



Newsletter Edition No. 71 - January 2016

FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

I am delighted to report that the Volunteer Meeting in late November was a great success in that we signed up eight new volunteers (including two who would like to join the Technical Team to help David Clarke and Fred Carter) and five members who expressed an interest in either joining the Committee or undertaking Committee related work including a new editorial team for the Newsletter (see the note from the present team on page 4 of this Newsletter for further information). Another member has agreed to be our Accounts Examiner. Thanks to you all.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Val Curtis who has decided to stand down as Volunteer Coordinator

We will now have a Volunteer Information Table at the monthly meetings in the run-up to our AGM in April where members will be able to meet Acting Volunteer Coordinator, Pauline Goldring, to find out more about volunteering opportunities. We still need volunteers, particularly to help transport the books for the Bookstall each month. Forms will be available for potential volunteers to complete and Nomination Forms will be available for vacancies on the Committee (see 'Situations Vacant' on page 8 of this Newsletter).

It was a pleasure to see so many of you at the Christmas Lunch at the Westcliff Hotel which was enjoyed by everyone. Thank you to Jane Godfrey and her Social Events Team for all their hard work in organising this event. Also, thank you to Maureen Huntly and her Educational Events Team for organising the very enjoyable 'Afternoon Tea with the Wyatt Family' at the end of November.

To remind you, our first monthly meeting in 2016 is on Thursday 7th January.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and I wish you all a Very Happy New Year.

Sincerely,
Pete Huntly
Chairman, Rayleigh U3A

THE MUSIC MAN PROJECT

Pat Clarke, one of the members of our Visiting Essex Churches Group 2, invited the Group to spend an evening in St. Nicholas Church, Rawreth, in November being inspired by David Stanley, the promoter of The Music Man Project, when he gave a fund-raising recital in the church on various keyboards. The objective of the project is to provide people with learning disabilities the same opportunities afforded to mainstream musicians, to enable them to showcase their unique talents and to bring forward their infectious passion for musical performance.



David Stanley established the Southend Mencap Music School in 2000. Southend Mencap has championed the rights of all people to enjoy educational excellence, a cause particularly important to those with a learning disability, who will continue to need access to learning throughout their entire lives in order to aid their personal, social and spiritual development at a pace unique to themselves. Officially launched in 2012, The Music Man Project builds on a foundation of over a decade of success in the field of Special Music Education and it's approach has already come to the attention of the Prime Minister for its ability to change lives and potential for duplication across the country. This has already happened with several groups similar to the one in Southend now established in towns across Britain. In explaining the Project to us, David Stanley said: 'All of us carry a musical instinct which can unlock tremendous potential and it is my desire that thousands of people will one day benefit from many Music Man Projects established around the country'.

To demonstrate its determination to provide music students with learning disabilities a platform to showcase their talents, the London Palladium was hired one Sunday evening last June to give a performance of 'Music is Magic' with over 200 people with disabilities on stage. There are even more ambitious plans to put the show on at The Royal Albert Hall later this year, and members of our Group said that they would encourage a party of members of Rayleigh U3A to show their support of such a worthwhile project by attending the show.

All of our group attending the evening at St. Nicholas found it most stimulating.

Notes from our Secretary, Jackie Soilleux

The winter programme of national U3A events is now under way and the website has full details of all these. The Secretary's board at the monthly Members Meetings also includes full details. In addition, you can contact me at jsoilleux88@gmail.com, phone number 01702 552426/mobile 07971 524360 for more information.

TV opportunities:

The Great British Bake Off- Applications by 10th January. To find out more contact baking@loveproductions.co.uk or download an application form at www.thegreatbritishbakeoff.co.uk

Older Drivers- ITV are planning a documentary on older drivers, so if you are over 90 and still driving, they would love to hear from you to discuss how driving has changed over the years. Info at cicara.mcgininity@rdtelevision.com or telephone 0207 0134524.

National Summer School information will be available at the January Members meeting.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ‘POWERS OF ATTORNEY’



Office of the
Public Guardian

One of our U3A members has suggested that we bring to your notice an experience she has had within her own family which illustrates the importance of Powers of Attorney.

Lasting power of attorney – property and financial affairs

Her brother’s wife has been admitted into a home with acute dementia. Because they do not have Powers of Attorney in place, he is unable to access their joint investments and bank accounts without his wife’s signature, which is now impossible. It will take several

months to allow him to obtain the legal right of access to these funds. He needs to raise about £48,000 per annum to pay for the care home and he is worried out of his mind. If only they had both taken out Powers of Attorney when they made out their Wills and were in good health, none of this would have happened. As our member says *‘none of us know what is in store for us in the future’*.

To expand on the above, we must recognise that there may come a time in our life when we may not be able to express what we want to be done with our financial affairs or with our health. A ‘Lasting Power of Attorney’ (LPA) can ensure that our wishes are carried out. An LPA is a legal document which gives the person or persons of your choice the power to deal with your affairs. You can choose someone you trust to be your attorney, thereby giving you the comfort that your estate will be being taken care of by someone you trust to do it, whether it be a solicitor, a family member or a close friend. These trusted people will then become your legally appointed attorneys and will be able to use the document to act on your behalf whenever necessary. This can be on either a temporary or permanent basis if you are unwilling or unable to manage your affairs yourself. Your LPA can protect your estate during your lifetime until you pass away, and then your Will takes over (but you can make it temporary, for example, when you are in hospital or abroad).

There are two types of LPA – you can choose to have both or just one on its own. One is for Property and Financial Affairs and the other for Health and Welfare. The latter can be most useful to enable medical issues to be discussed with doctors, to make decisions about healthcare and to deal with social services. A natural assumption is that married or co-habiting couples do not need LPAs to deal with each other’s affairs. However, legally, being married or co-habiting does not in itself afford you the right to access the partner’s bank accounts, speak to pension providers, query bills with utility companies or make a decision about healthcare. Without having a valid LPA in place naming your partner (or other trusted person) as your nominated attorney, they may find themselves powerless to help you.

Before an LPA (which needs to be completed on a prescribed form, witnessed and then certified by a professional or other responsible person that you know what you are doing and are not under any undue pressure) can be used it must be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian, a Government organisation that is responsible for the management of the affairs of adults who are incapable.

This is a subject which affects us all, and must not be taken lightly. It requires careful consideration and appropriate advice.

RAYLEIGH U3A's NEWSLETTER

Your current Newsletter production team of Liz and Roger Baker and Irene Tyson (and previously her late husband, John) has edited and produced the Newsletter for the past 3 years. This followed on from the excellent work done earlier by Janet and David Carlton who initiated a Newsletter for U3A members. We want the Newsletter to continue but because of other commitments, not only with U3A but also elsewhere, the present team believe it necessary for them to retire from the Newsletter role. Their last Newsletter will be that due for publication in March 2016.

With the total membership of Rayleigh U3A well in excess of 400, we hope that a new team can be formed from the membership and that people will volunteer to participate and enjoy this activity. Fortunately, two ladies have already come forward expressing interest in producing future editions of the Newsletter, and their interest is currently being followed up. The present team will meet with them and explain the Newsletter production arrangements. Should anybody else be interested in being involved in this rewarding activity, please contact one of us or Pete Huntly.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed articles and ideas for the Newsletter over the past 3 years. We have enjoyed editing and publishing it, and hope that the membership has enjoyed reading it.

Liz and Roger Baker, with Irene Tyson

SOCIAL EVENTS

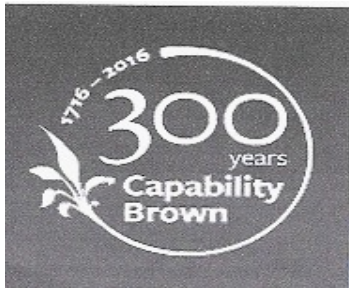
A happy New Year to all our members.

The last event that the Social Team organised for 2015 was the Christmas lunch at the Westcliff Hotel. A big thank you to the 108 members who attended, the large number made for a great atmosphere and, judging by the many positive comments, it was a very successful occasion.

The first date for your diary for 2016 will be a Race Night on Friday 11th March. Last year this event proved to be popular so we decided to repeat it. The tickets will be on sale at the January meeting at £4 each. This will be followed in April by another Quiz Night. Our quizzes are always popular so we thought we would have one in the Spring as well as in the Autumn. Ticket price will remain the same at £4. The date for this is to be confirmed and tickets will be on sale at the February meeting.

Further events are in the planning process and we hope to provide a varied programme for members throughout 2016.

**Jane Godfrey
Social Events Coordinator**



Celebrating 300 years of Capability Brown's stunning landscape designs

2016 is the 300th anniversary of the birth of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. He is often called 'the father



of landscape architecture' for he changed the face of the national landscape. He created the rolling vistas and serpentine waterways that, to many, have come to epitomise the best in English countryside design. There is to be a nationwide celebration this year of Brown's work with more than 150 landscapes that he designed being restored up and down the country. The Festival will enable people to discover more about Brown's work and how he created his amazing landscapes.

Brown was known to ask workmen to move hills and occasionally even

entire villages to make way for his designs. This would be a daunting prospect now, but imagine doing it with the tools available in the 18th century!

Serendipity Two Group will see for themselves the magic of Capability Brown's work when they visit Burghley House in Lincolnshire later this year as part of our Group's forthcoming programme of summer outings. Burghley is one of England's most spectacular country houses, construction of which began in 1555. Just 200 years later, a new Earl inherited the Estate and he appointed Brown to redesign the gardens sweeping away the unfashionable formal landscape. Terraces were levelled, avenues broken up, oaks planted and a serpentine lake dug below the House. In all, Brown worked at Burghley for 24 years, his longest commission and clearly one he enjoyed. Although much of Brown's landscape still survives, later planting and changing land management schemes have lessened its subtlety and cleverness, with key views being lost as woodland encroached and plantations were put in. Now, however, the Estate's trustees have embarked on an ambitious ten-year plan to return the park to its 18th century condition, bringing house and landscape together again, just as Brown intended. This work began in 2012.



Nearer to home in Essex, the gardens of Audley End looked after by English Heritage also boast the genius of Capability Brown, and like the many other Brown gardens in England, these will benefit from the restoration programme being initiated this year. It is estimated that Brown worked on over 250 gardens and landscapes across Britain. In 1764, 'Capability' Brown was appointed Chief Gardener at Hampton Court Palace by King George III and lived there with his family. This was an important appointment as it raised his status among the nobility leading to other commissions, including gardens at Blenheim Palace and Chatsworth House.

Gardening Corner – January 2016

Firstly, I hope you all had a Happy Christmas and New Year coupled with good health, and are looking forward to a good year in the garden. Looking back on our successes and failures in the past year, 2015 was a year of wildly fluctuating temperatures and lack of sunshine early on, which contributed to a late flowering of summer annuals and perennials which didn't give them much time to catch up before shortening days took over the scene. Nature has the last word as usual and we can only hope 2016 will renew our enthusiasm to try out new ideas and plants.



Pansies and Violas now seem to be around all year and this is beginning to show with more hanging baskets appearing in porches, borders and pots and on trellis with almost continuous displays at a time when bugs are not around, which is always good news! If you haven't swept up those falling leaves for composting, help nature a bit by running your rotary mower (if you have one) over a pile before composting in a bin or bags – it all helps to speed up the process. 'Busy Lizzies' seem to have recovered from the 'wilt' virus which decimated this much loved annual bedder.

Chrysanthemums are showing a come-back in popularity with some new varieties for all purposes with 'crosses' with asters and zinnias which gives those of you who do flower arranging new ideas. These crosses have the benefit of extending the flowering period.

Another tip: Nurseries and Homebase type stores are selling off bags of Daffs and Narcissus at 'knock-down' prices now, and providing they are firm and not showing too much shoot they are a bargain to fill up areas under trees. It is not too late (they will flower later than usual) but get them in before the end of January. Tulips too will do well especially if they are a late-flowering variety.

Perennials like phlox should be cut down to 6 inches ready to be divided in Spring when new growth shows. Throw away the old woody centres of all perennials like asters, chrysanthus, rudbeckia, etc.

I have discovered a very good seed catalogue worth a look at – Plants of Distinction (www.plantsofdistinction.co.uk) based at Needham Market – phone: 01449 711005

Good gardening

Brian Kersey (01268 743959) NEW e-mail: briankersey@gmail.com

ADVANCE NOTICE

**The Ninth Annual General Meeting of the Rayleigh U3A
will take place on Thursday, 7th April 2016 at Mill Hall, Rayleigh, commencing at 2.00 p.m.
followed by our speaker: ROGER TABOR 'The Cinque Ports'**

A copy of the Minutes of the 2015 AGM will be displayed on the noticeboard at the January, February and March meetings, and are also available on the website.

There are vacancies on the Committee as follows:

**Vice Chairman
Speaker Secretary
Newsletter Editor**

**Groups' Coordinator
Volunteer Coordinator
Committee Member**

**Nomination Forms must be returned to the Secretary, Jackie Soilleux,
by Friday 11th March 2016**

**Any motions which you would like to raise at the AGM, which need a Proposer and Seconder,
should also be submitted to the Secretary by 11th March 2016**

A FURTHER RECOMMENDATION FROM BOOK GROUP TWO

Elizabeth is Missing is the first book written by a new author whose talents were recognised when she was awarded the 2014 Costa Prize. Her book has been so successful that STV Productions has acquired the TV rights for a three-part production.

The book follows two themes with Maud the central protagonist aged 82 and as a girl growing up with her family. The older forgetful Maud makes a cup of tea and doesn't drink it; she is the person who loves to eat and continually eats toast and buys tins of peaches. As a young girl living with her parents and the rather strange lodger Douglas, they are all devastated when her sister goes missing, after which their life could never be the same. Everyone thought she had been murdered, but no body was found. Maud couldn't put the mystery out of her mind and this continued into her old age.



For readers who only have a limited understanding of dementia the book is enlightening. We felt it incredible that such a young person could write with such an understanding of the illness and all its effects on both the patient and their friends and family. It is not on occasion an easy read, but in the end it all becomes clear.

Kath Hands

CHRISTMAS IN MOROCCO

Did you enjoy your Christmas Dinner? Our member, Maureen Bristow, recalled the menu of the Christmas meal that her father-in-law enjoyed (or we hope he enjoyed !) whilst on active service in Morocco during the Second World War in 1943. We thought it sounded rather tasty even if he missed out on the traditional Christmas pudding and mince pie.



TALKS FOR ALL

Held at the Rayleigh Royal British Legion Social Club, London Hill, Rayleigh at 2.00 p.m.

Tickets £2 to include tea/coffee and biscuits

Tuesday 19th January 2016, 2pm – 4pm

Tim Sheppard of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute: 'The Work of the RNLI'

Tuesday 9th February 2016, 2pm – 4pm

Terry Jewell of the Essex Fire & Rescue: 'The Work of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service'

Tuesday 23rd February 2016, 2pm – 4pm

Carol Schoeman 'Life of a Paramedic'

Tuesday 8th March 2016, 2pm – 4pm

A Representative of Essex Air Ambulance: 'The Work and History of Essex Air Ambulance'

TICKETS FOR THE ABOVE ON SALE AT MONTHLY MEETINGS

N.B. Coach Trip to RAF Museum at Hendon is now sold out

SITUATIONS VACANT

Volunteers

Come along to the new Volunteer Table at the Monthly Meetings to find out more about opportunities to get involved. Volunteers are hugely important in making our U3A so successful. Our Acting Volunteer Coordinator, Pauline Goldring, or any of the Committee Members would love to talk to you.

Our U3A exists to keep us active in our Third Age through education using the lifetime skills and experience of our members. Every member has a skill that we could use even if they do not realise it as yet.

Committee Members

Vice Chairman – to work with the current Chairman, Pete Huntly, in 2016 with a view to taking on the role of Chairman from April 2017

Groups Coordinator – to get new interest groups up and running, to provide ongoing support to all groups as required and to help new members find groups to join

Speaker Secretary – to research and book speakers for monthly meetings for 2017 onwards

Volunteer Coordinator – to coordinate the recruitment and allocation of tasks to volunteers for Monthly Meetings and other events

Newsletter Editor – to represent the Newsletter Editorial Team on the Committee

Committee Member – roles to be allocated.

SPEAKERS AT FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

January – Ben Copsey of the Peace Pledge Union, talking about Cornelious Barritt, a conscientious objector from Essex.

February – Roger Squires, recommended by The Canal Museum in London. His talk is entitled: Canal Mania.

Rayleigh



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Nomination Form for Committee Members 2016/17

There are 6 vacancies. Committee Meetings are held on the 3rd Friday in the month.
Please ensure that the person you are nominating is willing to stand.

Vacancy for position of Vice Chairman

Nominee.....Proposed by.....Seconded by.....

Vacancy for position of Speaker Secretary

Nominee.....Proposed by.....Seconded by.....

Vacancy for position of Newsletter Editor

Nominee.....Proposed by.....Seconded by.....

Vacancy for position of Groups' Coordinator

Nominee.....Proposed by.....Seconded by.....

Vacancy for position of Volunteer Coordinator

Nominee.....Proposed by.....Seconded by.....

Vacancy for position of Committee Member

Nominee.....Proposed by.....Seconded by.....

Please return this form to the Secretary, Jackie Soilleux at
8, Galleydene, Hadleigh,
Essex, SS7 2QA
Or email to:
jsoilleux88@gmail.com