

Rayleigh



## APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

#### The FIFTEENTH Annual General Meeting of the Rayleigh u3a

will take place on **WEDNESDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022** at **HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, MAIN HALL**  
commencing **2.00pm** followed by our speaker at **2.30pm**

A copy of the Draft Minutes of the AGM 2021, draft Accounts for 2021 and draft Trustees Annual Report will be displayed on the noticeboard at the Members Meetings, will be emailed, and will be available to view on the website. Copies will also be made available at Members Meetings.

Nomination Forms for the Officer and Committee vacancies are available on the Welcome page of the Rayleigh u3a website and at Main Meetings and must be returned to the Secretary, Debbie Bamber by Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

Any motions which you would like to raise at the AGM, with a Proposer and Seconder, should also be submitted to the Secretary by 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

### DRAFT AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Approval of Minutes of the 14th Annual General Meeting (2021)
4. Chairman's Report
5. Approval of the Trustees Annual Report
6. Treasurer's Report & Approval of Accounts. (See separate sheet for accounts)
7. Appointment of Examiner of Accounts for 2022
8. Election of Officers and Committee Members
9. Any other Business
10. Closure of the formal part of Meeting.

### INTERVAL

followed by our speaker – **ALISON MEES**

### **LIVING THE AFRICAN DREAM**

- talk about wildlife, conservation, and community with lots of photographs.



## NEWS AROUND RAYLEIGH u3a

### **SERENDIPITY 6 go backstage at THE CLIFFS PAVILION**

Members of Serendipity 6 took a backstage tour of the Cliffs Pavilion enjoying seeing not only the auditorium but also what happens behind the scenes. This included the dressing rooms and learning how the props, scenery and lighting changes are made for every different type of performance, including enlarging the stage and removing all the seats in the stalls. We also learnt about its history. It was a very interesting tour which was followed by a traditional Afternoon Tea.

The history of the Cliffs Pavilion dates to the 1930s when work began on a 500-seater theatre incorporating the art deco style of the times. However, with the outbreak of WWII, work came to a halt.

The site remained boarded up until 1959 when the work that had taken place on the original building was levelled. Work began on a site further towards the cliffs to form the basis of the present building, which was opened in 1964, - the first performance being the ballet, Coppelia.

From July 1991 to December 1992 the building was closed for redevelopment and enlarged. The stairs were rebuilt, and a new Foyer Bar and a balcony were added to the auditorium. New plans are going ahead to incorporate a new restaurant on the original site of the building.



### **SERENDIPITY 6's VISIT to CHELMSFORD MUSEUM**

Members of the Serendipity 6 Group started their visit at the Chelmsford Museum in the Artillery Room, which held a variety of magnificent instruments which had been used during various battles including drums which were used at Ypres (see photo next page).

The relics, some of which dated back to c.1620-1640, are in remarkable condition. A Font dates to 1803 and was made for St. Mary's Church. It is made from Coade Stone, cost £30 and remained at the church until 1892. The 1960's 'Fashion' dresses were eye watering. There were some lovely nostalgic toys from different eras which were fascinating.

The Titanic Radio Room in which two operators, Jack Phillips and Harold Bride repeatedly sent SOS messages on that fateful day. Fortunately for them they were rescued by HMS Carpathia. Both the Wireless Telegraphy Room and the Titanic Radio Room were extremely interesting.

The Kitchen of yesteryear gave the members a real laugh, while showing Jill and Lesley slaving away. A motor generator was made before 1890 by Crompton's. It ran the Toastrack Railway along Southend Pier. The Toastrack carriage is due to be refurbished as part of current Lottery project. There were paintings by local artists displayed in the Art Room.

The Museum changes stock several times a year, entry/parking is free, and is close to Chelmsford and shops. The end of our very interesting visit brought us to the Hive Cafe with its delightful and delicious menu.

*Linda Osborne*

## NEWS AROUND RAYLEIGH u3a (continued)

### PHOTOGRAPHS taken during SERENDIPITY 6's visit to CHELMSFORD MUSEUM



Drums used at Ypres



Jill & Lesley slaving away



Yesteryear kitchen

### CHURCH VISITING GROUP 1

On Monday 14th February **CHURCH VISITING GROUP 1** made its way across the beautiful Essex countryside to St Thomas' Church at Bradwell-on-Sea to a warm welcome from the Churchwarden and a parishioner. We warmed up with a hot coffee and biscuits prior to a comprehensive talk about the Church and its history. One of the most interesting features was a lock-up jail with stocks and whipping post in the corner of the churchyard as seen in the photo.

The visit was organised by Cheryl Cutmore. We enjoyed a tasty lunch at The Green Man pub before we made our way home.



*Pete and Maureen Huntly*

## NEWS AROUND RAYLEIGH u3a

### **VISIT to WARLEY by GARDENING GROUP**

Fourteen members of the Gardening Group enjoyed a beautifully sunny morning towards the end of February visiting Warley Place Garden and Nature Reserve, near Brentwood, to see the vast displays of snowdrops as well as the early flowering daffodils, and scillas. The reserve covers 25 acres, and the two groups followed the marked undulating trail of approximately one mile with very knowledgeable guides from the Brentwood and Billericay Group of Essex Wildlife Trust.

The owners of the garden from 1875 to 1934 were Frederick Willmott and his daughter Ellen, who was to become one of the most important gardeners and plant breeders of her era and developed the garden. Many of the plants which she bred have either 'wimottiae' or 'warleyensis' added to their names.

The impact of WW1, when many of her gardeners went into the armed forces, her overspending on this garden, (two more she owned in France and Italy), depleted her fortune to the extent that she was bankrupt when she died. The estate was sold to cover her debts. The estate is still owned by the family who bought it in 1938 but the house was demolished soon after WW11 and the garden was neglected. Many of the plants and trees planted by Ellen Willmott can be seen around the overgrown garden.

After our visit, the group enjoyed a hearty meal at the Thatcher's Arms, which is adjacent to the entrance to Warley Place. If you have a few hours to spend this Spring, do visit to see the wonderful displays of daffodils on the hillside.

*Margaret Dawson*



Photographs by *Jim Whitehouse*

### **CERAMIC GROUP**

What a great morning on 7<sup>th</sup> March. There was creativity & lots of fun at the **CERAMIC GROUP** meeting - much laughter as well. We would love to welcome you if you would like to join us. Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at CLAY COTTAGE. If interested, please contact Brenda Parrott phone **01268 779590** or email: [Dper756242@aol.com](mailto:Dper756242@aol.com)



## NEWS AROUND RAYLEIGH u3a

### TRADITIONAL FISH & CHIPS LUNCH with ENTERTAINMENT

Ninety-one u3a members thoroughly enjoyed a fish/chicken and chips lunch followed by coffee and cake at the British Legion Hall.

The interesting, entertaining, and illustrated talk by Steve Short was about the life and times of Tommy Cooper. Steve is no stranger to our u3a, having previously talked about Morecombe & Wise. He entertained us with some magic tricks that Tommy Cooper had included in his shows. A 'volunteer' Teresa Clarke was picked from the audience to assist him in some of these.

The free raffle prizes of Afternoon Tea at Squires were won by Brian Keech and Teresa Clarke.



Above article and photos from *Val Whitehouse*

### COOKERY GROUP

The group had a lovely morning cooking together. James is involving the group in authentic green curry. Roll on next month!



*Ray Lowe*

## NEWS AROUND RAYLEIGH u3a

Here is a photo from our **BADMINTON** group taken on Tuesday, 8th March. Bernard Pilgrim is the Group Leader, and they meet on Monday and Tuesday afternoons at Rayleigh Leisure Centre.



*Bernard Pilgrim*

Below is a photo of **WALKING GROUP 3'S** latest walk of 4 miles at Burnham on Crouch on Tuesday, 8th March. Maureen Hayes is the Group Leader, and they meet up on the 2nd Tuesday of the month.



*Maureen Hayes*

## FUTURE EVENTS – DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

We are holding our **SUMMER QUIZ NIGHT** on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2022. Tickets will be available at the June and July monthly meetings.

*Val Whitehouse*

## TALKS FOR ALL

**TUESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022**

**2.15 – 3.45 PM – HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, CLOISTER HALL**

### **GETTING STARTED WITH YOUR FAMILY HISTORY**

A Talk by Rayleigh u3a member, Pete Huntly, which will cover the initial steps in tracing your family tree and will focus on some of the more important sources of information, including Birth, Marriage, Death, Parish and Census records.

TICKETS ARE £3 each, which includes Tea/Coffee and biscuits.

**TUESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2022**

**2.15 – 3.45 PM – HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, MAIN HALL**

### **LAWRENCE – BEFORE & AFTER ARABIA**

**A Talk by COLIN van GEFEN**

Following his very popular talk on Lady Houston – The Lady who Saved the Nation – Colin is back to tell us about Lawrence.

The legend of Lawrence of Arabia is well documented in books and films, but what about his life before and after the Desert War? Described as one of the most influential Englishmen of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century but he wasn't English! There are many myths but the truth is far more fascinating. A man of many lives.

TICKETS ARE £3 each, which includes Tea/Coffee and biscuits.

**TICKETS ARE ON SALE AT THE APRIL AND MAY MEMBERS MEETINGS BUT CAN ALSO BE RESERVED:**

**BY EMAILING VALERIE SKAM ON: [valerieskam@gmail.com](mailto:valerieskam@gmail.com)**

**OR BY TELEPHONE: 01268 786172**