

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Maldon and District

Newsletter



RHS Hyde Hall—April 2026

April 2026

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Registered Charity 1086182

FROM THE CHAIR

Who knew a talk about honey bees could be so entertaining? We smiled and laughed a lot and learned even more from our speaker, Stuart Overton-Smith at the March meeting.

A mix of members met at the Oak House on Friday 27th March to see how we could proceed with setting up some new groups and revitalising a few existing ones. A new knitting and crochet group has already been established and will be meeting at the Blue Boar on the first Wednesday morning of each month. The coordinator is Paula Jacobs paularjacobs@googlemail.com

Malcolm (our membership coordinator) and Patrick explained how groups operated and what the role was of a coordinator. There are few rules and groups can vary from a handful of members meeting at a member's home (e.g. French conversation) to larger groups which meet in hired rooms (e.g. Maritime). Most importantly, u3as rely on the active participation of their members.

Suggestions have been put forward for a number of groups and there was sufficient interest shown that morning to encourage us. We are hoping to get an introductory meeting off the ground for each of the following: Book Club, Poetry (reading), Climate Change, Spanish conversation, Family History and a second Wine tasting group. The object of this first group meeting would be for its members to decide how they want to run their group.

I am sure that there are other members who have not yet declared an interest in these proposed new groups but who might like to give them a try. If that is you, please do contact Malcolm, Patrick or me.

Theresa Byles

Chairman

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 **Monday 4th May**
Kris Taylor Newsletter Editor news.maldonu3a@gmail.com

One to watch

On **Tuesday 5th May** Chris Samson, our Aviation Group coordinator, is giving an illustrated talk by Zoom to the u3a National Aviation Group, Flight Inspirations, about the giant flying boat- "The Spruce Goose" - made by the Hughes Aircraft at their California site between 1942 and 1947.

The talk will cover its inception, design, construction and checkered history to the current day.

All members can join the talk by Zoom via this link https://www.eventbrite.com/e/copy-of-flight-inspirations-aviation-group-the-spruce-geese-tickets-1985934119411?aff=oddtcreator&keep_tld=true



Flight Inspirations Aviation Group: May

The "Spruce Goose," nickname for the Hughes H-4 Hercules, was built largely of laminated timber during WWII to counter U-boat losses. Driven by Howard Hughes' bold vision, it became the world's largest aircraft, flying once in 1947 as proof of his ambition, defiance, and engineering daring.

Tuesday 5 May at 10am

Free - online via Zoom

WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome our new members:

Robert Loader Sue Storer Debbie Wells Jackie Gascoigne
John Ferguson Debbie Faux Brian Brotherton

WITH REGRET

It is with regret that we have to inform you of the deaths of two of our members: Janet Buck and Terence Freer.

Janet had been a member since 1999 and Terence since 2024.

MONTHLY MEETING

Monday 18th May

Wickham Bishops Hall

Doors open at 1.15 for a 1.45 start

Borley Rectory, the most haunted house in England

Bryan Thurlow

Following a visit from a professional ghost hunter in 1929, a national newspaper declared in a bold headline, 'Borley Rectory, the most haunted house in England.' This brought a great deal of disruption to the quiet little north Essex village. To discover why the rectory was considered haunted Bryan will take us back to the 19th Century and tell us about two successive rectors, the latter, together with his sisters, was rather obsessed with spiritualism and claimed to have seen the ghost of a nun on several occasions. You will get to meet the Reverend Smith who moved into the rectory in 1928, his wife, Mabel, and Mr Harry Price who was invited to investigate all the strange goings on at the rectory.

MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2026

15th June

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 fine Georgian Mansion currently under restoration. A visit has been arranged on Friday 11th Sept.

20th July

Music and Memories

Steve Scruton & Ian Wyatt

Steve & Ian return with a trip down musical memory lane. Afternoon tea.

Ticketed event—Maldon u3a members only

17th August	Action for Family Carers <i>Rebecca Loader</i>	Action for Family Carers is a local charity which has been supporting carers in Essex for decades. It was founded by Carers for Carers and has been making a positive difference to the lives of unpaid family Carers ever since.
	<i>A short musical interlude</i>	Our own Guitar & Ukulele group will play a medley of songs from their playbooks.
21st September	Maldon's Lost Railway <i>Stephen Nunn</i>	Stephen will take us on a pictorial adventure from Witham to the end of line at Southminster and all stops in between.
19th October	The Commonwealth War Graves <i>Barrie Sears</i>	Barrie will talk about the important work of the CWGC and its educational charity, the CWG Foundation
16th November	AGM followed by a Quiz	A quiz from our own u3a member, Linda Allen
21st December	Musical Entertainment <i>The Purleigh Phil</i>	They're back by popular demand with Christmas music & songs. Festive afternoon tea Ticketed event—Maldon u3a members only

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

Save the Date—Friday 12th June 10.00—15.30

Open Day at Maldon Town Hall

**Our first event of 2026 will be a visit to
the Royal Ballet & Opera House Workshop in Thurrock
on Tuesday 30th June at 11.00.**

This guided tour will take us through the state-of-the-art workshops where the scenery is built, the costume centre and workrooms providing the opportunity to see firsthand the intricate work behind theatre and costume design.

The tour starts promptly at 11.00 and will last approximately 75 minutes. For more details see rbo.org.uk –Thurrock workshop tour.

The cost is £20 pp and this is a self drive event (car sharing can be arranged).

Tickets are limited so to reserve your place on this trip please contact:

Rosemary Case

SOCIAL ORGANISING GROUP

More dates for your diaries, further details will be in forthcoming newsletters:

A Magical Evening Friday 3rd July 6.30—10.00pm

Plantation Hall, Heybridge

Our magical evening begins with your choice of pre-ordered fish or chicken and chips at 6.30 followed by close up magic from 4 magicians from the Mid Essex Magical Society. They will move amongst the tables performing tricks before your very eyes.

Sea Shanty Evening Tuesday 8th September 6.00 —10.00pm

Blackwater Sailing Club, Heybridge

To celebrate 25 years of our Maritime Group you are invited to an evening of Sea Shanties with a two course meal. Bar service

Quiz Afternoon Thursday 29th October 2—4.00pm

Plantation Hall, Heybridge

An afternoon of quiz, tea and cake plus a raffle in aid of Macmillan Cancer.

It is unfortunate that it is necessary to hold some of the events in the evening as we know that many of you prefer not to drive at night. It may be that we have willing drivers that could assist. Please let us know if this is the case.

Margaret Harker Brenda Heal

GUITAR & UKULELE GROUP

We had an excellent turnout for our Tuesday meeting with 15 members

attending. Our main focus was on songs that we want to include in a 'live set' to perform at various events, so audience participation songs are to the fore.

The group has a unique sound of acoustic and electric guitars/ukuleles (yes, we have electric ukuleles as well) plus we now have a drummer!

We are looking forward to entertaining people in the near future with bookings in July and August (more details to follow). The group has come a very long way in a short space of time and continues to evolve.

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

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



KNITTING & CROCHET GROUP

The first meeting of the new Knitting & Crochet group took place on Wednesday 1st April at the Blue Boar, Maldon., and was deemed a great success.

If you are already a keen knitter/crocheter and would like to share your knowledge with others or would just like to have try at a new hobby please get in touch or speak to me at our monthly meeting when I will have some samples of work.

Did you know that men dominated crochet & knitting throughout most of history so we would be pleased to see some of you at our meetings.

Future meetings will be the first Wednesday of the month at the **Blue Boar from 10.00 until 12.00.**

Paula Jacobs

VISIT TO COPPED HALL – FRIDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER

Our main talk in June this year will be on Copped Hall, a fine Georgian mansion near Epping Forest, which is currently under restoration. Following a major fire the Copped Hall Trust saved the mansion and gardens by purchasing them in 1995. The aim of the Trust is to permanently protect the site, and carefully restore Copped Hall and its gardens for educational, cultural and community benefit.

To follow on from the talk, we have arranged a visit to the Hall and parkland on **Friday 11th September at 10.00am**. We will have a guided tour which covers the grounds, the Walled Garden and three floors of the Mansion. The tour takes approximately 2.5 hours with a break halfway for tea, coffee and home-made cake. Please note that the grounds are sloping and uneven, and there is no step-free access inside the Mansion. The price, including the refreshments is **£15 pp**. I need to confirm with the Trust that this visit is going ahead, so please book your place with me promptly.

Cheques payable to Maldon u3a with the name of the trip on the reverse can be handed over at the main Monthly meeting or posted to me at 10 Hopping Jacks Lane, Danbury CM3 4PN or you can pay online. If you are paying by bacs please let me know when you have made the payment.

Maldon & Dist u3a Sort code: 60-13-37 a/c 49774476 reference: Copped Hall

Please note that this is a self-drive event, open to all our u3a members. Car sharing is a possibility. I hope to arrange an option to go for a late lunch afterwards at a local pub – The Horseshoes in Upshire. This will depend upon interest and numbers.

Thank you. Theresa Byles

JUST JAZZ GROUP

Our next meeting is **Monday 20th April** 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,

Last month we had a well attended meeting for “The Battle of the Beams” talk given by Andy Strange. As ever military significance of the day forced a pace of development of guidance systems that are now used by us all in our daily lives—“swords to plowshares” come to mind!

Coming up this month on **Friday 24th April** we have Andrew Colley as our guest speaker – Andrew will give us an illustrated talk entitled “**The Man Who Tested Parachutes**”.

This is the story of Charles Agate who, although trained as a teacher, devoted his service life in WW2 to testing parachutes and to training the newly formed airborne forces of the British Army for the rigours of parachuting into battle.

On **Tuesday 5th May** I am giving an illustrated talk by Zoom to the u3a National Aviation Group, Flight Inspirations, about the giant flying boat- **The Spruce Goose** – made by the Hughes Aircraft at their California site between 1942 and 1947.



The talk will cover its inception, design, construction and checkered history to the current day.

All members can join the talk by Zoom via this link https://www.eventbrite.com/e/copy-of-flight-inspirations-aviation-group-the-spruce-oose-tickets-1985934119411?aff=oddtcreator&keep_tld=true

Wings & Wheels at Stow Maries on Sunday 24th May. If you have a classic car or motorbike and would like to join us, please let me know and I will add you to our list. Currently there are five of us confirmed.

May and June Visits

If you wish to join us on the visits to Brooklands in May or Duxford in June, please let me know soonest as the coaches are filling up—note that we are

combining with the Garden Group on both occasions.

Cheques payable to Maldon & District u3a with the name of the trip on the reverse can be handed over at the main Monthly meeting or you can pay online.

If you are paying by bacs please let me know when you have made the payment.

Maldon & Dist u3a Sort code: 60-13-37 a/c 49774476 using the reference Aviation-(name of trip)

Thursday 21st May Visit to **Brooklands Museum** combining with the Garden Group who will go to RHS Wisley.

Coach cost---£30pp; Group entry cost---£19.99 (based on 10+); 1 hour guided tour---£5pp (based on 12 in group)

Sunday 24th May We plan to have members with classic cars or motor bikes at the **Wings & Wheels show at Stow Maries** on Sunday 24th May.

Let me know if you wish to join us---drivers of the classic get in free but passengers have to buy a ticket via [www.stowmaries.org.uk /events](http://www.stowmaries.org.uk/events) page.

Monday 22nd June Visit to **IWM Duxford** combining with the Garden Group who will go to Audley End house and garden.

Coach cost---£25pp; Group entry cost---£23.10 (based on 15+ in group); self guided trip.

Friday 31st July TBA

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

PADEL TENNIS GROUP

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.

MARITIME GROUP

Monday 4th May – No Meeting – Bank Holiday

Monday 1st June – Trip to Dover Museum and Dover Commercial Docks.

Depart WMCC at 08:30, arrive at Museum at 10.30. The museum shows the history of Dover's Maritime past and houses the remains of a bronze age boat; leave the museum at 12:30 for lunch (not included). Following lunch leave for the Marina Curve with our guide Tim. We will then have a commentary from Tim about cargo operations in Dover, and a visit the Cruise terminal for a tour and talk about its history. Depart Dover for return to Maldon at 4:00pm. Cost per person is **£28.00**, this includes coach hire, coach parking, drivers' gratuity, entry to Dover Museum, guide. Payment by cheque only please.

Monday 6th July – Talk by Don Baines on Dunkirk Heroes – The story of two barges. The two barges are Pudge and Centaur, both Dunkirk little ships, based in Maldon, Don's talk is about the barges' contribution to the success of Operation Dynamo in May – June 1940.

Monday 3rd August – Trip to Blue Town Heritage centre and Museum, Sheerness. Depart from WMCC at 08:30, arrive Sheerness by 10:15 to visit the museum showing the history of Sheerness. A buffet lunch is included, followed by a guided coach tour of Sheerness and its Maritime Heritage. Cost per person is **£44.00**, this includes the coach, driver's gratuity, coach parking, entry to the Heritage centre and Museum, buffet lunch and guided tour. Payment by cheque only please.

Monday 7th 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 5th October – Talk by John Johnson–Allen via Zoom 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 again who

managed the successful evacuation of 140,000 troops from Gallipoli and, later, was the British Naval representative at the Armistice negotiations.

Monday 2nd 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 fleets 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

DONATIONS for SEAFARERS CENTRE, TILBURY

The centre is again asking for donations of knitted hats, gloves, scarves, jerseys, any colour and size. Coats, clean, are also asked for as ships are coming from warmer climes and the crew do not always have warm clothing. They also ask for jigsaw puzzles (complete), DVDs and books. Also, toiletries suitable for male and female and sweets and chocolates with long use by dates.. 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

RNLI Collecting Pots

Thanks goes to everyone who continue to fill their small Tiptree jars with 5p and 20p coins for the RNLI. Our collecting pots last year raised £231 for which the local branch of the RNLI are very grateful.

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

Mary Burd Malcolm Case

STROLLERS

On a sunny and warm Sunday morning in March, 13 Strollers had a lovely 4-mile circular stroll around Danbury Common.

After a bit of car-park juggling we set-off from 'The Cricketers Arms' down the gentle slope of Sporhams Lane to the ford at the bottom. A footbridge avoids having to paddle, and we continued along the road before turning onto a footpath through fields and meadows with horses. After crossing a stile across a stream we reached a road which led us into Danbury Country Park. The path meandered uphill, passing three lakes where we took the photo .

We had a brief stop to watch the ducks and then into the last part of the walk which took us through the Park's woodland, and out onto a path between houses to arrive at some very well-kept allotments and the Parish Church of St John the Baptist. It was a perfect Spring day with blossom in the hedgerows, and leaves



beginning to unfurl on the trees. The view from the ridge by the Church offered stunning views towards the south and Hanningfield Reservoir in the distance. More importantly the pub beckoned below us, about 400 yards ahead, where we arrived around 12.30 to enjoy a delicious Sunday roast. A great morning out in super company; that's Stollers for you !

John and Val Stealey

THE BIG BALTI

The next curry night will be held on **Monday 25th May at the new venue of Bengal Nights, Heybridge Square. Parking available behind the restaurant.**

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

Graham Evans Bob Gowers

STROLLERS

On **Sunday 19th April** our walk will take us through a quiet and serene area of the County from the village of Birch to the somewhat isolated Tudor Gatehouse at Layer Marney.

The walk is along open country around fields and minor roads. The terrain is as usual uneven across the fields so suitable footwear is advised. There is a stile which should not cause a problem. The distance depending on what gismo you have as a measure is about 4 miles and about 10,000 steps for those who target their fitness.

The starting point is the **Hare and Hounds, Layer Breton, CO2 0PN** where we will also finish for lunch. Please meet in the car park at 10.15 for a 10.30 start.

Please contact me direct and state whether you wish to stay for lunch. The normal practice now is to pay a deposit for lunch. I will send out the details and lunch menu nearer the date.

Happy Strolling

Mervyn

ROYAL HISTORY GROUP

Our next meeting is **Thursday 14th May** at 10.00 at the WMCC. We are now into the Windsor era , the period following on from the death of Edward VII until now looking at not only the royal families but also events that were happening in the UK and around the world at this time.



Why not join us? Kathy Goff

PETANQUE GROUP

It is time to dust the cobwebs off those Pétanque balls and head to the Pétanque 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, why not come along and have a go, we play from 2.00 pm until around 4.00 pm. We play on the Pétanque pitch 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 u3a or one of the Maldon u3a cluster groups.



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

We only play if the weather is dry. The season is April to October.

Contact Jack Veash or Geoff Macro

CROQUET GROUP

The first game of the year is scheduled for **Wednesday 15th April from 2–4 pm**.



Croquet is competitive yet sociable, enjoyable, active and healthy. The group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoons from April to October. There is a charge of £8.50 for the use of equipment and tea/coffee at the end of play. Please note that shoes should have flat soles, no heels must be worn and your toes should be covered so no sandals please.

Maldon u3a play with the kind permission of Maldon Croquet Club on the Club lawns at Hatfield Peverel Bowling Club, the Keith Bigden Memorial Ground, Wickham Bishops Road, Hatfield Peverel, CM3 2JL

If you would like more information, or would like to come along and give it a try, please contact: Geoff and Shirley Macro

FILM GROUP

The films under review for March were:

The Damned United – although based on the writer’s interpretation and, therefore, fictional in nature, it did give a good understanding of the events which brought about the short and difficult time Brian Clough spent as Leeds United manager. The film used real footage of football matches from the early 1970s when it was anything but the “beautiful game”. This provided some discussion amongst us about our experiences either going to matches or watching on TV. As always, Michael Sheen was excellent in the title role, well supported by Timothy Spall as his friend and team scout, Peter Taylor. Colm Meaney played Don Revie, who didn’t come across as a particularly pleasant man. It was amusing to pick out some of the other actors, one of which was Stephen Graham who played Billy Bremner. Overall, the film received very positive reviews. **Score: 9**

The Eternal Daughter – not so sure about this film. Well-acted by Tilda Swinton playing both the title role and her mother. It was all rather mysterious, in an eerie setting in a strange hotel which always appeared to be shrouded in mist, with time wavering between day and night. It was creepy at times with an expectation that something would happen, which it didn’t. However, it does sort of resolve itself in the end and mostly becomes clear what is going on. Possibly trying to be too arty and clever at times. Certainly not to everyone’s liking so received mixed results. **Score: 7**

Next time:

Bringing Up Baby – 1938 American screwball comedy film directed by Howard Hawks and starring Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant. The film tells the story of a palaeontologist in a number of predicaments involving a scatterbrained heiress and a leopard named Baby.

The Great Escaper – 2023 British biographical comedy-drama film starring Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson. It is based on the true story of 90 year old World War II Royal Navy veteran Bernard Jordan who “broke out” of his nursing home to attend the 70th anniversary D-Day commemorations in France in June 2014.

Both available on BBC iPlayer.

Our next meeting is on **Wednesday, 29th April 2026 at 7.30pm via Zoom**
New members welcome, please just get in touch.

Shirley Macro

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 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

GEOLOGY GROUP

Our next meeting is on **Wednesday 20th May** when we will continue to look at the geology of the last 65 million years with emphasis on the UK and especially Essex, but showing how this area was affected by worldwide events at this time.

We meet at the West Maldon Community Centre at 2p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month and would be pleased to see interested new members with or without geological knowledge. We are all asked to do some research, usually via the internet, in readiness for discussion at our monthly meeting.

Why not come along and meet our friendly Group for Geology, tea and biscuits

Sylvia Cousins

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



LONDON WALKS

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

We meet a professional guide at 11.15 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.

Contact Julie Lake to reserve your place. As the number of u3a members wanting to join our Walks is increasing, I need to know many weeks in advance in case I need to employ a second professional guide. Please continue to refer to www.walks.com for the details of each Walk. After the Walk you are free to enjoy London as you wish.

Travel arrangements are made by yourselves.

We met in March for our first Walk of the year at Southwark Cathedral on a lovely warm sunny day. The theme was exploring the life of Lionel Lockyer, an unqualified Quack Doctor in the 17th century, who became famous and very wealthy by selling his pills which 'harnessed sunlight' and were known to cure virtually every ailment! The pills contained potassium nitrate, salt and charcoal amongst other minerals as well as the magic ingredient of sunlight. They had a severe emetic effect, causing violent 'voiding' from both ends which supposedly purged the body of disease!

We started by seeing his large tomb in the Cathedral and learning that he had been a tailor and a butcher before turning to alchemy. He sold his 'sunlight' pills for four shillings for a box of 100, which, compared to £70 for medication from a private doctor, was most appealing to the public.



Moving on to Leadenhall Market we were told how songbirds had been sold in the market for remedies by other quacks, and swallows used to make balm for the eyes. In comparison Lionel Lockyer was preferable as he used minerals, and herbs and spices which he purchased from the Market.



We stopped at the Jamaica Wine House in St Michael's Alley off Cornhill, where traders used to meet. This enabled Lionel Lockyer to sell his pills here which were then transported to the New World. Testimonies of amazing cures poured in from foreign parts. We walked through the Royal Exchange where many of the shops sold his pills and displayed these testimonies.

Lockyer was certainly not the only quack, though he was probably the most successful. Standing outside the Old Dr Butler's Head pub in Great Bell Alley, named after William Butler who rose to be the physician to James I, we learnt of treatments such as firing pistols near patients to cure epilepsy and ice-cold treatment against the plague. He revived a clergyman, who had taken an overdose of opium, by slaughtering a cow and placing his body inside the carcass.

In Tokenhouse Yard we were told how private farthing tokens were produced to solve the shortage of coppers and used by traders. Developed by William Petty, an Oxford trained doctor, the area was previously owned by the Earl of Arundel. Our Walk ended at the tranquil Barber-Surgeons' herb garden in Monkwell Square which was established in 1987 by the Worshipful Company of Barbers to showcase over 40 medicinal herbs.



However, for all the wealth that Lionel Lockyer accrued from his 'sunlight' pills, he was generous too. When he died he left £50 (about £5,000 today) to each of 200 poor families in Southwark, a gold mourning ring to each of 200 friends; and then reflecting his conceited personality, he gave £1 to anyone who turned up at his funeral to ensure a large attendance! His pills continued to be sold after his death, but I think you would all agree that we must be thankful to Henry VIII who funded the College of Physicians and outlawed unqualified practices. *(thanks to Brigitte Whiteing for the photos)*

Itinerary for 2026 **Please note the change of dates for April and May**

14th April	The Famous Square Mile	Meet at Monument Station
12th May	Hampstead Village & Heath	Meet at Hampstead Station
16th June **	All day outing – a 45 minute guided boat trip from Little Venice to Camden. Lunch at Andy's Greek Taverna, followed by a 2-hour London Walk entitled Old Camden Town.	Meet at Warwick Avenue Station. Note meeting time of 11.00 Our day will finish in Camden at about 5pm
21st July	Darkest Victorian London	Meet at Monument Station
18th August	The Blitz	Meet at St Paul's Station

LONDON WALKS CONTD.

20th October	Revoluting London	Meet at Tower Hill Station
15th September	Rock n' Roll Covent Garden	Meet at Tottenham Court Road Station
17th November	London's Secret Village	Meet at St Paul's Station
15th December	Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol & Seasonal Traditions	Meet at Tower Hill Station

Payment by cheque in advance please –payable to Maldon & District u3a. No later than 8 days before the Walk please.

ONE CHEQUE PER EVENT.

Julie Lake

GARDEN GROUP

This year's garden visits are proving very popular with good numbers already for all our trips. Please reserve your place as soon as possible. For the self drive garden visits it may be possible to arrange car share. Please let us know if this is something that would help.

Cheques payable to Maldon & District u3a with the name of the trip on the reverse can be handed over at the main Monthly meeting or posted to Theresa at 10 Hopping Jacks Lane, Danbury CM3 4PN or you can pay online. If you are paying by bacs please let us know when you have made the payment.

Maldon & Dist u3a Sort code: **60-13-37**

a/c **49774476** using the reference **gardens –(name of garden)**

Thursday 21st May – all day £30 pp for the coach please pay now

Visit to RHS Wisley/Brooklands

We anticipate that there will be enough RHS members with joint membership so there will be no entrance charge. If this is not the case we will advise you nearer the date. We will leave WMCC at 8.30 and be dropped off at Wisley before the Aviation Group go on to Brooklands. We will return to Maldon 17.30/18.00. There are still a few coach seats available for this trip.

Tuesday 9th June at 2pm **£10 pp inc refreshments**

Ransomes, Wigborough Road, Peldon, CO5 7RA

A two-acre country garden with a focus on biodiversity. The colourful cottage garden leads to a meadow and young tree shelter belt. Wildflower meadows, dead hedging, log piles and a large lily pond create a haven for wildlife. An orchard, soft-fruit garden, an apiary and a productive vegetable garden with greenhouse and potting shed provide both homegrown produce and a plant nursery for the garden.

Monday 22nd June—all day **£25 pp for the coach**

Visit to Audley End/Duxford **[please pay for the coach now](#)**

This is an English Heritage venue and we hope that there will be sufficient uptake (15+) to qualify for the group rate of **£20.12 pp**, (unless you are a member of English Heritage).

Tuesday 14th July at 2pm **£10.50 pp inc refreshments**

Keeway, Creeksea nr Burnham on Crouch CMO 8PL

Large, mature country garden with stunning views over the River Crouch. Formal terraces surround the house with steps leading to sweeping lawns, mixed borders packed full of bulbs and perennials, formal rose and herb garden with interesting water feature. Further afield there are wilder areas, paddocks and a lake.

Theresa Byles

Kris Taylor

Possible new group – Walking Football

Walking Football is a slower paced version of the beautiful game. It was originally designed to help get over 50's back into football and increase physical activity through rekindling players' love for the game. Walking football is open to both men and women who want to play football at a slower pace.

If you think it is something that you would like to try please contact either Patrick Forsyth or Malcolm Case.

STROLLERS TOO

On Tuesday 24th March, 12 of us set off from St Bartholomew's Church in Wickham Bishops to do the 6km (3.7 miles) Rail Trail Walk. Although very breezy we were all pleased it was dry. Taking footpaths past a farm and across fields, we eventually crossed the Langford Road and descended to the Blackwater Rail Trail which closely follows the route of the former Witham to Maldon railway. We continued along the Trail as far as St Peter's Church.

The church was built in 11th Century by Maurice, Bishop of London using flint rubble, boulder clay and pillaged roman bricks and tiles. When the new church of St Bartholomew's was built in 1850, St Peter's gradually fell into decline and is now looked after by the Friends of Friendless Churches. Since 1994, the nave has been used as a studio by stained glass artist, Ben Finn, who created an award-winning east window in 2022.

Although the church was locked, a few of our group realised the window could be seen by peeping through a crack in the door and some wonderful photos were taken! Nicki and David captured the window in all its glory.

We then meandered back uphill to St Bartholomew's Church through the old apple orchards, admiring the blossom and beautiful spring flowers.

Nine of us then enjoyed a lovely lunch at The Green Man in Little Braxted. Thank you



to everyone who joined the walk, you were excellent company.

Muriel and Steven Clarke



STROLLERS TOO

Our next walk will be on **Tuesday 28th April**, a countryside ramble in the fields of Stow Maries.

Meet and park at **The Prince of Wales pub car park, 6 Woodham Road, Chelmsford CM3 6SA. 10.15 for a 10.30 start.**

The walk will take us along paths, bridleways and field edges. There are some inclines along the route, which is unusual for Essex! We will see vineyards, streams, woods and the Stow Maires aerodrome before returning via the fields to the pub.

The walk may be slippery in places, depending on weather, so please wear appropriate footwear, and bring walking poles, if possible, as some areas are uneven. Animals have been burrowing on the paths so I will be pointing out hazards as we go along. The walk is approximately 4 miles long.

For those that would like lunch we will eat at the pub. I have heard that the food there is very good.

Hope you can join me. Please let me know if you are coming and if you want lunch.

Sian Gibson

ENGINEERING GROUP

If you are interested in practical things, then I invite you to join our group. Each meeting, we watch 3 half-hour video talks: one on medieval technology, one on inventions that had major impacts on subsequent history, and the last on everyday engineering – such things as houses, water, electrical power, heating, sewage, and also personal transport – the internal combustion engine, highways and railways.

We meet on the first **Tuesday each month at 2pm** in my house in Danbury.

Tony Groves

ASTRONOMY GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 27th April**, meeting at the Chigboro Fishing Club, Chigborough Road, Heybridge starting at 7:30 pm for a talk by Patrick Forsyth on *Looking outwards: mysteries that remain*.

The universe is full of surprises and there is a fascination in following new discoveries, but much remains mysterious – and that's intriguing too.

Following the talk and if there are clear skies then we also be night sky observing, so bring your telescopes/binoculars.

Lyrid Meteor Shower: Active from 14th–30th April, with peak activity on the nights of 21st and 22nd April offering roughly 18 meteors per hour.



Planet Visibility: Venus is visible in the western sky shortly after sunset, while Jupiter is higher up near the constellation Gemini.

Constellations: Look for Cancer (the Crab) and rising Vega in the constellation Lyra.



Milky Way: Early morning hours in mid-April (around 17th April) provide opportunities to spot the galactic centre as moonlight is minimal.

u3a members are very welcome at the meeting.

Malcolm Case

Reminder

Don't forget that there are many on-line learning events on the [national u3a website](#).

Another site is [Friends Extra](#) which lists discounts available to u3a members.

Just click on the links on our web page www.maldonu3a.co.uk

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Theresa Byles	
Vice Chairman	Alec Fraser	
Treasurer	Steven Clarke	treasurer.maldonu3a@gmail.com
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Newsletter Editor	Kris Taylor	news.maldonu3a@gmail.com
Groups Coordinator	Malcolm Case	
Speaker Secretary	Margaret Harker	
Committee	Andy Simmonds Patrick Forsyth	

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
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—Windsors	Kathy Goff
Just Jazz	Peter Condon David Coombes
Knitting & Crochet	Paula Jacobs
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 – May 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
				1 Canasta	2	3
4 BANK HOLIDAY	5 Guitar/ Ukulele Engineering	6 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge Knitting /Crochet Croquet Padel Tennis	7 Ten Pin Bowling Rummikub Petanque German Conversation	8 Singing Mahjong	9	10
11 Handicrafts Discussion	12 London Walks	13 Ten Pin Bowling Meet & Eat Art Appreciation Padel Tennis	14 Ten Pin Bowling Royal History Country Dancing Petanque French Conversation	15 Canasta	16	17 Strollers
18 Monthly Meeting The most haunted house in England Just Jazz	19 Guitar/ Ukulele	20 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge Croquet Geology Padel Tennis Photos for Fun Zoom	21 RHS WISLEY BROOKLANDS Ten Pin Bowling Rummikub Petanque German Conversation	22 Singing Mahjong	23	24 Wings & Wheels Stow Maries
25 BANK HOLIDAY	26 Strollers Wine Group	27 Ten Pin Bowling Writing for fun Padel Tennis Film—Zoom	28 Ten Pin Bowling Country Dancing Petanque French Conversation	29 Canasta Cribbage	30	31

Blue— Morning Red—Afternoon Purple— Evening