



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Heybridge U3A

News Sheet No. 5/2015

June 2015

<http://www.heybridgeu3a.org.uk>

Registered charity number 1160360

Your Committee

**We still have vacancies for
Vice Chair & Coordinator of COGs.
Speak to a Committee member if
you are interested.**

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Chairman	Joyce Woodham Woodham359@btinternet.com 01621 841066	
Vice Chairman	Vacancy	
Secretary	Linda Etherton ethertonbikes@aol.com 01621 843702	
Treasurer	Angela Pleasance angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk 01621 850310	
Membership Secretary	Jenny Parker membershipsecretary@heybridgeu3a.org.uk 01621 843581	
Events Secretary	Pat Smith patcleary98@sky.com 01621 856569	
Group Co-ordinator	Vacancy	
Speaker Secretary	John Harrison speakersecretary@heybridgeu3a.org.uk 01621 854851	
News Sheet Editor	Geoff Hadley editor@heybridgeu3a.org.uk 01621 852494	

New Groups!!!

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NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

From the Chairman

Sometimes life continues at a harmonious level, nothing much happens, we carry on doing the same routine each day. Then, suddenly, it is like the English weather, it is all change. I often think that we would be bored if we did not have our changeable weather to talk about.

Our U3A is very similar, months go by, we have slipped into a routine and then something changes that. Recently, for no obvious reason one or two of our groups have not been as successful as they once were. At the same time two new groups have started up. I am wondering whether, because we are a relatively small U3A, that we can only effectively cope with a fixed number of activities. If that is the case, then we will always be in the situation where we have changes taking place. In a way this is not a bad thing because it shows that members are participating and keeping us from becoming stale.

Another change is that, recently, I have received a number of invitations for our members to join in with activities elsewhere – other U3As and requests to help with other charities. I always forward these invitations to the committee and almost always they tell me that the time scale for letting you know is too short. So if you want to invite others to any of your functions, please let Pat know well in advance, so that the information can be circulated in time.

Joyce Woodham

Chairman Heybridge U3A

From the Editor

The design of the Heybridge U3A News Sheet and the reports that it contains has been changed to a full-page layout. Information about the Committee Members and their reports can be found in the first few pages with a contents column to aid in finding the parts which you wish to read first on page 1. The back page (p16) shows the Diary for the months of June and July..

Please keep the Editor up to date with any interesting stories, relevant pictures or anything that relates to the Heybridge U3A, the Association of Essex U3As or the U3A movement as a whole. Please send details to me by email with 'Heybridge U3A' in the title

Contact me, Geoff Hadley, on any issue raised in the News Sheet by phone 01621 852494 or by

Email editor@heybridgeu3a.org.uk

From the Membership Secretary

As at 31st May, we have 154 paid up members.

If you are not a member and would like to find out more about Heybridge U3A, you are welcome to attend a monthly meeting (held in the Plantation Hall at 14.00 on the 2nd Friday of each month) as a guest. There is no need to book – just turn up and sign in.

For any queries relating to membership, please email membershipsecretary@heybridgeu3a.org.uk

Future Heybridge U3A Monthly Meetings

The 12th June meeting is to centre on The Magna Carta and its 800th anniversary.

There will be a PowerPoint presentation about the anniversary of Magna Carta, historical anecdotes, fact and fiction with opportunities for discussion and some light-hearted quiz questions.

For Friday 10th July Ralph Springett, a shipwright and carpenter, who has, and continues to work on Carol Greenhalgh's barge, is coming to talk to us about some of his experiences with *The Emergency Disaster Team* including the Japanese Tsunami disaster.

John W Harrison: phone 01621 854851 or Email speakersecretary@heybridgeu3a.org.uk

From the Events Secretary

Planned Events

- Friday 17th July, a trip to Audley End House and Gardens.
- Sunday 19th July. An Elizabethan Musical Extravaganza at Layer Marney Tower.
- **NEW!** Wednesday 5th August. A chance to see "Annie" at the Cliffs Pavilion, Southend, with Boon's coaches.
- Sunday 20th September 2015, a trip to the Royal Dockyards at Chatham, on their 'Back to the 40s' weekend – with Lodge Coaches.
- **NEW!** Wednesday 21st October, a day trip to Bletchley Park.

Please see page .12 for further details

GROUP REPORTS

Art (Painting) Group

As the holiday season gets under way, numbers attending our Friday afternoon sessions begin to thin out a bit.

Our COG Michael, for instance, is one of the lucky ones having been away twice already this year.

Some of us, present company included, miss the odd meeting during school holidays while grandchild-sitting - not that we hear many complaints about that.

It's all part of life's rich tapestry, or should I say canvas, or sketchbook.

Many a holiday snapshot has inspired a burst of artistic activity; likewise when the grandchildren are around.

In fact, snapshots taken on holiday with grandchildren can be the best spur to putting paint on paper.

So roll on summer!

Gill Carpenter

.For information about the group contact, Michael Kempen: Email m.kempen159@btinternet.com or Phone 01621 892974.

Ballroom & Latin Dancing Group

Progress is now showing through. This month we concentrated on the Waltz and Quickstep, not only on the steps, but also how to use the body when going in to turns etc, while still maintaining the timings of the dance.

Since starting our group we have had enquiries from other local U3A members as to whether they may join us. We are now able to expand and we are going to circulate the other local U3A's inviting their members to join us on a first come basis.

In fairness to our own dancers, we need to know whether or not you will be joining us again when we resume in September, a good indicator of this will be how many of you turn up on the fourth Friday of June being the last meet in this window.

July and August we have a break. First class to resume is September 25th 14.00 to 16.00 Plantation Hall
Gloria and Alf

Alf Bell. Email dossod@fsmail.net or phone 01621 840158

Bird Watching Group

This month we went to St Lawrence Bay and walked along the sea wall to a scrape (a shallow area of water) just the other side of the sea wall where we hoped to see the Avocet chicks but today, not one Avocet large or small in sight. It was such a cold and windy day not many birds were around. We did spot some old favourites, the Oystercatcher, Lapwing, Common Tern and Redshank, a Little Egret paid us a visit and a Kestrel did a flypast for us.



Disappointed as we were at not seeing the Avocets we had enjoyed our walk. Though cold at least it was dry, the downpour came as we drove home.

Next month we meet on 26th June. If you are interested to join us email symockturtle@yahoo.co.uk or phone 01261 869871.

A cold Morning Jill

New Bridge Club

If you would like to join this new group, please contact

Elizabeth Eastwood E-mail e.m.e@talktalk.net

Cards and Paper Crafts

We had a very happy group making our penguin cards, very cute and a bit fiddly, and greatly enjoyed by all.

We had a guest with us this time who was Angela's sister who was visiting her for a few days. She will take her new card idea back to her local group. Well done by all thank you.

The next meeting is 3rd June at 14.00

Please contact Lesley for details. Phone 01621 858135 e-mail Lindawoonton@sky.com

Computer Group

I have to report, again, that the numbers were down again in May. The subscription was increased to £7 this quarter and will stay at £7 for the third quarter of 2015. Has the increase to £7 per quarter put people off? Please let me know. We hope not. We had one new member at the group and one who will not be attending in future.

In the April Group Meeting we thought it might be worth considering the inclusion of topics related to the more mobile forms of communication and computer use that we know as the Tablet / iPad. The Computer Group Members considered that there are Heybridge U3A Members who are either using them or thinking of buying one and would like a forum to discuss this subject. The group proposed in the Computer Group's May Report and sent to the Editor a request from members for information to establish this need. This request was cut from the May News Sheet without any reference back to the Computer Group. Therefore this information is not available to us.

With the rejection of our request for funding for the purchase of a Tablet for use by the group we are now pursuing other methods of self-help to increase numbers. As part of this initiative, we are planning to have a short talk on the Tablets/iPads at our June meeting followed by 'How to set up an email account'. Depending on time, we will cover the subject 'An introduction to WORD'. At future meetings we plan to cover 'Simple ways of sorting out Photographs' and 'Basic Label Making'. We cover subjects you want at your level of knowledge.

The Computer Group Meetings are for those wishing to be more proficient at using the computer, in any of its forms, PC, Laptop, or Tablet, starting at any stage. The subjects covered are tailored to those that attend the monthly meetings. The meetings are held in the Claydon Room in Plantation Hall on the third Thursday of each month at 14:00, when you will be made welcome. Just come along. You can always contact me by phone or email before if you so wish.

Ian Newman: Email ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk or phone 01621 891184.

Ed.'s note: Ian has been informed that the Committee is taking up his idea of a survey with a view to organising workshops if there is a demand

Creative Writing Group

A small group heard about camping experiences this month, with photos from one member.

Our next project is a challenge from Mersea Museum. On a recent visit our Local History group learnt of a Roman burial barrow. When this was excavated in 1912 a lead box with a wooden lid was found inside. The box contained an urn of green glass in which were some cremated human remains. The surviving bones identify a male aged between 35 and 45. The museum's website (<http://merseamuseum.org.uk/mmbarrow.php>) tells us:

Most of his remains appeared 'relatively large and robust, with some marked muscle attachments, particularly in the lower limb'. He was 'regularly engaged in strenuous walking/running', and signs of soft tissue injury suggest he may have suffered a tear in one of the major thigh muscles. Far more surprisingly, evidence from spinal lesions and new, excessive bony growths indicate that he suffered from Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis [DISH], a disease of the joints which today is found mainly in men over 50. Jacqueline McKinley reports that she knows of no other cases of DISH recorded in cremated remains. This important Roman, living in a luxurious villa on beautiful Mersea Island, was likely to have suffered from stiffness and spinal pain, although these would not have been fatal unless there were complications.

So – can we write his story? Or a story set in his time, about 100 AD.

If this proves too much of a challenge the alternative is 'Magna Carta'.

Angela Pleasance angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01621 850310

Croquet Group

The Croquet Group got off to a quiet start on the 14th May in a slight but increasing drizzle, which soon saw us retire to the clubhouse for coffee. Weather permitting; we'll have met again on the 28th, before reverting on the 4th and 18th June to the first and third Thursdays of the month as last season. As there are four Thursdays in July, we'll give the 23rd a miss.

There's a possibility that we'll be joined later in the season by members of the Maldon Branch, some of whom have expressed an interest to Gillian Stone of that Branch. Since we ask only a modest green fee and mallet hire from those who turn up, there should be no financial complication for this inter-Branch co-operation which, if successful, could spread to the other local Branches – or could eventually lead to inter-Branch competition!

As before, we meet at Forrester Park, off Beckingham Road, at about 09.45 ready for a 10.00 start, playing until we've had enough – usually about noon to 12.30. It is all very informal.

John Gorrie Email gorries@jprag.myzen.co.uk or phone 01621 854006

Discussion Coffee Morning Group

We met on 15th May at Jean's house and, due to holidays etc, we were a manageable group of 5. We were very well behaved and quietly got through plenty of subjects. These included the rejection of the local housing development plan because it "indirectly discriminated" against travellers by failing to provide pitches for them. Jean provided tasty refreshments, much appreciated by all.

The next meeting will be at 11.00 on Friday 19th June at Linda Etherton's house.

Margaret Brown: phone 01621 854885 or Email mbandmeg@btinternet.com

Family History Group

There was no meeting in May because of holiday. The next meeting will be on Thursday 25th June 10.30 to 12.30 at my house as usual. Lesley Pomphrett: Phone 01621 817733 lesleypommy@hotmail.com

French Conversation Group

After talking about things that we had been doing during the previous month, we started to look at a Grammar exercise which we had been given at the end of our May session. It was about how "qui" and "que" which both can mean who, which or that. The problem was which one to put in the gaps in some sentences. Also, to complicate matters, we sometimes had to add "ce" which means this, these or that. Things were not helped by the fact that in modern English the words who, which and that are often omitted from sentences. After much bilingual discussion we sorted out the problems between us. These exercises always make me grateful that I am not learning English from a native language which has a rigid structure. That must be really confusing. Thinking about school, I remember being in trouble with our sharp tongued music teacher for singing the version of the rhyme about the bridge at Avignon with the first line, Sous (under) le pont d'Avignon, when she insisted that it was Sur (on) le pont..... I discovered during our conversation, that both were correct. The original version celebrated a notorious dance hall built under the arches and the second was a reissued version for children purporting to be a traditional song where peasants danced across the bridge. Did the author of the latter know that the bridge was ruined? What do you think?

Our meetings are held on the second Wednesday in each month starting at 10:00.

Pat Newman For further information please contact:

Jenny Parker: email jennyparker14@hotmail.com or phone 01621 843581.

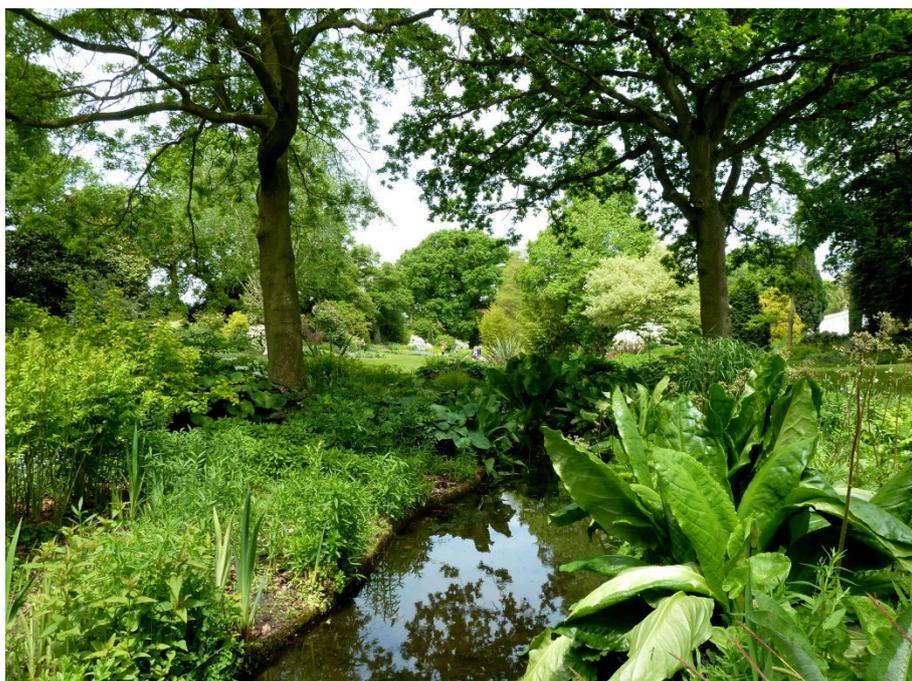
French Improvers: Joint Blackwater / Heybridge Group

As our May meeting fell on Bank Holiday Monday, we agreed to try and find an alternative date to meet. 15th June was the most popular and Peter has agreed to host. The normal June meeting will be on the following Monday, 22nd June, at 14.00 at my house.

Jenny Parker: email jennyparker14@hotmail.com or phone 01621 843581

Gardening Group

The Beth Chatto gardens were really beautiful, so fresh and green, with lots of colourful shrubs and plants, and of course a wonderful accompaniment of birdsong. There was good food in the cafe, and we couldn't leave the nursery without buying something!



Just down the road was Spring Cottage, a complete contrast, an old thatched cottage with a very small garden. It was packed with plants and interesting features, which are always useful for giving us ideas for our own gardens.

Our next visit is on Sunday 14th June at 14.00 to Rayne Hatch Farm, Stisted, Braintree, which is a two and a half acre garden with ponds, herbaceous borders, woodland, orchard and a walled garden. More details are in the Yellow Book.

Everyone is welcome, especially if you have never come on a garden visit before. I think our group has the wrong name, as we don't do any gardening together; it's just people who love a stroll in beautiful surroundings followed by delicious cake! Please phone me if you need a lift.

Pat Yates: Email pat.yates@tesco.net or phone 01621 892866.

Italian Conversation

There have been quite a number of changes within the Italian groups recently. Several members felt they had too many other commitments calling on their time, and so have had to drop out for now, and that just left one lady in the Advanced Group. However, seeing as all the members feel what they need more than anything else is conversation practice, we have decided to have just a single group. This Italian Conversation Group will meet twice a month, on the first and third Monday of the month, at 10.00 at my house. The next meetings will be:

Monday 1st June

Monday 15th June

Monday 6th July

The second meeting in July has yet to be confirmed as I might be away on the third Monday.

Janice Slight E-Mail janice.slight@tiscali.co.uk

Local History Group

We certainly went back in time for our May meeting when we had an excursion to Mersea Island. Some first visited the church then we all met at the museum to explore their current exhibition on the Home Front of 1915. We also had time to examine some of their other varied artefacts. We were able to see the cremated remains and the glass funeral urn that had been discovered in the Roman Barrow that we, with our guides, later went inside. There is lots to suggest that the Roman in question must have been very important, for example, it has now been established that the bones had been encased in resin and a good deal of frankincense.



Inside Mersea Island Tunnel

The Museum of Power is opening specially to give us a guided tour in June so we are hoping to have a good attendance. Please contact Carol if you are interested in joining us.

Our visit to Coalhouse Fort will now take place in July.

Carol Greenhalgh: phone 01621 840339 or Email george.smeed@virgin.net .

New Musical Variety Group

Heather Lealen would like to hear from you if you yearn to perform in a Variety Show

01621 857678 E-Mail heather@facetsoflove.co.uk

Patchwork Group

The next meeting of the Patchwork Group will be in the Claydon Room on Monday 8th June at 14.00.
Anne Thorpe E-mail Anne.thorpe@btinternet.com or phone 01621 850828.

Petanque Group

After two Bank Holidays in May we will soon be in June, and with several members having been on holiday, now that the weather is improving we hope that we will be back to full numbers. There are five Mondays in June so we will be having plenty of practice in our throwing skills. Any U3A members wishing to try the game, we can bring extra boules if notice is given. You will appreciate that to carry extra boules just in case, the extra weight is a consideration, but we are willing to do it if required.

Unless it is actually raining we shall be there every Monday at 14.00 so don't be shy, come along if you wish and have a go.

Barbara Barbrook. Email c.barbrook@sky.com or phone 01621 855605.

Photography Group

The meeting was held at the Combined Military Services Museum with 8 members attending.

The assignment subject for the May meeting, which had been agreed at the April meeting, was "to take a close up photo with the background blurred". Members managed to provide some interesting

shots ranging from flowers, insects and other subjects. We then discussed the photos and the camera settings that were used in taking them.

During the meeting we decided that for the next meeting we would print a copy of our favourite photo size 7" x 5" for discussion.

We also had a discussion on how we could further improve on what we do as a group with possibly including more outside visits and possibly linking with other U3A photography groups.

In the group we cover a wide range of topics and try to cater for the needs of all of our members whether you are an experienced photographer or a complete novice.

We welcome anyone who is interested in taking photographs no matter what type of device you use, whether it is a SLR, bridge or compact camera, a tablet or even a mobile phone.

If you have a particular topic or query you wish to discuss, if we cannot give an answer from within the group, we will attempt to find the answer for you. We set an assignment each month which has been agreed by those attending the meeting. We are not competitive but enjoy looking at everyone's interpretation of the topic chosen.

We meet on the first Thursday of each month at the Combined Military Services Museum at 14:00.

Anyone interested in joining or coming to see what we do can contact Norman Grove on 01621 842805 or by email norman.grove@gmail.com.

Reading and Books Group

Our next meeting will be on 17th June at the usual time in Plantation Hall.
Please contact Ann Lees 01245 225153 if you need further details.

Scrabble Group

This month we talked about the news report concerning thousands of new words added to the official Scrabble word list, for example devo (devolution, as in devo-max), vape (to puff an e-cigarette), onesie (all-in-one suit) and twerking (hip-gyrating dance). Making their debut in the list are lolz (laughs) and bezzy (best friend). How many we shall use remains to be seen.

I don't often manage a very high score in Scrabble so it was unusual to be able to use all 7 tiles to play the first word to go down on the board. The letters each had a value of 1, with one letter on a double letter square. The score is doubled when the first word is played and 50 points added if all tiles are used so the final score was 66. Intrigued? Why not come and have a game with us on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 2.00pm in the Meeting room at Plantation Hall. £2.00 per session covers the room hire with a cuppa and biscuit

Linda Etherton Telephone: 01621 843702 Email: ethertonbikes@aol.com

Solo Whist

Four of us met at Bill & Flo's place on 13th May for our monthly session of solo. Geoff however could not be with us due to unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances.

The four of us had a lively session (as usual) but this time the hands of winning and losing were more evenly spread between us. Flo provided some excellent refreshments at half time, which we all enjoyed.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 10th June at Margaret's place at the usual time of 14.00. Anybody new wishing to play please contact me Dave Mason (CoG) on 01261 858635 E-mail tina@tina832.orangehome.co.uk

Technical Computing Group

Our meeting started off with myself demonstrating a working installation of Microsoft Windows 10, which is available to download free from the Microsoft web site. The group discussed this program in great detail, and our opinion is that it is part Windows 7 and part Windows 8. Whilst we appreciate this is a trial copy, the final installation disks will not be available until sometime in the autumn. Our first impressions are that if you already have windows 7 or 8 stick with them initially. We then went on after a tea break to talk about various mobile phones, and deals currently available on the high street; our thinking is that 'you get what you pay for!!

As usual, anyone interested in joining our group, please contact me in the first instance.

Colin Mason (Cog) colin@mason20.wanadoo.co.uk 01621-854906

Ten Pin Bowling

Our meeting on 12th May was only a small number of 5 because, for various reasons, some of the regular players were unable to attend. We decided that the three ladies would occupy one lane and the two men the other. Graham powered his way to top scorer achieving 147. Graham and Simon were playing so fast that the two men had finished their four games in just over the hour! They paused for breath while we ladies finished our third game with Jenny as the high scorer with 114. We followed our exertions with a welcome cuppa and biscuits. More players needed! Please come and have fun every 2nd Tuesday of the month. The cost is only £4.75 for up to two hours play and free tea/coffee and biscuits.

Lynne Morrison lejmorrison@gmail.com 01621 891288

Threads and Fabrics Group

Our meeting in May was, as usual, busy, but relaxing. It is a chance to sit down and make decorative and/or practical items, while gaining inspiration for future projects. If someone has a problem with their work, often someone else in the group has experienced something similar and knows the solution to it. This helps us all to become more adventurous in things that we are willing to tackle.

We were pleased to welcome a new member to our group and hope that she enjoyed herself and that we will see her at future meetings.



The photo this month of embellished Indian fabric is a work in progress

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month starting at 14:00

Pat Newman. Email ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk or phone 01621 891184.

Ukulele Group

The first meeting of the Ukulele group was on June 3rd. All attendees enjoyed their first lesson

The next meeting will be on 1st July at 14.00 at Barbara Barbrooks' house: Beginners Welcome
Robin Carpenter E-Mail robinrcarpenter@yahoo.co.uk

Walking Group

Heavy rain caused the cancellation of our May walk. In the hope of more clement conditions, we'll try for the walk in Chalkney Wood next month instead. The bluebells may be finished but an early summer woodland walk should be pleasant.

Directions: Take the B1024 into Earls Colne, at the roundabout turn right into Upper Holt Street then right into Tey Road. After approx. 1/2 mile find the track to the left leading to Chalkney Wood and park along the track. Meet at 14:00 pm Thurs 11th June.

Please let me know if you can join us and if you need or can offer transport

Elizabeth: Email e.m.e@talktalk.net or phone 01621 850618. Mobile 07581029816.

Weekenders Group

The 18th May saw six Weekenders enjoying a rather windblown afternoon tea at the Remus Horse Sanctuary near Ingatestone. After our delicious tea, served valiantly by staff from the Sanctuary, we were given a tour of the facilities and the animals they so lovingly care for. Not just horses but goats, sheep, cows, donkeys and even cats have been given a new life from the suffering they have endured due to neglect and cruelty and looked after by an army of dedicated, caring volunteers. Well worth the visit. Apologies to anyone who went to Osea View for the May coffee morning only to find it closed. Those of us who were there moved on to Heybridge Basin and were unable to contact anyone else about the sudden change of venue.

Marilyn Corbett: Phone 01621817518 or email mars42@btinternet.com

Wine Appreciation Group

In May, we looked at the wine growing areas of Australia and tasted two different Chardonnays from the same year, one produced in Southern Australia and the other from Tasmania. Both wines were purchased from Aldi supermarket and were similar in colour and taste.

There will be no meeting in June, this year but I am trying to arrange a group tour to Giffords Hall Vineyard on Sunday 26th July. Giffords Hall is at Hartest, which is situated between Bury St Edmunds and Sudbury. As well as the chance to walk around the vines and taste the wines, there is a well-stocked shop selling local produce and refreshments available on site, including cream teas and lunches. The cost of a guided tour and talk is £5.00 per person and has to be paid in advance. This is open to all U3A members, so anyone interested in joining us for this visit, please contact me by email.

More details can be found on the Giffords Hall Vineyard website. Jackie Jones:

Email jachjones@tiscali.co.uk or phone 01621 817117

Further Information and Details of Events

The following events are planned for this year. Please note that members are asked to pay for outings in full, six weeks before the trip date. If the trip later proves not to be viable, the money will be refunded in full.

July A trip to the beautiful medieval house Audley End on Friday 17th July. Admission to the House and Gardens is free for us as U3A members, courtesy of English Heritage. Fords Coach will collect us from Tesco Extra on the Fullbridge, Maldon at 09.00. We first stop at Saffron Walden to eat our sandwiches, find somewhere for lunch, or just wander about that lovely old town, before journeying on to Audley End. Our visit ends at 16.00. Plenty of room on the coach, so please do sign up! Coach fare of £14.00 pp to be paid by Friday 12th June, when tickets will be available.

July. An Elizabethan Musical Extravaganza is planned at Layer Marney Tower on Sunday, 19th July. Last year we thoroughly enjoyed our picnic there and hope to do likewise this year, (nb we each take our own picnic though there is a cafe) the cost is £6.00 pp if 20 or more members go. Please pay and collect your tickets by 12th June. Car sharing is suggested for this event.

August In response to members request for more theatre trips, we are making a start by booking seats with Boon's Calibre Travel to see the 14.30 performance of the musical "Annie" at the Cliffs Pavilion, Southend on Wednesday 5th August. £59.95 includes a 2 course meal at the venue. Full payment is required by 12th June.

September. Sunday 20th September 2015 - a trip to the Royal Dockyards at Chatham, on their 'Back to the 40s' weekend with Lodge Coaches. Total cost £28.50. Numbers required by 19th June please. Full payment by 10th July

October Please sign up ASAP for a visit to the world famous Bletchley Park: until recently Britain's best kept secret where the Government Code & Cypher School studied and devised methods which broke the code of German and Japanese communications in WW2. I have made a provisional booking for Wednesday 21st October 2015. Admission is £13.00pp if 12 or more are in a group. Travel to be organised later.

Please sign up in the first place to show interest and remove your name if you later find you are unable to join the trip. Please contact me with any queries.

All cheques should be made payable to Heybridge U3A

PAT SMITH; 01621 856569 E.MAIL patcleary98@sky.com

U3A Visit to Kew Gardens

Yet again we found ourselves, at the early hour of 08.00, in Tesco car park waiting to board our trusty Ford's coach, this time to Richmond and Kew Gardens. On arrival outside the ornate and splendid Elizabeth Gate, coffee in the light and airy Orangery was of course our priority. Some of us then decided to visit the historic Kew Palace, site of the favourite home of King George 111 and Queen Charlotte, where we were greeted by young costumed volunteers eager to tell us all about it.

It is inimitably 17th century Dutch in style and surprisingly modest and unchanged for 200 years as it was shut up for many years in the 19th century. The King suffered bouts of madness and the harsh medical treatments here that are so familiar from the film *The Madness of King George*. You can see the chair in which Queen Charlotte died of dropsy. Two of her sons were married here (in a frantic rush for a legitimate future heir!) but the talented daughters chafed under a restricted and possessive regime, calling their home "The Nunnery". We were surprised to discover that the kitchens were in a separate building, perhaps making for some cold dinners! We learned that only menservants worked there, partly for reasons of status and partly to keep them separate from the women! The king's bath was considerably placed there in order to prevent

servants having to carry hot water a long way. Someone had even left water in it when the palace was closed up and this had rusted it.

We then wandered the Gardens which is a place of wonderful trees and plants and of course a world centre for botanical study and conservation. Flowers are rarer at this time of year but there was a stunning display of tulips, all of them of uniform height, size and colour. Some were planted into a Union Flag merged with that of the Netherlands to celebrate 70 years since the liberation of that country from Nazi occupation.

The Palm House provided welcome warmth on a chilly day but the Temperate House is closed for restoration, due to reopen in 2018. Everywhere is immaculately kept by an army of gardeners.

There is so much to see in a huge area but I must mention the Treetop Walkway which gives a fantastic view as you walk through the tops of the trees. It isn't for those who suffer from vertigo and felt quite wobbly at times! Did you know that the roots of a tree are twice as wide as its height but only reach about a metre deep? Nor did I!

There is so much to see, including a gallery of botanical art (as well as the essential shop of course!), that it was impossible to cover in one day but we made a start and must go back. There are many activities for children but we'll save those for the grandchildren another time. *And you can walk on the grass!*

Many thanks to Pat for organising and to Linda for taking over when Pat became ill. Get well soon Pat!

Gill Bridle

A Trip on the Thames

Fifteen of us travelled from Tilbury to Gravesend on the ferry where we boarded the Princess Pocahontas for our trip to Chelsea. The one thing which was noticeable for me was how much the industry has gone from the Thames to be replaced with housing, which is a sign of the times and very sad. The weather was good to us and I think everybody enjoyed the day. I certainly did. We had a very knowledgeable Captain who provided us with 3 hours of commentary on the way down to Chelsea.



A River View of the City

On the way back, we were left to reflect how different tourist points look from the river, and what wonderful architecture there is in London which we so often forget.

Thank you Pat for yet another excellent day out

Bridget Reason

Association of Essex U3As On the Notice Board

Items from the latest mailing that might be of interest:-

U3A Photography Competition - Britain's Wildlife – closing date 31st August

Some wonderful photographs have already been received, but the Third Age Trust is hoping for lots more especially now the weather is improving at least a little. Details are on the website.

ITV Documentary – stories and memories of the 1966 World Cup Final

Blakeway North, a television production company based in Manchester is making the above documentary on behalf of ITV and would love to hear from U3A members who have a funny or interesting story connected to the day. If you have a story and you would like to share it, please contact Jasmine MacNabb, the assistant producer on 0161 817 6650 or email her at [jasmine. macnabb@blakeway.tv](mailto:jasmine.macnabb@blakeway.tv) by July.

ATG Theatre Card Offer

U3A members can purchase an ATG theatre card for £25, a saving of £10 off the standard price. This gives you a series of benefits including priority booking and savings off tickets in their 38 theatres across the UK. If you are interested go to 'Offers for U3A Members' in the members' area of the website

More details for the above can be found on the Heybridge U3A Notice Board. These and others are also detailed in The U3A magazine 'Third Age Matters'.

Maldon U3A Aviation visit

Coach Trip to the Clacton Air Show Friday 28th August

Leaving West Maldon Community Centre at 9.30 am

Price: approx. £11

If interested contact Ian Stevens on 01621 819069 or email ianstevens8@gmail.co

National Theatre visit

Hallo everybody. I'm Ken Cocks of Maldon and District U3A We have a number of seats available on a visit to the National Theatre to take a backstage tour on Friday 26th June. The cost is £20. The coach will leave West Maldon Community Centre at 08:00 and the coach leaves to return at 16:30.

If you would like to join us or require more information please ring me on 01621 785486. Alternatively e-mail me at info@kencocks.plus.com including a contact number. Ken Cocks

Group Name, Co-ordinator & Contact Phone Number & Email

Group Name	Co-ordinator (COG)	Telephone Number & Email
Art (Painting)	Michael Kempen	01621 892974 m.kempen159@btinternet.com
Bird Watching	Maureen Lenoir	01621 869871 symockturtle@yahoo.co.uk
Cards and Paper Crafts	Lesley Woonton	01621 858135 Lindawoonton@sky.com
Coffee Morning	Margaret Brown	01621 854885 mbandmeg@btinternet.com
Computer	Ian Newman	01621 891184 ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk
Creative Writing	Angela Pleasance	01621850310 angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk
Croquet	John Gorrie	01621 854006 gorries@jprag.myzen.co.uk
Dancing (Latin & Ballroom)	Alf Bell	01621 840158 dossod@fsmail.net
Family History	Lesley Pomphrett	01621 817733 lesleypommy@hotmail.com
French	Jenny Parker	01621 843581 jennyparker14@hotmail.com
Gardening	Pat Yates	01621 892866 pat.yates@tesco.net
Italian	Janice Slight	01621 853393 janice.slight@tiscali.co.uk
Local History	Carol Greenhalgh	01621 840339 george.smeed@virgin.net
Patchwork	Anne Thorpe	01621 850828 Anne.thorpe@btinternet.com
Petanque	Barbara Barbrook	01621 855605 c.barbrook@sky.com
Photography	Norman Grove	01621 842805 norman.grove@gmail.com .
Reading & Books	TBA	
Scrabble	Linda Etherton	01621 843702 ethertonbikes@aol.com
Solo Whist	Dave Mason	01621858635 tina@tina832.orangehome.co.uk
Technical Computing	Colin Mason	01621 854906 colin@mason20.wanadoo.co.uk
Ten Pin Bowling	Lynne Morrison	01621 891288 lejmorrison@gmail.com
Threads & Fabrics	Pat Newman	01621 891184 ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk
Ukulele	Robin Carpenter	01621 859060 robinrcarpenter@yahoo.co.uk
Walking	Elizabeth Eastwood	01621 850618 e.m.e@talktalk.net
Weekenders	Marilyn Corbett	01621 817518 mars42@btinternet.com
Wine Group	Jackie Jones	01621 817117 jachjones@tiscali.co.uk

Diary of Meetings and Visits For details see articles and co-ordinators above

Week Commencing	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8th June	8 Patchwork 14.00 Petanque 14.00	9 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	10 French Conversation 10.00 Solo Whist 14.00	11 Technical Computing 14.00 Walking 14.00	12 Monthly Meeting 14.00	13 Weekenders At Salty dogs cafe 10.00	14 Gardening 14.00
15th June	15 Petanque 14.00 Italian conversation 10.00	16 Local History 14.00	17 Book Group 14.15	18 Computer 14.00 Croquet 10:00	19 Coffee Morning 11.00 Painting 14.00	20	21
22nd June	22 Petanque 14.00 French Improvers 14.00	23 Scrabble 14.00	24 Creative Writing Group 14.30	25 Family History 10.30	26 Copy to Editor Painting 14.00 Dancing 14.00 Bird Watching 14.00	27	28
29th June	29 Petanque 14.00	30	1 st July Ukulele 14.00	2 Photography 14.00 Croquet 10:00	3 Committee Meeting 10.00 Painting 14.00	4	5
6th July	6 Petanque 14.00 Italian conversation 10.00 Patchwork 14.00	7 Threads 14.00	8 Cards & Paper Crafts 14.00	9 Technical Computing 14.00 Walking 14.00	11 Monthly Meeting 14.00	11 Weekenders White Elms Nursery 10.00	12 Gardening 14.00
13th July	13 Petanque 14.00	14 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	15 French Conversation 10.00 Solo Whist 14.00	16 Computer 14.00 Croquet 10:00	17 Coffee Morning 11.00 Painting 14.00	18	19
20th July	20 Petanque 14.00 French Improvers 14.00	21 Local History 14.00	22 Book Group 14.15 Wine Tasting 14.00	23 Family History 10.30	24 Painting 14.00	25	26
27th July	27 Petanque 14.00	28 Scrabble 14.00	29 Creative Writing Group 14.30	30	31 Copy to Editor Bird Watching 14.00 Painting 14.00	1 st August	2