

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Maldon and District

Newsletter

*Wishing all our members
a happy and healthy new year*



January 2024

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Registered Charity 1086182

FROM THE CHAIR

As we enter this new year, I am sure my brief should be to look forward to what our u3a will be doing.

However, after the Christmas period wishing for peace and goodwill to all, we are faced daily with scenes where there seems to be only hatred, conflict and death. I doubt whether any previous Chairman started a year where the world seemed so full of violence and life so cheap. To avoid any comment would surely be very inward looking. So what can we do, either individually or as a u3a?



As a u3a, we can do little or nothing. Our “movement” is apolitical and, as a charity, we cannot give to other charities. Individually, however, we can try to ensure that our political leaders pitch their tents on the moral high ground, have open minds when it comes to reducing or ending the conflicts, and maintain intellectual honesty. A personal view is that we should do this.

We continue to enjoy the freedom of being able to write to MPs and ministers and of course the press. We have lived through several decades and our range of experience is immeasurably greater than those of tender years. Our views should be heard.

For 2024, our Committee has a new Treasurer, new Publicity Coordinators and a new Facebook page. However, Theresa, our Secretary, for personal reasons and with some regret, has decided to resign. I take this opportunity to thank her for her contribution to our u3a over the years and for her work on the Committee, in particular, for standing in when there were vacancies that needed to be filled. She has booked some excellent speakers for this year and will continue with the Garden Group.

I am looking forward to another successful year with our existing Groups thriving and an increase in the range of activities we offer – plus, of course, the fascinating mix of presentations at our monthly meetings throughout the year. There will, no doubt, be challenges, the first being the need for a new Business Secretary. I hope one of you will see this as a really good opportunity and will get in touch to see what is involved.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy new year.

Ken Hazell

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new members:

Christine Eshmade

Bob McNiff

Kay Mehrtens

Alison Mitchell



MONTHLY MEETING

Monday 19th February

Wickham Bishops Hall

Doors open at 1.30pm for 1.45pm start

Tea/coffee are available prior to the start of the meeting

Speaker: Gary Matthews

Easton Lodge

Gary's talk covers the history of Easton Lodge, including the life of the Countess of Warwick , the WW2 airfield adjoining the gardens and the work of the Trust in restoring the gardens

Please remember your membership card

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 4708090

www.thesilverline.org.uk

**The Silver Line**
helpline for older people

MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2024

18th March	Alan Pamphilon	<p>Essex women that rocked the boat</p> <p>True stories of ten local ladies who influenced national history. Women of Chelmsford who fought for their equality and rights, and the history of the local Essex girls from 15th century witches to the publicans of the 1960's. From the Anti Slavery campaigners to the brave factory workers of WW2.</p>
15th April	Tyler Butterworth	<p>The actor son of Peter Butterworth (Carry On films) and Janet Brown (best known for her Maggie Thatcher impersonation). A talk on the remarkable life of his parents.</p>
20th May	Richard Pusey	<p>Medical History on the doorstep</p> <p>Retired surgeon & London guide.</p>
17th June	Cherish Watton	<p>The Women's Land Army</p> <p>The history of the WLA. Over 200,000 land girls worked in the WLA from June 1939 until November 1950.</p>
15th July	<p>Social Event</p> <p>Cream Tea</p>	<p>Details to follow</p>
19th August	Prof. Stephen Brown	<p>CHASE Africa</p> <p>Prof. Brown, a Trustee, will talk to us about the work of this charity to support partner organisations in Africa that enable access to family planning, healthcare and rights, whilst protecting the environment and building resilience to climate change.</p>

16th September	Eve Regelous	Everything Strictly A glittering journey starting back in the '50s when <i>Come Dancing</i> and formation dancing was at the fore up to the latest series of <i>Strictly Come Dancing</i> . Behind the scenes information on a
21st October	AGM Andrew Wiltshire	Fungi & Flagstaffs The fascinating connections between Beatrix Potter, Kew Gardens and mycology
19th November	Tim Turner	Going , going, gone A history of Auctions. Tim returns to delight us with this history of the world of auctions.
16th December	Christmas Entertainment	Details to follow

If you know of any speakers that you can recommend please contact our

Speaker Secretary Theresa Byles

FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you for your contributions, please keep them coming and don't forget to include your photographs. The deadline for the next issue is Wednesday 7th February.

Kris

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Our first meeting for the new year is on **Monday 22nd January at 2pm** in the Town Hall, Maldon when our speaker will be John Frankland with his talk on ***100 years of Motor Racing in Essex.***

Between the wars Essex hosted motor sport events that saw drivers like Malcolm Campbell and Raymond Mays compete at public road speed events at Laindon, Thundersley and Westcliff. The post-war years saw the Boreham Airfield circuit at the forefront of motor sport. The hosting of a Formula 1 Race in 1952 was a highlight that might have led to the British Grand Prix being held there. More than a dozen venues and some significant events from 1899 onwards are covered in this talk.

All members are welcome to attend and we wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Kathy and Sylvia

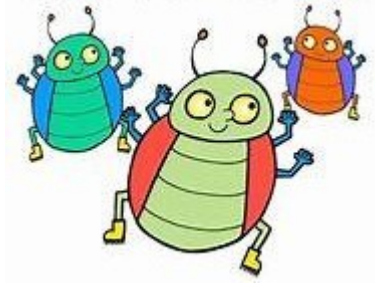
Reminder

Don't forget that there are many on-line learning events on the national u3a website. Zoom talks currently listed include the World of Toulouse-Lautrec, Fun with Mathematics and an Intro to the AirFryer !

Just click on the link on our web page , [maldon u3a.com](http://maldon.u3a.com)

SOCIAL ORGANISING GROUP

Coming Soon



The Social Organising Group
presents a

Beetle Drive

on 27th February at 2.30 pm
at Plantation Hall, Heybridge

Ticket £4.00, including tea and cake,
available from Rosemary Case

ASTRONOMY GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 22nd January** at **7:30pm** at the Chigboro Fishing Club, Chigborough Road, Heybridge, Maldon. Weather conditions allowing, we will be night sky observing. Please see the list below of planets which hopefully, we will be able to see. Please bring your telescopes/binoculars/monocular with you. Should the weather be against us then we will continue with our discussions on "The Planets".



Planets visible during January 2024

Mercury—a morning planet rising before the sun and shining at around mag -0.2 at the beginning of the month and brightening as the month progresses.

Venus—a bright planet located not too far from Mercury in the early morning sky.

Mars—very dim and low in the sky early in the morning. If you have a low horizon, you might be able to spot Mars near Mercury on the 27th.

Jupiter—well placed for viewing in January, shining at mag -2.4 to -2.5 and can be found in Aries.

Saturn—an evening planet and lower in the sky. It can be found in Aquarius shining at mag 1.0 .

Uranus – an evening planet shining at mag 5.7 and technically visible to the naked eye from a dark night sky.

Neptune—another evening planet which can be found in Pisces at mag 7.9

Our Moon

In January, our moon is often referred to as the Wolf Moon, Moon after Yule, Old Moon, Ice Moon, or Snow Moon 1. These names are derived from different cultures and are based on the typical weather conditions or events that occur in January.



Malcolm Case

RNLI 5p and 20p Collection Pots

Once again a big thank you on behalf of the RNLI for your continued support with filling the collection pots.

In 2023 we raised £237.38 bringing our overall total from October 2019 to £639.94. A great effort

Please continue collecting and keep handing the pots in at either the Maritime or main meetings

Happy New Year

Mary Burd

New Year – new pastimes

Why not consider joining a new group this year. There are more than 30 interest groups or pastimes to choose from. Just get in touch with the coordinator or join a meeting and take it from there.

What have you got to lose?

MARITIME GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 5th February**, starting at **10:00** at the Blackwater Sailing Club, Basin Road, Heybridge Basin, Maldon CM9 4SD, for a talk by Gordon Davies on ***Brunel and ss Great Eastern.***

The *Great Eastern* was an iron ,sail-powered, paddle wheel and screw-propelled steamship designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, and built by John Scott Russell & Co. at Millwall Iron Works on the River Thames.



Launched: 31 January 1858

Length: 211 m

Construction started: 1 May 1854

Displacement: 32,160 tons

Capacity: 4,000 passengers

Completed: August 1859

Malcolm Case

MARITIME GROUP Programme 2024

Monday 4th March	Talk by Raj Kehal of the Port of London Authority, who will talk about the History of the PLA over the years from their beginning up to the present day, including the industries, wharves, docks etc within the Port limits, type of trade and volume etc.
Monday 1st April	Easter Monday No meeting
Monday 6th May	Bank Holiday No meeting
Monday 3rd June	Talk by Malcolm & Rosemary Case on the Irrawaddy river in Myanmar , from its source to the Andaman Sea.
Monday 1st July	Talk by Linda Cook on the History of the RNLI . Beginning with a brief description of the founding of the RNLI and some of its developments along the way. Followed by its work today centring around the Southend lifeboats and the work that they do, moving on to examples of rescues around the coast , focusing on the Tower lifeboat station in London. Finally, some information about the training given to crew members and the facilities at Poole.
Monday 5th August	Trip to be arranged
Monday 2nd September	Trip to Sutton Hoo , to be arranged
Monday 7th October	Talk by Alison Mainwood on the History of Navigation from Lodestones to GPS

Monday 4th November Talk over Zoom by Roger Butler, with a colourful introduction to all aspects of ***Waterway Heritage***. Roger will include fascinating engineering and architecture, historic boats, and plenty of unusual landmarks. He will also weave in some archive images as well as important contemporary features such as the Falkirk Wheel in Scotland. Aspects include grand warehouses and quirky cottages, tall lock flights and sweeping aqueducts, deep tunnels and a vast array of bridges and even tiny bollards. Many such buildings and structures still reflect the work of the original distinctive canal companies, including of course, the famous Roses and Castles canal boat artwork.

Monday 2nd December Talk by Julie Hobby and Padre Ruth on the work of the ***Seafarers' Centre, Tilbury***. The talk will cover all aspects of their work for seafarers and will include details on how your donations to the centre are used. The talk will be followed by some Christmas cheer, nibbles and discussion on our 2025 programme.

BIRD WATCHING GROUP

Our next visit is on **3rd February** to Abberton Reservoir.

Meet at 10.00 in the visitor car park.

For further details or car share requests please contact:

Peter Gaywood

Michael Bagshaw



Redshank

Thanks to Alec Fraser for the photos taken on Maldon Prom in December.



Little egrets fishing

Juvenile Tufted Duck



Sanderlings



Birdwatching Group Programme 2024

3rd March	Cudmore Grove, Mersea	Meet in the car park
7th April	Blue House Farm, North Fambridge	Meet in the car park
4th May	Fingringhoe	Meet in the car park
1st June	Minsmere Reserve	Meet at 11.00 in the
7th July	Tollesbury	Meet in Woodrolfe Road car park
No Meeting		
7th September	Maldon Prom	Meet by Rossi's Kiosk
6th October	Heybridge Basin	Meet in the car park
2nd November	Walton on the Naze	Meet in the Visitor Centre car park
1st December	Hanningfield Reservoir	Meet in the Visitor Centre

NB All rendezvous times 10am unless otherwise stated. For details of locations or car shares please contact the coordinators.

Juvenile Herring Gull in its first winter plumage



AVIATION GROUP

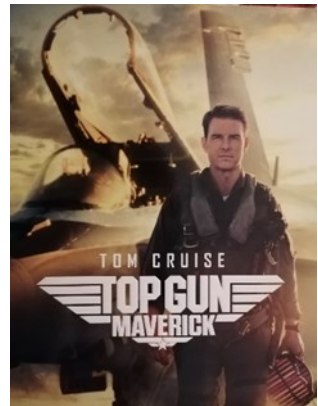
Hello everyone, and a Happy New Year to you all!

I wonder how many “Wannabe Pilots” were disappointed when an air fryer turned up in their Christmas stocking with Santa having misread their wish list!

Just before Christmas we watched ***The Shepherd*** at Woodham Mortimer Hall, an evocative aviation ghost story set during Christmas Eve 1957 with pivotable cameo roles performed by John Travolta. This was followed by an enjoyable end of term lunch at Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome.

On **Friday 26th January** we will be showing the Tom Cruise film ***Maverick*** from the Top Gun series. This is a full-length film so we will have a short comfort break midway.

This event will be at our **NEW** venue, ***Woodham Mortimer Village Hall, Post Office Rd., Woodham Mortimer, CM9 6SY*** beginning at **11.00**.



Looking ahead to **Thursday 21st March**, a visit to the superb Aviation & Motor Museum at the old Brooklands racing circuit in Weybridge, Surrey is planned. As the initial interest suggests that the numbers may exceed the 16-seat capacity of the 360 Community Transport minibus, the cost of hiring a larger coach from Fords of Althorne has been examined. Further information on the museum can be found at: <https://www.brooklandsmuseum.com/>

The cost per person works out at £19.70 (group entry fee at Brooklands) + £20/£25 (coach hire etc) = £40/£45. Guided tours of the site lasting approximately 1 hour are also available @ £3.50 pp.

To enable viable transport to be selected, please can you let me know of your interest by **31st January** at the latest. Once that process is complete and minimum numbers determined payment would be then be required by the end of February at the latest. Pick up points would be at West Maldon Community centre and Danbury, Eves Corner.

Don't forget that our meetings now take place at our **NEW** venue:

Woodham Mortimer Village Hall, Post Office Rd., Woodham Mortimer, CM9 6SY

Chris Samson

AVIATION GROUP PROGRAMME 2024

- | | |
|---|---|
| Friday 26th January | At last! The showing of the Tom Cruise film <i>Maverick</i> from the Top Gun series. |
| Friday 23rd February | An illustrated talk by our own Joe Marshall on the amazing airmen and women who formed the backbone of the Air Transport Auxiliary –ATA, collecting Britain's war planes from the factories and delivering them to the operational squadrons throughout WW2. |
| Thursday 21st March
(avoiding Easter & Friday M25 traffic) | A visit to the <i>Brooklands Museum</i> is planned. Details and transport arrangements TBA. |
| Friday 26th April | TBA |

STROLLERS

Our meetings in January are planning meetings for our walks during 2024.

The **Sunday Strollers** meeting is on **21st January**, starting at **10:30** in the upstairs room of The Oak House, High Street, Maldon.



Our **Tuesday Strollers** meeting is on **Tuesday 23rd January**, starting at **10:30** in the upstairs room of The Oak House, High Street, Maldon.

Please do join one or both meetings along with your ideas for walks in 2024 so that we can have a varied programme in differing surroundings. All walks should be, if possible, within a twenty-mile radius of Maldon and should be about 4.0 miles in length.

Tea/Coffee can be purchased at the bar on the ground floor.

Malcolm Case

FILM GROUP

Our next meeting will be **Wednesday 31st January 2024**. Please get in touch if you would like to join us.

Shirley Macro

TENPIN BOWLING

Do you fancy a chat and a cup of coffee with some tenpin bowling thrown in? The bowling, although it is good exercise and a chance to improve your coordination skills, it is not the main reason for coming. In fact, when the group was originally envisaged more than 20 years ago it was as a social group to meet for coffee with the bowling an added extra., and that has remained the case. A good morning is not necessarily a high score, but did you enjoy yourself?

We play every Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 09.45 – 12 noon at Madison Heights, Park Drive, Maldon.

If you are interested, please contact:

Alan Buck

David Coombes



BRIDGE GROUP

Please note that beginning in January there will be additional bridge sessions during the months with five Wednesdays—January, May, July and October.

Gill Cory

THE BIG BALTI

The next curry night will be held on **Monday 29th January** at the Balti Bhujon restaurant, Mill Road, Maldon. **6.30ish** start.

To add your name to the list please contact:

Graham Evans

Bob Gowers

POETRY GROUP

The Future

Now it's all over – we've eaten the crumbs;
We've put on the inches round bellies and bums
And quietly reflecting – just a few years ago
We were struck with malaise that changed everyone so.
I personally aged a decade in three years
And wasted my life with unimaginable fears.
How I long to be positive, see the future now clear
Our beautiful Planet can't fight with a tear
Some are trying so hard to make powers that be see
No more waiting or wishing; we need Activity
We must all pull together – the entire human race
And if one thing's for certain – the Earth is Our Place.

Jo Robson

POETRY GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on **Thursday 1st February**, starting at **2:00pm** in a member's house. The poet for discussion is Alfred Lord Tennyson.

1st Baron Tennyson FRS was an English poet. He was the Poet Laureate during much of Queen Victoria's reign. In 1829, Tennyson was awarded the Chancellor's Gold Medal at Cambridge for one of his first pieces, *Timbuctu*. He published his first solo collection of poems, chiefly *Lyrical*, in 1830.



He was born: 6 August 1809, Somersby, died: 6th October 1892, Lurgashall,

Spouse: Emily, Lady Tennyson (m. 1850–1892), education: King Edward VI Grammar School (1816–1820), Trinity College.

Grandchildren: Lord Tennyson, Harold Courtnay Tennyson.

Jo Robson

JUST JAZZ GROUP



David and I are most grateful for the new jazz fans coming along to our meetings.

Our next meeting is **Monday 15th January** from **7.30–9.30pm**, in the Little Ship Club, Hythe Quay, Maldon . The bar will be open so pop in for a drink, some music and a chat. We look forward to seeing you.

Pete Condon David Coombes

RUSSIAN CONVERSATION

One of our members, Irina Vahonina, is Russian and she has offered to start a Russian language activity group. She also speaks Polish, so she is able to teach that as well. The emphasis will be on conversational language – beginners are welcome.

Maybe you would like to expand your knowledge of foreign languages or maybe you, or a family member, is hosting a Ukrainian family (most Ukrainians also speak Russian) and would like to converse more freely.

Please contact Irina for more information

GERMAN CONVERSATION

Our meetings are held on alternate **Tuesdays** at my house in Wickham Bishops. Our next meeting is **23rd January from 2–4 pm.**

Please contact me prior to the meeting if you will be attending.

Howard Broadbridge

MAHJONG

Mahjong has vacancies for new members. We are a small, very friendly group that meet every other Friday in the Linton Room, West Maldon Community Centre.

If you haven't played Mahjong before we are very happy to teach you.

Please note that there will be **no** meeting in January. Our next meeting is **Friday 2nd February at the new time of 1.30–3.30 pm**

For more information, please contact Mags Pell.

PADEL TENNIS GROUP

The session is every **Wednesday from 2.30 to 4pm** at Padel United, Park Drive Health Club, Maldon. There are three indoor courts plus an outdoor court, and we normally have the use of two courts. We cater for between 3 and 10 members without anyone having to sit out for more than a few minutes and things have gradually evolved such that we get just about the right number.

Padels and balls are provided, and the charge per session is £3 per head. This is collected at the start of the session and paid to Padel United at the end. This is all cash and very simple. Suitable footwear is a must, but the main hazard would be tripping over balls not in use.

The exercise is fairly light although, as can be seen from the youngsters at one of the next courts, it could be pretty vigorous if you were a good player. The normal game is doubles so no need to rush around. To start with all of us found it difficult to take the ball off the back wall but the overall standard has continued to improve, and we enjoy some good rallies.

If anyone is interested in joining the Group or perhaps having a “taster” session, please contact me at

Committee members

We continue to look for volunteers to join our committee. Would you be willing to spend a couple of hours a month to attend committee meetings and to assist at monthly meetings ?

Please give this some thought and contact one of our committee members if you feel you could help. Thank you.



You in
your 3rd
age

Tai Chi

I am the group coordinator for Tai Chi classes which are held on **Monday** afternoons **2-4pm** at West Maldon Community Centre. All Maldon group members are welcome.

For more detail contact:

Peter Harden

Maldon u3a Publicity

We are pleased to announce that Irina Vahonina and Andy Simmonds are our new publicity coordinators.

They are making good progress in spreading the word about our u3a and promoting the many benefits that joining can bring.

Our webmaster, Tony Groves, launched a page on **Facebook** with links to our website in December, and this will provide us with the opportunity to promote some of our groups and activities to a wider audience.

For those of you familiar with Facebook please take the time to look at our page, [Maldon U3A](#), and like or follow it.



YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Ken Hazell
Vice Chairman	Alec Fraser
Business Secretary	
Treasurer	Steven Clarke
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case
Newsletter Editor	Kris Taylor
Speaker Secretary	Theresa Byles
Groups Coordinator	Malcolm Case
Committee	Andy Simmonds Carol Bates

Trustee	Geoff Cory
Webmaster	Tony Groves
Social Group	Michael Childs

Contact the u3a Office

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laugh,
live

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GROUP CO-ORDINATORS

Art Appreciation	Judith Johnston Andy Simmonds
Aviation	Chris Samson
Astronomy	Malcolm Case
Balti Night	Bob Gowers Graham Evans
Bird Watching	Peter Gaywood Michael Bagshaw
Bridge	Gill Cory
Canasta	Iris Slaney
Cribbage	Pat Clements
Croquet	Geoff Macro Shirley Macro
Discussion	Pat Jones
Film Club	Shirley Macro
French Conversation	Ann Lester
Garden Visits	Theresa Byles Kris Taylor
Geology	Sylvia Cousins
German	Howard Broadbridge
Handicraft	Marian Manning Brenda Heal
History— Victorians	Kathy Goff

Just Jazz	Peter Condon David Coombes
Local History	Sylvia Cousins Kathy Goff
London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Sheila Childs
Meet & Eat	Joan Cummins
Mah-Jong	Mags Pell
Maritime	Malcolm Case
Padel Tennis	Ken Hazell
Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash Geoff Macro
Photography	Tony Groves
Poetry	Jo Robson
Publicity	Irina Vahonina Andy Simmonds
Reading Rummikub	Patrick Forsyth Janice Martin
Scottish Country Dancing	Diana Rogers
Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
Strollers Sunday & Tuesday	Malcolm Case
Tenpin Bowling	Alan Buck David Coombes
Wine Circle No. 2	Graham Boswell
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***

Schedule of Events - February 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
			1 Poetry Rummikub Ten Pin Bowling	2 Mahjong	3 Bird Watching	4
5 Maritime	6 German	7 Bridge Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis	8 Royal History- Victorians Scottish Dancing Ten Pin Bowling French Conversation	9 Singing Canasta	10	11
12 Discussion Handicraft	13	14 Art Appreciation Meet & Eat Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis	15 Rummikub Ten Pin Bowling	16 Mahjong	17	18 Strollers
19 Monthly Meeting Easton Lodge Just Jazz	20 German	21 Bridge Geology Photography Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis	22 French Conversation Scottish Dancing Ten Pin Bowling	23 Canasta Reading Cribbage Singing Aviation Talk	24	25
26 Local History Astronomy	27 Strollers	28 Film Writing Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Wine Group	29 Ten Pin Bowling Wine Group			

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