



RAYLEIGH GRANGE u3a

Newsletter - Edition No. 156 2024



Welcome to the January 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

Welcome to the Rayleigh Grange u3a Newsletter.

Hello everyone – well we had our Christmas party at the beginning of December and, to be honest, for those of you who didn't go you missed an epic night out - it was great. The night really kickstarted the Christmas festivities off and we all had a great time. Many, many thanks to Jackie, Lynda and their team of helpers who put on the event - it really showed us all that Rayleigh Grange is - a force to be reckoned with.

On a less joyful note, the coach trip to see “Moulin Rouge” hit problems where a road traffic accident gridlocked the traffic preventing our coach from getting to the show. A happier note was that the coach company have said they will refund the coach trip monies as the event was unprecedented and, as a gesture of good will, they will not be taking payment. We will remember Cooks Coaches again for future trips - thank you.

Due to the Rayleigh Grange hall closure over the Christmas holidays, we are unable to hold a January meeting. I am, along with Barbara, looking for alternative hall venues in the area that can seat 180 people, have enough car parking and be reasonably central to our present Grange base. The Mill Hall in the town could suit, but Rayleigh u3a already have this on the same day as we would want it and there is also a cost issue here. When the council gets the rebuilding of the Grange Community Centre underway we are going to be without a hall for up to 10 weeks (they say) so we will keep you posted. If anyone out there knows of a possible contender please give me a shout.

We've got an eventful year ahead of us - take care and have fun.

Happy New Year

**Bill Keays
Chairman**

u3a CHRISTMAS PARTY



There was snow in the morning and it was bitterly cold in the evening, but once we were all in the hall this year's party certainly went with a swing! The band did a superb rendition of the Everly Brothers hits and then followed up with a selection of 60's music which kept the dance floor very busy. There was a great selection of food on offer and the gateaux proved particularly popular.

We are keen to book this band again, but would like some feedback as to whether you want the same type of format or whether you would prefer a different selection of music. They are very flexible with the music choices so we can ask them to adapt their repertoire if need be.



I think everyone enjoyed themselves and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped with the clearing up at the end of the evening. Everyone worked hard to make the evening a success. Thank you to David Butcher for the photographs.

Lynda Rooke















QUIZ – NHS

**Each answer contains the letters N, H & S within it, in that order
(Answers do not necessarily start with N)**

1. The process by which plants use the energy from sunlight. (13)	2. Breaths in. (7)
2. What do you get if you cut a third into 3 equal parts. (6)	4. To make somebody interested and energised in a subject. (7)
5. Mythological spirits of nature imagined as beautiful maidens inhabiting rivers and woods. (6)	6. UK city in the northwest of the country. (10)
7. Imperial unit of length (plural). (6)	8. Songs of devotion or loyalty, particularly to a country. (7)
9. A pair of attachments to the sole of a boot used for walking in wintry conditions. (9)	10. Improves something or to make something better than it was. (8)

Answers on page 16

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

SUNDAY WALKING GROUP



The group meets on the last Sunday of the month and on Sunday 26th November the group had its last walk of the year. Fifteen group members walked from Two Tree Island to Old Leigh and return, about 3.5 miles. It was a cold, yet beautiful, crisp and sunny day, without any wind. The river was flat calm and there were many sea bathers braving the cold water off the promenade in Old Leigh.



We had a stop halfway at The Peterboat Inn for mulled wine or coffee, and then a leisurely walk back to our cars. A new programme of walks will be set up for 2024 with group members 'volunteering' to lead a walk in specific months. Barbara Oliver kindly took the photographs.

Christine Shaw



CINEMA GROUP

The Cinema Group meets on a Wednesday morning at Cineworld, Basildon to see the Seniors films. On 22nd November 2023 the group had its largest turnout for a film, with 34 members attending the screening of “The Great Escaper”.

The film was based on the true story of Bernard Jordan aged 90 who in 2014 'escaped' from his care home in Brighton to attend the 70th anniversary of D Day in France. Michael Caine and the late Glenda Jackson played Bernard and his wife Rene. They both gave excellent performances it was to be Glenda Jackson's last film as she died in June 2023. The feedback from members was that it was an excellent film and thoroughly enjoyed.

Christine Shaw
Group Leader



QUIZ – CURRENCIES

Given the country, name their unit of currency

1. Kenya	2. Guinea
3. Brazil	4. South Africa
5. India	6. Belarus
7. Malaysia	8. Vietnam
9. Czech Republic	10. Saudi Arabia

Answers on page 18

LOCAL HISTORY AND CHURCH VISITS GROUPS
CHRISTMAS LUNCH



The Local History Group had their final meeting of the year having Christmas lunch at The Rettendon Lodge, Battlesbridge on Friday 8th December. The venue was extremely, busy but I hope the slow service did not prevent those present enjoying the fine food which offered extremely good value for money. Thank you to David Butcher for the photographs.





**Ken Paton
Group Leader**

PEEPING INTO THE PAST

A seasonal snippet from days gone by

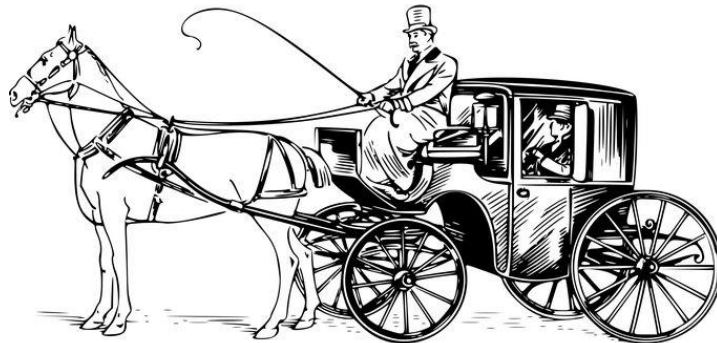
From The Essex Herald – 3rd January 1837 - THE SNOW STORM IN ESSEX

The snow does not appear to have fallen so heavily in this county, as in several other districts of the United Kingdom but still in several districts communication has been suspended.

The greatest fall seems to have been in the neighbourhood of Dunmow, Thaxted, Heddingham, Halstead and Braintree. The market at the latter place was very thinly attended on Wednesday, most of the farmers present having been compelled to make their way across fields on foot, the roads being blocked up and the snow having drifted in some places seven or eight feet deep. The Bury coach on its way to London was, we hear, detained at Heddingham from Monday to Wednesday.

Between Thaxted and Dunmow a distance of only six miles, all communication was shut out for nearly three days. Upwards of 200 labourers are now employed on the roads, and they have only been enabled to cut through a space sufficient for a man and a horse. The road between Thaxted and Debden is almost impassable, the snow being in many places nearly 20 ft. deep. At the latter place on Tuesday, a man named David Davis, shepherd to Mr. White in attempting to extricate his master's sheep from the snow got into a drift in the field and was afterwards found dead.

In the neighbourhood of Coggeshall, a post-chaise was set fast in the snow and was obliged to be abandoned, and on Wednesday a man who was sent out about seven miles with a horse and cart, loaded with shop goods for a grocer, was obliged to return without fulfilling his errand.



On Monday afternoon, the Dunmow coach from London, on reaching a place called Long Barns, nine miles from its destination became fixed in the snow. The passengers, none of whom were fortunately females, alighted and thinking their limited exertions could affect a passage through, they forced the coach onwards from behind, but such was the depth of the snow that they only increased their dilemma. In this situation they contrived to release the horses, and after unloading the coach, they were compelled to leave it behind whilst the coachman returned to Fyfield. The parcels were conveyed to a cottage, and the passengers, about six in number, started on foot to complete their journey, which they with much difficulty, completed at 2.0 o'clock in the morning. It was some time before the coach could be found, and we understand that on Wednesday it had not reached Dunmow.

Neither the Norwich mail, nor indeed any coaches from Norfolk and the lower parts of Suffolk, arrived on Monday; but on Tuesday the bags from Ipswich were brought in a post-chaise. Through this means the bags from the following places in this county reached London at 5.0 o'clock on Tuesday evening: Harwich, Manningtree, Brentwood, Billericay, Rochford, Romford, Colchester, Maldon, Chelmsford, Hadleigh, Bishops Stortford, Harlow and Epping.

The Norwich mail due on Monday only arrived yesterday morning. About half past three in the afternoon another mail from Norwich passed through bringing yesterday's bags. They were conveyed in a post-chaise and four.

Numerous accidents have occurred from the dangerous practice of making slides on public thoroughfares. A lad named Sillitoe living in Rainsford End was walking across a slide and falling down fractured his arm.

The Stortford mailman appears to have had a very narrow escape on Monday evening. On his way to Dunmow his horse and cart sunk into a declivity which had been obscured by the drifted snow and but for the timely assistance of four men who fortunately happened to be close on hand it is hardly possible he could have escaped from his perilous situation.

Fuller, the driver of the mail cart from Dunmow to Chelmsford waited the whole of Monday night and did not reach here 'til the following evening. Even then the state of the roads, particularly near Dunmow Priory, was such as to render them impassable and in many places he was compelled to cross the fields on horseback.

The communication between Chelmsford and London has not been much impeded, nor does the snow on the high road to Colchester appear to have caused great inconvenience, but at Harwich it is 10 or 12 feet deep in places.

Yarmouth mail from London has not yet been heard of; it is supposed it has reached Saxmundham and there has been compelled to stop.

Researched by Ann Rawlinson

ANSWERS – NHS

1. Photosynthesis	2. Inhales
3. Ninths	4. Enthuse
5. Nymphs	6. Manchester
7. Inches	8. Anthems
9. Snowshoes	10. Enhances



GARDENING NOTES

JOBS FOR THE GARDEN IN JANUARY

- It's time to prepare for growing in the year ahead: dust and scrub your pots, trays and labels.
- Clean and sharpen your tools and, if necessary, replace tools.
- If you've made a New Year's resolution to eat more healthily, try simple sprouting seeds: quick, easy and delicious in salad.
- Check that the seeds you intend to sow are in date and stored in a cool, dry, mouse-free container.
- Keep on clearing winter debris from your beds and mulch them with leaf mould, bark or compost; watch out for emerging bulbs.
- If you have a patch of perennial weeds, now is a good time to tackle it before the weeds begin to grow again.
- Continue harvesting leeks, kale and parsnips.
- Prune autumn-fruiting raspberries to soil level.
- Provide food and water for the birds in your garden.
- Place a seed order, as it will soon be time to start sowing onions, cabbages, parsnips, leeks, sweet peas and calendula.



ANSWERS – CURRENCIES

1. Shilling	2. (Guinean) Franc
3. Real	4. Rand
5. Rupee	6. Ruble
7. Ringgit	8. Dong
9. (Czech) Koruna	10. Riyal



FROM THE EDITOR

As I write this Christmas is just days away and by the time you are reading this it will be all over and a new year will have begun.

I have included in this newsletter a seasonal article about the great Snow Storm 200 years ago. This relates to Essex and familiar places although our part of the county was not as badly affected as other parts. You will read how the delivery of post was badly affected and I thought about that today when, for the first time in nearly two weeks, I received a couple of bundles (yes bundles) of post – our postal service of late has been absolutely abysmal with our poor postmen having to contend with a huge backlog. Our postal service couldn't blame 10 ft snowdrifts for the delays! I hope you find it interesting.

A Very Happy New Year to everyone and I look forward to receiving your contributions to the newsletter in the coming year.

The deadline for receiving articles for the February 2024 Newsletter is

Thursday 25th January 2024

rgu3newsletter@gmail.com

Ann Rawlinson

Newsletter Editor



GROUP CALENDAR

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

GROUP	DAY	TIME	GROUP LEADER
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
HOME AND AWAY FAMOUS LANDMARKS	3 rd Thursday From Jan 2024	2.30 – 4.00 pm	Theresa Hale
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
LOCAL HISTORY	2 nd Friday	2.00 – 3.30 pm	Janet & Ken Paton
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	1st Monday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Sue Howarth-Reading
MINDFULNESS/MEDITATION 1	2nd Friday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Carol Bright
MINDFULNESS/MEDITATION 2	4th Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Carol Bright
OUT AND ABOUT	Various Days		Ann Clarke-Overy
PHOTOGRAPHY MONDAY	Various		Geoff Kittle
PHOTOGRAPHY FRIDAY	3rd Friday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Maureen Cheesewright
		Contact via WhatsApp	
PUDDY GALORE	4th Tuesday	4.00 pm	Anne Berry
RUMMIKUB 1	1st Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Jane Gee
RUMMIKUB 2	2nd Thursday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Pam Green
SCRABBLE	3rd Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Wendy Bedwell
SHAKESPEARE APPRECIATION	3rd Friday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Paula Whittle
SHORT MAT BOWLS	Tuesday – Fortnightly	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Susan Neil
SINGING FOR PLEASURE	1st/3rd Tuesday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Joan Wayman
SOLO WHIST	2nd Monday	11.00 – 1.00 pm	David Lobley
TABLE TENNIS	1st/3rd Friday	1.30 – 3.00 pm	Maureen Saveall
TENPIN BOWLING	Tuesday – Fortnightly	11.00 – 3.00 pm	Jacqui Butcher
TEXTILE & CRAFT	1st & 3rd Friday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Chris Roffey Sarah Kay
THEATRE/EVENTS	Various times & days		Doreen Brown Edna Webb Susan Neil Ann Clarke-Overy
TRIVIAL PURSUIT	4th Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Steve Barns
WALKING MIDWEEK	3rd 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	1st Wednesday	1.30 – 4 .00 pm	Various Speakers

For specific dates please liaise with your Group Leader.

PLEASE REMEMBER - NO JANUARY MEETING AT THE GRANGE