



Broomfield & District

Newsletter December 2024

GROUPS:

- Art Appreciation
- Badminton
- Beer Appreciation
- Book Group
- Bus Pass
- Canasta
- Gardening
(with Chelmsford u3a)
- Geology
- Health Matters
- Lacemaking
- Natural History
- Photography
- Scrabble
- Table Tennis
- Tai Chi
- Ten-pin Bowling
- Ukulele
- Walking

WEBSITE

<https://u3asites.org.uk/broomfield>

EMAIL -

broomfieldanddistrictu3a@gmail.com

From the Chair

Welcome to our December newsletter.

I trust you are all keeping well and looking forward to the branch's New Year. For this to be a success, we need new members of the committee, particularly as there are roles where the current occupants will soon have to step down. The branch cannot operate without a committee so if no new members come forward this could be the last year we can operate. If you might be interested, please contact me or any other member of the committee.

I should be at the December meeting. I have been told that the speaker was responsible for coaching one of the cast of "The Dig" in the Suffolk accent that they used in the film.

To encourage you further to come, the refreshments should be be more than tea and biscuits! Don't forget your mugs!

If anyone has a subject that they are passionate about and would like to give us a talk on it do let one of the committee know.

If anyone has an idea for a new group and would like to start it up please let one of the committee know. Our new Tai Chi Group appears to be a great success.

Please remember to let Peter Radford know if you are coming to the meeting, this helps us when we are setting up the tables. Last month, a third of the attendees had not said they were coming beforehand and that caused several problems. If you could sign in on the forms on the tables this allows us to keep a track on numbers.

Please remember to complete your annual membership forms and submit your subscription fee; a new badge will be issued when fees are paid and membership forms received.

Remember it is your u3a branch and we want you to have your say on what goes on.

Best wishes

Jim Jenkins

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Please note: the Meeting is open and refreshments are available from 1.45pm. The speaker is scheduled to start at 2.15pm.

Please ensure you have confirmed to Peter Radford ([peterradford799@btinternet.com](mailto:perradford799@btinternet.com)) that you wish to attend, no later than midday on the Tuesday before the meeting.

Raffle proceeds continue to be a great help towards covering (increased) hall hire charges.

Meeting Schedule - 2024

11th December	Origins of English	Charley Haylock
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Meeting Schedule – Early 2025

8th January	A photographer's talk	Dan Bridge
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12th February	Continuity Capers	Sally Lawrence
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12th March	Lighthouses + the paranormal	Mark Lewis
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Calendar for December 2024 and January 2025

(Times, locations and contact details can be found in the individual Group reports.
 Entries in *italics* need to be confirmed.)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
December	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	December
	Badminton Canasta	Art Appreciation	Ten-pin	Table tennis Ukulele	Tai Chi			
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	Badminton Beer Appreciation	Walking	u3a Meeting		Lacemaking Tai Chi			
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	Badminton Canasta	Natural History	Ten-pin	Photography	Lacemaking			
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
		Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	Boxing Day				
	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	
		New Year's Eve	New Year's Day		Lacemaking			
January	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	January
	Badminton Canasta		u3a Meeting	Table tennis	Lacemaking Tai Chi			
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
	<i>Beer Appreciation</i>		Ten-pin	Photography	Lacemaking Tai Chi			
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
	Badminton Book Group Canasta		Gardening	Table tennis	Lacemaking Tai Chi			
	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
	Badminton	Geology			Lacemaking Tai Chi			
							February	

Notes and Notices, December 2024

To Start With

I hope you are not planning to travel by train in the period from Christmas Day to New Year's Day! In addition to the usual lack of any services on Christmas Day and Boxing Day, there are several large-scale engineering works planned.

From Christmas Day (25th December) to Saturday 28th December 2024 there will be work at the new Beaulieu Park station to bring into operation the third line through the station site. At the same time, the signalling system will be updated to show the new track layout between Chelmsford and Hatfield Peverel for the first time. On Friday 27th and Saturday 28th December, train journeys that would normally run via Chelmsford will involve a rail replacement bus service running between Billericay and Witham to help passengers complete their journeys.

In addition, London Liverpool Street station will be closed to train services from Christmas Day for eight days to allow engineering work to take place within the Bishopsgate tunnel approaches. This work includes the installation of steel support girders inside the tunnel, and work to repair existing steelwork to prevent corrosion. Work within the station itself will continue to take place to install new ticket gates for platforms 1-10. This is to improve gateline capacity for passengers and reduce congestion at peak times. The station concourse and in-station retail shops will also be closed to the public over the eight days to 1st January.

(There will also be significant engineering works – and disruption to travel – at the site of the new Cambridge South station.)

Talks and Events

A reminder that the next event at the Essex Branch of the Historical Association is a debate, intriguingly entitled "Causes of the American Civil War (1) Bleeding Kansas: Whose side are you on, Butternuts?". It's on Saturday, 7th December at Trinity Methodist Church. More details are at <https://essexbranchha.com>

I suspect that Gresham College's programme of talks is winding down for Christmas but before then there is one topical talk: 'Unwrapping Irving Berlin's "White Christmas"' by Professor Dominic Broomfield-McHugh on Thursday, 12th December. As ever, full details of this and of their other talks can be found at:

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/whats-on?see-all/>

If you are planning to go away this Christmas there are ten common mistakes which could invalidate your travel insurance. While travellers may think they are covered against theft or personal injury while on their holiday break, they may find insurers are reluctant to pay out if they break these simple rules. For details see:

<https://www.radiotimesmoney.com/news/surprising-things-which-could-void-your-travel-insurance/>

and finally...

I must put on record our appreciation of the work recently by Malcolm Taylor and David Warner. A few months ago, the Third Age Trust announced that there would be a change in the platform supporting all u3as' web sites. Moving to the new platform has involved an awful lot of preparation as well as the actual updating of our particular web site. While there are currently a few loose ends, thanks must go to Malcolm and David (and a few others, including Andy Moir of Chelmsford u3a); our web site has been updated before the deadline that was set by the Trust.

BROOMFIELD & DISTRICT U3A – GROUP REPORTS

ART APPRECIATION

This brand-new group is kicking off with its first meeting on December 3rd. If you haven't already 'joined' and would like to be involved, please contact me.

Glynn

BADMINTON

The Badminton Group dates are as follows:

- December 2nd, 9th, and 16th.
- January 6th, 20th, and 27th.

12.00 noon - 1.00pm at the Sports and Athletics Centre, Melbourne.
(There is no badminton on January 13th.)

Wishing everyone a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Have fun and see you in 2025.

Maxine

BEER APPRECIATION

We had a fine (early) Christmas Lunch at 'The Woolpack'. Although the selected fare (which ranged from ham, egg & chips by way of scampi, and sausage & mash to various curries) could hardly be called seasonal, it was enjoyed by all.

Whilst several beverages were tasted it must be said that the Reverend James stood out – but was he there??

Our next visit will be back to that old favourite 'The Ale House' on Monday 9th December at 2.00pm, when I hope we will be able to sample some of their seasonal offerings.

Please let me know if you are able to come.

Malcolm

BOOK GROUP

We met in Broomfield Library on Monday, 25th November where we discussed *The Co-Op's Got Bananas* by Hunter Davies. This book was an account of the author's experiences growing up in Cumbria during the war years and into the 50's. Members were almost unanimous in saying that the book failed to maintain interest throughout, although early childhood memories did resonate with them. The average score was 4/10.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, 20th January 2025 at 2.30 pm in Broomfield Library where we will be reviewing *Dombey and Son* by Charles Dickens and *Platform Seven* by Louise Doughty.

Barbara

BUS PASS

We had a good journey to Tiptree on a cold, sunny morning. Nick Wickenden was waiting for us at the bus stop and took us into the Wilkins site by the staff entrance to save a longer walk. Nick gave us an interesting tour of the museum, linking the exhibits to the history of the company. We followed this up with visits to the shop and tea room.

There were options for making the return journey via Witham or Maldon. For the nine of us who chose Witham that was when it all went awry. We were left waiting at the bus stop for a Heddingham and Chambers bus which never came, although two empty buses went past heading in the right direction displaying 'Not in Service'. One local waiting with us eventually went away... After a VERY long wait in the cold and dark we eventually came back to Chelmsford via Maldon. Not the best end to the day but as one of the group put it: "It proves we are a hardy bunch, everyone kept in good spirits."

We'll now take our usual winter break and resume in the spring.

Carol

CANASTA

The Canasta Group, meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays. This is for information only as we are full and I cannot accept anyone else into the group.

Marie

GARDENING

There are no December or January meetings for either Chelmsford U3A Garden Group or Little Waltham Gardening Club.

Broomfield Cottage Garden group is meeting on Wednesday 22nd January when the talk will be on *The Asian Hornet and the Pollinators*. Meet at Broomfield Village Hall at 7:15pm.

Pat

GEOLOGY



Our next session will not be until Tuesday 28th January, when we shall delve more into minerals and rocks following David's intriguing view of the origin of rocks & minerals in terms of chemical elements. Unpicking the subject like that brings out new perspectives and helps us all to understand the Earth better! We touched on how putting our understanding of Earth together with what we have found out about our neighbouring planets has informed our views of the possibilities of life on other planets as well as the origin of our own Earth.

Ros & Ian

HEALTH MATTERS

We had an interesting discussion about 'Joints and Bones' at our November meeting and realised that we all had joints which creaked or were stiff when we moved! It is an 'aging' process.

We also discussed moving the timing of our meetings. We will now be meeting on the 4th Friday of the month at 2pm but at the Pavilion, Great Waltham as before. For a variety of reasons, we are unable to meet again until March 28th next year.

Gill

LACEMAKING

We meet nearly every Friday but please contact me beforehand to confirm that we are meeting. We will not be meeting on 6th December and, probably, 27th December.

New members are always welcome and we have equipment available to get you going.

Wendy

NATURAL HISTORY

We spent a lovely morning at Hanningfield Reservoir Reserve. The day, after such an awful weekend was quite warm and sunny. The drive out round the lanes was superb with the sun shining through the golden leaves on the trees that are left after the storm.

We visited the first hide and were rewarded with seeing two Herons, Canada and Greylag Geese. As we left, we were met by a very friendly Robin who followed us hoping for some crumbs. At the next hide we saw Teal, Lapwing and Cormorants. Then we made our way to coffee and cake. On the walk back to the car park we spotted a Fungi Trail, which we hope to explore next autumn.

Our December meeting is a short walk around Writtle, then enjoying a Christmas lunch, which has been ordered.

The January meeting will be a planning coffee morning, information will be sent in the New Year.

Happy Christmas everyone and a healthy New Year.

Sue

PHOTOGRAPHY

Having experimented with 'minimalist' images this month, we are exploring 'portraiture' next month. (19th December, 10.00am - 12.00 noon at Little Waltham United Reformed Church.) This sounds simple, but there are many dimensions in the concept to explore. There are the aesthetic elements of a photographic portrait, the way the sitter is lit, the depth of field, expression, and there may also be story conveyed by the elements in the photo, or the expression and posture of the sitter.... I could go on, but for now I'll not. I will say it's not just a case of snapping away, if you're to take the art of portraiture seriously.

If you have time between now and February 2025, go to see the Taylor Wessing photographic portrait exhibition at the National Gallery.

As our 'new' website comes into proper operation, we'll be opening a gallery of group members' images, so keep a look out in the new year.

Glynn

SCRABBLE

Nine Members met on Tuesday 26th November in The Globe, Rainsford Road, where we enjoyed a few games of Scrabble. Our next session will be on Tuesday, 28th January 2025 at 2:00 pm in The Globe.

Barbara Bartlett

07790 350879

barbara36@hotmail.co.uk

TABLE TENNIS

Just one session for table tennis in December - Thursday, 5th at 11.00 at a cost of £1.50

Getting back to normal in the New Year with table tennis on Thursdays, 9th and 23rd January at 11.00 a.m. The cost will be £1.50, to be held at Melbourne Sports and Leisure Centre. Come and join us for a friendly game.

Jean

TAI CHI

Tai chi is going very well, we have moved on to every Friday instead of fortnightly.

Our last session of 2024 is 13th December. But we look forward to January 10th when we will be returning to our practice sessions. And we will be celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year on Friday 31st January after the morning session: The year of the Snake.

Cheryl

TEN-PIN BOWLING

Ten-pin bowling takes place on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at City Bowls, Rivermead Industrial Estate near Anglia Ruskin University. We play 2 games, the cost is £8; this includes bowling, shoe hire & coffee. If you haven't played before, don't fear; we have lanes with guards up the side so a score is guaranteed. We bowl at 10.30 but we request that bowlers arrive at 10.15, so we can arrange lanes, shoes, etc. Looking forward to seeing you all there.

The dates for the next two months are expected to be:

- December, Wednesday 4th & 18th
- January, Wednesday 15th (the 1st Wednesday is, of course, New Year's Day).

Lorna

BROOMFIELD UKULELE GROUP (BUGS)

We are meeting at Jennie's on the 5th December. We will not be meeting again until the new year.

We meet at 2pm and play until 4pm.

New members are very welcome and should contact Pat for the addresses. We are happy to have beginners or people who play another instrument.

Pat

WALKING

A select group set off for the The Naze Discovery Centre in November and upon arrival the weather was “dunkelflaute” (what a wonderful word), “dour” or “dreak”, dependent upon your linguistic persuasion!!

However, despite a gentle (?) breeze the sun came out; we even saw a rainbow.



Our walk took us around the edge of the Naze, past WW2 fortifications to the mudflats and estuarine views to Harwich. We saw numerous waders, gulls, geese and even sheep (?) on a gentle meander along the Twizzle and views of the Titchmarsh marina (and not an Alan in sight!!). Our walk ended with a gentle walk up from the town to return to the Naze and its tower (after a brief rest).

We return to walking in January but have a planning meeting at the Cheerful Chai, by the Broomfield Village Hall, at 10.00am on Tuesday 10th December – to discuss what we have enjoyed this year (one of our wettest!!) and hopes for the next (I hope it is drier).

If you have not already done so, can you please let me know if you are attending (or you'll be sitting on the floor).

Mobile 07399 330232 operable on the day (please note change of number).

Malcolm

GROUP LEADERS

Art Appreciation	Glynn
Badminton	Maxine
Beer Appreciation	Malcolm
Book Group	Barbara
Bus Pass	Carol
Canasta	Marie
Gardening	Pat
Geology	Ros
Health Matters	Gill
Lacemaking	Wendy
Natural History	Sue
Photography	Glynn
Scrabble	Barbara
Table Tennis	Jean
Tai Chi	Cheryl
Ten-pin Bowling	Lorna
Ukulele	Pat
Walking	Malcolm

New Group Leaders needed!

Any proposals for new groups?

Contact the editor for inclusion in next month's newsletter *or* if you'd like to talk it over first, please contact one of the committee.

THE COMMITTEE

Chair	Jim	-
		-
Vice Chair & Speaker Coordinator	Glynn	-
		-
Treasurer	Gill	-
		-
Secretary	Roger	-
		-
Membership Secretary	Peter	-
		-
	Dick	-
		-
	Mike	-
		-

Many thanks to Malcolm for continuing to act as Website Editor