



Learn, Laugh, Live

MALDON AND DISTRICT

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Join our first Monthly Meeting on Zoom

Monday 16th November 2020 at 2pm

CHRISTMAS – A FESTIVE HISTORY

by Andy Thomas

Details and how to join this
“Live” presentation with Q and A inside

October 2020

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

website: www.maldonu3a.co.uk/

FROM THE CHAIR



Here we are again, another month has rolled by and nothing much has changed – except Covid restrictions, which seem to alter daily. Sadly, I think this will be a recurring theme for some time to come. Other than that, I hope this finds you all fit and well.

The excitement of the virtual AGM has been and gone! All went well and thank you to everyone who completed and sent in their voting forms. We had 114 voting forms returned and 46 said they would join in the Zoom AGM meeting, and 27 actually took part. It was also a record breaking meeting as I managed to get through the agenda in about eight minutes – set the standard for the AGM next year, which I really hope will be a straightforward meeting in the hall. I am pleased to say that Geoff Cory was elected to serve as Treasurer and Carol Bates as Secretary. Welcome also to Tony Groves onto the Committee, a returning Veronica Smith, Andy Simmonds and Alec Fraser who were also re-elected to continue their roles as Committee members. After many years of contributing to the Committee in her role of Newsletter Editor, Jan Robertson has now decided to retire. Thank you, Jan, for everything.

At this point I should also mention a big thank you to Graham Webster for his time as Treasurer. His expertise at keeping our accounts in order was excellent – it is certainly one of the busiest and time-consuming jobs on a Committee. Graham had already served his three-year term as Treasurer when, at last year's AGM, he agreed to continue in the role for a further year while the hunt was on for a replacement. Graham had also been quite poorly earlier on this year and it was lucky for us that Geoff Cory then volunteered to take over. Once again, a big thank you to Graham.

Also, thanks need to go to Judith Johnston, who will be retiring as Secretary once she is able to hand over the reins to Carol. Judith has for some time now provided the Committee with prompt and accurate Minutes of our meetings and sent out agendas and dealt with other necessary paperwork. She has been co-opted back onto the Committee for the time being to assist with the handover to Carol. As you will appreciate, it has been difficult to do this under the current circumstances but, luckily, Judith and Carol have been friends for many years and will be working together towards a smooth handover. So not quite goodbye to Judith just yet.

Shirley Macro

MONTHLY MEETINGS

In the absence of our monthly meetings and the unlikely event of one happening soon, your Committee have decided to trial a virtual monthly meeting in November. We have booked Andy Thomas, who visited us last year, to give a talk to us via Zoom. Further details of his talk follow in this newsletter.

We are fully aware that the thought of using any sort of technology, let alone Zoom, fills many with dread. However, we feel that with the winter months fast approaching and the prospect of not being able to get out and about quite so much, holding meetings this way would be something to look forward to. Providing you have a device of some sort, computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone and an internet connection and camera, you should be able to download Zoom and be able to join in.

We have produced some information on “How To”, which I hope will be able to assist with this, *contact me and I will direct you to one of our volunteers to help you get set up*. There is also a link on our website and some good information guides on the National U3A website which gives helpful instructions on how to become connected.

As already mentioned, this is a trial and we would need a reasonable audience to take part before committing ourselves to booking more speakers. I would appreciate it if you would take the time to let me know if you would be interested in joining the meeting in November by either sending an email or telephoning me.

Shirley Macro

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING - 2020

A big thank you to all who came on a very wet and windy day to my socially distanced coffee morning this year.

The magnificent sum of **£575** has been raised the highest total ever for me.

Thank you again and stay safe.

Mary Burd

**THANK
YOU**

Thank you for everything you did to help make your Macmillan event a huge success. Together we raised

£575

Every effort you made and every coin dropped in a box has helped change lives.

 MACMILLAN

Fundraising for
**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

ASTRONOMY GROUP

THE NIGHT SKY in OCTOBER



With clear skies we should be able to see the star Arcturus to the north west. Arcturus is a red giant star and the brightest star in the constellation Boötes (the herdsman). Arcturus is also among the brightest stars that can be seen from Earth. Astronomers say Arcturus will end up as a white dwarf at the end of its life.

Saturn, look for the rings and Jupiter look for the four moons, both planets are still visible but to the south south west. Mars is also visible to the east; it is known as the "Red Planet". Mars is a terrestrial planet with a thin atmosphere, with surface features reminiscent of the impact craters of the Moon and the valleys, deserts and polar ice caps of Earth.

Orion starts to become visible low on the eastern horizon, the star Betelgeuse, which is just above the belt of Orion is also visible. Betelgeuse is the brightest star in Orion and marks the western shoulder of the constellation, it is one of the largest known stars and is probably at least the size of the orbits of Mars or Jupiter around the sun. That's a diameter about 700 times the size of the Sun or 600 million miles. For a star it has a rather low surface temperature (6000 F compared to the Sun's 10,000 F). The low temperature means that the star will appear orange-red in colour. Betelgeuse emits almost 7,500 times as much energy as the Sun. The combination of size and temperature tells astronomers that the star is a kind of star called a red super giant. The name Betelgeuse comes from the Arabic and is basically a corruption of the phrase "Armpit of the Giant".

Malcolm Case

LOCAL HISTORY

In view of the Government's Rule of Six, and National U3A protocol, the Local History Group is unable to meet in its current format for the foreseeable future. We will of course keep you informed of any changes.

Meanwhile if anyone has anything to report on Aspects of Local History, which would be of interest to the Group, please feel free to send items to either myself or Liz Samson for the Newsletter.

Sylvia Cousins

MONTHLY MEETING

2.00pm on Monday 16th November 2020



This will be a “Live” presentation on Zoom given by **Andy Thomas**, the author who previously entertained us with his talk on Crop Circles in July 2019. As this is a “Live” presentation there will be an opportunity for a Q and A session.

CHRISTMAS – A FESTIVE HISTORY



In his presentation, Andy Thomas uncovers the long and intriguing background to the festive season. From the ancient celebration of light in the winter darkness, to the marking of the birth of a Messiah, mid-December has long been a time for rituals and rejoicing. Andy shows how, for all the modern commercialisation, we can still find meaning in Christmas today and keep the flame of light alive in the winter darkness.

There is more about Andy on his website at www.truthagenda.org/

Click on the link to join the Zoom session

This link is also in the covering email, bookmark the email and use the link to join on the day.

Session opens at 1.50 for a 2pm start

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN STREAMED

You might remember Bernard Lockett speaking to us in 2017 about the International Annual Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Harrogate. Indeed, some of our members were able to attend.



Bernard has notified me that as Covid-19 has prevented the Festival from taking place this year, a new online service – www.gsopera.tv/ has been launched.

All the operas can be seen as well as interviews with some Gilbert and Sullivan greats. Go to www.gsoperafestivals.org/about-the-festival/ on any internet connected device to find out more, and perhaps experience that fabulous feel-good factor which we sorely need now.

Veronica Smith

Mayflower Trail opens in Harwich...



To commemorate four hundred years since the famous ship's sailing, the **Mayflower Trail** has opened in Harwich, exploring the town's links to the ship which transported early settlers to America in the 1600s. The 1km-long visitor trail takes in eight interpretation boards around Historic Harwich, telling the fascinating story of Harwich's connections to the founding of modern America.

16th September 2020 marked four hundred years since the pilgrims set sail for the New World, stepping onto the Mayflower ship at Plymouth for their voyage across the Atlantic, many of them never to return to English soil. Several crew members were from Harwich including Captain Christopher Jones, whose house still stands in Kings Head Street, Harwich, today.

Malcolm Case

WINE GROUP 3

Here are the answers to last month's quiz:

1. British term for red Bordeaux wine. **Claret.**
2. What is the major white champagne grape. **Chardonnay.**
3. Name two port producers of the Douro Valley.
Churchills, Croft, Cockburns. (any two from three).
4. Main wine of Tuscany. **Chianti.**
5. New Zealand Marlborough area wine producer. **Cloudy Bay.**
Wine well known but they are not so well known as a producer.
6. Name four black grape varieties. **Any four from: Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carignan, Carmenere, Cinsault.**
7. Spain's traditional method sparkling wine. **Cava.**
8. Where is Otard brandy produced. **Cognac.**
9. What is the name of the specially graded Riesling from the Rheingau region of Germany. **Charta.**
This must be 100% own estate, 100% Riesling grapes, grapes hand picked and minimum 12% alcohol. Bottles sealed with a capsule of a Romanesque double- arch which appears on the back label. Not too many people will know this! The alternative name is Kata wine.
10. Name two wine regions of Chile. **Any two from Casablanca Valley, Cachagoal Valley, Colchagua Valley, although Central Valley would be acceptable.**

Bonus question for our group members:

Name two white grape varieties not including Chardonnay – **Chenin Blanc and Colombard.**

No prizes but hope you've had fun taking part!!

Mary Burd

POETRY READING GROUP

Quiz answers to follow in the November newsletter.

This will give you extra time to read more poems.

Jo Robson



WELCOME TO NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Our new Committee members are sharing a little bit about themselves and a thank you for voting them in at the recent AGM.

Tony Groves - Webmaster

I am a retired professional engineer and live in Danbury. I've maintained our Maldon U3A website for several years and last year redesigned it to be more modern and suitable for use on smart phones. I play table-tennis, bowls and run a social badminton club. I'm involved in several other village activities, including organising the Poppy Appeal and helping in the annual effort to clear invasive weeds from the pond at Eves Corner.

Veronica Smith - Speaker Secretary

I spent my working life teaching and lecturing in various aspects of biology and look forward each year to taking small groups of U3A members on botany and tree identification walks. I held the post of Speaker Secretary from 2016 to 2019 and after a break for a year, am pleased to resume that position. It is rare that arrangements go wrong, or speakers don't turn up, and I find that most speakers are delightful, enthusiastic people only too happy to pass on their enthusiasm and experiences.

Carol Bates - Secretary

Hi, I'm Carol Bates, married with two children and four grandchildren. We have lived in Althorne for over 15 years and before that we lived in Danbury for 26 years. I am retired from Anglia Ruskin University where I worked in admin for 18 years. I have also enjoyed continuing my association with them through working as an invigilator and hope this will continue post Covid. I have also worked as an invigilator at Plume School and hope this too will continue. My interests are travelling, reading, meeting up with friends, and attending our U3A history and wine groups. I love doing secretarial work and look forward to being your secretary.

MARITIME GROUP

Our first meeting during these Covid-19 restrictions will be on **Monday 2nd November starting at 10:00 am**. As we cannot meet at The Blackwater Sailing Club **this meeting will be by virtual means using Zoom**. Details on how to join the meeting will be sent out nearer the date.

Our speaker is Gordon Davies who will be talking about **Safety at Sea - 1800s style**. Seafaring in the 1800s was a hazardous business. In this talk we look at some of the dangers, and how some new technologies helped to reduce the risks while others created new problems for sailing ships.

The talk will be some 50 minutes in length and there will be the ability, by using the "Chat Button", to ask questions.

Malcolm Case

This talk is open to all members, not just Maritime, if you would like to join email Malcolm for a link.

2021 U3A DIARY

If you are interested in a 2021 U3A Diary at £4.50 including delivery please contact Carol Bates as soon as possible.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Requests for information last month re Vessels in the Blackwater

My house looks out across the Blackwater on a stretch of water with the Blackwater Sailing Club in the distance at its centre. When I moved here the vessel mentioned was much better preserved and I was told (by long term locals) that this, and other such boats, were used during World War II as fast rescue craft going out to collect British pilots who had ditched in the sea. Sounded plausible.

Anyone know better?

Patrick Forsyth

Quiz: How well do you know the world's cuisines?

From Malcolm Case



1. What is the national dish of Barbados?

- Crab soup
- Cou cou and flying fish
- Jerk chicken
- Goat stew

2. Which country produces the most corn?

- USA
- Chile
- China
- Italy

3. The island of St Helena is famous for which dish?

- Fish curry
- Skate wing
- Roast beef
- Tuna fishcakes

4. How many different types of potato grow in Peru?

- Less than 50
- Less than 3,000
- More than 3,500
- More than 6,900

5. What is the national dish of Indonesia?

- Nasi goreng
- Amok
- Bulgogi
- Ceviche

6. The national dish of Canada is poutine. But what are the dishes' three main ingredients?

- Feta, chips and vinegar
- Cheese curds, rice and gravy
- Chips, bacon and salsa
- Cheese curds, chips and gravy

7. Which Cypriot cheese is usually grilled or fried?

- Manchego
- Anari
- Feta
- Halloumi

8. Moules-frites is often called the national dish of which country?

- France
- Switzerland
- Belgium
- Malta

9. Ackee is commonly eaten in Jamaica, but what is it?

- A type of fruit
- A type of bean
- A type of vegetable
- A type of nut

10. Pastizzi is a Maltese street food. Which unusual ingredient are they traditionally stuffed with?

- Mushy peas
- Baked beans
- Brussel sprouts
- Sardines

Answers Next Month

How to Join a ZOOM meeting



You need an internet connection.

It is best if you use a laptop or a tablet/smartphone with a camera so that you can see what is going on and join in with your video if you want.

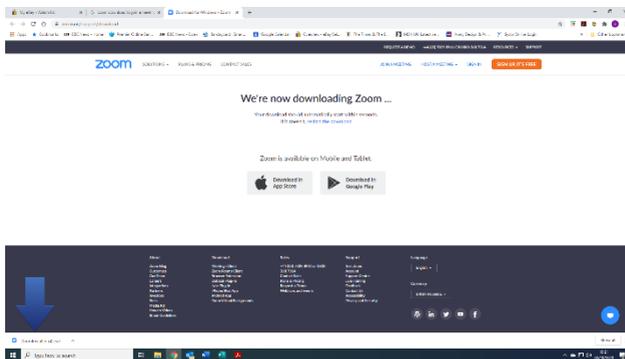
To get Zoom to work you need to add a bit of software or APP (computer programme) to your laptop or tablet/phone.

It is a good idea to load this in advance and try it out.

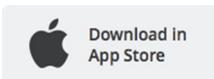
You may find it useful if someone helps talk you through this stage see the note from Shirley about Monthly Meetings on page 3.

To install Zoom

Laptop: <https://zoom.us/support/download> and follow the instructions (you don't need to sign up unless you are hosting meetings)



Tablet/Phone: Zoom is available to download on Mobile and Tablet.



You only need to do this once and is a good idea to try it before a meeting .

Once the Zoom is on your laptop or tablet/phone you are ready to join a meeting.

You will receive an email about the meeting like the example below for our AGM last month:

Topic: Maldon U3A AGM
Time: Sep 21, 2020 14:00 London

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/>



Meeting ID:
Passcode:

If you already have Zoom installed on your device, you can **join** a meeting directly from the app using a **meeting ID:** and **Passcode**

Or you can click on the **link** to take you directly to the meeting.

Guides on u3a website www.u3a.org.uk/how-to-guidance

[Zoom \(Desktop\) - account registration and starting a meeting](#)

[Zoom \(Phones and Tablets\) - account registration and starting a meeting](#)

Your Committee

Chairman	Shirley Macro
Vice Chairman	Malcolm Case
Secretary	Carol Bates
Treasurer	Geoff Cory
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case
Newsletter Editor	Liz Samson
Speaker Secretary	Veronica Smith
Committee	Alec Fraser Tony Groves Judith Johnston Andrew Simmonds
Webmaster	Tony Groves
Social Group	Michael Childs
AV Equipment	Mike Flack
Essex Assoc. of U3A's Committee	Malcolm Case

NATIONAL OFFICE

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Website <https://www.u3a.org.uk/>

Resource Centre: email: resource.centre@u3a.org.uk

Deadline for next newsletter: to be advised, just send contributions

CO-ORDINATORS

Art Appreciation	Andy Simmonds	London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Joyce Cotterell
Aviation	Brian Johnson	Luncheon Groups	Paul Costa
Astronomy	Malcolm Case	3rd Wed. Meet & Eat	Joyce Cotterell
Balti Night	Bob Gowers Graham Evans	2nd Wed	
Bird Watching	Peter Gaywood Michael Bagshaw	Mah-Jong	Molly Polden
Botany	Veronica Smith	Maritime	Malcolm Case
Bridge	Sheila Epps	Music Appreciation	Enid Hall John Skuse
Canasta	Iris Slaney	Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash
Cribbage	Pat Clements	Poetry	Jo Robson
Croquet	Jean Healey Shirley Macro	Reading	Sheila Epps
Discussion	Bryan Jones	Rummikub 1 Rummikub 2	Colin Beckett Beryl McDonell
Egyptology	Kathleen Goff Sue Robinson	Scottish Country Dancing	Shirley Grummett
Family History	Alan Buck	Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
French Conversation	Ann Lester	Strollers	Gill Stone
Geology	Enid Hall	Table Tennis	Louis Gunn
Handicraft	Marian Manning	Ten Pin Bowling	David Arnold
History—Stuarts	Beryl McDonell	Tree Identification	Veronica Smith
Just Jazz	Jim Light David Coombes	Weekenders	Beryl McDonell
Local History	Sylvia Cousins Jane Coombes Kathleen Goff	Wine Circle No. 2 Wine Circle No. 3	Graham Boswell Mary Burd Paul Costa Ann Goody
		Wine Circle No. 4	
		Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

Some useful contacts

Latest U3A News

www.u3a.org.uk/

www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter

A short joke from Malcolm

“My neighbour knocked on my door at 2:30am this morning, can you believe that 2:30am?!

Luckily for him, I was still up and playing my Bagpipes”

The Silver Line

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 4 70 80 90

www.thesilverline.org.uk

From the Editor

Many thanks for all your contributions for this newsletter. I have appreciated the many and varied articles and enjoyed having first read. Please keep them coming. Any suggestions, articles, useful tips etc. most welcome.

Don't forget to keep looking at our website for any updates in-between newsletters. www.maldonu3a.co.uk/

Liz Samson