



**BASILDON AND BILLERICAY**

**u3a**

**NEWSLETTER No 352**

**MARCH 2023**



## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**Sandra Randall**

Well hello again. Every month I try to find something new for you, and I have been told 'don't mention the weather'!!!

This month we are looking to add to our group of Greeters. For those of you who have ventured into a large hall alone for the first time, you will know this can be quite daunting, but with a friendly face to say hello, everything seems very different.

So who are Greeters? They are all members of our u3a, that's you.

What do they do? They attend monthly meetings (but not every month, unless you want to)

As a new member arrives, you will approach them and greet them with a friendly hello. Don't worry about approaching a stranger, they will be so pleased to see you, so this will not be a problem. If you are a new member this is a great way to meet other new members.

There will be a brief intro prior to starting a meeting, so for anyone interested please contact us for further details.

## **SECRETARY'S NEWS**

**Andy Fletcher**

No official notices to report. I have only just arrived home from our sojourn amongst our Continental neighbours and "normal" service will be resumed next month.

## **ACCESSIBILITY COORDINATOR**

**Aileen Burgess**

Hi everybody,

I have had a few enquiries from different people regarding possible lifts to the monthly meetings. If we were able to get a bank of people who might be prepared to give a lift now and again, it would certainly help members who cannot at present attend.

Our u3a is such a friendly organisation I know I will get some support with this.

Thanks



**GROUPS' REPORT**

Last month I started thinking about things starting, including new groups, so this has been in my mind for a month or more.

Now Andy and I are back from our travels for a bit, I am planning to hold a new groups meeting. This won't be until the end of April, or sometime in May, as I will have to find a date when I can hire a room and then advertise the meeting to the members. This gives you a little time to have a think.

I have come up with ideas for three groups, the first I suggested last month, a Birdwatching Group, and I had some interest shown. We live in an area rich in nature reserves and country parks, great places for a walk and search for our feathered friends. You don't need to be an expert to start, just have an interest in nature and the rest will come. Andy and I just started birdwatching with an old pair of binoculars and a battered copy of a bird book, and we soon started learning.

One member has wondered if we could start a Cribbage group. I learned to play Crib as a child, with my grandparents. I really used to enjoy playing card games with them in the evenings when they used to babysit. We would sit round a green baize covered table with a glass of cider and packet of crisps, pegging our points round a crib board. If you have played, or would like to learn how to play this game, please think about joining the group.

My sister told me about a very successful group in her u3a, Short Story Readers. Just like a normal book group, the members read a story, but a short story, then go and discuss it at their meetings. She said that those who don't have a lot of time for reading get a chance to read the whole story and others can read it more than once, if they wish. There are lots of books of short stories out there, and a book can last a long time.

Now, are there any other ideas for groups that you can come up with? Email me your ideas and then I will draw up a list of groups to try at the meeting. Then I can advertise the meeting and encourage members to come along.

**JOB VACANCY**

Unfortunately, I have served on the Committee for five years and will have to stand down at the next A.G.M, so I am looking for a person to take over in the role as Group's Facilitator. Are you that person?

You have to commit a couple of hours each month to keep things up to date and attend the Committee meetings. It is not a hard job, you just have to liaise between the Committee and the Group Facilitators. On a regular basis the Facilitator has to update the Groups List. I also have had to book rooms and halls for different meetings.

If you think that you could take on this job, please get in touch with me and we can have a chat about it. I would obviously help you with any hand-over and be there in the background for any help in the future. It is important that the role is covered. If we don't have members who are willing to stand for the Committee posts then this u3a will fold, which would be a shame for a u3a with around 500 members!

## **MONTHLY MEETING**

**2.30pm on Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
at the Cannon Roche Centre, Billericay**

### **Christine Beedle – “The Essex Scrubber”**

Christine gives humorous talks about her real life experiences – they are filled with fun, drama, passion and fascinating characters. She was born in Cornwall, moved to Colchester when she married, and began a small cleaning business which grew to employ 850 staff. She was awarded an MBE for her services to industry, was President of Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and was voted East Anglia Businesswoman of the Year in 1992. She has written two books about her life.

### **Next Month**

28<sup>th</sup> April

Bernard Lockett  
Gilbert & Sullivan – Illustrated talk about the social and political satire of Gilbert and Sullivan.

# **BASILDON AND BILLERICAY U3A**

## **QUIZ NIGHT**

**1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2023**

**7.00 PM TO 10.00 PM**

Emmanuel Church Hall

Laindon Road, Billericay

Buy your tickets by cash or cheque: u3a Members: £2

Non Members: £4

Cheques to be made payable to Basildon and Billericay u3a

All tickets must be booked by a member on a first come, first served basis as tickets are limited. There will be 12 tables of 8.

Tickets will be available at February and March monthly meetings or by post from the treasurer:-

Margaret Way

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The deadline for requesting tickets by post is 13<sup>th</sup> March. All successful applications will receive their tickets at the door on the night.

Bring your own drinks and nibbles



**Visit to the London Canal Museum**



On a cold but bright day our group travelled to Kings Cross from where we walked to the Canal Museum and were greeted with welcome refreshments and an introductory talk. The museum building was originally a warehouse for the Victorian Ice Trade. In the 1860s it contained two enormous ice wells which were 13 metres deep. One is still visible but only to a depth of 4 metres which still looked a long way down and very cold to work in! Ice was transported from Norway by Carlo Gatti, an Italian who had settled in London and ran thriving restaurant businesses. The ice was stored in the wells and sold across London.



The first floor of the museum is devoted to the development of the canals around London, the various types of craft that were used, the cargoes they carried and the care of the horses. The ground floor includes the ice well and part of a narrow boat, in which you can squeeze into the tiny cabin where the boatman and his family lived. There is also access to the Battlebridge Basin, which is an offshoot of the Regent's canal and where many boats are moored.

After a break for lunch we returned to the museum for a talk on the development of the ice cream trade, which was made possible by the importation and greater availability of ice. This was followed by a demonstration of Ice cream making using a traditional Victorian ice cream maker. Many of us helped churn the ice cream which we all sampled and thoroughly enjoyed. A very interesting and informative visit.

Report from Jean Carter

## **GOLF GROUP**

**Colin Perfect**

### **February Report**

On February 16<sup>th</sup> four members booked into Rivenhall at Witham and played round the long 9 hole main course. Then we split into a two ball who went round again, and the other pair opted for short game practice round the par 3 course. Conditions were dry and overcast and the tea room very popular with parents and children on half term.

At Hartswood, Brentwood on 23<sup>rd</sup> the group were down to 3 players enjoying the course with the bare trees making it a more open feel than in summer when the trees are fully clothed. For our next visit we hope the 1<sup>st</sup> tee area landscaping will be complete now that the main building work has finished.

At Dunton Hills on 2<sup>nd</sup> March we welcomed new member Mike to our 4 ball and enjoyed the course in good condition with some sunshine. We congratulated Dave B at the 4<sup>th</sup> hole for his rare and spectacular chip in from 30 yards.

The three members booked for 10:30 at Risebridge on the 9<sup>th</sup> March decided to cancel the booking due to early rain and forecast of more to come.

We're hoping for better Thursday weather next time.

We would be pleased to see golfers join us on Thursdays with a tee off time of about 10:30am at a different Essex course each week. Our members have unofficial handicaps ranging from 33 to 15, and we play non competitively, leaving the scoring (or non) to individual choice.

Report from Stuart Allen

## **HALF RAMBLE**

**Joan Lee**

We meet on the first Monday of every month at 10.30am. Walks are open to all u3a members, just turn up on the day. We walk for about one hour at a leisurely pace, mainly on flat ground, but it can be muddy. We always hope to finish with coffee (or lunch) and a lively chat to round off the day.

The aim of our group is that individual members will take a turn in choosing, planning and leading a walk on an occasional basis.

**Monday 3rd April** - Westley Heights, Langdon Hills SS16 6HU. From Laindon station follow the High Road to the very top of the hill. The entrance to the car park is just after the Miller and Carter pub/steakhouse.

**Monday 1st May** - Langdon Nature Discovery Park (Plotlands)  
Lower Dunton Road, Basildon. SS16 6EJ

## **RAMBLING GROUP**

**Brian Parker**



**The rambling group on the seafront by Chalkwell station.**

The weather was great for the 11 of us on our long walk across the Benfleet Downs with excellent views of Canvey and Hadleigh Castle. (See pictures below)

After a lunch break we continued to Leigh on Sea, which was really busy as it was half term. We continued to Chalkwell before taking the train back to Benfleet. A really flat walk with some great views.



Along the sea wall between Leigh and Chalkwell.

Our March walk along the Chelmer from Heybridge Basin will have taken place by the time you read this.



## **Rambling continued**

Our April walk is a cross country walk starting from Terling.

**We will meet at 10.15 on 19th April at Terling Village Hall, The Dismals, Terling.**

This is a 30 min drive from Billericay and not far from Hatfield Peveral. There is a car park by the Village Hall. From there, we will walk along footpaths on a circular walk in a lovely part of Essex. This walk is 5.3 miles long and relatively flat with no stiles. There are no facilities on this walk until we get back to Terling.

Please bring your u3a membership card. Refreshments are available at tea rooms and The Rayleigh Arms near the Village Hall.

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. Where possible, please try to carshare.

## **Newsletter Contributions**

If you have any items please send them by **12.00 Noon**

**on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

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](mailto:bbu3anewsletter@gmail.com)

**Please do not send any items in pdf format. I do not have the software to convert these items into Word for the newsletter.**

**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>

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Janis Horsley  
(Editor)