

May programme

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
2 Table Tennis	3 Birdwatching Petanque	4 Monthly meeting	5 Music Appreciation	6	7	9
9 Garden plant swop Theatre visit Science, Tech & Medical	10 History visit	11 Art Group Luncheon Group 3 Patchwork & Quilting Swimming	12 Reading Group History visit	13 Golf Singing for Pleasure	14	15
16 Table Tennis Birdwatching Rural Essex Scrabble	17 Birdwatching Petanque Woodturning	18 Birdwatching Art Group Theatre visit Woodturning	19 Birdwatching Family History	20 Birdwatching	21	22
23 Astronomy Gardening visit Maritime Group	24 Art Appreciation	25 Art Group Swimming	26 Walking Group Craft Group	27 Luncheon Club 2 Photography Singing for Pleasure Theatre visit	28	29
30 Table Tennis	31					

Blackwater U3A newsletter May 2011



U3A

www.blackwateru3a.co.uk

Reg. Charity No. 1113334

From the Chair

Monthly meeting times

There is still some doubt among some members about the timing of Wednesday monthly meetings – this is the running order.

- 1.30 Team for getting the hall and rooms and kitchen ready.
- 2.00 Doors open for everybody to come in, sign in and collect Newsletter.
- 2.20-2.25 Chairman starts meeting and announcements
- 2.30 Speaker begins
- 3.30 approximately. Tea or coffee served. Plenty of time to wander round and sign up for interest groups.
- 4.15 Start to put chairs away.
- 4.40 Everybody out of building and leave tidy.

Mileage allowances

We have introduced slightly increased payments by all passengers for travel by car to group events. This is based on the distance of outward travel only ie. one way.

£2 for journey to destination up to 8 miles

£3 for journey to destination 9 to 13 miles

£4 for journey to destination 14 to 19 miles

£5 for journey to destination 20 to 24 miles

Over 24 miles at discretion of event coordinator

Any parking costs to be shared by all in the car. Cars where possible to be full. Those on official U3A business to regional or national meetings can claim 30p per mile.

Dennis Eraut

June newsletter deadline

Deadline for the June newsletter is Friday 20th May. Contributions to ian@ianlinton.demon.co.uk 51 Washington Road, Maldon, CM9 6BN

Coordinators

Interest Group Coordinator	Dorreen Linton	01621 853428
Art	Anita Sandison	01621 741351
Art Appreciation	Dorreen Linton	01621 853428
Birdwatching	Peter Leggett	01621 852377
Community Garden	Dorreen Linton	01621 853428
Crafts	Sheila Wallis	01621 856667
Family History	Ken Johnson	01621 828490
French beginners	Val Wilson	01621 842455
Gardening	Jennifer Fowler	01245 222834
Geology	Anita Sandison	01621 741351
Golf	Alan Chapman	01621 816860
History	Dorreen Linton	01621 853428
Local Theatres	Sheila Rowsell	01621 740820
London Theatres	Gill Cato	01621 740153
Luncheon Club 1	Di Johnson	01621 828490
Luncheon Club 2	Kathy Leggett	01621 852377
Luncheon Club 3	Pam Mills	01621 874883
Maldon High Street	Dorreen Linton	01621 853428
Maritime Group	John Wallace	01245 225093
Music Appreciation	Mani Koenig-Roach	01621 854235
Patchwork & Quilting	Molly Middleton	01621 859914
	Gil Reeves	01621 855845
Petanque	George Wallis	01621 856667
Photography Group	George Wallis	01621 856667
Reading Group	Pat Wade	01621 740253
Rural Essex	Dorreen Linton	01621 853428
Science, Tech, Medicine	Alan Chapman	01621 816860
Scrabble	Sylvia Harden	01621 858506
Social Group	Barbara Brand	01621 853218
Spanish	Sue Watson	01621 852941
Swimming	Anne Kellard	01621 853045
Table Tennis	John Mundy	01621 854065
Walkers	Dorreen Linton	01621 853428
Wine Group	Stella Bradbrook	01621 854235
Woodturning	Charles Middleton	01621 859914
Joint groups with Maldon U3A		
Astronomy	Alan Chapman	01621 816860
Ballroom Dancing	Jean Smith	01621 843054
Singing for Pleasure	Jacky Holmes	01621 854108
Snooker	Brian	01621 842619
Tenpin Bowling	David Arnold	01621 853866
Scottish Dancing	Shirley Grummett	01621 853288
Trouble-Shooters	Liz or Bryan Jones	01621 857031

Current Committee Members 2011/12

Dennis Eraut	Chair	01621 829758
Val Wilson	Vice-Chair	01621 842455
John Wallace	Vice-Chair	01245 225093
Adrian Stockton	Treasurer	01245 225081
Dawn Mundy	Secretary	01621 854065
Barbara Brand	Social Activities	01621 853218
Dorreen Linton	Interest Group Coordinator	01621 853428
Sheila Rowsell	Committee Member	01621 740820
Sheila Wallis	Committee Member	01621 856667
Peter Holmes	Co-opted Member	01621 854108
Gill Cato	Co-opted Member	01621 740153

Local U3A contacts

Maldon—Joyce Cotterell 01621 858287
 South Woodham Ferrers—Heather Richardson 01245 320205
 Heybridge—Peter Thorpe 01621 850828

News update

Third Age Trust Newsletter 6th April 2011

Minutes of AGM held on the September 2010: Discussion paper ‘The Challenge of Finding Group Leaders’. The March issue of ‘The Pass’ magazine provides information and contact details of venues and activities suitable for groups through advertising, news items and features. Sight of Third Age Trust correspondence and the magazine is available at the monthly meeting. The website for The Pass is www.the-pass.co.uk

Emergency contact cards

We have purchased from the National U3A office a supply of ‘In Case of Emergency Contact’ cards. The card will slip easily into a wallet and when completed by you would provide vital details in the event of an emergency. Please ask for a card when signing-in at the monthly meeting or contact Dawn Mundy, 01621 854065

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for Maldon & District

On 30th March, Ken Harris, a former manager of the CAB Maldon, gave a talk to U3A members from both Blackwater and Maldon groups at West Maldon Community Centre. Mr. Harris stressed that CAB Services are free, confidential, impartial and available for everyone. The Bureau is managed by a Trustee Board of volunteers who are elected from the local community. It is a voluntary organisation that is staffed mainly by unpaid volunteers, each of whom have participated in a six months training programme. Should the Bureau not have the expertise to help with a client’s problem, it will provide advice as to where to go to seek support and how to proceed. The advice model they use is: exploration, option, action, conclusion. A large proportion of the cases dealt with relate to benefit appeals and it is not uncommon for a CAB worker to attend the appeal with the client. The CAB is located at St. Cedds House, Princes Road, Maldon CM9 NY, telephone 01621 841195. Website www.Adviceguide.org.uk Email: bureau@maldoncabnet.org.uk Dawn Mundy.

Rural Essex Group

The Group was treated to a guided walk around the 61 acre Tiptree Heath, the largest heathland in Essex. The heath is owned by Peter Wilkin and created as a public common in 1947. Records show that the common land dates back to 1401, formed on the sandy gravel ridge left by the last Ice Age. There is an art trail of carvings created by sculptor Jeff Higley working with pupils from six local Tiptree schools and groups between January and June 2004.



A group of 40 volunteers care for the area and control the invasive birch roots. Cattle and Exmoor ponies will be returning in the next few weeks - they also help to control the invasive scrub. Joan Pinch, the Warden, guided us around the heathland pointing out changes and the Trust's plans for the future. The heath is the only place left in Essex where three species of heather still grow together. Little did we realise when Joan showed us the examples of the different types that we would be tested

later! A wide variety of wildlife resides on the heath, including grass snakes. Members were asked to try to spot for them for recording purposes, much to the horror of a couple of our group. Dog walkers are welcome, but Joan carried out



a survey over a week to see how much 'poo' was left and displayed bows of hazard tape tied to bushes on one 50 yard strip - amazing how much was left! *Dorreen Linton 01621 853428*

Forthcoming events

Monday 16th May - visit to John Rowsell's Farm, leaving West Maldon Community Centre at 1.30 pm. There is now a reserve list in operation for this event.

Wednesday, 8th June – visit to Abbotts Hall Farm, leaving West Maldon Community Centre at 1.15 pm. Guided walk and afternoon tea on the lawn, £5.

Refreshments & Meet & Greet rota

June	London Theatre Group
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Speakers' Corner

Our monthly general meetings feature a wide variety of guest speakers. The meetings are held at West Maldon Community Centre on the first Wednesday of the month. Remember doors now open at 2.00.

June 'Living with the Ghosts of the Tower' by Brian D'Arcy, ex Yeoman Warder (Beefeater) and ex Curator of the Crown Jewels. Brian lived in the Tower of London with his wife for 23 years. He was awarded the Royal Victorian Medal in the 2000 New Year's Honours List.



The speaker for July is Karen Thomas, Coastal Advisor for the Environment Agency. The talk is on the Essex Coastline and the recent work and findings of the agency.

Our August meeting will be 'Summer Social: This is our U3A.'

Science, Technology & Medical Group

The next meeting of the Science, Technology & Medical Group will be at West Maldon Community Centre on Monday 9th May at 9.30am in the Linton Room. There will be a medical-oriented talk by David Petts, a microbiologist, who will tell the group about 'Fever in the Dengie Marshes' and explaining why, in the past, some of the marshmen married up to 25 times in their lifetime, because their young wives died of the Dengie illness. *Alan Chapman Group Coordinator, 01621 816860.*

Luncheon Group 3

Our venue on 14th April was the Du Cane Arms in Great Braxted where we enjoyed excellent food and great company. Our next meal is on Wednesday 11th May at the Queen's Head on the Hythe Quay. The group is growing satisfactorily. If you would like to join us, please phone me. *Pam Mills, Coordinator 01621 874883*

Art Group

We will spend the next few months sketching in and around Maldon. We meet on Wednesdays, except the first Wednesday of the month, at 10.30am, usually just for the morning. Please contact Anita on 01621 841351 asandison@gmail.com for details.



Summer sketching programme

Date	Venue	Car share per person
May 11 th	Beeleigh Weir: park by the bridge	£2
May 18 th	Heybridge Basin: Daisy Meadow car park	£2
May 25 th	Tillingham Village Green & Church	£3
June 8 th	Maeldune Centre Garden	
June 15 th	St Peter's Bradwell	£4
June 22 nd	Sandon: park near the church	£2
June 29 th	Hythe Quay: park near Methodist Church	

Scrabble Group

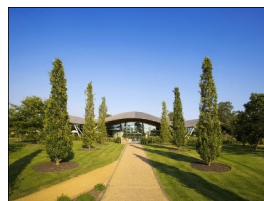
Apologies, I put the wrong day of the month in the April newsletter – these are the correct dates. Ian Meetings are every 3rd Monday of the month - May 16th, June 20th, July 18th, August 15th, September 19th, October 17th, November 21st, December no meeting. *Sylvia Harden - 01621 858506*

Wine Group

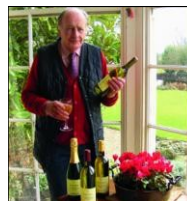
The next wine tasting event will take place at the home of George and Sheila Wallis on Monday 20th June at 7.30 pm. *For more information on the group ring Stella Bradbrook on 01621 854235.*

Social Group

BBC TV studio behind the scenes tour - Thursday 30th June, £20.00 including coach. Depart West Maldon Community Centre at 9am



Windsor - Wednesday 13th July. We have a tour of the Savill Gardens, 2 course lunch and a boat trip with cream tea. £40.00 inclusive including coach.



Great Bardfield Lodge Experience - Monday 19th September. A visit to the 17th century farm house including ploughman's lunch, a visit to the vineyard and wine tasting in the walled garden. £17.50 plus car share cost.

Barbara Brand —01621 853218

Family History Group

All meetings are held on the third Thursday in the month at 1.30 pm in the Linton Room at West Maldon Community Centre. Beginners and new members welcome. *Coordinator Ken Johnson 01621 828490*

13:30 - 14:00 Memories 14:15 - 14:30 Website of the month
14:30 - 15:00 Main topic 15:00 - 15:20 Tea & biscuits
15:20 - 16:00 Questions & answer session or main topic continuation.

MONTH	MEMORIES SUBJECT	MAIN TOPIC	SPEAKER
May		Visit to the LMA	

For full 2011 programme, see Family History page on the website. With all question and answer sessions it would be very helpful if you can let me know your questions in advance. This then gives an opportunity to find the right person to answer and or do the necessary research to get a meaningful answer rather than just give a best guess at the meeting

Roger Smith 01621 843054

Gardening Group

Barnards Farm, which we visited this month, was not the usual enclosed garden with herbaceous borders, lawns and shrubberies, but more of a country estate.

Bernard and Silvia Holmes bought the farmhouse and immediate gardens in the 1970s. Both the house and gardens had been neglected and they started to replan and landscape the garden, purchasing more land in the 1980s.

After visiting gardens abroad and in this country, and being influenced by many gardeners, they created this amazing garden. There are three small gardens close to the house - a Japanese garden, a vegetable garden and a herbaceous garden, all enclosed with lovely gates. The remainder of the garden is made up of wide avenues lined with an amazing yew hedge grassy paths through woodlands, around ponds, near streams and across an airstrip. The garden has a National Collection of Malus (crab apple) and the trees were in full bloom. The owners are obviously very interested in art and sculpture and have bought and displayed a wonderful collection of sculpture throughout the garden. For me, the most outstanding ones were the rowers, the sunflower, the family and the leaping man, Desert Quartet, a wonderful head by Frink and so many more. At the farm there is also a big collection of vintage cars, bicycles and motor cycles. We were made most welcome by Silvia Holmes, a most delightful person who opened the garden especially for us. The catering was excellent and all the proceeds of visits go to charities mainly supported by the National Gardens Scheme. Many of us will be returning for another visit. There is so much to see. *Jennifer Fowler 01245 222834*



Forthcoming visits

We have three garden visits planned for this summer and I do need to know if you are interested in coming very soon. Please sign at the monthly meeting or phone me. Buckingham Palace is oversubscribed so there will be a ballot at the Garden swap on May 9th. Don't be disappointed if you are not a lucky one as I can book again next year.

Monday May 23rd - Visit to Byndes Cottage Pebmarsh, £5 including tea. Meet at West Maldon Community Centre at 1.10. (Wendy Diss in charge 01245 223459)

Monday June 13th - Visit to Cobwebs, a private garden near Rochford, £4. Meet at West Maldon Community Centre at 1.45.

Monday July 4th - Visit by coach to Capel Manor Gardens, Enfield. Cost is £4 for concessions plus £2 for optional tour plus £12 coach. Departure time to be arranged, probably about 9.30.

Table Tennis Group

Sessions take place on the 1st, 3rd and 5th (when applicable) Mondays at West Maldon Community Centre from 11.45 am to 1.30 pm. (please do not arrive before 11.40) Fee £3.00 per session. It is a very friendly group. Balls and bats are provided and coaching is given. The group has been running since April 2010 and new members are always welcome.

Burnham & District Table Tennis League

A number of both Blackwater and Maldon U3A members compete in the league. The winter season is virtually complete apart from a few outstanding matches. Only slight movements have taken place in league positions since the last report. In Division 2, the Maldon U3A A team have dropped to 8th place after 18 matches with 7 wins and 75 points. Maldon U3A member Norman Hayes' form has dipped with 32 wins, a 60 percent win ratio. Ray Cheung, a Blackwater U3A member, has won 15 matches, a 56 percent win ratio. Bill Puxley's return from injury has bolstered the team. Maldon D, newly promoted to Division 2, have consolidated 3rd place from bottom. After 20 matches they have now won 3 matches and drawn 3, scoring 64 points. Rob Sach has been the pick of the U3A members with 13 wins, a 28 percent ratio. The two teams met recently with U3A A winning 7-3 against Maldon D.

In Division 3, the Maldon U3A B team remains in 5th position, playing 20, winning 12 and drawing 3 matches for 123 points. Tony Murray is out injured, but remains the leading player for the team. A recent match between Maldon U3A B and the league leaders Maldon F saw a 6-4 win to Maldon F. The match was hard fought -with Blackwater U3A member John Mundy playing for the f team. In Division 3, Maldon G are still 2nd from bottom. They have played 20, won 2 and drawn 1 match for 48 points. The leading player is John Mundy with 18 wins, a 55 percent win ratio. We have some sad news to report. John Fell has recently died after a long illness. John was one of the main members of the Maldon U3A team and a very good table tennis player who last played for the U3A 2nd Division side.

John Mundy 01621 854065

Maritime Group

Future meetings

Monday 23rd May - 2.00 pm meet at West Maldon Community Centre to look at a selection of maritime themed DVDs.

Monday 27th June - 2.00 pm visit to Mersea Island Maritime Museum (to be confirmed)

Friday 29th July (note the day, not our usual Monday afternoon) Boat trip on 'The Balmoral' from Tilbury (11.30 am) up the Thames through Tower Bridge and return to Tilbury (17 00pm). Balmoral is operated by the same company as 'The Waverley.'

It is not a paddle steamer, but is a most attractive historic small ship of a similar size. (Not Fred Olsen's



Balmoral!). Cost is £22.50 for the ticket plus the cost of car share and parking at the London Cruise Terminal on the day. We will leave West Maldon Community Centre at 9.30 am. All members of our U3A are welcome, as at all Maritime Group meetings. Please sign up as usual at the monthly general meeting. An early commitment will be helpful as the price depends on a minimum of 10 members going. There are light refreshments on board, but passengers may also bring their own packed lunch if preferred. *John Wallace 01245 225093*

Golfing Group

Our April golfing session was at the splendid and very difficult Bunsay Downs course. As we always meet on the 2nd Friday in the month, our May meeting will be on Friday the 13th when we will be visiting Benton Hall Golf Course near Witham for 9 holes on their Par 3 course. In the past we have always met at 11.00am, but, from May onwards, we will meet at 10.00am. The earlier start will allow us to sometimes play 18 holes instead of the usual 9.



Our golfing thought for this month is: "Golf is a sport whose secret is to hit the ball hard, straight, and not too often." Bobby Riggs (1918) American professional golfer. *Alan Chapman, 01621 816860*

Music Appreciation Group

We are still on the letter 'B', as there is so much to explore and enjoy. Benjamin Britten's 'Seascapes' conjured up the East Coast sea - Aldeburgh with its wonderful light and its brooding skies. Manni, an artist of boats and seas, showed us some of his works on that coast and one in particular portrayed deep, dark skies but with golden light shining through; truly lovely. Thank you Manni.



Francois Borne: we listened to his 'Fantaisie Brillante' for flute which highlights the full range of the flute and is created from themes of Bizet's Carmen. Bruch's violin concerto is an incredibly emotional piece in which we all indulged - a true winner.

Borodin's Symphony No. 2 in B minor was constantly interrupted in its creation because of his involvement with scientific research and as a chemistry teacher in St. Petersburg. It took six years to complete, not surprisingly. Rimsky-Korsakov remembers visiting Borodin when, in the midst of his musical creation, he would jump up and run to his laboratory "to see whether something had boiled over".

Our next meeting will be at Margaret Snowdon's home on Thursday 5th May, still on 'B'. Please phone her to let her know you'll be coming on 01621 854810.

Pat Willis. Mani Koenig-Roach, Coordinator 01621 854235

Historical Buildings in Maldon High Street

Thank you to all those members who have adopted a building. I am hoping to arrange a meeting in May at one of the High Street venues - I will contact members on my current list. We will return to the Oakhouse on Wednesday 22nd June at 2 pm to compare notes. If anyone would like to borrow any books, leaflets etc please let me know. I am hoping to have a printed list of the historical and other books that Ian and I hold so members can request a loan. *Dorreen Linton 01621 853428*

History Group

The ever-decreasing group travelled to Bury by car. Our guide first gave us a summary of the history of the Cathedral. The group saw the striking lantern tower, built of Barnack limestone, flint and lime mortar which was completed in 2005 and the beautiful gilded, vaulted ceiling which was added in 2010. We saw the decorative arms of the sister cathedrals on shields around the tower, except for the Isle of Man's which is plain white as the Government didn't want to pay to have the shield decorated! Grants from the Millennium Commission, the Stephen Dykes Bower Trust and donations from many individuals funded the project. The Cathedral organ has also been refurbished and is beautifully decorated by the same craftsmen who restore many famous London buildings. We all agreed that a venue can be visited several times and it will be a different experience according to the season, the weather and the guide. After a very sociable lunch, members went various ways to enjoy the many attractions that Bury has to offer.



A small group went to investigate the Malthouse Project which I had discovered on the Internet. This is the conversion of a 17th century Grade II listed building to provide a heritage centre, café, and a multi-resource community centre opened in 2007. There is a trail of small information boards and artifacts dating back to 1470. The building has been restored to bring together the old and new elements, finished on the outside with traditional lime and mortar wash using the local colour, Lady Lane Yellow, as found in Lavenham. The timber-framed walls have been insulated with sheep's wool and covered with lime plaster and lime wash. In the beamed room we discovered rat holes and there was a cat hole in the heritage room. We discovered photos of pre-restoration which showed the deterioration of the building to near collapse. We then went to the Kiln café which offers training and work experience opportunities for people who have been excluded from mainstream education and training because of illness, disability or other barriers.

Tuesday 10th May - Bulmer Bricks. This is a rare opportunity to visit the Company. You will be able to see the conservation and repair of historic rubbed and gauged brickwork. Leave West Maldon Community Centre at 9 am, £5.

Thursday 12th May - Little Baddow Church and 3 historical houses. Leave West Maldon Community Centre at 1.30, £5.

Friday 17th June – visit to Canterbury. Leave West Maldon Community Centre at 8 am, £26.

Tuesday 12th July - Mersea walk and Museum. Leave West Maldon Community Centre at 9.30 am, £3.

Thursday 21st July - Copped Hall and Gardens. Leave West Maldon Community Centre at 9 am, £10.

Dorreen Linton 01621 853428

Reading Group

The book we discussed on April 14th was 'Sashenka' by Simon Montefiore, a Russian historian. Despite his expertise, some members found the book unbelievable at times. Perhaps this was due in part to his lack of understanding of the main female character who was sixteen at the start of the story. She came from a wealthy Russian family and, due to her selfishness, was unpopular with the group. The second part of the novel took place in 1939. Sashenka was married with two children. Stalin's rule led to a great purge of his opponents and many lived in constant fear. We agreed that the third part of the story set in 1994, when a young historian sets out to find what happened to the family, was the most interesting part. However, some felt they couldn't recommend it as a good read. Our next book is 'The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo' which we will discuss when we meet on 12th May.



Pat Wade, Coordinator 01621 740253

Photography Group

Ten members met on 15th April where they discussed their photographs taken during the visit to RHS Hyde Hall gardens. Some very good pictures were presented. Our next meeting will take place at my house on Friday, 27th May at 10 am. Please note the change of date. Our subject this month is 'Close Ups.' *George Wallis - 01621 856667.*

Astronomy Group

The Blackwater & Maldon U3A Astronomy Group meets at West Maldon Community Centre in the Jubilee Room at 7.30pm on the 4th Monday of the month. The next meeting will be on Monday 23rd May *Alan Chapman, Coordinator 01621 816860*

Birdwatching Group

After an absence of three years, we were back at Rainham Marshes on 1st April. This RSPB reserve protects an ancient, low-lying grazing marsh along the shoreline of the Thames. Its complex of wet grassland and ditches, rank grassland and scrub supports many breeding and wintering birds. There are scarce wetland plants and insects and a nationally declining population of Water Voles.

The area was closed to the public for over one hundred years when it was a military firing range. This wide-open bleak landscape, as it was depicted in Great Expectations, had no trace of the moored Prison Hulks but an escaped convict in chains shuffling away into the reeds, was, anticipated. Canary Wharf could just be seen in the distance and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link close by.

Ruth Barnes was our very able guide. All the waterfowl we had seen elsewhere were there. Yet the kikk-ik-ik call in the reeds of the otherwise secretive Water Rail was heard in two locations which is a rare occurrence, and an actual sighting would have been more so. We also heard the call of the Marsh Frog. Furthermore, viewing through a telescope from the eco-friendly visitor centre,



we saw a Peregrine Falcon, high up on an electricity pylon. A rare sight in the southeast, but can be seen surprisingly perched around the top of the Tate Gallery London. Another rare sight was a six thousand year old tree stump from the Neolithic Period. This had remained preserved on the bed of the Thames until recently. After a good lunch in the Visitor Centre, a building matched for impressiveness by the very comfortable bird hides with lifts and seat cushions, we concluded that the eighty-two mile round trip had been well worthwhile.

Future expeditions

Friday 3rd June - Oxley Meadows, Tolleshunt Knights. Meet at West Maldon Community Centre at 9.15 am. NOW FULL

Friday 1st July – Pandemonium, Wimbish near Thaxted. Meet at West Maldon Community Centre at 8.30 am. Bring a picnic lunch. Signing up sheet will be available

Friday 15th July – Planning meeting at my house to fix the programme from Autumn 2011 to Spring 2012. Meet at 3.00 pm in order to avoid the Photography Group meeting in the morning.

Peter Leggett, Coordinator, 01621 852355 or mobile on day of trip 07881 680260

Theatre trips to London

Very shortly we will be off to London again, this time to see ‘The Lion King’ at the Lyceum Theatre on Wednesday May 18th. The coach leaves West Maldon Community Centre at 9.00 am. I look forward to seeing you all then.

Our second trip for this year is to see the matinee performance of the ‘Classical Spectacular’ at the Royal Albert Hall on Sunday November 20th. I have already had a good number of people signing up to go, but if you now find you can come, please give me a ring or email me and I will see if there are any more seats available – they sell out very quickly.

Gill Cato 01621 740153 or cato662@btinternet.com

Petanque Group

Eleven members of the group met to play on 19th April on a wonderful warm afternoon. So much a change from those winter afternoons we've had recently.

The group meets at the terrain on Promenade Park on the first and third Tuesday of the month. Now it is getting warmer, perhaps we could start at 2pm. What do you think?

George Wallis 01621 856667



Swimming group

Dates for the summer are Wednesdays 11th and 25th May, 8th and 22nd June, 6th and 20th July. *Anne Kellard 01621 853045*

Walking Group

The April walk report will be in the next newsletter. On 26th May we will be leaving Tesco at 9.30 am for a walk around the Wilkins Estate at Tiptree.

Dorreen Linton 01621 853428

Local Theatre Group

'Cirque de Glace'

The Cliff's Pavilion at Southend on Sea is an excellent venue that has hosted every form of theatre. On Wednesday 20th April, we enjoyed a performance of 'Cirque de Glace' entitled 'Evolution' featuring the Russian Ice Stars. It was good to note that the cast included two very talented UK skaters.

Dramatic music heralded the opening, but muted lighting diluted the impact of the performance. However, as each scene took us through the birth of planet earth, the



mysteries of the great oceans, the emergence of the forests, the development of man and the wonder of space, the choreography grew stronger, the costumes gained more sparkle and the music transported the audience to the four corners of the world. The skaters spun, danced, jumped and flew across the ice. Their skills, talent and precision were severely challenged as they performed on what could be described as a pocket-size ice rink. The final song called the children of the world to celebrate the sun, the earth, love and life. Thank you to Sheila Rowsell for arranging such a pleasant evening. Dawn Mundy.

Forthcoming events

Monday May 9th - 'Anything Goes' by Cole Porter, Witham Public Hall. £9.

Friday May 27th - 'Cowardly Custard' a smash hit Noel Coward review at the Civic Theatre. £16.50.

Wednesday June 22nd - 'Dinner Ladies.' The catering staff of BBC TV's hit sitcom written by Victoria Wood. Mercury Theatre, £12.75.

Sunday July 10th - 'Opera in the Orchard' presents 'A Laugh at the Opera' at Bouncer's Farm, Wickham Bishops. Laughs and surprises from Mozart, Rossini and more. £20.

Monday July 11th - 'Busy Body,' a comedy thriller at the Mercury Theatre. £12.75.

Sheila Rowsell 01621 740820

Art Appreciation Group

Tuesday 24th May, 2.00 - our May meeting at West Maldon Community Centre will be another 'Antiques Roadshow.' (£3 refreshments included) Please bring along any interesting object you have at home which could be discussed and share your knowledge or perhaps members may be able to help you in finding out more.

Tuesday, 28th June – visit to Jaywick Martello Tower arts venue. In the early 1800s, England feared invasion by Napoleon's forces. To help prevent this, 103 Martello Towers were built along the South and East Coasts from Seaford in Sussex to Aldeburgh in Suffolk. Jaywick Tower was built in 1809 using 750,000 bricks to build its twelve to eight feet

thick circular walls. The Tower was fully renovated in 2005 and is now home to a thriving arts and community venue. We have been invited to go to the exhibition, 'Tattered Outlaws of History' (the twelve towers in Fingal, North County, Dublin and 'If the Invader Comes' by photographers Dubowitz and O'Conchuir. Dubowitz is known internationally for his photography work and O'Conchuir is equally known for his creative preoccupation with the relationship between bodies and buildings. David Neame is also going to give us a guided tour on the history of the tower. We will be leaving West Maldon Community Centre at 9 am.



Thursday 29th September - shared visit to Greenwich leaving West Maldon Community Centre at 8 am. If you would like to visit the Ranger's House and possibly the Queen's House (subject to no private function) you will need to secure your place by paying £6 for Ranger's House and £12 for the coach – total £18. There are several members of the Maritime Group who have paid for coach only.



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