

Rayleigh



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Newsletter Edition – No.56 – July 2013
This Month's Meeting Thursday 4th July
Guest Speaker – Bernard Lockett – 'London Belongs to Me'

FROM THE CHAIR

I was surprised that another year has gone by, as again, I am writing this article on holiday in Spain. At least the weather is `hot and sunny` and after the long cold and wet English winter and spring I am at last feeling warm. I wish all of you who are going away this summer the best of weather and a happy and safe holiday.

The U3A holiday to Nantwich, led by David and Linda Clarke, was a success and despite the adverse weather they all enjoyed the company of friends and seeing a beautiful part of the country. With regard to this Newsletter, our new team of editors only agreed to take on this task on condition that it is produced bi-monthly so expect the next issue in July, September, November and January, etc. Your Committee are also trying to reduce costs by cutting back on postage and distribution of the Newsletters. As from September we will have hard copies for those NOT on internet available for collection at our monthly meeting at the Mill Hall. If you are unable to collect your copy at the monthly meeting, don't worry, all copies not collected will be posted to you after the meeting. So you are not disadvantaged by this new distribution method, all ticket sales for events, outings, holidays, etc. will be posted on the blackboard in the Mill Hall at our monthly meeting. Your Committee understands there may be objections to this new method of distribution and we have agreed to review this decision after the issue of next January's Newsletter. If you have any comments, please speak to a member of the Committee or put a signed note in the suggestion box.

Finally there will be no monthly meeting in August so we will meet together again on Thursday 5th September. I trust you will all enjoy a pleasant summer.

David Sheffield
Chairman, Rayleigh U3A

Speaker for our July meeting

At our meeting on July 4th our Speaker will be **Bernard Lockett**.
Bernard is an author, but his talk is entitled -
'Reflections of growing up in post-war East London'
and in his talk he compares this to later times (1970 to 2010)

A Visit to Beeleigh Abbey in Maldon

In May members of the Local History group paid a visit to Beeleigh Abbey, a district of Maldon situated about a mile from the town centre off London Road in deep rural Essex. The name Beeleigh being derived from the keeping of bees and the production of honey and Leigh from the old English `Leah` meaning a wooded clearing (within a forest).

The Abbey was founded in 1180 by a strict Premonstratensian order and constructed by 8 `canons` and a Bishop. Having no indigenous stone all materials had to be imported and ferried probably via the Chelmer which runs at the bottom of the grounds and one can only marvel at the skills still visible in what remains of the Abbey. Sadly little survived the vandalism of Henry the V111's reformation. Items from some excavations however indicated that the area was populated as early as the bronze age.

The surviving building is split into three parts constructed about 1270. The Calle-Factory which had a fine vaulted ceiling resting on three pillars which looked like marble but were in fact crushed polished shells, an oak dining table some 20 or so feet long and a superb inglenook fireplace. This was a place where the canons met to dine and keep warm. The middle was the `parlour` somewhat austere where they met to talk informally about any problems or just chat. Both here and in the Calle-Factory there is evidence the walls were highly decorated. A very modern stained glass window was made depicting a pictorial history of the characters of the Abbey from its inception to the present. A post card of this will be at our Local History table but it is too small to show the very bottom which had names of famous visitors to the Abbey – two I remember were George Bernard Shaw and Charlie Chaplin. The third section was the chapter house which housed a splendid organ which we were informed was played by the composer Handel, our guide a little tongue in cheek proposed he composed his `largo` there. One of us was invited to play the largo on the organ but sadly there were no volunteers. One of the bishops of the order was to become a saint – one Roger Niger, he was given to the Abbey as a new born by a couple thought to be as thanks but most likely they could not afford to keep him. He must have been exceptional because he became Bishop of the Abbey and eventually Bishop of London and witnessed the signing of the Magna Carta, his shrine was destroyed along with the Abbey. His exploits and fame however seem to have been lost in the mists of time but there are moves to try and establish his position in history and his place in Beeleigh. Our guide enlightened us with many facts of jealousy, rivalry, political intrigue and beheading as well as the many owners of the Abbey, its several rise and falls into decay.



Our guide then took us to the library where a fine collection of books were exhibited, tea caddies and boxes mainly made of tortoiseshell and many items in ivory. In a glass table there was a collection of 10 beautifully fine tooled leather bound books inlaid with oval miniatures and were very valuable. We were informed the current owner Christopher and Catherine Foyle, the nephew of the original Foyle, not only purchased the property but also attended the auction of the original book sale, what we saw was 40% of the original collection but only represented 5% of the value. (As an aside I visited a 90 year old friend in hospital and told him of my visit and as a supervisor of the old telephone exchange he had an occasion to visit the Abbey. When he had concluded his business a gentleman asked him if he would like to see the library and not only showed him the original collection but selected a script to show him written in hand by Shakespeare, obviously the original William Foyle.) One can only wonder what was lost to the nation at that sale. A quick visit to the bed chamber where the Bishops' quarters housed a large fireplace which was unusual as he was supposed to live in austerity like the canons, we were entertained at this point by stories of ghosts.

We then retired to the marquee for a welcome hot drink and a lovely selection of cakes which concluded the visit. We were then free to explore the gardens and what we saw of the work done by the present owner along with gardener Chris Cork and estate manager Ed Joslin was impressive. It was too cold and windy to venture further; a visit in warmer weather would make a very worthwhile day out to explore the gardens and grounds more fully.

An excellent day out despite the weather.
Brian Dennis

ARE YOU CERTAIN YOUR LOCAL RESTAURANT IS SAFE?

I was interested to hear on BBC Essex radio that the Food Standards Agency publishes the results of their Food Hygiene Rating Scheme on the Web.

The scheme helps you choose where to eat out or shop for food by giving you information about the hygiene standards in restaurants, pubs, cafes, takeaways, hotels and other places you eat, as well as supermarkets and other food shops. It's not easy to judge hygiene standards on appearance alone, so the rating gives you an idea of what's going on in the kitchen, or behind closed doors. You can check the ratings and use the information to switch to or choose a place with higher standards. It's also good to share this information with friends and family. The scheme also encourages businesses to improve hygiene standards.

The food hygiene rating reflects the hygiene standards found at the time the business is inspected by a food safety officer. These officers are specially trained to assess food hygiene standards.

A business can be given one of these ratings:

- 0 Urgent improvement necessary
- 1 Major improvement necessary
- 2 Improvement necessary
- 3 Generally satisfactory
- 4 Good
- 5 Very Good



The rating given shows how well the business is doing overall but also takes account of the element or elements most in need of improving and also the level of risk to people's health that these issues pose. This is because some businesses will do well on some areas and less well in others but each of the three elements checked is essential for making sure that food hygiene standards meet requirements and the food served or sold to you is safe to eat. To get the top rating of '5', businesses must do well in all three elements. Those with ratings of '0' are very likely to be performing poorly in all three elements and are likely to have a history of serious problems. There may, for example, be a lack of sufficient cleaning and disinfection, and there may not be a good enough system of management in place to make sure the food is safe.

A food business does not have to show its rating, so if you see a business without a hygiene sticker or certificate, you'll have to decide if you want to eat or buy food from there without knowing the hygiene standards. Putting a hygiene rating on show is a good advertisement for businesses that meet the requirements of food hygiene law. A good food hygiene rating is good for business.

If you are interested in checking your area, go to <http://www.food.gov.uk>
Click on 'Eating Out' under the Interactive panel on the right. Check the hygiene rating.
There are seven establishments in the Rochford/Rayleigh area with a rating of 1 or 0

David Fryer-Kelsey

Notes from the Secretary – July 2013

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

The full information on this item, can be found on the U3A Trust website at

www.u3a.org.uk or feel free to telephone me on 01702 473110 or email mhayesghayes@talktalk.net.

The full information will also be displayed on the Secretaries Notice Board at the Members meeting in July.

Globe Exhibition and Tour - Enjoy a visit tailored especially for U3A Groups. Dates available in October and November 2013 plus January and February 2014.

Shakespeare's Globe is a faithful reconstruction of the open-air Bankside playhouse first built in 1599, where Shakespeare worked and for which he wrote many of his greatest plays.

Your visit includes a guided tour of the Globe Theatre, and to the nearby site of The Rose, Bankside's first playhouse.

You can explore the Globe Exhibition, where you will enjoy a demonstration of dressing in Elizabethan-style attire.

Then you can enjoy refreshments overlooking the Thames.

ILHA DESERTA

Most people who go to the Algarve region of Portugal for their holidays go to play golf or to savour the glorious beaches, but I know of one of our U3A members who saw it as an opportunity to 'recce' yet another walk. This 'recce' was different in that it took a forty minute catamaran journey to reach Ilha Deserta (Portuguese for a deserted island), which is part of the Ria Formosa Natural Park and the most southerly point of Portugal. On disembarking from the catamaran we were on our own except for the wild life around us, both flora and fauna.



The Island is a stopping off point for some of the main species of migratory birds, which coming from the north of Europe, find a miniature paradise in which to recuperate themselves before continuing their journey to tropical Africa. We were lucky enough to see many of these birds, such as plovers, godwits, widgeons and terns. We stopped to admire the unusual flora – the lizards, other strange insects and many brightly coloured butterflies. There is so much to see that is unique that you could easily forget why you came to the island. An ancient boardwalk took us from one side of the Island to the other and after three hours of walking in the heat I thought it necessary to take a break and as you can see from the photo I could do no better than to sit on the planks of the boardwalk – just like the migratory

birds I needed to recuperate. The recce was not completed as we had to catch the catamaran back to the mainland so Walking Group One will not be undertaking this walk in the foreseeable future.

Liz Baker

THE PEMBROKESHIRE COAST

Three members of the Rayleigh U3A and one other spent a week at Broad Haven on the Pembrokeshire coast. We went in May to see the wild flowers which cover the cliffs at this time of year. Although everything was much later this year, the wild flowers did not disappoint us. The wild orchids deserve a special mention and a photograph.

Another highlight of the week was seeing puffins on Skomer Island, no photo as it was very wet and windy on that day. We were lucky to have one whole day without rain. This gave us the opportunity to walk on the beautiful deserted beaches and appreciate, along with professional photographers, the stunning sunsets.

I will always remember my first visit to Pembrokeshire. I thought that the cliffs along the coastal path looked like a large rockery that someone had spent a long time designing. This trip would certainly be worth a visit in May.

Julie Reader



Visit to St. Lawrence Jewry next Guildhall in the City of London

In 2007 the Rayleigh U3A started with a group of fourteen people and they formed the first Interest Group, 'Essex Church Visiting Group' guided by Group Leader Marian Allen. Six years later and we have visited interesting ancient and modern Churches, The Retreat House at Pleshey, a Convent, Monastery, lovingly restored Churches by Friends of Friendless Churches, Abbeys, a Mosque and a Synagogue, to name but a few. We have ventured to our Capital City and seen the wonders of Southwark Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral and more.

A recent Church visit took us to St. Lawrence Jewry next Guildhall where we were given an interesting tour and talk by the Reverend David Parrott who left Holy Trinity Church, Rayleigh in 2009 to become the new Vicar of St. Lawrence Jewry. This Church was built in 1136 and destroyed by the great fire of London in 1666. A new Church was built in 1677 by Sir Christopher Wren but destroyed by incendiary bombs in December 1940. The present Church was rebuilt 1954-57 capturing the spirit of Wren's original design creating a feeling of harmony and calm.



The Church is a Guild not a parish Church responsible for the official life of the Corporation of London. The Lord Mayor's pew is front right of the centre aisle.

We were privileged to arrive on the first day of the Organ Concerts for 2013 and some of us enjoyed listening to 22 year old Jemima Stephenson playing Johann Sebastian Bach 'Prelude and Fugue in D'

.Maureen Huntly

A SPECIAL U3A WALK

Roger`s arranged a special walk
for all the U3A
most of us are going
it should be a wonderful day

Maureen and Pete Huntly cannot go
they have something else to do
opening sister U3As
in Warsaw and Timbuktu

Progress on the walk is slow
we are really in a fix
we keep losing Keith in the undergrowth
because he`s only three foot six

Don has slowed us even more
we all give him dirty looks
he insisted on coming today
and carrying all his books

The whole walk has turned into a farce
we really are a rabble
Sue Taylor`s practising her Tai Chi
and Margaret Bristow`s playing scrabble

Roger`s getting really stressed
and swigs down a statin
Olive`s drunk on real ale
and Dave Filby`s spouting Latin

Roger`s starting to shout now
Bob Wren does not heed his calls
Bob being our bowling man
keeps juggling with his balls

Linda Clarke wants to cultivate a garden
whilst Liz wants to run away
Irene Stokes is picking flowers
and is trying to make a bouquet

Irene Tyson`s doing calligraphy
Laurie`s watching birds on the wing
David Sheffield is playing crib
and Stella`s doing a highland fling

We are travelling very slowly
it will soon be dark we fear
we are now travelling at a snail`s pace
but Beryl still brings up the rear

It is now totally pitch black
but David Fryer-Kelsey really is a toff
we navigate our way to safety
following David`s cough

Roger`s been put in a straight jacket
and locked up with the loonies
Liz needs constant support
and has joined up with the moonies

When we get back to Rayleigh
everybody talks
we decide it was all good fun
and just one of our normal walks

Anon



Groups/Group Leaders:

Acoustic Guitar	Vera Ward	01268 755040
Antiques/Collectables	Sheila Read	01268 778926
Archaeology	Ian Haynes	01268 779749
Art Appreciation	Barbara Curry	01268 775460
Art Water Colours	Sylvia Lester	01268 774201
Bird Watching	Laurie Denney	01702 615370
Book Reading 1	Doreen Blake	01268 774871
Book Reading 2	Marian Allen	01268 743339
Book Reading 3	Margaret White	01268 779709
Calligraphy	Irene Tyson	01268 742942
Canasta	Chris & Dave Towell	01702 528937
Ceramics	Brenda Perrott	01268 779590
Conversational French	Yvonne Poole	01702.521160
Crib Club	David Sheffield	01268 743586
Digital Photography	Brian Kersey	01268 743959
Drama	Joanne Baker	01268 742252
Family History - Beginners	Terry Taylor	01268 786405
Family History 1	Sue Taylor	01268 786405
Family History 2	Pete Huntly	01268 777398
Family History 3	Barbara Dale	01268 772018
Flower Arranging	Irene Stokes	01268 774564
Gardening - Slide Shows	Linda Clarke	01702 204559
Golf	Chris Towell	01702 528937
History - Local	Heather Flemmings/ David Fryer-Kelsey	01702 203455
History – Essex Social Group 1	David Carlton	01268 452791
Group 3	Joan Anderson	01268 774985
Industrial Awareness	Janet Carlton	01268 452791
Keep Fit	Iris McMillan	01268 784754
Knit & Natter	Doreen Oliver	01268 743082
Laptop 1	Frank Bodey	01268 733616
Laptop 2	Bob White	01268 779709
Medicine & Science	Maureen Huntly	01268 777398
Mid Week Lunch	Irene Carter	01268 766149
Music Appreciation	Margaret Bristow	
Music Appreciation 2	Les Geale	01702 206966
Papercrafts	David Sawyer	01268 774416
Poetry	Anne Windle	01268 928961
Points of View	Marian Allen	01268 743339
Psychology	John Edwards	01268 747208
Real Ale Group	Linda Robson	01702 555185
Rummikub	Dave Filby	01268 770023
Scrabble	Linda Tull & Julie Reader	01702 478649
Serendipity 1	Margaret Bristow	
Serendipity 2	Linda & David Clarke	01702 204559
Serendipity 3	Pam & Keith Dunt	01702 201747
Serendipity 4	Pat & John Pomfrett	01702 230253
Singing for Health & Pleasure	Sue & Mike Cairns, Maureen Hayes & Peter Britton	01268 743497 01702 473110 01268 777525
Strolling	Joanne Baker	01268 742252
Sunday Lunch	Connie Walker	01702 202225
T'ai Chi	Maureen Goss	01268 777681
Tenpin Bowling	Linda Robson	01702 555185
Theatre	Alan Hudson	01702 202158
	Bob Wren	01702 525311
	Jean Mackenzie	01268 510570
	Helena Maxwell	01268 772061
	Sandra Wilson	01268 775184

Visiting Essex Churches

Group 1 Marian Allen	01268 743339
Group 2 Elizabeth Baker	01702 331166
Group 3 Brenda Perrott	01268 779590
Group 4 Jan Churchill	01702 510296
Walking 1 Roger Baker	01702 331166 07929792846
Walking 2 Les Poole	01268 773174
Walking 3 Maureen Hayes	01702 473110
Wine Appreciation Harry Brickwood	01268 743838

Educational Events Committee

Last year a dedicated group of people worked tirelessly to bring together talented speakers on a variety of subjects for your interest and enjoyment with a "Festival of Words" Study Day providing a full day of what one of the Speakers called 'educational fun'.

We brought you six afternoon speakers with subjects ranging from Forensic Science to Influential Men and Women in History. This year the Educational Events Committee are investigating ideas for the 2013/14 series of talks from the list put forward by those who enjoyed the previous talks.

Look to the Events Calendar for the announcements and when tickets will be on sale so that you don't miss out. We could be finding out about Southend through the eyes of a newspaper Editor or how the many Livery Companies evolved in London.

Tickets for our Study Day on 6th November at Saxon Hall this year entitled "Victorian London" are selling fast.

Full details can be found on the Events page on our website at www.rayleighu3a.org.uk
Pete Huntley

Social Events Committee

Rayleigh U3A is known locally for being innovative, friendly and 'the U3A you need to belong to'.

In early June a group of enthusiastic members met together as the Social Events Committee. They are not only talented and experienced in organising events but willing to give up time to put together what will be a varied, exciting and enjoyable programme including different 'Social Occasions' for all our members to join in and experience.

So keep an eye on the Newsletter and look out for announcements at the Monthly Meetings about forthcoming events. Full details will also be included on the Events page on our website at www.rayleighu3a.org.uk
Maureen Huntley

GROUP ACTIVITY CALENDAR – Normal day on which each Group meets monthly.		
Mondays	1 st Monday	Art 1 (Watercolours); Ceramics; Family History 1 & Beginners; Laptop Computing 1; T'ai Chi Visiting Essex Churches 4
	2 nd Monday	Crib Club (evenings); T'ai Chi ; Tenpin Bowling; Visiting Essex Churches 1
	3 rd Monday	Antiques ; Laptop Computing 2; T'ai Chi ; Visiting Essex Churches 2 & 3
	4 th Monday	Canasta (evenings); T'ai Chi
Tuesdays	1 st Tuesday	Birdwatching; Digital Photography;
	2 nd Tuesday	Golf; Knit & Natter; Poetry; Wine Appreciation (evenings)
	3 rd Tuesday	Birdwatching
	4 th Tuesday	Conversational French; Midweek Luncheon
Wednesdays	1 st Wednesday	Drama; Walking 1
	2 nd Wednesday	Archaeology; Golf (May, June, August); Scrabble; Essex Social History 3
	3 rd Wednesday	Crib Club; Drama; Golf (April, July & September); Local History ; Real Ale; Serendipity 3;
	4 th Wednesday	Calligraphy; Family History 2; Music Appreciation 1 & 2
Thursdays	1 st Thursday	U3A Monthly Meeting
	2 nd Thursday	Acoustic Guitar; Essex Social History 2; Knit & Natter ; Rummikub (Eve); Serendipity 1 & 2 Theatre
	3 rd Thursday	Book Reading 1; Papercrafts ; Points of view ; Serendipity 4
	4 th Thursday	Art Appreciation; Essex Social History 1; Family History 3; Psychology; Strolling
Fridays	1 st Friday	Keep Fit;
	2 nd Friday	Book Reading 2; Keep Fit.
	3 rd Friday	Book Reading 3; Flower Arranging; Keep Fit;
	4 th Friday	Keep Fit; Walking 2.
Saturdays	Currently no Groups	
Sundays	2 nd Sunday	Sunday Lunch

Please note dates may vary more with some groups than others, particularly with coach trips and other outdoor activities.

Check with Group Leaders' for Golf, Ind. Awareness, Medicine & Science, Serendipity, Theatre (usually Fridays).

PLEASE ALWAYS CHECK THE DATE OF YOUR NEXT MEETING WITH YOUR GROUP LEADER

A message to all Group Leaders from our Webmaster

Just over a year ago I added brief details about each Activity Group on the Rayleigh U3A website. This was based on the details published in the Activity Groups Booklet.

Could I ask each Group Leader to check on the website at www.rayleighu3a.org.uk that these details are correct and up-to-date and if not email me an update at pa.huntly@btinternet.com, please. For those of you who are not on email please drop me a line at 9, Gilbert Close, Rayleigh, SS6 8QR or ring me on 01268 777398.

As I mentioned at the Group Leader's Days this year I can provide each of you with access to your own Group Page so you can edit the page yourself. Full instructions will be provided and it is a fairly simple and straightforward process. Please let me know if you would like to have access to your own page.

Pete Huntly

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman: David Sheffield
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Vice Chairman: Pete Huntly
(also gift aid and study day and educational activities coordinator & webmaster)
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Social Activities Co-ordinator: Maureen Huntly
maureenhuntly@btinternet.com 01268 777398

STOP PRESS

Dates for your Diary - Educational Events

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

Wednesday, 6th Nov Study Day on "Victorian London" at Saxon Hall. Tickets on sale at the Monthly Meetings £15 incl Coffee, Buffet Lunch and Afternoon Tea and Pastries. Programme of speakers to be publicised at the May Meeting

Series of talks to be held at the WI Hall Rayleigh Subjects to be announced

2013

Monday, 7th Oct Half Day Talk (2 -4pm)
Monday, 21st Oct Half Day Talk (2 - 4pm)
Monday, 4th Nov Half Day Talk (2 - 4pm)
Monday, 18th Nov Half Day Talk (2 - 4pm)

2014

Monday, 3rd Feb Half Day Talk (2 - 4pm)
Monday, 17th Feb Half Day Talk (2 - 4pm)

Social Events – Contact – Maureen Huntly
maureenhuntly@btinternet.com
01268 777398

Saturday, 19th Oct Quiz Night at Holy Trinity Hall
Friday, 6th Dec Christmas Lunch at Saxon Hall

Additional events are being planned and will be published in the September Newsletter or beforehand on our website.

Following Month's Speaker

Lucinda Hawksley – Charles Dickens (September)



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 10th of the month preceding the normal monthly meeting (e.g. 10th August for the September edition). Please cooperate with us in this regard.

Even more important, however, is the need for you to contribute articles and photos which you think will be of interest to your fellow U3A members to read so that your Newsletter can be successful.

Please send articles for inclusion to –

**Liz and Roger Baker – rogerbaker99@hotmail.co.uk
Irene and John Tyson – jatyson1@aol.com**