

RAYLEIGH GRANGE u3a

Newsletter - Edition No. 157 2024



Welcome to the February Newsletter

***Next monthly meeting at the Grange is on
Wednesday 7th February at 2.00 p.m.***

Our speaker will be Mark Lewis – “Tying the Knot” whose talk explores the history and origins of many nuptial beliefs, customs and superstitions of England and Wales, including elopement to Gretna Green, Fleet Marriages and Smock Weddings



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello everyone

Firstly, let me say that there have been some developments regarding the “Moulin Rouge” trip that many members were caught up in when an accident prevented them getting to the show. The Committee discussed what action it could take following an enquiry as to whether any help would be given. Glyn has a note about this in this newsletter.

Membership is up with a small, but evident, waiting list for people who have heard how good we are and want to join us. There have been discussions across some of the groups as to whether they would benefit from a review on where they are and Carol will expand on this further in her piece later in this newsletter.

We had a scam email issue where persons unknown sent out emails to some members purporting to be from me asking if they had received the mail and to reply to a highlighted email address. This was not from me, but a fraudster hoping to embed a virus into the PC of members who opened the link in the email. Had it not been for the fast and brilliant work done by Ann Clark Overy and Jackie Dillnutt who noticed something was wrong here and told me, we moved quickly to send out a mail to everyone NOT TO OPEN ANY LINK OR ANY MAIL FROM ME as it would damage the members PC and leave them open to possible financial loss. Thanks ladies. We are not the only u3a that has been hit with this so be aware that these fraudsters are concentrating on organisations such as the u3a to steal your money by embedding a virus which could access any financial information you may have on your PC.

There has been movement on us finding an alternative hall for when building works start on the Rayleigh Grange Hall which we use. There has been no start planned for the building as yet so we are many months away from doing anything. I will keep you all posted on this.

We've got an eventful year ahead of us - we are already getting news of excursions for next Christmas.

Take care and have fun.

Bill Keys
Chairman

THEATRE TRIP TO MOULIN ROUGE 29th NOVEMBER 2023

You may have heard that the coach carrying some of our members to see Moulin Rouge last November was stuck in traffic for over 6 hours as a result of the police closing the A13 following a severe accident. Fortunately, there was a toilet on the coach!

As a result, all those on board missed the entire performance and any after-show dinner they may have planned. The coach company cancelled their invoice but the request to the theatre for some consideration fell on deaf ears. This meant that those affected lost the £65 that the ticket had cost.

In the circumstances, the Committee has decided to make a contribution, from the reserves created by historic Social events, of £25 to each person on the coach in some mitigation of that loss. This is an entirely exceptional one-off matter and is not to be considered a precedent in any way whatsoever.

Glyn Overy
Assistant Treasurer



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Well it's that time again. Renewal of membership is due by the 31st March. Ken Bates will be contacting you next week to find out if there have been any changes in your details. It is important that you notify him of any changes as this means we do not have to ask you to fill in another renewal form.

I will be contacting everyone about details of how to renew soon, but if you want to pay by cheque at the next monthly meeting the fee is £10 for a single membership and £18 for a couple. Cheques made payable to Rayleigh Grange u3a.

Susan Neil
Membership Secretary



AN UPDATE FROM OUR GROUP CO-ORDINATOR

Sadly, last year ended with the leaders of two groups deciding to give up their roles. A big 'Thank you' to Ken and Janet Paton for their work in making the Local History Group such a flourishing one and to Chris Roffey and Sarah Kay for their efforts with the Textiles Group.

For a while it looked as if we would lose both groups, but I'm pleased to say that Donna and Steve Lowe have volunteered to lead the History Group under a different name and a different format.

Unfortunately, despite Chris and Sarah's best efforts, the Textiles Group has struggled for the past year and the December meeting saw it close with a 'Bring & Eat' event, food – that is not our work! Consequently, Knit & Natter is now our only craft related group.

With over 300 members I'm convinced that we must have some enthusiastic crafters in our midst, and it would be wonderful if we could start a new craft group. As always, we need someone, or more than one someone, to volunteer to lead it.

Whilst the thought may seem daunting, being a Group Leader can in fact be very rewarding.

The personal and immediate benefits would include:

- Making new and deeper friendships – nothing bonds people together like a shared endeavour;
- Finding a group of enthusiasts who want to share and explore your own interests and hobbies, a shared interest is more gratifying and satisfying than one pursued on your own;
- Doing new things – new experiences are useful at whatever age;
- Experimenting and taking risks can keep a young outlook – u3a members are the nicest people, interest groups are an ideal and supportive context to try new things, push your boundaries, challenge yourself a bit, but in a safe way.

Most importantly, you will never be expected to do it single-handedly, the Committee and I will always be there to give support.

So, if you are interested in becoming a group leader, for crafts or any other interest, please contact me via our web page or speak to me at one of our monthly meetings.

Carol Bright
Group Co-ordinator



QUIZ – DON'T GET IT YET?

Given the artist(s) and the year, name the hit song.
All 10 answers have something in common!

1. Elton John & Kiki Dee (1976) (No. 1 hit).	2. The Human League (1981) (No. 1 hit).
2. Police (1980) (No. 1 hit).	4. Rihanna (2007) (reached No. 4).
5. Elvis Presley (1956) sold 6 million copies in U.S., but released in the UK as a B-side to Hound Dog. Released as a UK single in 1978 a year after Presley's death.	6. Elton John & George Michael (1991) (live recording No. 1 hit).
7. Bobby McFerrin (1988) (reached No. 2).	8. ELO (1979).
9. Queen (1979) (No. 1 hit).	10. Blue Oyster Cult (1976).

Answers on page 11

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

ART APPRECIATION GROUP



Members of the Art Appreciation Group enjoying their post-Christmas lunch at Gambero D'Oro in Rayleigh

SINGING FOR PLEASURE GROUP

Some pictures of the pre-Christmas meeting of the Singing for Pleasure Group who were practising their bell ringing skills.





WINE APPRECIATION

Our two Wine Appreciation Groups combined for our annual visit and Wine Tasting to the “Pipe of Port” in Southend. Our talk this year was about Australian wines and we were able to sample wines from the two wine producing regions of the country – the area with the cool climate where the white wines are produced and the warmer region where the red wines are produced. The wines we enjoyed were:

White wines:

2022 Mad Fish Sauvignon Blanc from Western Australia

2021 Mount Horrocks Semillon from the Clare Valley region

2021 Distant Noises Chardonnay from the Yarra Valley

Red Wines we tasted were:

2020 Caravan Petite Sirah, South Eastern Australia

2021 Willunga 100 Grenache, McLaren Vale

2021 Dandelion Vineyards Lion’s Tooth Shiraz Riesling, McLaren Vale

We then enjoyed an excellent meal.

Our thanks to Ann Newman for organising such an enjoyable evening.



QUIZ – ANIMAL FACTS

<p>1. Which creature lives above 3000m elevation in the Himalayas, can leap 9 metres, and their main prey is blue sheep (which is neither blue, nor a sheep)?</p>	<p>2. What is a Blue Sheep?</p>
<p>3. What colour is the skin of a polar bear?</p>	<p>4. There are two main species of whale. The toothed whale and which other?</p>
<p>5. The name of which animal is believed to come from the country's indigenous language for "no water"?</p>	<p>6. Which Amazonian animal that lives in the tree canopy only defecates once per week?</p>
<p>7. There are five species of this animal in the world, one of which is Sumatran. Which animal?</p>	<p>8. Which of the following are not classed as rodents – squirrels, hedgehogs or guinea pigs?</p>
<p>9. Which animal's name comes from the Malay word for "roller"?</p>	<p>10. Which marine reptile has seven species two of which are Olive Ridley and Kemp's Ridley?</p>

Answers on page 11



GARDENING NOTES

JOBS FOR THE GARDEN IN FEBRUARY

Now is the time to buy Snowdrops in the green, that is when they are in season. Most will be happy planted anywhere that's damp and partly shaded. If you have established clumps that are getting congested it's a good idea to dig these up and break apart the bulbs, replanting with space between. This way you can help to avoid disease. After flowering, Snowdrops can be given a slight boost after their exertions with a couple of weekly liquid feeds using a tomato fertiliser.

Keep Paths Clear

It hardly needs saying, but do watch that paths don't become lethal in the cold and wet. There are plenty of gadgets for such jobs – pressure hoses and what not – but a stiff metal brush on a long handle works well and warms the muscles.

Repair or Replace Broken Fences

Now is the perfect time before new growth starts and quickly covers the fence, putting the structure under even more pressure.

In the Borders

You might want to start giving flower borders a bit of a tidy, cutting down perennials and weeding as you go. If hard frosts and a further sharp cold is forecast, you may be better holding off for a while yet.

Prune Shrubs

Prune winter flowering shrubs once they have finished blooming. If you don't have any already, do consider buying some winter scent. Daphne, Viburnum, Sarcococca are all wonderful at giving you a bit of a fillip as you walk past and catch a drift of their sweet smell on low, dark days. Now is also the time to winter prune Wisteria

Berries and Currants

Cut down to the ground autumn fruiting Raspberry canes. Blackcurrants should be pruned. On established bushes aim to remove a third of old wood (two years and more) cutting down to the base of the stems. Red and White Currants and Gooseberries should be winter pruned if not yet done.

Apples and Pears

Apple and Pear trees need pruning now if not already done.



USED POSTAGE STAMP APPEAL

Thank you to all our members who continue to save used postage stamps which are sent to the Bone Cancer Research Trust. I have received this “thank you” from the Trust for our continued support:

This year, our supporters have helped us to:

- Invest almost £1 million in research and fund 10 new research projects. We’re hoping to fund three more projects and invest another £600,000 before the year ends
- Support more than 1,000 people
- Provide 150 financial grants to help bone cancer patients and their families.

We simply couldn't do this without the help of our wonderful supporters. Thank you.



ANSWERS – DON’T GET IT YET?

1. Don’t Go Breaking My Heart	2. Don’t You Want Me (Baby)
3. Don’t Stand so Close to Me	4. Don’t Stop the Music
5. Don’t Be Cruel	6. Don’t Let the Sun Go Down on Me
7. Don’t Worry, Be Happy	8. Don’t Bring Me Down
9. Don’t Stop Me Now	10. (Don’t Fear) The Reaper

ANSWERS – ANIMAL FACTS

1. Snow Leopard	2. Bharal (a bovine creature, looks like a large mountain goat)
3. Black	4. Baleen Whale (filter feeding system whereas Orcas and Belugas have teeth)
5. Koala	6. Sloth (due to slow metabolism)
7. Rhino	8. Hedgehogs
9. Pangolin	10. Turtle



FROM THE EDITOR

How quickly the time comes round to produce the monthly newsletter – it only seems a short time ago that I was pondering what to write in my editorial! It's good to be back in the swing of group activities after the busy festive season and, for those of us who are Group Leaders, planning what we will be doing in the coming year. This is perhaps time to remind members and those who are new to our u3a of things which help Group Leaders with the running of their groups. Do please let the Group Leader know if you are unable to attend a meeting. Remember the 50p charge for refreshments. If you are going on a coach trip, please leave the front seat free for the organiser who may have to liaise with the driver.

I was saddened to learn that the printer of Third Age Matters has gone into liquidation. I know some members were not really interested in the publication, but I found it really interesting to hear about the u3a movement countrywide – hopefully the Trust will be able to organise a new publisher.

Don't forget this is your newsletter and contributions are always welcome be it a recipe, comment or piece about your group – don't leave it all to your Group Leader.

The deadline for receiving articles for the March 2024 Newsletter is

Saturday 24th February 2024

rgu3anewsletter@gmail.com

Ann Rawlinson

Newsletter Editor

Our next monthly meeting at the Grange will be on Wednesday 6th March when our speaker will be Neil Sadler with his talk entitled (Almost) Death in Paradise

Neil spent 30 years as a Police Officer being “on the beat” in Bognor Regis and working briefly in Hong Kong, Trinidad and Abu Dhabi.



GROUP CALENDAR

If you are interested in joining any of these Groups please contact the Group Co-ordinator

GROUP	DAY	TIME	GROUP LEADER
AD HOC HISTORY	To be advised		Donna & Steve Lowe
ART APPRECIATION	3 rd Wednesday	2.00 – 4.30 pm	Geoff Pearce
BADMINTON 1	Thursday – Fortnightly	10.00 am	Jacqui Butcher
BADMINTON 2	Wednesday – Fortnightly	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Geoff Pearce
BIRD WATCHING	4 th Wednesday	10.00 am	Peta Turner
BOOK GROUP 1	4 th Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Angela Bartlett
BOOK GROUP 2	Last Thursday	3.30 pm	Jackie Dillnutt
BRIDGE	2 nd Wednesday	7.30 pm	Dave Westall
CANASTA 1	2 nd Monday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Doreen Brown
CANASTA 2	3 rd Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Edna Webb
CANASTA BEGINNERS 1	3 rd Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Clarke-Overy
CANASTA BEGINNERS 2	2 nd Wednesday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Jane Gee
CHURCH VISITS	3 rd Wednesday	10.00 – 1.30 pm	Ann Rawlinson
CINEMA	Wednesday (various)	Afternoon	Christine Shaw
CRIBBAGE	4 th Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Susan Neil
DISCUSSION	3 rd Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Doreen Brown
FAMILY HISTORY 1	1 st Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 2	1 st Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 3	2 nd Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 4	4 th Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FILM APPRECIATION	3 rd Monday		Joan Hanscomb
FUTURE LEARN DISCUSSION	As and when	4.00 – 5.00 pm	Pam Green
GARDEN GROUP	Various		Theresa McAninch
IPAD/TABLET	2 nd Friday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Mark Wiseman
KNIT & NATTER	2 nd Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Ann Clarke-Overy
LUNCH SUNDAY	3 rd Sunday		Susan Neil
LUNCH WEEKDAY	2 nd Wednesday		Edna Webb
MAHJONG	Tuesday – Fortnightly	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Keith Robjent
MARITIME HISTORY	1 st Monday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Sue Howarth-Reading
MINDFULNESS/MEDITATION 1	2 nd Friday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Carol Bright

MINDFULNESS/MEDITATION 2	4 th Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Carol Bright
OUT AND ABOUT	Various Days		Ann Clarke-Overy
PHOTOGRAPHY MONDAY	Various		Geoff Kittle
PHOTOGRAPHY FRIDAY	3 rd Friday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Maureen Cheesewright
		Contact via WhatsApp	
PUDDY GALORE	4 th Tuesday	4.00 pm	Anne Berry
RUMMIKUB 1	1 st Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Jane Gee
RUMMIKUB 2	2 nd Thursday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Pam Green
SCRABBLE	3 rd Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Wendy Bedwell
SHAKESPEARE APPRECIATION	3 rd Friday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Paula Whittle
SHORT MAT BOWLS	Tuesday – Fortnightly	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Susan Neil
SINGING FOR PLEASURE	1 st /3 rd Tuesday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Joan Wayman
SOLO WHIST	2 nd Monday	11.00 – 1.00 pm	David Lobley
TABLE TENNIS	1 st /3 rd Friday	1.30 – 3.00 pm	Maureen Saveall
TENPIN BOWLING	Tuesday – Fortnightly	11.00 – 3.00 pm	Jacqui Butcher
THEATRE/EVENTS	Various times & days		Doreen Brown Edna Webb Susan Neil Ann Clarke-Overy
TRIVIAL PURSUIT	4 th Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Steve Barns
WALKING MIDWEEK	3 rd Monday		Gwen Bushell
WALKING SUNDAY	Last Sunday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Christine Shaw
WINE THURSDAY	Various	7.00 pm	Susan Neil Ann Newman
WINE FRIDAY	Various	7.00 pm	Susan Neil Ann Newman
WOMEN IN HISTORY	Last Friday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Lynda Rooke
u3a MONTHLY MEETING	1 st Wednesday	1.30 – 4 .00 pm	Various Speakers

For specific dates please liaise with your Group Leader.