

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

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

A history of dark, dangerous and deadly Victorian fashion.



**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July at 2pm Summer Social.**

Pit your wits in our House of Games Quiz, enter the free prize draw and find out more about our Interest Groups. Light refreshments will be available.

This event is free but it is advisable to reserve your place by going to our website or by clicking on this link <https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/july-social/> and following the instructions you will find there.

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> August at 2pm. Karen Lawrie – An Interactive Fitness Presentation.**

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm Amanda Sutherland – Make Do And Mend.**

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October at 2pm Jo O’Brien – Chiropractor.**

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm Mary and Graham Brace – Wildlife Photographers & Conservationists**

## View from the Chair

This month's newsletter will reach you in **Volunteers' Week** (Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> – Sun 9<sup>th</sup>). Volunteers' Week is about celebrating and thanking those who give up their time to make a difference. This year will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Volunteers' Week, which was first established in 1984, by what was then known as Volunteering England.



As I am sure you are aware, the u3a movement is a volunteer-led organisation. At all levels volunteers are dedicated to bringing learning opportunities to u3a members across the UK. Locally every u3a is run and

activities are delivered by volunteers, and Chelmsford u3a is no exception. There are plenty of volunteering opportunities within the u3a to suit a wide range of skills, experiences and time commitment. At a local level this may involve being on 'The Committee', helping to run an interest group, organising meetings and events, or welcoming new members into our u3a.

**Ask not what your u3a can do for you but what you can do for your u3a!**



During Volunteers' Week (and throughout the rest of the month) why not speak to the leader of an Interest Group that you belong to and ask how you can be of help? Maybe you could collect the subs and keep a basic account of the group's income and expenditure (our Beacon system has a Ledger you can maintain). If figures aren't your thing, perhaps you could volunteer to be the group's 'roving reporter' taking down a few notes about the meetings or events and providing a short report for this newsletter. If you are keen on taking photos why not take some of your group activities and offer to submit them to our newsletter editor/website manager (Andy Moir). These can then be used to illustrate a written article or

your group's page on our website. We particularly like to see pictures of members enjoying themselves (but be sure to check with them that don't mind their photo appearing on-line).

Of course the other thing you could do is volunteer for the Committee. Committee members can gain great satisfaction from the fact that their organisation stands for a worthwhile cause and that they are able to make a difference by making sure it meets the needs of its members. They also enjoy seeing the organisation they manage develop.

Chelmsford u3a is currently looking for a volunteer to undertake the role of **Business Secretary**. Marie Neale, our existing secretary has served on the committee as a trustee for a total of 10 years and she will be stepping down at the AGM in February 2025 – even if we can't get a replacement! Anyone that volunteers for this role will be given full training if they join the committee on a co-opted basis, before Marie leaves us.

**The role can be summarised as follows:**

- Support the Chair by preparing agendas and minutes for the monthly committee meeting.
- Day to day administration of the U3A – keeping the Trust and the Charities Commission up-to-date.
- Be the point of Contact for the Trust and to forward information to the committee members.
- To maintain effective records – nothing is printed out any more - it's all kept electronically.
- To act as an information and reference point for all members of the committee.

**If you are interested in volunteering for this role, please contact Marie on [secretary.chelmsfordu3a@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.chelmsfordu3a@gmail.com).**

Of course if you are interested in the wider picture there are also volunteering opportunities within the Third Age Trust. Some of these roles include answering calls to the u3a Advice Line, giving subject advice to Group Leaders, giving talks and running workshops for u3a members and much more. If you are interested in getting involved at a national level as a Trust Volunteer, please look for opportunities advertised on their website <https://www.u3a.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering-for-u3a>, in the u3a matters magazine and in the Friends newsletter <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter>

## Third Age Trust – OnLine Learning

The Trust's new film series, Share Something Brilliant Today, showcases the skill sharing and friendships that take place within the u3a movement. Their first film features John and Peter, who enjoy experimenting with science in Chichester u3a's Practical Science group – you can watch it here:

<https://youtu.be/aSN6VqfXq8I?si=ljxhDLcOjdfD6k0>

On Friday 7 June at 2pm, Callum Brogan from the Imperial War Museum's War Memorials Register will be explaining how you can help record the unique historical details of war memorials in the UK. This and other upcoming national learning events can be found here:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>



The u3a Short Story Competition is now open for entries. The theme of this year's competition is 'Escape'. Find out more and enter your short story now <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/short-story-competition>. Entries close on Monday 8 July at 12pm.

Would you like to learn more about **Walking Football**? Subject Adviser John is a member of Barnsley u3a and formed their walking football group eight years ago. John aims to "encourage the development of Walking Football across the national u3a movement so that we can hold regional league and cup competitions. He is happy to provide advice to anyone who may be thinking of starting up their own group. Get in touch with him here <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects/walking-football>

If you are interested in reading about what other u3a's are getting up to, follow this link to the **u3a Sources website**: <https://sources.u3a.org.uk/>

**Making Plans for the future:** How prepared are you if something unexpected happens tomorrow? Find out about how you can make plans for the future from home, for free, by joining James Norris, the founder of My Wishes and Digital legacy Association, in the next Future Lives meeting, taking place on Wednesday 5 June at 2pm. The aim of this Future Lives webinar is to empower you to do the tasks that you haven't already completed and ensure that your future wishes are adhered to. Register on the Future Lives page <https://www.u3a.org.uk/our-impact/future-lives>

Lesley Wood  
chair.chelmsfordu3a@blueyonder.co.uk

## 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.



## Future Programme 2024

- 24<sup>th</sup> Jun Talk: 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. A flyer to book a place on page 19 of this newsletter.
- 19<sup>th</sup> Aug Talk: "Bridging" London, speaker Katie Davies.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept Visit to "Shakespeare's Globe, Story and Tour"
- 28<sup>th</sup> Oct Talk: Along London's Capital Ring Walk, speaker Tony Tuckwell
- 25<sup>th</sup> Nov Visit to Wimbledon



**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

Our next meeting is on 28th June at Fishers Green, Waltham Abbey, EN9 2EF

### Our 2024 Programme

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.

## Science Group

Leader: Chris Bellamy

### Science Group Visit to CSH Environmental Ltd 2pm Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June



CSH was founded in 1981 and provides commercial waste management. CSH processes 65,000 tons of waste a year, including plastic, cans, paper & cardboard, helping to reduce landfill. As a result of an arrangement with some Essex farmers who supply plastic to GSH in bulk, GSH paid £17,000 to Essex Young Farmers to help fund their annual May show.

Visit Address - CSH, Greenacres, Packards Lane, Wormingford, Colchester, CO6 3AH. A maximum of 25 members can attend. Please email [chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com](mailto:chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com) by Wed. 12<sup>th</sup> June. Please consider car sharing.

## Talk on Copped Hall; Thursday 16 May 2024



We have probably all seen Copped Hall as we wend our way along the M25 between junctions 26 and 27. It is up on the right (north side) in the Epping direction, to my mind it changes colour depending on the lighting conditions but, whenever one sees it, it is an imposing building.

Linda Stewart, aided by her husband Graham, both volunteers at the hall for many years, gave a detailed talk on the history of the hall, its principal personalities, the Trust which now owns and operates the property and some forthcoming plans.

Copped Hall is a mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century country house, built in the Palladian style and which has been undergoing restoration since 1999. A much older building on the site was home to the young Queen Mary Tudor and it is almost certain that it saw the first performance of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1594.

The building was rebuilt in 1758, using material from the original property by John Conyers and his family who lived there and the surrounding 4,000+ acres. After several changes of ownership, the building was largely destroyed by a devastating fire in 1917. It is suspected this was caused by an electrical fault. Some of the wiring and insulation used in those times was a significant fire hazard. The nearest fire brigade was the local Epping team, consisting of three elderly fire-fighters and hardly adequate equipment. No doubt, the blaze was well under way by the time they arrived.

Much of the salvaged goods and chattels found their way to the then owners' other home near Sevenoaks, Kent, Knole now part of the National Trust portfolio. Copped Hall Trust would like to have some of the items returned but the chances of that happening are remote!

Much refurbishment has been done and there are bold plans for much more. Of course, this is an expensive process, and the Trust holds frequent fundraising events which are often sold out which is a mark of the esteem and regard that Copped Hall generates. It does have regular Open Days, has a membership structure, and encourages volunteers for a variety of tasks.

Linda's obvious passion about the Hall and her enthusiasm and knowledge permeated everyone in the audience. Many thanks Linda.

Report by Maurice Austin

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**

For details of the talks please see the CES website at <https://ces.org.uk/>

## Spanish Conversation Group

Leader: Lindsay Whitehouse

Eleven of us gathered in Chelmsford Library for what turned out to be a lively meeting.



In order to help our listening skills (and also to enlighten us on a significant part of Spanish history), Luisa gave us a presentation on King Ferdinand and Queen Isabel. Their marriage in 1469 resulted in the amalgamation of Aragon and Castille. Deeply religious, they strove to impose their faith throughout Spain (the start of the Spanish inquisition) and were encouraged by the then Pope (Alexander VI), who gave them the title of Kings of Catholicism. By 1492 they had driven the Moors from their last remaining stronghold in Spain (Granada) resulting in modern Spain as we know it. That same year they commissioned Christopher Columbus to search for a route west to the East Indies – but instead as we all know, he discovered America.

Isabel was the driving force behind these events, backed by Fernando whose skills were as an organiser. Isabel died in 1504, but buoyed by wealth from the Americas, Spain would be the dominant European power for much of the next century.

Our other discussion item concerned a Spanish scheme to help healthy, active retired people to travel to other European countries on an exchange basis both to enrich their lives and to fight anti-ageism. We learnt that there is a very active equivalent to u3a in Spain, pursuing very similar interests to ours. It would be interesting for us to link up with an English conversation group!

As well as these two discussion topics, we also told each other what we had been doing over the last month and had a quiz on colloquial phrases. The Spanish equivalent of “the grass is greener etc” is “the neighbour’s chicken always lays more eggs than mine.”

Our group is currently at full capacity, so we are not seeking additional members at the moment. However, if you 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 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 10:30am at Chelmsford Library in a meeting room on the first floor.

David Gout

## IT Group

Leader: Lyn Parsons

At the IT Group meeting in May we had twelve members in attendance. Unfortunately the costs of running the group is not met with such a low number. We have had to make some cost-cutting decisions. We now meet at Christchurch 10.00-11.30, a reduction of half an hour and we will not be meeting in July August September. With the holiday season it made sense not to hire the room. We will resume again in October and the cost of attendance may have to rise to £3. This will be reviewed later in the year.



The group has been running for around eighteen months and during that time we have supported members with help on both Android and Apple devices, given support on Facebook, using spreadsheets, WhatsApp, sending photos, device security, text messages, digitalising/restoring old photos to name but a

few of the many issues members have had. Our loyal group of helpers have offered their support where ever needed. If you have any IT issues that you need help with, please come along.

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month 10.00 -11.30 @ Christ Church New London Road. New members always welcome, you might only need to come along for a few sessions to gain the knowledge you need. Bring with you the device you want help with (there is no membership fee), but £2 each time you attend and bring a mug for teas/coffee.

## Local History Group

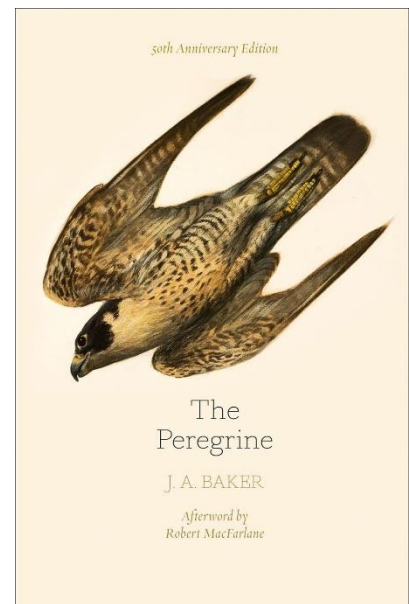
**Leader:** Jane Humphreys 01245 259590



On 7 May we welcomed Sarah Harvey from Chelmsford Museum, curator of the current exhibition 'Restless Brilliance: The Story of J A Baker and The Peregrine'. Sarah introduced us to John Alec Baker, born in 1926 to Wilfred and Pansy Baker of Finchley Avenue, Chelmsford. An only child, he went to Trinity Road Primary School and then KEGS. He had a difficult relationship with his father, was short-sighted, and at KEGS was labelled lazy, a daydreamer, and a loner. At 16 he was made to repeat a year, and finally made a group of four friends with whom he sustained an intense correspondence till at least 1951. He had rheumatic fever while at junior school, and developed ankylosing spondylitis afterwards. This prevented

him being conscripted, but he became depressed as his friends were called up while he struggled to find suitable work and fell hopelessly in unrequited love. A mental breakdown led to seven weeks at Roffey Park institution for treatment for neurosis in 1945. In 1951 he took a job with the AA (Automobile Association – not Alcoholics Anonymous) although he never learnt to drive. It was here that he met Doreen Coe, aged 16, who was working in accounts. They married in 1956 at London Road Congregational Church where both Doreen and Pansy sang in the choir (and Doreen was still singing at Christ Church 40 years later).

JAB also started birdwatching at this time, despite his short-sightedness. His meticulous note-keeping starts with an entry on Sunday March 21<sup>st</sup> 1954 – 'Start of systematic watching'. He records seeing a peregrine on December 5<sup>th</sup> and from then on wore the same clothes, kept to strict routes and times whenever he was looking for peregrine. He went nowhere socially, but loved to walk or cycle to the Chelmer Valley to observe the wildlife. He also enjoyed writing, and it was perhaps natural that these two passions should come together. He and Doreen lived in a council flat at 44 Stansted Close, and in 1965 he gave up work to live on national assistance so that he could write the book we know today as 'The Peregrine'. When it was published in 1967 he was socially awkward and didn't want people to know where he lived. The proceeds from the book were enough for the Bakers to buy their house at 28 Marlborough Road. He wrote a second book which had less success. He died on 26 December 1987, aged 61. Recently he has been recognised with a blue plaque on the Stansted Close property.



The exhibition at Oaklands Park runs to 3 November. Do go and learn more about this reclusive Chelmsfordian who wrote one of the UK's top 10 favourite nature books. Next year we are looking at taking a walk in 'Baker country' and maybe will spot a peregrine ourselves.

Tuesday 4 June will find us on the Writtle Wireless Walk, led by Alan Pamphilon. We will meet at 1pm on the Green outside the Rose and Crown. This walk costs £8. Then on 4 July will visit the Gardens of Easton Lodge, hoping for better weather than the Garden Group had in February.

Jane Humphreys

### **Lunch Club 3**

Leaders: Laraine Linard and Barbara Childs

This month found us at The Fox and Raven, Chelmer Village where nineteen members attended and had a very enjoyable lunch. It was a first time for a few of us and we are delighted to say that the food was plentiful and the ambience very convivial. Although we were split on to two tables, the conversations still managed to flow freely between us.

Thank you, Sandra, for hosting this event.  
Laraine and Barbara

### **Art Appreciation Group**

Leader: Brenda Kelly

We gathered this month at a member's house to talk about the picture we would take with us to cheer ourselves up if we were marooned on a desert island. There were very varied choices.



'Luncheon of the Boating Party' by Renoir was chosen by one member, who had actually been and enjoyed his visit to the restaurant along the Seine outside Paris which was the subject of this cheerful picture painted by one of the Impressionists. Another brought along a picture of two boats at Pin Mill which had been painted by her father. It would bring back memories of her family who loved his work.

A painting by Norman Rockwell in 1947 of an American family enjoying themselves appealed to another. There was always a debate as to whether he was an Illustrator or a Painter, his pictures filled the front page of the 'Saturday Evening Post' for many years, and there was an exhibition at Dulwich Picture Gallery some years ago.

From America we went to Spain where one of our members had lived for a few years. He went to Barcelona and loved the work of Joaquin Sorolla he saw there. His pictures of women walking along the beach with white dresses were very attractive. Somehow he conjured up magic painting white.

Japanese prints appealed to another member and it was very interesting to hear how they were made. She had a lot of prints of Japanese women in their colourful kimonos and these prints influenced the Impressionists, Monet showed many at his house in Giverny.

A picture by Kandinsky was another's choice, she loved bright colours and his paintings in yellow, red and blue were great to look at and appealed to the imagination. We then went to a glamorous portrait of 'Joan Rhodes' by Dame Laura Knight chosen by another. He knew Joan when she was older and



running a cafe in Crouch End where he lived at that time. In her youth she was a strong woman, a weight-lifter bending iron bars. Once she lifted and dropped Bob Hope!



Snow scenes appealed to another member, she loved Caspar David Friedrich's 'Winter Landscape' and its wintry effect with the church disappearing mysteriously in the mist. Finally 'The Hay Wain' by John Constable was another choice as the muted greens and browns and cloudy skies would remind her of the Essex countryside where she came from in contrast to the bright sunshine and cloudless sky of the desert island. She would be lonely there and seeing the two men in the cart, the angler and the dog would cheer her up.

It was a very interesting afternoon and taking a picture to the desert island made a change from discs.

This month Sue Pownall, who has spoken to us in the past about artists of the Stour Valley, will give a talk on 'The Role of On-Location Drawing in Art'. She will be looking at a range of male and female European artists like Constable, Angelica Kauffman, Barbara Hepworth and Graham Sutherland. The meeting is on Tuesday June 25th at 2.15 p.m. in Room 2 at Christchurch, New London Road. The cost (including tea and biscuits) will be £5.

On July 23rd we are going to Tate Modern to see the 'The Expressionists: Kandinsky and Blue Rider' exhibition. Finally it may be of interest that in the evening of Thursday 6th June there is a film on 'My National Gallery, London - 200 years old' at the Chelmsford Theatre Studio in Fairfield Road

### **Garden Group**

Group Leader: Chris Bellamy Secretary: Val Green



Twenty-eight members enjoyed member Prue Jones's guided tour of her garden. The tour included her grapevine, often producing a gallon of red wine or if less juice, vegetables, clematis winding around a mountain ash, a range of colourful perennials and annuals, apple, pear, plum trees and ponds with toads, frogs and newts. There is a summerhouse with croquet hoops, mallets and balls.

Following the tour members had delicious home made cakes with coffee or tea serves by Prue's son Aidan. We sat on chairs and benches relaxing around the garden. Thanks to Prue for a lovely sunny afternoon in an English Country Garden in Chelmsford !

For our next meeting we return to Mr and Mrs Tom Fenton's Garden at 59 East Street Coggeshall CO6 1SJ at 2 p.m. Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June. All Chelmsford u3a Members are welcome, please let [chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com](mailto:chrisallenbellamy@btinternet.com) know you are coming by Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June.

## Bus Pass Group

Group Leader: Maurice Austin

Members of the group were looking forward to our trip to Brightlingsea, its lovely individual shops, sandy beaches, the electric ferry to Point Clear and East Mersey, views of the attractive countryside and much more! We got heavy, torrential rain all day, steamed up bus windows and a cloudy, misty, damp, and chilly town!

We met at a particularly congested bus station and waited for our driver to adjust his driving position to suit his posture and ensure everything was satisfactory. He drove forwards a smidgen, back a bit, wiggled his steering wheel up and down, fiddled with the mirrors and eventually let us on! There was a doubt when another 371 arrived from Colchester, but that dropped its passengers and went off to park. Twenty-six passengers loaded, fifteen from the Bus Pass Group and we set off just a few minutes late. By the time we reached the Army and Navy stop, there were 34 passengers in all, and we stayed well-loaded for the entire trip. Despite heavy traffic and appalling driving conditions, our timekeeping was good.

The bus windows all steamed up so there was much wiping and scraping but our lovely party seemed to find plenty to talk about!

When we arrived at Colchester High Street, we had to change buses. Normally, a short wait there would have been interesting, if not quite a pleasure! But the City Council are undertaking extensive improvement works to the pavements and "fabric" and that, co-incident with a very heavy and long downpour made for unpleasant conditions! And the next bus was rather late! Several of us gave up, went shopping and took an early trip home.

A, still large, group of dripping u3a'ers (!) boarded the double-decker for Brightlingsea. My note pad was soaked (and so was everything else!) to the extent that most of my scribbling had been washed away! Luckily, the bus heating was in full-winter mode, and we dried out somewhat by the time we had to get back out into the awful conditions. What does one do in a seaside town when it is wet, cold and foggy? It is obvious, have a coffee and cake, and for some, an all-day breakfast! But conditions were so dire, we could hardly see the shops!

Chris Bellamy, in his usual shy and retiring way, asked a local gentleman for a café recommendation for an ADB and was directed just across the road. We probably wouldn't have gone in there had we not been advised (everything looked so sad and gloomy in the conditions) but we struck lucky. We filled the place up; we were treated well and eventually emerged with full tummies. There was a waiting bus, so we hopped on and returned to Colchester. Some members of the group were much more adventurous and explored the damp but pretty little town.

Our return bus didn't turn up! We spoke to a First lady inspector who said she would sort things out. She did! She arranged for the next 371 bus home to get to the stand early and made a point of making sure we all boarded, together with a large crowd of regular passengers. That bus was packed, with a standing load much of the way.

When we reached Witham, we were overtaken by another 371, presumably the one we were intending to catch. The two buses played tag until we reached Chelmsford, arriving at about the time we had intended to arrive.

Our group seemed to be in fine form, despite all the privations caused by the weather. However, no-one took any photos because of the conditions!



This unattributed picture is taken from the Brightlingsea Beach website.

Our trip took place on the first Friday instead of the usual second Friday because of a clash of events in Maurice's diary. Murphy's law applied as the weather on that second Friday was perfect. We will revert to the usual dates from the June meeting.

**On Friday 14 June**, we will go to Brentwood. We will catch the 10.05 First 351 to Brentwood and Warley, from stand 6 at Chelmsford Bus Station. My current plan is to catch the 15.05 from Warley (15.19 in Brentwood High Street) for the 351 back to Chelmsford. We expect to be back in Chelmsford about 16.05 hours. There are later and earlier buses back if we need to take advantage of the lovely weather!!

Brentwood is hosting its annual Art Trail; there will be over 60 items on display in the town, including in some shops. Most displays are free of charge. There are plenty of eating and drinking establishments!

**Note 1.** I had previously said we would have an earlier start, taking the 300 to Billericay and changing to the 9 for Brentwood. Hardy travellers could still do that of course, but I will be at Chelmsford bus station for the 351.

**Note 2.** First have changed timetables for the 351 and several other routes with effect from 2 June. Of particular interest to some of our regulars will be the change of route and timetables for the X10 and X30 in Chelmsford. Broomfield Road stops are being altered in a way that will benefit some of you!

Maurice Austin.

### **Book Group**

Leader: Andy Moir

At our May meeting we discussed *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* by Anne Bronte. The novel is written as a series of letters from Gilbert Markham to his friend about the events connected with his meeting a mysterious young widow, calling herself Helen Graham, who arrives at Wildfell Hall, an Elizabethan mansion which has been empty for many years, with her young son and a servant.

Contrary to the early 19th-century norms, she pursues an artist's career and makes an income by selling her pictures. Her strict seclusion soon gives rise to gossip in the neighbouring village and she becomes a social outcast. Refusing to believe anything scandalous about her, Gilbert befriends her and discovers her past.

In the diary she gives to Gilbert, she chronicles her husband's physical and moral decline through alcohol and debauchery in his dissipated aristocratic milieu. Ultimately she flees with her son, whom she desperately wishes to save from his father's influence.

The Tenant of Wildfell Hall is considered to be one of the first feminist novels. In leaving her husband and taking away their child, Helen violates not only social conventions but also early 19th-century English law. It was seen as shocking to Victorian sensibilities and it was an instant, phenomenal success; within six weeks it had sold out

The majority of the group thought that it was an important book which highlighted the position of women in 19th-century English society but they also thought that because of its style it was a difficult book to read. Members agreed that they were pleased that they were born in the 20th-century when the position of women in society had improved enormously.

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

Mon Jun 17 <sup>th</sup>	Travels with my aunt by Graham Greene
Mon Jul 15 <sup>th</sup>	The Only Story by Julian Barnes
Mon Aug 19 <sup>th</sup>	Sister by Rosamund Lupton

**Church Visiting Group**

Group Leader: Brian Greatrex Administrator: Michael Gray

Wednesday 1 May - STAPLEFORD TAWNEY St Mary THEYDON MOUNT St Michael



On a fine spring day, two dozen members met at Stapleford Tawney for tea and biscuits, followed by an introduction to this interesting church.

We were lucky enough to have Anne Padfield, local historian [very local, she lives minutes away from both churches] to talk to us at both St Mary and St Michael, sister churches deep in the beautiful Essex countryside, yet within sight, and hearing, of the M25.

Anne pointed out the two ambries, and the two “penitents” pews, near the draughty back door. There are two bells too, one cast in Whitechapel, the other in High Ongar. We saw and heard the Father Willis organ, tucked into the vestry, leaving little room for anything else. And admired the Salviati mosaic reredos depicting the Last Supper.

More works of art at St Michael’s, notably the memorial window at the east end, depicts France and Britain fighting as one to defeat evil. The church was long connected to the Smith family of neighbouring Hill Hall: monuments, window glass, and nine splendid hatchments. Anne pointed out the tiny font, the Maiden’s

Garland, the numbered slabs over the crypt, the sacred texts on the walls, and outside, the contrast between the ancient original bricks, from the Hill Hall brickfields, and the newer, cheaper bricks of the chancel.

Our next visit is to the north of the county on Wednesday 5 June: HADSTOCK St Botolph and ASHDON All Saints.



### **Art Club**

Leader: Peter Anderton

**Have you ever considered learning to draw and paint?**

**If you would like to try please go to the Art Club web page at**

**[https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_groups/art-club/](https://chelmsford.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/art-club/)**

### **Family History Group**

Leader: Lesley Wood

Last month, members of our group were treated to a really good presentation entitled a Tale of Love & War by Ian Mercer, a Chelmsford u3a member and retired Geologist (and no, I haven't made a mistake, I didn't mean Genealogist!).

Ian set about researching his family tree once he retired but as far back as he can remember he has been interested in his 'roots' and had longed to be able to solve the mystery surrounding his maternal grandfather and his family. Growing up in the 1950s Ian began to realise that there were secrets from the past that no one in his family wanted to talk about. His mother, Queenie Jacobs seemed to know very little about her father and could not provide an explanation as to why she had spent a great deal of her childhood in an orphanage even though both her parents were still alive. Queenie's mother, Agnes née Wilkins had told her daughter that her father, Erich Jacobs, was from Magdeburg in Germany and that his family owned a spa. He had been interned during the First World War, and that he had died in the 1918 flu epidemic.

When he was about 12 years old, Ian tried to get more information out of his grandmother, but she refused to talk to him about it and he could see it was upsetting her. At this time, Magdeburg was behind the Iron Curtain, and Ian had to wait for several decades before he could make any headway in his quest to find out anything more about his grandfather. Then came that eureka moment when Ian learned of the existence of a database of WW1 internees and he discovered that Erich hadn't died during the first war and had in fact lived through the second world war! After that he couldn't stop digging and revealing all kinds of nuggets of information. Eventually, with the help of a very kind and helpful German archivist he was able to find the missing pieces and track down the truth about Erich & Agnes and reveal their tragic love story.

Ian has written a book entitled "A tale of Love and War", which not only tells the story in the words of each family member but also explains how he went about the research that led to the amazing discoveries about his grandparent's relationship.

We meet at Christ Church usually on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month at 13:45. Each member pays a small contribution towards the cost of the room hire. It would be great if you could join us.

Lesley

**Reminder to Group Leaders**  
**Please send copy for the July 2024 Newsletter to the editor, Andy Moir.**  
**All copy must arrive no later than Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024.**

**Ten Pin Bowling Group** ARE YOU 'AVING A LARF ?

Leader: Roger Spall



I reckon it's fairly true to say that most of the time when we go 10 pin bowling it's smiles all round with this group. Even the balls and pins probably have a laugh, especially when someone sends the ball down the gutter. Although the way we play and our scores are "consistently inconsistent" the one thing that doesn't change is the friendly atmosphere and the fact that we are a very sociable group. There is much chatter and jovial banter – sometimes in the shape of advice - at least that's what I think is being offered to me, especially when it's my go and I'm busy doing something else!

And to continue on the theme on everyone being sociable, a small group of us have become regular, and reasonably successful, quizzers. Our team names have varied, but two frequently used are "Universally Challenged" and "Cracked Egg-Heads". This second name was recently used when our team were runners up and received a prize of a £50 donation to a charity of our choice. Chelmsford Food Bank was the lucky recipient of our benevolence.

Since we have been back at City Bowl the group has continued to flourish with an average of 23 members who regularly come along on most of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays each month. With up to a maximum of 6 lanes available to us, this is well within the number needed for us all to have a good game with not too much waiting between goes. Although the previous change in day and venue whilst we had to go to Maldon had meant that we lost some of our members, since returning to City Bowl we have now had some new players join the group.

Another new addition to City Bowl is the way in which their food choices have been improved. After an energetic and tiring game of bowling some of us may need to recharge our batteries (or just fancy something to eat anyway). They still have the usual fare of burgers, pizzas or other light bite type snacks, but now there are special menus on Fridays and over the weekend, all served buffet style. The "Fish Friday" menu, is where the choices are various types of fish dishes plus chips/potatoes/veg and even a dessert is available if wanted. The cost is very reasonable and many of us have already sampled these dishes and found them to be very tasty.



So there we have it, join us at City Bowl and you'll be recognised as a member of a group where there is Bowling, Brains and a Bon Appétit.

And Finally, Swiss historians have reported that William Tell and his son belonged to a bowling league, but the name of the league's sponsors wasn't mentioned. So we'll never know for whom the Tells bowled!

Roger Spall

## Fishing Group

Leader: Alan Caddy

On Thursday 22nd of May, the Fishing Group had its first for 2024 fishing on Cuton Match Lake again. The team Joe, Jim, and Alan, the fishing group team for the day, started our first adventure with a Bratwurst and roll. This year we all decided to aim for carp as our main prey. To that end each rig was set-up for ledgering on the bottom. A new bait was introduced for Jim and Joe to try, it is called a boile, mainly fruit flavoured, Tutti Fruti, Strawberry, Banana, and Pineapple. Sounds like food for a banquet, they smell really fruity.

Joe was the first to catch, Jim landed a decent size carp. It however, this was soon followed up with a small bream from myself and a couple of decent size carp. Joe caught another sizeable carp in the afternoon. Joe and Jim are excited to try this new method for catching carp as soon as possible. During the afternoon we had a cooked lunch of Bacon, Sausages, and baked beans. The food was good the fishing was even better. We all agreed it was worth waiting until May as the weather favoured us.

We are still looking to add new members even if you are novices or just want to try it, please feel free to drop me an email on [alan.caddy@btinternet.com](mailto:alan.caddy@btinternet.com). All are welcome.



Looking Happy and Full



It was this big my carp.



Just did not fit the net.



Lovely Condition and Colour



Boilies

## The Travel Group

Leader Anne Brereton

### Chelmsford u3a holiday to Northumbria 8-12 May 2024

Twenty Travel Group members set off early Wednesday morning on the long journey to Northumbria with Tailored Travel, stopping at Durham on the way with plenty of time to visit the wonderful cathedral and town. We were thrilled and amazed to find ourselves basking in sunshine which continued for the rest of the holiday.

The next day, after a quick stop at the Angel of the North, the rest of the day was spent at the Beamish Open Air Museum which recreates life in North East England in the early 1800s and 1900s, with plenty of trams and buses to help us get around. Many of the exhibits brought back nostalgic memories of our parents' or grandparents' homes and even of our own early years.

On Friday we first went to Alnwick where we visited Alnwick Garden with its famous Poison Garden and water displays. It's surprising how dangerous our gardens can be. Some also managed to squeeze in a visit to Alnwick Castle.



The National Trust Cragside House and gardens were our afternoon visit. A beautiful Victorian mansion, often considered Britain's first smart home and the first in the world to be lit using hydroelectricity. It also features a lift powered by hydraulics and an internal telephone system, all of which amazed visitors in its time.

On our last full day we crossed the causeway to Holy Island to visit Lindisfarne Priory, built by monks nearly 1,400 years ago. Our Blue Badge Guide explained the importance of St Aidan and St Cuthbert, also the Lindisfarne Gospels. A couple of us also managed to find the mead tasting!



Half the group then had free time to explore Bamburgh. The rest of us went on a three hour boat trip around the Farne Islands to see hundreds of too-many-to-list sea birds on the cliff faces, the Grey Seals colony and followed the route Grace Darling made in 1838. Now bird flu has gone we were able to land on Inner Farne where we could walk amongst the birds (including puffins and eider ducks) who had no interest at all in us.

En route home we visited the Yorkshire Sculpture Park to see the many, sometimes weird, sculptures around the grounds.

We arrived back in Chelmsford around 6.30pm, tired but having had an enjoyable and interesting holiday.

Anne Brereton

**Coach Outings Group**  
Leader Malcolm Lonsdale



We had our first trip out on Thursday 30th May. First stop was Hever Castle which didn't disappoint. Mostly the weather held out with a couple of showers. The castle was well worth a wonder with much Anne Boleyn history.

The gardens were beautiful with not too many visitors, which gave us a chance to explore. We then went on to Teapot island for a really good cream tea. Teapot island has over 10,000 teapots on display in five rooms, it was mind blowing to see. So many different designs and shapes of all sizes from miniature to the enormous.



If you have never been it is well worth a visit. Here are a few pictures to see. I will print some off and bring them to the next meeting. If any of the members on the trip have pictures we would love to see them.

Anne Brereton

## Chelmsford u3a Committee

Position	Name
Chair	Lesley Wood
Vice Chair	Alan Caddy
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/>

### Any Website Authors?

If any Group Leaders would like to be able to edit their own group page (changing the text, adding photos or adding future meetings) please contact me via the website and I will arrange some training.

Andy Moir  
Web Manager

## LONDON – THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE GROUP

### Annual Walk 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 - Exploring the Inns of Court,

**This walk is another tour of exploration** starting at Chancery Lane Underground station. We will look at the outside of Staple Inn, an Inn of Chancery and then proceed to Gray's Inn, an Inn of Court, look around the Squares and view the statue of Francis Bacon (Philosopher & statesman who served as Attorney General and Lord Chancellor under James 1) plus some of the original 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings.

We then walk along Chancery Lane to Lincoln's Inn and look at the chapel and Old Hall built in 1489 and learn why diners never stand for the Loyal Toast! We will also see the site of one of the first bombing raids by a Gotha aircraft in 1917.

Crossing Fleet Street, we walk through the Squares of Middle Temple taking in the outside of the marvellous Hall which has the best example of a double hammer beam roof in London.

The tour continues through to Inner Temple and will finish at Inner Temple Church modelled on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem with its round nave.

We will see where the western limit of the Great Fire of London was extinguished in 1666 and much more!

Meeting Point: We will meet our guides Richard Pusey and Terry Pipe at Chancery Lane underground station at 11am.

Train times: 9.56 from Chelmsford, 10.02 from Ingatestone, arriving at Liverpool St at 10.31. We will wait at platform 11 for anyone preferring to travel together/use loos etc, then use the Central Line to Chancery Lane station. We suggest buying a rail ticket to zones 1 & 2 which can be used throughout the journey. (It often pays to buy your ticket in advance and do remember your senior railcard if you have one.)

There will be a minimal charge of £10 pp to cover our guides' expenses. Please place your money in an envelope to give to Berry on the day. This visit is limited to 36 people.

**Please contact Berry before Wed. 17<sup>th</sup> July latest if you are planning to come**

Email [mayberrynotes@outlook.com](mailto:mayberrynotes@outlook.com) or 01277 355823 On the day 07811 091771





## u3a Croquet Day 20<sup>th</sup> May


Chelmsford Croquet Club invited u3a Chelmsford members to a croquet day and eight of us turned up at Writtle on a beautiful sunny day.



We were greeted with tea, coffee and biscuits. We then chose our mallets and had a short practise session. Most of us were beginners but Judith, Julie and Tony soon had us ready to play and it didn't take long for competitiveness to raise its head. We were soon trying our best to knock our opponent's ball away to make room for ours – not always successfully. We had time to play 3 games and I think we all had a very enjoyable day.

The Croquet Club would like to welcome new members. They are currently holding three free Taster Days – see flyer below.

Jackie



**Chelmsford Croquet Club, Writtle**

Invites you to

**3 Free Taster Days**

Come along any **Tuesday** or **Thursday**  
from **10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**  
(weather and ground conditions permitting)

**Fun, sociable and competitive!**

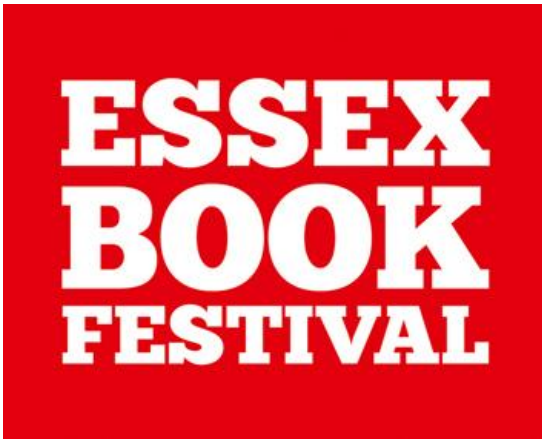
A great sport for all ages.  
Try something new.  
No experience or equipment necessary.  
Just wear flat shoes or trainers and warm clothing.

**Come and join us at:**

a.r.u. Writtle Sports Field, Fox Burrows Lane,  
Lordship Road, Writtle, CM1 3SS

For more information please contact:  
07748 098120 Judith  
07715 102330 Julie  
or email Tony at:  
t\_frewin@hotmail.com

## Essex Book Festival June 2024



This year the festival celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary under the theme 'This Land', with more than 100 events from 250 writers and artists showcasing Essex's fascinating history and natural heritage.

Chelmsford City Council is a partner of Essex Book Festival as part of its commitment to culture in Chelmsford and will be hosting some of the Essex Book Festival's top author events including John Crace's 'Depraved New World', Mark Cocker's 'One Midsummer's Day', and Alan Johnson's 'Death on the Thames'.

Rebecca Smith comes to Chelmsford Cathedral at lunchtime on Thursday 13 June to talk about her latest book, 'Rural'. Having grown up in Cumbria where her father worked as a forester, Smith returns to the countryside in 'Rural', to explore the stories of millworkers, miners, farmers, and pub owners today; the challenges they face and the beauty of their rural lives.

At Hylands Estate on Sunday 16 June there's Restless Brilliance and at Rainham Hall, National Trust 22-23 June, a weekend of storytelling and nature inspired art and poetry.

On Tuesday 25 June, Marion Gibson, author of 'Witchcraft: A History in 13 Trials', joins Syd Moore, author of 'The Essex Witch Museum Mysteries' at the Essex Record Office to explore the history of witchcraft and witch hunts through the stories of the victims.

For history lovers there's much to enjoy at Layer Marney on Sunday 30 June.

You can book tickets for these and other Essex Book Festival events at <https://essexbookfestival.org.uk/>

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### 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	E-Mail
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
Coach Outings	Various		Malcolm Lonsdale		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	4th 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