

Rayleigh



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Newsletter Edition – No.57 –September 2013
This Month's Meeting Thursday 5th September
Guest Speaker – Lucinda Hawksley – Charles Dickens

FROM THE CHAIR

This month I am writing this report after having had a wonderful day Conquering The Dome of the O2 Arena with 'Serendipity Xtreme' run by Mike Cairns and his support team.

What is 'Serendipity Xtreme' I hear you ask????

Well, by unanimous agreement of the Group Members it was decided to use August to attempt an extreme activity. Our first trip started at the Royal Docks with a crossing of the Thames on the Emirates-Air-line cable car to the O2 Arena. The 19 intrepid explorers then split into 2 groups and after the usual Health and Safety video we were all fitted with a harness and safety wire. Both groups reached the top without mishap, although the climb is very bouncy to give the impression that you are actually climbing on the tent roof of the O2 Dome itself. At the platform at the top we were 50 metres high but with wonderful views of the Thames, Docklands, The Olympic Site and a 360 degree panoramic view of London

The descent was even more exciting as it was very steep but all our explorers arrived safely at the bottom, including our 'Mascot' Stan who will be 80 next year. After lunch we took the boat to 'Bankside' where we strolled along the south bank of the Thames, over the Millennium Bridge and home to Rayleigh, all exhausted after an exciting and wonderful day. The next question on our lips what will Mike do next year????

Back to U3A business. Don't forget, members who are not on internet can collect their Newsletter from the front desk at the September monthly meeting. (If you are unable to attend all uncollected newsletters will be posted on to members) Also, remember, all ticket sales and new activities will be posted on the black board when you enter the Mill Hall. I must finally remind you that your Committee is looking for replacements for our Business and Membership Secretaries and our Main and Social Account Treasurers, who will have to stand down at the next A.G.M. So, if you are interested, please see me or a member of the Committee who can give you a more detailed job description. Better still, you can shadow the present incumbents and get a real feel of what the job entails. I hope you all had a HOT Summer break and are refreshed and looking forward to our Autumn and Winter activities.

Regards

David Sheffield – Chairman Rayleigh U3A

This Month's Speaker

Our speaker in September is the celebrated historian and novelist, Lucinda Hawksley. She is the great-great-great granddaughter of Charles Dickens. She narrated recently on TV in the series about Queen Victoria. Her talk is entitled 'The Man behind the Novels'

COMMITTEE OPPORTUNITIES

In order to comply with U3A procedures, 4 of the present holders of key positions on our Committee are not able to stand for re-election at the next AGM having now served their permitted period of office. At this time the Committee wishes to identify other members who are willing to take on these positions as from March 2014, using the intervening period to shadow the present officers. Job descriptions of the 4 positions – Treasurer (Main Account), Treasurer (Social Account), Membership Secretary and Business Secretary – are given below. You are invited to contact the present holder of any of these positions for more information.

Treasurer (Main Account)

Present holder: David Clarke (Tel: 01702 204559)

Job description:

- 1) To deal with all monies received for and paid by Rayleigh U3A in respect of all matters except social activities (which are dealt with the Social Account Treasurer)
- 2) Receipts mainly comprise members' payments for annual subscriptions, study days and half-days, the speaker's lunch and smaller cash sums from book sales and visitors
- 3) Payments are mainly for such items as hall hire, speakers' fees and expenses, printing and postage of newsletters, Third Age Trust capitation fees and magazine mailing, committee members' expenses, group leaders' day, purchase of equipment, stationery and other small items
- 4) To keep book-keeping records for all transactions and regularly reconcile with the bank account held with Cooperative Bank
- 5) To draw up a simple budget at the beginning of each year and thereafter report monthly to the Committee on the Group's financial position
- 6) To draw up at the financial year-end a set of Accounts which are independently examined and signed off
- 7) Most receipts and payments are by cheque but there are some small cash transactions involving the maintenance of a cash box.
- 8) To be the key contact with the Cooperative Bank for changes to signature mandates and debit cards as required. We have internet access to the bank accounts

This is a very rewarding job, with close involvement with our U3A's affairs generally.

Membership Secretary

Present Holder: Doreen Blake (Tel: 01268 774871)

Job description:

- 1) To make ready existing members' Renewal Forms for inclusion in the November newsletter
- 2) To receive and record subscription cheques (not cashed until January) and pass them to Treasurer
- 3) To maintain membership waiting list (opened on 1st. October), and in February offer any vacancies to those on list

- 4) To issue membership cards and up-dated trifold brochures (both externally printed) both for renewals and new members
- 5) To arrange a New Members meeting annually in March
- 6) To maintain a record of membership information in a card index and on a computer database, and to pass computer record of membership to National Office for issue of Third Age Matters magazine

An interesting role involving contact with members.

Business Secretary

Present Holder: Maureen Hayes (Tel: 01702 473110)

Job description:

- 1) To attend Committee Meetings and support the activities of Rayleigh U3A and the Third Age Trust in accordance with the Constitution and its described aims and objectives
- 2) To liaise with the Chairperson in order to prepare Agenda and distribute to Committee members
- 3) To take Minutes at Committee Meetings and at the AGM, and once they have been approved by the Chairperson, distribute to Committee members
- 4) To ensure that members of the Committee are informed as to correspondence received and of any matters requiring discussion/decision
- 5) To ensure that information relevant to members which is to be included in the Newsletter is sent to the Editorial Team in time for publication
- 6) To place relevant information and notices on the Notice Board for perusal by U3A members at the monthly meeting
- 7) To ensure that specific information received from Third Age Trust and any other body is passed to the relevant Group Leaders and members of the Committee
- 8) To order diaries and any other items necessary and/or requested for sale and/or distribution
- 9) To ensure notice of Annual General Meeting, with nominations required, is sent to all members two months before the AGM.

Treasurer (Social Account)

Present Holder: Margaret Read (01268 761039)

Job description:

- 1) To deal with all monies received for and paid by Rayleigh U3A in respect of social activities, collecting and banking monies, and making payments by cheque or direct debit
- 2) To keep book-keeping records for all transactions and regularly reconcile with the bank account held with Cooperative Bank
- 3) To be a joint signatory on the bank account
- 4) To report to the Committee each month on the financial position of Groups and to liaise with the Treasurer (Main Account) on any matters as necessary

- 5) To draw up an annual Statement of Account for inspection by the Independent Examiner and present that Account to members at the AGM for approval

This is a key role in Rayleigh U3A requiring close liaison with Group leaders. An ability to deal accurately with figures is essential.

THE GARDENING SPOT

With the Summer nearing the transformation time to early Autumn, many plants begin to look tired and this is where some late flowering Hardy Perennials come into their own.

I have grown ASTERS and RUDBECKIAS for many years with great success even in a year like 2012 when many plants struggled to meet their potential.

I can recommend the Hybrid versions of ASTER Novae-Angliae (The New England Aster). They come in a good range of colours from White through to Pinks, Magenta and Blues. The older varieties of Michaelmas Daisy were always prone to powdery mildew which decimated the foliage badly which affected the flowering. The aforementioned strain is completely immune to this, flowering in good years from September through to the first frosts. Large clumps are formed which can be divided in Spring every second year. Depending on growing conditions fresh plants will be produced thus increasing your collection. After some time the original stock becomes woody and the central part of the clump can be discarded.



Some varieties to look out for are:

- Alma Potschke (Deep pink/Magenta)*
- Herbstchnee (White)*
- Harringtons Pink*
- Christopher Harbutt (Blue)

- Barrs Purple
- Rosa Seiger*
- Primrose Upward
- September Ruby
- *RHS Merit Award

*All are splendid for cutting
Size 18" – 24"*



There are useful nurseries on the web. Just key in the names.

RUDBECKIAS: - Golden Daisy with dark cone centres
Another excellent late Summer flower. Fully Hardy and Perennial – size 30"
Some varieties I have grown:

- Rudbeckia Deamii All excellent for cutting – will grow in any good fertile soil
- “ Goldsturn in the sun. Long season
- “ Goldquelle
- “ Herbstonne

Treat as for Asters regarding propagation. A mulch of well-rotted compost or manure outside of the growing season is very beneficial. Cut back in late Autumn to 3-4 inches. If you are a bird lover leave the dead flowers on for longer – they love the seed heads.

Side shoots can be detached in Spring to give easy growing material.

Good gardening
BRIAN KERSEY
01268743959 (give me a ring in Spring for cuttings)

THE HUMBLE BUMBLEBEE

In British gardens you see many insects, including honey bees, solitary bees, wasps and of course bumblebees. All of these are useful for different reasons and should be cared for. There are also other insects that have evolved to look like insects that sting, such as hover flies and bee flies. These are called 'mimics' and may be confused with bees and wasps.

Bumblebees are among the most loved and familiar of these gardens insects. The sight and sound of them buzzing from flower to flower is a quintessential part of British summertime, but sadly these charismatic creatures are struggling to survive. In our modern world of paved gardens and intensive agriculture, our bumblebees can find themselves hungry and homeless. There are now far fewer flowers in the countryside to provide bees with the pollen and nectar they need to survive.

To most people, bees are instantly recognisable but there are distinct differences between the appearance and lives of bumblebees, honeybees and solitary bees. Bumblebees are larger and hairier than their cousins which makes them perfectly suited for colder climates. Their extra insulation allows them to venture out on cold days when honey bees stay tucked up inside. However, bumblebee nests are small and they do not store large quantities of honey, so they are more sensitive to the availability of pollen and nectar-rich flowers to feed on. Don't confuse bumblebees with wasps or honeybees. Bumblebees do not swarm and are not aggressive. Only female bumblebees can sting and they will only do so if they feel very threatened. Bumblebees play a vitally important role in pollinating the crops that provide us with food to eat and the colourful flowers in our landscape. Without their 'free bee' service, many wildflowers could disappear.

Bumblebees are social insects and live in nests of up to 400 individuals. Each nest is ruled by a queen and lasts for just one year. This is different from honeybee hives which can remain active for several years. In early spring the queen emerges from hibernation to start a new nest. Her first task is to build up energy reserves so it is really important that she can find plenty of pollen and nectar-rich flowers. Once she has found a suitable nest site she will rear her first batch of eggs – a group of female workers whose job it will be to feed and nurture the colony. This process is repeated throughout the summer with the queen rarely leaving the nest. Towards the end of the summer the queen produces male offspring, along with new queens. After mating, the males die off, as do the old queens and workers. Only the new fertilised queens survive to hibernate through the winter and establish their own nests the following year. Bumblebees rarely nest in the same location two years running.



The moral of this story is – please help the bumblebee to survive. Be 'bee-friendly' and grow flowers in your garden that are rich in pollen and nectar. Some ornamental plants that are commonly found in British gardens, such as pansies and begonias, are of little value to wildlife, but there are hundreds of other beautiful flowers which are 'bee-friendly', foxgloves, lavender, geraniums, herbs and wild roses among them.

Did you know that Andy Murray's success at Wimbledon this summer was fuelled by SUSHI?

The mix of protein and carbohydrates in sushi helps to repair and replenish muscle, and the high salt content helps to replace the salt lost through sweating. It is favoured not only by successful tennis players such as Andy Murray and Serena Williams, but also by many athletes.

Many assume sushi to be as Japanese as sumo or sake, but, though it's popular in modern-day Japan, it actually originated in other parts of South east Asia. Though the definition of sushi has changed over the years, one common misconception is that sushi means raw fish. Sushi is often made using raw fish, but it also frequently includes cooked fish and vegetables, as well. By strict definition the word "sushi" refers to cold rice that's been mixed with vinegar, moulded into a circular shape and garnished with a piece of seafood or vegetable. Though sushi eaters today may find it hard to imagine sushi ever existing without rice, in ancient versions of sushi, the rice was strictly used as a preservative and thrown away prior to the meal.



In the 1800s sushi became a popular fast-food option. A rice ball and a slab of raw fish required very little preparation, making it a popular choice with roadside food vendors.

It became one of the few foods considered acceptable to eat-on-the-go and was the food of choice for picnickers or theatre-goers.

Sushi first began to appear on western menus after the invention of the refrigerator made it possible to transport raw fish, but it wasn't until the 1970's that sushi became the international superstar it is today.

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

Have you travelled from Southend Airport recently? 15 minutes from Rayleigh and just 90 minutes for security checks before prompt take off.

We recently went to Krakow from there and, while we saw the usual tourist sights, the salt mines, the cathedral and the central square, the Jewish ghetto and Schindler's factory, our main reason was to go to the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camps.

Like us, I am sure you have read of the atrocities and seen photographs of Auschwitz where around 20,000 prisoners were housed. Until you see the size, the death wall, the gallows, the bunk houses, the toilet blocks, the suitcases of the prisoners, the human hair including plaits and the beards of the Jewish men, the prosthetic limbs, the brushes (hair, shaving and tooth), the footwear, the childrens' clothes and even Jewish prayer shawls in such quantities, remembering this is only a fraction of the total as much had already been sent to Germany, you cannot believe mans inhumanity.

Then from Auschwitz to Birkenau where, because Auschwitz was too small, old army barracks were enlarged to an unimaginable area to house where up to 90,000 prisoners were poisoned by gas in specially designed chambers and the bodies disposed of by 5 crematoria, The sixth planned, but not built, needed to deal with the killing rates. The tragedy goes on.

At Auschwitz prisoners were photographed on arrival, but within 2 months of labour and starvation, these records became unrecognisable, so at Birkenau the numerical branding we associate with the camp took place. Prisoners came from all German occupied countries but from Greece, for example, prisoners spent 11 days crowded into cattle trucks in unsanitary conditions, without food or water, by trains directly to the site. No matter where prisoners came from, on disembarkation, they were met by the SS and, with a thumb only, were deemed fit or unfit for work. Those fit for work were used for labour and under supervision the disposal of the corpses. Those deemed unfit for work including young children, the elderly, pregnant women and the infirm, were led behind trees, still there today, told to strip and kidded that they were going to shower after so long a journey, instead they were packed, 2,000 at a time and 20,000 a day, into the gas chamber and within 20 minutes of arrival at Birkenau they were dead.

Their fellow prisoners were supervised to remove all their belongings, including gold teeth, and carry the bodies to the crematoria, while their belongings were sent for storage, known as Canada because that country was thought to be a land of untold riches, before they were shipped back to Germany.

The Facts:

Between 1.1 and 1.5 million registered prisoners were killed, more than the combined total of British and US losses in WW2. Individuals declared unfit for work were never registered but sent straight to the gas chambers. Victims included a million Jews plus political prisoners, Soviet POWs, gypsies, homosexuals, people with disabilities, prisoners of conscience or religious faith and German criminals

A Hebrew sign at the gas chamber entrance proclaimed "This is a gateway to God, Righteous men will pass through", while the entrance to Auschwitz was the infamous slogan "Arbeit Macht Frei" translated as "work makes you free". Some young Jewish females were given "light work" – prostitution.

Josef Mengele, the Angel of Death, carried out many barbaric experiments on prisoners including on twins, if one died the second was killed for comparative autopsies. Children were left out in the open in extreme cold and snow to study frost bite.

"NEVER AGAIN CAN WE ALLOW SUCH CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY TO HAPPEN"

Robin Blake

U3A Diaries and Calendars for 2014

Diaries for 2014 will be on sale at the U3A September and October meetings.

For the first time there will also be a sample of a U3A 2014 calendar to view, enabling members to place orders if they wish.

A Human Satnav

I have a little Satnav
It sits there in my car
A Satnav is a driver's friend
It tells you where you are

It lists the vehicles just in front
And all those to the rear
And taking this into account
It specifies my gear

I have a little Satnav
I've had it all my life
It's better than the normal ones
My Satnav is my wife

I'm sure no other driver
Has so helpful a device
For when we leave and lock the car
It still gives its advice

It gives me full instructions
Especially how to drive
"It's thirty miles an hour", it says
"You're doing thirty five

It fills me up with counselling
Each journey's pretty fraught
So why don't I exchange it
And get a quieter sort?

It tells me when to stop and start
And when to use the brake
And tells me that it's never ever
Safe to overtake

Ah well, you see, it cleans the house
Makes sure I'm properly fed,
It washes all my shirts and things
And – keeps me warm in bed!

It tells me when a light is red
And when it goes to green
It seems to know instinctively
Just when to intervene

Despite all these advantages
And my tendency to scoff,
I do wish that once in a while
I could turn the damned thing off!!

RAYLEIGH U3A SOCIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE - FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Rayleigh U3A Autumn Quiz

Why not join us at our annual Quiz with Quiz Master David Lutterloch at Holy Trinity Church Hall on Saturday 19th October 2013 at 7 for 7.30pm. Teams of 8 with a maximum of 12 teams. Tickets will be on sale at £4.00 per person. There will be Prizes for every team taking part. Bring your own drinks and nibbles.

An Evening at the Coral Romford Greyhound Stadium

This exciting evening has been arranged for Wednesday 30th October 2013 to include entry, a meal and coach plus gratuities for only **£21 per ticket**. Coach pickups at Websters Way at 5.45pm and at Rayleigh Station 5.55pm, we will return after the last Race at 11.30pm.

This event includes a 2 course meal in The Chase Restaurant where you can enjoy panoramic views of the track. You can order drinks from your table and place a bet. Tote messengers can explain betting terminology, place bets for you and collect your winnings. All you need to do is sit back, relax and capture the thrill and excitement of greyhound racing!

Medicine & Science Group

We are happy to open the following events to all members of the Rayleigh U3A on a first come first served basis.

On **Monday 23rd September** we are pleased to have Mr. Terrence Rockall give us a talk entitled '**The History of Fingerprints and Crime Scenes**'. This is to be held at the W. I. Hall from 2pm – 4pm. Terrence was a Police Officer with the Metropolitan Police until he was injured and later he retrained as a Civilian Fingerprint Instructor with New Scotland Yard Detective Training College. Pay at the door £2 to cover the cost of the hall hire and speaker.

On **Wednesday 16th October** we are travelling by coach to **Bawdsey Manor House & Gardens** plus **Radar Exhibition** near Felixstowe which includes coffee on arrival, Guided Tours and a light lunch for £28.50 plus coach which will be approximately £12 (payable in October).

Tickets Available at the September/October Meetings or please send a cheque made payable to 'Rayleigh U3A' for £28.50 to Maureen Huntly, 9 Gilbert Close, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8QR together with a **stamped addressed envelope**.

Your U3A Membership Renewal for 2014

Please note that the Application Form for renewal of your U3A Membership for 2014 will be included with the **November Newsletter**. I should very much appreciate it if you would please **complete it fully and return the whole form to me** as soon as possible with a cheque for the appropriate amount.

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

Doreen Blake – Membership Secretary

Notes from the Secretary - September 2013

I would like to bring to your attention the forthcoming events and information notified to me by the U3A Trust. The full information on these items can be found at 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 in September.

Two dates in November when tickets will be available for the screening of 'The Nutcracker' ballet from the Marinsky Theatre - shown at the Odeon Covent Garden Cinema in Shaftesbury Avenue. £14 per person.

We have an invitation to a West End U3A Sing Out - Wednesday 16th. October 2013 @ £35 per head, including lunch and a copy of a CD that will be recorded by U3A participants that day.

The Elgar Birthplace Museum invites U3A members to explore Elgar's Life and the Women who influenced him using the Museum's Archive Collection on Tuesday 8th. October. This is in Worcester. £15 per head including lunch and refreshments,

Maureen Hayes – Secretary

Forthcoming Speakers

Our meeting speakers for the next two months are: October - Simon Brett entitled 'Tickled to Death'.

Simon is a prolific writer of 'whodunnits' but as well as writing crime novels he writes for other media. After Henry, the sitcom he wrote for both radio and television, is frequently repeated on Radio 4 Extra, along with other of his series like No Commitments, Smelling of Roses and Foul Play.

November - Malka Baker entitled 'History of Dick Whittington'

Malka is a London Tour Guide and Speaker

For those of you who are having trouble accessing the Newsletter or find it a chore logging on every time you want to read the Newsletter, try the following. This has already helped a few of our members and may help you. Enter the Website – click on '**Newsletters**' in the yellow bar at top – **Click on 'Latest Newsletter – Month 2013'**. **Make sure you click on the month of issue.** Enter **user name** in panel – enter **password** in panel – click on box '**remember my credentials**' – click '**ok**' box. *Now for the good bit* - Every time you now enter the website just click on '**Newsletter Latest**' or any older newsletter you may want to read and BINGO the website remembers you and there is no more logging on.

The diagram shows a login form with two input fields: 'user name.....' and 'password.....'. Below these fields is a checkbox labeled 'remember my credentials'. An arrow points from the text 'Tick this box' to the checkbox. Below the form are two buttons: 'ok' and 'cancel'.

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
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Membership Sec. Doreen Blake
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Events Co-ordinator: Terry Gouldsmith
terrygouldsmith@live.co.uk 01268 562803

Speaker Secretary: Sylvia Mitchell
smitchell151@sky.com 01268 770139

Secretary Assistant: Barbara Hodge
No E-Mail 01268 771820

Treasurer No. 2 A/C: Margaret Read
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Groups Co-ordinator: Bob Wren
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New Members' Contact: Bob Tinker
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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

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Friday 6th December 12 for 12.30 till 4pm
In the new Jubilee Suite with dance floor at
Saxon Hall Aviation Way, Southend-on-Sea SS2 6UN

Three course meal with tea/coffee & mince pies with wine or soft drink

Flower Arrangement Table Prizes

Gratuity for Staff and Raffle

Musical Entertainment by Pete George

Tickets at £25 each

on sale at the September meeting

STOP PRESS

Dates for your Diary – Educational Events

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

Wednesday 6th. November - Study Day on 'Victorian London' at Saxon Hall (sold out)

Series of half-day talks to be held at WI Hall, Rayleigh, generally on Mondays from 2 – 4 p.m.

(but on **Friday** 22nd. November)

Tickets £2 to include tea/coffee and biscuits on sale at the September meeting.

7th October 2013 - Jim Worsdale (former Editor of Southend Echo) - **'Rambles around Southend by a Rambling Reporter'**

21st October 2013 – David Williams (City of London Guide/Lecturer) - **'The City Livery Companies'**

4th November 2013 -Martyn Harrison (Professional Opera Singer) – **Jubilee Celebration at the Musicals**

22nd November 2011- Prof. Alan Davies (School of Physics, Astronomy and Mathematics at University of Hertfordshire) – **'Rainbows'**

3rd February 2014 - Rev. Kelvin Woolmer (ex Metropolitan Police Officer, Ordained Minister and Olympic Chaplain) **'Nicker to Vicar'**

17th February 2014 – Adrian Wright – **'150 Years of the London Underground'**

Dates for your Diary - Social Events

Contact – Maureen Huntly maureenhuntly@btinternet.com
01268 777398

Saturday 19th. October 2013 - Quiz Night
at Holy Trinity Hall

Friday 6th. December 2013 – Christmas Lunch at SaxonHall



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. October for the November 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