

### Newsletter Edition - No.59 - January 2014

This Month's Meeting Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> January Speaker – David Clarke –'My Travels in Cuba'

#### From the Chair

Well, I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and can now look forward to another U3A year enjoying all the Group activities you support. New Year is the time to change or renew. So if you have decided to leave a Group, please inform the leader, so we can fill your place with new members on our waiting list.

I must take this opportunity to thank Sandra Wilson and her team of supporters who have successfully run our Theatre Group for many years. Sandra has decided to close the existing group and set up Theatre Trips, hopefully, organised by individual supporters who will focus on different aspects of the Theatre. So if you have a particular theatrical passion and are interested in organising a special Theatre Trip, speak to Sandra, me or Bob Wren.

Our A.G.M. will be held in March at our usual monthly meeting before the speaker. (See official notice on page 6 of this Newsletter). If you feel you can help run our U3A, application forms for election to the Committee are also attached to this Newsletter or can be obtained from the front desk at our January meeting. Remember, all completed forms must be returned to our Secretary, by the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at the latest.

What is now critical is the need for two Treasurers, one for the main account and one for the social account. Please search your conscience and if you have the slightest talent we will organise training. Also, guidance and support will be available from our retiring Treasurers David Clarke and Margaret Read. I must say our accounts are well organised and in order, so I hope the task of treasurer will not be too onerous. If we cannot find treasurers we might have to close Rayleigh U3A.

On that down note, I do wish you all a successful New Year with Rayleigh U3A and enjoy the group activities that interest you.

David Sheffield - Chairman Rayleigh U3A

#### A REMINDER FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

If you have not yet renewed your membership and wish to do so, I must have your form and cheque by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. Cheques made payable to 'Rayleigh U3A'.

We have a waiting list for those people wishing to join our U3A and these will be allocated at the beginning of February.

The Committee would like to thank all members who have renewed or wish to renew their membership and hope they will enjoy the Events and Groups we have for them in 2014.

Doreen Blake – Membership Secretary 01268 774871

# A Happy and Healthy New Year to you all

#### An unforgetable visit

When joining my Church Visiting Group II for a recent visit, I thought we would be visiting another beautiful little Church in some way out village. On this occasion I was quite wrong. We went to the Chapel of the Royal Anglian and Essex Regiments at Warley.

My satnav took me down a single track road through a wooded area which led into a village. We were directed through tall electronic iron gates behind an official looking building where we were offered refreshments.

If you imagine a typical Sergeant Major, forceful in bearing, upright with a booming voice, this was Major Tony Jones. He joined the Army in 1969 and retired in 2007. He invited us into an adjoining room where there were pictures and plaques of Regimental memorabilia. He then proceeded to tell us the history of the Regiments and subsequently what has taken place in more recent times. The Territorial Army will henceforth be known as the Army Reserves. Men from the Regiments are still being sent from here to Afghanistan, and sadly 17 soldiers have lost their lives during the conflict.



In the Chapel we were invited to climb the stairs to the Bell Tower which housed a traditional hand clavier with wooden batons allowing the chimer direct musical control. A member of our Group operated the clavier and succeeded in ringing the bell, which we all enjoyed.

I spoke to the Major and said I had an Uncle who was killed in World War I and I believed he belonged to the Essex Regiment. I was shown a Memorial Book with names of soldiers lost in the Great War. His name is Albert Ewin and there he was recorded. I was quite emotional – I had not expected this.

Albert was killed before I was born but my Mother would talk of her brother and said that he wasn't 17 years of age. On a bus a lady gave him a white feather. He was under age to be called up, but went straight away and enlisted. He lied about his age (call up was 18). Albert was sent for training and then to Holnon village, St. Quintin, in the area of the Somme. He arrived in France on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 1918, and was killed at 6 a.m. on the 17<sup>th</sup> September, five days after arriving. He and 17 soldiers in his Battalion were killed on the same day.

70 years later I visited the copse in which he was killed. What a contrast, there were beech leaves covering the ground. I was standing in a crater, one of many. Bird song, the sky was blue, sound of traffic in the distance. I heard a woodpecker, dried dead bracken everywhere.

What a difference to September 1918. The noise, the smell, the gas and the terror.

I made my way to a cemetery not far away where we identified the names of other soldiers in his Battalion. There were three graves marked `A Soldier of the Great War` Essex Regiment. We homed in on one particular grave and said a prayer.

You never know what a day might bring!

Peg Foster



The Church Visiting Group II in the Regimental Chapel at Warley. Peg Foster is the Lady in the front on the right hand side.

#### A Golfer's Dream

The sun was warm, there wasn't a breeze
I teed up for my first shot completely at ease
I shuffled my feet, lined up my head
bent my knees as the golf pro had said
A perfect ball down the fairway it soared
a few yards from the green, a birdie I scored

The next eight holes were much like the first my excitement took hold like a tortuous thirst The back nine, however, would be a challenge for me, I checked my irons and woods as I approached the tee If only my nerve would hold to the end my score would read under par by at least ten



At the 18<sup>th</sup> I encountered a hitch
I sliced the ball....the result of a twitch
I missed the bunker, but not the rough
I reached for my chipper I knew it`d be tough
With my eyes tightly shut I said a quick prayer
chipped the ball sharply, it lifted high in the air
It rolled down the green and swerved to the right
teetered the hole and plopped out of sight

I heard the applause loud in my head, opened my eyes found I was still in my bed I searched for my score card it read one hundred and four no-one I know has ever scored more I couldn't believe it, and began to scream this never happened to Monty, it had all been a dream

#### A VISIT TO WADDESDON MANOR

As a culmination of the 2013 visits programme by the Serendipity 2 and Walking 1 Groups, in early December we went by coach to Waddesdon Manor in an outing organised by Liz and Roger Baker and Pam and Keith Dunt. Waddesdon Manor is a French Renaissance-style chateau set in the heart of the Buckinghamshire countryside. It was built in the 1870s by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild to house his superb art collection. It has since been bequeathed to the National Trust.

Passing through the gates to enter the estate, we proceeded to the Manor House by what could only be described as rolling parkland. We seemed to travel about a mile before arriving at a gravel drive flanked by manicured lawns some 200 yards from the House to receive a brief introduction by one of the staff before we left the coach to tour the House. The entrance hall was decorated with the flags and flowers of Austria and all the differing rooms, about 14 in all, were decorated in the Austrian Christmas style with baubles, gifts, lights, etc. It would take too long to describe each individual room, many with portraits by famous artists, i.e. Klimpt and the School of Van Dyke, passing an armoury, inspected bedrooms, billiard room, bathrooms, and all were individually decorated, some with models showing sumptuous dresses and a uniform worn by one of the Rothschilds. One interesting section was the Pantry Corridor set in the Salzburg tradition and some of the music from 'Sound of Music' played as we passed. The glass globes, some original, were made by the crystal artist Swarovski.

After leaving the House, we had some time to explore the gardens and features of the grounds or to take the land train which toured the area (about 20 minutes) or to visit the shop with many tempting items including some very expensive wines or to have a warm drink and relax before it was time for our Group to enter the restaurant for our Austrian-style lunch. After lunch we had about an hour to explore further and walk round the Winter Light Display created by Bruce Munro, a feature of Christmas at Waddesdon. This display is of six large-scale light installations positioned at intervals in the gardens. The first was 900 millimetre spheres containing smaller spheres illuminated by fibre optics and were representative of the 'Brass Monkey' which housed cannon balls on ships. Then we saw towers made of used 2 litre plastic bottles filled with water and lit with fibre optics and colour representing sound as music was played activated by movement as we passed. Wigwams made of 12 foot old fluorescent tubes and a drift of over 6500 small globes lit with fibre optics in differing colours to represent a river of light.

We made our way to the front of the Manor to await our transport home about 5 p.m. where the conifer trees either side of the drive were spectacularly lit with lights which in the dark were stunning. Our journey back was smooth and uneventful but a nice touch by Roger and Liz who gave everyone a Christmas card with a little gift included a fitting end to a very enjoyable day.

Many thanks to Roger, Liz, Pam and Keith

#### **Brian Dennis**

#### **Classical Spectacular**

Last November saw the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 'Classical Spectacular' concerts at the Royal Albert Hall. Whilst Classical Spectacular concerts are staged at several venues in the UK and other parts of Europe, their natural home is the Royal Albert Hall which lends itself so magnificently to the scale and style of the production. The annual BBC Promenade concerts may perhaps be better known because of their exposure to a wider audience on radio and television, but the 'Classical Spectacular' series, of which there are 12 performances in London each year, are more celebrated because of the range of popular classical music presented, normally played by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.



This year's concerts were no exception with stirring performances of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, Elgar's Nimrod and Wagner's Ride of the Valkyries among many others. The music is enhanced by laser illuminations and by pyrotechnics from the gallery, together with much Union Jack flag waving by the audience. The scintillating orchestral playing was augmented by the Band of the Welsh Guards and by the singing of the Royal Choral Society. The wonderful solo violin playing of Thomas Gould could easily have been taken for that of Nigel Kennedy.

Several U3As feature a visit to a Classical Spectacular concert among the outings they arrange for their members each year, and later this year perhaps we can organise an outing for our Rayleigh U3A similarly to experience the enjoyment of joining the audience of 4500 people at such a concert.

#### **BIRDWATCHING GROUP 2**

Birdwatching Group 2 had an 'interest' meeting on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November. The meeting mainly concerned itself with frequency and timing of future meetings. A healthy number of potential members attended and the following was decided. Potential members were given some advice on items such as clothing, footwear, binoculars, cameras, note books, etc.

It was decided that meetings would be on a monthly basis and be on the second Tuesday of the month. Venues would be decided in the week or so before the meeting so that then current expected weather conditions, high tides, transport, etc could be taken into account as close to the meeting as possible.

The first scheduled meeting will be on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014. Anyone wishing to join us please contact me using the details below. We still have a few places left so be quick!!

Many thanks John Edwards

Tel: 01268 747208 Mobile: 07850 621764 E-mail: Edwards@chase116.fsnet.co.uk

## GARDEN SLIDE SHOWS At TRINITY CHURCH CLOISTER ROOMS ALL SHOWS START AT 1.45PM – COST £3.00 WITH REFRESHMENTS

MONDAY 27<sup>th</sup> JANUARY - BARRY KAUFMANN-WRIGHT - POND AND RIVER LIFE

Barry is making his 6<sup>th</sup> visit to us. This will be just as interesting and informative as all his other talks have been. Barry worked for 6 years at Jersey Zoo with Gerald Durrell. He then worked for Essex Police for 32 years and became their Wildlife Crime Officer. He will be selling books about his life, and greeting cards from his extensive collection of photographs.

MONDAY 24<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY – BRIAN KERSEY – ORCHIDS

Brian is an original member of Rayleigh U3A and held the post of Vice-Chairman for 3 years.

He will be talking on Orchids including the various names and many different types. His digital photography is superb, and many of you have already seen his work. He has offered to help repot your orchids, so if you wish, please bring them with you.

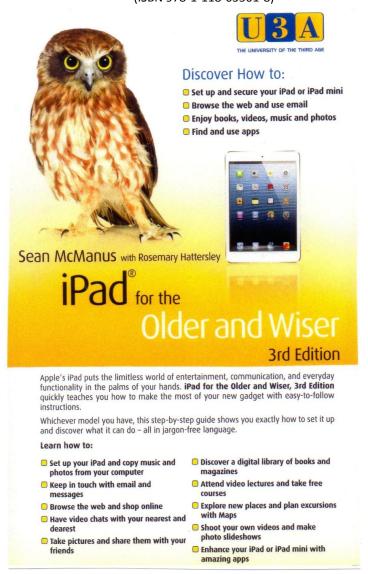
Linda Clarke

#### Have you been given an iPad for Christmas?

U3A has sponsored the publication of a book to help us 'wrinklies' to understand the magic of the iPad.

You can obtain the book fromAmazon for £10.34

(ISBN 978-1-118-63501-8)



#### **Our Speaker in February**

Our speaker in February is EVE REGELOUS.

She is a professional events organiser and has been a lady magician. She worked closely with Harrods for 10 years and her talk gives a unique insight into this world famous company. She talks about the store's history from its foundations to the recent take-over, including a glimpse behind the scenes of day-to-day life which unfolds for staff and customers.

#### Technical Team

Everybody who attends our monthly meetings will be aware that we not only have an excellent sound system, but we also have a full set of projection equipment comprising a digital projector, a laptop computer, a screen, and all the associated bits and pieces (leads, mouse, laser pointer, remote control, etc.). It is possible to connect the projector or laptop to the sound system giving the possibility to show educational DVDs and films.

The equipment is available for use by any group leader. Whilst Fred Carter (sound system) or myself (projection equipment) may be available on most occasions it is clearly necessary that other members should be able to set it up and operate it. At the last meeting of your Committee it was proposed that we should recruit a 'technical team'. If you would like to get involved please contact me.

David Clarke, Treasurer Clarked46@talktalk.net 01702204559 07941 813650

#### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Members are advised that the Seventh Annual General Meeting of the Rayleigh U3A is to take place on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 2.00 p.m. at The Mill Hall, Rayleigh.

The meeting will be followed by our Speaker ELAINE FOX - 'Rainy Brain, Sunny Brain'

A copy of the Minutes of the 2013 AGM will be displayed on the noticeboard at the January and February meetings and are also available to view on the website as a separate document.

Nomination Forms are available from the Secretary or can be downloaded from the website.

These forms are to be returned to the Secretary not later than 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014

#### Notes from the Secretary - January 2014

I would like to bring to your attention the forthcoming events and information notified to me by the U3A Trust.

The full information on these items can be found on the U3A Trust website at

www.u2a.org.uk or feel free to telephone me on 01702 473110 or e-mail me at

mhayesghayes@talktalk.net. The full information will also be displayed on the Secretary's Notice Board at the

Members meeting in January 2014.

**U3A Explores Science at the Royal Institutio**n in London on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Half day programme with three speakers plus Q & A sessions.

Helen Czerski – Bubbles: The Bath and Beyond Elizabeth Stokoe – The Conversational Racetrack

David Whitmore – Biological clocks, light and what happens in a cave.

£20 per head including refreshments

#### **National Summer Schools in 2014**

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July to Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July at Harper Adams University, Newport, Nr. Telford. Monday 18<sup>th</sup> August to Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August at The Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester.

**Happy New Year - Maureen Hayes** 

## GARDENING CORNER An A – Z of Shrubs No.1 ABELIA

A family of easy to grow, mostly hardy plants with a long flowering season June - October or longer.

Numerous white-pink clusters of flowers. Small leaves. Will grow to around 5ft in 10 years.

Semi-evergreen. Needs a sunny position with good to average drainage and can be pruned after flowering. Bees and butterflies love them. Varieties available: Chinensis (small growing, fragrant)

Grandiflora

Edward Goucher (mauve flowers)

Schumannii

Kaleidoscope (green and gold foliage) Francis Mason (similar)

Floribunda which is a tender variety needing frost protection, has cherry red tubular flowers (this is difficult to find).

I have grown nearly all of those listed above and are one of my 'Good Do'ers' among shrubs.

Look them up on the web, just key in Abelia.

Some local nurseries may stock it – try Glebelands at Hawkwell opposite the Leisure Centre turn-off, or Summerhill on the A127 (Southend bound).

Plant when the soil is still warm in Autumn or pot on (larger pot).

Good Gardening!

BRIAN KERSEY 01268 743959 or brian.kersey@sky.com



#### Reflection on Educational Talks in 2013 and the launch in 2014 of 'Talks for All'

In 2013 the membership enjoyed a calendar of 'Afternoon Speakers' covering subjects such as Opera, Writers, Editor of a local newspaper, City of London Livery Companies and how rainbows are formed. In addition we held a Study Day about 'Victorian London' (see photo) that included three renowned speakers on the subject and a rendition of Cockney Songs from a Pearly King telling the story of the costermongers of that time. These talks were well received with packed audiences. The Educational Committee have talks planned for the spring and autumn on subjects to include The London Underground plus the Chaplain from the Olympic Village

In April we have a Luncheon with Lord Petre, Lord Lieutenant of Essex who will describe to us his role as Her Majesty The Queen's representative.

Rayleigh U3A Committee have agreed to the proposal to integrate talks (arranged by those Group Leaders who wish to join in) into the Calendar of Events for 2014.

This is an exciting step forward for our U3A as no other has such a new and innovative plan. We look to our Group Leaders to support us and we would like to hear from our membership about interesting speakers or subjects you would like to be included.

All talks will cost only a nominal sum of £2 towards the cost of the speaker, hall hire and refreshments.

During the winter, spring and autumn, when the nights are long and the days are short, having the opportunity to listen and learn about interesting and informative subjects is enjoyable and exciting. The U3A opens doors that otherwise might be closed but for an enthusiastic team of people who do a great deal of research to make this 'Year of Talks for All' for the members of Rayleigh U3A.

Pete Huntly - Educational Events

pa.huntly@btinternet.com Tel: 01268 777398

The organising committee of the very successful Victorian London Study Day held at Saxon Hall on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 together with the three speakers – The Pearly King, John Knowles with the author Jean Fullerton to his right, and London guide-lecturer David Williams third from right.



#### DO YOU ENJOY WORKING WITH FIGURES? IF SO, PLEASE READ ON

The position of Treasurer – No 2 Social Account will be vacant as from the beginning of 2014, and we are looking for a member to take on this role.

Duties include:

Collecting and banking monies.

Writing and sending cheques as required, or paying by Direct Debit.

Reconciling the monthly bank statement and producing a Trial Balance.

Attending monthly Committee Meetings.

You will need to enjoy dealing with figures and be very accurate, but you do not need to be an Accountant to volunteer for this position.

If you are interested, please get in touch with any member of the Committee.

I will be happy to answer any further questions and also be on hand to help, if necessary, for the first couple of months.

Margaret Read Treasurer – No.2 Social Account

#### THEATRE GROUP

Following the retirement of Helena Maxwell and Jean Mackenzie from the Theatre Group,
Sandra Wilson has decided to close the Group in its present format. Sandra apologises to any member of
the original group who she hasn't advised directly about this. In its place, Sandra is forming a new Theatre
Visits Group which will be open for participation by all members of Rayleigh U3A.

She has prepared a questionnaire (which is on a separate sheet attached to this Newsletter) which she invites everyone interested in theatre visits and similar events to complete and return to her. Prospective visits will be publicised at the monthly meetings, on the web site and in the Newsletter. Group visits to theatres are very popular and we hope this new initiative by Sandra will be given every support.

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman: David Sheffield

dave@djsheff.demon.co.uk 01268 743586

Vice Chairman: Pete Huntly

(also gift aid and study day and educational activities coordinator & webmaster) pa.huntlv@btinternet.com 01268 777398

Treasurer No. 1 A/C: David Clarke

clarked46@talktalk.net 01702 204559

**Secretary:** Maureen Hayes

mhayesghayes@talktalk.net 01702 473110

Membership Sec. Doreen Blake

rblake@uk2.net 01268 774871

Events Co-ordinator: Terry Gouldsmith

terrygouldsmith@live.co.uk 01268 562803

Speaker Secretary: Sylvia Mitchell

smitchell151@sky.com 01268 770139

Secretary Assistant: Barbara Hodge

No F-Mail 01268 771820

Treasurer No. 2 A/C: Margaret Read

margitcrip@yahoo.com 01268 761039

Groups Co-ordinator: Bob Wren

bob\_wren@hotmail.com 01702 525311

**Newsletter Editor:** Irene Tyson

jatyson1@aol.com 01268 742942

Volunteers Co-ordinator: Peg Foster

pegfoster@talktalk.net 01268 747741

**Social Activities Co-ordinator:** Maureen Huntly

maureenhuntly@btinternet.com 01268 777398

#### A NOTE FROM YOUR EDITORS

Now that we are publishing the Newsletter earlier in the month, so that we can achieve better distribution arrangements, it is important that Group Leaders' and Members' contributions for publication are received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the normal monthly meeting (e.g. 10<sup>th</sup> February for the March edition) Please cooperate with us in this regard.

Please send articles for inclusion to: Liz and Roger Baker - rogerbaker99@hotmail.co.uk Irene and John Tyson - jatyson1@aol.com

#### **STOP PRESS**

Dates for your Diary - Educational Events

Contact – Pete Huntly pa.huntly@btinternet.com 01268 777398

Series of half-day talks to be held at WI Hall, Rayleigh, generally on Mondays from 2-4 p.m. Tickets £2 to include tea/coffee and biscuits on sale at the September meeting.

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014 - Rev. Kelvin Woolmer (ex Metropolitan Police Officer, Ordained Minister and Olympic Chaplain) 'Nicker to Vicar'

17<sup>th</sup> February 2014 – Adrian Wright – '**150 Years of the** London Underground'

**Dates for your Diary – Social Events** 

Contact - Maureen Huntly maureenhuntly@btinternet.com 01268 777398

**Right Cockney Knees up !!!**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2014 At Hullbridge Sports and Social Club, Lower Road, Hullbridge Come and join in with this fun sing-a-long evening. Tickets £18 With a two course meal, bar and raffle.

Music by Guitarist and Singer Pete George.

Tickets on sale at the January Meeting or for further details contact John / Pat Pomfrett 01702 230253

#### AN 'INVITATION TO LUNCH WITH LORD PETRE'

'An invitation to Lunch' with Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Lord Petre, who will give a talk entitled 'Duties of the Lord Lieutenant'

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014 – 12 for 12.30 pm. Saxon Hall, Aviation Way, Southend on Sea, SS2 6UN

Two course lunch including coffee/tea & mints Tickets - £17.50

Lord Petre is the 18<sup>th</sup> Baron Petre and lives at Ingatestone Hall. The Lord Lieutenant is the Queen's personal representative in Essex.

We are privileged to have Lord Petre agree to talk at our Luncheon.

Tickets will be on sale at the January monthly meeting



### **Nomination Form for Committee Members 2014/2015**

Committee Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month **Please ensure that the person you are nominating is willing to stand** 

#### **Vacancy for position of Treasurer (No. 1 Account)**

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Vacancy for position of	f Social Treasurer	
Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Vacancy for position of	of Secretary	
Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Vacancy for position of	f Membership Secretary	
Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Vacancies for position	of Committee Member	
Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by

Please return this form to the Secretary, Maureen Hayes at 14, Agnes Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3SX by 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014

## **THEATRE TRIPS**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INFORMED OF FORTHCOMING THEATRE TRIPS PLEASE FILL IN ALL YOUR DETAILS BELOW.

NAME
ADDRESS.
PHONE NO.
E MAIL.
PLEASE MARK THE TYPE OF SHOWS IN WHICH YOU
WOULD BE INTERESTED.
WOOLD DE HAIDMENTED.
LONDON MUSICALS
SHORT RUN LONDON PLAYS
LOCAL PLAYS.
LOCAL MUSICALS
LOCAL AMATEUR GROUPS.
OPERA
BALLET
'NATIONAL LIVE' AT THE ODEON SOUTHEND
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)
,
•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••
ARE YOU ABLE/WILLING TO ASSIST IN ANY WAY?
MANNING THEATRE DESK
TAKING A PARTY TO A SHOW
LEADING A COACH TRIP
OTHER
IN FUTURE THEATRE TRIPS WILLL BE ADVERTISED ON
THE SAME SITE AS THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER, UNDER
THE GROUPS/THEATRE HEADING, AS WELL AS AT
MONTHLY MEETINGS. PLEASE CHECK IT REGULARLY.

SANDRA WILSON sandra.alanwilson@yahoo.com