

Burnham-on-Crouch



The Windhover

I caught this morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding
Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
Stirred for a bird, – the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!

No wonder of it: shéer plód makes plough down sillion
Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, written 30 May 1877, published posthumously in 1918



Our monthly meetings are held on the first Friday of every month in
the Village Hall, Arcadia Road, Burnham-on-Crouch CMO 8EF. List of dates: p.2.

Email: info.u3a.boc2@gmail.com

Telephone: 07388 153930 Website: www.bocu3a.org

Facebook  Burnham-on-Crouch u3a

From the Chair

Hello Members,

For those of you that attended our December Festive event, I hope you enjoyed the afternoon, and I still have no idea how the magician did the trick with the rings! We also enjoyed our very own Recorder Group, who kicked off the afternoon and got us all into the Christmas spirit.

Well, Christmas is over for another year, the decorations are all packed away with promises not to overdo it next year. As for those that attended Stonehenge for the Winter Solstice the days are now getting longer (though not by much). However, we can now look forward to Spring and growth anew in the gardens.

The Committee are already planning the monthly meetings/social events for 2026.

This year we are working with another local organisation, Probus, to combine efforts and are hoping to be able to run two trips out during next year, one to Sutton Hoo (this time with more notice) and later in the year a trip to the Spectacular Show that is Thursford, so watch out for details.

Look forward to seeing you at the various events in 2026.

From all the members of the Committee, we wish you all a Very Happy New Year.

Regards

Carl



Monthly Meeting Dates

(2.15 for 2.30 pm)

Burnham Village Hall CMO 8EF

Dates (Fridays)	Speaker	Subject
9 th January 2026	Zoë Bridges (Archaeology Group)	<i>Old St Barnabas' Church, Mayland – A four- year excavation.</i>
6 th February 2026	Diane Raddon	<i>Wildlife of Botswana</i>
6 th March 2026	Social – Afternoon Tea (tickets in advance, £4 each)	
10 th April 2026	Joanna Symons	<i>What next for the Royal Family?</i>

Social Meeting, Friday 6th March 2026



Our meeting on Friday 6th March will be a Social, with Afternoon Tea and a chance to catch up with fellow-members.

We will start as usual at 2.30pm.

So that we can get the numbers right for catering, we ask you please to buy your tickets in advance. Tickets (£4 each) will be on sale at our meetings on Friday 9th January and Friday 6th February. If you can't be there, contact Diane Raddon (treasurer@bocu3a.org, tel. 01621 861899) to get a ticket.



Burnham u3a Committee Needs You!

Like every u3a, Burnham u3a has a committee (who are also the Trustees, as we are a registered charity), made up of volunteer members. Each year at our AGM we choose new Committee members, and this year a few key people will be stepping down, so now is the time – **please** – to think about whether you'd like to give it a try. It's interesting and not too serious – and if you'd like to come along to one of the monthly committee meetings to see what it's like, you'd be very welcome – just let our Secretary, Jo Gray know so that we make sure you get a cup of tea or coffee!

Christmas with our fantastic Line Dance Group



Maldon District Culture and Heritage Strategy Community Survey

We have been approached to help inform a new culture and heritage strategy which is being developed for the Maldon district. The aim is to help the district council and others to invest effectively to improve culture and heritage opportunities across the district. As part of this, we've been asked to encourage as many members (and their family and friends) as possible to complete a short questionnaire, which you can find [here](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MaldonDistrictCultureHeritage) or via this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MaldonDistrictCultureHeritage>

The survey asks how often people visit culture/heritage sites in the local area or further afield; how often they visit local festivals; their 'top' local culture/heritage assets; what they think would improve their participation in local culture/heritage activities; their current/potential involvement in helping with culture/heritage activities; ideas for further change/improvement.

Giles Tofield, who is working as part of this project, will be coming along to our monthly meeting on Friday 9th January and will give a short explanation of the project to develop this culture and heritage strategy.

NEW INTEREST GROUPS

The Company of Crafters

This new group will be starting on Thursday 19th February, 1:30–3:30pm, in the side room at Burnham Carnival Hall (use the entrance by the main car park please). £2 per person.

This first meeting will be a discussion but feel free to bring some portable crafting if you'd like to. Many thanks to those who have offered to co-lead the group. It is possible that emails have gone into junk folders so please do check there towards the end of January.

Jan Moreland



Alternative Therapies, Practices and Beliefs

This group would bring discussions, demos and talks on subjects from aromatherapy or aliens to tarot or zen, or anything in between.

If you are interested or would like to know more, please contact me on either 07771 611038 via WhatsApp or by email at JTPinternet@gmail.com. I am thinking either Friday afternoons or alternate Thursday afternoons to fit in with 10 pin bowling.

Thanks.

Julie Thomas-Page



There's a full list of Interest Groups towards the end of this newsletter.

We continue to work on getting new groups started, including other areas where we know that members are keen to join such as reading, gardens, lunches and craft. If any of you are inspired to help get other new groups – including in these areas – going, or if you have an idea for an entirely new group, please don't hesitate to contact Pete Wardle, Groups Co-ordinator.

Art, Architecture & Design Group

C is for Christmas and also Caravaggio!

We extended a warm welcome to our members on Friday 19th December at the monthly meeting of the Group with our attendance fee waived as a Christmas gift. Well, a warmish welcome, because there is still no heating in the Burnham Museum Cole (nicknamed 'Cold') Gallery. Luckily it was a sunny morning and the solar gain, along with two small heaters and 18 bodies, helped to get the room to a reasonable temperature. The members declined to start with a work-out session suggested as a warm-up and instead chose to keep their coats on (and hats, gloves and scarves). Let's hope the Museum gets the heating issues sorted in time for our January meeting otherwise, if the weather turns too cold, we may have to cancel or find a temporary alternative venue. We'll let you know what's happening in advance by email and on also Facebook.

We were a little down on numbers attending at only 18 due, mostly due to seasonal duties taking precedence. The meeting took the usual format with the main talk first. In this instance we explored 'An A-Z of Christmas Art and Design' with those attending trying to guess who the Christmas-related art work was by. We kicked off with a couple of Art related Christmas Cracker jokes which for your entertainment are reproduced here. And a look at a real Christmas artist – well in name if nothing else; William Ernest Christmas 1863 – 1918, an Australian artist who painted all around the world, eventually dying in Hawaii.



There was a deathly silence when it came to Z. But we learned that Z was for Oksana Zbrutska, a Ukrainian artist who with her father, Andrii Zbrutskyi **has fled Ukraine and, as part of the Nightingale project, are living and working in Canada.** And yes, the surnames are spelt correctly. It seems that in Ukraine some names have differing masculine and feminine forms meaning people in the same family will be inflected with different suffixes to the surname hence Zbrutska and Zbrutski. This Ukrainian artist delivered a fitting end to the presentation in the form of a quote from Gerhard Richter, the German visual artist, who wrote: *"Art is the highest form of hope"*.

After the refreshment break, of mince pies, sausage rolls etc. with vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options, we played a game of Basic, Better and Best the idea courtesy of The Antiques Roadshow. Sadly though, there were no prizes just the Christmas Joy of taking part!

All being well, next month on 16th January, we shall look at 'When Amy met Frances'. This is a talk that came about because of a chance purchase by the Allens in 1992, of a vase potted by Amy Krauss. Research for an article and an exhibition led to an interesting story of how she met and became a lifelong friend of Frances Hodgkins, the New Zealand artist. These two women and the circle they moved in make for an interesting look at a group of mid-20th century artists sharing a common 'secret'. Although, perhaps "Love in a Cold Climate – the story of Nancy Mitford" may be more suitable given the Cole(d) Gallery issues! But we're saving that one for a rainy day!

As for the 'I collect...' session after refreshments, it will likely be Glass – and Dartington Glass and the designs of Frank Thrower but we are still working on that one.

Happy New Year and hopefully see you in January!

Delia and Mike Allen

u3a BURNHAM ON CROUCH

WHEN AMY MET FRANCES...

The story of Amy Krauss and Frances Hodgkins



AN ILLUSTRATED TALK by MIKE ALLEN - FRIDAY JANUARY 16th at 10.30am BURNHAM MUSEUM COLE GALLERY

Pitch and Putt

12th December 2025

Seven of us met on a quite lovely winter's day. The grass was wet, but all the leaves had been cleared away. The group of three started first, and gradually pulled away from the other group of four. It was the last meeting of the year, and there were two trophies up for grabs, but unbeknown to the players, the awards had already been decided, and this last round of the year would not affect the presentation. Anyway, Yve got the lowest score of the day with a 36, Lynn and Tony got 39, Ian P, Phil and Karen got 41, and Janet H got 54. Unfortunately Janet got a 9 on the sixth and the ninth, but also made the best shot ever by chipping off the green 20 yards, hitting the flag post and dropping straight in the hole. It was quite an amazing shot and I don't think it even bounced before hitting the flag post.

We then set off for the Fox and Hounds for lunch and the award "ceremony".

Lynn got the main prize for the most wins over our last three years, and she also still has the lowest two scores ever. Ian P got the miscellaneous trophy for having the most wins in the 2025 season.

Many thanks to Phil for wearing his sparkly flashing hat, and to Tony for taking the photos.

Ian Parrott





Ten-Pin Bowling

18th December

Still without our leader Diane, who was this time enjoying the Christmas markets in Malta, our members had to contend with closed roads and Christmas shopping traffic to reach the bowling alley on time.

We requested some festive music to get us in the mood, it came on a bit loud, I know we are a bit hard of hearing but....

Steve T took the first round with 133, better scores in the 2nd, Eric 134, Don 130.

At tea break, we called John the volunteer and general gofer, to present him with his card, signed by us all, and gift voucher in appreciation for putting up with us, sorting light balls out for our petite ladies, fixing the lanes, putting on the right era music, making our teas and coffees, etc, etc. Think he was a bit a bit shocked at our generosity.

Bowling resumed, nothing too remarkable. I thought I had clinched the 3rd round and highest score of the afternoon with my 143 but Tim snatched the Christmas crown with a very nice 156.

I had just one pin more, to claim the highest series.

High series Lynne 370, Tim 369, Don 352.

The best strike of the day came when we gathered in front of the Christmas Tree for our group photo to show off our Christmas jumpers. Someone must have started on the sherry early, 'felling' the artificial festive fir tree, baubles of all shapes and sizes rolling over the floor. The tree launching itself towards the counter alerting the staff to the uncontrollable Burnham u3a antics. The Grinch sock mocking at our embarrassment as we wrestled with the decoration trying to re- erect it as quickly as possible. Good job John had been bribed with the 'gift' earlier or we could have been barred.

Three strikes and you're out. See what happens when you are not there Diane.

We will be joined by our group leader when we resume bowling on 8th January.

Lynne Leech



Ten-pin bowlers on the naughty list....!

Wednesday afternoon Table Tennis Group

In early January 2025 we lost our oldest u3a member, Dave Toe, who after a short illness sadly passed away in his 95th year. He had still been playing 3 times a week just months before he became ill.

It was suggested by Dave Bateman that in his honour, we have a tournament, the winners taking home the Dave Toe cup.

So, on the very last club day before Christmas, 20 players were paired up as fairly as possible, to play a single game, knock out round. Everyone looked quite serious, tactics discussed in quiet voices, everyone hoping to do well. The two pairs with the lowest score went out in the first round. The highest losers went on to try again.

The final came and it was a close run match, it went to a tie break, some good rallies provided oohs and aahs from the watching crowd, but in the end the group leader, Roy Hutchins and his partner Dave Siggins were narrowly beaten by Barry Doan and the canny, choppy, curvy, spinner player, Mike Burton. They are pictured holding the very heavy trophy!! The winners also took home a jar of locally produced honey, provided by beekeeper and fellow player, David McHattie.

It was an enjoyable afternoon, which continued later at the Star Inn in the town, where the Wednesday players were joined by some members of the Monday table tennis Group, for a Christmas get together drink and mincepies.

Big thanks to Dave Bateman, who came up with the idea, and helped Roy with the pairings, also to Dave's son, Dan, who did the scores on the day.

Special thanks to both the u3a leaders, Eric Tremlett and Roy Hutchins, for all their time and effort keeping these sessions running smoothly, which are very much enjoyed by everyone. We hope to follow in Dave Toe's footsteps and still be playing in our nineties.

Lynne Leech



Bird & Wildlife Group

Abberton Reservoir, Wednesday 10th December

Another day of fine weather, about the only one that week. A good number, 12 in all. We saw a scaup which is a species of duck and not so common. Alas no Smew, the male is very striking, mainly white with black markings and a bit of a mohican hair cut! There was always a pair in the Winter but I think with the weather warming they have decided to stay at home as they are from Northern Europe. [Note – the male has since been seen at Abberton, so all is well for now. LE]

The next meeting will be Wednesday 14th January at Bradwell. We will meet 10am at the Green Man to order our food, returning at 12.30 for the meal.

Lynda Ewers

Birds:

Barn Owl	Goldfinch	Moorhen
Blackbird	Goosander	Mute Swan
Black-headed Gull	Great Black-Backed Gull	Pochard
Black-tailed Godwit	Great Crested Grebe	Pied Wagtail
Blue Tit	Great White Egret	Red Kite
Brent Goose	Grey Heron	Redshank
Buzzard	Greylag Goose	Robin
Canada Goose	Herring Gull	Rook
Carrion Crow	Jackdaw	Scaup
Common Gull	Kestrel	Shelduck
Cormorant	Lapwing	Shoveler
Cetti's Warbler	Linnet	Spoonbill
Collared Dove	Little Egret	Starling
Coot	Little Stint	Stonechat
Cormorant	Magpie	Teal
Egyptian Goose	Mallard	Tufted Duck
Gadwall	Marsh Harrier	Wigeon
Goldeneye	Meadow Pipit	Woodpigeon

Plants:

<u>Plants:</u> Bristly Ox-tongue Dandelion Gorse Hedge Mustard Smooth Sow Thistle	<u>Mammals:</u> Grey Squirrel
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Community Voluntary Service



Burnham u3a is a member of Maldon & District Community Voluntary Service, a charity which aims to support communities across the Maldon district. Many of you will already know about these organisations, but even if you do, you may find it useful to have their details (below) to pass on to friends and family if appropriate. Or you may feel like exploring opportunities to volunteer with them.

Pete Wardle

Action for Family Carers	(website; phone: 0300 770 8090; email care@affc.org.uk) <i>Action for Family Carers is a charity which offers information, advice, support, counselling, activities and respite day care to carers who provide unpaid help and support to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage otherwise.</i>
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS UK & EIRE	(website; Free confidential helpline 0800 0086 811, open 10am-10pm 365 days of the year) <i>Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Eire is for anyone whose life is or has been affected by someone else's drinking.</i>
Carers First	(website; helpline: 0300 303 1555; email: hello@carersfirst.org.uk) <i>Carers First works directly with and for carers, providing personalised information and tailored support in the way that suits them, helping them find balance and to live their lives to the fullest.</i>
citizens advice	(website; phone: 01621 875774; email: via website) <i>Citizens Advice, an independent charity, provides free, high quality, independent information and advice on a wide range of subjects.</i>
Essex Wellbeing Service	(phone: 01376 574341/0800 977 5858; email: enquiries@caessex.org.uk) <i>Community Agents Essex, part of the Essex Wellbeing Service, is a countywide network of agents and volunteers who support older people and informal carers to find and develop independent living solutions from within their local community.</i>

 Essex Home Help Service	(website; phone: 01245 806440; email: essexhomehelpservice@gmail.com) <i>Essex Home Help Service are a registered charity who are offering a FREE telephone befriending service. We can also support you with the following (paid) services: Housework; Shopping; Sitting/Companionship.</i>
 Social Supermarket Maldon and District	(website; phone: 01621 851891; email: admin@maldoncvcs.org.uk) <i>The Social Supermarket offers the chance to buy a weekly shop at a fraction of regular supermarket prices.</i>



Maldon Cluster Group

(Maldon & District, Blackwater, Limebrook, Dengie & District, Burnham-on-Crouch, Crouch Valley and South Woodham Ferrers u3as)

As a member of Burnham-on-Crouch u3a, you are free to attend Interest Groups, including theatre trips and outings, organised by a number of other u3as in the area, if there is space.

Follow this link for more information about Interest Groups across the Maldon Cluster Group:

<http://www.maldonu3a.co.uk/activitygroups/ClusterGroupActivitySchedule.pdf>



Third Age Trust – the u3a nationally

As a member of Burnham-on-Crouch u3a you also have access to:

Offers and discounts via 'u3a Friends Extra'

(https://u3afriends-extra.org.uk/a_/)

The '**u3a Friends**' (sign up to the newsletter)

(<https://www.u3a.org.uk/get-involved/u3a-friends>)

A u3a podcast

(<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-radio-podcast>)

The u3a learning programme

(<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>)

Online learning via Zoom

(<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>)

'Third Age Matters' magazine – you can read the latest issue via the link below

(<https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/u3a-matters/screen-reader-editions/u3a-matters-winter-2025-screenreader-edition>)

Interest Groups

*** – Groups marked with an asterisk are currently so popular that we need to set up extra groups in these areas: if you'd like to be part of new group (perhaps even help to organise it) please let the current group leader, or the Groups Co-ordinator, know. There is lots of support to help new groups get started.**

Day	Interest Group	Group Leader	Tel.	Email
Mon 10.00am (2 nd)	Photographic	Diane Raddon	01621 861899	diane.raddon@gmail.com
Mon 2.00pm (2 nd & 4 th)	Recorders	Linda Baxandall	01621 782298	lindabaxandall68@gmail.com
Mon 2.30pm (weekly)	Table Tennis 1	Eric Tremlett	07936 172582	e.tremlett@btinternet.com
Mon 2.30pm (last)	Garden Views *	Margaret Heel	01621 785846	-
Mon 2.30pm (3 rd)	Book Lovers *	Frances Harris	01621 783770	-
Tue (am) (4 th)	Walking	Diane Caulkett	01621 783786	-
Tue 2.00pm (weekly)	Badminton	Julie Thomas-Page		jtpinternet@gmail.com
Tue 5.00pm (weekly)	Line Dancing	Anne Dowman		a.dowman@btinternet.com
Tue 2.00pm (2 nd)	Literary *	Sue Holmes	01621 782610	suejholmes@btinternet.com
Tue 7.00pm (weekly)	Bridge *	Liz Smith	07790 384005	-
Wed 10.00am (weekly)	Archaeology	Sue Spiers	01621 776570	sjrspiern@gmail.com
Wed (am) (2 nd)	Bird & Wildlife	Lynda Ewers	01621 741577 07467042654	ewerslynda49@gmail.com
Wed 10.00am (3 rd)	Family History *	Mary Hyde	01621 783143	-
Wed 10.00 (1 st)	Genealogy & Family History	Caroline O'Neill	07484 269215	caoneill15@gmail.com
Wed 10.30am (3 rd)	Garden Topics *	Pamela Burton	01621 779575	-
Wed 2.00pm (fortnightly)	Scrabble	Sandra Stocker	07535 651491	sandrad.richards@gmail.com
Wed 2.30pm (4 th) November - April	Winter Readers	Bev Abbott	01621 786005	bevabbott2000@yahoo.co.uk
Wed 2.30pm (weekly)	Table Tennis 2 *	Roy Hutchins	07710 534709	-
Wed 2.30pm (last)	Our Ancestry *	Peter Banham	01621 772668	peter@pwbanham.co.uk
Wed 3.00pm (1 st & 3 rd)	Pétanque	Gwen Pocock	01621 740703	gwendolinepocock@tiscali.co.uk
Thur 10.00am (weekly)	French *	Pam Eastham	01621 783453	-
Thur 1.30pm (3 rd)	Company of Crafters	Jan Moreland		jan.moreland@hotmail.co.uk
Thur 2.00pm (fortnightly during school terms)	10-Pin Bowling	Diane Caulkett	01621 783786	-
Thur 3.00pm (2 nd)	The Literati	Phyllis Brame	01621 785669	-
Fri 10.30am (3 rd)	Art, Architecture & Design	Delia & Mike Allen	01621 784955	deliaallen2@aol.com
Fri 10.30am (2 nd)	Pitch and Putt	Ian Parrott	07890 600153	-
Fri 12.00pm (4 th)	Luncheon Homebirds *	Diane Raddon	01621 861899	diane.raddon@gmail.com
Fri 12.30pm (3 rd)	Luncheon Explorers	Josie Scroggs	01621 740457	-
Fri 2.00pm (weekly)	Mah Jong *	Terry Sims	01621 784102	-
Sat 10.00am (weekly)	Archaeology	Sue Spiers	01621 776570	sjrspiern@gmail.com
As Arranged	MOTO (Members On Their Own) *	Liz Smith	07790 384005	-

Committee

Position	Name	Telephone	E-mail
Chair	Carl Hughes	07714 481205	
Vice-Chair	Dave Rae	07734 445452	
Secretary	Jo Gray	07801 555026	jo.gray1@outlook.com
Membership Secretary	Phil Flack	07788 907846	
Groups Co-ordinator	Pete Wardle	07788 566103	gc@bocu3a.org
Treasurer	Diane Raddon	01621 861899	treasurer@bocu3a.org
Webmaster	Graham Newman	07746 958690	graham@gb7.com
Social	Marilyn O'Doherty	07793 056313	
Speaker Co-ordinator	Maureen Rae	07969 617403	maureenrae88@outlook.com

Committee meetings are held at the Olde White Harte Hotel on the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 10.00am. Members are very welcome to attend; if you plan to do so, please let our Secretary, Jo Gray, know in advance.



Upcoming Committee Meetings

15th January; 19th February; 19th March 2026.



Please note: there will be no edition of our newsletter next month, February 2026 because the editor will be out of the country. Would regular contributors please send their material instead to Graham Newman (graham@gb7.com), who will ensure that it appears on our website.

The deadline for copy for the MARCH newsletter will be NOON on Friday 27th February.

Burnham-on-Crouch u3a, Registered Charity Number: 1091017

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