

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Maldon and District

Newsletter



Sand Martin colony—Walton on the Naze Birdwatching Group

Thanks to Alec Fraser

Membership Renewals Are Now Due

July 2025

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Registered Charity 1086182

FROM THE CHAIR

Last month I got AI to write **From the ChAIR** and I thought she did rather well but watching Wimbledon she seems now to be making errors. This month, I shall start with a quote from a newspaper article.

“The Thames Barrier Authority regret that gate number 3 failed to close during the spring tide, which was heightened also by a tidal surge. We are carrying out a thorough investigation as to why this happened and expect a full report to be available by the year end. A spokesman said there had been a small glitch in the control system and that lessons would be learned to avoid future problem and he apologised for any inconvenience that has resulted from this failure.”

Of course, this article is entirely fictitious, and the inconvenience would have been the flooding of part of central London.

On 2nd June, I joined the Maritime Group to visit the Thames Barrier. This Barrier is a most remarkable feat of engineering as indeed was its construction in the 1980s. What is different about this engineering marvel is that it must work and it does – at a time when much around us does not seem to do so. The barrier must be carefully maintained and has significant back-ups and resilience. In practice this means it must be low-tech and not, it seems, dependent on sophisticated systems and imported micro-chips.

Moving now to the East London Cemetery, we heard at our June meeting about the interesting people buried here. This was an excellent and carefully researched talk. In addition to well-known celebrities from the East End, we were surprised that those that rest in this cemetery include German spies executed at the tower of London and a mass grave for victims of a shipping disaster in the river Thames. Some of the latter died, not from the accident, but from the pollution in the Thames.

Our July meeting involves rather a change of mood as Steve Scruton will be running a Musical Quiz and there will be refreshments to nourish the “little grey cells”.

Ken Hazell

Chairman

Maldon & District u3a

1st September 2025 to 31st August 2026

Membership Subscription Renewals

Subscriptions: Are due by no later than the 31st August 2025.

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 £21.00 per person. If you wish to continue to receive the u3a TAM magazine then the subscription is £25.00. Subscriptions 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** 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 **31st August 2025**. We do not accept cash. **The forms together with your cheque (if paying by cheque) MUST be returned to the Membership Secretary at 30 The Spinnaker, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford. CM3 5GL.**

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.

Membership cards have already been sent to you (white plastic bar coded credit card size) in May 2020 or when you joined if after this date.

MONTHLY MEETING

Monday 18th August

Wickham Bishops Hall

Doors open at 1.15 for a 1.45 start

The Livery Companies of the City of London

David Williams

For many centuries the skills of craft industries were controlled by the Livery Companies but their influence faded as Britain became more industrialised. Yet the Livery movement has survived and many of the 110 companies are supporting education, offering scholarships, building and maintaining schools and financing organisations who care for the sick, the needy and the homeless.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new members:

Audrey Beagle Eve Regelous

WITH REGRET

It is with great regret that we have to inform you of the death of Mary Hughes. Mary had been a member since 2002.

It is also with great regret that we have to inform you of the death of Geoffery Cotterell. Geoffery had been a member since July 2002 (and his wife, Joyce, had been our chairman from 2010 to 2013).

MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2025/26

15th September	Tortoises – To Be Honest Jane Williams	Jane will be talking about the history of pet tortoise keeping; interesting features of tortoise biology and their ways of life. Together with photographs of the variety of different tortoises seen around the world.
20th October	AGM Followed by a talk by Patrick Forsyth	Our own u3a member and author, Patrick will tell us about the ‘funny side of writing’. Light refreshments
17th November	The Dig Charlie Haylock	An intriguing and sometimes hilarious look behind the scenes in the making of the Netflix film <i>The Dig</i> . A film based on the novel of the same name about the discovery of the famous Sutton Hoo burial ship and the people involved.
15th December	Christmas Entertainment	Music, quiz and much more.....
19th January 2026	The Art Of The Cartoonist Harry Venning	Harry, an award winning cartoonist,, illustrator and comedy writer, traces the story of cartoons and cartoonists over the last two hundred years, from Hogarth and Gilray to Herjé and Schulz. There will be humour, there will be history and there will be live drawing, as he shares some of the tricks and techniques of the trade.
16th February 2026	A Schoolgirl’s War Mary Smith	The story of school life during WW2, arising from two fascinating recent discoveries. The first was the uncovering of an extensive set of tunnels used as underground classrooms, and the second was the discovery of a set of paintings created as the war unfolded.

16th March 2026	The Life and Strife of Honey Bees Stuart Overton-Smith	The more that we have learnt about the lives of honey bees, the more in awe we have become. They are so important to the ecosystem that we, and they, are part of. Other bees are discussed too, specifically the solitary bees that are easily kept in your garden in the homes that are made by Leigh Bees.
20th April 2026	From Titanic to Batman: The Highs & Lows of a Stuntwoman's Life Lucy Allen	With over 30 years experience, Lucy reveals the thrills, challenges, and behind the scenes secrets of stunt work—plus, enjoy a 10-minute film of Lucy in action.
18th May 2026	Borley Rectory, the most haunted house in England Bryan Thurlow	Following a visit from a professional ghost hunter in 1929, a national newspaper declared , 'Borley Rectory, the most haunted house in England.'
15th June 2026	Copped Hall Philip Mckinder	Following on from his excellent talk on the 1952 Lynmouth Flood Disaster Philip returns to tell us about Copped Hall, a Georgian Mansion near Epping that is undergoing restoration.

If you know of any speakers that you can recommend please contact our Speaker Secretary: Theresa Byles



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

Travel

Would you be interested in a 5 day tour, based in the outskirts of Paris, including full day tour in Paris and a visit to the newly re-opened Notre Dame, plus a visit to the Palace of Versailles and Monet's retreat in Giverny?



Departs Thursday 7th May 2026 with travel by coach and ferry to a hotel outside Paris.

Day 2: Full day tour of Paris and guided tour of Notre Dame.



Day 3: Full day guided tour of the Palace of Versailles

Day 4: Visit to Monet's country retreat at Giverny and the nearby village of Verdon.

Day 5: Return to Calais for afternoon sailing back to Dover and return to Maldon.

Includes: Travel, 4 nights accommodation at Novotel Paris, Saclay, Half Board

From **£749pp** sharing, **£899** sole occupancy



For further information please contact::

Malcolm Case

LONDON WALKS

London Walks take place on the **3rd Tuesday** of the month.

We meet a professional guide at 11.00 to be taken on a 2 hour guided walk. The distance walked is not vast as we stop many times to be told interesting and entertaining information. Details of the Walks can be found at www.walks.com.

After the walk you are free to join others for coffee/lunch or plan other things to make the most of your day in London. Travel arrangements are made by yourselves.

June's Walk saw us discovering the legal side of London around the wonderful Inns of Court. These are the professional associations for barristers in England and Wales, and the only bodies that can call individuals to the Bar. We learnt how junior barristers are required to do a pupillage to gain work experience and to try to develop useful contacts for future recommendations.

There are four Inns: Gray's Inn, Inner Temple, Lincoln's Inn, and Middle Temple. All have their coat of arms or emblems: Gray's -griffin; Inner Temple -Pegasus; Lincoln's -lion; Middle Temple -lamb. These emblems are prolific on all the buildings and wrought iron gates etc., very often in gold.



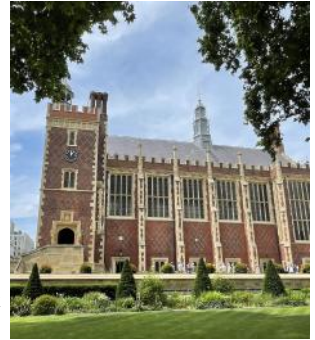
Lincoln's Inn is the oldest Inn dating back to the 13th century, with Georgian, Regency, Baroque and Gothic influences. On an 11-acre site with beautiful, manicured gardens, and housing a chapel, Great Hall and libraries, it has been the inspiration for many a film.

Gray's Inn, the smallest of the Inns was badly destroyed in the Blitz but the buildings are now sensitive replicas of the originals. The children of a neighbouring primary school use the Inn's dining hall for their lunch - what a privilege! Up until 1997 it was compulsory for barristers to eat there too.

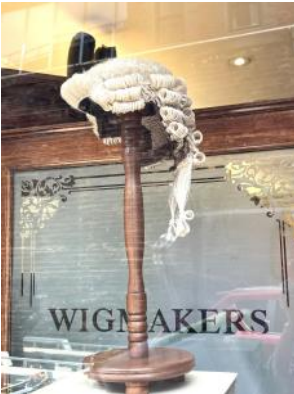
Inner Temple stands on the site of an ancient Hall of the



Knights of the Temple. The Temple church (1185) survived the bombing in WW2 and was featured in the Da Vinci Code.



Middle Temple, close to the Royal Courts of Justice, has wonderful architecture and gardens too.



On our travels we found Ede & Ravenscroft, the oldest Tailors, dating back to 1598. The window displays showed the gowns and horsehair wigs worn by the barristers, with the style of wig denoting the barristers' level of experience. We passed the London Silver Vaults (which I later visited, well worth popping in if you are a silver enthusiast).

I can't convey adequately what a wonderful experience the Walk was. At times it felt like we were walking through the university grounds of Cambridge. Seeing the amazing buildings, gardens and experiencing the sheer tranquillity of all the Inns in the heart of London was something I am keen to repeat. What a shame I opted for a career in computing and not law!

Future Walks for 2025

15th July	Brunel's River Cruise	Meet at Embankment Tube station
19th August	Kensington, The Royal Village	Meet at High Street, Kensington Tube Station
16th Sept	Little Venice	Meet at Warwick Ave, Tube Station.
21st October	Old Mayfair	Meet at Green Park Tube Station
18th Nov	Disastrous London	Meet at Barbican Tube Station
16th Dec	Musical Tour 15.30	Meeting at Tottenham Ct Road Tube Station

The cost for **each Walk is £12 per person**. Payment by cheque in advance please -payable to Maldon & District U3A. **One cheque per event**

Julie Lake

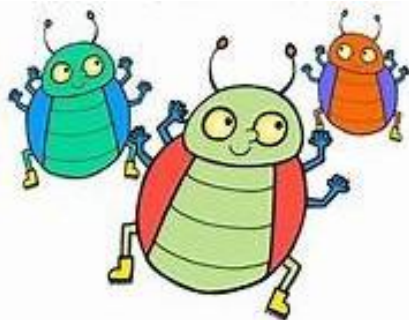
SOCIAL ORGANISING GROUP

Our postponed Beetle Drive is now on **Tuesday 2nd September** 2.00–4.30pm at Plantation Hall, Heybridge, CM9 4AL.

Tickets £4.00, including tea/coffee and cake, available from Rosemary Case

Payment by cheque made payable to Maldon & District u3a

And another date for your diary—**Race Night on Saturday 4th October**. Further details tba



Do you subscribe to [u3a Events](#)? Each month they publish a list of online events for members to participate in.

A flavour of what's coming up in August (and available for booking)

- Staying Safe Online – a u3a presentation with Q&A, Friday 1st August at 10am
 - Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: The Future and History of Drones, Tuesday 5th August at 10am
- Exploring Alternatives to Mainstream Media, Monday 11th August at 2pm
 - George Mallory 1886 to 1924 Friday 15th August at 2pm

George Mallory was a mountaineer, who took part in the 1921, 1922 and 1924 expeditions to Mount Everest, to conduct a thorough reconnaissance of the mountain and determine the most viable route to the summit, hopefully being the first to reach the top. Mallory died on the mountain – but was he still on his way up, or was he on his way down, having reached the summit?

MARITIME GROUP

On a sunny day, Monday 2nd June, 52 members left the WMCC for a visit to the Thames Barrier. Arriving at the Barrier coach park it was then a short walk to the visitor centre where we were met by our two guides. The group was split into two and shown videos and given very detailed explanations on how the barrier operates, why it is there, its construction and cost and its future. Both guides were excellent, their knowledge was extensive, and no question went unanswered.

During the talks, one of the barriers was raised, this happens on a rotational basis to test the operation of the gates – it had taken some persuasion on my part to arrange this closure whilst we were there!!!! Following on from the talk and videos, we were taken on a short walk along the lower embankment towards the barrier with our

guides giving us further information and pointing out the various features. This embankment is on two levels, the lower, which is down stream of the barrier floods when the barrier is closed, so a higher level was constructed. Part of our walk took us past a wall which showed various flood levels which have



occurred over the years. We were also shown the Environment Agency Headquarters building which is nearby. From here we went back to the visitor centre where we were shown a short video on the construction of the barrier and shown a working model of its operation.

The Thames Barrier spans 520 metres across the River Thames near Woolwich and protects 125 square kilometres of central London from flooding caused by tidal surges. It has ten steel gates that can be raised into position across the river.



When raised, the main gates stand as high as a five storey building and as wide as the opening of Tower Bridge. Each main gate weighs 3,300 tonnes. The barrier is closed under storm surge conditions to protect London from flooding from the sea. It may also be closed during periods of high flow over

Teddington Weir. This is to reduce the risk of river flooding in some areas of west London including Richmond and Twickenham. It has been closed 221 times for flood defence purposes since it became operational in 1982 (as at 16 April 2024). The barrier protects around 1.4 million people and 420,000 properties. Construction started in 1974 and was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II on 8th May 1984.

Following our visit, we were then back on the coach for the short journey to the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, where we able to get lunch and visit the various exhibits. A thoroughly enjoyable and informative day.

Malcolm Case

MARITIME GROUP Programme 2025

Monday 4th August No meeting

Monday 1st September Trip to **Tilbury Docks and Tilbury Fort**, with buffet lunch at the Seafarers' centre . We will depart from the **WMCC at 09.00.**



On arrival at Tilbury we will pick up our guide for the Docks.



After lunch we will take the coach to Tilbury Fort..

Cost £30 pp which includes the coach, coach parking, drivers' gratuity and lunch.

There are still some spaces available.

Monday 6th October Talk by **Roger Butler on Treasure Islands** – exploring the Hebrides looking at islands, ferries, wildlife, etc in the Hebrides as well as travelling out to far-flung St Kilda.



Monday 3rd November Talk by **Richard Pusey on “Antarctic Exploration (Scott v Amundsen v Shackleton)**. The talk starts with an introduction to the geography and geology of the Antarctic and the early exploration of the area by Captain James Cook in 1772 on his 2nd voyage. The 3 big explorers, Scott, Amundsen and Shackleton will be introduced, and the early Discovery Expedition of 1901 and the Nimrod Expedition of 1907 are outlined and how they paved the way for the big expeditions to bag the South Pole. The talk then concentrates on the main theme of “Scott’s Last Expedition” of 1910–12 and how it was set up and staffed with particular attention to Edward Wilson and the doctors, George Levick and Edward Atkinson. Some of the medical conditions they encountered are described. Details of the trek to the Pole are given including the strange decision to change the Pole Party from 4 to 5 at the last minute with only rations for 4.



The great disappointment of being beaten to the Pole by Amundsen and the Norwegian team using dog sledges will be described and the terrible return journey of Scott’s party suffering from scurvy, dehydration and slow starvation and final death is vividly illustrated with pictures of frostbite. The causes of Scott’s failure and Amundsen’s success are analysed.

The talk then turns to Shackleton and his Trans Antarctic Expedition of 1914 and the destruction of his ship Endurance by pack ice. How he survived without loss of a single man in the middle of WW1, with no radio communications, must be one

of the greatest stories ever told. Their survival on a slowly melting iceberg, the voyage in 3 small lifeboats to Elephant Island at the tip of the Antarctic peninsula and the eventual boat journey under sail in the James Caird to South Georgia



to get help are vividly described. The talk finishes by summarising the recreation of the famous boat journey in 2013 in the replica Alexandra Shackleton and the Commonwealth Trans Antarctic Expedition of 1955–58 using motorised transport.

The audience will be left with the famous quote: – “For scientific discovery, give me Scott. For speed and efficiency of travel, give me Amundsen but when disaster strikes and all hope is gone, get down on your knees and pray for Shackleton.”

Monday 1st December Talk by **Kris Taylor** on the **Cable & Wireless super yacht** and its race around the World in 74 days, 20 hours and 58 minutes.

The diary of a PR person as she promoted a high-tec, 115ft diesel engine monohull vessel on its journey from Gibraltar around the world whilst its crew of 15, including 4 professional and 11 amateur mariners, undertook a challenge to become the first powered vessel to circumnavigate the globe in less than 80 days in 1998.



This will be followed by some Christmas cheer and discussions on our 2026 programme.

All meetings are held at The Blackwater Sailing Club, Basin Road, Heybridge Basin, starting at 10:00am.

Malcolm Case

HANDICRAFT GROUP

We are a small, very friendly group who meet on the **second Monday** of each month, **10.00 – 12 noon** in the Linton Room, WMCC. Over the next few sessions we are planning to teach members how to crochet, but will also be covering a wide range of projects related to many forms of handicrafts.

There is no meeting in August. Our next meeting is **Monday 8th September**. Why not come along? Please contact us for further details.

Marian Manning

Brenda Heal

ROYAL HISTORY GROUP

We are currently discussing the Edwardian period.

We meet every second Thursday in the WMCC. There is no meeting in August. Our next meeting is **Thursday 11th September** at 10.00 where we will continue not only discussing the Edwardian Royals but also events that were happening in the UK and around the world at this time.

Why not join us?



TENPIN BOWLING

Do you fancy a chat and a cup of coffee with some tenpin bowling thrown in? 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

GARDEN GROUP

Our group enjoyed a visit to Easton Lodge Gardens in June. The weather was delightful and, after mid-morning refreshments of tea, coffee and cake, we were given a guided tour of the spacious grounds. There are



many magnificent trees, dating back to the Edwardian times when the great house was occupied by Daisy, Countess of Warwick. Much of the house was destroyed by fire in 1918 and what is left is in private ownership. The gardens fell into disrepair in the mid-20th century following their requisition by the War Office for WW2, but are now being restored by a friendly and knowledgeable team of volunteers. The Italianate sunken garden with lake and the walled garden were looking particularly good, as the roses were in full bloom. It is remarkable what has been achieved by a team of volunteers. We can thoroughly recommend a

visit to these gardens which are open to the public on Thursdays April – October, and on nine Sundays each year. *Thanks to Brigitte Whiteing for the photos*

The website is www.eastonlodge.co.uk

Two weeks later some of us visited Hever Castle and Grounds, sharing the coach with the Aviation group who were off to Biggin Hill. Although the weather forecast had been somewhat doubtful, it turned out to be a fine day and not too warm. The grounds looked beautiful and despite the hot weather we had



experienced, there were sufficient roses still in bloom to make a good show. The view from the Loggia over the lake is wonderful. The Italian Garden dates back to the time that the Astor family owned and lived in the Castle.

There was time to look round the Castle which had been the family home of Anne Boleyn though later it fell into disrepair. It



was saved by William Waldorf Astor who used his fortune to restore and extend the Castle in the early 20th century and install the Italianate garden which includes roman statuary and stonework. We sure do have to thank our American cousins for their love of our history and heritage.

We had a lovely day. We felt very grateful to our experienced and patient coach driver.

The road by the entrance to the Castle was undergoing a repair and this forced a 25-minute detour through country lanes. Lovely views for the passengers, but hard for the driver.



PLEASE NOTE: The planned visit to Pilgrims Hatch on 24th JULY has been CANCELLED due to insufficient interest.

Theresa Byles

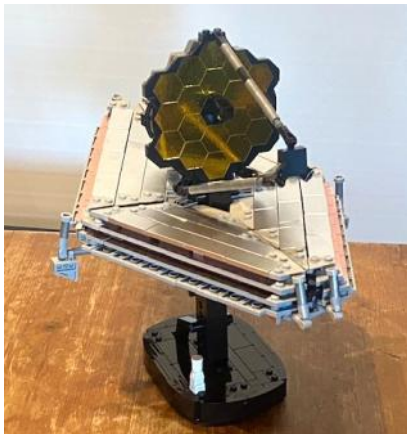
Kris Taylor

ASTRONOMY GROUP

At our meeting on Monday 23rd June, we had a very interesting and informative talk on our closest star – the sun, given by Pat Sheehy. Some Sun facts – Equator circumference: 4,379,000km. Radius: 695,700km. Temperature: 5,973°C to 15,000,000°C. Average orbital speed around the Milky Way: 720,000km/h (200km/s), it takes 230 million years for the sun and our solar system to make one complete orbit. Star type: Yellow dwarf.

Even though the Sun is not solid like Earth, it still has a rotation as the plasma swirls around its surface. On average, it takes 27 Earth days for the Sun to rotate once on its axis, but different parts move at different speeds. The equatorial regions take just 24 days to rotate and the polar regions more than 30. The Sun is in a spiral arm of the Milky Way called the Orion Spur. This branches off from the galaxy's Sagittarius arm. The Sun is the biggest object in our solar system. It contains 99.86% of the mass of the entire solar system and could contain roughly 1.3 million Earths.

Also, one of our group members had made models of the Hubble telescope and of the James Webb telescope, both accurately



made, even down to the reflecting panels on the underside of the James Webb

telescope and also with the solar panels on the Hubble telescope which could furl and unfurl.



The next meeting of the Astronomy group is on **Monday 28th July**, meeting at The Chigboro

Fishing Club, Chigborough Road, Heybridge at 7:30 pm for a talk by Angela Pleasance on *Well Known Astronauts*, this talk will cover who they are, their training to become Astronauts, when they went into space and what they achieved.

Malcolm Case

SUNDAY STROLLERS

The July walk, which will take place on **Sunday, 20th July**, will start and finish at the Rayleigh Arms pub in Terling and is approximately 4 miles. We will arrange parking at the Rayleigh Arms (CM3 2PW). It will take us around parts of Terling, including a small section alongside the River Ter.

The pub is very popular so we would appreciate getting an idea of numbers at this stage so that we can make a provisional booking for lunch. Can you please email me if you are interested in joining the walk and whether you would like to book lunch afterwards?

Janet Morley and Jenny Barclay

STROLLERS TOO

Our Tuesday Walk on **22nd July** is at Hanningfield Nature Discovery Park. The walk will start at The Cafe on the Water (CM3 8HX) and takes us into mixed woodland areas, by meadowland and alongside Hanningfield Reservoir. Half-way along the walk is the Essex Nature Discovery Centre, where we can pause for refreshments (if required). Meet at the cafe entrance at 10.15 for a 10.30 start.

Lunch is at The Old Windmill, South Hanningfield Road, CM3 8HT (O1268 712280) at 12.45.No pre-order is necessary.

Please let me know if you are coming on the walk and if you require lunch,as I need to advise the pub of final numbers by Tuesday, July 15.

Chris Speed

GERMAN CONVERSATION

Please note that there will be no meetings in August
Howard Broadbridge

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 6th August**.

Kris news.maldonu3a@gmail.com

GEOLOGY GROUP

Our lunch in May proved popular so we hope to make this an annual occurrence.

During June and July we continued to look at the geology of the Caribbean, tracing back to when the super continent, Pangea, broke up about 250 million years ago when the Americas separated from Africa and the Atlantic Ocean began to form. There was and continues to be much Tectonic activity through the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods when many volcanoes formed through subduction forming the volcanic arc of the Greater and Lesser Antilles.

Throughout the Cretaceous period from 125 to 65 mya much of the area, like much of the rest of the world was under water and huge deposits of Limestone were formed..

Group members had researched individual islands such as the Bahamas, the Windward Islands, Martinique, Culebra and Cuba.. Barbados was unique in that it had no signs of volcanic activity, showing mainly reef-related limestone rocks.

Please note there is **NO MEETING** in August and we will resume again on **September 17th**. New members are welcome to join us, with or without geological knowledge and everyone is asked to research a selected topic usually with the help of the internet.

If you would like to see where our geological travels take us next, join us on September 17th, for geology, tea and biscuits. Our meetings are held on the **third Wednesday of the month at 2pm** at West Maldon Community Centre.

Sylvia Cousins

JUST JAZZ GROUP

Our next meeting is **Monday 21st July** from 7.30–9.30pm, in the Little Ship Club, Hythe Quay, Maldon . The bar will be open so pop in for drink, some music and a chat. We look forward to seeing you.



Pete Condon

David Coombes

AVIATION GROUP

Hello Everyone,

In June, 20 of us visited the fabulous Spitfire Factory at Biggin Hill followed by a visit to the RAF Biggin Hill museum for a superb day out.



Some of the planes being overhauled



A Two Seater Spitfire

This month we will meet at our regular venue, Woodham Mortimer Village Hall where we will show the film of the 3 vintage AUSTER AOP aircraft that commemorated the 80th anniversary of D Day where their predecessors completed the same journey to provide “eyes” in the sky to help the Allied Armies in targeting the enemy positions.



Looking ahead, we have a full programme of speakers and activities through to Spring of next year and we are still looking at visiting Bomber County (Lincolnshire) this autumn over 2 days with an overnight stay.

The plan is to visit, amongst other places, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight facility at RAF Coningsby, Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre at East Kirby, and the International Bomber Command Memorial Centre.

If you interested in joining the trip and would like more details, please drop a line to me and I will forward your interest to fellow member David Gillespie who is doing the heavy lifting on this one.

All our meetings, unless stated, are held at Woodham Mortimer Village Hall at 11.00, doors open at 10.30 for coffee, biscuits, gossip etc.

Chris Samson

AVIATION PROGRAMME 2025

- Friday 25th July** Remembering the 80th anniversary of VE day in May 1945 we will show a film of the flight by three members of the AUSTER Club who took their aircraft to Normandy to celebrate the 80th anniversary of D-day last June and to commemorate the contribution made by the AUSTER AOP (Artillery Observation) to the success of the landings.
We hope also to live stream the external camera feeds at the famous OSHKOSH 7-day long airshow via the projector to the big screen.
A lot less expensive that flying to Wisconsin in July!!
- Friday 26th September** A Show and Tell event (moved following the March hall cancellation).
The same formula as we used last June when members brought along items of interest or had related family stories to tell.
Please let me know of your interest so that I can build a programme where everyone has time to relate their story or discuss their exhibit.
- Friday 31st October** Guest speaker and local historian David Newman will give us an illustrated talk on the Aviation history all around and above us from the Dengie in the East to the boundaries of London in the West. From the earliest days of heavier than air experiments on the banks of the river Crouch to the present day. More details next month.

**Friday 28th
November**

Guest speaker and fellow u3a member Robin Smith will give us an illustrated talk about the various Aviation companies and activities along our South Coast from the Solent east and west!

More details next month!

December

Aviation Quiz

PETANQUE GROUP

We meet at the Petanque rink on Maldon Prom on a **Thursday afternoon** for a couple of hours or so of fun. New players are always welcome to come and give it a try, so why not come along and have a go. The start time is **2.00 pm** until around 4.00 pm. The Petanque pitch is opposite the Marine Lake at the Promenade Park, Park Drive, Maldon Essex CM9 5JQ.



No charge is made to play but you must be a member of Maldon & District u3a or one of the Maldon u3a cluster groups.

Car parking is available at the park, please note Maldon District Council make a charge, or in the side streets.

We may be able to loan you some boules to get you started to see if you like it, but you will need to purchase some of your own to play regularly.

The season is April to October, and we only play if the weather is dry.

Contact Jack Veash or Geoff Macro for more details.

PADEL TENNIS

The session is every **Wednesday** from 2.30 to 4pm at Padel United, Park Drive Health Club, Maldon. We cater for between 3 and 10 members without anyone having to sit out for more than a few minutes.

If any one interested in joining the Group or perhaps having a taster session please contact: Ken Hazell.

FILM GROUP

Our June meeting was another good one and I thought the discussions around the films were very interesting. Thank you all, especially Barry for his selections.

On Chesil Beach – Interesting storyline set in the early 1960s about two young people from different social backgrounds who fall in love, marry and then find their relationship stalling once they attempt to become more intimate. Through flashbacks their lives are revealed, showing very different and difficult upbringings. We felt there was possibly a moral to the story and perhaps it is that love doesn't necessarily conquer all. Well acted by the whole cast, particularly the two leads by Saoirse Ronan and Billy Howle. There were some truly cringe-worthy scenes, they obviously needed some help! **Score: 8**

Aisha – Certainly not an easy watch as it brings home how difficult it can be for asylum seekers fleeing from danger. Beautifully acted by Letitia Wright as a Nigerian refugee and well supported by Conor Healey as they develop their friendship. Certainly not a fast action movie, but has slow, quiet moments full of emotion. The interactions with authority show the bureaucracy involved, and, apart from the hostel manager, no one is being deliberately obstructive. The process takes a long time and, sadly, people like Aisha live in limbo.

Score: 8

There will be a break for July, interrupted by holidays!

Next time: ***King Richard***– 2021 American biographical sports drama film starring Will Smith as Richard Williams, the father and coach of famed tennis players Venus and Serena Williams (both of whom served as executive producers on the film). Available BBC iPlayer until 3rd August.

Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl – 2024 British animated comedy film produced by Aardman Animations. Wallace's latest invention is hijacked by a vengeful Feathers McGraw. Available BBC iPlayer.

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday, 27th August, 7.30pm via Zoom.**

If you would like to join us, please just get in touch.

Shirley Macro

Summer is well and truly here, with record breaking temperatures and long hot sunny days. So seven of us headed for the coast, not to take a dip or for a spot of sunbathing but to see what we could see at the Naze nature reserve, run by the Essex Wildlife Trust.

At this time of year, our coasts and countryside host an abundance of feathered migrants from far and wide. Swifts and swallows swooped over the clay cliffs snatching insects in mid air. The dark brown swifts have a shorter body and longer wings than swallows and come to us from central and southeast Africa, spending almost all their adult life in the air. But their numbers in the UK are declining, falling by 62% between 1995 and 2021, and they are now on the red list of Birds of Conservation Concern. The decline has been blamed on the loss of nesting sites in buildings and falling numbers of insects.

We were pleased to see plenty of sand martins – also returned from Africa, flying in and out of the nesting burrows they dig in the crumbling cliffs. They are faring better than swifts, classified as green on the BCC.

Once again we used the Merlin phone app to identify birdsong, this time picking up blackcaps, chiff-chaffs, whitethroats, a Cetti's warbler and, we're pleased to report, a greenfinch. Once a common garden bird, their population has fallen by 63% since 1993. This is primarily attributed to the disease trichomonosis which is spread through contaminated food and water. Greenfinches have been moved from green to red in the BCC report.



Out on the shoreline were a pair of ringed plovers, small rotund waders with distinctive black and white markings, foraging for invertebrates and crustaceans. They are a resident species to the UK, but are joined by other birds from Europe in winter.

Mike Bagshaw Peter Gaywood

30th August (September meeting brought forward) Chigborough Lakes.
Meet in car park opposite Chigborough Road entrance (TBC)

5th October Wallasea Island. Meet in Reserve car park

1st November Hanningfield reservoir. Meet in Visitor Centre car park

7th December Langdon nature discovery park. Meet in Visitor Centre car park

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Ken Hazell	
Vice Chairman	Alec Fraser	
Treasurer	Steven Clarke	
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case	
Minutes & Speaker Sec.	Theresa Byles	
Newsletter Editor	Kris Taylor	news.maldonu3a@gmail.com
Groups Coordinator	Malcolm Case	
Committee	Andy Simmonds Carol Bates Margaret Harker Patrick Forsyth (co-opted)	

Webmaster	Tony Groves	webmaster@maldonu3a.co.uk
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GROUP COORDINATORS

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
Country Dancing	Diana Rogers
Croquet	Geoff Macro Shirley Macro
Discussion	Pat Jones

Engineering	Tony Groves
Film Club	Shirley Macro
French	Ann Lester
Garden Visits	Theresa Byles Kris Taylor
Geology	Sylvia Cousins
German	Howard Broadbridge
Handicraft	Marian Manning Brenda Heal
History—Edwardians	Kathy Goff
Just Jazz	Peter Condon David Coombes
Local History	
London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Sheila Childs
London Walks	Julie Lake
Meet & Eat	Joan Cummins
MahJong	Mags Pell
Maritime	Malcolm Case
Padel Tennis	Ken Hazell
Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash Geoff Macro
Photography	Tony Groves
Rummikub	Janice Martin
Russian Conversation	Irina Vahonina
Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
Social Events	Margaret Harker Brenda Heal
Strollers Sunday & Tues	Malcolm Case
Tenpin Bowling	Alan Buck David Coombes
Wine Circle No. 2	tba
Wine Circle No. 3	Mary Burd
Wine Circle No. 4	Ann Goody
Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

Schedule of Events – August 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Engineering	Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Croquet	Ten Pin Bowling Petanque	Singing		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Discussion		Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Meet & Eat	Ten Pin Bowling Petanque French Conversation Country Dancing			Strollers
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Monthly meeting Livery Companies of London Just Jazz	London Walks	Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Croquet Photography Zoom	Ten Pin Bowling Petanque French Conversation	Singing		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Astronomy	Strollers	Padel Tennis Film Zoom Writing for fun Wine Group	Ten Pin Bowling Petanque French Conversation Country Dancing Wine Group	Cribbage	Bird Watching Chigborough Lakes	