



## RAYLEIGH GRANGE u3a

Newsletter - Edition No. 151 2023



## **Welcome to the July/August Newsletter**

***Next monthly meeting at the Grange is on  
Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 2.00 p.m.***

***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
For the election of our Officers and Committee***

***It is important that you attend this meeting, if possible, as we need a quorum of members in order to elect the Officers and Committee to take our u3a into another year.***

***We will be holding a Quiz after the AGM – tables of 8 with prizes for the winning team.***



## **FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Hello and welcome to the Rayleigh Grange u3a Newsletter.

It's warm out there and you can be assured of a warm welcome at our u3a here at Rayleigh Grange. I can't believe it's been a year since I was voted in as Chairman and, with the AGM coming up at the next meeting, I would hope to be voted in for another year.

The concerning issue that we have is that if there is no clear mandate for the election of a Chairman, a Treasurer and a Secretary at this AGM our constitution states that we can no longer operate and sadly Rayleigh Grange would cease to exist and CLOSE – what a shame that would be considering the fun that members have not forgetting all the very hard work we all do –so help us all out and please turn up at the AGM.

Remember it's your u3a and we are good!

Take care and have fun.

**Bill Keays**  
**Chairman**

## **CAN YOU HELP ?**

Val and Alan Robson who have been organising and running our **Book and Jigsaw Swap** at our monthly meetings for the last 11 years are now unable to continue. We do need help in September if this popular facility is to continue. Please contact any member of the Committee if you are able to help.

***Our sincere thanks to Val and Alan for all their hard work which is much appreciated.***



## **NEW MINDFULNESS GROUP**

A new Mindfulness Group to be held on the last Monday in the month (probably afternoon) is planned. Priority will be given to those currently on the waiting list.

Please contact Carol Bright our Group Co-ordinator if you are interested.

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

### GARDEN GROUP

#### VISIT TO ISABELLA'S GARDEN IN LEIGH-ON-SEA



The Garden Group visited Isabella's garden in Leigh. What a wonderful garden packed with roses, clematis, agapanthus, herbaceous plants, alpines and unusual succulents and cacti. With a wildlife pond, lilies and huge hanging baskets, there was no room for any weeds anywhere!!! We enjoyed sitting in the sunny garden with a cream tea with freshly made scones and cakes.







We ended our day with a visit to Cyril and Linda's garden which was also full of colour.





**FRIDAY PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP**



This is the source of all the noise  
at 4-30 A.M.

**Blackbird by Keith**

## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



On 9<sup>th</sup> June under bright blue skies, albeit with a chilly wind, 15 Local History Group members assembled at Tilbury Fort one of the finest surviving 17<sup>th</sup> century bastioned artillery forts in England. Work began in 1539 when a small fort known as a "blockhouse" was one of five established along the river Thames. It was close by that Queen Elizabeth I gave her famous "*I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king*" speech in 1588. In 1670 a design for a new fort was agreed and it is this fort which, to a large extent, survives today although it was not completed until the late 1690's.



There were a number of re-fits during the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century when the fort was permanently garrisoned during the many wars and threat of invasion at this time. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century the fort's role in the defence of the Thames was in decline, but gunners from the fort claimed to have shot down a German Zeppelin in the First World War. The fort was taken under the control of the Ministry of Works in 1950 and opened to the public in 1982. Since 1983 the site has been managed by English Heritage. My thanks to Paul from English Heritage for his enlightening introductory talk, to David for the attached photographs and to all who joined us on the trip.

**Ken Paton**  
**Group Leader**



## **QUIZ – COMEDY SPIN-OFFS**

Given the name of the spin-off name the parent comedy.

1. Frasier	2. George and Mildred
3. Count Duckula	4. Grace and Favour
5. Ted and Ralph	6. The Green Green Grass
7. Joey	8. Torchwood
9. Mork and Mindy	10. Phoenix Nights

**Answers on page 16**



## VISIT TO BRICK LANE MUSIC HALL

### LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE



In July a group of us set off to Brick Lane Music Hall to see their show 'The Sound of The Sixties.' The venue changed about 20 years ago from Brick Lane to an old church in Silvertown. The interior has been decorated to fit its use.



We were served with a 3-course lunch with, of course, 'bangers and mash' as the main course. A typical east London meal!



Spotted in the Ladies Loo!!

Then the show started. It brought back all the songs of our youth with the performers dressing up to try to resemble the actual stars of that time. We all sang along with gusto. Everything was very 'tongue-in-cheek' with a lot of comedy and innuendo. It was often rather politically incorrect which had the audience roaring with laughter. None of us wanted it to end.

It left us all with 'the feel-good factor'.



Even our Chairman joined us in the Flower Power theme!!

**Peta Turner**

**TRIP TO LIVERPOOL AND RHS BRIDGEWATER**  
**MONDAY, 29<sup>th</sup> MAY TO FRIDAY, 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE**

Our merry band set off for our annual u3a residential trip which this year was to Liverpool. Despite it being a bank holiday, the journey was stress free. Our hotel, the Dixie Dean Hotel, was named after the famous Everton footballer. Staff there were very friendly and helpful and at dinner the first night we all discussed our “unique” room arrangements. The hotel is one of several party and hen night destinations in Liverpool and most of us were in rooms that could sleep 8 people. The breakfast buffet choices were good and had a wide range of choices. The 3-course dinner options were typically very tasty and well presented. It was also very well located within walking distance of many of the most popular places to see, including the Cavern Club.

On our first full day a few people decided to stay and explore Liverpool or go on a tour of Liverpool FC whilst most of us went to the newest RHS garden at Bridgewater just outside Manchester. It has been open a couple of years now and is looking beautiful and full of further potential with work still going on in the Chinese garden and pool area. The gardens are being very well tended and there are large wild pasture and woodland areas to contrast the more formal parts. The gardens are very large and there was plenty to see in our full day there.



The next day we were taken to the famous “ferry ‘cross the Mersey” and had a guided circular tour of the river and spotted many of the landscape highlights, including the Liver building with its huge Liver birds. This was followed by a visit to the Beatles Experience in the Albert Dock area. There were an incredible number of items of Beatles memorabilia and the audio tour was very interesting.





**Albert Dock and Tate Liverpool**



**Eurovision Memories**

We used the afternoon to explore Liverpool's many delights. Some took the hop on hop off tourist bus to find out more. Others visited Albert Dock for the street culture, museums and galleries. There was so much there to see and do.

The final day we had the morning free to continue to explore our own choices of locations and activities. The Tate Gallery had some challenging art installations, but help was on hand to explain their meaning! The Mary Walker Art Gallery had a wonderful range of art matching anything in London and the Liverpool Museum explored the history of the city through many iconic items. In the afternoon a guide joined our coach for a Magical Musical tour of the city focussing on all the places relevant to the music scene, but also showing some of the other notable buildings. Many of us made the most of our location to visit the famous Cavern Club and some of us were lucky enough to see a wonderful local band become The Beatles. A room full of people singing along with every song – it was a great night!



**The Cavern Club**



**Beatlemania!**

Great weather, a fantastic city and wonderful friends and colleagues, it was a brilliant holiday break and many of us wished we'd had a day or two more there. Roll on the next holiday!!!

**Jackie Dillnutt**



## GARDENING NOTES

### JOBS FOR THE GARDEN IN JULY

- Summer can still throw some surprises, make sure tall plants and climbers are well-supported in case of strong winds or heavy rain.
- When watering your plants do it at dusk when water droplets on foliage is less likely to cause damage by heating on leaves. The droplets of water act like a magnifying glass for the sun's rays.
- Terracotta pots are prone to evaporation so dampen the pot to help keep the plant roots cool.
- Mulch plants to keep moisture in.
- Penstemons – as flowers fade cut back to just above a leaf bud to encourage new flower growth. The same applies to Delphiniums.
- Hardy Geraniums – when finished flowering cut whole plant back to get more flowers.
- Cut hanging baskets, if looking tired, and feed to promote fresh growth.
- Remember a plant makes flowers to make seeds to make future plants. If you constantly deadhead any plants it will deny making seed. This will encourage it to make more flowers to make seeds.
- Prune Wisteria now. Just remove the whippy side shoots from the main branch framework (about five leaves from the stem).
- Keep an eye out for pests on plants early. Early treatment is best before it takes a strong hold.

**BLUEBELL STEAM RAILWAY AND NT STANDEN HOUSE AND GARDENS TRIP**  
**FRIDAY, 23<sup>rd</sup> JUNE**

We travelled to the beautiful High Weald area of East Sussex for a morning trip on the Bluebell steam railway. On our arrival we stopped for a comfort break and tea/ coffee before embarking on our journey through the lovely, peaceful countryside. The journey brought the evocative smell of coal and the sound of train whistles as we gently rode along. After a 30 minute journey to East Grinstead we were able to alight and watch as the engine was moved to take us on our return journey to Sheffield Park.



At Sheffield Park many of us had a pleasant lunch in their pub/restaurant before moving on to Standen House and Gardens, a family home built and fully fitted in keeping with the Arts and Crafts movement. It was designed by the architect, Philip Webb, and contains many textiles, ceramics and wallpapers created by the William Morris company based on the theory “Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be beautiful or believe to be useful.” The rooms and décor were stunning and surprisingly contemporary in style.



The gardens had a sculpture park and wonderful views of the Weald. It was an idyllic location and a beautiful rendering of Arts and Crafts with the top architects, designers, craftsmen and women, garden designers and artists used in its creation.

The weather was perfect and a lovely day was had by all.

**Jackie Dillnutt**



## QUIZ – FUN OF THE FAIR

1. Which drinking vessels can have styles and shapes called Dunoon, Wings of Grace, Royal Albert and Irish?	2. In which town was the first ever Ghost Train opened to the public and still operated to this day?
2. "WAGONS BITS" is an anagram of which children's ride from yesteryear?	4. Which fairground game would kids love to capture a type of Anseriform?
5. The Waltzer was originally called what – The Spinner or The Rapids?	6. The word originally spelt "Shie" in Coconut shy" means what – Kill, Row or Throw?
7. Which attraction could also be a UK TV series starring Kathy Burke or a place where people illegally take drugs?	8. How many years has Goose Fair been active – 539, 639 or 739?
9. On which ride at a funfair might you see an "Overhead System", a floor pick up or a Quantum class being used?	10. Why is a Ferris Wheel so called? Is it a. the first wheel made of metal b. mis-spelt "Ferret Wheel" c. it was invented by George Ferris

**Answers on page 22**



## ANSWERS – COMEDY SPIN-OFFS

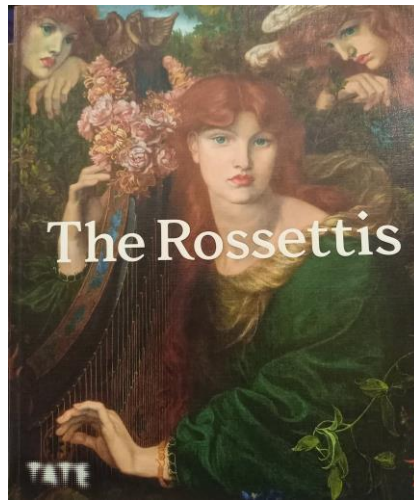
1. Cheers	2. Man About the House
3. Danger Mouse	4. Are you Being Served?
5. The Fast Show	6. Only Fools and Horses
7. Friends	8. Doctor Who (Torchwood is an anagram)
9. Happy Days (Robin Williams starred as alien)	10. That Peter Kay Thing



**SOME MORE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE BLUEBELL RAILWAY**  
by Maureen Cheesewright



**ART APPRECIATION GROUP**  
**VISIT TO THE ROSSETTI EXHIBITION AT THE TATE**



**CHURCH VISIT GROUP**  
**JUNE VISIT TO LINDSELL AND STEBBING CHURCHES**



**St. Mary the Virgin, Lindsell**

It was a glorious day for our June Church Visits. The first was to St. Mary the Virgin in the village of Lindsell. This endearing little church is set in an unspoilt, rustic setting approached between barns and other farm buildings and next to Lindsell Hall. Our guide took us to the rear of the church to see the 12<sup>th</sup> century anchorite cell. Here, with the authority of the Bishop, the anchoress, after receiving the Last Rites, spent the rest of her life living alone in the shadow of the church, following an approved rule of life. Evidently there were up to 500 ladies who chose this way of life in medieval England, the most famous being Mother Julian of Norwich.

The three-light east window contains fragments of ancient glass, the font is 15<sup>th</sup> century and there is a brass of Thomas Fytche d. 1514, his wife and eleven children.





**The anchorite's cell set in the exterior wall of the building**



**The tiny interior window where the Anchoress could view the altar and receive the sacrament**

The entrance to the church is through farm buildings. The village was once much larger than it is today with a population of 407 in 1871, but the population fell rapidly to 187 which is about the number of its inhabitants today.



Our drive through the hamlet of Duck End (with its duck pond and ducks) and lovely old properties took us to the much larger village of Stebbing. Here we had an excellent lunch at the White Hart, the only surviving hostelry in the village street, before our next visit to the parish church of St. Mary. Set in a cluster of ancient cottages the church stands proud and high at the south end of the village.



**St. Mary the Virgin, Stebbing**

In complete contrast to the tiny church at Lindsell this much larger building's crowning glory is the wonderful three-arch rood screen with intricate tracing spanning the wide chancel arch. The nave is wide, light and spacious. Our very affable guide took us round pointing out the interesting features including a beautiful brass of a medieval lady set in the floor of the nave.



Stebbing Church is about to close for a complete re-ordering of the building for which a grant of one million pounds has been made by the Heritage Lottery Fund. During this time services will be held at the Quaker Friends Meeting House in the village.

Both Stebbing and Lindsell are in a group of parishes known as the Pilgrim Parishes and form part of a group of five churches with one priest-in-charge.

Our thanks are due to Lorraine Taylor and Pauline Crowther who made all the arrangements for a very enjoyable day.

**Ann Rawlinson**  
**Group Leader**



## GARDENING NOTES JOBS FOR THE GARDEN IN AUGUST

- Keep Rhododendrons and Camelias well-watered at this time of year to ensure next year's flower buds develop well.
- Keep your baskets and tubs watered and feed with a liquid fertiliser once a fortnight.
- Stake Dahlias and all tall and top-heavy plants to prevent rain or wind damage.
- Keep deadheading your plants to force them to produce more flowers.
- Finish dividing Irises so they still have time to establish root growth before the cold weather comes.
- Prune summer flower shrubs.
- Do not mow your grass in the hot sun – best to do it in the evening to give it a chance to recover and not burn. Do not give a high-protein fertiliser now as this will produce too much young growth for this time of year and could be damaged by the autumn weather.
- Remember to take notes and photographs to recall what to keep and what to change.
- Give hedges their final trim of the year before they stop growing.
- Most of all take time to sit back and enjoy the efforts you have made in your garden.



### ANSWERS – FUN OF THE FAIR

1. Tea Cups	2. Blackpool Pleasure Beach
3. Swingboats	4. Hook-a-Duck
5. Whirligig	6. Throw
7. Shooting Gallery	8. 739
9. Dodgems/Bumper cars	10. Invented by George Washington Gale Ferris



## **FROM THE EDITOR**

I write this on what has been the hottest day of the year. Looking at the photographs this month it seems we have all been blessed with fine weather for our activities and trips.

Our AGM has come round again and we have candidates for all the posts we must fill, but we still need the support of the membership so do please make an effort to attend.

Many groups, although not all, take a break during August and there will be no monthly meeting at the Grange and no separate newsletter (this one covers July and August), but I know that our Website Manager will keep you up-to-date if anything important crops up during the August break.

The next monthly meeting at the Grange will be on **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September.**

Our speaker will be **Amanda Sutherland** with a talk about her career journey through fashion, television, theatre and costume design.

The deadline for receiving articles for the September 2023 Newsletter is

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

**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 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	2.00 – 4.30 pm	Geoff Pearce
BADMINTON 1	Thursday – Fortnightly	11 am	Jacqui Butcher
BADMINTON 2	Wednesday – Fortnightly	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Geoff Pearce
BIRD WATCHING	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	10.00 am	Peta Turner
BOOK GROUP 1	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Angela Bartlett
BOOK GROUP 2	Last Thursday	3.30 pm	Jackie Dillnutt
BRIDGE	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	7.30 pm	Dave Westall
CANASTA 1	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Doreen Brown
CANASTA 2	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Edna Webb
CANASTA BEGINNERS 1	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Clarke-Overy
CANASTA BEGINNERS 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Jane Gee
CHURCH VISITS	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	10.00 – 1.30 pm	Ann Rawlinson
CINEMA	Wednesday (various)	Afternoon	Christine Shaw
CRIBBAGE	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Susan Neil
DISCUSSION	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Doreen Brown
FAMILY HISTORY 1	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 2	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 3	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FAMILY HISTORY 4	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Ann Rawlinson
FILM APPRECIATION	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday		Joan Hanscomb
FUTURE LEARN DISCUSSION	As and when	4.00 – 5.00 pm	Pam Green
GARDEN GROUP	Various		Theresa McAninch
IPAD/TABLET	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Mark Wiseman
KNIT & NATTER	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Ann Clarke-Overy
LOCAL HISTORY	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	2.00 – 3.30 pm	Janet & Ken Paton
LUNCH SUNDAY	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday		Susan Neil
LUNCH WEEKDAY	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday		Edna Webb
MAHJONG	Tuesday – Fortnightly	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Keith Robjent
MARITIME HISTORY	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	2.30 – 4.30 pm	Sue Howarth-Reading
MINDFULNESS	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Carol Bright



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

*For specific dates please liaise with your Group Leader.*