

RAYLEIGH GRANGE u3a

Newsletter - Edition No. 148 2023

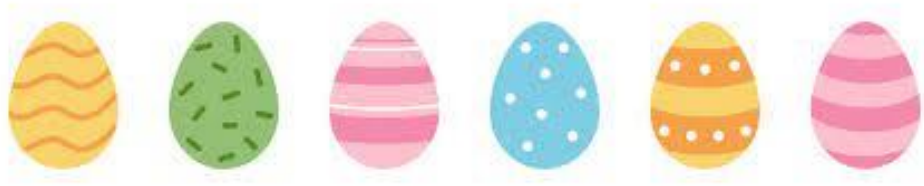


**Welcome to the April
Newsletter**

***Next monthly meeting at the Grange is on
Wednesday 5th April 2023 at 2.00 p.m.***

Speaker: Peter Regulous

After what seemed a lifetime of working for Essex Police in a Civilian Management Role in 1988, at the age of 41, Peter jumped ship for a life in the Entertainment and Arts sector. Throughout his varied career firstly as a singer then a stand-up comedian, actor, presenter and writer, the experiences he had were often colourful, sometimes quite bizarre, occasionally precarious and, on a couple of occasions, definitely compromising!



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello and welcome to the Rayleigh Grange u3a newsletter.

Spring is here and daffodils are starting to peak through, the days are getting longer, still a bit cold, but the year is opening up nicely for us all to enjoy our u3a with new activities and meeting new friends.

The Grange Hall is to undergo floor repairs sometime soon so we are looking at the possibility of changing halls for one meeting. We haven't found one big enough yet that's available, but we will keep you all informed.

A new Capital Walks Group will be starting up which is something a lot of us are interested in. I would like to congratulate our Group Activities team for the sterling work they all do in organising activities we all enjoy.

It was lovely to see so many happy faces at our last meeting where Jim Buttress kept us entertained with his history in horticulture. He will be coming back – I promise you.

Electronic Bank Transfer is going well – another first for Rayleigh Grange.

At the next meeting I will introduce our committee to you all. With some members saying they don't know who our committee is this will be the chance to put a face to the name and the sections they control.

Take care and have fun.

Bill Keays
Chairman



DAY TRIPS

There are still some spaces for the **Kensington Palace** trip. Contact Jackie Dillnutt to reserve a place. If you have already reserved a space on either of the following trips and not yet paid, please could payment be made at the April monthly meeting, by post or by bank transfer.

20th April	Penshurst and Tonbridge Wells	£25.20	Bank reference PENS
19th May	Kensington Palace	£33.20	Bank reference KENS



NON-U3A MEMBER GUIDANCE FOR TRIPS AND EVENTS

Please be reminded that only U3A members are able to go on any trips or group outings which involve a coach or minibus as they would not be covered by our liability insurance. If you are in any doubt, please speak to a member of the committee for clarification. Events run by a third party, such as the annual residential holiday, are not subject to this rule and non-U3A members can go, although members will be given priority.

NEW GROUPS

MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION GROUP



If there is sufficient interest I would like to start a *Mindfulness & Meditation Group*.

Mindfulness aims to help you:

- become more self-aware
- feel calmer and less stressed
- feel more able to choose how to respond to your thoughts and feelings
- cope with difficult or unhelpful thoughts
- be kinder towards yourself.

It is a technique you can learn which involves noticing what's happening in the present moment. The technique has roots in Buddhism and meditation, but you don't have to be spiritual, or have any particular beliefs, to try it.

The idea will be to explore a different meditation practice each meeting, learning as we go.

If you are interested please contact me via the website or speak to me or a committee member at our monthly meeting.

Carol Bright
Group Co-ordinator



CAPITAL WALKS

If you would like more information about this proposed new group, please contact Carol Bright the Group Co-ordinator.



STAMP APPEAL

A Thank You from the Bone Cancer Research Appeal

“Thank you so much for supporting the Bone Cancer Research Trust Stamp Appeal by saving your used stamps! So far this year our Stamp Appeal has raised an INCREDIBLE **£7,319.85!!!**

This could fund **244** hours of vital research, because of the support of people like you the Bone Cancer Research Trust was able to invest almost NINE times more into primary bone cancer research than the leading UK charities. Your efforts really do give hope to bone cancer patients and their families.”

Please continue to save your used postage stamps as we collect them all year round and bring them to the monthly meeting.

Ann Rawlinson



QUIZ – RIVERS

Name the river that flows through the following capital cities:

1. Cairo	2. Paris
3. Baghdad	4. Buenos Aires
5. Vientiane (capital of Laos)	6. Beijing
7. Tokyo	8. Washington DC
9. Dublin	10. Amsterdam

Answers on page 13

NEASDEN HINDU TEMPLE AND KENSAL GREEN CEMETERY TRIP

17th MARCH 2023

The Hindu temple in Neasden which is made of intricately carved white marble, was an amazing sight set in the middle of an urban area, surrounded by housing and close to Brent Cross shopping centre on the South Circular. The whole temple was designed and made using Italian Carrara marble which was shipped to India to be carved and the whole lot was sent to be pieced together on site like a huge 3-D puzzle. It was funded by donations from the local Hindu community. We saw an exhibition on the Hindu faith, had a tour of the temple, saw a film on the making of the temple and finished by observing one of their religious rituals which was accompanied by music, singing and clapping. The volunteers there were very kind and helpful and there was a real sense of peace and tranquility as we went around.



The largest Hindu temple outside of India



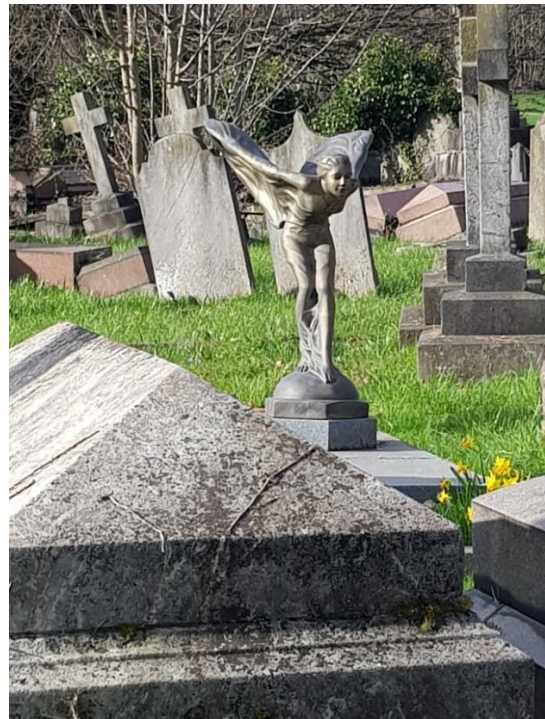
Hindu Gods carved in relief on marble pillars

We followed the tour with a traditional Hindu vegetarian meal in the linked restaurant, Shayona and some of us bought Indian sweets in their shop.

After a quite congested journey through London traffic we spent the afternoon at the Kensal Green cemetery where two of the Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery Association took us around the large and impressive sight. They shared the history of the site and how it became “the” place to be buried in the Victorian era. Two members of royalty, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the mathematician Charles Babbage, the novelists Wilkie Collins, Anthony Trollope and William Makepeace Thackeray and many more Victorian celebrities are buried there. The monuments were typically Victorian with many large and imposing ones and some that were very touching.



Isambard Kingdom Brunel's resting place



A tomb decorated with the Spirit of Ecstasy



An imposing and beautiful modern example of a memorial on the loss of a son

Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy the day and, with the exception of the photo below, the weather was kind to us all day.



Jackie Dillnutt
Social Secretary



Another photograph by Lorraine Taylor



QUIZ – ADD A LETTER

The answer to the first clue is a 5 letter word.

The answer to the second clue is a 6 letter word and an anagram of the first answer with one added letter.

1. City in Yorkshire / A vehicle on runners sometimes pulled by dogs over ice	2. Paddington & Yogi / They hold your trousers up
3. In maths, the difference between the lowest and the highest of a series of numbers / A US President	4. Father Christmas / The name of an airline
5. Weeps / Write	6. Woodturning tool / Shakespeare play
7. Speed / A European Capital	8. Chemical element, atomic number 86 / Amman is its capital
9. A species of tree of the Birch family / a baby's bed, usually on rockers or hanging from a tree	10. First name of Martin Kemp's son / 1996 Mel Gibson movie

Answers on page 13



GARDENING NOTES

APRIL

- **Keep on top of weeds.** Weeding is a priority now hoeing once a week, if possible, and keep mulching thinly, but evenly. Try to avoid turning the soil – a freshly turned soil is the perfect seedbed for weed seeds to germinate in.
- **Deadhead pansies** to keep spring containers looking good for as long as possible. It is still too early to plant containers with tender plants so you will rely on these plants to provide colour for another couple of months.
- **Mow the lawn to perfection.** Raise the blades on your mower for the first few cuts of the spring and then slowly lower them as the season progresses. It is a good idea to vary the direction in which you mow your lawn this will prevent ruts from forming in the lawn and ensure even the most stubborn blades of grass get cut. However tempting, avoid mowing wet and frosty grass as this will damage the turf.
- **Plant sweet peas.** Sweet pea plants can be planted out now if you haven't got time to sow them from seed. After watering them in they will be left to make their way up the supports and provide a fantastic show in June.
- **Plant summer-flowering bulbs.** Make sure your summer-flowering bulbs are in the ground, if not done already. Prepare the soil first to ensure that drainage is sufficient to prevent the bulbs rotting. Check that the plants you buy have strong shoots and plant them into well-prepared soil.
- **Prune spring-flowering trees and shrubs** after flowering, before full leaf growth and while you can see their shape more clearly. When pruning perennials some plants will benefit from having their flowering shoots thinned out. Although this results in fewer blooms they will be larger and of much better quality.
- **Young vegetable plants and seedlings** are now well on their way, but should still be kept under cover. Plant out tomatoes under cover and outside, get your garlic, onion, shallots and potatoes into the ground. While you should keep an eye on the weather forecast for sudden overnight frosts, most vegetable seed can be sown straight into the ground now. As the young plants grow, keep them safe from violent rainfall and strong winds and harvest as crops become ready to avoid a glut.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

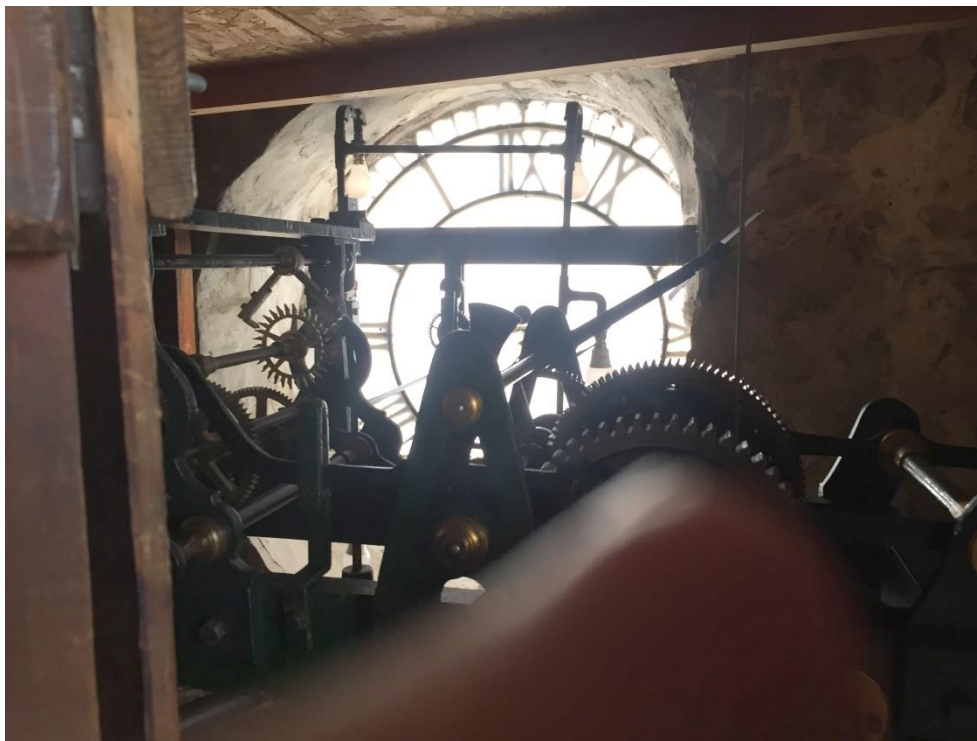


Despite the inclement weather a group of 27 Local History Group members assembled at Rayleigh Holy Trinity Church for a most informative escorted tour of the grounds and building by Gordon the Church Facilities Manager, Ann a Rayleigh Museum volunteer and regular church and choir member and our very own Liz Simmonds.





The parish church dates from the late 14th century and has undergone a number of restoration programmes, but the latest refurbishment which was completed in 2022 after two years planning and hard work has resulted in, and I am not using the term lightly, a minor miracle. The church is now a modern, bright, open welcoming venue and is a credit to all those involved who can be justifiably proud (as should the local residents) of the end result.



A few hearty souls managed to climb the 99 steps of the bell tower before the weather closed in to complete a most satisfying afternoon that was enjoyed by one and all.

My thanks to Alison, Jan and Mal for the photographs.



Our next visit is booked for 14th April when we will undertake a car share to Burnham-on-Crouch Museum for a talk and slideshow given by the local u3a Archaeology Group detailing their two-year excavation at Southchurch Hall.

Ken Paton
Group Leader



ANSWERS – RIVERS

1. Nile	2. Seine
3. Tigris	4. River Plate
5. Mekong	6. Yellow
7. Sumida	8. Potomac
9. Liffey	10. Amstel

ANSWERS – ADD A LETTER

1. Leeds / Sledge	2. Bears / Braces
3. Range /Reagan	4. Santa / Qantas
5. Cries / Scribe	6. Lathe / Hamlet
7. Haste / Athens	8. Radon / Jordan
9. Alder / Cradle	10. Roman / Ransom

CHURCH VISIT TO
ST. ANDREW, GREENSTED juxta ONGAR



Our March Church Visit was to the lovely and unique little church of St. Andrew in Greensted near Chipping Ongar. We met our guide in the beautifully manicured churchyard. Visitors from all over the world come to see Greensted church which is the oldest timber building in Britain and probably Europe. The church is of stave construction – built of split logs set vertically, their rounded faces on the exterior. Stave-built churches can be found in Norway where they date from the 12th and 13th centuries. A date, based on tree rings, of 869 has been claimed here but the age of the building is uncertain. It is alleged that the body of St. Edmund rested here on its journey from London to Bury St. Edmunds. Edmund King of East Anglia had been martyred by the Danes.





Our guide took us round the exterior of the building for a journey through time. It was thought that the church had been built on the site of a Roman temple. At our feet the grave of a 12th century Crusader – identified as such by the shape of the flat gravestone he lies beneath which indicated that he was a bowman. The chancel was built in Tudor times of lovely little red bricks and the east wall was built in the 18th century, as was the white weather-boarded tower capped by a single broach spire. The porch and pretty red-tiled dormers are Victorian.



Inside we sat in the Victorian box-pews – a rare feature nowadays when most have been removed. The nave is quite dark being lit only by the small dormer windows. The chancel was brighter with a relatively modern stained glass window and we were able to see the lovely tapestry bridal kneelers depicting the marriage of two of the Tolpuddle Martyrs who lived in the village before sailing for Canada. The original font would seem to be lost, but has been replaced by a new timber font which had been commissioned from Sir Hugh Casson – now placed just inside the main door the font, it seems, is in a rather inconvenient place for bridal parties and funeral processions. The design of the font reflects the timber staves of which the church is constructed.



As we left our guide in the churchyard she related the story of the resident ghost – he lies near the churchyard gate and was an 18th century Welsh drover who fell in love and married a local lass – the match was unpopular and he came to an untimely end in the lane beside the churchyard where he still walks.

Our lunch venue was the Ongar Garden Centre where we enjoyed an excellent lunch. Our thanks are due to Jane Simpson for organising a very enjoyable and interesting visit.

Photographs by Lorraine Taylor and Mal Clarke.

Ann Rawlinson
Group Leader

OBITUARY

It is with sadness that we record the passing of our long-term member William Lagden. Bill was a member of the Cribbage Group whose members always enjoyed his legendary bread pudding and Bill also enjoyed Rummikub and Bowling.

Our sincere condolences to Joan, their son and daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



FROM THE EDITOR

By the time you are reading this the clocks will have changed and British Summer time will have begun. Easter is almost upon us and we will have time to spend with our families to enjoy all that the season has to offer. Hopefully the torrential rain and dark days of recent weeks will have ceased.

Enjoy the trips our Group Leaders have arranged in the coming weeks and don't forget to partake of our, now traditional, Hot Cross buns which will be served with tea at our monthly meeting.

The deadline for receiving articles for the May 2023 Newsletter is

Tuesday 25th April 2023

rgu3newsletter@gmail.com



Our Speaker for May will be Alison Mees

"LIVING THE AFRICAN DREAM"

Alison will transport you to Africa through her photographs and stories from the bush where she spent 16 years living and working in the safari industry, supporting community projects and working with researchers in Cheetah observations.

She will share her experiences with nature including watching a family of cheetahs from four weeks old until they become independent from their mother.

Now working with CCF UK as a volunteer helping to raise awareness and fund raising to keep cheetahs safe in the wild. With less than 7,500 left in the wild they need our support.

Ann Rawlinson

Newsletter Editor

GROUP CALENDAR

If you are interested in joining any of these Groups please contact the Group Co-ordinator.

GROUP	DAY	TIME	GROUP LEADER
ART APPRECIATION	3 rd Wednesday	2.00 – 4.30 pm	Geoff Pearce
BADMINTON 1	Thursday – Fortnightly	11 am	Jacqui Butcher
BADMINTON 2	Wednesday – Fortnightly	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Geoff Pearce
BIRD WATCHING	4 th Wednesday	10.00 am	Peta Turner
BOOK GROUP 1	4 th Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Angela Bartlett
BOOK GROUP 2	Last Thursday	3.30 pm	Jackie Dillnutt
BRIDGE	2 nd Wednesday	7.30 pm	Dave Westall
CANASTA 1	2 nd Monday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Doreen Brown
CANASTA 2	3 rd Monday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Viv McKeown
CANASTA BEGINNERS 1	3 rd Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Clarke-Overy
CANASTA BEGINNERS 2	2 nd Wednesday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Jane Gee
CAPITAL WALKS	Various (TBA)		Val Shepherd
CHURCH VISITS	3 rd Wednesday	10.00 – 1.30 pm	Ann Rawlinson
CINEMA	Wednesday (various)	Afternoon	Christine Shaw
CRIBBAGE	4 th Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Susan Neil
DISCUSSION	3 rd Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Doreen Brown
FAMILY HISTORY 1	1 st Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 2	1 st Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 3	2 nd Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 4	4 th Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FILM APPRECIATION	3 rd Monday		Joan Hanscomb
FUTURE LEARN DISCUSSION	As and when	4.00 – 5.00 pm	Pam Green
GARDEN GROUP	Various		Theresa McAninch
IPAD/TABLET	2 nd Friday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Mark Wiseman
KNIT & NATTER	2 nd Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Ann Clarke-Overy
LOCAL HISTORY	2 nd Friday	2.00 – 3.30 pm	Janet & Ken Paton
LUNCH SUNDAY	3 rd Sunday		Susan Neil
LUNCH WEEKDAY	2 nd Wednesday		Edna Webb
MAHJONG	Tuesday – Fortnightly	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Keith Robjent
MARITIME HISTORY	1 st Monday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Sue Howarth-Reading

OUT AND ABOUT	Various Days		Ann Clarke-Overy
PHOTOGRAPHY MONDAY	Various		Geoff Kittle
PHOTOGRAPHY FRIDAY	3 rd Friday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Maureen Cheesewright
RUMMIKUB 1	1 st Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Jane Gee
RUMMIKUB 2	2 nd Thursday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Pam Green
SCRABBLE	3 rd Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Wendy Bedwell
SHAKESPEARE APPRECIATION	3 rd Friday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Paula Whittle
SHORT MAT BOWLS	Tuesday – Fortnightly	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Susan Neil
SINGING FOR PLEASURE	1 st /3 rd Tuesday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Joan Wayman
TABLE TENNIS	1 st /3 rd Friday	1.30 – 3.00 pm	Maureen Saveall
TENPIN BOWLING	Tuesday – Fortnightly	11.00 – 3.00 pm	Jacqui Butcher
TEXTILE & CRAFT	1 st & 3 rd Friday	1.00 – 4.00 pm	Chris Roffey Sarah Kay
THEATRE/EVENTS	Various times & days		Doreen Brown Edna Webb Susan Neil Ann Clarke-Overy
TRIVIAL PURSUIT	4 th Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Steve Barns
WALKING MIDWEEK	Various		Theresa McAninch
WALKING SUNDAY	Last Sunday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Christine Shaw
WINE THURSDAY	Various	7.00 pm	Susan Neil Ann Newman
WINE FRIDAY	Various	7.00 pm	Susan Neil Ann Newman
WOMEN IN HISTORY	Last Friday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Lynda Rooke
u3a MONTHLY MEETING	1 st Wednesday	1.30 – 4.00 pm	Various Speakers

For specific dates please liaise with your Group Leader.