abberton Reservoir	Meet in car park
5th March	Heybridge Basin	Meet in Daisy Meadow car park
1st April	Blue House Farm	Meet in car park
13th May	Bird ringing at Landguard Fort, Felixstowe	(To be confirmed)
3rd June	Fingringhoe Reserve	Meet in visitor centre car park
2nd July	Wallasea Island	Meet in RSPB car park
	No meeting in August	
9th September	Bradwell	Meet in St Peter's Chapel car park
8th October	Walton on the Naze	Meet in Naze Tower car park
4th November	Two Tree Island, Leigh-on-Sea	Meet in car park
3rd December	Maldon promenade	Meet by Rossi's ice cream kiosk

All rendezvous times 10am unless otherwise stated.

For full locations details or car share requests please contact:

Peter Gaywood

Michael Bagshaw

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Thank you to all those members who were able to join us for the film on "Memories of the Essex Coast" which was very nostalgic for those of us who grew up in this area.

There will **NO MEETING in December**.

Our first meeting of the New Year is on **Monday January 23rd** at 2pm at the Town Hall when we will have a talk by the Archaeological Group of Burnham on Crouch u3a on their "Archaeological Discoveries at Southminster Hall".



The remains were unearthed by members of the Burnham group of the u3a.

Some of you may have visited the site when there was an Open Day at the site in September 2021 and will appreciate all the work involved in such a project.

Meanwhile enjoy December and all those Festive Lunches and we wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

Kathy and Sylvia

"Sound" Person "Still" Required

The basic sound kit is now easily carried in a briefcase and quickly plugged in at the side of the stage behind the curtain. Setting up the projector is unchanged and is also quite simple.

Please see any member of the Committee and we can have an informal chat/demo at the next meeting. Support and training will be provided, as well as written instructions.

Alec Fraser

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The photography group continues to meet monthly via Zoom.

The next meeting is on **Wednesday 18th January at 7:30pm.**

The subject for January is "Sports, games and other recreations".

Visit the photography page on our website to see the growing and varied selection of pictures.

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

New members are most welcome, pictures can be of any standard that you have taken yourself.

Examples of recent 'Furniture' pictures:



Nicki Iszard



Shirley Macro



Carol Bates

Tony Groves



Tony Groves webmaster@maldonu3a.co.uk

MARITIME GROUP Programme 2023

Mon 2nd January	No meeting – Bank Holiday
Mon 6th February	Talk by Gordon Davies on “ Brunel’s SS Great Britain ”.
Mon 6th March	Talk by John Rogers on Sagas and Experiences from 70 years of ‘ Messing around in Boats ’. This will be a light-hearted illustrated talk about some of the things that John has got up to since he was involved with boats from the age of around nine. John has a long memory when it comes to boats and there will be no exaggerations!
Mon 3rd April	Trip to Dover Castle , this will include a visit to the Secret Wartime Tunnels together with other tours. Cost per person is £30.00, this includes cost of entry, coach, driver’s gratuity, and coach parking in Dover. Depart West Maldon Community Centre at 8:15 (please park your cars at the far end of the car park), arrive Dover Castle at 10:30, depart at 4:00pm.
Mon 1st May	No meeting – Bank Holiday
Mon 5th June	Talk by Jimmy Byam Shaw on “ Small Boat Building ”.
Mon 3rd July	Talk by Barbara Jones of Lloyds Register about the History of Lloyds over the past 260+ years .
Mon 7th August	Your ideas please for a trip as we cannot meet at the club.
Mon 4th September	Talk and updates by John Rayment on the Restoration of the Sailing Barge “Pudge” .
Mon 2nd October	Talk by Gordon Davies on “ Brunel and the SS Great Eastern ”.
Mon 6th November	Talk by John Pomfrett on City of Lakes and Rivers – waterways in and around Berlin . Following a brief introduction to the early, largely natural river navigations that served Berlin from its founding in the 13th century, this talk traces the development of the canals and river navigations around Berlin.

Mon 4th December	Talk by Simon Stephens of the National Maritime Museum Greenwich on “Model Boat building for the National Maritime Museum” . Followed by discussions on our 2024 programme and some Christmas cheer.
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All meetings are held at The Blackwater Sailing Club, Basin Road, Heybridge Basin on the first Monday of the month, starting at 10:00 am.

Malcolm Case

GEOLOGY GROUP

The Geology Group continues to meet at 2pm on the third Wednesday of the month; for the winter months we will be meeting in the Jubilee Room at West Maldon Community Centre.

At our meeting in November, we had a very informative session on the Geology of Thailand.

There will be *NO MEETING in December* so our first meeting for the New Year will be on **Wednesday January 18th** at 2pm at WMCC when we will have another look at the “Geology of the Isle of Wight”.

We would be pleased to see any new members who would like to join us.

Sylvia Cousins

AVIATION GROUP

The next meeting is on **Friday January 20th** at 11.00am.

Joe from the group will be giving us a talk on the life story of a World War I pilot. A story of a pilot's journey from childhood, through being pitched at a young age into the early years of aerial warfare, and beyond. This will provide a fascinating follow up from Trevor's presentation on Stow last month.

Venue is the Old Pavilion, Dawson Field, Main Road, Danbury CM3 4NQ

Chris Tressider

STROLLERS

NOVEMBER WALK

On Sunday 20th November six of us left the Daisy Meadow car park, Heybridge Basin at 10:15 am for a walk in aid of the BBC Children in Need Appeal.



What seemed initially a wet and miserable day turned out to be bright and sunny but the wind made it feel cold. We walked from the car park up to the canal bank, then across the lock gates and on to the river bank, because the pathways were wet and slightly muddy due to the recent rain. We then crossed from the river bank on to Battle Rise then on to the BIO22, across the bridge then down the steps and on to canal bank for a stroll back to the car park.

The canal water level was high coming close to overflowing the bank in places. A very pleasant stroll on a very bright and sunny morning.

A total of **£270.00** was raised which has been sent to the Children in Need Appeal. Thank you to those who came on the walk and to all who gave a donation.

Malcolm Case

STROLLERS

STROLLERS TOO

The next meetings:

Sunday Strollers – **Sunday 15th January**

Tuesday Strollers Too – **Tuesday 24th January.**

Both meetings will be in the upstairs room at the Oak House, High Street, Maldon, and both will start at 10:30 am. These meetings are to discuss dates etc for our walks in 2023.

If you would like to join either group do, please come along on one or both dates.

We look forward to seeing you there.

On behalf of both groups, we would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy, peaceful, and healthy New year.

Malcolm Case

WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome the following new member:

Peter Windos Harris

You in
your 3rd
age

FROM THE EDITOR



Many thanks for all your contributions to the newsletter throughout this year, please keep them coming. Look at our website for any updates in-between newsletters.

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Liz Samson

FILM GROUP

As always, we had another good meeting. Both film choices received very interesting comments, with one getting good scores all round and the other with some differences of opinion.



Starting with **"Loving"** – this film based on a true story received excellent comments from all. Excellent performances from all the main characters, particularly Ruth Negga as Mildred Loving and Joel Edgerton as her husband Richard. A well-directed film depicting ordinary people who find themselves in the middle of a legal row because they just happen to be of different colour and married. Their case goes all the way to the Supreme Court, who unanimously holds that laws prohibiting interracial marriage are unconstitutional. Before going to Washington, their lawyer asks Richard if he has a message for the justices. Richard replies, "Tell the judge I love my wife." **Score: 8**

"The Young Offenders" offered something completely different, based around the difficult daily lives of two young lads. Not to everyone's taste but some did find it amusing. Quite a silly plot about two troubled lads stealing bikes to cycle some distance to see if they can find a missing bale of drugs supposedly washed up on a beach. Of course, it leads to some daft capers, involving chickens, a very peculiar policeman, a local thug, and a nail-gun wielding villain. **Score: 6**

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday, 25th January 2023**, usual time of 7.30pm.

The next film choices are yet to be selected.

Shirley Macro

CANASTA GROUP

Canasta starts again on **Friday January 13th** and fortnightly from that date.

13th and 27th January

10th and 24th February

Iris Slaney

PETANQUE GROUP



The Petanque group finished its last game of the 2022 season on 1st December 2022 and we had a surprisingly good attendance with 14 players.

The forecast for the coming weeks is now for some very cold days, and even wrapping up well does not compensate for the icy breeze coming off the river.

We have had a good season with some new members joining the group this year. We have not needed to cancel many sessions due to inclement weather.

The regulars will be contacted when we propose to start again, and we would welcome any new players wishing to join us, details will appear in the newsletter.

Geoff Macro & Jack Veash



ART APPRECIATION GROUP

We are continuing with "Lives of the Artists", (thank you, Vasari), and in the New Year will also examine some artworks in detail.

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday 4th January**, at a member's house.

For more information please contact

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Ken Hazell
Vice Chairman	Theresa Byles
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 Andrew Simmonds
Webmaster	Tony Groves
Social Group	Michael Childs

Contact the u3a Office

u3a

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Deadline for next newsletter: 4th January 2023

CO-ORDINATORS

Art Appreciation	Judith Johnston Andy Simmonds	London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Sheila Childs
Aviation	Chris Tressider	Meet & Eat	Joan Cummins
Astronomy	Malcolm Case	Mah-Jong	Mags Pell
Balti Night	Bob Gowers	Maritime	Malcolm Case
Bird Watching	Graham Evans Peter Gaywood Michael Bagshaw	Music Appreciation	tba
Bridge	Sheila Epps	Padel Tennis	Ken Hazell
Canasta	Iris Slaney	Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash Geoff Macro
Cribbage	Pat Clements	Photography	Tony Groves
Croquet	Jean Healey Geoff Macro Shirley Macro	Poetry	Jo Robson
Discussion	Liz Jones	Reading	tba
Film Club	Shirley Macro	Rummikub	tba
French Conversation	Ann Lester	Scottish Country Dancing	Diana Rogers
Garden	Theresa Byles Veronica Smith	Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
Geology	Sylvia Cousins	Strollers/Strollers Too	Malcolm Case
German	Howard Broadbridge	Tenpin Bowling	David Arnold
Handicraft	Marian Manning Brenda Heal	Tree Identification	Veronica Smith
History—Georgians	tba	Wild Flowers	Veronica Smith
Just Jazz	Jim Light David Coombes	Wine Circle No. 2	Graham Boswell
Local History	Sylvia Cousins Kathleen Goff	Wine Circle No. 3	Mary Burd
		Wine Circle No. 4	Ann Goody
		Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

Comment on ***“Third Age Matters”***
via ***Patrick Forsyth***

third age ^{u3a}
matters

Schedule of Events – January 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
						1 New Year
2 Bank Holiday	3 German	4 Tenpin Bowling Padel Tennis Art Appreciation	5 Tenpin Bowling Rummikub	6	7	8
9 Discussion Handicrafts	10	11 Tenpin Bowling Meet and Eat Bridge Padel Tennis	12 Tenpin Bowling French History-Georgians Scottish Dancing	13 Canasta Sing for Pleasure	14	15 Strollers
16 Monthly Meeting Just Jazz	17 German	18 Tenpin Bowling Photography Geology Astronomy Padel Tennis	19 Tenpin Bowling	20 Aviation	21	22
23 Local History	24 Strollers Too Wine 4	25 Tenpin Bowling Bridge Film Group Wine Group 2 Writing for Fun Padel Tennis	26 Tenpin Bowling French Music App Wine Group 3 Scottish Dancing	27 Canasta Cribbage Sing for Pleasure	28	29
30	31 German					

Schedule correct at time of publication – please confirm dates with co-ordinators.

Also check website www.maldonu3a.co.uk