



Maldon and District

Newsletter



Garden Group visit to Blunts Hall

photo by Brigitte Whiteing

Membership Subscription Renewals are now due.

Please see page 3 for details.

July 2023

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Registered Charity 1086182

FROM THE CHAIR



On Thursday June 15th, we held our Open Day in Maldon Town Hall. The Mayor attended and showed a keen interest in our varied activities. I think we made a good impression on all who came and we must thank the Group Co-ordinators for all their efforts.

Gordon Bennett! This incredulous expression of surprise became clearer at our June monthly meeting when Fran Sandham gave us a presentation entitled "Dr Livingstone I Presume?". An excellent talk in which he painted a vivid picture of both Livingstone and Stanley and indeed the editor of the New York Herald – Gordon Bennett himself.

Our next talk on 17th July will be on "Fakes and Forgeries" given by Tim Turner. We can take pride in the eclectic range of subjects we are able to cover at our monthly meetings, and I am particularly looking forward to this one.

It seems to me that nearly all Groups are progressing well and there is even more activity in the summer. I am inclined to say there is not much to report but that might seem feeble.

However, I recall on a visit to Bletchley Park, an elderly gentleman who had worked there explained the importance of "nothing to report". Every day at the same time, a German outpost in the desert sent a message "Nothing to report. HH". This enabled Bletchley Park to work out the settings on the Enigma Machine for the day. Needless to say, the British Army were given strict orders not to go anywhere near this outpost.

Don't forget that Membership Subscription Renewals are now due.

Ken Hazell

Maldon & District u3a
1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024
Membership Subscription Renewals

Subscriptions are due by no later than 31st of August 2023.

Please use our web site maldonu3a.co.uk and complete the forms under "Membership Renewal". If you are unable to do this then renewal forms are available from the Membership Secretary. Each member must complete a separate form.

Annual subscription is £20.00 per person, which can be paid by bank transfer into Barclays Bank. Account name – Maldon U3A; sort code 20-54-30; Account number 53198995, the reference you use MUST be your forename and surname – with no space e.g., johnsmith; or if you wish, you can still pay by cheque which should be made payable to Maldon & District u3a..

Using the web site and paying by bank transfer is the preferred way.

The completed form(s) together with your payment must be made before the 31st August 2023. We do not accept cash. The forms, together with your cheque (if paying by cheque), MUST be returned to the Membership Secretary D

Data Protection Law and Data Base: The renewal forms are used to check our database, please indicate on the form if your details are unchanged from your original renewal. Any changes then please advise the Membership Secretary.

Emergency Contact: Where couples are both members, please avoid using each other as emergency contacts. Please also ensure that you have the consent to use the name and telephone number of the person/s named as your emergency contact.

Gift Aid: Please indicate on the form "I want to Gift Aid" if you able to gift aid your subscription.

DO IT NOW: You do not have to wait until the end of August.

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

WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Suz Walker	Brian Webber	Derek Kelly
Linda Allen	Pam Webber	
Anita White	Pat Firth	
Marg Triston	Pat Hercules	
Laura Epps	Jean Roughly	

URGENT – Maldon u3a Committee Vacancies

Our Treasurer and Secretary complete their 3 year term at the AGM in October 2023 and we are looking for new members to join the committee in these key roles.

From the **Treasurer**, Geoff Cory:

In October this year my 3 year term as Treasurer finishes, consequently a replacement is needed to step up and take over this essential function to ensure the continued future of the Maldon u3a.

A Finance or Accounting background is definitely not required, just a willingness to help.

Please contact Geoff Cory if you feel you can help your u3a.

Carol Bates, our **Secretary**, is also standing down at the AGM.

Please contact Carol for more details of what is involved.

Maldon u3a Open Day 15th June

An illustrated report will be in our next Newsletter. Our thanks go to all the Group Co-ordinators, their helpers, and our refreshment team; in fact to everyone that gave their time on one of the hottest days in June.

To date 11 new members have enrolled.

POETRY GROUP

There will be no Poetry meeting in August. The next meeting will be on Thursday 7th September. Further details will be in the August newsletter.

Jo Robson

WINE GROUP 2

Wine Group 2 are looking for a further two u3a members to join us. We meet once a month on the fourth Wednesday at 7.30 p.m. in each other's houses. The next meeting is on 27th July.

For more details, please ring Graham Boswell

FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you for all your contributions to the newsletter, please keep them coming. Sometimes printing space is an issue, but they will be filed and used in the next edition. Don't forget to send your photographs. Our website has updates of events in-between newsletters. www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Kris Taylor

MONTHLY MEETING

Monday 21st August 2023

Wickham Bishops Hall Doors open at 1:30 for 1:45 start

Jenny Gibbs Life in a Turkish Village

Jenny's tales of rural life in her Turkish village are full of humour and packed with unusual and surprising stories of a culture so different from her own. Embarking on her new life of adventure at the age of fifty, meeting the man of her dreams, Jenny's talk traces her arrival in her village in 1994 through to the present day.

Setting up home in the village and buying an ancient farmhouse in desperate need of restoration, Jenny quickly became an integral part of this close-knit community, where time seemed to have stood still, but which is now on the cusp of change. She arrived just in time to experience this age-old culture before the inevitable change occurred.

Jenny and her partner, will be bringing a selection of Turkish made products, which will be for sale, with a percentage of the sale going to our funds.

Please remember your Membership Card

0800 4 70 80 90 www.thesilverline.org.uk

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.

The Silver Line
helpline for older people

MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2023

September 18th	Cherith Lowry	The Gibberd Garden The Gibberd Garden is an inspirational and fascinating Grade II listed garden created between 1957 and 1984 by Sir Frederick Gibberd, Master Planner of Harlow New Town and leading post-war architect. It is acknowledged to be one of the most important 20th century gardens in the country .
October 16th	Julie Miller	The Combined Military Services Museum – One man’s obsession Curator and historian Julie will be giving a talk on the background of the creation of the Combined Military Services Museum in Maldon, and taking a look at some of the special pieces from the collection. A journey covering 1000 years of history through objects ranging from a Viking sword, to Jacobean armour and the gadgets of Cold War spies.
November 20th	Patrick Forsyth	Unaccustomed as I Am . . . Patrick has spoken widely on the pitfalls and (occasional) joys of public speaking. Standing up to speak in public can be difficult, challenging, maybe even frightening, yet with a few tricks of the trade it can be fun too, or
December	Christmas	tba

If you know of any speakers that you can recommend please contact the Speaker Secretary. Theresa Byles

MARITIME GROUP

The group's next meeting is a visit to the Foxton Incline/Locks and Museum , the longest and steepest staircase of locks in Britain, on **Monday 7th August .**

With guided tours of the locks and museum, we will also be able to visit the top of the Incline.



We will be leaving the West Maldon Community Centre at 08:45, please park your cars at the far end of the car park. There's a second pick-up at Eves Corner, Danbury at about 08:55.

Places are still available. The cost per person including coach, driver's gratuity, coach parking and guided tours is £35.00., lunch not included. Lunch is available at the Foxton Locks Inn .

If you would like to join this trip, then please contact: Malcolm Case.



MARITIME GROUP Programme 2023

**Mon 4th
September**

Talk by Simon Gregor who will take us on a virtual stroll along the Thames from Vauxhall to Westminster, uncovering some of London's rich history along the way. Sometimes on the embankment, and sometimes diving into quaint side streets, this talk will explore not only the big sights like the Palace of Westminster and the Tate Britain Gallery, but also some of the less well known history lurking in the back streets, with the Thames itself providing a constantly flowing thread linking the city together.

**Mon 2nd
October**

Talk and updates by John Rayment on the Restoration of the Sailing Barge "Pudge".

**Mon 6th
November**

Talk by John Pomfrett on the City of Lakes and Rivers: waterways in and around Berlin. Following a brief introduction to the early, largely natural river navigations that served Berlin from its founding in the 13th century, this talk traces the development of the canals and river navigations around Berlin, from the early canals of the 17th century, through the peak of expansion in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to the final completion of the Mittellandkanal in 2003, following the reunification of Germany. Having set the scene, we then take a tour along the present day waterway system, starting with the complex network of waterways within the city, then looking at the links to the Baltic, the Elbe and the Rhein and upstream to the unique waterways of the Spreewald. We will see ports and palaces, locks, lakes and a lido, old and new boat lifts and many other points of interest in and around this fascinating city.

Mon 4th December

Talk by Simon Stephens of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich on model boat building for the Museum. Followed by discussions on our 2024 programme and some Christmas cheer.

All meetings are held at the Blackwater Sailing Club, Basin Road, Heybridge Basin on the first Monday of the month, starting at 10.00am.

Malcolm Case

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

We had a very interesting talk by Max Fox, a Blue Badge Guide , when he gave us a whistle stop tour of some of the amazing links of Colchester's colourful history from Roman times to the present day.

Over the last few years we have had talks and tours on the siege of Colchester and the Castle, but there were many topics in his talk that we could investigate in the future (we meaning everybody!!)

Our next meeting is on **Monday July 24th** when we will continue our **walk** down Maldon High Street, pointing out buildings and places of interest. Please meet in the churchyard of St. Peter's at the Maeldune Centre at 2p.m. The walk will take about an hour and should be easier to negotiate than last time, as the pavements are wider, but please watch your step!! There is no need to book.

There is NO MEETING in August. Meanwhile, enjoy the summer sunshine and your holiday breaks.

Kathy and Sylvia

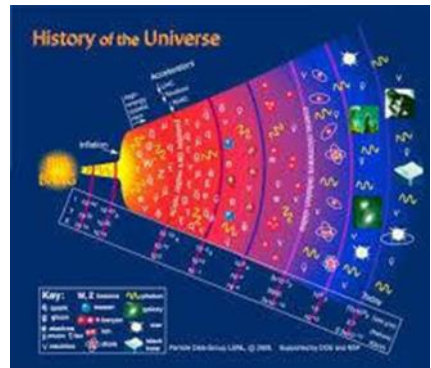
ROYAL HISTORY GROUP

Please be advised that the outing to Kensington Palace rescheduled for October 12th has been cancelled due to lack of numbers.

Kathy

ASTRONOMY GROUP

The next meeting of the group is on Monday July 24th, at 7:30 pm at the Chigboro Fishing Club, Chigborough Road, Heybridge. CM9 4RE for a talk on Cosmology followed by a discussion .



Our proposed visit to The Observatory Science centre, Herstmonceux is still to be arranged, details will be advised at the July meeting.



Malcolm Case



Mrs Thatcher was in the garden of 10 Downing Street when she told an aide, "Listen, that's a nightingale." "Oh no, Prime Minister, it's a song thrush," the aide replied. He was taken aside by a senior colleague to be advised: "Listen. If the Prime Minister says she heard a

nightingale, it's a nightingale."

But there was no mistaking the melodious song emanating from the scrub close to the hide at the Fingringhoe Wick Nature Reserve where 10 members of our Birdwatching Group were listening on June 3rd. A few of us were lucky enough to glimpse this secretive songster, about the size of a robin. Nightingales winter in central Africa, returning to Britain in April. Males return first and can be heard singing until late May or early June when the young hatch.

So we were quite lucky. The birds can sing at any time, day or night, but it is after dusk or just before dawn that their magnificent song can best be heard. These highly secretive birds spend much of their time in dense bushes. They eat worms, spiders and insects.

The reserve is run by the Essex Wildlife Trust and occupies the site of a disused gravel pit, and is considered one of the best places in the country to hear them.

It is highly unlikely that one ever sang in Berkeley Square.

Visit to Wallasea Island in July

Sights and sounds of summer seemed all around when 9 group members ventured into the seemingly endless expanse of this 740 hectare reserve run by the RSPB. As skylarks serenaded overhead, the churring, repetitive call of reed warblers, summer visitors to Britain, drifted from the dense reedbeds.

More than 3 million tonnes of earth from Crossrail excavations were shipped in to create a landscape of marshland and lagoons, ideal breeding grounds for the many gulls, mainly black-headed, going about the noisy business of rearing their now almost fledged young. At 36cm, they are the smallest of our common gulls, although before 1880, they were only seen around the Thames estuary. Among them, we were lucky enough to see a Mediterranean gull similar in appearance with a black head but slightly larger at 39cm.

Other summer visitors that breed here, common terns, were diving for fish to feed their young. These graceful birds with long wings and forked tails, also known as swallows of the sea, will head south in October, some as far as South Africa. A female kestrel hovered nearby, scouring the ground for rodents such as voles, although they also eat small birds, worms and insects.

But the star of the show was another hunter, a marsh harrier flying low as she quartered the marshes for any unwary small mammal or water bird. These spectacular birds of prey – our largest harrier, the size of a buzzard – became rare as



reedbeds were drained and their eggs taken by collectors. Many were shot, stuffed and displayed in glass cases. They ceased nesting in Britain, but eventually returned to Norfolk from where, thanks to conservation, they have staged a remarkable recovery.

Mike Bagshaw

Birdwatching Group Programme 2023

August	No meeting	
9th September	Bradwell	Meet in St Peter's Chapel car park
8th October	Walton on the Naze	Meet in Naze Tower car park
4th November	Two Tree Island, Leigh-on-Sea	Meet in car park
3rd December	Maldon promenade	Meet by Rossi's ice cream kiosk

All rendezvous times 10.00 unless otherwise stated.

For full locations details or car share requests please contact:

Peter Gaywood
Michael Bagshaw

THE BIG BALTI

The next curry night will be held on **Monday 31st July** at the Bulti Bhujon restaurant, Mill Road, Maldon. 6.30ish start.

To add your name to the list please contact:

Graham Evans

Bob Gowers

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

Visit to Thomas Gainsborough's house in Sudbury, Suffolk

On a sunny day in June , fifteen art enthusiasts enjoyed a splendid guided tour of the Gainsborough collection , before the obligatory tea and cakes.

Sadly, Gainsborough's Blue Boy has been returned to the Huntington Collection in California after a brief visit to The National Gallery in 2022



In front of the 300 year old Mulberry tree

Our next meeting, on 12th July at 14.00 will be hosted by Andy Simmonds.

A film of the recent blockbuster Vermeer exhibition in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

GEOLOGY GROUP

Our June meeting was a field trip out to Walton-on-the-Naze to see how much erosion had occurred since our last visit there some while ago.

It was a lovely day, plenty of warm sunshine with enough breeze to keep us comfortable. We managed to get down onto the beach before the tide came in and had plenty of time to walk along and view the cliffs. As expected, these are continuing to erode and the movement of the Red Crag, a shelly sand containing many fossils, can be easily seen. This reddish brown, sandy shell layer was formed around 2.4 million years ago. Rich in fossils it was deposited when the area was covered by cool seas. These deposits are the only ones known of this age in Britain and



the combinations of shells found in these beds is unique. Muddy looking water from the London clay deposits could also be seen running off.

Exploration of the Naze was first recorded in the early 13th century with the discovery of "giants' teeth".

These were later identified as the teeth of mammoths from the Pleistocene period. The area was a favoured location for Victorian fossil collectors and is still somewhere you can pick up fossils, including sharks teeth – not that I've ever found a shark's tooth just lying around!

Shirley Macro

(Information courtesy of Essex Rock & Mineral Society and Essex Wildlife Trust)

STROLLERS TUESDAY GROUP

The Strollers Too walk on Tuesday 25th July will be from The Swan pub, School Road, Little Totham, CM9 8LB. Cars can be parked in the rear car park.

The walk will be approximately 4.35 miles, crossing fields, through woods and on some roads.

Please meet at 10:15 for a 10:30 departure outside the rear of The Swan.

Orders for lunch at 13:00 in The Swan will be taken prior to us departing for our walk.

Please let me know by Monday 17th July if you intend to walk and if you would like lunch. I cannot guarantee availability for lunch after this date.

<https://www.theswanlittletotham.com/menu>

David Griffiths

Please note that there will be no Strollers on Sundays or Tuesdays in August. The next walk will be Sunday 17th September, details to be advised in the August newsletter.

Message from Peter Harden Blackwater u3a

Tai Chi classes are held every Monday in the West Maldon Community Centre from 14.00–16.00. All Maldon group members are welcome.

For more detail contact:

Peter Harden

FILM GROUP

As usual, the films under review provided some very differing views.

Starting with *Bill*. Enjoyed by some, who found it amusing in places and quite silly, others found it an excellent way to induce sleep! Some of the jokes in the film were funny and certainly played on the works of Shakespeare. It was a panto like romp with exaggerated portrayals of Queen Elizabeth I, the King of Spain and Walsingham. Not to everyone's taste but it still came out with a score of 7.

Eaten by Lions. Full of good natured silliness and a happy multicultural comedy. Not completely successful with our group but it was quite enjoyable to watch, a harmless feel good film. The young lads with the lead roles did well, along with a good supporting cast. Score 6.

The next two selections are only 54 years apart, but both have boats/ships and water involved.

The African Queen is a 1951 adventure film adapted from the 1935 novel of the same name by C.S. Forester. It stars Humphrey Bogart (who won the Academy Award for Best Actor, his only Oscar) and Katharine Hepburn. The plot involves the developing relationship between the two main characters and their plans to escape German East Africa in 1914 and to turn the African Queen into a torpedo boat to sink a large German gunboat, thus aiding the British.

The African Queen was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry in 1994, and the Library of Congress deemed it "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant."

In The Heart of the Sea is a 2015 historical adventure drama directed and produced by Ron Howard and written by Charles Leavitt. It is

based on Nathaniel Philbrick's 2000 non-fiction book of the same name about the sinking of the American whaling ship, Essex, in 1820. An event that in part inspired Herman Melville's 1851 novel Moby Dick. It stars Chris Hemsworth, Benjamin Walker, Cillian Murphy, Tom Holland, Ben Whishaw and Brendan Gleeson.

Both are available on BBC iPlayer for a limited time.

Our next meeting will be via Zoom on Wednesday, 26th July at 7.30pm

If you would like to join please get in touch.

Shirley Macro

AVIATION GROUP

Friday 28th July 11am Danbury Cricket Pavilion – film on Concorde, concept, design, and operation.

August Summer break

Friday 29th September Visit to Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome. Independent travel to SM and meet in the car park at 10.30. There is an entry fee of £7 per person. Guided tour starts at 11.00. Refreshments available on site.

Friday 27th October Danbury Cricket Pavilion – illustrated talk by fellow member David Gillespie on his flight of a lifetime in the restored Canadian Lancaster

Friday 24th November Grand film event! Tom Cruise in *Maverick*!! Popcorn and ice cream served in the interval!!

Friday 15th December End of year social lunch at the Airmen's Mess Cafe, Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome.

Chris Samson

The weather forecast was somewhat foreboding for our visit to the garden of Blunts Hall, but our intrepid bunch were undeterred and we had a delightful afternoon. The owners, Alan and Lesley, have been working on the restoration of the garden at Blunts Hall for the last 5 years with the aim of returning it to its Victorian splendour.



The visit started with a brief history of the Grade II listed house, which is much older than expected. There is a record of a farmhouse on the site in the Domesday survey. The original house has been much changed and added to over the centuries, and has a Georgian frontage which looks over a semi-formal lawned area with a newly planted yew avenue. This leads on down to the pond and woodland area. There are many beautiful specimen trees.

To one side of the house the parterre garden has been reinstated and given an informal arrangement of plants, which with the gentle subtle colours in the borders, makes for a relaxing and harmonious scene.

Further into the garden the espaliered pear trees share their space with bright red roses and blue salvias .



The remains of a ringwork, a medieval fortification dating back to the 12th century, can be seen in the background of the photo above .

Having enjoyed our tour of the garden, we then had a delightful tea, sheltered from the light rain which, though it had begun, did not dampen our spirits. After all, we knew the gardens needed it. The hospitality we received was wonderful. The heavy rain had held off until we were on our way home. We felt lucky indeed.



Theresa Byles

You in
your 3rd
age

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Ken Hazell
Vice Chairman	Theresa Byles
Secretary	Carol Bates
Treasurer	Geoff Cory
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case
Newsletter Editor	Kris Taylor
Speaker Secretary	Theresa Byles
Groups Co-ordinator	Malcolm Case
Committee	Alec Fraser Tony Groves Andrew Simmonds
Webmaster	Tony Groves
Social Group	Michael Childs

Contact the u3a Office

u3a

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u3a learn,
laugh,
live

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Deadline for next newsletter: 8th August 2023

CO-ORDINATORS

Art Appreciation	Judith Johnston Andy Simmonds	London Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Sheila Childs
Aviation	Chris Samson	Meet & Eat	Joan Cummins
Astronomy	Malcolm Case	Mah-Jong	Mags Pell
Balti Night	Bob Gowers Graham Evans	Maritime	Malcolm Case
Bird Watching	Peter Gaywood Michael Bagshaw	Music Appreciation	tba
Bridge	Gill Cory	Padel Tennis	Ken Hazell
Canasta	Iris Slaney	Petanque (Boules)	Jack Veash Geoff Macro
Cribbage	Pat Clements	Photography	Tony Groves
Croquet	Geoff Macro Shirley Macro	Poetry	Jo Robson
Discussion	Pat Jones	Reading	tba
Film Club	Shirley Macro	Rummikub	Janice Martin
French Conversation	Ann Lester	Scottish Country Dancing	Diana Rogers
Garden Visits	Theresa Byles Kris Taylor	Sing for Pleasure	Sue Garnham
Geology	Sylvia Cousins	Strollers Sunday & Tuesday Group	Malcolm Case
German	Howard Broadbridge	Tenpin Bowling	David Arnold
Handicraft	Marian Manning Brenda Heal	Wine Circle No. 2	Graham Boswell
History—Georgians	Kathy Goff	Wine Circle No. 3	Mary Burd
Just Jazz	Peter Condon David Coombes	Wine Circle No. 4	Ann Goody
Local History	Sylvia Cousins Kathy Goff	Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

Comment on *“Third Age Matters”*
via *Patrick Forsyth* patrick@touchstone28.com

third age 
matters

Schedule of Events – August 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
	1	2 Tenpin Bowling Croquet	3 Petanque Rummikub	4 Canasta	5	6
7 Maritime Visit to Foxton Locks and Museum	8	9 Tenpin Bowling Bridge Padel Tennis Meet & Eat	10 Tenpin Bowling Petanque History-Georgians	11 Mahjong Sing for Pleasure	12	13
14 Discussion Handicrafts	15	16 Tenpin Bowling Padel Tennis Art Appreciation Croquet Photography	17 Tenpin Bowling Petanque French	18 Canasta	19	20
21 Monthly Meeting Life in a Turkish Village Just Jazz	22	23 Tenpin Bowling Bridge Geology Padel Tennis Wine Group Writing for fun	24 Tenpin Bowling Petanque Music Appreciation Wine Group	25 Mahjong Reading Sing for Pleasure	26	27
28 Bank Holiday	29 Wine Group	30 Tenpin Bowling Film Group Padel Tennis	31 Tenpin Bowling Petanque French			

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