



## Newsletter Edition No. 70 - November 2015

### From the Chair

Dear Members,

As the Christmas season approaches and U3A Groups book up their celebrations and we buy our tickets for the Christmas lunch and other events, stop and think about how much the U3A means to you. Your diary and calendar have dates marked for Meetings, Talks, Group Activities, Coach Trips and meeting new friends. Now STOP and THINK how your life would change if this all disappeared. Hopefully it is not going to happen unless more of you are willing to be part of your U3A. Think about volunteering – come along to our 'Drop in for a Cup of Tea (or Coffee!) Afternoon' at the WI Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, between 2 and 3.30 p.m. on Monday 16th November and find out more. We would very much like all current volunteers to join us as well.

Our Volunteer Coordinator, Val Curtis, will be there to welcome you. Please let Val know if you are able to come or just drop in:

Telephone: 01702 531133 or E-Mail: [valcurtis9@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:valcurtis9@yahoo.co.uk)

This will be an informal gathering where you will have a chance to chat and get to know fellow volunteers.

You will find within the Newsletter a 'Situations Vacant' column which not only lists a number of vacancies for volunteers but also positions on the Committee which we must fill next year. If you are interested in any of these Committee roles, please contact me on:

Telephone: 01268 777398 or E-mail: [pa.huntly@btinternet.com](mailto:pa.huntly@btinternet.com)

I will be stepping down as Chairman in April 2017 by which time I will have served my 3 year term as Chairman and will have served on the Committee for 7 years in a variety of roles. We will need a new Vice Chairman next year who will be willing to take over as Chairman. You are most welcome to join us at our next Committee Meeting to find out more.

Sincerely,

*Pete Huntly*  
Chairman, Rayleigh U3A

## **U3A MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2016**

The application form for renewal of your U3A Membership for 2016 is enclosed in this Newsletter. I would very much appreciate it if you could complete and return the form to me as soon as possible, with a cheque for the appropriate amount. Cheques made payable to Rayleigh U3A.

This will help considerably in avoiding a build-up of applications over the Christmas period. The cheques will not be banked until January.

Many thanks

Gwen Greenwood Membership  
Secretary

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## **THEATRE TRIPS**

As this is the last Newsletter of this year, we would like to take the opportunity to thank all the members who have supported us on our trips to the theatre, both locally and in London. There have been 7 trips in 2015, including 'Beautiful' the Carol King story, 'Hay Fever' with Felicity Kendall, 'Gypsy the Musical' with Imelda Staunton, and our annual trip to the Palace Theatre, Westcliff, to see an Agatha Christie play.

All Rayleigh U3A members are welcome so if you haven't already done so please feel free to join us on one of our visits. Many members come on their own so don't be shy. You can talk to us at the monthly meetings and let us know which shows are of particular interest. We have been going to the theatre since this U3A started, so in that time we have seen very many shows, but if there is sufficient interest we can always repeat them. Many theatres offer Group reductions for as few as 10 people.

We have already booked The Russian State Ballet at the Cliffs Pavilion in January, and 'Guys and Dolls' at the Savoy Theatre, London, for March. We are waiting to see if 'Mac and Mabel' transfers to the West End and also 'Funny Girl' with Sheridan Smith. All the information about our trips is available before the monthly meeting on the 'Theatre Site'. If you get your Newsletter via E-Mail, just click on the Groups heading, scroll down to the Theatre Group and all the up-to-date information will be there, together with a 'Contact Us' facility. Otherwise just 'Google' Rayleigh U3A Theatre Trips and you will get the same screen. There are always notices on the blackboard as you come into the Mill Hall and on the Groups noticeboard.

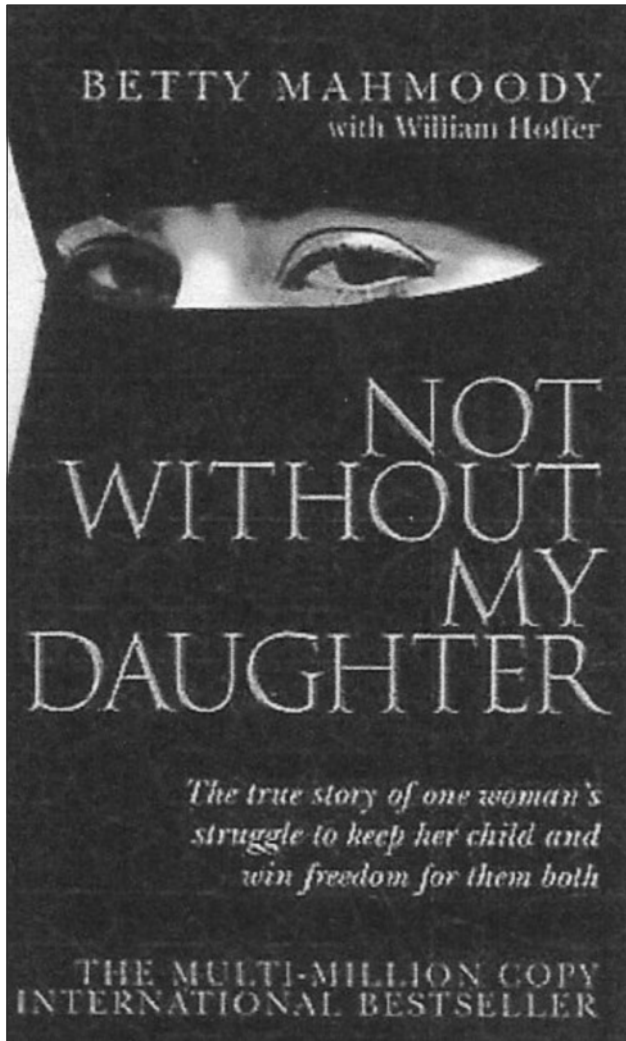
So, to all the faces we already know, particularly those who regularly help us at the Theatre Desk at the monthly meetings, and to all the faces we hope to meet in 2016, we wish you a very happy festive season.

Sandra Wilson and Joan Gardiner

## A FURTHER RECOMMENDATION FROM BOOK GROUP TWO

*A true story of one woman's struggle to keep her child and win freedom for them both.*

This book was harrowing, but compelling reading. If you didn't know that eventually Betty and her daughter did get out of Iran it would have been a page turning thriller. The terrible position she found herself in and the mental and physical cruelty she received from her once loving husband and his family were unbelievable. A film has been made but the book reveals just how appallingly women were treated in Iran at that time and this comes over so much better than in the film.



It was hard to take in that her husband, who was a doctor and had lived in America for twenty years could take his wife and young daughter to live with his family and expect them to accept the totally squalid conditions there. Betty desperately wanted to leave and return to America with her daughter but seemed blocked every way she turned. The Iranians who did help her were extremely brave as the Americans were hated and blamed for all troubles in Iran. The details of her actual escape to get across the Iranian border into Turkey and then to America were hard to imagine anyone could endure, let alone with a small child.

The book was written in conjunction with William Hoffer an American who has written other books and film scripts based on real life stories so you wonder if parts were embellished to make it a marketable book and film. Also not all Iranian families live in the squalor of the Mahoodys.

This lady when she eventually got back to America has spent her life lecturing on living with different cultures and is concerned with an organisation to protect children of bi-cultural marriages. We felt that this is a book that should be read.

Janet Quinn

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## DREAMS

**Nothing happens unless first a Dream.**

**Without Dreams, how unbearable life would be.**

**Some people dream of success, while others wake up and work hard at it.**

## PAPERCRAFTS

At present, Papercrafts is a combination of just two crafts – Scrapbooking and Hand-made Card Making. Some members of the Group enjoy both crafts and each month work on one or the other depending on what projects they are involved with at the time. Both crafts are easy and interesting. Members learn techniques from each other and develop their own styles.

Our small enthusiastic Group recently attended a workshop in Rettendon. Sue, one of our members, had heard that workshops were offered by Sharon, the proprietor of Blitz and Glitter in Rettendon, to groups like us. Sharon runs her own business and teaches a number of groups various techniques of Cardmaking and Scrapbooking on a weekly basis.

We are a self-taught group and were one of the first groups to be formed when Rayleigh U3A first started. We meet once a month in one of our members' homes and have resourced libraries and have specialist magazines to give us ideas. We also share ideas and draw inspiration from one another.

Sue and I went along to meet Sharon and her daughter to discuss having a customised workshop to suit all our needs. On the day of the workshop we all were shown by Sharon with help from her daughter how to make three different cards using different techniques and materials. We spent a pleasant, enjoyable and inspirational afternoon with Sharon and plan to arrange another slightly more advanced workshop with her in a few months' time.

Janet Carlton – Group Leader

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## Notes from the Secretary

The programme of national U3A events for the last 2 months of this year has now been published and the website has full details of these. The Secretary's board at the Monthly Members' Meetings also includes full details. In addition, you can contact me at [jsoilleux88@gmail.com](mailto:jsoilleux88@gmail.com), phone number 01702 552426/mobile 07971 524360 for more information. Members can now be put onto an Events Mailing List from the main U3A Trust – they just need to visit the website and register their E-Mail address.

Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, is holding a series of workshops and invites U3A Groups to explore the jet age, including Concorde. There is a special presentation '**VC10 and Her Royal Connections**'. Please see website for booking details.

4th November Theatre Workshop

19th November Stem Cells, Regeneration and Cancer 26th November National Gallery Study Day

7th December U3A Christmas Concert 2.30 and 5.30 p.m.

Jackie Soilleux

## **SITUATIONS VACANT**

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### **Accounts Examiner**

We have appealed from the stage and in the Newsletter for a volunteer to act as our Accounts Examiner. This is a once a year job in January or early February, spending a day or so looking through the accounting records of our two treasurers to check that the books have been accurately kept and represent a fair record of our financial position as at the previous year end 31<sup>st</sup>. December. We do not need a qualified accountant, just somebody with an understanding of figures and basic bookkeeping. This matter is now becoming critical, so if you think that you can help your U3A please have a word with our Chairman, Pete Huntly, or me or indeed any of the Committee Members.

### **Technical Team**

We have appealed in the past for a few members to join Fred Carter and myself in forming a technical team to set up the speaker system and the projection equipment for the monthly meetings and occasionally for other educational or social events. It is really important that we have some back up in these areas otherwise we may have a future situation where you all turn up but we cannot run the meeting. Please come to chat with me or Fred.

### **New Committee Members**

The AGM in April may seem a long way off but we need to start planning to fill places on the Committee that will become vacant.

**Vice Chairman** – We need to elect a new Vice Chairman to work with Pete Huntly in 2016 with a view to taking on the role of Chairman from April 2017.

**Groups Coordinator** – We need to elect a new Coordinator to help to get new groups up and running, to provide ongoing support to all groups as required and to help new members to find groups to join.

**Speaker Secretary** – We need a new Speaker Secretary to research and book speakers for monthly meetings from January 2017 onwards.

### **Volunteers**

Perhaps you want to help but cannot see any of the above positions suiting you. Come and join our little army of volunteers. Our volunteers at the monthly meetings sell books, make drinks, help on the door, sell tickets, meet and greet, etc. We also have volunteers who help at our educational talks and social events making drinks, checking tickets, putting out chairs and so on. Volunteers are hugely important in making your U3A so successful. Our Volunteers Coordinator, Val Curtis, or any of the Committee Members would love to talk to you.

As a final comment, I must point out that 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 yet.

**David Clarke - Vice Chairman.**



## Gardening Corner

Have you noticed how well the berrying shrubs like the Holly (Ilex) and Pyracantha have performed this year? Among the many Hollies, Ilex J.C. Van Tol, is a spineless variety and female, does not require a pollen partner and this year is one of the best I have known.



Pyracantha (Golden Charmer) has yellow/orange berries beloved by Blackbirds when ripe in winter. All in all, apples and pears and most fruits have performed well. Hollies and Pyracantha make good evergreen hedges and respond well to pruning. The recent outbreak of Box Blight which has devastated long established hedges and topiary has no known cure or regrowth.

As soon as fruiting is finished, it is time to start pruning apples and pears, but NOT plums. Remove any long non-fruited growths or overcrowded branches completely, with the rest down to two or three buds. A dressing of Lime, which will disappear during the wet of winter, is also recommended.

Autumn fruiting raspberries (Autumn Bliss is a good one) are also having a bumper year. Pruning of this variety should be complete removal of this year's growth (down to ground level) soon after fruiting, which could be November!

Finally, a touch of late colour - Zinnias which are annual plants, easy to grow from seed with a little bottom heat, which flower in a wide range of unusual colours. Long lasting when cut, or enjoy outside until the first frosts.



Happy Gardening !

Brian Kersey (01268 743959)

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**I'm never going to say I can't do it. I'm never going to say maybe.**

**I'm never going to say I don't think I can. I can and I will.**

Spoken by **Nadiya Hussain** - Winner of this year's 'Great British Bake Off'

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE EVENTS - Winter 2015/2016

**Friday 27th November 2015**

### **THE WYATT FAMILY AFTERNOON TEA AT THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION SOCIAL CLUB**

Every year we look to introduce something new and exciting to our calendar of events and this year is no exception. If you are intrigued to find out about how one talented family have careers in publishing, writing books, illustrating cartoons and the use of modern technology to produce books, games and films – then come along and meet them.

Tickets £5, to include tea/coffee and cakes.

**Wednesday 16th March 2016**

### **COACH TRIP TO THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM, HENDON**

Following on from our Study day guest speaker, David Keen from the RAF Museum, we have arranged a coach trip. Tickets: £14 (includes coach, guided tour and gratuities) or £31.50 with an excellent 'Meal Deal' (Coffee/tea on arrival, hot lunch, dessert and fruit juice, and afternoon cream tea).

### **OTHER EVENTS**

We have speakers giving Talks about four of our important Emergency Services in **January, February and March next year**. Tickets: £2

Tickets for all the above events will be on sale at the November meeting.

**Maureen Huntly – Educational Events Coordinator**

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## **Invitation to Volunteers**

We would like to invite you to a 'Drop in for a Cup of Tea (or Coffee!) Afternoon'

**The WI Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh between 2.00 and 3.30 pm  
on Monday 16th November**

Be part of your U3A by giving a little of your time to help run it.

Loads of Volunteer Vacancies.

Come along and see. Meet Valerie who coordinates the Volunteer List.

Don't be shy - we would love you to be a Volunteer. We would very much like all current volunteers to join us as well. Please let Val know if you are able to come or just drop in

Telephone: 01702 531133 or E-mail: valcurtis9@yahoo.co.uk

## Social Events

Two events still to come this year on the Social Events Calendar.

Our ever popular **Quiz Night is on Saturday 21st November at 7.30 p.m.** at the Holy Trinity Hall and there are still places available. We have a team from one of the church groups, so how about members of some of our other groups getting a team together? The quiz is always a lot of fun thanks to our excellent Quizmaster, David Lutterloch. David sets the questions at just the right level, so each team feels they could win ! Tickets are £4 and you can bring your own drinks and nibbles, so a very inexpensive and entertaining evening. Tickets will be on sale at the November meeting.

**The Christmas lunch is on Thursday 3rd December** at The Westcliff Hotel. Tickets have sold extremely well for this event and there are currently 104 members booked. There are still a FEW places available at £25 each. I hope to have exact times for the coach pick-ups at the November meeting. Please see me there if possible. Any guest that I don't see at the meeting, I will contact to confirm pick-up time which will be approx. 12.00 noon. I'm also holding a number of tickets for members who have paid for, but as yet, not collected them. Please try to collect them at the meeting or, if you are unable to be there, maybe ask a friend to pick them up for you. This is the last meeting before the lunch, so do make sure you have your ticket.

As we will not have another Newsletter before Christmas, I would like to thank all those who have attended any of the social events or coach outings that we have arranged this year. I couldn't do this without the help of the Social Committee Team who support me throughout the year. They are: Barbara Dale, Heather Flemming, David Fryer-Kelsey, Terry Gouldsmith, Gwen Greenwood, Maureen and Pete Huntly, Stella Lutterloch, Janet Moore and Carol Shrubsole. So a big thank you to all of them.

We hope you have enjoyed the events that we have arranged and we will do our best to provide an enjoyable programme for 2016. We are always ready to listen to new ideas, so please feel free to approach us.

**Jane Godfrey - Social Events Coordinator**

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## Speakers at our Monthly Meetings

**The speaker at our November meeting will be Martin Lloyd who will give a talk entitled 'The History of Passports'. He originally worked for HM Immigration Service and has since been a lecturer and has broadcast on local and national television and radio. Immigration is of course very much in the news at the present time.**

**In January, we shall have a talk by Ben Copsey of the Peace Pledge Union. He will talk about Cornelious Barritt, a conscientious objector from Essex.**