

GROUPS:

- Art Appreciation
- Badminton
- Beer Appreciation
- Board Games
- Book Group
- Bus Pass
- Gardening
(with Chelmsford u3a)
- Canasta
- Film and Theatre
- Geology
- Health Matters
- Lacemaking
- Photography
- Scrabble
- Strolling in Nature
- Table Tennis
- Tai Chi
- Ten-pin Bowling
- Ukulele
- Walking

WEBSITE

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Chair's Chat

Hello

Well, it's getting warmer and the tulips and wallflowers look spectacular.

A lovely display at Buckingham Palace when I went to London with my Grandson recently.



Last month we had a fascinating talk by Derek Adams - Snapshots from the life of Lee Miller. She was an American photographer and photojournalist. It was really interesting and helped me understand a bit more about her work.

At our next meeting on 13th May, we have a talk by Tony Tuckwell – 'The only coastal way is Essex'. A well-known local historian who will give another of his fascinating talks on the area.

It is great to see you looking at the notice board, there are general notices and group information. Thank you to those group leaders that have signed up for our meeting on 20th May.

For those that read the East of England Monthly bulletin, Ruth Freedman was elected as our Regional Representative and will assist Ian Matthews – he will stay as our Council Representative and Ruth will be working with the rest of the region.

Unfortunately, I might not be attending the next meeting as I have been summoned for Jury Service. Hopefully, it won't be a long trial, although a nice juicy one would be interesting!!!

Hopefully I will see you soon.

Heather Bourdon

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Please note: the Meeting is open and refreshments are available from 1.45pm – please bring your own cup if you can. The speaker is scheduled to start at 2:15pm.

Please ensure you have confirmed to Peter Radford 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 – 2026

Date	Title	Speaker
13th May	The Only Coastal Way is Essex	Tony Tuckwell
10th June	From Clown to Corporate	Siobhan Pierce
8th July	Claudius' Conquest of Britain AD43 (Romans)	Richard Bale
12th August	?Quiz?	none
9th September	When the Kite builds... WHY and HOW we restored Red Kites across Britain	Mike Pienkowski
14th October	An Epidemic of Uncertainty: Rumours, conspiracy theories & Vaccine hesitancy	Dr Kevin Bryant
11th November	From Simon Cowell to Dragon's Den	Danielle Barnette
9th December	A Beginning, a Muddle and an End. Where do novelists get their ideas from?	Bobbie Derbyshire

Calendar for May and June 2026

(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	
May	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	May
	Bank Holiday Badminton <i>Canasta</i>	Board Games	Gardening Ten-pin	Ukulele	Art Appreciation Lacemaking Tai chi			
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
	Badminton Beer Appreciation Film & Theatre	Walking	Main Meeting	Table tennis	Lacemaking Tai chi			
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
Badminton Book Group Canasta	Strolling in Nature	Ten-pin	Photography Ukulele	Health Matters Lacemaking Tai chi				
25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Bank Holiday Badminton	Geology Scrabble		Table tennis	Bus Pass Lacemaking Tai chi				
June	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	June
	Badminton Canasta	Board Games	Ten-pin	<i>Ukulele</i>	Lacemaking Tai chi			
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
	<i>Beer Appreciation</i>	<i>Walking</i>	Main Meeting	Table tennis	Art Appreciation Lacemaking Tai chi			
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
Badminton Canasta	Strolling in Nature	Ten-pin	<i>Photography</i> <i>Ukulele</i>	Lacemaking Tai chi				
22	23	24	25	26	27	28		
Badminton	Geology Scrabble		Bus Pass Table tennis	<i>Health Matters</i> Lacemaking				
29	30	1	2	3	4	5	July	
Badminton Book Group							July	

Notes and Notices, May 2026

To Start With...

Digital Inclusion

Further to Glynn Wadeson's request for volunteers last month, there will be questionnaires on the tables at the next meeting. They are intended to find out how many of you struggle with IT and would like some help. (If you can't get to the meeting but are interested in this, please contact one of the committee.)

Talks

The next meeting of the Essex Branch of the Historical Association will be at Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2XB, at 2.30pm on Saturday 16th May when Professor Andrew Breeze, University of Navarre, Spain will talk about "The Aftermath of the Roman Departure from Britain"
More details of this and future talks are at: <https://www.essexbranchha.com/>

My arbitrary selection of the forthcoming Gresham College talks in May is: "Making Memory Visible Through Photography" by Julia Winckler (Thursday 7th); "How Hard is too Hard? An Introduction to Complexity" by Colva Roney-Dougal (Monday 11th); "Society and Survival During the Holocaust" by Mary Fulbrook (Monday 18th); "The White Knight: Ice" by Helen Czerski (Thursday 21st) and "Education – And Its Limits" by Daniel Susskind (Tuesday 26th). Also there are a couple of early June talks: "Forging Better Futures for You and AI" by Matt Jones (Tuesday 2nd) and "Pluto Isn't a Planet" by Chris Lintott (Wednesday 3rd).

More details of these and other talks are at: <https://www.gresham.ac.uk/whats-on?see-all/>

An Offer

Brooklands Museum (<https://www.brooklandsmuseum.com/>) has declared this month "u3a May" and is offering (small) discounts on entrance and other fees. My feeling is that it's a long way away, short notice and quite expensive but if anyone is interested, let me know. (Baddow & Galleywood u3a might try to arrange something next year.)

An Opportunity(?)

There is an organisation, based in New Zealand, offering the opportunity to plant trees in Africa, as part of a number of existing reforestation projects across Kenya, Tanzania and Madagascar! It sounds weird and I have not done a thorough check although first impressions seem OK. (Once again, if anyone is interested, contact me.)

Pollen Avoidance

It's the hay-fever season! Which? has some tips for reducing the pollen in your home and, thereby, reducing the chance of you suffering from hay-fever. (It's a bit heavy on adverts but still worth reading.) See <https://www.which.co.uk/news/article/how-to-pollen-proof-your-home-a3TmL7a9ZkoJ>

Spend Less on Food and Drink

With constant price inflation, it's always useful to find ways of spending less. Which?'s experts reveal 13 ways to save money when shopping for food and drink. See:

<https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/supermarkets/article/how-to-spend-less-at-the-supermarket-ak1KX1f4HCve>

and finally...

A reminder about Great Dunmow's "BookFest". Saturday 13th June,
<https://www.talliston.com/great-dunmow-bookfest>

BROOMFIELD & DISTRICT U3A – GROUP REPORTS

ART APPRECIATION

The group offers an opportunity to study and discuss the lives and works of artists and to visit exhibitions and collections. We alternate gallery visits with discussion meetings at The Pavilion, South Street, Great Waltham from 1:00pm – 3:00pm.

Our last discussion was on the works of great British artist Stanley Spencer and the influences of his rather unorthodox life and relationships.

On 8th May we'll be visiting the *Seurat and the Sea* exhibition at the Courtauld Gallery.

For more info or if you'd like to join the group contact me.

Glynn Wadeson

BADMINTON

The badminton dates for the next two months are as follows.

- For May the dates are 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th.
The 4th and 25th are both bank holidays but we will still be playing.
 - For June the dates are 1st, 15th, 22nd and 29th. There will be no badminton on 8th June.
- 12:00 noon – 1:00pm at the Sports and Athletics Centre, Melbourne.

Maxine Martin

BEER APPRECIATION

Our April visit to The Ale House, as usual, produced a varied selection of beverages ranging from an "intriguing" porter to some liquids of concerning "ancestry"!!

To verify some of those results we will revisit The Ale House on Monday 11th May 2026 at 2.00pm. Who knows we might, once again be surprised by the resultant research...

Look forward to seeing you. As ever please let me know if you are coming.

Malcolm Taylor

BOARD GAMES GROUP

We will meet on the following dates at 1.30 pm in The Globe, Rainsford Road:
Tuesday, 5th May, Tuesday, 2nd June, Tuesday, 7th July.

We will always welcome new members, please contact one of us for details.

Barbara Bartlett

Carol Greatrex

Lorna Stuart

BOOK GROUP

The Book Group will next meet on Monday 18th May at 2.30pm at Broomfield Library, where we will discuss *The Seventh Son* by Sebastian Faulks. The following meeting will be on the 29th of June.

At our April meeting we reviewed *A Neighbours Guide to Murder* by Louise Candlish. This was a psychological thriller, everyone agreed it was an easy read but the characters were not engaging so an average score of 5 out of 10 was given.

If you would like to join the Book Group, please contact me on the email address below.

Christine Pearson

BUS PASS

We enjoyed a lovely day at Hanningfield reservoir. The sun shone and the bluebells were looking good. Most of the party had a spot of lunch together at the visitor centre after walking through the nature reserve. The problem arose when we went to catch the bus home. The bus bypassed our stop, for reasons unknown, and we were left stranded in South Hanningfield. We kept smiling, eventually one of the group ordered a taxi and six of us had a good journey home, almost to our individual properties and all for a very reasonable price. A taxi was a first for the bus group but a happy ending. It was a Friday and a no.13 bus - not that I'm superstitious!!



On Friday 29th May we shall hope for another fine day to visit Burnham-on-Crouch.

June is yet to be confirmed but at the moment it is likely we shall visit Harlow Museum and walled gardens. This would be on THURSDAY JUNE 25th because the museum and gardens are closed on Fridays.

Carol Greatrex

CANASTA

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

Marie Mackie

FILM AND THEATRE

During our inaugural meeting at the Angel yesterday we had a very productive discussion and have arranged events and meetings for the next 6 months.

Our first trip is on Monday 11th May - 'walking in the footsteps of Alfred Hitchcock' - a tour of parts of Leytonstone.

We have shows and a backstage theatre tour in the near future. In between events we have group meetings to discuss what we did last month and decide where to go next.

If you are interested in joining the group, please ring me.

Heather Bourdon



GARDENING

Little Waltham Gardening Club's final Spring evening meeting is on May 6th (starting at 7:30pm), when Nick Dobson will give two talks, one about Fuchsias, the other about Pelargoniums, at the Little Waltham Memorial Hall.

Pat Radford

GEOLOGY

Geological timescale

Era	Period or epoch	Age (millions of years)	
Cenozoic	Neogene	Holocene	0
		Pleistocene	0.01
	Palaeogene	Pliocene	2.6
		Miocene	5
		Oligocene	23
		Eocene	34
		Palaeocene	55
			65
Mesozoic	Cretaceous	145	
	Jurassic	200	
	Triassic	250	
Palaeozoic	Permian	300	
	Carboniferous	360	
	Devonian	415	
	Silurian	445	
	Ordovician	490	
	Cambrian	550	
Precambrian	(The Precambrian era accounts for more than 85% of the Earth's history)	4,600	

At our last session we had contributions from members of the group. The major input was about oxygen in the oceans - some interesting facts about the amount of oxygen past and present and some discussion about its origin and what keeps it at such a constant proportion of the atmosphere today. We went on to discuss the mining of metallic nodules formed on the ocean floor, before we looked at various rocks that members had brought and some pictures of rocks to identify. The first question that is always asked when someone asks the name of a rock is "Where did it come from?" This gives lots of clues and eliminates some possibilities. The other concept that comes up regularly is that of time - geological time.

Thus at our next session we shall take a look at rocks with a geologist's eye to identify the giveaway features about its identification and its possible significance and origin. We shall also have further thoughts about geological time and relate this to the geology of Britain. This will be on Tuesday 26th May at 2a Hearsall Avenue. We shall also think about having an outing to look at rocks in the field the following month, 23rd June.



A large grey rock

Ros & Ian

HEALTH MATTERS

At the April meeting, we listened to a hospital radiologist telling us all about the various scans as well as X-rays which they can perform on us. In fact, they can be considered as the 'Heart of the Hospital' as over 90% of all hospital diagnoses depend on radiology departments. We learnt a lot about what radiologists do and the advantages and disadvantages of the various procedures.

At our next meeting, which will be on May 22nd at 2:00pm in the Pavilion, Great Waltham (CM3 1DF), we will start talking about Mental Health. As this is such a huge topic, we probably will spend several meetings considering different aspects of mental health.

All new members are very welcome to attend,

Gill Sturman

LACEMAKING

Lacemaking usually takes place every Friday.

New members are always welcome and we have equipment available to get you going but please contact me beforehand to confirm that we are meeting.

Wendy Talley

NATURAL HISTORY

See *Strolling in Nature*.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Photography Group offers a space for photographers to share images, exchange photography tips, ask questions and seek constructive criticism on their photos in a friendly and supportive environment.

We meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month at Little Waltham United Reformed Church from 10:00am – 12:00noon. Our next meeting will be Thursday 21st May.

A selection of our monthly challenge images can be viewed on the Broomfield u3a website.

For more info, or if you'd like to join, contact me.

Glynn Wadeson

SCRABBLE

We will meet on the following dates at 1.30 pm in The Globe, Rainsford Road:

Tuesday, 26th May, Tuesday, 23rd June, 28th July

New members are always welcome, please contact me for details.

Barbara Bartlett

STROLLING IN NATURE

A group of us 'Strollers' enjoyed a delightful morning in Blake's Wood, Danbury. The sun shone, the birds sang and the sea of bluebells was amazing, the fragrance filling the air. As we wandered along the woodland paths we spotted other spring wild flowers including primroses, celandines, wood anemones and stitchwort (aka Shirt Buttons'). Together with the bluebells, these flowers were making the most of the window of sunlight before the chestnut tree leaves unfurl in their summer glory next month. There were plenty of bees and pollinating insects visiting the



flowers to guarantee seedlings next spring. Bird song provided a soundtrack to our stroll. Robins, with their strident calls were competing against chiff chaffs, wrens, blackbirds and blue tits, punctuated occasionally by the drum of woodpeckers. Squirrels were spotted zipping about, perhaps searching for their autumn collected stash of nuts. The morning was rounded off with coffee and cake at Danbury Mission. A really relaxing morning, our batteries re charged in nature.



Our next stroll will be on 17th May when we plan to visit a wildflower meadow in Writtle..

New members are welcome. Please contact me, for further information.

Details of all walks will be given one week before so an email address will be needed.

Happy Walking

Sue Browning

TABLE TENNIS

The Table tennis group will meet at Chelmsford Sports Centre at 11.00 on 14th and 28th May and 11th and 25th June, cost will be £2.50. New members are very welcome to this fun and friendly group.

Pauline Vinter

TAI CHI

In May, our dates are: 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th.

In June, our dates are: 5th, 12th and 19th.

Cheryl Beeney

TEN-PIN BOWLING

Ten Pin bowling takes place on the 1st & 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/tea. We bowl at 10:30am but request bowlers arrive by 10:15am so we can arrange lanes, shoes etc. Looking forward to seeing you all there.

The dates for the next 2 months are

- May 6th and 20th
- June 3rd and 17th

Lorna Stuart

BROOMFIELD UKULELE GROUP (BUGS)

The Ukulele Group is meeting at Janette's house on May 7th and at Pat's house on May 21st. Dates and venues for June have yet to be decided.

Contact Pat for the relevant address. We meet from 2:00pm – 4:00pm and we welcome newcomers who would like to play or sing.

Pat Platt

WALKING

Our walk along the Deben Water following sections of the Harcamlow Way and the final leg of the Saffron Trail (which runs through Broomfield) was blessed with sunshine and pleasant walking country. We reached the trig point (the highest point of our walk) and took in the breathtaking view overlooking the M25?? There were times, as can be seen from the associated picture, when one wonders what (if anything) was attacking us – he was just embarrassed!!



Our May walk is a 4.3 miles loop linking the Walthams and Broomfield (a three parishes walk?) commencing in Little Waltham.

We will meet at 10.00am in the Little Waltham Memorial Hall car park, Brook Hill, on Tuesday 12th May 2026.

Please let me know if you are coming.

The usual mobile will be operative on the day.

Malcolm Taylor

GROUP LEADERS

Art Appreciation	Glynn Wadeson
Badminton	Maxine Martin
Beer Appreciation	Malcolm Taylor
Board Games	Barbara Bartlett Carol Greatrex Lorna Stuart
Book Group	Christine Pearson
Bus Pass	Carol Greatrex
Canasta	Marie Mackie
Gardening	Pat Radford
Geology	Ros Mercer
Health Matters	Gill Sturman
Lacemaking	Wendy Talley
Natural History	Sue Browning
Photography	Glynn Wadeson
Scrabble	Barbara Bartlett
Table Tennis	Jean Lock Pauline Vinter
Tai Chi	Cheryl Beeney
Ten-pin Bowling	Lorna Stuart
Ukulele	Pat Platt
Walking	Malcolm Taylor

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	Heather Bourdon	-
		-
Vice Chair & Secretary	Roger Warner	-
		-
Treasurer	Sue Blamire	-
		-
Speaker Coordinator	Lynne Blackburn	-
		-
Membership Secretary	Peter Radford	-
		-
Group Coordinator	Mike Farn	-
		-
	Julie Warner	-
		-

Many thanks to David Warner for acting as Website Editor