BASILDON AND BILLERICAY u3a

NEWSLETTER No 394

SEPTEMBER 2026



Harvest Festival

MONTHLY MEETING September 25th 2026

The welcome return of Tony Harris with his new portrayal of Donald Trump!

Next Month **23rd October 2026**

This is a FIVE FRIDAY month, we always meet on the FOURTH FRIDAY

Phil McKinder - Corpus Delecti

This is the principle that a crime must be proven to have occurred before someone can be convicted of committing it. However, does it always apply? A young woman travelling to England disappears on route and is never seen again.
A suspect is tried for her murder. Your u3a members are called up to be the jury for this trial. I tell the facts of the case, the case for the prosecution, and then the defence, and them ask them to decide on the guilt or otherwise of the prisoner. I then tell them the actual result.

……

News from the Groups

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP 1

- We are a largely home-based discussion group. Individual members give a short introduction to a topic and others join in the discussion.
- Do you watch TV programmes about archaeology, follow new discoveries, travel to interesting sites?
- Recent focus has been on Troy and the Bronze Age, the Etruscans, Cave paintings, Carnac megaliths, Archaeology in Ireland……
- We welcome new members with similar interests.

ESSEX DISCOVERY

TRIP TO GREENWICH



Six of us made this visit to Greenwich using the Uber Boat from Barking Riverside. Because we were travelling on a stretch of the River Thames included in Old Essex, we felt justified in our Essex Discovery Group making this trip.

Ann and Andy had researched the travelling really well, but even so we arrived at the boat pier as three separate pairs rather than travelling together from Basildon (don't ask!). Andy pointed out many places of interest as we sailed along which made the voyage fascinating. The Uber boats are very comfortable, and it is easy to see the activity on the river.

On arrival at Greenwich Ann suggested we tackled a walking quiz using an app called Adventure Lab. This took us to some interesting sites, but not too much walking. The gate behind us in the photo gave the answer to the first of five questions.

A very tasty lunch at The Old Brewery and some time to relax followed. Two of us then had to head back home, but the others stayed on to enjoy more of the attractions including the Cutty Sark and Greenwich Park

RAMBLING GROUP

Nine of us met at Bedford Park visitors centre on a mild day on the 19th August. We passed the deer herd as we walked to the pretty green at Havering Atte Bower. After walking through a long path of Redwood trees in Havering Forest, we reached the edge of the forest to look out onto fields and the distinctive skyline of London. We were in a London postcode but could not hear traffic noise! A semi-circular route took us back into Bedford Park on this 5 mile walk. The majority then enjoyed a homemade meat pie lunch in Navestockside.







October's walk will be in the Langdon Hills area. We are expecting to start at 10.30am on Wednesday, October 21st from the Essex Wildlife Trust Visitor Centre on Lower Dunton Road. The walk will be about 5 miles and will take in Plotlands and Marks Hill Park - final routing is still to be confirmed. There are some moderate gradients but no stiles. There are toilets and a café at the visitor centre. Car parking is free (suggested EWT donation of £2 encouraged). If you are interested in coming along, please make sure to be joined to the WhatsApp group "……." and look out for updates.

GOLF GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2026 REPORT

As a Group we have been through some interesting, and often rather challenging times in recent weeks, facing the extraordinary weather - heat waves and occasional rain - as well as having medical and other problems.

We normally play all twelve months a year in all weathers but recently climate change has forced us twice to take the unprecedented step of deciding not to play. Once was because the temperature forecast was 37 degrees. The other cancellation was because violent storms were forecast at Cranham.



Parched Hainault Golf Course



The dried-up lake at the signature 18th at Hartswood

We did play in 30 degree heat at Stapleford Abbots Golf course. Unfortunately, that is one of the very few courses that we regularly play where, after playing the 9th hole and being half way through your round, you are not back at, or near, the clubhouse. The group never stops for a mid round break, but it would have been welcome that day!
Similar heat was faced at Risebridge Golf course, so there we did pause for a welcome drink at the clubhouse. Two of us even took the unheard of step of hiring a golf buggy which considerably helped playing in the extreme heat.
In recent times we have contended with everything from scorched earth and crisp dry brown grass to soggy fairways and puddles on the green.
At Epping we played 18 holes without the heavy rain stopping once. New member Terry said afterwards that this was the first time that he had ever played an entire round in such rain. We are undoubtedly a sturdy bunch in the u3a Golf Group!
Quite apart from the weather problems, various players have had minor or major surgery and all kinds of medical difficulties recently ranging from a knee replacement, shoulder and back surgery, gout, back problems, leg issues and even a serious auto immune condition. As if that was not enough, one of our partners has had major surgery and another is recovering after a lengthy spell in hospital.



Terry driving



Norman driving at Stapleford Abbots



Colin on the tee at Stapleford Abbots



Mick and Dave on the 17th green at Hartswood Golf Course in Brentwood



Colin's birdie at Epping Golf Course as Norman looked on

Resilient as ever, we have played on, albeit often in smaller numbers than usual, and (some of us) have played some fine golf.
As a group we are looking forward to the return to the fairways of all of our members currently unable to play.

REPORT by R.B.

RAILWAY JOURNEYS GROUP

VISIT TO FRINTON



On Tuesday, 1st September our group met at Billericay station to catch the 9.17am train to Frinton. After our 1.5 hour journey changing at Shenfield and Thorpe le Soken, we arrived in Frinton before 11am.

We walked a short distance to the base of the Frinton & Walton Heritage Trust and were met by our hosts Linda and John. We were served tea and biscuits before we started our guided tour of the houses of special interest in the avenues of Frinton.

John, our guide, talked us through interesting facts relating to the architecture, history, and residents of some of the largest houses e.g. the Sainsbury's, Boots and Marconi families. Some notable Royal family members also stayed in Frinton incognito ego Edward & Mrs Simpson.

When the tour ended, we made our way to Connaught Avenue for our lunch of choice. We reconvened at the Heritage Centre to see their collection of interesting artefacts e.g. mammoth teeth and bones found in the Frinton area.

A good day was had by all and members left for trains home from 4pm onwards.

Newsletter Contributions

October is a FIVE FRIDAY month, so the deadline is earlier.

If you have any items, please send them by **12.00 Noon on Wednesday, 14th October 2026**

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)