

**u3a** learn,  
laugh,  
live

Maldon and District

**Newsletter**



**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

**December 2025**

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

Registered Charity 1086182

## FROM THE CHAIR

I hope you are dusting off your sparkles and festive clothes ready for our Christmas special this month. Those of us who have enjoyed the Purleigh Phil performances before know that we shall have a most enjoyable afternoon.

Your committee was most heartened to see a good turnout at the New Members' Coffee Morning. It was a positive, inspiring event, with members keen to get involved with the interest groups, and maybe start some new ones. Let's have a shout-out for Steve Collis, a recent joiner, who has set up the Guitar & Ukelele Group and found that there are plenty of members interested in this. Thank you Steve.

Also, I would like to recognise the contribution of Malcolm Case who has been a very active member for many years, both on the committee and running a number of groups. In 2001 he founded the Maritime History Group, which then became the Maritime Group due to the range of topics covered. The first few meetings were held in the River Bailiff's Office on the Hythe but as the numbers increased, meetings moved to the Maldon Little Ship Club and thence to the Blackwater Sailing Club.

The group meets on the first Monday of the month, at 10.00 sharp. All members are welcome; no pre-booking required. There has been a great variety of speakers giving talks on a variety of Maritime based subjects, such as – the Canberra during the Falkland's conflict, re-rigging of the Cutty Sark following the fire, sailing around the world by cargo ship, ship design to name but a few. The group has also been on more than fifty day-trips and some fifteen five-day Maritime themed holidays; to North Wales, Liverpool to see the "3 Queens" sail up the river Mersey, Exeter, Antwerp, Sweden to see the "Vasa" and many more. The group has also had several Maritime themed Dinners: Battle of Trafalgar, Mary Rose, Britannia, Titanic etc. By September 2026, the group will have been going for 25 years which is a remarkable undertaking.

Malcolm thinks this is time for a celebration, and so do I!

Theresa Byles

Chairman

## What's new?

We have had several announcements recently about new groups and will continue to report on what goes on.

The Guitar & Ukulele group is now up and running.

Meantime, lists are available at the main meeting for people to sign up to potential new groups that have been suggested. These currently include:

- Book (reading) group
- Poetry (reading) group
- Climate change group
- Walking football group
- Spanish conversation group
- Wine tasting group (an additional one as the existing one is full)
- Knitting/crochet group.

None of these have a workable number yet, though some need only one or two more to make them viable.

Note also that several groups can take more people. These currently include:

- Astronomy (which meets on the 4th Monday of the month at 7.30)
- Geology (which meets on 3rd Wednesday of the month)
- Writing for fun (which meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month)

Coordinators for these groups are listed elsewhere in the newsletter and if any other groups would like to be listed here, please say.

Patrick Forsyth

### 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 January. Kris [news.maldonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:news.maldonu3a@gmail.com)

## MONTHLY MEETING

**Monday 19th January**

Wickham Bishops Hall

Doors open at 1.15 for a 1.45 start

**The Art of the Cartoonist**

**Harry Venning**



Harry Venning has been a professional cartoonist for over thirty years, during which time he has provided cartoons for several high profile UK publications (The Guardian, Radio Times) as well as for countless more obscure titles (British Journal Of Wound Care).

He was awarded UK Strip Cartoonist Of The Year for his Guardian strip Clare In The Community, which he adapted into a Sony Award winning Radio 4 sitcom starring Sally Phillips.

In The Art Of The Cartoonist Harry will be tracing the history of his profession through the work of artists who have made an impact upon language, culture, history, and most importantly, upon him.

These include James Gillray, Charles Schulz, Herje (Georges Remi), Posy Simmonds and Ronald Searle.

Harry will also be drawing live. Prepare to hear some tricks of his trade, learn where to put eyebrows for maximum effect, learn what a plewd is and when you should use it, and discover exactly what the Eskimo brothers said in The Funniest Joke Ever (possibly).

## WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome our new members:

Brenda Brown

Shirley Hunter

Sheena Campbell

Gillian Brett

Lindsey Seago

David Seago

Chris Denham

## MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2026

<b>16th February</b>	<b>A Schoolgirl's War</b> <b>Mary Smith</b>	The story of school life during WW2, arising from two fascinating recent discoveries.
<b>16th March</b>	<b>The Life and Strife of Honey Bees</b> <b>Stuart Overton-Smith</b>	The more that we have learnt about the lives of honey bees, the more in awe we have become.
<b>20th April</b>	<b>From Titanic to Batman: The Highs &amp; Lows of a Stuntwoman's Life</b> <b>Lucy Allen</b>	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.
<b>18th May</b>	<b>Borley Rectory, the most haunted house in England</b> <b>Bryan Thurlow</b>	Following a visit from a professional ghost hunter in 1929, a national newspaper declared, 'Borley Rectory, the most haunted house in England.'
<b>15th June</b>	<b>Copped Hall</b> <b>Philip Mckinder</b>	Following on from his excellent talk on the 1952 Lynmouth Flood Disaster Philip returns to tell us about Copped Hall.
<b>20th July</b>	<b>Summer entertainment</b>	Musical Memories—the return of Steve Scruton & Ian Wyatt with a trip down memory lane.

If you know of any speakers that you can recommend please contact our Speaker Secretary: Margaret Harker

## WITH REGRET

It is with regret that we must inform you that Jo Robson passed away on Friday 5th December. Jo had been a member since 2000 and had been the coordinator of the Poetry Group.

## GUITAR & UKULELE GROUP

On Tuesday 11th of November the inaugural meeting of the new Maldon & District u3a **Guitar & Ukulele group** took place. As a start up meeting this took place at my house in Maldon. The amount of interest and people that came along made for a rather interesting, fun and busy afternoon in our lounge.

Including myself and my brother from Braintree u3a, who kindly supplied most of the music, we had ten people in attendance. A very good turn out for a first meeting and hopefully the start of a fun and regular group.



Guitar and Ukulele go together well. We have people of all abilities and play everything from Rock 'n' Roll to Oasis! All you need is an instrument and if possible a music stand, we will supply easy to play music and lyrics.



The meetings will be on the **1st and 3rd Tuesday** of each month from **10.00 until midday** in the Linton Room at West Maldon Community Centre. There is plenty of free parking and each two hour session will be £3.

Contact **Steve** if you would like to join.

Steve Collis

## BRIDGE GROUP

If you would like to play Bridge we meet on the **first and third Wednesdays** at the WMCC starting at 9.15 for 9.30. We play social Bridge in a friendly atmosphere.

If you would like to join us please contact Gill Cory

**Maldon All Saints Church** held their Annual Christmas Tree Festival over the weekend of 5–7th December. Among the 65+ trees on display representing individuals and organisations within the Church and local area was one representing our very own u3a.

Our thanks go to Shirley Macro for her excellent u3a colour coordinated display.



## JUST JAZZ GROUP

Our next meeting is **Monday 15th December** 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.



Some of you have mentioned concerns over lack of parking close to the Club. Permits are available to park on 'the Hard' in front of the Club. Please ask David on arrival.

Pete Condon

David Coombes

## Did you know?

Landlines are going digital at the end of January 2027, and the u3a are running another of their events to inform members about the changes and how they will impact them. This is run in conjunction with BT Digital Voice and will take place on Thursday 11 December at 3pm as a Zoom meeting.

See the link in our website or go to <https://www.org.uk/u3a - Events>

## SUNDAY STROLLERS

Our penultimate stroll of the year took us to the charming village of Great Tey in the heart of the Essex countryside on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November. Sixteen cheerful walkers gathered at 10:30 in the car park of The Chequers pub, ready to stretch their legs and enjoy the outdoors.

Despite the sky looking rather grey and unpromising, the weather was mild and kind to us—much appreciated after Storm Claudia had gifted Essex a generous helping of rain the week before! We were braced for mud up to our ankles, but the paths were surprisingly pleasant as we strolled along country lanes, grassy tracks, woodland paths and a couple of fields.

Halfway round, we paused at a newly built memorial dedicated to the airmen who tragically lost their lives when two Lancaster Bombers collided during a night mission above the surrounding fields. The story, told via an audio bench beside the memorial, was a touching moment and provided a perfect spot for our group photo.



We continued our route and eventually returned to The Chequers—just over four miles walked, spirits high, and not a raindrop in sight! The pub had kindly reserved tables for us, and three more members joined for lunch, making a lively group of 19.

Lunch was delicious and disappeared quickly, followed by a birthday toast to Gillian, a Children in Need collection (thank you Malcolm), and a spirited round of festive bingo—won by Jenny!

If the idea of a pleasant Sunday walk, good food and friendly company appeals to you, why not join us? We meet twice a month on a Sunday and a Tuesday, and new faces are always warmly welcomed!

Nick Sizer

Please contact Malcolm Case if you would like to join the Strollers Group.

## STROLLERS TOO

On Tuesday 25th November our walk started from The Star Inn at Steeple. The walk was in aid of the **BBC Children in Need Appeal** for which we, currently, have raised **£500.00**.

The weather was in our favour, clear blue skies and sunshine but a very cold northerly wind. Our route took us past Steeple Church, then on to Steeple Bay caravan park, where we saw several new static caravans for sale, from there we continued along the sea wall which gave



spectacular views across the river Blackwater to Osea Island. There was plenty of wildlife to observe along the mud flats and also inshore. We continued along the sea wall for just over one mile before turning off and crossing a small ditch, this involved us having to negotiate a rather high metal bar at the entrance to the small bridge, however once across it was down a narrow lane between hedges and thence across fields and back to the pub for a well earned and excellent lunch. The walk was some 4.5 miles in total and one which we would recommend.

Malcolm Case

## STROLLERS

The next meeting of the **Strollers** group is on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2026**, starting at **10:30** and meeting upstairs at The Oak House, 35 High Street, Maldon, CM9 5PF, to discuss our 2026 programme of walks.

The next meeting of the **Tuesday Strollers** is on the **27<sup>th</sup> January 2026**, meeting at **10:30**, at the same venue as the Sunday strollers meeting, again to discuss our 2026 programme of walks.

Please come along to either one or both.  
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](http://www.walks.com). After the Walk you are free to enjoy London as you wish. Travel arrangements are made by yourselves.

For our November Walk (Disastrous London) we met near the Barbican and assembled in Charterhouse Square to be told we were standing on a Black Death pit where over 30,000 bodies were buried. This set the scene for the Walk during which our guide regaled us with grisly stories of the executions of the likes of William Wallace who was hung, drawn and quartered for treason at Smithfield. Charterhouse has an interesting history having been built originally as a priory. After the Dissolution of the monasteries it became a courtyard mansion, then being bought by Thomas Sutton who established a school and alms houses.

We passed Smithfield meat market, with its interesting facade which has been in operation since the 10th century but now faces possible demolition and redevelopment (how sad).



We had an unexpected visit to St Bartholomew The Great church, one of the oldest churches in the City founded in 1123; it features a wonderful oriel window and an amazing statue entitled Exquisite Pain by Damien Hirst, of the 'skinned' St Bartholomew (showing again, the barbarity in past centuries). The church has been the setting for many films, including The King's Speech and Four Weddings and a Funeral.

The gatehouse to the church built in 1595, featuring a half-timbered Tudor building, survived the Great Fire and in the 18th century, a Georgian facade was

placed across it. In 1917, during a Zeppelin raid, the facade was blown off exposing the Gatehouse once again, mercifully protected.

And of course we saw Barts Hospital, the oldest hospital in Britain.

The Black Death, as well as killing up to 60% of Europe's 14th century population, wiped out cheap labour, and caused the introduction of poll taxes and froze wages, whilst increasing prices. This led to the Peasants' Revolt, and standing in Smithfield Market Square envisaging 10,000 rebels on the warpath and the widespread slaughter that ensued, was a sobering moment for us.

We were told of the Great Fire of London, tragically spreading as the Lord Mayor would not give permission for fire breaks to be made.

We stood by Cock Lane, an appropriately named street, being the only street licensed for prostitution! Our humorous guide told us of the many other streets illegally used for this 'trade' with names far too rude for me to print in the Newsletter!

And finally more gruesome facts of life in Newgate Prison in the 18th century. No fresh air, no water, rife with disease. Jailers had no salary and they lived by extortion of the prisoners. There was no hope for the prisoners, many incarcerated for petty theft, for if they even survived their sentence, which was highly unlikely, on release and unable to pay their debts they were flung back in prison again.

Food for thought: The first London Underground train ran in 1863; the last public hanging was in 1868.

*Thanks to Nicki Izzard and Brigitte Whiteing for the photos.*

### **Last Walk of 2025:**

**16th Dec** Musical Tour. **15.30.** Meeting at Tottenham Court 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 please.

**Our 2026 walks will begin in March.**

Julie Lake

## GARDEN GROUP

### Possible day trip Thursday 23rd July 2026

Looking for possible visits for the Garden Group, I found that the RHS is holding a **Summer show at Sandringham**. I am wondering whether there are a sufficient number of us to make a day trip by *coach viable*. *Tickets for these shows sell out quickly, so I would need to make a firm booking quite soon*. Assuming we could find a minimum of 30 members to go, we can get a group booking. RHS members also pay to attend these events. At 30 people, the cost would be approximately £72 – £35 for the entrance fee and £37 for the coach seat. If we had more members, the cost would go down. I understand that it is difficult to commit oneself so far in advance, but that is the only way we can be sure of getting tickets. The journey is approximately 2 1/4 hours plus a comfort stop.

We have some members interested in this visit, but not quite sufficient yet. I shall advertise it to neighbouring branches in the new year, so please do let me know if you wish to come.

**Please let me know if you wish to join this visit.**



#### **RHS Sandringham Flower Show 22 – 26 July 2026**

Held in the grounds of the royal family-owned estate, RHS Sandringham Flower Show is an exciting new RHS Show coming to Norfolk in July 2026. Expect coastal-inspired

show gardens, fruit and vegetable competitions and fabulous florals, all nestled within a countryside setting.

Get take-home gardening tips from the Long Borders, learn about climate change mitigation at the Grow Forward Gardens and enjoy timeless picnics on the lawn... all whilst taking in the beauty of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla's private retreat.

Theresa Byles

## 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. The cost is £9 per session which includes shoe hire and tea/coffee & biscuits..



If you are interested, please contact:

Alan Buck

David Coombes

## GEOLOGY GROUP

Please note there is NO MEETING in December. We start again on **Wednesday 21st January 2026**, when will continue looking at the Tertiary Period starting a mere 65 million years ago when Essex geology began to come into its own and we can learn about the ground beneath our feet which for so long had been under water.

We would be pleased to see interested new members with or without geological knowledge. We are all asked to do some research especially via the internet in readiness for discussion at our monthly meetings.

We meet on the third Wednesday of the month at 2pm at West Maldon Community Centre, so why not come along and meet our friendly Group for Geology, tea and biscuits!!

Sylvia Cousins

## THE BIG BALTI

The next curry night will be held on **Monday 26th January**. Venue to be confirmed

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

Graham Evans    Bob Gowers

## MARITIME GROUP

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January – A talk by John Rogers on the *Blackwater Estuary from the sea to Beeleigh Falls*.** John will take us on a virtual 'cruise' up the Blackwater Estuary. This illustrated talk will celebrate the beauty of this noble waterway taking in points of interest, history, navigation and wildlife along the way.



**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – talk by Gordon Davies on *the English Channel 1875*.** Webb swimming it, cross channel ships designed to help passengers use them without being seasick and the first attempt at creating a channel tunnel.

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March – talk by David Griffiths on *Working on a North Sea Oil Production Platform*.**

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April – No meeting – Bank Holiday**

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June – Trip TBA**

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July – talk by Ron Piper on *World War II Merchant Navy Convoys across the Atlantic*,** with mention of his father who was on ships in these convoys.

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August – Trip TBA**

**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September – talk by Roger Butler,** by Zoom, on the tiny archipelago of **St Kilda** which lies forty miles west of the Outer Hebrides – you won't find it on any road atlas! These isolated islands have a unique history, and the last residents were evacuated in 1930. The impressive cliffs are some of the tallest in Europe and the seabird colonies are amongst the most important in the North Atlantic. The talk describes a week spent on the main island – and just getting there is part of the adventure

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October – talk by John Johnson-Allen on *Roslyn Wemyss, Admiral of the Fleet: The Man Who Created Armistice Day*.** The life of a Naval officer from 1877 to 1919 through peace, war and then peace who managed the successful evacuation of 140,000 troops from Gallipoli and, later, was the British Naval representative at the Armistice negotiations.

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November – talk by Jimmy Byam Shaw on tank testing of ship shapes and design.**

**Monday 7th December – talk by Stephen Nunn on Maldon’s links with the Battle of Trafalgar (1805).** Our overwhelming victory over the French and Spanish fleet off Cape Trafalgar on 21st October 1805 gave the Royal Navy its most famous triumph and confirmed a long tradition of naval supremacy. The battle also immortalised the memory of Viscount Horatio Nelson who was shot and died of his wounds at the moment of his greatest victory. There are some surprising links between maritime Maldon and this famous national event.

u3a members are very welcome at the meetings and on trips.  
Malcolm Case

## RNLI Collecting Pots

Thanks goes to everyone who continue to fill their small Tiptree jars with 5p and 20p coins for the RNLI. We are pleased to tell you that we have just passed a total of £1,000. We started collecting following a Maritime trip in September 2019 and it’s quite amazing how the coins add up.

Thank you again and if you wish to join in jars are always available at the Main meeting or Maritime.

Mary Burd Malcolm Case

## DONATIONS for SEAFARERS CENTRE, TILBURY

All donations are always gratefully received and on behalf of the centre, thank you. If you have any donations, then please give them to me at a monthly meeting or at a Maritime meeting.

Malcolm Case

## ART APPRECIATION GROUP

At our December meeting we completed the last two episodes on ‘The Louvre’ and in January we will begin studying the paintings of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Andy Simmonds

Judith Johnston

The final curtain fell on Saturday, 9th December after some 25 years with a last foray by 10 members on the Abberton reservoir reserve, a popular destination for birdwatchers across north Essex and beyond.



We were not disappointed.

Apart from the plethora of wildfowl out on the water – much diminished by prolonged drought over the summer—there were three stars of the show: a red kite, great white egret and a short eared owl topping the bill, though not all of us were lucky enough to see the bird.

These winter visitors are about the size of a tawny owl and come to the UK from Scandinavia, Russia and Iceland. They are day-time hunters and are to be seen in northern, eastern and central southern England – especially around the coast. They have mottled brown upper parts with a pale belly and a round face with fierce yellow eyes. The birds are on the conservation amber list signifying concern over habitat loss, fluctuations in prey – mainly voles – and persecution. Our owl was flying low over grassy scrub into which it frustratingly disappeared, possibly after descending on an unwary rodent.

The red kite is a major conservation success, recovering from near extinction through persecution and hunting to a widespread, thriving species thanks to large-scale reintroduction programmes, with birds released in the Chilterns and Scotland starting in the 1990s. They are now seen across most of the UK, though persecution and poisoning remain threats in some areas. Despite their size, the birds are scavengers rather than hunters and were common over the London of old, when household refuse was just thrown into the street.

Great white egrets were a rarity a few decades ago, but many now winter in the UK with a few pairs nesting here. Compared to the now familiar little egret great

whites are huge – nearly the size of a grey heron. They stand in shallow water, spearing their prey with their distinctive yellow dagger-like bill. The birds are most often found in south-east England and East Anglia, with the first pair breeding on the Chiltern levels in 2012.

Like other inland waters, the reservoir offers a winter home to many ducks with large flocks out on the water. Those we saw included teal, gadwall, wigeon goldeneye and tufted duck so not a bad last morning's birdwatching – after which we repaired to the visitor centre cafe for welcome mugs of hot chocolate and slices of cake!

Mike Bagshaw      Peter Gaywood

## ROYAL HISTORY GROUP

Our next meeting is **Thursday 18th December** at 10.00 at the WMCC where we will finish discussing the final years of Edward VII's reign.

Why not join us?    Kathy Goff

### Donation to the Little Princess Trust

Shirley Lloyd, one of our u3a members is donating 12inches of her hair to the Little Princess Trust who make wigs for children and young people with cancer.

The cost of a wig is around £500 and Shirley has already started fundraising for this very worthwhile cause. She will be having her hair cut on 17th December at Scoundrels and Scallywags in Maldon.

You can donate online through the Little Princess Trust website:

**<https://www.littleprincesses.org.uk>**

or call 01432 352359 to make a donation over the phone

# AVIATION GROUP

Hello everyone,

At our last meeting In November, we had an excellent illustrated talk by fellow u3a member Robin Smith on Sea Planes over Southampton Water.

It covered many of the early Aviation companies including Sopwith, Fairey Aviation and Supermarine. These were all largely concentrated in the Woolston area of Southampton and the Hythe area on the Western side of Southampton Water.

## Friday 19th December

### Aviation quiz and a short film

Aviation Quiz followed by a short 1970's atmospheric film written and narrated by Jack Currie called ***The Watchtower***, based on his experiences flying Lancasters from RAF East Kirkby and Wickenby during late WW2.

Following up on last month's talk by Roger Smith I have inserted some short clips of the SARO Princess and jet fighter boat. Plus, a couple of surprise flying clips to round out the meeting!

Meeting at **Woodham Mortimer Village Hall at 11.00**, doors open at 10.30 for Xmas nibbles, coffee, biscuits, gossip etc.

## Friday 30th January

### Film of the Nevil Shute story ***No Highway in the Sky***.

Starring James Stewart as a "boffinish" structural scientist based at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough in the immediate post WW2 era of British Civil Aviation. Co-starring Marlene Dietrich and Jack Hawkins.



Friday 27th February	Speaker: <b>Capt. Pete Hewitt – <i>My life in the Clouds</i></b>
Friday 27th March	Speaker: <b>Andy Strange – Subject TBA</b>
Friday 24th April	Speaker <b>Andrew Colley or John Neil – <i>The Man Who Tested Parachutes</i></b>

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

## FILM GROUP

The films under review received varying reports ranging from enjoyable to less favourable comments.

**Red Eye:** a 2005 psychological thriller starring Rachel McAdams, Cillian Murphy and Brian Cox follows the events of a hotel manager ensnared in an assassination plot by a terrorist while aboard a red-eye flight to Miami. As usual with these types of films, the plot was far fetched with strange things happening during the flight, followed by a high speed chase through the airport terminal and a full-on fight in the main character's family home. Also included was a missile fired at a hotel in an assassination attempt. There was plenty going on throughout the film and there was probably enough suspense to keep watching. We decided it was enjoyable enough. **Score: 6**

**The Woman in Black:** a 2012 Gothic supernatural horror film based on the book by Susan Hill. The film stars Daniel Radcliffe as a young recently widowed lawyer who travels to a remote village where he discovers that the vengeful ghost of a scorned woman is terrorising the locals. It also stars Ciaran Hinds and Janet McTeer. It was very creepy in places and there were several "jump worthy" scenes. There was a continued sense of suspense and foreboding, the sets were very well done, with plenty of dark corners, locked doors, strange Victorian automaton toys and, of course, the Woman in Black herself. There was some discussion about the ending of the film, with not everyone particularly liking it, but it did bring the events to a conclusion of sorts and might even be considered a happy one. **Score: 8**

There is **no meeting in December**, but we will be reviewing a couple of films ready our January meeting on **Wednesday, 28th January at 7.30pm via Zoom**. If you would like to join us, please just get in touch.

Shirley Macro

## 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.

# 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

## ASTRONOMY GROUP

At the group meeting on Monday 25th November, one of our members brought along a model of the Saturn 5 rocket complete with launch tower, crawler unit etc, all built to scale. The construction of the model was explained in detail, how plans were purchased and many of the Lego parts required were purchased from across the world. There was also discussion on the actual rocket, its size and how it took astronauts to the moon.



We also had a demonstration of the electronic telescope – SeeStar S50, this is a fully automated small but very powerful telescope which finds and photographs nebula etc and then displays the pictures on a laptop, Ipad or Iphone.

There is no meeting of the group in December, the next meeting will be a visit to Charter Hall, Colchester for a talk on “Work in Progress” by Professor Brian Cox on **16th January 2026**. Future meeting details will be in the January Newsletter.

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. We are currently working on a Christmas Wreath, to be followed by a handmade Christmas Card.

We are now up to full numbers. However, if you are interested in joining the group in the future we are running a waiting list. Please contact us for further details.

Marian Manning

Brenda Heal

## YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Theresa Byles	
Vice Chairman	Alec Fraser	
Treasurer	Steven Clarke	<a href="mailto:treasurer.maldonu3a@gmail.com">treasurer.maldonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case	<a href="mailto:membership_maldonu3a@outlook.com">membership_maldonu3a@outlook.com</a>
Secretary	Carol Bates	<a href="mailto:secretary_maldonu3a@outlook.com">secretary_maldonu3a@outlook.com</a>
Newsletter Editor	Kris Taylor	<a href="mailto:news.maldonu3a@gmail.com">news.maldonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Groups Coordinator	Malcolm Case	
Speaker Secretary	Margaret Harker	
Committee	Andy Simmonds Patrick Forsyth	

Webmaster                      Tony Groves    [webmaster@maldonu3a.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@maldonu3a.co.uk)

Publicity                        Andy Simmonds    [publicity.maldonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:publicity.maldonu3a@gmail.com)  
    Steve Collis

## 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
Guitar & Ukulele	Steve Collis
Handicraft	Marian Manning Brenda Heal
History—Edwardians	Kathy Goff
Just Jazz	Peter Condon David Coombes
London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Sheila Childs
London Walks	Julie Lake
Meet & Eat	Joan Cummins
MahJong	Jane Rainbird Elaine Brady
Maritime	Malcolm Case
Padel Tennis	Ken Hazell
Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash Geoff Macro
Photos for Fun	Tony Groves
Rummikub	Janice Martin
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. 4	Ann Goody
Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

## Schedule of Events – January 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
			1 New Year's Day	2	3	4
5  Maritime Discussion	6  Guitar/ Ukulele  Engineering	7  Ten Pin Bowling Bridge  Padel Tennis Art Appreciation  Meet & Eat	8  Ten Pin Bowling Royal History Country Dancing  German Conversation French Conversation	9  Singing  Canasta	10	11
12  Handicrafts	13	14  Ten Pin Bowling  Padel Tennis	15  Ten Pin Bowling Rummikub	16  Mahjong  Astronomy	17	18  Strollers Meeting
19  Monthly Meeting   The Art of the Cartoonist	20  Guitar/ Ukulele  Engineering	21  Ten Pin Bowling Bridge Geology Padel Tennis Photos for Fun Zoom	22  Ten Pin Bowling  German Conversation  French Conversation	23  Singing	24	25
26  Balti Night	27  Strollers Meeting	28  Ten Pin Bowling Writing for fun Padel Tennis Film—Zoom	29  Ten Pin Bowling	30  Aviation  Mahjong  Cribbage	31	

Blue— Morning      Red—Afternoon      Purple— Evening