

Rayleigh



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

## Newsletter Edition No. 77 – January 2017

### FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

Welcome to our January Newsletter.

I would like to draw your attention to the AGM Notice including the list of Committee vacancies and the Committee Nomination Form within this Newsletter.

All our Committee Members work very hard for you to ensure that you are able to enjoy all the benefits of membership of Rayleigh U3A including our monthly meetings, educational and social events throughout the year. If you feel you would like to contribute to assist in running our U3A then please have a word with me or any other Committee Member. If becoming a Committee Member interests you then you are welcome to come along to one of our forthcoming committee meetings to see how we work first hand.

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.

Thank you to Maureen Huntly and her Educational Events Team for organising the fascinating and enjoyable Twinings 'History of Tea' talk followed by a Tea Tasting and a delicious Afternoon Tea at Saxon Hall at the end of November.

To remind you our first monthly meeting in 2017 is on Thursday 5th 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**

### URGENT APPEAL

After our AGM in April we will need a volunteer, or volunteers, to take over the Sound Equipment as Fred Carter, after nearly ten years, will be retiring from this vital position.

If you have storage space, are willing to bring the equipment to the monthly meetings and be part of a team, please speak to me or any other member of the Committee. There is a monthly payment to cover storage and charging of batteries.

**Pete Huntly, Chairman**

# History of Tea, Tea Tasting and Afternoon Tea at Saxon Hall

Speaker Lucy Chappell from Twinings

OUR AFTERNOON of discovery about the World's favourite drink was to find out that we drink over 165 million cups of tea in Great Britain every day.

There are various legends surrounding the origins of tea. Perhaps the most famous is the Chinese story of Shen Nung, the emperor and renowned herbalist, who was boiling his drinking water when leaves from a nearby tea shrub blew into the cauldron. He tasted the resulting brew and the beverage of tea was born.

Tea was officially introduced to England by the young Portuguese wife of Charles II, Catherine of Braganza, in 1662. She served it to her aristocratic friends and soon tea became the fashionable drink of the day.



At this time in history popular drinks of the masses were gin, ales and coffee. People would even drink these at breakfast because the water was so contaminated. Thomas Twining took full advantage of this by becoming knowledgeable about tea and tea tasting and decided in 1706 to open a coffee shop in The Strand selling tea which was well placed to sell to city gentry and business men.

In 1837, Queen Victoria granted Twinings its first Royal Warrant for tea – she appointed Twinings as supplier of teas to her household. Twinings has had the honour of supplying every successive British Monarch to date.

When World War II broke out, neither bombs nor rationing could halt the flow of morale-boosting cups of Twinings tea. Tea-rationing, which had been introduced the year before, also failed to damage the business.

Twinings continued to supply wartime Britain with tea. Twinings produced tea for Red Cross prisoner-of-war parcels, for the Women's Voluntary Service and for many YMCA wartime canteens.

We tasted four different types of tea and Lucy pointed out to us the subtle underlying flavours and tastes of each one which make Twinings tea unique and enjoyable.



Afternoon Tea is as sociably acceptable from the extravagant and luxurious afternoon tea at the Ritz to a cuppa from a flask on a construction site. Afternoon Tea began when the hostess used the best china and served tiny sandwiches and cakes and made polite chit-chat with friends. Even now though most tea lovers in Britain have their own rituals - the first cup of the day, the favourite mug, the method of stirring, tea first or milk first - which illustrate the comfort and peace that can be found in the familiar act of making the perfect cup of tea.

Tea bags were first introduced in 1956 and have become very popular and affordable but loose tea is regaining popularity with the introduction of infusions and new blends.

The afternoon was enjoyed by everyone and we learnt a great deal. When we now pop the tea bag in our cups we will think about the historical, cultural, and social benefits tea has brought to our lives and is, we are led to believe, healthy as well.

**Maureen Huntly**  
Educational Events Coordinator

## **EDUCATIONAL EVENTS**

### **TICKETS FOR SALE AT MONTHLY MEETING**

#### **'TALKS FOR ALL'**

**At WI Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh from 2pm - 4pm**

**Tickets - £2 to include Tea/Coffee and Biscuits**

**Trevor Carnforth - 'Life of an Auctioneer'**

**Monday 16th January 2017**

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**Paul Dunt, Editor of Rayleigh Review**

**'Cycling Across America'**

**Monday 6th February 2017**

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## **STUDY DAY**

**“Tercentenary of ‘Capability’ Brown - Landscaping in the Past,  
Present and Future”**

**WEDNESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2017**

**AT SAXON HALL**

**TICKETS - £20**

**Three well known speakers - Includes morning coffee and  
biscuits, a hot buffet lunch and afternoon tea with pastries**

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## **SPEAKERS AT FORTHCOMING MONTHLY MEETINGS**

**January: Keith Baldwin 'All the King's Horses and all the Queen's Men and Women'**

In his early days Keith was a soldier in the Household Cavalry and served for six years, gaining the rank of Corporal. He then joined the police service, retiring as a Superintendent – which he says was just slightly less important than being a Corporal and didn't involve too much work!

**February: Tom Corby 'Behind the scenes at Buckingham Palace'**

**March: Prof Pamela Cox – Essex University lecturer 'Servants – below stair'**

Dr. Cox, a senior lecturer in the sociology department, presented BBC2 show Servants: The True Story of Life Below Stairs. The programme depicted life in service as dramatised by popular shows such as Downton Abbey.

**April: Mike Benning 'Barney's Bobbies'**

Mike Benning was bored working for the Local Authority Legal Dept. so, after playing football and cricket with a group of Policemen, decided to join the Police Force. He became Chief Superintendent - in 2000 he was presented with the Queen's Police Medal. He has also written a book entitled 'Island Jogging'.

## GARDENING CORNER



After an extended autumn with superb leaf colour from some deciduous trees and shrubs, early December brought frosts with temperatures down to minus 5 for three nights. There are always problems regarding what is hardy, half-hardy or tender. The latter says it all and will die in frozen ground. Hardy will tolerate low temperatures with hard frosts and half-hardy will tolerate some frosts if not too severe.

**SALVIAS** are a typical half-hardy. When finished flowering, cut down to a foot and mulch around the base with small bark or rough compost. They are sun lovers and do best in open areas away from cold winds.

All spring bulbs should be in by now. If you have Gladioli in the ground, leave in situ and trim back any leaves or flower stems to about six inches, or leave to die down naturally which, if you can stand it, will at least remind you where they are! Again a mulch will give some protection to the bulbs if in a cold spot.

There has been a lot of Cyclamen on sale and perhaps this is the time to distinguish between the hardy and tender varieties. Unless the plants are marked, the small leafed types are the hardy ones and will flower on and off through the winter in half shade – preferably surrounded by small evergreen shrubs in a well-drained soil. Over the years they will expand to form mats, which can be in-planted with crocus (Spring and Autumn varieties), snowdrops etc. Keep weed free **and they will give years of pleasure.**

Good Gardening

**Brian Kersey**

01268 743959 or email [brianskersey@gmail.com](mailto:brianskersey@gmail.com)

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## CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2016

On Thursday 8th December 105 members attended the annual Christmas Lunch at The Westcliff Hotel, transported there in two coaches which left Websters Way promptly at noon and stopping at various points along the Eastwood Road to pick up members. When we arrived at the hotel we found The Windsor Suite looking very festive with the tables beautifully decorated. We were served a lovely meal and this year the coffee/tea was served at the table, as requested.

After the meal, there was the raffle and 9 members went home with a prize including a 3 course meal for 2, and 2 vouchers each for an afternoon tea for 2, kindly provided by the hotel. After this there was time for more chatting and milling around before heading for the coaches at 4.30pm.

I have had many favourable comments regarding the lunch and judging by the happy ambience, I think everyone enjoyed themselves. I wasn't happy that we had to queue to get our reception drinks, this didn't happen last year and hopefully won't again if we return next year, so much easier to have the drinks ready for people to help themselves. Apart from that hiccup, we had a very enjoyable afternoon.

## SOCIAL EVENT

The Social Committee are planning a night out for members at The Romford Dog Racing Stadium. This will be on Wednesday 15th February 2017. The price will be £21 per person and includes a two course meal and return coach travel. This has proved popular on a previous visit, you keep your table for the night and there is no pressure to bet if you don't wish to. There is a good view of the track and also several TV screens to keep an eye on your chosen dog or just come along and enjoy the ambience and a meal with friends somewhere different. The price is the same as 2 years ago, so offers good value. The coach will start in Hullbridge and make various pickups on the way, leaving to arrive in good time for the first race at 7.30pm. I will be taking bookings and payment at the January meeting, or before if you wish to be sure of a place by contacting me by email or phone.

**Jane Godfrey, Social Events Coordinator**

01268 781249/[jangra14@btinternet.com](mailto:jangra14@btinternet.com)

## NHS CONTINUING HEALTHCARE

If you know someone who is in need of care there is an alternative to local authority social services funding.

NHS continuing healthcare is free care for outside of hospital that is arranged and funded by the NHS. This means that you will receive care and support to meet your assessed needs at no cost to you.

### **Where can NHS continuing healthcare be provided?**

It can be provided in a variety of settings outside hospital, such as in your home or in a registered care home.

### **Eligibility**

You must be assessed by a team of healthcare professionals as having a “primary health need”.

### **Checklist Assessment**

For most people, there is an initial checklist assessment, which is used to decide if you need a full assessment. However, if you need care urgently – for example, if you’re terminally ill – your assessment may be fast-tracked.

### **Full Assessment**

This is undertaken by a team made up of a minimum of two health or care professionals who are already involved in your care. They will consider your needs under various headings and priorities.

If you have at least one priority need, or severe needs in at least two areas, you should be eligible for NHS continuing healthcare.

### **Care and support planning**

If you are eligible, the next stage is to arrange a care and support package. There are different options, including support in your own home and the option of a personal health budget, which enables you to manage your care in a way that suits you.

### **If you are not eligible**

If you are not eligible for healthcare but you are assessed as requiring nursing care in a care home, the NHS will pay a contribution towards the cost of your nursing care.

This is necessarily a brief introduction. Look further on the NHS website or the Which? Elderly Care website.

*David Fryer-Kelsey*

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## U3A MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you have not yet already renewed your Rayleigh U3A membership, and wish to do so, could you please return your form and cheque to me as soon as possible?

The **cut-off date for renewal is 31st January** and after this date I will assume that you will not be renewing your membership. We have a long waiting list of people wishing to join our U3A and new member application forms will be sent out at the beginning of February. The **Renewal Form for 2017** can be printed off from our website, situated on the right hand side of the Welcome Page. If you are having difficulty printing this, there will be some spare copies available at our January monthly meeting or you can contact me for advice.

**Gwen Greenwood**

Membership Secretary (01268 774882)

[gwen3a@btinternet.com](mailto:gwen3a@btinternet.com)



# Happy and Prosperous New Year



from

Group Coordinators: Heather Flemmings and David Fryer-Kelsey

At the U3A Meeting in November two new Groups were mentioned. We are pleased to report that the Bridge Club will be running in January.

Also we wanted to kick off Serendipity 6, a few people have put their name down and the general opinion was that it should not have coach trips.

When we were at the National Conference this year, the general advice given for the way ahead was to encourage members to be more proactive in helping each other. We have already carried this out in a couple of our walking groups, and we have members taking it in turns to suggest a walk and lead it. They will of course get support where necessary from the group.

In February we hope to hold a meeting of Serendipity 6 members. Group Leaders from Serendipity 4 & 5 will be there to advise and support. If you are interested in joining this new group, we would love to hear from you.

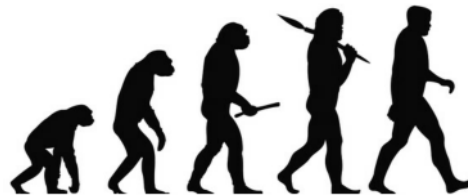
## New Year Resolutions

*Have you a hobby or interest. Why not share it with our members?*

*The U3A is a self-help organisation that requires all members to contribute to make it a success.*

*It's true that you can learn by teaching others.*

*Look forward to meeting you at our desk.*



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## TEN PIN BOWLING GROUP

The Ten Pin Bowling Group meets on the 2nd Monday in the month at 2pm. We are a small friendly group but our numbers have dwindled due to dodgy hips, knees, backs etc. so we would like to welcome some new members. We used to bowl at C.J.'s in Hockley, but that has been closed for some time due to a fire. Then we tried The Kursaal, but that was not popular, so now we plan to try the facilities at The Basildon Festival Leisure Park until such time that we can return to the local venue. If you would like to join us (varying levels of skill!) please contact me as I have now taken over as Group Leader, as Bob Wren has moved to pastures new. We meet next on Monday, 9th January.

GRAHAM GODFREY

Phone: 01268 781249 or email: [jangra14@btinternet.com](mailto:jangra14@btinternet.com)

# ADVANCE NOTICE

## THE TENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RAYLEIGH U3A

will take place on Thursday, 6th April, 2017

at

Mill Hall, Rayleigh

commencing at 2.00 p.m., followed by our speaker

**MIKE BENNING: 'Barney's Bobbies'**

A copy of the Minutes of the AGM 2016 will be displayed on the noticeboard at the January, February and March Meetings, and are also available to view on the website.

There are vacancies on the Committee as follows:-

**Chairman**

**Vice Chairman**

**Secretary**

**Committee Members (various roles, including Social Events Co-ordinator and a Representative for the Educational Events Sub-Committee chaired by Maureen Huntly)**

Nomination Forms must be returned to the Secretary, Jackie Soilleux by Friday 10th March 2017.

Any motion which you would like to raise at the AGM, that needs a Proposer and Seconder, should also be submitted to the Secretary by 10th March 2017.

### NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY JANUARY 2017

I would like to bring to your attention the forthcoming events and information notified to me by the U3A Trust. The full information/booking forms on these items can be found on the U3A Trust website at [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) or [info@u3a.org.uk](mailto:info@u3a.org.uk); telephone 020 8466 6139 or please feel free to telephone me on 01702 552426 or email at [jsoilleux88@gmail.com](mailto:jsoilleux88@gmail.com). Information will also appear in the Third Age Matters magazine, in addition to being displayed on the Secretary's Notice Board at Members' Meetings.

#### Mughal India: Art and Culture

U3A is privileged to be invited by The British Library Knowledge Centre Theatre to discover Mughal India at this study day, exclusive to U3A members.

*Maximum 2 tickets per applicant. Tickets £25 to include morning tea/coffee. Lunch not provided.*

Ruling South & parts of Central Asia from 1526-1858, the Mughal dynasty became one of the most powerful and opulent empires the world has ever known. Remembered through a rich artistic and cultural heritage including exquisite paintings, manuscripts and architecture, the British Library has assembled six key speakers to explore the art and culture of Mughal India - a world of beauty and exquisite craftsmanship.

**DATE & TIME: MONDAY, 27th MARCH, 2017. 10.45 - 16.00pm. LOCATION – THE BRITISH LIBRARY, NW1 2DA**

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

9th March – National Gallery, Dutch Painting Study Day

16th March – Royal Institution, Spring Meeting

Bookings in New Year

## Serendipity 5 visits the Royal Opera House - Bob White

In November Serendipity 5 paid a visit to the Royal Opera House, not the Opera House in Covent Garden but the High House Production Park in Purfleet, amid beautifully landscaped gardens. The Production Workshop and Costume Centre are a fascinating and an inspiring place to discover the skills behind theatre and costume construction and design. The enormous, purpose-built Production Workshop is home to scene painters, carpenters and metalworkers. Here they turn the designers visions into reality, creating the many different sets that appear in the ballets and operas performed on the stages of the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden and Birmingham.

We first visited the Costume Centre to see some of the magnificent costumes that had been made for past productions. Costumes are kept for not only the life of the production, but for many years after, for subsequent revivals. Consequently the costumes need to be made in such a way that they are able to be adjusted to accommodate the varying shapes and sizes of future divas. We then moved on to the Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop.

The workshop, which opened in 2011, is dedicated to making the scenes and famous sets that are used in Royal Opera House productions. The workshop was purpose-built specifically for the Royal Opera House, and designed to accommodate the set and scenery of several productions at once. It has an Eco friendly grass roof with natural lighting supplemented by computer controlled fluorescent tubes to maintain an even light source in the workshop whatever the conditions outside. It features a production area as large as the Covent Garden stage, allowing the creative team to fully construct the set before it is transferred to London.



Before any construction begins, the designer produces feasibility models of the sets to ensure that their ideas are viable. It's also important that the sets can be broken down to manageable sections for transportation to the theatre. Most of the sets are made from timber or fibreglass fixed to steel frames. The sets are huge, some larger than a house, so transportation and assembly can be a real issue. All construction is undertaken in house, so an army of skilled artisans are always on hand.

After lunch, we were taken to a training workshop, and after a short talk on costume design and how fabrics should enhance the dancers' movements we were divided into small groups and assigned the



task of designing some of the costumes for the Sleeping Beauty Ballet. Each group was given a wooden mannequin about two feet high, a host of different fabrics, beads, fasteners and an assortment of tools. After some hesitation, but with help and encouragement from our guides, each group got to work designing and producing an assortment of costumes to dress the mannequins. It was surprising how much discussion ensued as to the use of appropriate colours and choice of fabrics for the different costumes. It soon became apparent that colour and the type of fabric used have a huge effect on the appearance. The photo shows our masterpieces and maybe not couture, but not bad for a bunch of wrinklies.