

Rayleigh



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Newsletter Edition – No.55 – May 2013
This Month's Meeting Thursday 9th May
Guest Speaker – Jules Pretty – 'The Luminous Coast'

LETTER FROM YOUR NEW EDITORS

As of this month, your new editorial team has taken over from Janet and David Carlton the production of Rayleigh U3A's Newsletter. Janet and David's splendid work as editors over the past 5 years is a hard task to follow, but we shall do our best to provide you regularly with a Newsletter that is both informative and interesting. We are grateful to David and Janet for the many hours they have put in during the past few months to educate and train us in the nuances of newsletter production, and we shall follow their example much of the time. However, the passing over to us of the Newsletter baton does offer the opportunity to take a fresh look at how the Newsletter is presented and what it should contain.

The Newsletter is of course written for the benefit of Rayleigh U3A's membership as a whole. Whilst the individual Groups in our U3A are at the core of our organisation, communications within the membership of an individual group are best done directly by the Group leader rather than through the medium of the Newsletter. Nevertheless, the Newsletter is a forum for Groups to make known to the Rayleigh U3A membership as a whole, the activities they have benefited from and those they have planned. In particular, we would welcome Group members writing articles for publication in the Newsletter about activities they have enjoyed and which they believe will interest members generally. Tell us about the places you have visited - not just their history but what makes them memorable - or perhaps the wines you have tasted and appreciated, or the archaeological successes you have had. What about sharing the poems you have enjoyed, or telling us about the unusual birds you have seen. Perhaps the calligraphers and photographers among you could show us work you are proud of. There must be a story behind the antiques you have been studying, or the history - both local and social - that you have unearthed. What about a review of a play you have just seen or a book you have been reading? There is no end to what you can write about - an end in itself for those of you with literary talents. We hope that in the coming months you will be motivated to send us articles for publication that will make your Newsletter an interesting read that members will look forward to receiving. The Newsletter will of course continue to be used for announcements from members of the Committee of relevance to the membership at large.

We are looking forward to editing your Newsletter. Please help us by letting us have any input that could be of interest to your fellow U3A members.

Irene and John Tyson

Liz and Roger Baker

From The Chair

This report will be shorter than usual (thank goodness, I hear you say!) as you would have heard most of my news if you attended our 6th Rayleigh U3A A.G.M. last month. Thank you all for attending and thanks for re-electing me Chairman for another year. My personal thanks go to all the other Officers and Committee members who are willing to put up with me for another year.

As you know, Rayleigh U3A has 448 Members for this year and I was pleased to welcome 47 New Members to our 'Open Morning' on the 10th April. They had an introduction to U3A and many were able to join an activity Group of their choice. We also had New Members willing to start up new Groups such as, Conversational French and Music Appreciation. I am hoping to set up a system whereby New Members will have their own designated representative on the main Committee who will champion their cause. Don't forget, there is always the suggestion box at our monthly meetings, if you have any ideas or suggestions for improvements. We do ask you to sign them, as after we have debated your suggestion at our Committee meeting we like to give you a personal reply.

Let's look forward to the year ahead. The Rayleigh U3A holiday season is under way with Roger Baker leading a group of 47 walkers to Wales. Later in the year Linda and David Clarke are taking their Serendipity Group to Cheshire for a week. I do hope they have better weather than we have experienced lately. Fred Carter's day trip to Highgrove Gardens in September is already over - subscribed.

Just a reminder, if you have any clean books, please donate them to our book stall held most months at our monthly meeting.

Finally, do introduce yourself to me or other members of the Committee at our monthly meetings as we do want to get to know you and listen to your views.

David Sheffield

Chairman Rayleigh U3A

Notes from the Secretary – May 2013

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

The full information on any of these items, 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 Secretary's Notice Board at the Members meeting.

- The Third Age Trust's National Conference and AGM at Nottingham 13th – 16th September 2013.
- The latest Jazz Appreciation Newsletter.
- Places still available at the Harper Adams Summer School 15th – 18th July
- The BBC is looking for contestants for the next series of Mastermind - email mastermind@bbc.co.uk

A SPECIAL WINDOW ON CANVEY ISLAND

Our Church Visiting Group recently made a return visit to the parish church of Canvey Island, St. Nicholas. We had been invited back by the charismatic Caribbean rector of St. Nicholas, the Revd. David Tudor, to view the new impressive west window which had just been dedicated following a year in its making.

The window is about 40ft. in height and is made up from 1,038 individual shards of glass of different colours to form a 'Tree of Life', each shard symbolising one of the leaves of the tree. It cost £110,000 which was financed by members of the Canvey community, and will serve as a timeless memento to the people of the Island. Some 716 shards have been sponsored and have been engraved with the name and date as a tribute to a loved one or in celebration of an important event. The firing of the glass makes the engraving a permanent feature that cannot be removed. The remaining 322 shards have been left plain to represent the remainder of the community.



We visited the church on a sunny day and saw the window at its magnificent best. The coloured glass seemed to shine and shimmer in the sunlight, and as the sun shines through the window, it gives the illusion that the tree is moving.

The artist behind the project is John Bray and his idea was to illustrate how people can be brought together and provide them with a memento which will hopefully last forever.

The window is undoubtedly a work of art which the people of Canvey will treasure.

Elizabeth Baker

Group Leader

Church Visiting Group Two

Knit and Natter – Doreen Oliver - Group Leader

I would like to let U3A members know that since starting our Knit and Natter Group, we have completed 9 blankets (made from 6 inch knitted squares)



Any spare wool or yarn (4ply – double knitting) can be given to Doreen Oliver on the Book Stall at the monthly meetings. Many Thanks!!

New members welcome, bring your own knitting, or other crafts, or help with the squares, or just come for a natter!

There is no meeting for Knit and Natter in May

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP - David Fryer-Kelsey

Group Leader

Get all the latest details of the group on our blog

<http://lhgu3arayleigh.blogspot.com>

We visit Beeleigh Abbey near Maldon on **Wednesday 15th May 2013**. This visit includes the house as well as the grounds. The cost is £16.50 per person.

This visit is fully booked.

For our June visit we take a coach to Stowmarket to see the Museum of East Anglian Life. The cost is £19.00 per person which covers the coach fare, a gratuity for the coach driver and entrance to the museum. **Wednesday 19th June 2013** from Kirbys Coaches depot.

This visit is fully booked.

On **Wednesday 17th July 2013** we visit Gravesend via Tilbury. Drive past the docks to the ferry landing stage and park there. The ferry runs every 30 minutes and costs £2.00 for an off-peak return. Walk up the High Street towards the St. George's shopping centre and look out for the Information Centre. There we will meet our guide and start the tour. The River Thames has been important to Gravesend since Roman times. Chalk also played an important part being quarried for agricultural and building purposes.

Pocahontas, the native American Indian princess, was buried in St George's church and there is a statue of her in the churchyard. The riverside has several old pubs with smuggling associations. The Town Pier has a restaurant and a viewing platform with a great view of the busy Thames. The Blockhouse is an old fort overlooking the river and contains the oldest building in Gravesend, the Milton Chantry with many displays and artifacts. The Riverside Leisure area gives an excellent point to view shipping. There has been a large Sikh community here since the turn of the 20th century and they have built a magnificent new temple, The Gurdwara, which non-Sikhs are allowed to visit, with due respect regarding covering the head and removing footwear.

There are large covered shopping areas in the town centre along with traditional shops and many fine eating places. Enjoy a leisurely exploration before returning to the ferry. The cost of the guide is £2.50

Book and pay at our table by the bar at the monthly U3A meetings in the Mill Hall.

Cheques made payable to Rayleigh U3A

Tenpin Bowling

Although Alan Hudson was unable to join us at our last meeting, due to ill health, 20 members attended, even though it was still Easter school holidays. We wish Alan a

speedy recovery and hope he will be able to join us at next months meeting. BOB WREN 01702 525311

Theatre Group

Would all members going to The Mill at Sonning on 4th July pay their balance of £30.50 per person either before or at the May meeting please. Cheques to be made payable to Rayleigh U3A with their address on the back as usual and either sent to Helena or taken to the theatre table at the meeting. Also to please let us know where you will be picking up the coach.

"Chorus Line" – Sandra has one ticket to sell. Anyone interested in seeing this show in London, by coach, on 22nd May, to get in touch with her.

Would all members going to "Chorus Line" or "The Bodyguard" please collect their tickets from the Theatre table at the meeting.

Jean Mackenzie, 750 Kings Park, Canvey Island, SS8 8QS.
Tel: 01268 510570/07719800733.

E-mail – j.mackenzie123@btinternet.com

Helena Maxwell, 5 Warwick Close, Rayleigh, SS6 8PH.
Tel: 01268 772061/07952574907.

E-mail – maxbox@talktalk.net.

Sandra Wilson, 1 Katherine Close, Rayleigh, SS6 8U.
Tel: 01268 775184.

E-mail – sandra.alanwilson@yahoo.com.

Groups' Coordinator News

I'm sure our Chairman has commented on the successful New Members' Coffee Morning, so I'll try not to repeat his input.

We now have instigated a Conversational French group, thanks to new members Yvonne & Terry Poole. David Sawyer is looking to start another Music Appreciation group and, with a little pro-activity by other members, I am looking to start a Walking Group 3. I will be contacting all those who have put their names forward in the past year and if anyone else is prepared to assist and help organise this, as it is easier with more than one organiser, contact me or see me at the next monthly meeting. The new Medicine & Science group is getting established, thanks to the work of Maureen Huntly and her team and it already has no further vacancies for the time being. The embryo of a Psychology group may also develop in the near future and I'd love to get another Theatre group up and running (with support), so if you feel you can work with like-minded others to organise this, please let me know.

BOB WREN Groups' Coordinator

THANK YOU

As you may know we have stepped down from Rayleigh U3A Committee and will no longer be editing the Monthly Newsletter. Over the five years we have been producing the Newsletter it has grown from a one page A4 sheet to the present form it is today. This wouldn't have been possible without our volunteer Newsletter team.

We would like to thank Terry Gouldsmith and Sylvia Keetch for collecting and arranging to post the printed copies to send out to members who don't have access to the internet and to thank proof-readers, group leaders and everybody else who has wanted information placed in the Newsletter for ensuring that they meet deadlines etc. each month. Thank you - you have made our job much easier.

Janet and David Carlton

A Visit to Caernarfon Castle

Did you know that castles can be palaces? Well they can. We had such an interesting experience on our trip to North Wales with the Walking Group. On a day that was very blustery, but fortunately dry, we went to Caernarfon Castle and were taken around by the most interesting guide many of us have experienced. He is a medieval historian and he really brought the castle to life for us.



photograph David Fryer-Kelsey

In the 11th century, water would have surrounded the castle so access was by boat, not horseback, as horses were hugely expensive and only used in warfare. The structure inside the walls is not complete and people lived in wooden buildings inside the walls. The castle is unique in that it has triple defensive arrow slots, one forward and one either side angled towards the centre so that it looks lightly defended from the outside until a huge spray of arrows descends on the unsuspecting attackers. Twisting corridors inside also confused

Invaders who would be ambushed from small recesses. Toilets were provided which exited either to the river from the knights' rooms, or to the moat from the servants' quarters. Also waste from the kitchens was pushed through a channel into the moat and of course stayed here so castles were very smelly places. We think castles are cold and gloomy places which on the ground floor they are because that is where the provisions were stored. They had to be self-sufficient because if you went outside you were almost certainly killed by the Welsh people who wanted to take over. If you were a knight you lived very comfortably on the top floor. Your room would have had thick hazy glass in the windows, doorways with high steps (draught excluders) and wooden doors. There would be a fireplace – the largest for the most important person decreasing in size in order of importance. The walls would be whitewashed and covered with murals. Because most people could not read or write, paintings and sculptures filled the gap. Knights' families stayed at home and the only women would be servants. If you were a servant you lived in the huge kitchen which ran along the inside of the castle and you slept where you could, all together at one end. Rainwater was collected in a huge tank on top of the tower with pipes built into the structure to deliver it to the kitchen. Food was boiled in huge pots, never emptied, with more food being put on top, so there was not much nutrition. Life expectancy was 30 to 35 years. We were pleased that we had a nice hotel to go back to, but it was fascinating to see how people lived in those days.

Maureen Weedon.

Highlights of our visit to Snowdonia – David Fryer-Kelsey

Our 4th holiday that Roger and Liz have organised for the Walking Group, this time staying in Caernarfon.

To pick out just a few on our varied itinerary.

We visited the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffs, where we were buffeted by gale force winds. There were excellent themed memorials to all walks of life and we saw many exquisite wood carvings which we were proud to be told had been carved by the Essex Carvers.



On another day a guided tour of Caernarfon Castle. This was to be followed by a trip on the train up Snowdon but on arrival we were told this had to be cancelled due to a pylon fallen on the line. As always with Roger there was Plan B and we went to Portmeiron, the Italianate village on the coast in a beautiful cove. At the end of the visit we made a beeline for the 'seconds' shop and we all talked ourselves out of loading up with Portmeiron china, but inevitably we ended up with many packages to remind us of a lovely afternoon in sunshine.

At our hotel we were never disappointed with the evening meal followed by the entertainment laid on by Liz and Roger i.e. quiz etc. The holiday went with a swing as we had great company, the members all mixing with one another and making new friends.

Mountbatten Festival of Music 2013 - Marjorie Cook and Barbara Curry

Both Barbara and myself together with other members of Rayleigh U3A travelled by coach to London to enjoy an evening of great music performed by The Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines in the magnificent setting of The Royal Albert Hall and compered by John Suchet.

After enjoying a nice meal we made our way to our seats which were in a perfect position for viewing the whole event.

The evening opened with a piece of music called Chariot Wars with The Massed Corps of Drums of Her Majesty's Royal Marines showing the audience their precision drum and bugle work. This set the tone for the rest of a fantastic evening in which we were treated to classical music, great marches, modern arrangements and a section paying tribute to the Rock Group Queen which sent a buzz round the audience.

This particular concert was to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Battle for the Atlantic during World War Two.

Two memorable pieces were played to commemorate this event –

The Battle of Atlantic Suite which is based on the longest and largest naval battle in World War 2 – the suite follows the progress of a Royal Navy warship travelling the North Atlantic from the British Isles in 1943, The second piece – Distant Shores is a celebratory anthem as the ship's journey is now successfully completed. The music builds on a large scale before the Fanfare of the Trumpets of the Royal Marines concludes this magnificent piece.



The evening finished with the audience singing and waving flags to the wonderful and much loved Rule Britannia music.

Everyone enjoyed a super evening arriving home about midnight in very good spirits and in great admiration of the wonderful music they had heard.

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	Knit & Natter; Poetry; Wine Appreciation (evenings)
	3 rd Tuesday	Birdwatching
	4 th Tuesday	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
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; Strolling
Fridays	1 st Friday	Keep Fit;
	2 nd Friday	Book Reading 2 & 3; Keep Fit.
	3 rd Friday	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 Industrial Awareness, Golf, Serendipity and Theatre .

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

Welsh Cakes –(Pice ar y maen) - **Elizabeth Baker**

Popular throughout Wales, these little cakes, originally cooked on a heated bakestone, were often served to travellers on their arrival at an inn. In North Wales they are now known as Teisen Gri.

- 1 lb flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 pinch allspice
- 1 pinch salt
- 4 oz butter
- 4 oz lard
- 7 oz sugar



- 4 oz seedless raisins
- 2 eggs beaten
- Milk to mix
- Caster sugar to sprinkle

Stir together the flour, baking flour, allspice and salt in a large bowl. Rub in the butter and the lard. Add the sugar and raisins. Beat the eggs and add to the mixture, with a little milk, to make a fairly stiff dough. Roll out on a lightly floured surface to a thickness of about ¼ inch and cut into 2 inch rounds with a pastry cutter. Cook on a greased griddle or heavy based frying pan for about 3 minutes each side until golden brown. Sprinkle with sugar and serve warm.

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.huntly@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
sylviamitchell18@yahoo.co.uk 01268 770139

Secretary Assistant: Barbara Hodge
No E-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

New Members' Contact: Bob Tinker
bobtinker2@hotmail.com 01268 777491

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

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 Meeting on May 9th £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, 7 th Oct	Half Day Talk (2 -4pm)
Monday, 21 st Oct	Half Day Talk (2 – 4pm)
Monday, 4 th Nov	Half Day Talk (2 – 4pm)
Monday, 18 th Nov	Half Day Talk (2 – 4pm)

2014

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

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

01268 777398

Thursday, 27th June Highgrove Coach Outing (Sold Out)
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 July Newsletter or beforehand on our website.

Following Months' Speakers

Peter Alvey – The Art of Photography (June)
Bernard Lockett – London Belongs to Me (July)



**In future the newsletter will be published bi-monthly. Therefore your next newsletter will be available shortly before the July meeting. Any articles for inclusion should be in the hands of the editors not later than the 10th of June. Please send to Liz and Roger Baker – rogerbaker99@hotmail.co.uk
Irene and John Tyson – jatyson1@aol.com**