



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Blackwater U3A has now been in existence for 12 months, how time flies when you are having fun, I certainly have!

The original meeting took place in November 2004 when 25 of us gathered at the West Maldon Community Centre to discuss the formation of a new U3A branch in the Maldon area. As a result of that meeting under the guidance of a steering committee of 4, the Blackwater U3A branch was started, our first meeting being held in January 2005. The membership had grown to 90 by the end of the year and a further 4 joined at the January meeting. A SUCCESSFUL start for the Blackwater U3A.

We have started over a dozen special interest groups, with more in the pipeline, which are all active. Our thanks must go to the group coordinators who put in so much hard work to provide a regular and interesting programme. More SUCCESS.

The summer outing to Kew and The National Archive was fully subscribed. We chose one of the hottest if not the hottest days of the year, apart from some "overheating" by the gardeners everybody enjoyed themselves. More SUCCESS.

We finished the year with our social at which we were royally fed by Ellen and Shirley with their band of helpers. Entertainment was under Alan's control; and to these and many others we owe our thanks. More SUCCESS.

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The disappointment of the year, only 50 members turning up to the social when 70 said they were coming. Only 3 members had the courtesy to contact me to say they could not make it, what a waste of food!

There can only be one word to describe our first year, SUCCESSFUL! My personal thanks must go to the committee who have worked hard to provide the programme for the year. Thanks are also due to you, the membership of the Blackwater U3A for your support, without you there would be no point in continuing. I am looking forward to another successful year in 2006.

Lastly, on behalf of Jean and myself I would like to wish you all a very happy New Year.

Our Newsletter.

This is the first Newsletter in our new A5 format. There will probably be some mistakes and much criticism. Help me to help us all by advising me promptly of planned activities and any changes. Suggestions and advice are always welcome. Contributions of articles and items of interest to our members would be appreciated.

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Computers.

Beginners I.T. course started before Christmas at the S.W.A.N.S. Computer suite at St. Cedds House, Council Offices, Maldon. on Thursday afternoons 1.15-3.15 p.m. and will continue until 23rd Feb. This course is full up but Sue Fredericks (01621 840951) is collecting names for a similar beginners course to start soon.

Digital Photography

An introductory course for beginners was held on Jan 5th to 19th at WMCC from 2.30-4.30 p.m. on Thursday. There is a chance of another bonus lesson, please contact Sue Fredericks on 01621 8409951

Theatre visits

Cheques must be sent to Jennifer Fowler at Lodge Farm, Woodham Walter CM9 6RL before the performance otherwise we cannot book seats.

Essex Wildlife Trust

Invite our members to join the Maldon EWT on Sunday, 19th March. Meet behind the bins @ Tesco. Contact Anita on 01621 741351

Local History

Monday, 27th February
A talk on Essex Churches at 1.30 pm
WMCC

Astronomy

27th Feb. speaker from Castle Point "The Cassini-Huygens probe to Saturn" With slides. All welcome. 01621854732 Molly.

Birdwatching

East Mersea Country Park. 10.30 Car Park. Contact Anita on 01621 741351
Saturday 10th March
A birdwatch to Minsmere. Meet at Mayes Lane Car Park, Danbury. 9.00 am
Contact Peter Groves on 01245 227018 for details. Share cars etc

Gardening Group

-Monday 27th February
A talk by Susanne Gaywood. "Grenada at Chelsea"
Meet in the Linton Room WMCC. 2.0 p.m. Cost £4 Contact Jennifer Fowler 01245 222834

Monday March 20th
Hyde Hall. Meet behind Bins at Tesco's 10.45 am.

Friday 28th April
Glen Chantry, Wickham Bishops. Meet at Tesco's behind the bins. 1.45 pm.

Please let Jennifer Fowler know if you are coming on these visits on 01245 222834

Questors

Thursday 7th March
Visit to the Essex Police Records. Contact Roger 01621 843054 for details.

Film Show

Join the Maldon U3A at the Town Hall on the 4th Tuesday each month. 1.30 for 2 pm start
28th Feb. "Brown Sugar"

Stamp on costs by buying now to post later

The cost of sending a letter will rise by 2p on April 3. A first class stamp will then cost 32p and a second class stamp 23p. The price is set to rise another 4p for first and second class over the next four years. So now may be the ideal time to buy a stock of first and second stamps at the old prices. They will be on sale until the prices go up and you can use them whenever you want to. Buying early will cut the cost of posting a first class letter by 6% and nearly 10% for second—and more in future year. The stamps can also be used to make up the value on higher cost mail. From April 3, a first class stamp bought earlier for 30p will "count" as 32p when used with other stamps on heavier items. In August a more radical change will happen when post will be priced by its size as well as by weight.

What's on in Maldon in March and April

Tours of the Moot Hall
SATURDAYS from 4th March – 2pm & 3.30pm.
Admission: Adults £1, concessions 50p

SUNDAY 5TH MARCH

Craft and Design Fair. Blackwater Leisure Centre. 10am – 5pm. Craft event encompassing both traditional and modern crafts, craft making, supplies and demonstrations. Adults £1.50, accompanied children under 14 free.

SUNDAY 12TH MARCH

Science Sunday. Museum of Power, Langford. As part of National Science week a special event aimed at ages 7 to adult with scientific displays and demonstrations plus three short talks and demonstrations. Museum's machinery will be operating and miniature train rides will be available. Enquiries: 01621 843183 www.museumofpower.org.uk

THURSDAY 23RD MARCH

The Sutton Hoo Mob. Purleigh Village Hall. 7.30pm. A play by Eastern Angles of Ipswich. An ealing-style comedy about the finding of the treasure at Sutton Hoo in 1939. Tickets £7.50 adults |£6.50 concessions. In aid of Purleigh Church. Enquiries: 01621 850739.

SATURDAY 1ST APRIL

Maldon Choral Society. United Reformed Church, Maldon. 7.30pm. An evening of Mozart, Heiden and William Russell. £7.50 including programme. Tickets available from Tourist Information Centre 01621 856503.

SATURDAY 8TH & SUNDAY 9TH APRIL

Art Show. Langford & Ulting Village Hall. 10am – 5pm. Over 300 exhibits. Home made refreshments. Admission £1. Enquiries: Hannah Robinson 01621 854242.

2006 CALENDAR—Dates for your Diary

March

Thursday, 2nd Photography Group
"Taking better pictures"
A talk by Bert Collis. WMCC at 2 pm
Concert: London Mozart Players
Questors visit Essex Police Records
Members of U3A Invited to join Maldon EWT.
Meet behind bins @ Tesco. Anita on 01621 741351
Monday 20th Gardening: 11.00 a.m. Hyde Hall
Saturday 25 A birdwatch to Minsmere. Meet at Mayes Lane Car Park, Danbury. Contact Peter Groves 01245 227018 for info. Share cars etc

April

Friday 28th Glen Chantry, Wickham Bishops.
Meet behind bins at Tesco's 1.45pm.
Cost £3.50 free to RHS members.

Wednesday Meeting

April 5th at 1.15 pm

AGM

Be ready to vote for your new committee!!

Speaker:
Tony Erle on
"Kodak Ltd."