



Maldon and District

Newsletter



November 2024

www.maldonu3a.co.uk

Registered Charity 1086182

FROM THE CHAIR

We are back on GMT, the Budget is still an ongoing debate, as I look out of the window I can see, in the distance mist and mud rather like the film *The Essex Serpent* and we are now on the verge of a new Trump era – but all continues calmly within our u3a. We will continue to Learn, Laugh and Live but may have to work a bit harder on the Laugh element.

Our AGM last month was followed by a talk about Beatrix Potter. It seems that she was not just a fine artist but also an art critic who wrote her reviews in her own coded language. These reviews have been decoded and are thoughtful and on occasions somewhat derogatory. I am sure few of us realised her talents were quite so varied.

Our Open Day at the Town Hall has proved successful bringing in 12 new members, and we are now able to create good publicity through our Facebook page and online through the Maldon Nub. But the best method is always word of mouth so don't forget to tell your friends and family about us.

There will be a Coffee Morning for new members on Thursday 21st November at the Maldon Town Hall from 10.00 to noon. This will be a chance for new members to meet (and question) members of the Committee and coordinators and to see the range of activities we have to offer. It is always helpful to know why members have joined and what activities they are involved in or are planning to pursue. Ideas for new Groups are particularly welcome as we must continue to evolve.

Our thoughts are now turning to Christmas and we are planning a Christmas Meeting to be even better than last year.

Ken Hazell

MONTHLY MEETING

Monday 16th December

Wickham Bishops Hall

Doors open at 1.15pm for 1.45pm start

Christmas Entertainment

by the *Purleigh Philharmonic*

with quiz and refreshments

Please remember your membership card

WELCOME

Alan Butcher

Sian Gibson

Steve Brown

Mary Eley

Angela Pleasance

Tina Ball

Julia Bawden

Louisa Thorpe

Lewis Thorpe

Ron Piper

Brian Bailey

Rosemary Bailey

Louise Yeates

Janet Stiling

Fred Lane

Geoff Cohen

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 **Tuesday 3rd December**.

Kris news.maldonu3a@gmail.com

MONTHLY SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2025

20th January	Gainsborough's House	A talk on the recently extended and refurbished house in Sudbury and on the painter, Thomas Gainsborough.
17th February	Blesma: The Limbless Veterans Brian Chenier	Blesma, The Limbless Veterans, is an Armed Forces charity dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the use of a limb, an eye or sight. We support these men and women in their communities throughout the UK.
17th March	The 1952 Lynmouth Flood Disaster Philip McKinder	Philip will explore the happenings in August 1952 in the little town of Lynmouth in North Devon, that had an impact all over the world. Members will be asked to choose a hotel for their holiday and then walk through the village before finding out what happened to them on the night of 15th August.
21st April	Easter Monday	No Meeting
19th May	Stories behind the photos	Barbara Mayer, a wildlife photographer, will talk about the challenges and memorable moments she faced whilst taking photos of big cats and other wildlife species.
16th June	Tales from the East Side Gary Lewis	The East London Cemetery does not allow guided tours, but Gary's talk will introduce us to a cast of fascinating characters who are buried there.

21st July	Musical Quiz Steve Scruton	A light hearted quiz from Steve of BBC Essex featuring pictures and music with questions . Plus light refreshments.
18th August	The Livery Companies of the City of London David Williams	For many centuries the skills of craft industries was controlled by the Livery Companies but their influence faded as Britain became more industrialised. Yet the Livery movement has survived and many of the 110 companies are supporting education, offering scholarships, building and maintaining schools and financing organisations who care for the sick, the needy and the homeless.
15th September	tba	
20th October	AGM Followed by a talk by Patrick Forsyth	Our own u3a member and author, Patrick Forsyth will tell us about the 'funny side of writing'.
17th November	The Dig Charlie Haylock	An intriguing and sometimes hilarious look behind the scenes in the making of the Netflix film <i>The Dig</i> . A film based on the novel of the same name about the discovery of the famous Sutton Hoo burial ship and the people involved.
15th December	Christmas Entertainment	

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

Open Day 25th October

A few photos from a successful day



Malcolm welcoming visitors at reception

Refreshments anyone?? Just ask
Hilda or Janice



Sylvia with our Town Mayor,
Andrew Lay



Mike and Peter our bird watching experts

Patrick, our local author and raconteur



Glass of wine anyone? Carol and Tony from one of the Wine Groups

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

Our October Walk saw us exploring the square mile of Soho, no longer housing the red-light district since 1957, when legislation took the 'working' women off the streets. A few references to the seedy side of life were to be found at the Prince Charles Cinema where blue movies were shown; only allowed legally if shown in a club to members, and now showing classic films. The famous Windmill Theatre still stands, where nude actors were allowed on stage only if standing still, as does Paul Raymond's Revue Bar, still with its trademark neon sign.

Many immigrants had flocked to Soho, when it had been an area of slums and crime, and different nationalities are still represented here. From the French Roman Catholic Church (Notre Dame de France) to the famous De Hems pub named after the Dutch traveller and businessman who wanted to supply cold beers instead of the English 'warm pint'. And of course there is China Town, a fantastic sight of hundreds of lanterns suspended over the streets all year round, amazing oriental restaurants and shops, and an eclectic mix of locals and tourists making it a most colourful spectacle.



But this isn't all that there is to see; the 18th century buildings of Old Compton Street, the famous 'gay' street where no questions would be asked during pre-1967 times; Bar Italia, established in 1949, over which lived John Logie Baird who

demonstrated the first TV there; Archer Street, the unofficial Labour Exchange, where in the 20s to 60s, musicians congregated waiting for work; and, of course Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club, saved from closure after his death by Charlie Watts.

The leafy corner of Soho Square was a peaceful respite to the hustle and bustle of Soho. Here, beside a statue of Charles II, we learnt of his campaign to restore the monarchy. We were in, what was once the 'hunting corridor', which stretched from St James' Palace to Wanstead. The Dog and Duck pub in Hunting Chase was a reminder of those times, and Soho even got its name from the old hunting cry of SO-HO.



We enjoyed a lovely Walk, ending, for some of us, with a very indulgent Chinese meal!

Forthcoming Walks:

On **Tuesday 19 November** we will explore The Old Palace Quarter.

On **Tuesday 17 December** we find out about Christmas food in Eating Christmas.

To clarify: Eating Christmas is NOT a tasting tour, but the history behind the food we eat and the traditions.

There will be no Walks in January and February, but a full calendar will resume in March.

The cost for each of the walks is £10 per person. Payment by cheque in advance please – payable to Maldon & District U3A.

One cheque per event please.

To reserve your place or any further info please contact: Julie Lake

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

On Saturday 5th October 12 members enjoyed a very pleasant morning at an Archaeological site near Mayland Hall.

The weather was beautiful, and we had wonderful views over Mayland and the River Blackwater as Burnham u3a showed us the foundations of the original church, parts of which go back to the 11th Century.

After a very welcome slice of homemade lemon drizzle cake, we were shown some of their precious "finds". We were impressed by the professional way the site had been excavated and recorded over the last 3 years and once the site is filled in, Burnham u3a will prepare a full account for possible talks and offer their finds to the Burnham Museum.

We finished off our very informative morning with lunch at a local hostelry.

On Monday 28th October we had a very interesting afternoon at our meeting when Robert Rose from Braintree Museum gave a talk on at least 20 Leading Ladies who from the 17th Century onwards had influenced life in the Braintree District in a beneficial way, including ladies from the Courtauld family, nurses, ladies who wove the Coronation Robes for Queen Elizabeth II and Dodie Smith who wrote 101 Dalmatians.

Our final meeting for 2024 is on **Monday 25th November** for another afternoon of ***Mystery, History and Miscellany***. Members are invited to give a brief talk on any family antique or story they are willing to share.

Kathy and Sylvia will begin with a brief account of family connections to Dunkirk and the afternoon will finish with light seasonal refreshments.

See you on the 25th.

Kathy and Sylvia



As many of you are aware, our Local History Group, which has been providing our members with a wide variety of speakers and visits for at least 20 years, will be discontinuing next year if new Coordinators do not come forward.

Kathy and Sylvia, together with Jane, became coordinators in 2016 and are happy to share with you their knowledge of local topics and speakers, as well as assisting with the fundamentals of restarting the Group. Our Committee members are also there to lend a hand with any logistical items, such as hall bookings and meeting fees.

Why not get together with one or two colleagues and have a chat with Kathy and Sylvia, to gain an insight into what is involved.

Thank you



Have you logged onto our website recently ? On the left hand side you'll see Links to other websites This will take you to many links, not only to other local and national u3as but online courses, general information on how to, and in particular to a sign up for u3a Friends, a monthly email, and to a sign up for Friends Extra. u3a Friends Extra – is a new range of benefits, offers and services exclusively for members of our u3a Friends community. The benefits include discounts for shopping, travel, insurance and more – and we hope really add to your u3a experience.

FILM GROUP

The Group met to discuss the latest two films under review.

Mrs. Dalloway – This film received mixed reviews. Although well-acted with an illustrious cast of British actors and beautifully staged, the story was dull, somewhat confusing with the flashbacks and not particularly interesting characters. There also seemed to be two storylines that didn't really come together in a satisfying way. The scoring ranged from very low and, as often happens within a group, one member quite enjoyed the film and scored it much higher. **Score: 6**

The Outfit proved to be a gem of a film for nearly the whole group, just one member who lost interest in it. The film setting was limited to just two or three rooms within a tailor's workshop and this gave it an almost play like quality. The storyline was complex with twists and turns, with the main character quietly manipulating the unfolding events. The film has been likened to a game of chess. Superb acting by Mark Rylance and the rest of the cast. **Score: 9**

Next time: **The Phantom of the Open**– 2021 British biographical comedy-drama film about the exploits of Maurice Flitcroft. The screenplay by Simon Farnaby was based on the biography *The Phantom of the Open: Maurice Flitcroft, The World's Worst Golfer* by Farnaby and Scott Murray. The film stars Mark Rylance, Sally Hawkins and Rhys Ifans.

Grandpa's Great Escape– Heartwarming comedy drama about a former WWII flying ace with Alzheimers who is admitted to an old people's home, from which he is determined to escape for one last adventure. Jack (Kit Connor) decides to help his Grandpa (Sir Tom Courtenay) escape from the home run by Miss Dandy (Jennifer Saunders), who has ulterior motives.

Both films available on BBC iPlayer with plenty of viewing time left.

Our next meeting is a week later than normal on **Wednesday, 4th December** 7.30pm by Zoom. If you would like to join us, please get in touch.

Shirley Macro

AVIATION GROUP

Hello Everyone,

At our October meeting we had an excellent talk given by local historian David Newman about the history of RFC Goldhanger dating from the time a War Department land requisition was sent to the farmer at Gardeners Farm in 1915 to the present day where microlights now use a section of the original aerodrome.

Once again reminding us of the sacrifices made by our forebears.

We meet in **November on Friday 29th** when we will have an Illustrated talk about Operation EXODUS by Chris Samson and Operation DODGE by fellow member David Gillespie. These operations were put in place in May 1944 to airlift and repatriate thousands of Allied POWs as their camps were liberated by the Allied Armies in Northern Europe (EXODUS) and Italy (DODGE).

This will cover the bases, the squadrons, the planes, the guys who flew them, the results and much more besides.

The programme for the rest of this year is as follows:

Friday 29th November An illustrated talk about Operation EXODUS by Chris Samson and Operation DODGE by fellow member David Gillespie. The meeting is at Woodham Mortimer Village Hall at 11.00, doors open at 10.30 for coffee, biscuits, and gossip.

Friday 20th December We will meet at Woodham Mortimer Village Hall for an Aviation related quiz and be entertained with two short films from my own records covering little known stories involving the legendary Vickers-Supermarine SPITFIRE. Christmas nibbles will be served and if time permits, we will round off our year with a repeat showing of the aviation ghost story ---- ***The Shepherd.***

Looking ahead I have a full programme of meetings and events planned for 2025. The first four months are published on the following pages.

AVIATION PROGRAMME 2025

Friday 31st January

We open our 2025 season with the film, ***Murphy's War***, starring Peter O'Toole as a lowly air mechanic who learns to fly in taking his personal quest for revenge on the U Boat and its crew who sank his ship and killed his comrades off South America during the latter part of WW2.

The fabulous Grumman Duck float plane is the real star of this film!

Although aviation is the central theme to this film, there is something for everyone to see with Peter O'Toole at his fabulous hell-raising best!

Friday 28th February

We will have an illustrated talk by Dave "Flash" Davies, who is a local professional photographer, for many years the company photographer at Marconi in Chelmsford and more recently the official photographer at Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome. His subject matter will be Photography ABC with an emphasis on the infancy of photography from the air and its evolution from WW1 to more recent times.

Friday 28th March

This meeting is devoted to a considered evaluation of the air disasters that befell the Boeing 737 Max.

This will start with a short, illustrated talk by Chris Samson about the phenomena of the "Super Stall" which led to electronically signalled stall recovery systems for civil airliners followed by an illustrated presentation from a non-aviation specialist who brings a refreshingly new approach to analysing what went wrong in causing not one but two catastrophic failures of the latest aspiration of arguably one of the most successful passenger carrying aircraft ever produced.

AVIATION PROGRAMME 2025 CONTD

Friday 25th April

A Show and Tell event!

The same formula as we used last June when members brought along items of interest or had related family stories to tell.

Please let me know of your interest so that I can build a programme where everyone has time to relate their story or discuss their exhibit.

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

ASTRONOMY

The next meeting of the group is on **Wednesday 27th November** with a visit to Cambridge University Observatory. We will car share and depart from Plantation Hall, Colchester Road, Heybridge CM9 4AL at the latest 4:30 pm to arrive in Cambridge by 6:00/6:30 pm.



The observatory opens at 6:30 pm with a half hour talk starting at 6:45 pm. Following the talk and if there are clear skies, then the telescopes at the observatory will be open.



New members are always welcome

Malcolm Case

Not a promising start for nine members as we set out on the reserve's cliff-top path, braving a wet and windy November morning. Two weeks earlier we could have seen a real rarity, a Pallas's warbler, thousands of miles off course from its usual migration route between the Siberian Mountain forests in which it breeds to over-winter in southern China or south-east Asia.

But we were pleased to see two or three goldcrests, Britain's smallest bird, as they flitted from twig to twig in an area of scrub. These birds are relatively common but can be surprisingly difficult to spot as they search for food, frequently hanging upside down to pluck insects from the underside of leaves. The bird is smaller than a wren, yet many cross the North Sea from mainland Europe to spend the winter in Britain. Their nests are made from moss held together with spiders' webs, often hanging from the ends of branches to foil heavier predators.



Out on the tide line, common, black-headed, black-backed and herring gulls flocked as occasional squalls blew in from the sea. Overhead flocks of brent geese flew having arrived from their breeding grounds in the high Arctic tundra where summer is short. Nesting starts before the snow and ice have

melted, and the geese must leave within 100 days. They have become something of a menace to farmers through damage to winter sown cereal crops, trampled by hundreds of webbed feet.

*The group's next venue is Hanningfield reservoir on **Sunday 1st December**, meeting in the car park at 10am*

Mike Bagshaw
Peter Gaywood

STROLLERS TOO

Our walk on **Tuesday 26th November** will start at: The Braxted Bakery, Witham Road, Little Braxted, CM8 3ET, whence we will return for lunch on completion of the walk.

Please arrive at 10.15 for a 10.30 start and car share wherever possible.

The walk is roughly one third on rural roads with the remaining two thirds on farm tracks and field paths. Approximately 250 yards are on quite a busy road where extra care will need to be taken.

David Griffiths

There will not be any walks in December. Our next meetings will be in January which will be planning meetings for 2025, further details will be in next month's Newsletter.

Malcolm Case

A WALK IN AID OF THE BBC CHILDREN IN NEED APPEAL Sunday 17th November

I am again organising a sponsored walk in aid of the BBC Children in Need Appeal. Meet at 10:15 for a 10:30 start from the car park on the right at the bottom of Marsh Farm Road, South Woodham Ferrers, CM3 5WP. This is a free car park. The walk is some 3.5 miles and will be alongside the river Crouch. As this is a sponsored walk you can bring friends and family, and dogs (on a lead always please). If you would like to take part in the walk and raise money for a worthwhile cause, then please do join us. I would ask that if you do join in that you are sponsored and that you bring any sponsorship money with you. If you are not able to join the walk, then please give any donation to someone who is coming on the walk. I will then collect it, bank it, and send it directly to the BBC Children in Need Appeal. Thank you for your support and I look forward to seeing you on the walk. Lunch will be at The Shaw Farm pub, Wickford Road, South Woodham Ferrers, CM3 5QY.



Malcolm Case

PETANQUE GROUP

The group meets **Thursday afternoons**, start time 2.00 p.m. until around 4.00 p.m. We play on the Petanque pitch opposite the Marine Lake at the Promenade Park, Park Drive, Maldon CM9 5JQ.

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

We only play if the weather is dry. The season is April until November

For more details please contact:

Jack Veash

Geoff Macro

TENPIN BOWLING

Do you fancy a chat and a cup of coffee with some tenpin bowling thrown in? We play every **Wednesday** and **Thursday mornings** from 09.45 – 12 noon at Madison Heights, Park Drive, Maldon.

If you are interested, please contact:

Alan Buck

David Coombes



THE BIG BALTI

The next curry night will be held on **Monday 25th November** at the Balti Bhujon restaurant, Mill Road, Maldon. 6.30ish start.

To add your name to the list please contact:

Graham Evans

Bob Gowers

DONATIONS for the SEAFARERS CENTRE, TILBURY

The centre is asking for donations of knitted items – hats, scarves, gloves, jumpers, socks, any size any colour. They are also requesting coats suitable for male and female (must be clean). Toiletries suitable for male and female. DVDs, jigsaws, and sweets with a long use by date. All donations are gratefully received and appreciated by the Centre.

If you can give a donation of any of the above, please bring them to the monthly meeting, or to the Maritime group meetings, or contact me and I will arrange for any donated items to be collected. On behalf of the centre, thank you.

Malcolm Case

MARITIME GROUP

The next meeting of the Maritime Group is on **Monday 2nd December** starting at 10:00 am at the Blackwater Sailing Club, Basin Road, Heybridge Basin, for a talk by Julie Hobby and Chaplin Ruth on the work of the Seafarers Centre, Tilbury.

They will tell us how the centre works for visiting seafarers and the reason behind these centres which are not just in Tilbury but also to be found in most major ports in the United Kingdom; they will also tell us how our donations are used. Should you have any donations, then please bring them to the meeting when they can be given directly to Julie.

Any u3a member is very welcome to join us.

Malcolm Case



A Senior's Version of Facebook

For those of my generation who do not, and cannot, comprehend why Facebook exists: I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles. Therefore, every day I walk down the street and tell passers by what I have eaten, how I feel at the moment, what I have done the night before, what I will do later and with whom. I give them pictures of my family, my dog and of me gardening, taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having lunch, and doing what anybody and everybody does every day. I also listen to their conversations, give them a "thumbs up" and tell them I "like" them. And it works

I already have 4 people following me: 2 police officers, a private investigator and a psychiatrist.

ANON



The Silver Line is the only free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. 0800 4708090 www.thesilverline.org.uk

Committee members

We continue to look for volunteers to join our committee. Would you be willing to spend a couple of hours a month to attend committee meetings and to assist at monthly meetings ?

Please give this some thought and contact one of our committee members if you feel you could help. Thank you.

MAHJONG

We are a small , very friendly group that meet every other **Friday** in the Linton Room, West Maldon Community Centre from **1.45—3.45pm**.

Our group is currently full but for more information or to be added to the waiting list, please contact Mags Pell.

JUST JAZZ GROUP



Our next meeting is **Monday 18th November** 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

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 anyone is interested in joining the Group or perhaps having a “taster” session, please contact Ken Hazell.

GERMAN CONVERSATION

Please note that our next meeting is **Tuesday 19th November** from 2—4pm. Please contact me prior to the meeting if you will be attending.

Howard Broadbridge

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Ken Hazell	
Vice Chairman	Alec Fraser	
Treasurer	Steven Clarke	treasurer.maldonu3a@gmail.com
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Case	membership_maldonu3a@outlook.com
Newsletter Editor	Kris Taylor	news.maldonu3a@gmail.com
Minutes & Speaker Sec.	Theresa Byles	
Groups Coordinator	Malcolm Case	
Committee	Andy Simmonds Carol Bates Margaret Harker	

Webmaster	Tony Groves	webmaster@maldonu3a.co.uk
Publicity	Andy Simmonds Irina Vahonina	publicity.maldonu3a@gmail.com

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
Croquet	Geoff Macro Shirley Macro
Discussion	Pat Jones

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

Schedule of Events – December 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
						1 Bird Watching Hanningfeld Rsv
2 Maritime	3 German	4 Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Bridge Film	5 Ten Pin Bowling Poetry Rummikub	6 Mahjong	7	8
9 Discussion Handicrafts	10 Engineering	11 Ten Pin Bowling Padel Tennis Art Appreciation Meet & Eat	12 Ten Pin Bowling French Conversation Royal History- Victorians	13 Canasta Singing	14	15 Strollers
16 Monthly Meeting Music, quiz and refreshments Just Jazz	17 German London Walks Strollers	18 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge Padel Tennis Photography	19 Ten Pin Bowling Rummikub	20 Aviation	21	22
23	24	25 Merry Christmas	26 Ten Pin Bowling ?	27 Reading ? Singing ?	28	29
30	31 Happy New Year					