



Heybridge U3A

News Sheet No. 2010/9

September 2010

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| Contacts: | Peter Thorpe | Chairman | 01621 850828 |
| | Brenda Dewar | Secretary | 01245 400492 |

From the Chairman

It does not seem possible that August has passed and that we are now into September. As the hours of daylight get less and autumn approaches, we will have to get used to doing more things inside again. All of which makes me think about our groups and I am delighted that the Books and Reading Group has out-grown being able to meet "at home" and will now regularly meet at the Plantation Hall. We are lucky to have such a venue in Heybridge and I think that it is good for the image of the U3A to have our larger groups using the Plantation Hall for their meetings.

We have had excellent attendances at our Monthly Meetings throughout the summer period and the last meeting was no exception. It is special to have a talk by a local man, on a local subject. Roger Beckett has been involved with local barges for most of his adult life and has skippered and sailed on several of the barges that are still moored on Hythe Quay today. He is an excellent photographer and illustrated his talk with traditional slides, some of which were taken many years ago when he was involved in barge racing. He discussed the design of a typical Thames Barge and described what life was like for the crew as they plied their trade around the coastal waters of south east England. Some of the flat bottomed craft sailed across the channel and along the south coast to Cornwall. Only a handful of barges now remain out of a fleet of many hundreds and none carry commercial cargoes any more.

Members asked Robert many questions, indicating their interest in these fascinating craft. At Robert's request, we have donated his fee to the RNLI.

It was great to see some letters in the "Letters to the Editor" section of the August News Sheet. I was particularly interested to read David's letter on the name of the U3A. I expect that most of you know that I agree with the original concept of the U3A and with the name given to the organisation when Eric Midwinter established it in the 1980s, but what do you think?

Our speaker at the September meeting will be Peter Webb from Tolleshunt D'Arcy who will talk about "The Good Life". It should be very humorous.

Peter Thorpe

From the Editor

I am a little disappointed that there have been no reactions to the articles or further letters to the Editor both of which can be found at the end of the News Sheet. This month we have an article written by Beryl Claydon with a title "The Magic Box". Your replies or comment, short or long, can be sent to me by email, post, or handed to me at the Monthly Meeting (typed please).

This advance copy of this News Sheet is, again, being circulated to all members who have provided their email addresses to the Membership Secretary. If you have an email address and have not received an emailed copy of this News Sheet please let me know.

I would, again, like to promote articles in the Monthly News Sheets. These articles need not be associated with any of the Groups. They could range from interesting aspects, such as trips away from home, through to aspects associated with your previous or current job. If you wish to discuss this further, please see me at the Monthly Meeting.

The Diary on the last page has been updated through to the end of October. It is important that you as COG's, members of Groups or just members of Heybridge U3A, keep me up to date. If anyone has an interesting story, relevant pictures or activity that relates in some way to The Heybridge U3A or the U3A movement as a whole, then please contact me.

Most will know the publication procedure. Copy should be with me by the last Friday of the month. Please continue to send details to me, preferably by email at ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk with 'U3A' in the title. Typed copy can also be provided. Alternatively, phone me on 01621 891184 or see me at the Monthly Meeting to decide other methods of

providing copy. Publication will take place some seven to ten days later.

Ian Newman.

Heybridge U3A Meetings

The next Meeting is on Friday 10th September, starting at the normal time of 14.00, in the Plantation Hall, Heybridge. This month we have Peter Webb who will be giving a talk entitled "The Good Life". This is his humorous life based on the sit-com and promises to be extremely amusing.

At our October meeting Peter Turrall will talk about the History of Marconi. In November we will have a talk on how dogs help people with disabilities. This will be presented by the Canine Partners Charity.

From the COGCo (Group Co-ordinator)

How quickly the months go past and how the weather changes. Fortunately we had brilliant sunshine for our Strawberry Tea but then it poured with rain for the talk about Barges!

Someone at the last meeting mentioned winter but perhaps it might be better to think about autumn. I know the Petanque Group will stop for a while and the garden visits will stop after October until April next year but the hardy ones amongst you will probably still go walking and bird watching. Perhaps some of you are thinking what else to do in addition to all the inside activities. It has been suggested to me at the last meeting that perhaps we could have a Heybridge U3A choir. Some of the members have been discussing this whilst having tea at Beth Chatto Gardens but I really would like some suggestions as to what is wanted. Please note I will give this my support, but not vocally, as I cannot sing and am tone deaf. My late husband once put a penny under the bathroom door before we were married and I have never tried to sing again. However, I do like listening to music and I think quite a few of you are interested in musicals, jazz or even big bands, so maybe something along those lines. I am of the opinion that this group could get going but I let things happen naturally and I will not push (well not too hard). So let me know your ideas.

I am involved personally with six groups which I enjoy very much but will leave it to each COG to tell you what has been happening although I could go on a length about the good times we have and places we visit. It is the company that makes these events so successful. Make sure you read all their very interesting articles in the News Sheets. Do not forget that you can send personal articles to Ian for inclusion in the News Sheets. I started the ball rolling a couple of months ago so perhaps you can send a longer article about one of the Gardens visited, the story of the RNLI, a history subject that interests you or an exotic place visited, even your

favourite meal (with the recipe). The subjects are endless.

Gill Thorne 0162 852294

gillthorne2@hotmail.co.uk

Group Names, Co-ordinator, Contact Telephone

| Group Name | Co-ordinator (COG) | Telephone Number |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ballroom Dancing | Joint with Maldon Jo Robson * | * 01621 828236 |
| Bird Watching | Maureen Lenoir | 01621 869871 |
| Bridge | Lisbeth Bazzard | 01621 843208 |
| Coffee Morning | Margaret Brown | 01621 854885 |
| Computer | Tina Abeysekera | 01621 858635 |
| Esperanto | Peter Groves | 01245 227018 |
| Family History | Lesley Pomphrett | 01621 817733 |
| Gardening | Pat Yates | 01621 892866 |
| Local History | Carol Greenhalgh | 01621 840339 |
| Luncheon | Beth Jeffries | 01621 853403 |
| Maritime & Coastal | Brenda Dewar | 01245 400492 |
| Painting | Michael Kempen | 01621 892974 |
| Petanque | Barbara Barbrook | 01621 855605 |
| Photography | Peter Thorpe | 01621 850828 |
| Reading & Books | Ann Lees | 01245 225153 |
| Scrabble | Ruth Tyler | 01621 869865 |
| Theatre | Gill Bridle & Janet Morley | 01621 892587 & 892626 |
| Threads & Fabrics | Anne Thorpe & Pat Newman | 01621 850828 & 01621 891184 |
| Walking | Elizabeth Eastwood | 01621 850618 |
| Weekenders | Marilyn Corbett | 01621 817518 |

Membership Secretary

If you are not a member and wish to join, please contact Lisbeth Bazzard on 01621 843208 or by email lisbethbazzard@talktalk.net You can also write to her at 2, Silver Street, Maldon, Essex. CM9 4QE or speak to her at the monthly meeting.

REPORTS

Art (Painting) Group

Our weekly meetings continue to be happy gatherings with a wide variety of subjects being painted. Everyone has something to contribute whether it be useful tips, highlighting clever techniques, or a short chat about the weeks happenings. Usually we have a small still life display and it is very interesting to see the different interpretations. Pastels, pen & ink, as well as water colour are all used, so choice is the order of the day. Possible venues are still being discussed for outdoor sessions. Let us hope that the weather will be kind to us! Do come along and join us on a Friday (not the Monthly Meeting Friday) at Plantation Hall.

Tina Martin.

Bird Watching

See me at the Monthly Meeting for details of the next bird watching meeting.

If you need more details about our group email me at symockturtle@yahoo.co.uk or phone 01621 869871.

Maureen

Bridge Group

Please ring me on 01621 843208 or email lisbethbazzard@talktalk.net for details of the next duplicate bridge session.

Liz

Computer Group

Another enjoyable meeting of the Computer Group was held on the 19th August with a good attendance. The first subject for discussion was the internet and the various providers used by us all. It transpired that most people used 'Google' because of its speed but all realised there were other options.

Ian had emailed members with one or two queries to test their ability to search on line and some interesting results were obtained. The varying cost of ink cartridges was also discussed, and the importance of security programmes. The group was reminded to check incoming emails as there are several viruses about, both old and new, mostly to be found in their attachments so the advice is to be vigilant. Also be wary of using links embedded in the text of emails.

The general queries raised by members provided much discussion and was of great value. In view of this, it was agreed we would continue with this format for the next meeting. Please, therefore email any problems to Ian beforehand.

Many thanks to Ian, as always, and to Peter for his tea making efforts, which were much appreciated.



Next meeting Thursday 16th September 13.00. Let's hope its stopped raining by then!!!!

Audrey

Coastal and Marine Group

The photograph opposite shows the "NOT the Liverpool Mersea Ferry" but the local Mersea. A ferry trip took place on 20th August when this picture was taken. Note that the river traffic is quite different!

On Friday 17th September, Glenn has arranged for us to have a conducted tour of the Museum at West Mersea at 14.30). Please contact me if you would like to join



us so that I can arrange car sharing. Phone, email, or let me know on Friday at Plantation Hall. Our October meeting will be at the Blue Boar and we are fortunate to have John Robson as our Speaker. He has tales of the Pacific for us! More details to follow.

Everyone welcome to join us. Hope to see you soon.

Brenda Dewar. (01245 400492)

Discussion Coffee Morning

Five of us met at the usual time on 20th August at Maureen Baldwin's house. Before we realised it, two hours had passed and we had covered a range of topics which included house decorating, holidays, gardening, hospitals and laser eye surgery! We also had a couple of ideas in connection with the U3A monthly meetings. I believe Gill Thorne is going to look in to this aspect.

The next meeting will be on Friday 17th September at 11.00 at my house. Details will be available at the next monthly meeting or you can telephone me, Margaret Brown, for information, on 01621 854885.

Family History Group

At the August meeting, using Ancestry.co.uk, Jean Butcher showed us how to find Birth and Marriage Certificates and how to find relatives' names on the Census. Norman Groves showed us how to use the Essex SEAX Site for Essex Parish Records. Both Jean and Norman are very experienced and I know we all gained so much from their input.

This month, we will see how far everyone has progressed and if you are a beginner and missed the August meeting do not worry as we can look at access to certificate and census again. The next meeting will be at my house on Thursday 23rd September, time 10.30 to 12.30. I look forward to seeing you all again.

Maps, if needed, will be available from me at the next Monthly Meeting in Plantation Hall.

Lesley Pomphrett

lesleypommy@hotmail.com

Gardening Group



We had a very enjoyable time at Beth Chatto's garden last month. Although it was chilly, the garden was beautiful and most of us could not resist buying some plants from the wonderful selection in the nursery. Our next visit is to a small garden, Wood View at Great Totham, on Monday 27th September at 14.30, followed by a free plant swap. Please note that the venue has changed to my house, 56, Seagers, Great Totham. If anyone would like a lift to the garden, please let me know.

Pat Yates, 01621 892866 or pat.yates@tesco.net



Local History Group (LHG)

Clive 'Mac' MacPherson came to talk at our August meeting. Clive has been, amongst other things, a Royal Marine and he is now doing his 'dream job' as a historian at the Combined Services Museum. He was going to speak on the Essex Regiment but he offered us a more interesting talk on the Charge of the Light Brigade as seen through the eyes of a recruit who ended his years in the Maldon Workhouse. This certainly brought that event alive to us and sparked off some enthusiastic questions and answers afterwards.

Carol is away for the group's next activity, which is a visit to the Little Baddow History Centre on Tuesday, 21st September. If you would like to add your name to the list, please contact Gill Carpenter. Gill is away until 7th September but hopes to make the next general meeting. You can leave a message for her by e-mail gillian.mariner@btinternet.com on 01621 859060.

Carol Greenhalgh.

Luncheon Group

I was in Wales so missed the lunch at Blubeckers, but I hear that the consensus was that the meal was not very good anyway. I am sorry about that as Russell and I have been at least four times during the summer with friends and always had a good meal there.

The next booked date is Friday 24th September at The Square and Compasses, at Fuller Street near Chelmsford.

I understand parking may be a problem at Plantation Hall, so suggest we meet at Morrison's at the bottom of the car park at 12.00 for lunch at 12.45.

Unfortunately, I will miss the next U3A meeting, as I will be away, but I will make sure the list is there for anyone to sign up if you are interested. Russell and I will be at the lunch so see you all then.

Beth 01621 853403.

Petanque Group

We enjoyed our petanque/raclette afternoon in the Basin with ten members enjoying the last of the hot sunshine. Two weeks later, our afternoon had a deluge but, that is the British summer.

We are trying to arrange a match with one of the Maldon U3A's in September so will let you know when it is at the next U3A Monthly Meeting. Apart from that we just have two more months before we hibernate so come and join us if you can. We can be found on Monday on the 'Prom' along the tarmac path above the auditorium or lake depending which way you come. We can promise you some fresh air for two hours.

Barbara Barbrook

Photography Group



Author – Maureen Baldwin

There was a good attendance at the meeting in August when we discussed the techniques involved in taking pictures of people. We also had a quick look at the huge subject of using a computer to improve the look of a picture. We will continue to explore these and many other subjects as we progress. Members are encouraged to discuss their photographic problems with the group at any time.

If you are interested in photography and want to join us, we normally meet in the Claydon Room of the Plantation Hall, on the first Thursday of each month

at 13.00 (lunch time!). We laugh as we learn and you are welcome.

Peter Thorpe

Reading and Books Group

I am pleased to say that our group has grown to twelve in total. A good number for a book group and without doubt will lead to interesting discussion every month. As nice as we all agree this is, we do think it will cause a problem with accommodation and we are going to try and find a permanent and larger venue for our meetings. I am not expecting this task to be easy, so I will welcome any suggestions.

Ten from the group gathered this month at Carole Overy's home for what turned out to be a lively and enjoyable afternoon.

The book under discussion was *The Comfort of Strangers* by Ian McEwan.

This was one of his first books and it was clear that, as a novelist, he was going to have a long and illustrious career. The story tells of a couple who, whilst on holiday, become locked into a relationship with another couple who live in, what we are led to believe is, Venice. Although the author never once stated explicitly that this was so his succinct, well observed descriptions, which he so cleverly used to create feelings of foreboding, led us all to believe it was Venice. The story tells of the developing of a sinister and dangerous relationship between the two couples which ends in the death of one of them.

We have a problem in our group sometimes suspending disbelief and going with the flow of the story. Yes, it was hard to believe that the holiday makers in this story could have been so stupid as to have allowed the murderer to influence them as he did. However, it was a novel about how, on holiday under the influence of drink and drugs but not grounded by the responsibilities of everyday existence, two people can become vulnerable to evil forces. As sinister as the story was Ian McEwan, we all agreed is a sensitive, perceptive and above all readable author, whose other books we will be happy to read.

Moving as we are towards the end of the year, we are looking forward to collecting information about the books we will be choosing for next year. All of us have agreed to obtain names of books and authors, which will be considered by the group in the weeks to come. The books chosen will then hopefully provide us with interesting and diverse reads, which will not only increase our enjoyment in reading but educate us.

We now have collected a box of novels read and enjoyed by some of us. These are being borrowed

by members of the group, with the books being changed at regular intervals as new ones are put into the box and those read being moved on to the charity shops.

With this, apart from our regular monthly read, we are able to widen and share our reading experiences with each other

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE: The next meeting takes place in the Committee Room at Plantation Hall on 15th September at 14.30. If you are interested in joining the Book Group, please contact Ann Lees on 01245225153.

Scrabble

We had a most entertaining afternoon at the August Scrabble session when we were pleased to welcome Vesta and Reg Wheatley. We played on two boards, with a break for a cuppa after two games, and we enjoyed it so much we stayed on for a further game. I do hope the first three words on the game I was playing were not representative of the company - BARMY - HAIRY - OIKS!!

(Ed: I know what 'barmy' and 'hairy' mean but I was lost for words as to what 'oiks' means. From the Internet, I find it is *slang* for a person regarded as inferior because they are ignorant, ill-educated, or lower-class. Am I correct?)

Here are the details of the Scrabble Meetings until the end of the year. Ring me at any time if you are interested in joining us.

- Wednesday 29th September at the home of Pam Archer (01621 815379).
- Wednesday 27th October at the home of Beryl Claydon (01621 852082).
- Wednesday 24th November at the home of Elizabeth Eastwood (01621 850618).

Please let the hostess know the day before the meeting, if possible.

Ruth Tyler 01621 869865

Theatre

Our first visit to London took place on Thursday, 12th August to see 'Dreamboats and Petticoats'. I think I can speak for all those who went and say that this was a successful visit and the only two words to describe the show are "absolutely brilliant". My thanks go to all who supported this venture and also for all the thanks and positive comments that I received. It certainly makes me feel like going ahead with another one, only this time perhaps we will have more U3A members. I'm hoping that our next visit to London will be to the Albert Hall on Thursday, 16th December for a Christmas Carols Sing-along, starting at 14.30 but leaving on a coach

at around 09.00. I have quite a few names down for this event but the list will go up again at the September meeting where we hope more names will be added.

Janet Morley: email dennis-morley@tiscali.co.uk or 01621 892626.

Threads and Fabrics

At our August meeting we looked at how an embellishing machine works. It has five or more barbed needles which punch wool fibres into a fabric (e.g. felt, silk or muslin). This changes the texture and colour of the original fabric. It can then be stitched by conventional sewing machine or by hand and used to decorate bags, quilts or even clothes. Some of this work, by a talented group of textile artists, can be seen at the Maeldune Heritage Centre in Maldon from 8th September until 2nd October.



Our next meetings are on 7th September and 5th October. Please contact Pat or Anne for further information

Anne and Pat

Walking

A good turn out of people and dogs enjoyed the August walk along the canal to Beeleigh, then back past the beautiful Beeleigh Abbey. Fortunately, the rain held off until we were almost back into Maldon. Many thanks to Liz Bazzard who provided, not only shelter, but also tea and delicious cake at the end of our outing. This was much appreciated.

Our next outing will be a little further afield from Dedham to Flatford Mill (refreshments at the cafe) and back to Dedham. There is a free public car park in Dedham off Mill Lane (B1029) not far from where the lane crosses the river. I suggest we meet at the car park entrance at 11:00 on Thurs 9th September. We will walk to Flatford along the north of the river (approx 45 minutes according to my information), returning by the shorter route south of the river. I hope we get a good weather and many of you will join us.

Please contact me if you can come and I will try to organise travel in as few vehicles as practical.

Elizabeth

01621 850618 or email me at e.m.e@talktalk.net

Weekenders

Twelve Weekenders visited the garden at The Old Mill House, Witham on Sunday 15th August which was open in aid of the Red Cross. Unfortunately, we felt that the garden was not quite ready for visitors but we could see its future potential. We still enjoyed the day with friends. The garden was open in aid of charity. On Saturday 21st August we had tea and cakes at Spring Step Dairy, Mundon followed by a short walk by half of the group.

Dates for your Diary

- Saturday 18th September: Coffee at Olivers at 10.00.
- Saturday 16th October: Coffee at Wilkin's Jam Factory at 10.00.

Look forward to seeing you at the September meeting.

Marilyn Corbett 01621 817518

Letter to the Editor

None

U3A News Magazine

Issue 91 (Summer 2010) of the quarterly U3A News Magazine is still available. You can collect your copy at the monthly meeting.

On the Notice Board

On the Notice Board at the August Monthly Meeting the following notices were posted:

- U3A 2011 Calendar Order Form.
- U3A 2011 Diary Order Form.
- XXIV AIUTA Conference in Costa Rica between 15th and 17th November.
- A shared learning project with the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.
- East of England U3A Conference. Wednesday 29th September.
- 14th Folk Dance Network Holiday. 8th – 12th November 2010.
- Northumbria Region U3A Residential School. 11th – 14th April. Subjects will be Biology, Earth Sciences and Physics.
- NHS Nursing Home Care.
- U3A AGM 9th September in Cirencester.

If you would like more information about any of the above, please speak to the Heybridge U3A Secretary, Brenda Dewar or to one of the Committee.

If you are planning to put something on the notice board that is not group related and it is available prior to the first Friday of the month, the Editor would be pleased to include it in this section of the News Sheet.

Members Article

The Magic Box

Ruth Tyler and I went to see "The Magic Box" at Tiptree, a play about Mechi, an agricultural pioneer. He made a fortune in London and then read all he could about farming and bought the worst farm in Essex, Tiptree Hall Farm. He experimented and made it successful. He held meetings each year to spread news of his methods when over 600 attended. He wrote books and founded 'The Agricultural Benevolent Institution' in 1860. The bank of which he was chairman failed. He resigned as an alderman of the City of London, when he was in line to be Lord Mayor. Because he was ill with diabetes, he was unable to rescue the bank and died in poverty in 1880.

A play about Mechi, entitled "The Magic Box", was commissioned by Wilkin & Son, written by Ann Courtney and performed by Mad Dogs and Englishmen Theatre Company who will be performing it on Maldon Promenade on Friday 17th September at 19.30. Ruth and I found it riveting, very well cast and acted, and very enjoyable.

Tickets are available from Maldon Tourist Office in Wenlock Way.

The ticket prices are stated to be Adults £10 and Concessions £8.

Beryl Claydon.

| Week Commencing | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|----------------------------|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|--------|
| 6 th September | 6 Petanque 14.00 | 7 Threads 14.00 | 8 | 9 Walking 14.00 | 10 Monthly Meeting 14.00 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 th September | 13 Petanque 14.00 | 14 | 15 Book Group 14.30 | 16 Computer 13.00 | 17 Coffee Morning 11.00 Painting 14.00 Coastal and Marine 14.30 | 18 Weekender Coffee at Olivers 10.00 | 19 |
| 20 th September | 20 Petanque 14.00 | 21 Local History 14.00 | 22 | 23 Family History 10.30 | 24 Submit News Sheet text Luncheon Group Painting 14.00 Bird Watching? | 25 | 26 |
| 27 th September | 27 Petanque 14.00 Gardening 14.30 Note correct date | 28 | 29 Scrabble 14.00 | 30 | 1 Committee Meeting 10.00 Painting 14.00 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 th October | 4 Petanque 14.00 | 5 Threads 14.00 | 6 | 7 Photography 13.00 | 8 Monthly Meeting 14.00 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 th October | 11 Gardening 11.00 & 12.30 Petanque 14.00 | 12 | 13 | 14 Walking 14.00 | 15 Coffee Morning 11.00 Painting 14.00 Coastal and Marine 14.00 | 16 Weekender Coffee at Wilkin's Jam Factory 10.00 | 17 |
| 18 th October | 18 Petanque 14.00 | 19 Local History 14.00 | 20 Book Group 14.30 | 21 Computer 13.00 | 22 Painting 14.00 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 th October | 25 Petanque 14.00 | 26 | 27 Scrabble 14.00 | 28 Family History 10.30 | 29 Submit News Sheet text Painting 14.00 | 30 | 31 |

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