

Blackwater u3a Newsletter

July 2025



Flower arrangements around a Maypole

u3a

Reg. Charity No. 1113334

From the Chair

Blackwater u3a - Entertainment of the members, by the members, for the members, are you getting involved? Yes, of course you are!

Here we are in July and I hope you have remembered to renew your membership for this year, especially if you are attending one or more of our 41 (at last count) groups and activities the latest being the curry club organized by Gerry Davis – yummy so give it a try.

Or perhaps you are socializing by turning up at our monthly meetings to listen to the speaker, have a chat, cup of beverage and a biscuit, take part in the raffle and collect a hard copy of this month's glossy newsletter. Having lost a few members due to health and gained a few we are still about 215 without counting cluster group members and associates so we can always welcome more if you know of people who would enjoy belonging.

So with all those wonderful options make sure you are either a full member, a member who also belongs to another non cluster group u3a or a cluster group u3a member any of those gives you the price of admission and as a bonus we will even let you attend a couple of committee meetings if the mood or urge takes you and indeed why wouldn't it. So as the Dentist said to the Man with no front teeth "you can't say fairer than that"!

Don't forget to keep up to date with all that is happening by checking out our wonderful website. Our website manager Liz is constantly adding new bits and deleting old information. For instance, details of our July meeting at which it doesn't matter how you pronounce your scone or whether you put the jam or the cream on first a cream tea is a cream tea so get stuck in, not literally. It's July's hot ticket, please ensure you let Jenny know if you are coming so we don't end up with a bun (scone) fight because of a lot of wastage.

Allen

Deadline for the August Newsletter

The deadline for the next Newsletter will be **Friday, 25th July**. Please submit items in the usual way to Di Martin:
dironmar@btinternet.com

Treasurer's Request

When making payments by Bank Transfer please make payments for the following categories:

Membership Payments/Diaries

Sort Code: 60-13-37 Account No: 49519611
Account: Blackwater U3A
Quoting: 'Membership' or 'Diary'

Group Activities/Events

Sort Code: 60-13-37 Account No: 49532057
Account: Blackwater U3A No 2
Quoting: 'Theatre' / 'History' etc.

Payments by cheque should be made payable to 'Blackwater U3A'.
Payments can also be made at the Monthly Meetings by Debit/Credit Cards.

Thank you, *Chris Daines*

Support and Befriending Group

If you are in need of some help or support, please telephone one of the following numbers and they will try to put you in touch with someone who can help.

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| Dennis Eraut | 01621 829758 |
| Christine Wright | 01621 853171 |
| Roger Wilson | 01621 842455 |

RAGs (Real Ale Group)

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, 30th July for a barbeque at a member's house.

Co-ordinator: Paul Allen 07712 052303

Membership Secretary – Request to Co-ordinators

If you are a Group Co-ordinator, could you please let me have names of anyone in your group who is a Cluster Group member. Please also check their current membership of their home u3a. I will then make sure they are on our Beacon system. Many thanks to those co-ordinators who have already done this.

Gerry Davis, Membership Secretary, 01621 843217

Play Reading

We read a very strange play this time, Cloud Nine by Caryl Churchill.

Her idea was to make a parallel between colonial and sexual oppression. Act I is set in Victorian Africa and Act II in modern London.

The characters age over 25 years. Much is made of gender and colour. Clive, a white settler, has a black manservant, who is played by a white person because he wants to be white, similarly Clive's wife is played by a man because that is what she wants to be.

Act II is set in the changing sexuality of our time.

The play gives much food for thought.

Co-ordinator: Anita Parkes 01621 857730

Wine Group 1

You may already be aware of the sad passing of Mani Koenig-Roach at the beginning of June. Along with his wife, Stella, he was the instigator of our u3a wine group and a guiding force in its early stages. Mani had been an active member of Blackwater u3a, leading a music appreciation group and belonging to a number of others. Although he spent most of his time at home in recent years, he and his association with the wine group will be remembered with affection.

Our next meeting will be on Friday 4th July, hosted by Jacky and Peter. I look forward to seeing you all again then.

Co-ordinator: Frances Butcher 01621 853352

Art Appreciation Group

Our last meeting was a show of two DVDs by Prof. Kloss on the Italian Renaissance artist Raphael 1483-1520.

We looked at several of his Madonna and child paintings and Kloss was keen to point out the pyramidal structure of the composition with the point of the triangle being just on top of the Virgin's head. The actual face of the Madonna was quite similar in several paintings and certainly serene and beautiful, a new aspect at that time in early C16 Florence. The Christ child perhaps not so good.

This was followed by some portraits; the one on Baldassare Castiglione being characterful and what Kloss called an "indisputable, indeed incomparable, masterpiece. The embodiment of the ideal of humanism".

We moved on then to several of his history paintings, many on the walls in the Vatican. The huge School of Athens is one of the most famous with imaginary portrayals of philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle and include a brooding sullen looking Michelangelo. It was quite an achievement to just complete this vast fresco in the Papal apartments. We appreciated the historical knowledge about the paintings but not always his interpretation of what the artist meant.

Our July meeting is on July 22nd when Dennis will speak on " Art Deco, Fashion and Erté". This is something quite different and shows the interaction of Art as painting with textile design and "Haute Couture" in the 1910's and 1920's and its legacy. Expect extravagance, boldness of colour and even eroticism. You may recognise some of the art works from Erté.

Everyone welcome even if you have never been before.

Co-ordinator: Dennis Eraut 01621 829758

Country Dancing

Country Dancing resumes on Thursday 11th September. If you are interested please contact the co-ordinator.

*Co-ordinator: Di Rogers 07860 162328
or email diana.rogers2@btinternet.com*

History and Science Group

On Tuesday 10th June, our group went on a walking tour of central Chelmsford. The tour was led by Alan Pamphilon, an Environmental Consultant who has a passion for local history.

Chelmsford as a settlement has been around since the Neolithic period. It was an important Roman town from the first to the fifth centuries AD. During the Saxon period, Chelmsford got its name which came from a river crossing, which was named after Ceolmaer.

In 1199 the Bishop of London, William de Sainte-Mere-Eglise, applied to King John for a charter and on the 7th September 1199 the Bishop was granted permission to hold a weekly market on Fridays within 'his manor of Chelmsford'. The site of the original market was triangular in shape and included the open space between the High Street, Tindal Street and Tindal Square in front of the Cathedral extending to the bottom of Springfield Road.

The tour started at the Stone Bridge built in 1784 over the River Can. Nearby is a Blue Plaque commemorating Thomas Watts, a heretic who was burnt at the stake in 1555.



The Stone Bridge

As we progressed along the High Street, we were shown a number of old, interesting buildings. Several of these buildings had Blue Plaques attached to them. Notably Benjamin Pugh – a doctor who pioneered improvements in midwifery, Guglielmo Marconi – wireless pioneer, Frederick Spalding – photographer and Anne Knight – feminist and abolitionist campaigner.



The Shire Hall

Our tour finished near the Chelmsford Station and outside the Brewhouse Kitchen which was formerly a Quaker Meeting House from 1823 to the mid 1950's. This was also known as the Anne Knight Building; her Blue Plaque appears on the front of the building.

An interesting and a very informative tour. *Geoff Pugh*

Our next visit will be to the RAF Museum at North Weald on the 8th July, we shall meet at WMCC for car share. Further details will be supplied later by Peter Holmes.

Co-ordinators: Peter Holmes, Dennis Eraut and Geoff Pugh

Petanque Group

The Petanque group is extremely popular, consisting of members from Blackwater, South Woodham Ferrers, Limebrook and Maldon. Attendance is averaging over a dozen at a time and total membership is nearly thirty.

Play takes place every Tuesday afternoon in the Maldon Promenade Park meeting at 1.30pm. Please arrive 10 minutes before so we can allocate teams.

Co-ordinator: Phil Hopkins 07902 918574

CHAI (Churches of Historical & Architectural Interest) Group

On Friday 6th June a small party of us started our day by visiting the beautiful little church of All Saints at Creeksea. Around 1124 the construction of a new Norman-style stone church began. The square font under the west window of the church has been dated to around 1125 and part of the doorway is also of a similar date. Under the auspices of the Priory of Dunmow priests were appointed to serve the tiny village. But at some point, the advowson (the authority to appoint a priest) passed to lay patrons.

A list of clergy and patrons is on the south wall just past the font. In 1549 the manor of Creeksea was sold to William Herries. There is a rapier hanging in the church which belonged to Sir William Herries, knight, of Creeksea Place and there is also the tomb of the Herries family near the altar. In 1671 the patronage lapsed and returned to the Crown and King Charles II appointed John Middleton as Rector of Creeksea. He remained as incumbent until 1704, the year that his great granddaughter married James Baker of Creeksea Place. But an entry for the Archdeacon's visitation (a regular inspection of the church which continues to this day) in 1684 said 'the church is so decayed and ruinous that it must be built anew.' Nothing seems to have been done for the next hundred years. Although some repairs may have been undertaken it was not until the mid 1800s there was a major move to repair and restore the church.



From this period we have a very clear view of the medieval church. The Kemp family, who then lived in Creeksea Hall, were the main instigators and supporters of the restoration. The Lords of the Manor were at this time the Mildmay Family who had inherited it from the Herries family through marriage. Samuel Kemp was churchwarden for 30 years. Over the past 100 years the church has been supported and cared for by a congregation drawn from both Creeksea and Burnham.



Our group were given a very warm welcome as we entered the church, and it also felt very warm and friendly. In 2018 a new annex was constructed providing a toilet, a tea and coffee point and a meeting room. Gracing the west end of the new room is a magnificent stained glass window featuring St Francis in a typical Essex riverside landscape.



After a lovely lunch at the Parlour Café in Creeksea we then visited St Mary's, Burnham on Crouch, just over a mile down the road. The church sits towards the north side and west end of a large graveyard. To the south of the graveyard is a large car park and area of greensward also in the ownership of the church. Like most medieval churches, the Parish Church has evolved over the centuries and requires significant maintenance and upkeep. There was a church on this site in 1155, when records show it was given into the care of the Priory of Little Dunmow.

The workmanship and architectural styles span many periods of alterations and improvements over its long and eventful history. Major rebuilding appears to have taken place during the early 14th century. Much of the core of the present building stems from that period as more reordering was undertaken during the 15th and 16th centuries, the tower and the whole of the south aisle date from this period. Around this time the two chapels in the north and south aisles were dedicated to the Guilds of St Peter and St Catherine respectively. This was followed by the south porch and by the north porch which are made of Tudor brick. The next changes to the church were brought about to repair damage caused by storms and fire. The tower was badly damaged in 1702. In 1774 the interior of the church was completely destroyed by fire but by the end of

1775 St Mary's was fully restored for worship. A spire was finally blown down in 1779. Many of the present features in the church date from the 1870s: the east window the open bench pews and the pulpit.

Both the organ console and choir stall had originally been installed in 1922 at the front of the church before being moved to the rear between 1964/65. The old vestry in the west end of the centre aisle was converted into a toilet and tea point in 2008 when the organ console and choir stalls were moved to the front of the south aisle. The area has retained the screen installed by the architect Eric Rouse in 1950 and the original staircase to the ringing chamber for the ringing of a peal of six bells. A new vestry was created at the west end of the north aisle which is named after the Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham, the Patrons of St Mary's.

Our thanks go to both churches for their hospitality and warm welcome.
Sylvia Rickett

Our visit on Friday, 4th July, is to the Black Chapel at North End to arrive at 11am and our second visit for the day is to St Mary's Church at Great Leighs for 2.00pm. Lunch at the Butcher's Arms. *Organised by Geoff Pugh*

Co-ordinators: Geoff Pugh, Jim Skelly and Di Martin

Cribbage Group

Still low in numbers attending this month due to more holidays, but never mind as 6 of us enjoyed some fun games. We are still waiting for someone to make a good high score but sadly the highest was 17 points from Ken. Ken and I played, and he beat me 2 games to 1, while the other 4 played doubles with Mary and Ron beating Peter and Beryl 2 games to 1.

Hopefully our numbers will soon be back to normal.

We meet on the second Wednesday of the month in the Linton Room at WMCC from 2.00pm so please come along if you like to play crib. Currently we pay £2 pp but may have to up the fee a little very soon to cover the cost of hiring the room.

Co-ordinator: Terri Hardcastle 07934 349959

Birding Group

Our Friday meet was a hot one, gathering at Heybridge Basin, we intended walking the circuit from the sea wall, heading back to the basin along the canal.

A sedge warbler was showing well, singing at the top of a small oak, a great sighting.

Whitethroats were aplenty and a great crested grebe was looking resplendent in its summer plumage on the river.

The tuneful chirping of sparrows were showing their appreciation of the lovely summer weather and three noisy oystercatchers flew over and came to rest on the concrete pillars. With numerous black headed gulls scratching a living from the invertebrates living in our glorious mud, a couple of shelduck and a seal basking on the bank we decided to do a U-turn, back to the tea rooms for respite from the heat of the day.

Having for the most part finished breeding, most birds are going into eclipse (having a change of feathers) and will be tucking themselves away, so no birding in July and August. Too hot for the birds and too hot for us.

A convivial morning was finished off with tasty crab and salmon sandwiches.

We resume our birding on September 5th when we'll meet at the sandpit for 9.30am.

Enjoy your summer and I'll see you then.

Co-ordinator: Stephy Eraut 01621 829758 or 07710 677789

Card and Board Games Group

We meet every first Tuesday of the month in the Linton Room from 2pm. If you would like to join us, please contact the Deputy co-ordinator.

Deputy Co-ordinator: Peter Harden 07754536639

Flower Arranging

For our May meeting we set ourselves the challenge of depicting a maypole within our arrangements and at our June meeting we decided to use a gift bag or box to hold our arrangements.



As in previous years we have been invited to take part in St Mary's Flower Festival which will take place from 18th-20th July when the theme this year is Children's books. We have chosen our books and are now in the process of deciding how to incorporate our arrangements.

We meet the fourth Tuesday of the month, apart from July and December, in the Linton Room at WMCC from 9.30am to 11.30am and as we do not meet in July or August our next meeting will be on 23rd September.

Co-ordinator: Di Martin 01621 856347

Rummikub Group

There were eight members at our June meeting making two groups of four.

Marg won in her group and Elaine won in my group, it was good to be back as we didn't have a meeting in May as some members were on holiday.

We meet on the third Thursday of the month from 10am to 12 noon. If you would like to join the group, please contact the co-ordinator for further details.

Co-ordinator: Patricia Harding 01621 843099



ST MARY'S CHURCH
CHURCH STREET MALDON CM9 5HN

FLOWER FESTIVAL

18th to 20th July 2025



Friday and Saturday 10am to 4pm

Sunday 12noon to 4pm

Lunches, Fresh Coffee, Homemade cakes

Served in the Octagon – Contact 07969686109

Blackwater u3a garden

The team usually meet on a Friday morning for about an hour and volunteers are always welcome. Please contact Dorreen for further information.

Dorreen Linton 01621 853428

Gardening Group

Our June meeting was a pretty warm visit to Rookwoods in Sible Hedingham.

We were greeted in front of the rather grand white brick house adorned with four austere columns leading to the front door by Melvin, the car park attendant come heavy and odd job man who wasn't too good on his horticultural knowledge.

Lavender and Lychnis were blooming profusely as we wandered along the path, a great combination of colour, but then I was somewhat disappointed with what I saw next. It wasn't quite like the lost gardens of Heligan, but the herbaceous area was looking quite unkempt. I agree watering has been a big issue for us gardeners this year but almost everything was struggling. The meadowgrass was looking splendid though and there were plenty of mature trees to view in the 4-acre garden. There was a beautiful copper beech dazzling in the sunlight, mature Spanish chestnut, swamp Cypress and boundless kiwi vines running along the red brick garden wall. Unfortunately, we didn't see the pond as Melvin didn't take us to that area.

Retreating to the wisteria covered area we were greeted by our charming host Sandra Robinson, and we were served tea, coffee and a plate full of goodies, cucumber sandwich fingers, lemon drizzle cake and a light as air jam and cream scone, which was more than generous.

Our next visit is on July 21st to 207 Mersea Road, Colchester. Homemade cakes, tea, coffee and soft drinks also available. Admission £5.00. Our hosts will be Kay and Rod.

Meet at 1.15pm at WMCC for car share and please sign up at the next meeting as numbers are limited to 15.

Co-ordinator: Stephy Eraut 01621 829758

Culinary Experiences For Good Health

Due to the lack of numbers, a decision has been made to close the group.

Ann Elizabeth 07763 822553

Reading Group

There have not been too many occasions when all members have thoroughly enjoyed a book but this month's choice, "The Giver of Stars" by JoJo Moyes was a great hit and highly recommended. It is a fantastic story, historical fiction based on real life events. A programme, created by President Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor, was designed to provide books for pleasure and education to those families living in the more remote areas of Kentucky during the Great Depression. This became known as a Packhorse library because the books were delivered by women on horseback.

Alice Wright, a newly married English lady, disenchanted with life in a stifling household with a domineering father-in-law and weak husband, enthusiastically signs up as one of the librarians, working with the indomitable Margery O'Hare, a fiercely independent and strong-willed woman. They are soon joined by three others, and we soon see the way lives are transformed by this initiative after some reservation and distrust. We loved the characterisation. The women are strong and feisty, the men are intimidating and abusive, apart from two.

The author covers many issues here – misogyny, corruption, domestic abuse, poverty, and race. Marks ranged from 9 to 10 with an average of 9 ½. It's been a long time since we have had 10s in our marks so that shows you how much we loved this book. Read it – you won't regret it.

Co-ordinator: Gill Swanson 07975 920460

Meditation Group

On Monday 16th June we were finally able to resume Meditation Group meetings. After a longer than anticipated break in our meetings it was good to be back together and there was just as much chatter as there was quiet meditation.

New members are always welcome to join us for the opportunity to enjoy a calm, quiet spot in our sometimes busy lives and if you are interested, please ring me, Di Reddish, when I will be happy to give you more information.

Co-ordinator: Di Reddish 01621 810653

Golf Group

The Golf group is a small friendly group which plays at different local golf courses on the second and fourth Fridays of each month. All members have a list of dates and venues. If you are interested, please contact the co-ordinator.

Our next meeting is on Friday 11th July at Bunsay Downs Golf Club, Woodham Walter. Meet at 10.15am in the car park.

Co-ordinator: Peter Holmes 01621 854108

Local Theatres Group

Big Fish – Maldon Town Hall

Wednesday 20 August 2025 @ 7.30 p.m. Tickets £12.00



Based on the celebrated novel by Daniel Wallace and the acclaimed film directed by Tim Burton, **BIG FISH** tells the story of Edward Bloom, a traveling salesman who lives life to its fullest...and then some! Edward's incredible, larger-than-life stories thrill everyone around him - most of all, his devoted wife Sandra. But their son Will, about to have a child of his own, is determined to find the truth behind his father's epic tales. Overflowing with heart and humour, **BIG FISH** is an extraordinary musical that reminds us why we love going to the theatre—for an experience that's richer, funnier and bigger than life

itself.

Payment to be made by 4th August 2025, please.

Bank Transfer Payments: Sort Code: 60-13-37 Account No: 49532057

Account: Blackwater U3A No 2

Quoting: Local Theatre (Fish)

The Last Laugh – Palace Theatre, Southend

Wednesday 20th August 2025 @ 14:30pm

Tickets: £44.00



Direct from a sell-out run at Edinburgh Fringe Festival, **The Last Laugh** is a brand-new laugh-a-minute play which reimagines the lives of three of Britain's all-time greatest comedy heroes – Tommy Cooper, Eric Morecambe and Bob Monkhouse.

Filled with great gags and touching stories, *The Last Laugh* is nostalgic and poignant and guaranteed to be the ultimate comedy night out. *The Last Laugh* is written and directed by the award-winning Paul Hendy, and stars Bob Golding as Morecambe, Simon Cartwright as Monkhouse and Damian Williams as Cooper.

Payment to be made by 4th August 2025, please.

Bank Transfer Payments: Sort Code: 60-13-37 Account No: 49532057

Account: Blackwater U3A No 2 Quoting: Local Theatre (Laugh)

Cirque The Greatest Show – Chelmsford Theatre

Wednesday 29th October 2025 @ 14.30pm

Tickets: £31.50



Musical theatre meets a circus spectacular as everyone's favourite West End hits combine with breath taking performances, incredible contortionists, and thrilling feats of agility and flair.

Let the music lift you on a journey bursting with kaleidoscopic colour in this variety spectacular, promising fun for all the family.

Payment to be made by 4th August 2025, please.

Bank Transfer Payments: Sort Code: 60-13-37 Account No: 9532057

Account: Blackwater U3A No 2 Quoting: Local Theatre (Cirque)

Please note if you wish to have tickets these **MUST** be paid in advance so we can ensure purchasing these, some events are popular, and tickets need to be purchased well in advance. Thank you. *Co-ordinator Janet Watson 07952 925164*



CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

On behalf of the West Maldon Community Association, I welcome you to this first issue of our Newsletter. We hope that within this we can keep you up to date with what is going on/at/with the centre, so that you can know how we are trying our best to serve our hirers. We are constantly looking at ways that we can improve our facilities and services. In an ever-changing world of legislation this can be a minefield, but we work through it all carefully.

If your group is not represented on our committee, and you'd like to be, email either myself or my Vice-Chair and we'll have a chat with you before joining us.

Thank you for your continued use of the West Maldon Community Centre, it is much appreciated.
Steve, Chairman. WMCA

NEW WINDOWS AND DOORS

Thank you everyone for your support during the fitting of the new windows and doors. We are very pleased with them. There has been a slight problem with the fire doors but we are now pleased to say this has been sorted. We hope everyone is now used to the different opening of the front door. Rather than propping the door open, by double tapping the reader outside, you can put the door in open mode. Please remember to double tap again once all your group are in to the general public just walking into the centre.

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SHUTDOWN

Our maintenance shutdown this year is from Monday 18th August until Monday 25th August with the centre reopening on Tuesday 26th August.

QUIZ NIGHTS

The Centre holds quiz nights throughout the year. The forthcoming dates are:-20th September, 25th October & 22nd November. They start at 8pm so best arrive by 7.45pm and the cost is £5 per person with teams up to 8 people. Details on our website.

WEST MALDON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

WMCA is the management committee for the Centre and is a registered charity. We meet 6 times a year plus AGM. All members are volunteers. If you'd like to come along and have your say please see our website wmcc.org.uk to find the dates on the events page or email Chairman: Steve Whittingham Stephen@wmcc.org.uk Vicechair: David Campbell david@wmcc.org.uk

WMCC TEAM

If you ever have any queries regarding the centre please contact us. For help on the day the caretakers number is on the front door and on the door in the corridor. Our caretakers are Jason, Jim & Jon. Facilities Managers are Lisa & Sharon our email address is:- facilities-manager@wmcc.org.uk Lisa is Booking officer and her email address is :- Bookings@wmcc.org.uk and Sharon is the treasurer and her email address is sharon@wmcc.org.uk

HALL AND SIDE ROOM BLINDS

Please can we apologise for the delay in fitting the blinds especially those in the upper windows of the main hall. It has been a slow and painful process and we have been let down by various companies. We are pleased to say that hopefully they will be fitted during the maintenance shutdown in August so not to disturb our hirers.

Walking Group

July 24th – Hatfield Peveral Village Hall, CM3 2HP

August 28th – Lodge Road car park, Woodham Ferrers North, CM3 4HJ

September 25th – Tesco, Fullbridge, CM9 4LE

October 23rd – Bicknacre, Priory Fields car park, CM3 4ES

November 27th – Blackwater Leisure Centre, CM9 5UR

We walk on the fourth Thursday of the month, starting at 10.00am. New walkers would be very welcome and if you are interested, please ring me, or see me at the monthly meeting.

Co-ordinator: John Mayes 01245 222530

Members on Their Own (MOTO) GROUP

Some of us visited the Friary Garden Open Day on the first Sunday in June and found it full of colour – beautiful roses, irises and peonies. It was a very relaxing afternoon. Thank you to the volunteers who work in the garden all year round.



One Saturday in June we met at Deli and Fizz in Maldon for a hilarious lunch. It certainly was an experience!

If you are interested in joining this group or finding out more about it, please contact the Co-ordinator.

Co-ordinator: Robyn Slade 01621 928536

Curry Club

Putting out the list for expressions of interest at the last monthly meeting generated considerable response and 12 of us attended the inaugural Curry Club meal. On a very warm evening we were pleased to have a cool air-conditioned restaurant. The restaurateur at Maldon Spice was very welcoming and he explained that most of the food on the menu was Bengali in origin, with some adaptations for British tastes. Some 8 out of 10 'Indian' restaurants in the UK are in fact owned by British Bangladeshis and 95% of these have chefs who originate from Sylhet in the northeastern region of the country.

The food was excellent, and we were very impressed by the fact that all the meals appeared together despite so many of us eating. Three people showed their mettle by asking for lime pickle, the rest of us enjoyed less powerful chutneys with our poppadums. The house wines were good as of course was the Cobra beer. A ten percent reduction on our bill because we were a u3a group was both welcome and unexpected.

A short quiz while we waited for the food to arrive showed that not everyone knew the meaning of brinjal, kheer, keema or aloo whereas samosa, ghee, dhal and tandoor were better understood.

Fifteen people are now in this group so if you are interested in joining, I will have to add your name to a waiting list (unless you want to start a second group of course). We are using a WhatsApp group for communication and the poll feature for booking in.

Our next meeting will be on Friday July 18th at 7pm, venue to be notified to the group in due course.

Gerry Davis, Curry Club Coordinator, 01621 843217.

Canasta

We meet every third Thursday of the month in the Linton room, 2-4 pm. New players always welcome.

If interested in joining either sign up at the next monthly meeting in the Jubilee Room, or contact me on 07710 677789.

Co-ordinator: Stephy Eraut

Monthly Meeting Speaker's Corner

2nd July 2025 – Summer Social with a Cream Tea (maybe a Wilkins talk)

6th August 2025 – Charlie Haylock – The History of Spoken English

Charlie will show us how the seeds of spoken English were first set. He will also show us how each invading force affected the English language, and the different sounds they brought, from the Angles and Saxons to the Vikings and Normans.

Charlie will include a dialect tour of the British Isles and further afield and demonstrate the different facial expressions of each dialect . . . and how a deaf person he knows can tell what dialect a person has . . . just by lip reading.

3rd September 2025 – Ray Tyzack – The Amusing Side of Policing in the 1970's

A romp through the goings on in Whitechapel CID in the 1970's. The highs, the lows and the ridiculous. A cross between 'Life on Mars' and 'The Keystone Kops'

Shakespeare Group

We have now started one of his most popular and performed plays "A Midsummer Night's Dream". Should we think of it indeed as a Dream with Fairies? Well, it is a love story and the lovers running away. What better quotation to have in Scene One than:

"The course of true Love never did run smooth"

It is amazing how many phrases that are commonly used in speech nowadays date back to Shakespeare's plays. A few of us recognised a speech that they had learned at school, so how many recall this? :-

"I know a bank where the wild thyme blows
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows
Quite overcanopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk roses, and with eglantine".

It has proved an enjoyable play to read so far much better than the last two.

Our sessions for July will be on the 11th and 25th at 2.00pm.

Co-ordinator: Dennis Eraut 01621 829758

Art Group 1

No chance of working outside this month! We have been working on our own projects and will continue to do so, again, with the possibility of away days if the weather allows.



Exploring felt tip pens
Jim Palmer



Flowers, watercolour
work in progress
Maureen Taylor



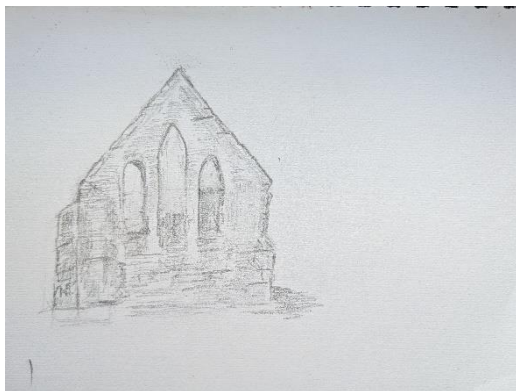
Perspective, Hampton Court
Graham King. Watercolour and pen



Watercolour
Sylvie Harden



Cacti, Jenny Riley
Work in progress, pencil



St Giles' ruins, work in progress
John Hayes, pencil



Val Wilson
Pen and wash



Teddy
Sandra Potts
Pencil

Co-ordinator: Anita Sandison 01621 741351

Card Making Group



As you are all aware I now struggle to make new cards, however I am happy to start teaching again.

Here are two cards by Robyn Slade

Co-ordinator: Kathy Leggett

Art Group 2 – Heybridge

As the Claydon room at the Plantation Hall is still out of action, we are continuing to have our meetings in the community hall of St George's Church in Heybridge basin. We are getting more skilled at setting up and clearing the room afterwards and getting a bit of a work-out as a bonus.



A couple of pictures to show some of our works in progress.

We meet on the first and third Fridays of each month from 2pm to 4pm.

If you would like to join us or want to know more contact *Carol Greenhalgh* on 07585 593028.

Table Tennis 1 & Tai Chi

Table Tennis: Monday mornings 9.30am till 12pm all standards accepted.

Tai Chi: Monday afternoons 2pm till 4pm learners and all standards welcome.

Co-ordinator: Peter Harden 07754536639

Table Tennis 2

We meet on Thursday afternoons at West Maldon Community Centre between 2.30pm and 4.30pm. We have four tables for our use and play doubles and singles, depending on numbers. The group is now full; however, I am happy to add names to a waiting list.

Co-ordinator: Kath Little 07762 312838

Committee Members 2025/6

| | | |
|-----------------|---|--------------|
| Allen Griffiths | Chair | 01621 732191 |
| Ron Martin | Vice Chair and Database Manager | 01621 856347 |
| Chris Daines | Treasurer | 07973 342283 |
| Gill Swanson | Secretary | 07975 920460 |
| Sholto Morton | Minutes Secretary | 01621 929238 |
| Janet Watson | Groups Co-ordinator | 07952 925164 |
| Jenny O'Connor | Monthly Meeting Co-ordinator | 07903 959450 |
| Liz Walden | Website Manager | 07985 202924 |
| Gerry Davis | Membership Secretary | 01621 843217 |
| Peter Harden | Cluster Group Representative and Committee Member | 07754 536639 |

Newsletter Production:

| | | |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| Editor | Di Martin | 01621 856347 |
| Publisher | Roger Wilson | 01621 842455 |

Joint groups with Maldon U3A

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Singing for Pleasure | Jacky Holmes | 01621 854108 |
| Tenpin Bowling | Alan Buck (Wed) | 01245 227709 |
| | David Coombes (Thurs) | 01621 855358 |

July Programme

As well as the schedules on the back of this booklet, please check the Events page on the Blackwater U3A website and the Newsletter items for the latest up to date information.

Local U3A contacts (Our Cluster Group)

You will find details of the other members of our Cluster Group on their websites.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Maldon | http:// www.maldonu3a.co.uk/ |
| Limebrook | https://limebrook-maldon.u3asite.uk/ |
| Burnham on Crouch | https://bocu3a.org/ |
| Dengie | https://dengie.u3asite.uk/ |
| Crouch Valley | https://u3asites.org.uk/crouch-valley/home |
| South Woodham | https://swf.u3asite.uk/ |
| Ferrers | |

And of course, a reminder of our own website:

Blackwater U3A <https://blackwater.u3asite.uk/>

Rotas for Refreshments

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| JULY | Canasta and Play Reading |
| AUGUST | Rummikub and Gardening |
| SEPTEMBER | Cards and Board Games and Birding |

Doors will be open for helpers and co-ordinators setting up at 1.30 pm. Doors are open for other members at 2.00 pm. If you have insufficient members between your groups, please contact me in advance.

Welcome Team

Jenny and her buddies will be on hand to welcome new members.

Set-up and Clear-up rota

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| JULY | Art Appreciation and Table Tennis 2 |
| AUGUST | Real Ale and Shakespeare |
| SEPTEMBER | Petanque and London Theatre |

When setting up the hall please start with the row furthest away from the speaker, leaving sufficient gangways as normal. When clearing up, please do not put the chairs away until requested by a committee member.

Thank you all for your co-operation, *Janet Watson*

Co-ordinators

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Interest Groups Co-ordinator | Janet Watson | 07952 925164 |
| Art Group 1 | Anita Sandison | 01621 741351 |
| Art Group 2 (Heybridge) | Carol Greenhalgh | 07585 593028 |
| Art Appreciation | Dennis Eraut | 01621 829758 |
| Birding | Stephy Eraut | 01621 829758 |
| Canasta | Stephy Eraut | 01621 829758 |
| Card and Board Games | Sheila Rowsell | 01621 740820 |
| Card Makers | Kathy Leggett | 01621 852377 |
| <i>CHAI, Churches of Historical and Architectural Interest</i> | Jim Skelly Di Martin | 01621 740799 01621 856347 |
| Community Garden | Dorreen Linton | 01621 853428 |
| Country (Scottish) Dancing | Diana Rogers | 01621 853841 |
| Cribbage | Terri Hardcastle | 07934 349959 |
| Croquet | Geoff Macro | 07462 333742 |
| Curry Club | Gerry Davis | 01621 843217 |
| Family History | Geoff Pugh | 01621 843297 |
| Flower Arranging | Di Martin | 01621 856347 |
| Gardening | Stephy Eraut | 01621 829758 |
| Golf | Peter Holmes | 01621 854108 |
| History and Science | Dennis Eraut Geoff Pugh Peter Holmes | 01621 829758 01621 843297 01621 854108 |
| Local Theatres | Janet Watson | 07952 925164 |
| London Theatres | Brenda Broom | 01621 841520 |
| Luncheon Club 3 | Sid Sutton | 07711 258802 |
| Meditation | Di Reddish | 01621 810653 |
| Memories | John Mundy | 01621 854065 |
| MOTO | Robyn Slade | 01621 928536 |
| Nature Walks | vacant | |
| Petanque | Phil Hopkins | 07902 918574 |
| Play Reading | Anita Parkes | 01621 857730 |
| Reading | Gill Swanson | 07975 920460 |
| Real Ale Group | Paul Allen | 01621 856303 |
| Rummikub Group | Pat Harding | 01621 843099 |
| Shakespeare | Dennis Eraut | 01621 829758 |
| Short Walks | vacant | |
| Social Group | vacant | |
| Table Tennis 1 | Peter Harden Jack Veash | 07754 536639 07388 420968 |
| Table Tennis 2 | Kath Little | 07762 312838 |
| Tai Chi | Peter Harden | 07754 536639 |
| Walkers | John Mayes | 01245 222530 |
| Wine Group 1 | Frances Butcher | 01621 853352 |
| Wine Group 2 | Paul Allen | 01621 856303 |

July 2025 Programme

RED INDICATES A MORNING MEETING
BLUE INDICATES AN AFTERNOON MEETING
BLACK INDICATES UNSPECIFIED TIMING

| Monday | Tuesday | Wed | Thursday | Friday | Sat | Sun |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|------------|
| | 1 Petanque Card and Board Games | 2 Monthly Meeting | 3 Table T 2 | 4 CHAI MOTO Art 2 Wine 1 | 5 MOTO MOTO | 6 |
| 7 Table T 1 Tai Chi | 8 History and Science Petanque | 9 Art 1 Cribbage Croquet | 10 Play Reading Table T 2 Reading | 11 Golf Singing Shakespear | 12 MOTO | 13 MOTO |
| 14 Table T 1 Tai Chi | 15 Petanque | 16 Art 1 | 17 Rummikub Table T 2 Canasta | 18 Art 2 Curry Club | 19 | 20 |
| 21 Table T 1 Tai Chi Gardens | 22 Petanque Art Apprecia- tion | 23 Art.1 Croquet | 24 Walking Table T 2 | 25 Golf Singing Shakespear Newsletter deadline | 26 | 27 |
| 28 Table T 1 Tai Chi | 29 Petanque | 30 Art 1 Real Ale | 31 Table T 2 | | | |