



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Heybridge U3A

News Sheet No. 11/2014

December 2014

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

WE HAVE A NEW GROUP

Ballroom Dancing.









**For More details
See Page 5**

**Still needed
Volunteers to help**
Speak to one of the Committee

News Sheet Contents

	Page Number
Your Committee	1
From the Chairman	2
Committee nominations	2
From the Editor	2
Membership Secretary	2
Monthly Meetings	3
From the Events Secretary	3
From the Group Co-ordinator (COGCo)	3
Group Reports	4
Detail of Events	9
Association of Essex U3As	10
On the Notice Board	10
COG Names and contact number	11
Diary	12

Your Committee

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 jennyparker14@hotmail.com 01621 843581	
Events Secretary	Pat Smith patcleary98@sky.com 01621 856569	
Group Co-ordinator	Gill Thorne Contact any member of the Committee	
Speaker Secretary	John Harrison johnwharrison@sky.com 01621 854851	
News Sheet Editor	Ian Newman ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk 01621 891184	

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

From the Chairman

Representatives of the Essex Association of U3As met in Chelmsford on the 28th November. Questionnaires had been circulated to Member Association Committees some six weeks previously. There were over sixty members present, so, to ease the problem of analysing all the forms, people were asked to sit in a group of five or six to talk through the responses. This took nearly an hour, but from the buzz of animated discussion, it was clear that this was an enjoyable activity. In order to get a clearer pattern of what is happening across Essex, we then did a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

It was so encouraging to see how strongly people feel about the positive aspects of the U3A. One person commented on how the U3A had brought the people in her village closer together, others said that it reduced loneliness. One of the opportunities that was felt to be missing is that we are not mentioned in the local press, nor on local T.V. (Although GPs are willing to display fliers in their surgeries.) I think that everyone left the meeting feeling that, with further co-operation, U3A in Essex can become even better.

The Study Day this year was again an outstanding success, with 240 delegates and 40 group leaders and helpers. Once again, many thanks to the Heybridge members who supported this event. Each year, since the first successful Study Day, I have been saying that similar Study Days could be set up in any part of the county, but there has been an obvious reluctance to do this. Next year there will not be a Study Day open to all Essex members, but there may be a Study day in Maldon but only for members living in the Maldon District. We think that there are enough group leaders here to make it possible so, if you are willing to put your name forward as a group leader, please contact me.

Joyce Woodham: phone 01621 841066 or Email woodham359@btinternet.com.

Important Notice: Committee Nominations 2015

There will be an AGM on the 13th March 2015. Committee members are elected to stand for 3 years before being re-elected. Nominations will be required for the following positions:

- Vice-Chairman
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Nomination forms will be attached to the February News Sheet. One form needs to be completed by

each person wishing to stand for a position on the Heybridge U3A Committee. The Nomination Form needs to be signed by the Nominee, Proposer and Seconder and given to or posted to the Secretary at 12 Rowan Drive, Heybridge, Maldon CM9 4BW to arrive by Friday 20th February 2015. If there is more than one person nominated for any one position, a vote will take place at the AGM on Friday 13th March 2015.

The names of Nominees and positions will be published in the March issue of the News Sheet, which will be available prior to the AGM.

Subscription Renewal 2015/16

To thank all members for their loyalty and support since the establishment of our U3A in 2009, we will be offering existing members a one-off discount on their 2015/16 subscription renewal. The amount of the discount will vary to reflect length of membership. Full details will be given in the February News Sheet. This is an optional discount – you may still pay the full fee if you wish!

From the Editor

The layout of the Heybridge U3A News Sheet and the reports that it contains, remains the same as that produced earlier in the year. Information about the Committee Members and their reports can still 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 (p12) shows the Diary for the months of December 2014, January 2015 and February 2015. Please all note that there is no January News Sheet and therefore the Diary covers a longer period than usual.

Please keep me 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. Continue to send details to me, preferably by email with 'Heybridge U3A' in the title. Alternatively talk to me at the Monthly Meeting.

I now have a three person team (including myself) producing the Monthly News Sheet. They are Tina Abeysekera who continues to draft the page 12 Diary and Geoff Hadley who has continued to assist me in producing this News Sheet. This has been done by splitting the work into time slots with only one of us holding the master document.

We all wish to maintain the standard that you, as members of the Heybridge U3A, want.

Contact me, Ian Newman, on any issue raised in the News Sheet by phone 01621 891184 or by Email ian.newman@tiscali.co.uk or speak to me at the Monthly Meeting. You can also contact Geoff Hadley by email: geoffh45@blueyonder.co.uk

From the Membership Secretary

We were pleased to welcome two new members in November, taking our total membership to 169. If you are not a member and would like to find out more about the Heybridge U3A, you are welcome to attend a monthly meeting (held in the Plantation Hall on the 2nd Friday of each month at 14:00 as a guest. There is no need to book, just turn up and sign in.

Jenny Parker.

For any queries regarding membership, please Email jennyparker14@hotmail.com or phone me on 01621 843581. Or, If I am not available, please contact Angela by phone on 01621 850310 or by Email angela.pleasance@hotmail.co.uk.

From the Events Secretary

Planned Events

- Wednesday 25th February 2015. A tour of the Tractor Plant at Basildon.
- Friday 20th March 2015. A tour of the UK Supreme Court in Westminster. Now fully booked, but see page 9.
- Monday April 27th 2015. A coach trip to Kew Gardens.
- NEW - 15 Seats for 'Sunny Afternoon' – The Kinks Story at the Harold Pinter Theatre on 25th March 2015.

Please see page 9 for details.

Heybridge U3A Monthly Meeting held on 12th September 2014

Secretary's note

Joyce was unable to attend the meeting so notices were given out by Linda Etherton. Members were reminded that there is still a need for a Vice-Chairman, to stand in for the Chairman when required. If any member would like to visit a committee meeting to see what goes on they would be most welcome. A new Ballroom Dancing group had been suggested and a sheet is available for people to put their names down to show their interest. There is a visit to the tractor factory planned for next year and Pat Smith has the details. If you are

interested, please put your names down for this activity.

November 2014 Speaker

The speaker, Vivien Newman, gave a fascinating insight into the role of women in the First World War, the difficulties they had to overcome and the contribution they made, with little recognition from the authorities. They served, in the truest sense of the word, and took on work in munitions factories, drove ambulances, set up field hospitals, acted as nurses, surgeons, and despatch drivers. They were blown up in munitions explosions, shot as spies, came under fire including being torpedoed. They were proud of their service and rightly so.

Future Heybridge U3A Monthly Meetings

On December 12th Peter King will be coming to give us a talk about "*A Life on the Road with Peter King*". Peter is an actor on the stage, in films and on TV.

In the New Year, on the 9th January, William Marriage, Chairman, and Dudley Courtman, of The Chelmer Canal Trust, will be coming to give us a talk on some of the many aspects of The Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. I am awaiting details of their talk.

For 13th February, I am finalising the details for Fran Sandham to give us his talk on his 3,000 mile solo walk across Africa, from the Atlantic coast to Zanzibar. Details can be found on his website www.traversa.co.uk.

John W Harrison: phone 01621 854851 or Email johnwharrison@sky.com.

Trip to Thursford Spectacular – 23rd November.

About a dozen of us boarded a coach early on a dark and very wet morning to travel to Thursford in Norfolk. Having toured the local area for about an hour picking up other people, we made our way to Swaffham for an early lunch at the George Hotel as the performance started at 14:00. After the show, we reversed the process arriving back in Heybridge at about 20:30.

What a trip! I think everyone who went would agree that it is a truly spectacular, magical and unique event. It's difficult to describe, but the sheer number of people involved in the show, and the quality of their performances is hard to believe. It's West End+ and attracts many thousands of people every year to a barn in the middle of the Norfolk countryside. To describe it as a variety show would be an understatement as it's so much more. It's safe to say

that you will never go to anything like it again in your life.

A huge thank you goes to Pat for organising such a great trip, which included the coach, lunch and the show. It's not easy to arrange and we're very grateful to her

From the COGCo (Group Co-ordinator)

Gill is now recovering steadily, having now left hospital. Should any CoG or Member wish to discuss any topic that is normally covered by Gill, please do not hesitate to speak to one of the Committee (See page 1 column 2 for contact details).

GROUP REPORTS

Art (Painting) Group

November saw our brave painters more challenged than at any previous time in our five-year history.

Acrylic artist Mike Wills from Braintree, who paints in the realist style, for which this medium is ideally suited, encouraged us to abandon our wishy-washy watercolours and tackle our chosen subjects full on using this oh-so-solidly colourful method.

Well, we had tentatively agreed to try acrylics sometime soon - and some of us had even gone so far as to acquire a box of them, plus the necessary coarse brushes.

But when it came to actually applying the required slabs of colour, while keeping the paint properly hydrated on the palette without making it too runny or too transparent, it all proved a bit harder and messier than expected.

Yet Mike Wills had made it look so easy.

It will be interesting to find out, when we meet after Christmas, who else was brave enough to ask Santa Claus for a set of acrylic paints and all accessories!

Gill Carpenter

Ballroom Dancing Group

Having had the majority of replies from would be dancers; the response gives a very high majority in favour of Friday dancing. I have had to alter some of my personal commitments to accede to this response. Thereby; I have booked, with Heybridge Plantation Hall, the only Fridays available, namely the fourth Friday of each month starting 23rd January 2015, 27th February 2015 and 27th March 2015, all at 14:00 to 16:00. I have also made a provisional booking for the remaining fourth Fridays of 2015 at the same time. This will allow us to continue to progress.

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

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

Bird Watching Group

This month we got together to visit Tollesbury Wick. We had had to cancel the previous two months because of the weather. Once in the hide we saw large groups of Geese and flocks of smaller birds take off from the lakes. We checked the horizon hoping to see a bird of prey, and we were not disappointed, as we saw a Marsh Harrier. It was hovering and gliding along by the reed banks. What a wonderful sight it was too.

Lots of species of Ducks around today including Mallard, Shellduck, Teal and the colourful Shoveler, in addition to groups of Widgeon, Godwits and a large flock of Golden Plover.



Very dark Greylags Author: Jill McGregor

On the fields we also had large groups of what were thought to be Canada and Brent Geese. Jill took this picture of what we thought were Brent Geese but as their bodies were darker and their beaks orange,

even after checking all information we could not be sure.

Jill, later, based on the photographs taken, considered them to be very dark Greylags. We finished our morning with a visit to the Loft Café for a warm drink and snack.

There is no meeting in December so may I wish a Happy Christmas to you all.

Maureen: Email symockturtle@yahoo.co.uk or phone 01621 869871.

Computer Group

Six people attended our meeting on 20th November. We soon found that the Wi-Fi signal was not present due to work being done on the hall roof. We decided to improve our knowledge by inserting Clip Art and Photos into our documents and Emails with tuition from Linda and Barbara.

The session ended happily with tea and biscuits.

The Computer Group 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.

Report Ken Russell

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

Cards and Paper Crafts

We now have a new group for card-making and paper crafts with Lesley Woonton as the group co-ordinator. The group meets at 2pm on the first Wednesday in the month; the next meeting will be in January. New group members are welcome.

Please contact Lesley for details. Phone 01621 858135 (Please note that the telephone number published last month was wrong.)

Creative Writing Group

We had a fun meeting hearing how £100 would have been obtained, or spent, and gaining some insight into its value a hundred years ago. There followed a taster session with a few seasonal goodies to be sampled.

There is no meeting in December so the next meeting will be on January 28th. Our subject for that month will be, "A funny thing happened on my/the way to ..."

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

Croquet Group

Unfortunately the playing season has ended. Now, to find something to occupy us through the winter months before the 2015 season begins towards the end of April.

Through the News Sheet and the Monthly Meetings I'll advise, in good time, when play can resume.

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

Discussion Coffee Morning Group

We met at Anne's house on 21st November and thoroughly enjoyed the tasty refreshments provided. It was good to welcome Gill back to our friendly get together.

We were topical in our conversation about WW1 and the Tower of London Poppy display, which a few members had visited and were very impressed. The time passes very quickly as we covered other items of interest and suddenly we draw breath, then realise it's time to go.

The last meeting of 2014 is at 11.00 on Friday 19th December at Marilyn Corbett's house at Tiptree. It seems far too early to say it, but I wish everyone a pleasant and enjoyable Christmas break.

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

Family History Group

In February we hope we will have a lady called Gill come to help us with our problems. So members, please start making your lists.

Please remember; no meeting in December.

The January meeting is on Thursday 29th.

February meeting Thursday 26th 10:30 to 12:30 at my house as usual.

I would just like to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

Lesley Pomphrett: phone 01621 817733 or Email lesleypommy@hotmail.com.

French Group

With Christmas approaching, we started by talking about what preparations, if any, we had made for the festive season. Apart from Barbara, who has designed and painted her own Christmas cards, it seemed the rest of us have a long way to go. To



provide us with ideas for presents, we read some suggestions from a French website and learnt that '*les produits hi-tech*' are the n°.1 present under the Christmas tree. For sporting folk, suggestions included a '*système de coaching électronique pour booster la performance*' or a '*kit de fitness zumba*'. Feeling good about our comprehension skills, we were then brought down to earth by a '*baladeur pour nageuses*', which is apparently an underwater Walkman for swimmers. Clearly the French Academy, whose task is to preserve the French language, is still alive and kicking (but only just!).

At Georges' suggestion, we have started to read a novel by Georges Simenon entitled '*Maigret et la vieille dame*' (Maigret and the old lady) – an appropriate title for a U3A Group! By reading a chapter a month, we should finish the book in July 2015, by which time we will probably have forgotten the start! Joking aside, reading is a good way to consolidate vocabulary and grammar and we will spend some time at each meeting to discuss what we have read.

Our final meeting of the year is on 10th December at my house and will be followed by a buffet lunch to which everyone is contributing something to eat or drink.

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

For further information please contact:

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

French Improvers: Joint Blackwater / Heybridge Group

Nine members attended the third meeting of the new joint group on 24th November, with apologies from the two absentees. We started by learning how to spell our names and email addresses in French. While many letters in the French alphabet are similar to their English counterparts, those with a 'g' or 'j' in their names, had to remember that, in French, 'g' is called 'j', while 'j' is 'g'. Vive la difference!

We then went on to practise how to ask for basic items in a shop or market and how to understand what the shopkeeper says in reply. This included practising our numbers and we agreed that, next time, we will play bingo in French as comprehension practice. I am now charged with finding out how to say 'legs eleven' and 'two fat ladies' in French!

Finally, to get us in the Christmas spirit, we sang two songs. The first was a drinking song called '*Chevaliers de la Table Ronde, goûtons voir si le vin est bon!*' (* Knights of the Round Table, let's drink and see if the wine is good'). Unfortunately, we didn't

have any wine as we had to drive home. The second was a more traditional Christmas song '*Mon Beau Sapin*', which we know in English as 'O Christmas Tree'. To my surprise, everyone sang beautifully and it sounded really good. There is no meeting in December; our next meeting is on 26th January 2015 chez Val.

For further information please contact:

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

Gardening Group

The last Garden Visit for 2014 has now been completed. We will not meet again until the 2015 planning meeting, which will be arranged in the New Year."

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

Italian Conversation

I hope to resume Italian meetings soon. With that in mind I am getting in touch with everyone so we can have a coffee and a chat sometime to discuss what form we want any future meetings to take, i.e. mainly discussion, some grammar, reading passages and translating them, or a bit of everything.

janice.slight@tiscali.co.uk

Local History Group (LHG)

Our meeting in November was our last for the year, when we agreed a tentative programme for 2015. We next meet in February, in the Committee Room of the Plantation Hall, for a talk [speaker to be confirmed] and Carol is hoping for a more firm plan for the year to be in place by then. Members of the group will be contacted as soon as the February speaker is confirmed.

Our planning meeting was also a time to hear of research carried out by some of the group members. We heard about the 'Devil at Barn Hall', 'The Bental's Walls in Heybridge', and the progress made with finding out more about the Friary in Maldon.

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

Luncheon Group

Ten of us visited The Ship at Tiptree Friday 28th November. There was the usual wide choice of menus which we all enjoyed, together with good and friendly service.

For 19th December I have now booked The Hurdlemakers Arms at Woodham Mortimer, our venue last year, though the News Sheet and individual e-mails had advised that Russells was the intended venue if I received enough names in time. With only the original eight after the November meeting I tried to make a reservation only to find there was no room.

I think I was quite lucky to get a booking at The Hurdlemakers and after e-mailing all frequent members, two more joined in.

For the future, the forthcoming "Dancing Group" is going to be on the fourth Friday, and some of our regulars have already advised that they will be taking that option even though they enjoy our lunches. Alternative days and weeks appear to have limited possibilities, so please everyone, regulars and others, i.e. anyone, advise days and weeks when you could/would want to have a lunch out. If I get sufficient interest before Friday 12th December 2014 then I might try and book something for January 2015.

Any queries please speak to me at Friday's meeting on 12th December, phone or e-mail at any time.

John W Harrison: email johnwharrison@sky.com or phone 01621 854851.

Patchwork Group

The next meeting of the Patchwork Group will be in the Claydon Room on Monday the 8th December at 14.00.

Anne Thorpe; Email Anne.thorpe@btinternet.com or phone 01621 850828.

Petanque Group

We have finished playing for the Winter and we hope that everyone can start the season next March, which will be 16th, with a reminder in next February's Newsletter. Wishing you all an enjoyable winter with a good Christmas and see you next year.

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

Photography Group

For this meeting, we concentrated on one aspect of photography, which we are encountering more and more in this Digital age. That is, the manipulation of photographs, using computer software.

Our group expressed a wish to understand that better, how easily, how simply and how cheaply, it can be achieved.

Norman Grove volunteered to research this subject and report back. His findings were presented to the group.

The most common software used by our members, seemed to be 'Picasa', which is a Google product, and has the great advantage of being free to download. It is simple to use, and cropping, lighting adjustments, colour adjustments, adding text, retouching, etc. are all possible, and not too complicated.

Another product, widely used, is Adobe Photoshop Elements. This is a more versatile software product, and has many more features, but at a price. It is more complex to use, and does cost money (latest version somewhere around £50 plus, but older versions can be procured for a few pounds).

Norman also covered other software products, such as Gimp, Paint.net, Raw Therapee (all free) and PhotoPlus, Lightroom and Paintshop Pro (not so free).

The various products have different strengths and weaknesses, and a spreadsheet presented to the group, spelled out some of their features.

The group assignment for our next meeting is "November", covering any photograph taken during that month, and reflecting autumnal subjects, the onset of winter, the onset of the midwinter shopping festival, or weather related, or indoors, or any other similar subjects. A wide scope this month.

We meet again on Friday 4th December at the Combined Military Services Museum at 14:00. Anyone interested in joining can contact Norman Grove on 01621 842805 or by email norman.grove@gmail.com.

Reading and Books Group

Our book this month is Jon McGregor's "So Many Ways to Begin". In the book the plot is about David, who grows up and marries Eleanor. She is estranged from her family and disappointed to give up a promising career as a geologist. David was born at the end of World War II, and grew up salvaging treasures from bomb sites in Coventry, building miniature museums and telling stories about his past. He lands his dream job as a curator at the Coventry Museum but discovers his uncertain origins by chance and embarks on a search for his real mother. His journey leads him to Donegal, but not to resolution, or at least not of the kind he had imagined. The book is not an easy read but encourages us to think that beginnings are not so important because there are so many ways to begin.

We discussed our new book list for 2015 and our planned Christmas lunch at the Foresters on 5th December.

Our next meeting is on 17th December where we shall meet at the usual time in Plantation Hall.

More details are available from Carole Overy at caroleovery@sky.com or 01621 89345

Scrabble Group

I challenged the Scrabblers to see if they could use a Christmas-related word on the board and almost immediately someone put down NOEL. The theme was continued with mince pies and chocolate log to fortify us, which must have contributed to an opening word in the second game that achieved an eye watering high score. Double points combined with a 50 point bonus for using all seven tiles yielded 80 points. Then again you might just score 3 or 4 for a word, but it's all good for the little grey cells and combined with good company the two hours go far too quickly. We resume in 2015 on the 27th January at 14:00 in the Committee Room at the Plantation Hall. If you would like to join us do contact me, details below.

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

Solo Whist

For our November meeting, four of us met at Geoff's home and we had a lively session. It never ceases to amaze me how different the sessions can be. This time, 50% of the group had nearly all the calls and winning hands, and the other 50% had hardly any calls at all. Also, apart from one successful Misere call, during the rest of the afternoon only Solos were called, won and lost.

Having said that, we had a very enjoyable session, with lovely chocolate brownies, tea and coffee provided by our host in the interval (very wise).

The next session will be on Wednesday 10th December at 14:00 at my home.

Any newcomers would be very welcome.

Dates for next year 14th January & 11th February. Venue yet to be discussed.

Dave Mason C O G

Dave Mason: phone 01621 858635 or Email tina@tina832.orangehome.co.uk

Technical Computing Group

This meeting took place at Peter's house, where we had a full attendance. Some time was spent setting up Peter's laptop to work with the HDMI input of his wide screen television, with the result that a very good picture and sound were obtained. We found, that since Peter had extended the range of his

router, we were able to connect to the internet from his lounge, (which had not been possible before the addition of a 'range extender').

Further discussions took place on the use of the U3A computer within the photographic club meetings. The meeting ended at about 16.15, which overran as usual due to more discussions.

It was decided that due to the approach of Christmas, no meeting of the group would take place in December, but would resume in January 2015 as usual.

I would like to thank Ann & Peter for their kind hospitality.

Any members of the U3A interested in coming to one of our meetings please contact me for details.

I would like to wish all readers a Very Merry Christmas and all peace for the New Year.

Colin Mason: phone 01621 854906 or Email colin@mason20.wanadoo.co.uk

Ten Pin Bowling

We had two sessions this month (November). On our regular Tuesday meeting on the 11th there were six players with Alf taking the highest score of 139 – his personal best! Simon and I were away so thanks go to Geoff and Margaret for standing in!

At our first Monday session of the winter months, on the 24th, there were eight players - plus a very welcome spectator and score keeper – Gill – who we were delighted to see looking better. She is determined to start playing again in the New Year and we look forward to that.

We also welcomed Diane as a new player who has been playing Petanque with most of us this summer. The highest scorer on this occasion was Simon with 129. Jackie was the most consistent with over 110 in all 3 games.

Our last game of this year is on Tuesday 9th December, followed by our Christmas lunch on Tuesday 16th December (No bowling on this day).

It was felt that Monday 22nd is too near to Christmas so the following game will be on Tuesday 13th January at the usual time of 13.45 for 14:00 start.

From January we will be playing through the winter twice a month on the second Tuesday and the fourth Monday.

New members are always welcome to join us for a 2 hour play at Madison Heights followed by tea/coffee and biscuits for the bargain price of £4.75!

Lynne Morrison. Phone : 01621 891288 or Email: lejmorrison@gmail.com

Threads and Fabrics Group

The start of November had many of our members in a Christmas mood. It is amazing how many different fabrics are available now, which have a Christmas theme. There were not only the traditional decorated trees, holly and Santa Claus patterns, but poinsettias and some very natty owls. Some of the owls were on a pocketed calendar which was to be a treat for a very lucky grandchild. But the owls which took my fancy were little tree decorations, made from scraps of fabric, with sequins for eyes. If I described all the beautiful, seasonal things being made by our members, I would use up more than my fair share of space in this news sheet. We would like to wish all its' readers a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.



Little Christmas Owls Author: Pat Newman

The meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month starting at 14:00. Please speak to Pat on this subject.

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

Walking Group

We had a pleasant November walk from Althorne Village Hall down to the River Crouch then along a short stretch of sea wall to the Marina and back up into the village, arriving at our cars just as the rain started - It couldn't have been timed better!

Hoping again that the weather holds good, the December walk will be a morning stroll along the sea wall from Heybridge Basin and back along the canal to the Lock Café for those who have ordered Xmas lunch,

Meet at the car park at 10:30 am on Thursday 11th December. Those not lunching are welcome to join the walk.

There will be no organised walk in January. The usual February snowdrop outing will be arranged closer to the time.

Christmas greetings to all.

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

Weekenders Group

There is nothing to report this month other than to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and best wishes for 2015.

Dates for your diary:

Coffee Mornings dates are:

- Saturday 10th January 2015 at Oliver's Nursery at 10:00.
- Saturday 14th February at Forrester Golf Club, Totham at 10:00.
- Saturday 14th March at Heybridge Basin at 10:00.

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

Wine Appreciation Group

The wine appreciation group will not be meeting again until Wednesday 18th March 2015, when we will be having a planning meeting to discuss ideas for future meetings, visits to vineyards, and wine merchants. Ideas for next year include repeat visits to Majestic at Colchester, for their free tasting evenings, and perhaps a return to Bardfield Vineyard in the summer, to view the results of the work being carried out earlier this year on the Anne of Cleves barn. We may also look into the possibility of a day trip to France.

I wish everyone a happy festive season and best wishes for the New Year. I look forward to welcoming new and returning members of the group in March 2015.

Jackie Jones: Email jachjones@tiscali.co.uk or phone 01621 817117.

Further Information and Details of Events

The following events are planned for this and next year. Please note that in future members will be 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.

FEBRUARY 2015. A guided tour of Basildon Tractor Plant has been arranged for 13:00 on Wednesday 25th February 2015. I am fascinated and overawed on seeing these huge tractors on our Essex roads. They look like giant 'Tonka Toys'! So I am looking forward to seeing them being put together bit by bit. The robot painting area should be well worth the trip and while there we may also 'interact' with moving parts of the vehicle! The tour will last approximately

three hours and will cost £6.00 each, including tea / coffee and biscuits on arrival. We have made a booking with Viking Transport to collect the group from Plantation Hall at 12:00 and return us at about 16:30. It may be best to take sandwiches for lunch, to eat on the bus. The cost of transport will be £5.00, Please sign up early to avoid disappointment as 15 is the maximum number for this trip. Payment in full (£11.00) due by 16th January 2015.

MARCH. UK Supreme Court. All 25 places for this tour on Friday 20th March have been taken. A coach will collect us from Tesco in Heybridge at 08:30 and we should arrive in Westminster at approximately 10:30. Our tour begins at 14:00 and lasts one hour. There is a cafe in the building. Members taking the 'coach only' option have four hours in which to explore London! The rest of us have two and a half hours before our tour begins, so – possible things to do and see during that time;

- Changing of the Guards at Horse Guards Parade, Whitehall 11.00 (free)
- Visit the Banqueting Hall, The Mall, (£4.95 booked on line) – certainly worth seeing!
- Tour the Houses of Parliament, (90 minutes – cost £19.00)
- Take an audio tour of Westminster Abbey (90 mins , £15.00)
- The London Eye; (£26.50 on line),
- Or take a trip on the Thames; Finally Tate Britain is just a short bus ride away

None of the above is included in the price, but I will book places for anyone who wishes me to.

There are still a few seats available but they are going fast, so book now and join us for a day in London The cost for coach and tour will be £21.50 and for the coach alone £18.00. Payment will be due by 6th February 2015.

APRIL. Kew Gardens. I have booked a visit to Kew Gardens for Monday 27th April 2015. Entrance to Kew Gardens costs £10.65 (Group and concession rate), and coach cost will be £18.00 pp, details later. You may also like to take a tour of the site on the Kew Explorer land train - hop on/off at any of the seven stops on the site; £3.50 for the day (booked in advance and not included in the above cost). The National Archives are adjacent to Kew Gardens so anyone wishing instead to study there could join the group for the day. Admission to the Archives is free, so cost would be for coach only. Payment will be due in March 2015.

March Do you remember *The Kinks? Waterloo Sunset* Etc. Etc.? We have a chance to see a very well-reviewed new London show! Sign up for a matinee at Harold Pinter theatre on 25th March 2015. Our 15 seats in the stalls are on hold until December

20th and are at the excellent price of £39.50 (real price £65.50). Payment due now please.

Also planned for 2015

A visit to the beautiful English Heritage property Audley End House, near Saffron Walden.

A day cruise on a Thames Barge from The Hythe.

A trip to London from Tilbury on the Pocahontas

Please sign up for the events and contact me with any queries.

Pat Smith; Phone 01621 856569 or Email patcleary98@sky.com

Association of Essex U3As

Association of Essex U3As Study Day 2014

The Study Day this year was again an outstanding success, with 240 delegates and 40 group leaders and helpers (See Chairman's Report on page 2).

Association News

The Essex Association of U3As met in Chelmsford on the 28th November when a questionnaire was discussed (See Chairman's Report on page 2).

On the Notice Board

Items from the latest mailing that might be of interest to members.

National Summer Schools 2015

The U3A Summer Schools will take place at Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire, Monday 13th to Thursday 16th July 2015, and Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Monday 17th to Thursday 20th August 2015.

Information about the courses can be found on the U3A website in the members area and application can be made online or by post from 1st December 2014.

Languages Group Study Day

For leaders of U3A Language Groups, Thursday 26th February 2104 at the Memorial Centre, 8 East Common, Gerrards Cross, SL9 7AD

The National Office of the Third Age Trust will be closed from Friday 19th December 2014 until Monday 5th January 2015.

Flyer for RAF Museum London First World War Display The tour lasts for an afternoon and several dates are available throughout the year.

FutureLearn More courses are available at the Website www.Futurelearn.com

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

Co-operation between Maldon Area U3As

Contact Joyce Woodham for further details. (See page 1 for contact details).

Group Name, Co-ordinator & Contact Phone Number

Group Name	Co-ordinator (COG)	Telephone Number
Art (Painting)	Michael Kempen	01621 892974
Bird Watching	Maureen Lenoir	01621 869871
Ballroom Dancing	Alf Bell	01621 840158
Coffee Morning	Margaret Brown	01621 854885
Computer	Ian Newman	01621 891184
Creative Writing	Angela Pleasance	01621 850310
Croquet	John Gorrie	01621 854006
Family History	Lesley Pomphrett	01621 817733
French	Jenny Parker	01621 843581
Gardening	Pat Yates	01621 892866
Italian	Janice Slight	01621 853393
Local History	Carol Greenhalgh	01621 840339
Luncheon	John Harrison	01621 854851
Patchwork	Anne Thorpe	01621 850828
Petanque	Barbara Barbrook	01621 855605
Photography	Alex Lees & Norman Grove	01245 225153 01621 842805
Reading & Books	Carole Overy	01621 893450
Scrabble	Linda Etherton	01621 843702
Solo Whist	Dave Mason	01621 858635
Technical Computing	Colin Mason	01621 854906
Ten Pin Bowling	Lynne Morrison	01621 891288
Threads & Fabrics	Pat Newman	01621 891184
Walking	Elizabeth Eastwood	01621 850618
Weekenders	Marilyn Corbett	01621 817518
Wine Group	Jackie Jones	01621 817117

Diary of Meetings and Visits

For details see articles and co-ordinators above

Week Commencing	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	8 Patchwork 14.00	9 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	10 Solo Whist 14.00 French Conversation 10.00	11 Walking 10:30	12 Monthly Meeting 14.00	13 Weekender Red Dog Cafe 10.00	14
15 th December	15	16	17 Book Group 14.00	18	19 Painting 14.00 Coffee Mng 11.00 Luncheon	20	21
22nd December	22	23	24	24 CHRISTMAS DAY	25 BOXING DAY	27	28
29 th December	29	30	31	1 st January Bank Holiday	2 Committee Mtg 10.00 Painting 14.00	3	4
5th January	5	6 Threads 14.00	7 Cards and Paper Crafts 14.00	8 Technical Computing 14.00	9 Monthly Meeting 14.00	10 Weekender At Oliver's Nursery. 10.00	11
12 th January	12 Patchwork 14.00	13 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	14 French Conversation 10.00 Solo Whist 14.00	15 Computer 14.00	16 Painting 14.00 Coffee Morning 11.00	17	18
19 th January	19 Beginners Italian 10.00	20	21 Book Group 14.30	22 Family History 10.30	23 Painting 14.00 Bird Watching Dancing 14.00	24	25
26th January	26 French Improvers 14.00 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	27 Scrabble 14.00	28 Creative Writing 14.30	29	30 News Sheet Copy to Editor Painting 14.00	31	1 st February
2nd February	2	3 Threads 14.00	4 Cards and Paper Crafts 14.00	5 Photography 14.00	6 Committee Meeting 10.00 Painting 14.00	7	8
9th February	9 Patchwork 14.00	10 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00	11 Solo Whist 14.00 French Conversation 10.00	12 Technical Computing 14.00	13 Monthly Meeting 14.00	14 Weekender Forrester Golf Club 10.00	15
16th February	16	17 Local History 15.00	18 Book Group 14.30	19 Computer 14.00	20 Painting 14.00 Coffee Mng 11.00	21	22
23rd February	23 Ten Pin Bowling 14.00 French Improvers 14.00	24 Scrabble 14.00	25 Creative Writing 14.30 Tractor Plant Tour	26	27 Painting 14.00 Bird Watching Dancing 14.00	28	1 st March