



BASILDON AND BILLERICAY

u3a

NEWSLETTER No 372

NOVEMBER 2024



November Mists

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

If you have not yet found the on line talks produced by u3, they are ideal for a wet afternoon or to top up your knowledge on a subject.

u3a members can access a wide range of free online talks, and most sessions are led by fellow members. There are some very interesting people belonging to u3a.

You can either go to - u3a online learning events,

or follow this link : <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events>.

As we come to the end of another year we can reflect on this year's achievements, and look forward to new ventures for next year.

The u3a Committee wish you a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Hello everyone,

You should all have received a copy of the East of England newsletter that gives information for November and December.

The trustee for the East of England, Maurice Austin, has resigned because of ill health and elections will be held shortly.

If you are interested in online workshops, you can find information about courses offered nationwide on the u3a.org website and search under events.



For all members

Every first Thursday of the month 10.45 at the Emmanuel Church Hall – opposite the Fire Station and across from the Canon Roche Church where we hold our monthly meetings.

Come along, meet friends, and make new ones.

ALSO INCLUDES



Book and Jigsaw swap – bring a book or jigsaw you've completed and exchange it for a new one.

ONLY 50P FOR COFFEE/TEA AND BISCUITS

MONTHLY MEETING

2.30pm on Friday, 22nd November 2024
at the Canon Roche Centre, Billericay

Speaker **Phil McKinder**

“An Unexpected Change in the Weather”



Phil will talk about the
Lynton and Lynmouth
Floods of the 1950's

December meeting

Friday December 13TH 2024

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Starting at 1 pm – with Festive Refreshments

We will be holding our popular Christmas Social event
again this year in the Emmanuel Hall, Billericay

Entertainment by Ella Botton, a well-known local singer.

Christmas Quiz

There will be a charge of £1 per person to be paid at the door on arrival
Membership Cards to be shown at the door.

This event is strictly Basildon and Billericay u3a members only and must be
booked in advance to allow for catering. Places will be limited. To book a place,
please contact the membership secretary before Nov 30th

All successful applications will be confirmed.



CONGRATULATIONS!

PETANQUE GROUP

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2024

Keeping active is widely recognised as being beneficial to our personal wellbeing and 'Find your Active- Basildon' is an organisation, supported by Basildon Council, to promote and encourage individuals, teams and groups, within the Borough, that contribute to their aims.

The u3a Petanque Group is proud to have been honoured by Basildon Council as winner of the category 'Sports Club of the Year 2024' at an awards ceremony at the Wat Tyler Centre on 6th November.



The award was presented to the Group Cordinator, by the Assistant Director - Community and Leisure at Basildon Council.

The Petanque Group enjoy playing at Lake Meadows and thank the Council and Park Staff for their support over the years.

RAILWAY JOURNEYS GROUP

NOVEMBER VISIT TO THE ESSEX FIRE MUSEUM



Using the c2c line from Basildon, it was appropriate that we visited the Essex Fire Museum in Grays on bonfire night, 5th November. The Museum is located behind the Fire Station and was created by a former Grays firefighter from a large personal collection. It has since considerably increased in size, mainly from donations. The Museum gives a fascinating history of the fire service and how it has progressed as technology has advanced. The Essex County Fire Brigade was renamed in 1985 to the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service to reflect their role in not only putting out fires, but rescuing people and animals on occasions.

On arrival, we were taken into their warm and cosy classroom and welcomed by Dan Bailey, Volunteer and Heritage Manager, who offered us tea, coffee and biscuits. This was followed by a talk by one of their enthusiastic and very knowledgeable volunteers, Mick, who gave us some history of firefighting from Roman times up to present day. The Romans established a fire service called the Vigiles who fought fires using very basic methods such as leather buckets and hand pumps.



We were then split into two groups, each led by a volunteer and taken around the museum. There is an amazing number of photos, uniforms, helmets, equipment, apparatus and exhibits, which depict how women as well as men played a big part in wartime Britain to keep the public safe. The first female firefighter was appointed in 1982, aged 17.





Inside the Fire Safety Room there is a mock-up of a bedroom and a kitchen, where we noted the fire hazards that we could see. These included overloaded sockets and adaptors, damaged leads, candles, broken smoke alarms etc. Another very enthusiastic volunteer gave us some useful advice to keep ourselves and our property safe. They offer a free Home Safety Check to point out potential fire risks and stressed the importance of testing smoke alarms regularly, as the cost of a fire engine being called out is £3000.

The Museum is both educational and historical and they have Open Days throughout the year with activities and displays, ideal for families. The volunteers, many of whom are retired firefighters and from other walks of life, have done a huge amount of research and are very friendly and proud to pass on their knowledge and all of this made a very enjoyable visit for our group.

HALF RAMBLE

Mon 2nd December - Christmas lunch at The Running Mare Galleywood. Contact Joan for menu details. Christmas meal time is 12.30pm

Mon 6th January - Hanningfield Reservoir, Hawkswood Road, Downham CM11 1WT. Park at the Visitor Centre.

This will be the last meeting of our group. If no-one comes forward to run this group perhaps members will join the new "Walk in the Park" group on a Tuesday, or the new "4 Mile Max" group on a Thursday. (See page 10 of this newsletter)

RAMBLING GROUP

Our October walk in Warley was hilly in places, but it meant we had some great views to the south and once again the weather was in our favour. It was so warm that we were able to sit outside at the Thatchers Arms for our lunch.



Our next 4 walks will be in London. Details for our November walk were in last month's newsletter. Our December walk starts at Stratford Station at the entrance to Westfield Shopping Centre. **We will meet at 10.15 on 18th December by the barriers at Stratford Westfield Shopping Centre.** We will walk through part of the Olympic park to pick up the River Lee, the Hertford Canal, Victoria Park, Regents Canal and then on to Canary Wharf. This is a 6 mile walk.

To get there, I suggest we go by train to Stratford Station. For those coming from Laindon or Basildon, I suggest travel to West Ham station and then the Jubilee Line to Stratford Station. From Laindon, get the 09.38 train. From Wickford get the 09.31 train and Billericay get the 9.37 train. Return train fare from Billericay to Stratford is £11.25 with a senior rail card. On the way home you would need to use oyster or smart card to tap to get back to Stratford or West Ham. Price back to Stratford was £1.80. If anyone wants to travel with me, please meet me at Billericay station by the ticket office at 09.20.

There are refreshments available at various places on this walk. As usual, please wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Boots help to protect your ankles. All u3a members are welcome to turn up on the day. Please bring your u3a membership card. Please contact me if you require any more information.

ESSEX DISCOVERY GROUP

VISIT TO THE MUSEUM OF POWER

12 of us enjoyed a visit to the Museum of Power, Langford, between Maldon and Hatfield Peveril, housed in the old Essex Waterworks pumping station. It is well presented with many signboards explaining how items worked and manned by many knowledgeable and enthusiastic volunteers.

This building previously held three enormous Lilleshall steam pumping engines, two were scrapped when the pumping station closed but one, "Marshall", was retained and is now the highlight of the Museum.

Also on display is a multitude of other artefacts needing different types of power to be operated. Some are still in working order and activated at the touch of a button. Enough to keep us older children amused!

Apart from showing how the pumping station operated in its day, in the main hall there were displays of agricultural machinery, scientific gadgets, and domestic appliances, some of the latter brining up nostalgic memories.

Other rooms held other collections including machine shop tools such as lathes and drills; transport items with a model railway, an aircraft engine and futuristic eco car models; all sorts of engines using a variety of power such as steam and diesel. We each found something of particular interest.



Luckily, we were there at the same time as a school group, this meant that "Marshall" was activated for us and the miniature railway was running. This doesn't normally happen on a Friday. The children were all very well behaved, it was the 'older children' that were asked not to operate the noisy items so often!

Also on site is a very good café, so coffee on arrival and lunch before departure left us feeling very satisfied with our visit.

GOLF GROUP

NOVEMBER REPORT

We've enjoyed lovely autumn weather these last few weeks and not too muddy underfoot. The fallen leaves have made finding the ball a challenge at times, especially at wooded venues like Hartswood where six players enjoyed their visit on Oct.17th. The new pavilion and groundworks are now complete and tea on the terrace, with its view down the 1st fairway, was delightful in the autumn sunshine.

Risebridge was our venue on October 24th. The earthworks for remodelling the first hole are now complete and grassed, so tee shots sliced right no longer land in heaps of earth and a second shot is playable. The large willow tree remains in the middle of the fairway and was a challenge for our six players who enjoyed another breezy sunny day.

On October 31st we had five players at Epping enjoying the short hilly course. The morning was overcast and misty, but cleared to a sunny afternoon.

Six players were pleased to meet at Stapleford Abbots on 7th November to collect a stamp on their loyalty card which gives a free round after five visits. Hopefully we'll visit enough times to earn a free round on our Christmas lunch day.



Members of the golf group, joined by their wives, had a very enjoyable private Golf Weekend at Norwich.

As always new members are welcome to join us on Thursdays at a course not far away.

KNITTING AND SEWING GROUP

We meet on the morning of the 4th Friday of the month in Billericay, although the date of the meeting is flexible, to accommodate members.

Members work on their own projects, be it patchwork, quilting, sewing, knitting or crochet and there is always a wealth of expertise to help you sort out your muddles or learn a new skill.

We have an ongoing project to make Twiddle Muffs, which are knitted muffs for people who have Alzheimer's disease and need to keep warm, but also have something to occupy their hands. We make these from scraps of wool, using any stitch and decorate them inside and out with buttons, ribbon, zips, bells and anything else to hand.

So, if you'd like to practice a skill or try a new one, contact the Groups' Facilitator, via our online website. She will put you in touch with our coordinator.

FOUR MILE MAX

The next walk for the Four Mile Max will be from Benfleet to Leigh-on-Sea which is approximately 3.5 miles. We will then get the train back to Benfleet to our car park. I don't know if there is a bus for those of us who have passes, but we can find that out when we're there. We can grab a bite at Leigh as I'm sure there are plenty of places to eat, so I'm not booking anywhere.

If you would like to come on this walk just turn up by **10.30 on 28th November** in the car park at the end of Brook Road (SS7 5JF) right down the bottom of the road where there are fields and you will see the car park. It is free

There will be no walk in December as it would be Boxing Day and there will be no walk in January. We will start off again in February.

I look forward to seeing you all on the 28th November.

A WALK IN THE PARK

A WALK WITH INTEREST

This takes place on the 1st Tuesday of each Month at 10.30am

A healthy walk for inspiration and fitness

The next walk will be on Tuesday 3rd December 10.30 am in WICKFORD MEMORIAL PARK
Meet at the entrance **SS11 7HJ** at 10.30 am

From Wickford High Street towards Runwell, the entrance to Car Park is on your right, adjacent to the crossing. No need to book, just turn up on the day

Newsletter Contributions

Please note the early deadline so that you will receive your Newsletter before Christmas!

If you have any items please send them by **12.00 Noon**
on Wednesday, 11th December 2024

I am always happy to receive your report or comments at any time before the cut-off date.
Please send all items in **editable format** to bbu3anewsletter@gmail.com

If you are sending photos please send them separately in JPG format.

Only send photos that you have taken yourself. We cannot use photos or pictures that have been downloaded from the internet, unless copyright free.

All contributions will be acknowledged.

Current and past newsletters can be viewed on our website <https://u3asites.org.uk/bb>

Please note that, in the interests of security, all personal details of individuals (address, email or phone number) have been redacted from the on-line versions.

(Editor)