

**RAYLEIGH GRANGE u3a**

**Newsletter - Edition No. 159 2024**



## **Welcome to the April Newsletter**

***Next monthly meeting at the Grange is on  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 2.00 p.m.***

Our speaker will be **Eve Regelous** with her talk  
**"I blame it on the Beatles"**

"It cannot be disputed that the 1960's were a time that changed the world from fashion to food, from music to microwaves, from radio airwaves to television.

If the 1950's were black and white, then the 1960's were multi-coloured."



## **FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Hello and welcome to the Rayleigh Grange u3a April newsletter.

We are known as the u3a to join in Rayleigh. This title is brought about by our friendly attitude, our excursions and its entertainment. Membership is buoyant with 329 confirmed members and a further 4 or 5 in the pipeline where Sue is processing their membership. New groups of Pétanque, Bridge, Crafts and Psychology have growing interest and will no doubt flourish in coming months.

We couldn't come close to being the best without our fantastic Group Leaders. These lovely people are the glue that keeps us all going and striving to be the best. How many members realise that without the input and hard work that our Group Leaders put in there would not be any Rummikub or Bridge or Short Mat Bowls, in fact nothing. Our groups only survive by the Group Leader getting down and making it happen. I personally have a lot of time for our Group Leaders and hold them in high esteem because as volunteers, like us, they make it happen for you.

A new venture of an Open House where members got together for a cuppa and a chat, but moreover getting to know each other, went well when we held our first meeting at the Cedar Centre recently. Let's hope we can keep this going. It was good.

Take care everyone.

**Bill Keays**  
**Chairman**

**FIRST OPEN HOUSE SESSION AT THE CEDAR CENTRE**  
**FRIDAY, 22<sup>nd</sup> MARCH**



We held our first Open House session hoping that members would find it useful and it appears to be going well so far. We had a good response in terms of numbers attending and it was a mix of established members who came along for a chat and a cuppa and recently joined ones who were hoping to get to know people and find out more about groups and events.

Our Chair, Bill Keays, came along as well as leaders of theatre trips, social events and our Website Administrator and they were able to answer member queries.

We plan to continue these sessions on a monthly basis on the last Friday of the month and all are welcome to attend or drop in. There will always be a member of the committee and at least one group leader at each meeting.

**Jackie Dillnutt**  
**Social Secretary**



## QUIZ – NOT SO FUNNY

**Given the name and year of the movie, name the comedian who stars in a straight role.**

<p><b>1.</b> Good Will Hunting (1997) Will Hunting, a janitor, has a gift for mathematics, but needs help from a psychologist.</p>	<p><b>2.</b> The Colour Purple (1985) An American woman struggles to find her identity after suffering abuse from her father.</p>
<p><b>3.</b> Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2004) When their relationship turns sour, a couple undergo a medical procedure to have each other erased from their memories.</p>	<p><b>4.</b> Philomena (2023) A world-weary journalist picks up the story of a women’s search for her son, who was taken away from her decades ago.</p>
<p><b>5.</b> Mrs Brown (1997) When Queen Victoria’s husband Prince Albert dies, she finds solace in her trusted servant, Mr John Brown.</p>	<p><b>6.</b> King Kong (2005) A greedy film producer assembles a team of moviemakers and sets out for the infamous Skull Island.</p>
<p><b>7.</b> Dreamgirls (2006) A trio of female soul singers cross over to the pop charts in the early 1960’s, facing their own personal struggles along the way. Who plays the raucous performer Jimmy Early.</p>	<p><b>8.</b> Being There (1979) A simpleminded, sheltered gardener becomes an unlikely trusted advisor to a powerful tycoon.</p>
<p><b>9.</b> Limelight (1952). A fading comedian and a despondent ballet dancer look to each other to find purpose and hope in their lives.</p>	<p><b>10.</b> The King of Comedy (1982) Rupert Pupkin (Robert de Niro) is an unsuccessful comic who craves to be in the spotlight so he stalks and kidnaps his idol.</p>

**Answers on page 17**





### SPOTLIGHT on The Knit and Natter Group

The group meets once a month, and we take turns to host the morning. There are 10 of us in the group when we have a full house.

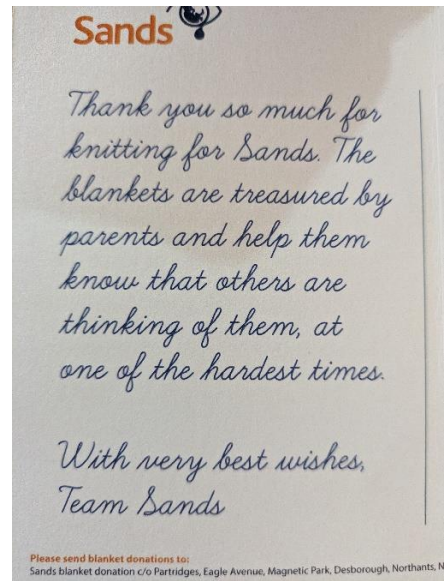


We are a friendly group and usually spend the first few minutes having a general catch up. Then the knitting or crocheting comes out and we're away.





The members of the group have various levels of expertise, some really experienced using complex patterns, one who designs her own patterns and one who asks for help quite a lot (myself), when things go wrong! It doesn't matter if you crochet or knit, we all have our own projects and enjoy admiring and commenting on the pieces being made.



Some while ago a few in the group knitted small blankets for Sands who support parents whose babies have very sadly died. One of our group has knitted many hats for the prem babies at the hospital.

We enjoy our tea and cake and with all the chat, the two hours fly by.

**Ann Clarke-Overy**  
**Group Leader**



## DAY TRIP TO ST ALBANS - WEDNESDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

Despite the recent wet weather, we were lucky and had a dry day for our trip to St. Albans. It was market day so there was plenty to see and do.

Our day started with a 90 minute a guided tour of the abbey and proved to be very interesting. The building is both a cathedral and a parish church and there are shrines to two saints. St Alban was the first British martyred saint. He gave shelter to a Christian priest called Amphibalus and helped him escape. Amphibalus was later captured, martyred and later made a saint. Construction of the building dates back to 1077 and more recent work on the abbey used bricks from the nearby Roman town of Verulamium.



We were free in the afternoon to explore. Many of us visited the town museum, now housed in the old courthouse. They have the holding cells, used until the 60's, which can be visited and the old courtroom is now a café. There was a good history of the area in the museum and an interesting exhibition of modern art by a local artist in the gallery.

Some of us also took the walk through Verulamium Park to the Roman museum to see the range of finds and mosaics on display.



The town itself is a lovely mixture of buildings from medieval time to the present day and it has lots of independent shops and the market which many of us enjoyed.

**Jackie Dillnutt**  
**Social Secretary**

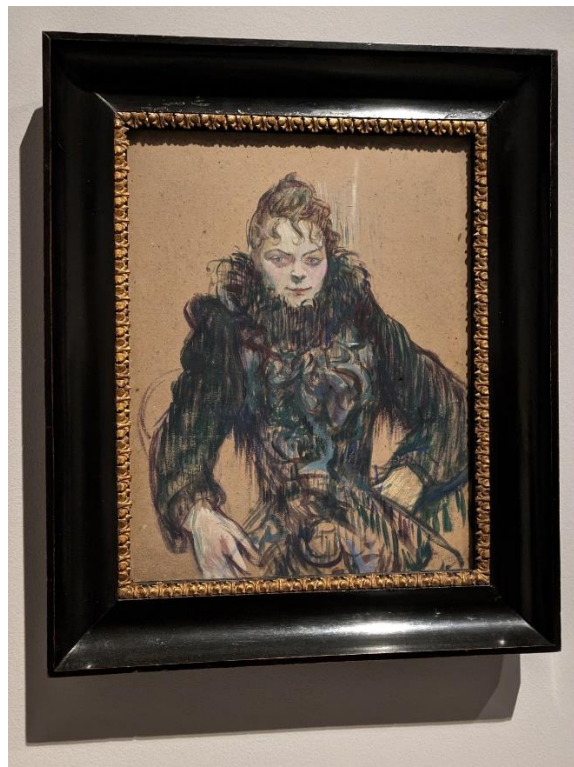


## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

### ART APPRECIATION



The latest Art Appreciation Group trip out was to the Tate Modern to see the “Impressionists on Paper Exhibition”. This depicted work from artists who wanted to challenge the contemporary orthodoxy of oil on canvas to explore other media particularly paper sketches using pencil or water colour etc. A good chance to learn more about art history and the shaping of today’s artists.





## FRIDAY PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Our group had great fun practising 'Splash Photography' at our last meet. Here are some of our efforts.



**Geoff Mead**



**Maureen Cheeswright**





**Linda Boar**



**Keith Rutledge**



## QUIZ – CARDINALS

1. Hitchcock movie 1959.	2. Hit song for the Pet Shop Boys 1986.
3. Which English football club playing in the National League 2022/23 has the nickname The Shrimpers.	4. Played Batman in the 1960's TV series.
5. Where would you find Europe's largest centre for the arts, comprising of a number of venues including Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery.	6. Welsh rugby player who scored for the British Lions in Australia in 2013.
7. Hit song by American disco group Village People 1979.	8. Which festival comprising a series of open-air concerts taking place summer 2023 at Crystal Palace Bowl in London.
9. Husband of Prunella Scales.	10. 1946 movie based on the Uncle Remus stories.

**Answers on page 17**



## **GARDENING NOTES**

### **JOBS FOR THE GARDEN IN APRIL**

- Plant your Lilies in pots now so that they can be moved around the patio or flower beds, when they flower.
- Lift and divide perennial plants to improve their vigour and produce free plants.
- Divide Hostas before they come into leaf.
- Divide Primroses after they have finished flowering.
- You can now start to move evergreen shrubs and trees as long as the soil is not frosty or waterlogged.
- Continue to plant herbaceous plants.
- Forced bulbs from indoors will be finished so plant them outside.
- Hardwood cuttings taken last year may now need potting on.
- Make sure tree ties are not cutting into tree and loosen if necessary.
- Make sure that supports that are needed for plants are ready in place. Tie in climbing and rambling Roses.
- Prune Penstemons cutting back all the old shoots back to the base provided that there is new growth at the bottom. If no new growth, then prune to above the lowest set of leaves.
- If you have not done so already, cut back dead foliage on your perennials or grasses.
- Prune Forsythia when finished flowering, cutting back to strong new shoots.
- Trim back winter flowering heathers.
- Now is the time to sow grass seed, lay new turf or repair bald patches. Apply a high nitrogen fertilizer to encourage strong growth. You can also now use specialist lawn weed killers on your lawn. Mow the lawn as required and lower the blades through the month.



**CHURCH VISITS GROUP**  
**MARCH VISIT TO ST. PETER'S CHURCH, GOLDHANGER**



Our March Church Visit, and the first excursion of the year, was to the village of Goldhanger and the church of St. Peter. Goldhanger lies on the north bank of the Blackwater Estuary between Heybridge and Tollesbury.

We were blessed with a lovely warm spring day and had enjoyed a pleasant journey through the Essex villages bedecked with daffodils. The magnolias are a wonderful sight this year (I understand they are flowering a month early) and the hedgerows were white with blackthorn blossom.

On entering the churchyard, we were faced with the “impressive and noble” war memorial. This Calvary Cross of Portland stone is unique in Essex and commemorates seventeen young men who lost their lives in the Great War. They included the son of the Rector who was at the front for just four days.

We were met in the porch by our guide David Newman, a local historian, who gave us an interesting talk on the history of the church and parish. The church dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century but may well have been a place of worship since Saxon times. St. Peter's has a sunken floor which is characteristic of Saxon buildings. There is evidence of re-used Roman brick in the church building. The south side of the church was added in the 14c and the tower in the 15c. There was much restoration in the 1790's and some rebuilding by the Victorians. There is a long history of bell ringing here and there are eight bells in the tower.



The churchyard is surrounded by a red brick wall built in the 1850's by the Rector who encouraged parishioners to build brick walls around their properties. A walk through the churchyard to a stile through the wall at the back of the churchyard affords lovely views across to the Blackwater Estuary glinting in the sunshine.

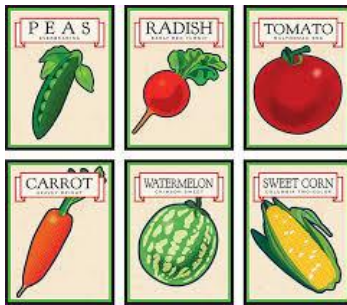
We learned from our guide that Maldon Sea Salt is produced in Goldhanger (not in Maldon) and the creek here is the saltiest part of the British coastline.



**The 16c. Swan Inn at Little Totham**

Our lunch venue was in the nearby village of Little Totham at “The Swan Inn” – a 16<sup>th</sup> c. hostelry which we had visited before and where a warm welcome awaited us. We enjoyed an excellent and very reasonably priced lunch before wending our way back to Rayleigh.

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



**ANSWERS – NOT SO FUNNY**

1. Robin Williams	2. Whoopi Goldberg
3. Jim Carrey	4. Steve Coogan
5. Billy Connolly	6. Jack Black
6. Eddie Murphy	8. Peter Sellers
9. Charlie Chaplin	10. Jerry Lewis

**QUIZ – CARDINALS**

1. North by Northwest	2. West End Girls
3. Southend United	4. Adam West
5. South Bank Centre, London	6. George North
6. Go West	8. South Facing Festival
9. Timothy West	10. Song of the South



## OBITUARIES

It is with sadness that we record the passing of three of our members:

In early March, Colin Wark, a long-term member who enjoyed our Badminton, Table Tennis and iPad Groups.

Val Robson who, for many years until very recently, ran our Bookstall with her husband Alan and was also a member of the Birdwatching, Solo and Textiles groups.

Carol Hardy who was a member of Canasta Beginners Groups 1 and 2.

Our sincere condolences to the families of all our recently departed members.

## FROM THE EDITOR

I hope you have enjoyed your Hot Cross Buns and Easter eggs over the Easter holiday. Thank you to all who contribute to our newsletter. We do have our regular contributors, Cyril who organises the quizzes and Garden Notes and those Group Leaders who regularly keep us up-to-date with what they have been doing. What brilliant photographs our Friday Photography Group have shared with us this month and the Knit and Natter Group have shown us how talented their members are. There will be more pictures from this group next month. It would be great to have contributions from some of our other group activities – whether they be indoors or out. Nearly everyone has a mobile phone these days – so there is no excuse!

**The deadline for receiving articles for the May 2024 Newsletter is**

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**rgu3newsletter@gmail.com**

**Ann Rawlinson**

**Newsletter Editor**

Our next monthly meeting at the Grange will be on **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May**  
when our speaker will be **John Field**

### **The Amazing World of Magic**

A retired solicitor, he is a member of the Magic Circle and his talk will feature the performance of different styles of magic which, it is said, will both entertain and baffle us.



## 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 <sup>rd</sup> 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 <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
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/MEDITATION 1	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Carol Bright

MINDFULNESS/MEDITATION 2	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Carol Bright
OUT AND ABOUT	Various Days		Ann Clarke-Overy
PHOTOGRAPHY MONDAY	Various		Geoff Kittle
PHOTOGRAPHY FRIDAY	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	10.00 – 12.00 pm	Maureen Cheesewright
		Contact via WhatsApp	
PUDDY GALORE	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	4.00 pm	Anne Berry
RUMMIKUB 1	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Jane Gee
RUMMIKUB 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Pam Green
SCRABBLE	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Wendy Bedwell
SHAKESPEARE APPRECIATION	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Paula Whittle
SHORT MAT BOWLS	Tuesday – Fortnightly	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Susan Neil
SINGING FOR PLEASURE	1 <sup>st</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	10.30 – 12.30 pm	Joan Wayman
SOLO WHIST	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	10.00 – 12.00	David Lobley
TABLE TENNIS	1 <sup>st</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> 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 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Steve Barns
WALKING MIDWEEK	3 <sup>rd</sup> 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 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	1.30 – 4 .00 pm	Various Speakers

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