

General Meetings are held on the **second Thursday** of the month at 2.00pm  
at Christ Church, 164 New London Road, Chelmsford CM2 0AW

## General Meeting Speakers

Please see page 19 for a thank you note received from the March speaker.



**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm Easter "eggstravaganzer" – See page 18 for further details.**

Parking is limited at the Church so where possible please use public transport/taxi/car sharing. Remember to bring your £1 coins for the side shows.

The hall has a limited capacity and all the available places for the social have been booked. Please contact Lesley Wood by going to

<https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/april-easter-eggstravaganzer/> to join the waiting list.

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm Alison Woollard – Hylands House.**

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm Jane Piper - Fashion to Die For**

Aa history of dark, dangerous and deadly Victorian fashion.

## View from the Chair

I'd like to start by welcoming all our **New Members**. Since the year started we have had over 50 new joiners, which is amazing! It's no wonder that our monthly meetings are filling up and we are having to think about ways we can accommodate everyone (safely) in the church hall.

I understand that some of you found Christ Church's car park full up when you arrived for last month's meeting. I'm very sorry about that, it transpires that there was another big event going on (something to do with local school children) and we were not informed by the church of the likely affect that would have on parking availability.

As you know we have had to restrict the attendance to our "Easter Eggstravaganzer" this month but I am hopeful that most people who want to come can still do so. It is likely that parking is again going to be tight so please either come by bus, or arrange with your friends to car share. By the way, don't forget to wear an Easter Bonnett/Hat and have a go at painting a hen's egg!



I should like to remind everyone that you should by now have renewed your annual membership to Chelmsford u3a. At the time of writing there were still about 150 members who hadn't renewed. We do



allow two months of grace but if you haven't paid by the end of April we will have to lapse your membership. If you have online banking, the quickest way to renew is by bank transfer. Cheques are fine but I would point out that the post is often delayed for up to two weeks in parts of Chelmsford. In order to get over this difficulty we have purchased a bank card machine, so now you can renew your membership by this method at our monthly meetings.

It has been pointed out to me that members reading this newsletter may assume that the only Interest Groups we have are those that regularly submit an article about their activities. I can assure you this is not the case and just to put the record straight I have asked the editor to regularly feature a list of all our groups at the end of the newsletter. Of course you will find out much more information about each group by accessing our website <https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/>. I appreciate that some of you do not have the internet so if that is the case I will try my best to help you if you ring me on the number below.

You may have read in Third Age Matters magazine or in the national newsletters about the proposals the Trust has for making the u3a movement 'Fit for the Future'. These proposals centre around introducing a u3a Council and reducing the size of the u3a Board. The Trust has been consulting with u3a's around the country by delivering online presentations about the proposed changes, and we have recently been advised that the 'the consensus is overwhelmingly in favour of introducing a Council and a smaller Board'. If you would like to watch a video of the presentation you can do so here: <https://youtu.be/JUA68qh6gPA>

Just a quick reminder: If you book a holiday with Riviera Travel please let them know that you are a member of Chelmsford u3a and they will donate 10% of your holiday cost to your u3a when you travel.

Best Wishes  
Lesley Wood  
01245 601359

### **Presentations around Criminal Justice for u3a members**

I have arranged to deliver two presentations at Fête in Grays Yard Chelmsford on the following dates:

Friday 12 April at 1400 and Thursday 18 April at 1400

Full details of the presentations please see **page 18 of this newsletter**. These presentations are exclusively for members of Chelmsford u3a. Some places have already been allocated to committee members and group leaders to acknowledge, to thank them, for all the work they put in voluntarily, to help support our u3a.

I am now opening the invitations to all Chelmsford u3a members to come along. If you wish to attend one of both of these presentations please email me at [ljwhitehouse@mail.com](mailto:ljwhitehouse@mail.com). I will allocate seats on a first come first served basis. There is no charge to anyone attending.

Both presentations will take up to one hour, which includes any questions. The room is not accessible to anyone unable to climb stairs, sorry about that, but as it is not a full u3a meeting I feel I have not contravened any rules around equality. If you like the presentations I will be happy to deliver them to a full u3a meeting where wheelchair users and members with limited mobility will be able to attend.

Lindsay Whitehouse

## London - The City & its People Group

Leader: Berry Cornell

If you would like to join the London Group please contact the membership secretary Chris Rycroft for further information: Tel no. 01245 473047 email: [c.rycroft123@btinternet.com](mailto:c.rycroft123@btinternet.com). The Group **usually** meets up on 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 2pm but **dates in bold** are exceptions due to Bank holidays, Christmas and availability. Meetings are held at Christ Church, New London Road, Chelmsford.



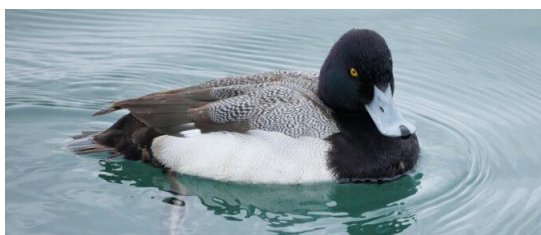
### Programme from February 2024 – July 2024

- 22<sup>nd</sup> Apr A visit to the Horniman Museum  
**20<sup>th</sup> May** Walking in Southwark and Bankside, speaker Kathy Lancaster.  
24<sup>th</sup> Jun Pounds, Shillings and Poverty: London in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, speaker David Williams  
22<sup>nd</sup> Jul A walk around the Inns of Court lead by Richard Pusey and Terry Pipe.  
19<sup>th</sup> Aug “Bridging” London, speaker Katie Davies.  
23<sup>rd</sup> Sept Visit to “Shakespeare’s Globe, Story and Tour”  
28<sup>th</sup> Oct Along London’s Capital Ring Walk, speaker Tony Tuckwell

**Committee:** Berry Cornell Convenor 01277 355823, Susie Fowkes, Chris Rycroft, David Marsh, Dave Sayers, Bob Smith Deputy Convenor.

### Birding Group

Leader Alan Alexander 01245 248030 Mobile 07712 818499



On 22<sup>nd</sup> March, fourteen members of the Birding Group met at Abberton Reservoir Essex Wildlife Trust Reserve. It was a dull overcast chilly morning, but undaunted we set off towards the Hide Bay Hide. The area was covered in Black Thorn and Broome bushes in full blossom, we were surrounded by Skylark and Chiffchaff song and it wasn’t long until we sighted them.

At the hide we spotted Heron, Great Crested Grebe, Marsh Harriers, Tufted Duck, Widgeon, Cormorant, Pochard, Egyptian Goose, Swans both white and black. Shoveler, Little Grebe, Goldeneye and a first for me, Lesser Scaup. We saw Carrion Crow and Coot.

We then made our way to the Island Hide where we were rewarded with another first for me, a Black Throated Diver, we also saw Black Headed Gull, Lesser Black Backed Gull and a Goosander. Two pairs of Great Crested Grebe we displaying to each other, watching them glide and mimicking each others movements was quite beautiful.



Our next meeting is on 26<sup>th</sup> April and was due to be at Tiptree Heath but after due consideration I have swapped the April and May venues around, so we will meet at Fingeringhoe Wick.

Our 2024 Programme

24<sup>th</sup> May. Tiptree Heath

21<sup>st</sup> June. Lea Valley

July. No meeting

23<sup>rd</sup> August. Cockayne Wood

27<sup>th</sup> September. Rainham Marshes

25<sup>th</sup> October. Thameside

22<sup>nd</sup> November. Blue House Farm

**New members are very welcome to join us, please** feel free to contact me on the numbers above, or by the U3A website email address. We meet at 10am on the fourth Friday of the month at the chosen venue and set off about ten minutes later. The walking is not arduous, we usually spend more time standing or sitting in hides enjoying the spectacle of nature. There is no fee to join the group and **all abilities are more than welcome** whether an experienced birder or total novice.

If members would like to be added to our growing WhatsApp Group, please let me know and give me your mobile number. As always, if any members have ideas or suggestions for visits, please let me know. I will send all members an email nearer the time, confirming the location and that we can go ahead.

### Spanish Conversation Group

Leader: Lindsay Whitehouse

For the second month in a row, we had twelve members attending our meeting. With two regular attendees missing, those present all agreed that we are at full capacity and therefore will not be seeking any more new members at this time. Anybody interested in joining will be put onto a waiting list.



One of our members brought along a number of books (in Spanish) which he was happy to lend to any member.

We repeated our exercise of looking at a variety of colloquial phrases in Spanish and how they translate into English. Examples included “to be at your wit’s end;” “stubborn as a mule;” and “talking at cross purposes.”

Because of the number of attendees, we split into two groups to talk about what we had done in the last month and what we plan to do over the Easter holiday. One member had been to Tenerife and Budapest (to see a Depeche Mode concert) since our last meeting!

If you already can hold a basic conversation in Spanish and wish to be put onto our waiting list, please click the link to our website. The next meeting for the group will be on Wednesday 17th April 2024 at 10:30am at Chelmsford Library in a meeting room on the first floor.

David Gout

## Pickle Ball

Leader: Alan Mayo 07979 540053

**P**ickleball is a bat & ball game similar to tennis, the ball is much slower and less bouncy than a tennis ball. The net is slightly lower than in tennis and the court is smaller – so it's suitable for us thirdagers! Our new group is playing the game at Riverside Leisure Centre every Monday at 2pm. If you've played any racquet sports before you will adapt easily to this game and we normally play doubles as there's less running! Those interested in finding out more can contact me by phone, through Chelmsford U3A website



Groups/Pickleball/Group email or directly at [pickleballu3a@gmail.com](mailto:pickleballu3a@gmail.com)



## IT Group

Leader: Lyn Parsons



The IT Group meeting in March continued the support and help with Facebook. Once again this proved popular with members. In April we will continue this support alongside our regular help for members on Apple/Android devices.

If you are interested in digitalising/restoring old photos please let Lesley or me know and she will arrange to bring the equipment along to a meeting to support you.

If you have any IT issues that you need help with please come along. Our knowledgeable support team have helped lots of members with their queries on using laptops/phones/tablets.

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month 10.00 @ Christ Church New London Road.

## Lunch Group 2

Leader Harry Glaser

Twenty-one members gathered for lunch at the Fox and Raven on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March. This was our first visit there since the extensive renovation of the pub and the occasion was a really enjoyable experience. It's so encouraging when attendance at an LC2 lunch is so high. Apart from a few members who had indicated their non-attendance, this represented an almost full gathering. My thanks to Jenny who hosted.

It also was the last lunch of my nearly eight year tenure as leader of the Club and whilst I'm happy to be just another diner in future, these years have been the basis of getting to know so many friends for which I'm thankful.

The baton has now passed to Harry Glaser and he and Angela will host next month's lunch on 23<sup>rd</sup> April at The Anchor, Danbury.

Harry Franklin

## Science Group

Leader: Chris Bellamy

Science Group Talk Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April

### **BEATRIX POTTER'S (forgotten) SECRET CODE BREAKER**

**Learn about a cipher code that Bletchley Park couldn't even break – and the man who did!**

**By Andrew Wiltshire**

The forgotten tale of Leslie Linder, the Essex businessman who after five years of study broke open the cipher code that Beatrix Potter had invented and used, between 1881 and 1897, to record her private thoughts and observations, before creating her famous Peter Rabbit stories.

Then, over the next eight years Leslie Linder decoded over 200,000 of her words before publishing, in 1966, his acclaimed work on her Journal and becoming a literary, film and TV celebrity.

### **U3a Science Group Meeting Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 1024**

**How do Pilots Know Where to Go**

**By Andy Emberton**



Andy gave a very clear well illustrated presentation with an engaging style on the various ways in which aircraft navigate in order to make safe landings. The key words are safety, safety & safety! All systems are designed to be robust and must be regularly checked to ensure they are accurate. Apparently, pilots can not rely on GPS as it can be jammed particularly near war zones or by vehicles on the ground with tracker systems.

Aviation safety worldwide is regulated by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) which was set up in 1944 with 52 countries and has expanded since then. In the UK, it was governed by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and now we are out of the EU it is our own organisation, the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Early aircraft relied on four instruments – altimeter, air speed indicator, heading indicator which is relative to magnetic north and attitude indicator (also known as artificial horizon). These instruments are still used today enhanced with many others. An aircraft with basic instruments can only fly in daylight with good visibility. To be able to fly at night in cloud or poor visibility the aircraft must be ‘properly equipped’ with approved equipment. An aircraft comes into land usually at an angle relative to the ground of just 3 degrees which is surprising to learn.

To aid navigation on landing a number of systems are in use, using radio signals such as Instrument Landing Systems (ILS), Non directional beacons, distance measuring equipment and VHF Omni-directional Range (VOR). ILS provides both horizontal and vertical information to the pilot. ILS has a number of categories; Cat IIIC is the highest and is the most sophisticated. These systems are known as Nav aids and can be used in combination with one another. Above all they must be accurate.

Another very clever landing aid consists of red and white light projected from a series of lamps arranged by the side of the runway such that the pilot should see a bank of red lights if approaching too low and white lights if too high. If the colour of the four lights appears to have two red and two white lights, the approach is perfect.

Andy is a retired Maconi radar engineer and now works part-time for a company which checks the Navaid equipment for accuracy. The company has a fleet of small aircraft covered in all sorts of aeriels connected to accurate monitoring equipment. The pilot has an additional screen to follow which provides information where the aircraft is and where it should go. Andy showed us maps of the track of a typical sortie which looked a bit like scribble on the map because the aircraft need to stack before following a very strict path! Towards the end of the presentation Andy showed a couple of video clips from the cockpit of an aircraft on a calibration sortie where it flies towards the runway and then continues 50ft above it – the clip ended at the end of the runway before the aircraft lifted skyward. The company fleet consists of a Cessna and a small number of Diamond DA62 twin propeller driven by diesel engine and burning jet A fuel.

The positioning of the aircraft uses GPS which seems contradictory – but it is not navigating using GPS, it is using it to know where it is. It is worth knowing that the equipment in the aircraft is authorised by the Civil Aviation Authority.

Report by Paul Chaplin

Science Group talks are held in the Catholic Church Hall in Melbourne Avenue, Chelmsford CM1 2DU. Doors open at 1.30pm and the talks start at 2.15pm. Tea/Coffee before the talk. **Non-members of the Science group are welcome. £2 for non-members.**

### Chelmsford Science and Engineering Society

- 10<sup>th</sup> Apr **RDF to RADAR – My parents contribution to Hitler’s downfall and how I came to be!** by Chris Neale former Technical Director at EEV,
- 17<sup>th</sup> Apr **High-Tech Healthcare: How Chelmsford Still Leads the World in Diagnosis and Treatment** by Nic Vincent (Vice President of Sales and Business Development) and David Rowlands (Head of Product Development and Applications), Teledyne e2v.

For more details see the CES website at <https://cses.org.uk/>

## Local History Group

**Leader:** Jane Humphreys 01245 259590

On 5 March we welcomed back Georgina Green who introduced us to the Buxton family of Essex. Georgina, who lives in west Essex and loves Epping Forest, first became interested in the Buxtons when Georgina was involved in celebrations for 100 years since the Epping Forest Act of 1878 preserved the forest from the rapid expansion of London's housing and industry. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton of Warlies (Upshire) and his younger brother Edward North Buxton of Knighton (Buckhurst Hill) were part of the Commons Preservation Society for Epping Forest. Thomas gave land for the building of Upshire church, and Edward saved Hainault Forest to become a country park, and also bought part of Hatfield Forest so that it could be preserved.

The story of the Buxtons not only goes back over 500 years in Essex, but also is a wonderful example of the challenges of disentangling family trees. A classic trait is passing names down through the generations. When Isaac Buxton married Sarah Fowell, daughter of Thomas Fowell of Snaresbrook who was the business partner of Isaac's father Charles, they called their first son, born 1756, Thomas Fowell Buxton. Every subsequent generation had a Thomas Fowell Buxton, though confusingly Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton of Warlies was the eldest son of Sir Edward North Buxton not Sir Edward's younger brother Thomas Fowell (because Edward had an older brother Thomas who died in childhood so the family recycled the name.....). More complications came when brothers married sisters who were also their cousins – Sir Edward and his brother Thomas married Catherine and Rachel Gurney respectively who were nieces of the boys' mother Hannah Gurney (who just happened to also be sister of Elizabeth Fry, nee Gurney). The Gurneys were already related by marriage to the Buxtons in the previous generation.

Georgina started the story of the Buxtons in 1537. The Buxtons of Sudbury worked in the cloth trade, and arranged for Robert to be apprenticed to the Paycockes of Coggeshall. Robert's marriage to his master's daughter Emma caused something of a scandal. When the last male heir of the Paycocke business died in 1584, Paycocke's house passed to William Buxton. He and his family may or may not have lived at Paycocke's, but by the early 1700s John Buxton was living there, courtesy of his father Isaac who was now a wealthy clothier (and philanthropic non-conformist). John's brother Charles inherited Paycocke's, but was the one son who left the cloth trade for London where he became a trader in whale oil, in partnership with Thomas Fowell. In 1746 he sold Paycocke's, although at the end of his life he returned to live at Kelvedon and is buried in Coggeshall. The Buxton family did not forget Paycocke's. In 1904 Noel, son of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton of Warlies (who was instrumental in saving Epping Forest), bought Paycocke's for £500, and gave it to the National Trust in 1924.

There was so much to learn about this family with a strong commitment to educating their employees, campaigning against the continuation of slavery, and preserving the natural world for the benefit of all. My personal interest was in what happened when Edward North Buxton of Knighton died in 1924. Part of the Knighton estate – Knighton Wood – is now part of Epping Forest, but an adjacent area was developed for housing. In 1932 my grandparents were happy to move into the new house built at the corner of Knighton Way and the High Road, and I have many memories of visiting them there until they downsized to a bungalow in 1962.

In April we will meet on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> at Stow Maries WWI airfield for a guided tour. For more details, please contact Nick Bailey [nickbailey01245@outlook.com](mailto:nickbailey01245@outlook.com).

We will be back at Boreham Village Hall on Tuesday 7 May for a talk by Sarah Harvey on John Alec Baker, the Chelmsford naturalist about whom an exhibition has just launched at Chelmsford Museum,  
Jane Humphreys



## The Essex Branch of the Historical Association

2.30pm Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Sir Jules Thorn, the Man & his Empire –

When you believe your business is safe, that is when it is most vulnerable.

(Thorn Electrical Industries)

Dr Jim Lewis. Official biographer

at Trinity Methodist Church, Chelmsford

All Welcome £5 for non-members

### Art Appreciation Group

Leader: Brenda Kelly



In March we visited Tate Britain for the exhibition 'Sargent and Fashion'. We all enjoyed seeing the work of the great portrait painter John Singer Sargent (1856-1925). It was set out in about eight rooms showing his portraits of Victorian and Edwardian members of high society dressed for startling effect, side by side with some of the actual dresses shown in the portraits as well as the actual fans and hair ornaments. Sargent regularly chose his sitter's outfits or re-arranged their clothing for the best artistic and dramatic effect. The first room was dedicated mainly to black (reminiscent of the work we saw when we visited the Frans Hals exhibition recently) It is amazing the different effects you can get with black with the effects of light and shine on the material.

The magnificent portrait of *Charles Stewart, sixth Marquess of Londonderry at the Coronation of Edward VII* carrying the Sword brought to mind Penny Mordaunt doing the same thing at the recent coronation of Charles III. The well-known portrait of *Madame X* in her black dress

with both her diamond straps in place dominated another room and there was also a version with one diamond strap falling from her shoulder.

Although most of the portraits on show were of women, one striking male portrait *Dr Pozzi at Home* caught the eye with his flamboyant red dressing gown which reached to his feet. At first glance *Vernon Lee* in severe dark clothing appeared to be masculine, but was in effect the British writer Violet Paget using her pseudonym. *Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth* was another well-known picture on view. It was shown next to her actual dress and cloak.

Sargent enjoyed painting dancers and we saw the Spanish dancer *La Carmencita* who was a regular performer in music halls at that time. Side by side with her portrait was her beautiful dress of yellow satin. Also shown was a photograph of his studio in Tite Street, Chelsea, which was opposite the home of Oscar Wilde, where Sargent created portraits of the time which we still enjoy today. An exhibition well worth a visit.



Next month Margaret Mills will be coming to give us a talk on 'Joseph Wright of Derby' at Christ Church, New London Road on Tuesday 23rd April.

## Garden Group

Group Leader: Chris Bellamy

Secretary: Val Green



Members enjoyed tomato soup and scones seated under a canopy shortly after arrival, a welcome first for us on a garden visit. Chris Bellamy welcomed everyone present, read out some notices before introducing Owners Alan and Lesley Gamblin who gave an interesting and informative outline about buying and restoring the period house and then over the last fourteen years rescuing the gardens to their design, a continual ongoing project.

Members were split into two groups between Alan and Lesley who over the next hour, or so guided us, explaining in detail the various beds, bulbs, a mound, potting shed, plantings, specimen trees, the lake and pointing out the vista and views at different points during the tour.

Members were able to see and admire for themselves the features described in the March newsletter.

On our return we sat down again for coffee or tea and delicious cake which finished off a very well organised and pleasant afternoon, with only periodic light rain and gusts of wind.

Chris Bellamy.

**Our next Garden Visit will be on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April at 2.00 p.m.  
to Barnards Farm, West Horndon, CM13 3FY.**

The 22 hectares of garden and woodland feature a Japanese garden, vegetable plot, wild life ponds and a lake. There is also a collection of sculptures from the grand to the quirky, including works by Elizabeth Frink, Anthony Gormley and Nicholas Lavarenne.

The entry price is £10. Tea/coffee is available for £2.50 per person and a slice of cake is an additional £2.50. However, people are welcome to bring their own refreshments.



## Directions to Barnards Farm

On A128 1½ m S of A127 Halfway House flyover. From junction continue south on A128 under the railway bridge. Garden is on the right just past the bridge. There is ample free parking.

Please let Chris Bellamy know if you want to come by Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April at the latest  
Chris Bellamy Email: [chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com](mailto:chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com)

## Bus Pass Group

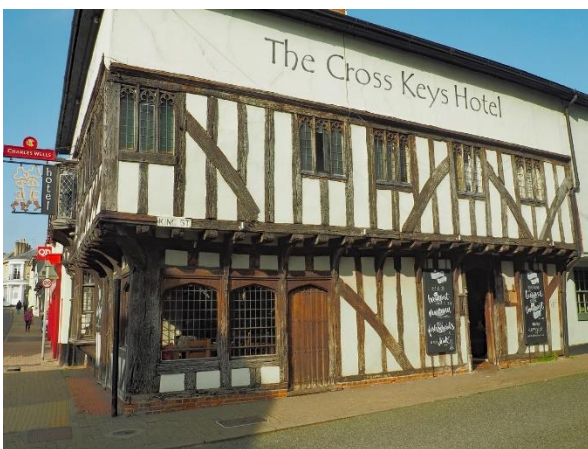
Group Leader: Maurice Austin

Our March turnout was our largest so far, with 23 participants. We filled several buses, overfilled one and contrived to leave some regular passengers standing when they were used to virtually empty buses! And some of us were left behind on our return, when a 16-seat mini-bus with passengers already on board turned up for us!

We waited at Chelmsford Bus Station for the 09.53 First Essex Aircoach X30 amidst a large crowd of other intending passengers. I was getting rather worried as there were well over 50 people waiting! Two X30s arrived together, one for Stansted Airport and the other heading towards Southend-on-Sea. Fortunately, many went for the seaside bus. The rest of us all boarded and found seats but the bus was almost full. By the time it had picked up a few extra passengers in Bromfield Road, we were full and soon had a standing load! At Great Dunmow, we disembarked and vacated enough seats for the remaining standing passengers to have a seat for the rest of their trip to the Airport. Our Leader looking very pleased with himself in Great Dunmow.



As we were a bit late arriving, our notional 33 minutes wait at the same stop gave ample opportunity for personal relief and/or a bit of basic exploring. A small single decker Stephenson's 314 duly arrived with a couple of passengers. We filled it up! One woman and her shopping got off at the western end of Great Dunmow and we then went on a fruitless tour of the new housing estates before heading through some gorgeous villages and picking up very few other passengers until we got to Wimbish Barracks. Here we picked up half a dozen regulars who all had to stand for the rest of their journey. No-one said anything but it was obvious that a full bus was a novelty!



On arrival at Saffron Walden, we had the usual rush for a suitable refreshment stop, some choosing a pub, others one of the many excellent cafés and restaurants. Saffron Walden is an attractive medieval market town which is laid out on a grid pattern. It has a wide range of properties built from profits of the early wool and saffron trades. When these trades became less profitable, further redevelopment and upgrading of town centre buildings was curtailed, leaving us with many medieval architectural masterpieces. Much the same happened in towns like Lavenham and Coggeshall which experienced similar changes in fortunes.

There is so much to see in this attractive town, such as three mazes, a wonderful church, the Bridge End Gardens which have recently been renovated by volunteers, and many individual and unique shops. The famous Fry's Gallery was unfortunately closed as, it too, was being refurbished and wouldn't be open until around Easter. Nevertheless, we all found plenty to do!



Our return journey was an earlyish Vectare bus 316 to Stansted Airport, due at 14:38. It arrived on time but was a 16-seat mini-coach with several other passengers already on board and a small number of “locals” waiting with us. It was a very smart little vehicle but not capable of taking us all. The very nice lady driver patiently waited until I had sorted out those of who needed or wanted to get to the Airport to catch a connecting bus or get home promptly for other reasons. That bus left ten minutes late full and leaving about 8 of us behind. So, we went for a cup of tea and cakes in a rather gorgeous restaurant we had espied earlier. We caught the next 316 an hour later. Murphy’s Law prevailed and that bus was a full-sized single-decker that would have coped with the full party! We had a pleasant ride through some very pretty villages, including Molehill Green, right at the end of the airport runway, maybe the noisiest place in Essex!

All photos by Lesley Wood. **Please see page 17 for more information about St Mary’s Saffron Walden**

We finished the day with another busy X30 ride to Chelmsford, tired but happy. We had had a very enjoyable day.

On Friday 12 April, we will go to Epping. We will catch the 10.15 First 46 to Ongar, from stand 6 at Chelmsford Bus Station. We will change to Central Connect 320 for Epping. My current plan is to catch the 14.49 320 to Harlow for the 59 back to Chelmsford. If the weather is nice (!), we can come back an hour later. We expect to be back in Chelmsford about 16.06 hours. I am exploring different routes home to avoid a long wait in Harlow.

Maurice Austin.

### **Church Visiting Group**

Group Leader: Brian Greatrex

Administrator: Michael Gray

Wednesday 6 March St Thomas and St George Brentwood



Two dozen members made the short journey to Brentwood for the first meeting of the 2024 season. The morning started splendidly, with coffee and home-made cakes in the modern annexe of St Thomas’s.

Tony spoke of the history of this Victorian urban church. It dates from 1883, replacing a poorly built early 19<sup>th</sup> century church on the same site, which in its turn replaced the chapel whose ruins can still be seen on the High Street. He pointed out cracks in the pillars, damage done before the west wall was complete, the saints and Old Testament stories in the little stained glass windows, the gallery, which some of us were able to visit, and the wonderful wrought iron over the font and elsewhere. A few intrepid members ascended as far as the ringing chamber where there are eight bells - and Eric Withams tried out the Norman & Beard organ.

Not too warm inside the church, the gas bill to blame, but even chillier in St George's on the Ongar Road. Its austere architecture, 1933, a stark contrast with the high Gothic of St Thomas's. Thanks to Prue Jones for the details:



St George the Martyr is a red brick, minimalist, art deco structure. The modest church is situated on the Ongar Road and is the core of a local community which needs the support the church gives to them. It was one of the first designs by Lawrence King, a local man educated at Brentwood School working in the 1930s. King went on to a significant architectural career.

Inside St George's there is virtually no decoration but the visitor is immediately struck and impressed with the wide Romanesque chancel arch edged in red brick. There are tall clear windows with no stained glass so the building is bright and airy. This is a high Anglican Church and the stations of the cross set around the walls are attractive and simple.

Caroline Harris gave us an excellent introduction to the church and its activities. The congregation run many fund raising events, one of which is a Palm Sunday procession using the building and its grassy surroundings.

**Our next meeting is Wednesday 3 April,  
EARLS COLNE St Andrew  
and WAKES COLNE All Saints**

**See page 19 for our provisional programme for the rest of the year.**

## Chelmsford & District NT Supporter Group

Wednesday 10th APRIL 7:45pm

**Dissolution of the Monasteries – what happened to all those household effects, fixtures, fittings and materials?** Talk by Ken Crowe

The Venue for our meetings is Trinity Methodist Church, 46, Rainsford Road, CM1 2XB

### Summer Evening Walks

Leader: Alan Mayo

**W**alking on summer evenings is what this group does, followed by a pub meal. This year follows last year's format, meeting at a pub at 4:30 pm, walking for around 4 miles, not fast, not slow, enjoying the company, the weather, the scenery and, we hope, the meal (and possibly a drink) afterwards. To join, or enquire about this group's email [chelmsfordu3awalking@gmail.com](mailto:chelmsfordu3awalking@gmail.com) or via the u3a website groups or phone 07979 540053



### Book Group

Leader: Andy Moir

At our March meeting we discussed *Old Baggage* by Lissa Evans. The novel begins in 1928 with the main character, Matilda Simpkin (Mattie), being reminded of her past. In her youth she was a militant suffragette. who was jailed five times. Now in middle age, the closest she gets to the excitement of her old life is the occasional lecture on the legacy of the militant Suffragette movement.

After running into an old suffragette comrade, who became a supporter of Fascism, Mattie decides that there is a new cause she needs to fight for, and turns her focus to a new generation of young women. She forms the Amazons, a group created to give girls a place to not only exercise their bodies but their minds too, and ignite in young women a much-needed interest in the world around them.

But when a new girl joins the group, reminding Mattie of a tragedy in her past, things start to go wrong.

The majority of the group really enjoyed the book and thought that it was excellent, well written. One member said, *"I thoroughly enjoyed "Old Baggage". I found Mattie and "The Flea" and Ida admirable characters and by contrast, given my antipathy to right-wing politics, my opinion of Jacko and her ilk was the exact opposite. Lissa Evans captured the spirit of that late-twenties period when the efforts of the suffragette movement were at last beginning to bear fruit whilst the horror of burgeoning Fascism as in the dictatorship of Mussolini in Italy were preparing the way for Hitler."*

However a minority of the group didn't enjoy the book and another member said *"It has lots of sub-plots and no focus ....in the end it just fizzled out"*. An interesting afternoon

**Our books for the next three meetings are:**

Mon Apr 15 <sup>th</sup>	Beartown by Frederik Backman
Mon May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Travels with my aunt by Graham Greene
Mon Jun 17 <sup>th</sup>	The Tenant of Wildfell Hall by Anne Bronte

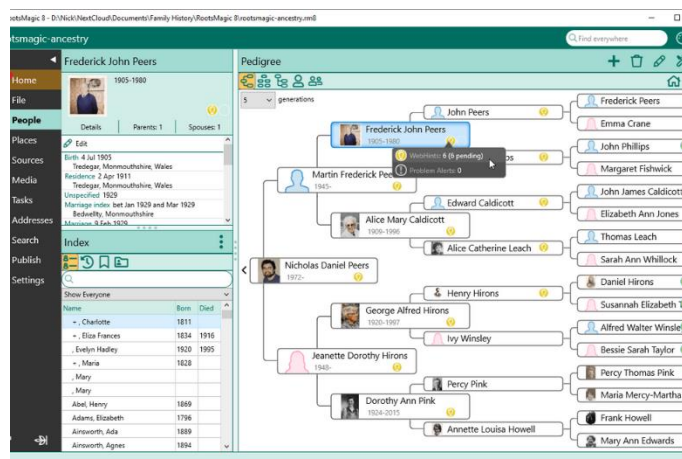
## Family History Group Leader: Lesley Wood

We had an interesting and interactive meeting in March, the topic being Family History Software. Some people prefer to keep an entirely clerical record of their research whilst others record their findings in online family trees such as Ancestry, Family Search or Find My Past. So why might you want to use family history software as well?

*A good family tree programme can help you:*

- Grow an extensive family tree with direct and indirect family members shown. You can also create, share and print a wide range of family tree charts
- Search for your ancestors in the record collections of many of the key genealogy sites, from within your software, and import those new details right away (*you may need a subscription to the relevant genealogy site to gain the full benefits*)
- Keep really organised research – for instance adding in source citations and notes about your discoveries
- Write reports using the automatically-generated templates based on the data you've entered to your family tree

We talked about three main versions: Roots Magic, Family Tree maker and Family Historian. Lesley demonstrated Roots Magic to the group, which she has been using for years. There are versions available for Windows and Mac. Lesley demonstrated how you can build your tree from scratch, a generation at a time or if you have an online tree you can download it as a 'ged-com' file and then upload it to a software package where even a large tree will appear in a couple of seconds.



The latest download version of Roots Magic is very reasonable at £29.95 whereas Family Historian costs £59.95 and Family Tree Maker will probably set you back about £90 . All the programmes will entail a learning curve, so it's a really good idea to experiment with them and try out those with trial versions and see which appeals to you most.

We shall not be meeting in April so our **next meeting is in on 24<sup>th</sup> May** when we have a guest speaker – **Ian Mercer**, who will be delivering a talk entitled **“A Tale of Love and War”**. It is about Ian's discovery of his grandfather, born in Germany, interned on the Isle of Man in WW1 and repatriated to Germany after the war. The meeting starts at 2.00 p.m. and the venue is Christ Church (Room 2) New London Road, Chelmsford. Members and guests are welcome.

Lesley Wood Email: [lesleywood54@yahoo.com](mailto:lesleywood54@yahoo.com)

### Reminder to Group Leaders

Please send copy for the May 2024 Newsletter to the editor, Andy Moir.  
All copy must arrive no later than Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Please would contributors use the Calibri Font size 12.  
For MS Word use Paragraph settings; line spacing single and spacing 0 before and after lines.

### Chelmsford u3a Committee

Position	Name
Chair	Lesley Wood
Vice Chair	David Sweeney
Secretary	Marie Neale
Treasurer	Wendy Hubbard
Membership Secretary	Diane Read 01277 352413
Speaker Organiser/Deputy Treasurer	Eddie Wood 01245 601359
Newsletter Coordinator	Lynn Regan
Monthly Meetings Organiser	David Marsh/Brian Littlechild
Marketing/Recruitment	Alan Caddy
Groups Coordinator	Lesley Wood
Social Media/Deputy Web Manager	Allan Goldsmith
Publicity & Advertising	Peter Anderton
Committee Member	Ann Bell
Committee Member	Nick Bailey

### Volunteers not on the Committee:

Web Manager	Andy Moir
Newsletter Editor	Andy Moir

To contact any of the above go to the Committee page on our website  
<https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/contact/>



## Mary's Church Saffron Walden, Essex



The parish church of Saint Mary the Virgin is the largest (non-cathedral) church in Essex, with an overall length of 183 feet, whilst the height of the tower and spire is 193 feet.

'The Children of Calais is a life-sized sculpture of six children in poses echoing The Burghers of Calais by Auguste Rodin. The piece is designed to provoke debate about the inhumanity of our response to the children caught up in the ongoing refugee crisis. Rodin's original memorialises a moment during the Hundred Years' War when Calais was under siege by England for over a

year and King Edward offered to spare the people of the city on condition that six of its burghers would surrender themselves. Ian Wolter's sculpture evokes a parallel narrative: the sacrifice being demanded of child migrants for our 'greater good'. Dressed in contemporary clothing, one of the figures holds a lifejacket in place of the city key held in Rodin's original.'

Award-winning sculptor and conceptual artist Ian Wolter was inspired by Rodin's famous 'The Burghers of Calais', an edition of which lives in the shadow of the Houses of Parliament. Rodin was commissioned by the City of Calais to commemorate the six burghers of their city who, in the fourteenth century, were prepared to sacrifice themselves to the English king, to save their citizens from starvation under siege. The six men are portrayed at the very moment they walked out of Calais to their certain death, one carrying the key to the city in an act of silent surrender. Every figure subtly portrays desperation in a different way. Although they are standing close enough to touch one another, each is lost and alone in their misery. Yet as well as expressing sorrow and defeat, they also capture heroic self-sacrifice and human dignity.



'My six figures are English children,' Ian explains, 'children I know, in contemporary clothes, but in poses echoing Rodin's burghers, with the tallest child holding a lifejacket in place of the Calais city key. Refugee children are simply children at the end of the day, forced from their homes and at the mercy of strangers whose language they may not even speak. When children are portrayed in the way Rodin approached his sculpture, the loneliness and desperation is overlaid with their need for adult care and protection.'

Lesley Wood

## Presentations around Criminal Justice for u3a members

**12<sup>th</sup> April Oh, Mr Commissioner** – So what does a Police and Crime Commissioner actually do? Should we keep politics out of policing? The public image of the Police has taken a battering recently, is that accurate or fair? We look at the stories of some bent coppers, as well as recognising that the vast majority are hardworking, brave public servants. Can we believe the statistics that tell us crime is going down? I shine a light on the use of Police Cautions before we revisit some actual (but disguised) cases and ask the audience what you would have done. We ask whether the public is getting value for money? We look at the human side of crime, and also the humorous side of crime. All the stories are drawn from my life experience as the first Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex.

**18<sup>th</sup> April Prison Escape** - Whenever a prisoner escapes from custody, something has gone wrong. It could be a failure of technology, equipment, human error, building and procedural design, or staff corruption. I guide my audience through a real life escape from a prison where I worked. I have an intimate first hand knowledge of what happened, when, where, how and why. Four prisoners escaped in a single operation. I highlight why that story did not hit the national news headlines. I talk my audience through the whole escape plan from conception to execution, which was run just like a military operation. Perhaps that is not so surprising, because the leader of the escapers was also a soldier serving in the British Army. We look at how it all ended, and the supreme irony of karma for one of the escapers.

Lindsay Whitehouse

## **April 11<sup>th</sup> - Easter "eggstravaganzer"**

This year's Easter 'eggstravaganzer' will take place at the usual venue starting at 2pm. We will be sending out an email later this month asking you to confirm attendance so we can arrange the correct amount of food and ensure we do not breach fire safety regulations.

Please put your creative skills to the test by designing and bringing along an Easter bonnet and/or a decorated hens egg (hard boiled or blown please!). There will be a prize for the best one of each.

The Easter party will also feature delicious food, a host of Easter and egg themed entertainment including:



- Easter quiz – free entry
- Easter egg hunt – free entry
- Free Easter raffle
- Bunny ears and tails stand-up bingo

Plus some other side shows which will be £1 per entry

- Guess the number of eggs in the jar.
- Guess the name of the bunny rabbit.
- Guess the weight of the Easter cake
- Bunny treasure map – find the buried treasure.



## Church Visiting Group Provisional Programme

Wednesday 1 May THEYDON MOUNT St Michael CM16 7PP STAPLEFORD TAWNEY St Mary RM4 1DQ	Wednesday 5 June HADSTOCK St Botolph CB21 4PH ASHDON All Saints CB10 2HG	Wednesday 3 July WARE St Mary the Virgin SG12 9EH STANSTEAD ABBOTS St James SG12 8JZ
Wednesday 7 August RAYLEIGH Holy Trinity SS6 8BB HOCKLEY St Peter and St Paul SS5 6AE	Wednesday September 4 GREAT WAKERING St Nicholas SS3 0AH NORTH SHOEBURY St Mary the Virgin SS3 8UL	Wednesday October 2 LONDON Savoy Chapel Chapel Royal St James Palace
Wednesday November 6 CHELMSFORD Cathedral Church of St Mary the Virgin, St Peter and St Cedd CM1 1TY		



Chelmsford U3A  
 Christ Church  
 164 New London Road  
 Chelmsford  
 Essex  
 CM2 0AW

15 March 2024

To all members of the Chelmsford U3A,

Thank you very much for making me feel so welcome during my Dogs Trust talk this week. I really enjoyed myself and was delighted with the response from you all!

Thank you also, for the £131.98 donated in total by everyone. It is extremely kind of you all and will help us care for the many dogs that need us.

With around 14,000 dogs coming into our 21 rehoming centres each year, some as a result of the current 'cost of living' crisis, we continue to work tirelessly to look after them, with the aim of finding them a loving new home – and as mentioned in my talk, we never put down a healthy dog.

We are truly grateful for your donations and for any support you have given Dogs Trust in the past and continue to give in the future. So, thank you once again for helping our dogs - such as Dotty, the 11-year-old Lurcher, as well as all the other dogs we are currently looking after at Dogs Trust Basildon.



If you would like to visit the local rehoming centre, so you can see how we put donations to good use, please contact me on 01268 535053 or at [stephanie.disch@dogstrust.org.uk](mailto:stephanie.disch@dogstrust.org.uk). I would then be more than happy to arrange a behind-the-scenes tour for you all.

With warmest wishes

Stephanie Disch  
 Supporter Relations Officer  
 Dogs Trust - Basildon

Dogs Trust  
 Clarissa Baldwin House T: 0207 837 0006  
 17 Wakley Street F: 0207 837 0006  
 London, EC1V 7RQ [www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)

Registered Charity Numbers: 227523 & SC037843

### Interest Groups (as of March 2024)

You must be a member of Chelmsford u3a before you join an Interest Group. However, if you would like a taster session before you join contact the Group Leader either by phone or by email.

Name of Group	Day of Month	Time	Group Leader	Phone	EMail
All Day Walks	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday		Berry Cornell	01277355823	Via website
Art Appreciation	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	14.00	Brenda Kelly	01277840621	Via website
Art Club	Mondays Weekly	9.30	Peter Anderton	07773074105	Peter.anderton@s cion-uk.com
Art Group	Tuesdays Weekly	9.30	Cynthia Cronin	01245461215	Via website
Birding	4 <sup>th</sup> Friday	10.00	Alan Alexander	07712818499	Via website
Book Group	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	14.30	Andy Moir	01245440007	Via website
Bridge (beginners)	Tuesdays	14.00	Alan Cardus		Via website
Buss Pass Group	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	varies	Maurice Austin		Via Website
Church Visits	1 <sup>st</sup> Wed	10.15	Brian Greatrex & Michael Gray	01245258833	Via website
Craft Workshops	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	10.00 – 13.00	Julie Nicholson		Julnic138@gmail. com or via website
Discussion Group	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues	13.00- 15.00	Brian Littlechild		brian.littlechild@ blueyonder.co.uk
Family History	4 <sup>th</sup> Friday	14.00	Lesley Wood	01245601359	lesleywood54@ yahoo.com
Fishing Group	Wednesdays		Alan Caddy		Via Website
French Conversation	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	14 -15.15	Marie Neale		Via Website
Garden Group	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	14.00	Chris Bellamy Val Green	01277353481	Via website
Information Technology	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	10.00	Lyn Parsons		Via Website
International Dining	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	Evenings	Jennie Cappin	01245 358629	Via website
Jazz and Blues Group	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	10.30- 12.30	Heinz Kassier		kassier2@gmail. com
Live Arts	Theatre Visits	As & when	John Heathcote	01245380766	liveartsgroup@aol .co.uk
Local History	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday	14.15	Jane Humphreys	01245 259590	Via website

London the City & its people	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	14.00	Berry Cornell	01277 355823	Chris Rycroft via website
Lunch Club 1	Last Friday of month	12.30	John Heathcote	01245 380766	Via website
Lunch Club 2	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	12.30	Harry Glaser	01245 462760	Via website
Lunch Club 3	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday	12.30	Laraine Linard Barbara Childs	01245 475444	Via website
Mah-Jong	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	2.00	Chris Paget	01245 474811	chrispaget@lineone.net
Philosophy	Thursday 4-weekly	11.00	Julia McClure	07941 480240	Via Website
Philosophy & Religion	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	10.00	Jim Mackay		Jim88mackay@aol.co.uk
Photographs on Face Book	Online		Alan Mayo	07979 540053	Via Website
Pickleball	Monday Weekly	2.00	Alan Mayo	07979 540053	Via Website
Poetry Appreciation	2nd Wed	14.00	Judith & Tony Boniface	01245 266316	Via Website
Science Group	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday	13.45	Chris Bellamy	01277353481	Via website
Sewing, Knitting & Crochet	3rd Thursday		Jacqui Norfolk	07714 258517	Jacqueline.n@virgin.net
Short Walks	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	10.00	Robert Lloyd	01245466167	Via website
Spanish Conversation	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	10.30	Lindsay Whitehouse	01245 356363	Via website
Summer evening walks	4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	Apr -Sep	Alan Mayo	07979 540053	Via website
Sunday Lunch	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	13.00	Lesley Wood	01245601359	Via the website
Ten Pin Bowling	2nd & 4th Fridays	10.30	Roger & Ruth Spall	01245466486	Via website
Travel Group	See website		Anne Brereton		cu3atravelgroup@outlook.com
Walking Group	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	10.00	Alan Mayo	07979 540053	Via website