



RAYLEIGH GRANGE u3a

Newsletter - Edition No. 158 2024



Welcome to the March Newsletter

***Next monthly meeting at the Grange is on
Wednesday 6th March at 2.00 p.m.***

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.



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello and welcome to the Rayleigh Grange u3a March newsletter.

Firstly, let me apologise for mixing Bury St. Edmunds and St. Albans up as a destination and final stop on a future excursion on my little verse at the beginning of the monthly meeting. Good job I'm not driving the coach!

The membership renewals went well this year with Sue, our Membership Secretary, being swamped with renewals emails. Our current membership numbers are buoyant at 328. We are looking at membership renewal rates at other u3a's in the area and our Treasurer, Dave Westall, will be looking into this for 2025/6.

With the Trinity Fair coming to Rayleigh in early June we are exploring the possibility of taking on a stall, possibly with other u3a's in the area, to improve our profile in Rayleigh. We might attract some new members as well.

New groups are appearing following membership interest - these being Bridge and Pétanque. Carol is doing some sterling work with Rayleigh Town Council to secure the use of the purpose built Pétanque court on King George V playing field.

We are starting an "Open House" where members are being invited to come along for a cuppa and biscuit to discuss anything u3a they want. This will be good for new members to get to know others along with committee members and some group leaders. This is planned for 22nd March at the Cedar Centre in Castle Road Rayleigh. Looking forward to this.

Bill Keys
Chairman



OPEN HOUSE

It has been suggested and agreed by the Committee that it would be a good idea to have regular informal coffee mornings to run alongside our usual monthly meetings.

The idea is that members can just drop in, have tea or coffee and a chat. A Committee member and a Group Leader will be there to facilitate i.e. make the drinks and hand round the biscuits!

Everyone will be welcome, and we hope that this is something that may appeal especially to newer members as a way of getting to know people.

They will be held on the 3rd Friday of the month from 10am to 12pm at the Cedar Centre Castle Road starting on Friday 22nd March.

The Cedar Centre has limited parking but is close to Castle Road car park and only a short walk from Rayleigh High Street buses.

Initial meetings will be free of charge but, if this venture is successful, we will ask for a small contribution towards hall costs and refreshments.

Carol Bright
Group Co-ordinator

DAY TRIP TO THE TEREZA JOANNE BOAT FOR LUNCH WITH ABBA
THURSDAY, 22nd FEBRUARY

This turned out to be a very popular trip and we had 55 members attend the event. The venue was new to almost everyone. It was on a boat moored in King George V dock with great views of the planes taking off and landing at City airport.



We arrived earlier than expected but were welcomed on board where we settled at our tables and began the day with drinks before lunch. Lunch was excellent with free range chicken, mash, green beans and an amazing gravy. The band's first set then followed the main course. The group were a very good ABBA tribute and the girl's voices were very authentic. They sang lots of ABBA's hits and the harmonies were very good.



We then had dessert which was a cheesecake with cream. The second set included many of their biggest hits and most of us got up and had a dance to the likes of Dancing Queen and Thank You for the Music.



The staff there were very efficient and friendly and contributed to making it a great day out. Many people were keen to repeat the trip again as they have a range of performers and meal arrangements. Watch out for future trips!

Jackie Dillnutt



QUIZ – COMPLETE THE NAME OF THE BAND

1. Peter Paul and
2. Roxy
3. The Andrews.....
4. The Sex.....
5. Bob Marley and the
6. The Lovin'.....
7. Kool and the.....
8. The Bee.....
9. Earth Wind and.....
10. Emerson Lake and
11. Sly and the Family
12. Dexys Midnight.....
13. The Swingin Blue
14. The Grateful
15. Booker T. and the.....
16. Crosby Stills and
17. The Sutherland Brothers and
18. Brian Poole and the.....
19. Limmie and Family
20. Manfred
21. Red Hot Chilli
22. Dion and the
23. Smokey Robinson and the
24. Bucks.....
25. Credence Clearwater
26. Katrina and the
27. Billy J. Kramer and the
28. Huey Lewis and the
29. The Thompson
30. Kenny Rogers and the

Answers on page 14

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

SUNDAY WALKING GROUP



The first walk of 2024 was on Sunday 28th January when we walked along the seafront in Canvey Island. Fifteen group members attended and we had a lovely sunny day with only a light breeze. We walked from the free car park at the end of the Esplanade to Thorney Bay and back. Unfortunately, due to extensive rebuilding of the sea wall we couldn't walk all the way along and had to detour around the amusement park and road. We did manage to walk along the murals wall as can be seen in some of the photos. We stopped halfway at the Welcome Hut Cafe and sat outside to drink our refreshments, as it was so sunny and warm. Group members have volunteered to lead walks through the year and we have a full programme of walks planned.

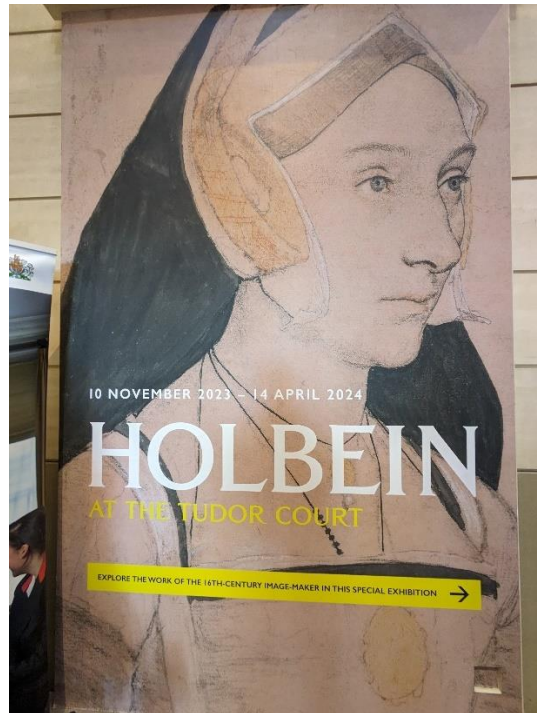




Thanks to David Butcher and Geoff Mead for the photos.

Christine Shaw

ART APPRECIATION GROUP



The Art Appreciation Group's latest day out was to the Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace to see their collection of works by the great artist Holbein. He was a brilliant painter of portraits, usually preparing a sketch in advance to work from. These sketches are great pieces of art in their own right.



Thomas Moor (sic) Lord Chancellor

The exhibition covers pieces from Holbein's time working at the Tudor Court for nobility and Henry VIII where he was a very popular artist. He also sparked the design of ornamental items and armour. A good trip was had by all.



Hans Holbein the younger



Thomas Howard Duke of Norfolk



Our Art Appreciation group are a friendly group who have a love of art and a keen desire to learn more. We cover all styles from traditional to ultra-modern.

If you think you might be interested in joining, please contact the Group Co-ordinator via the website.

Geoff Pearce
Group Leader

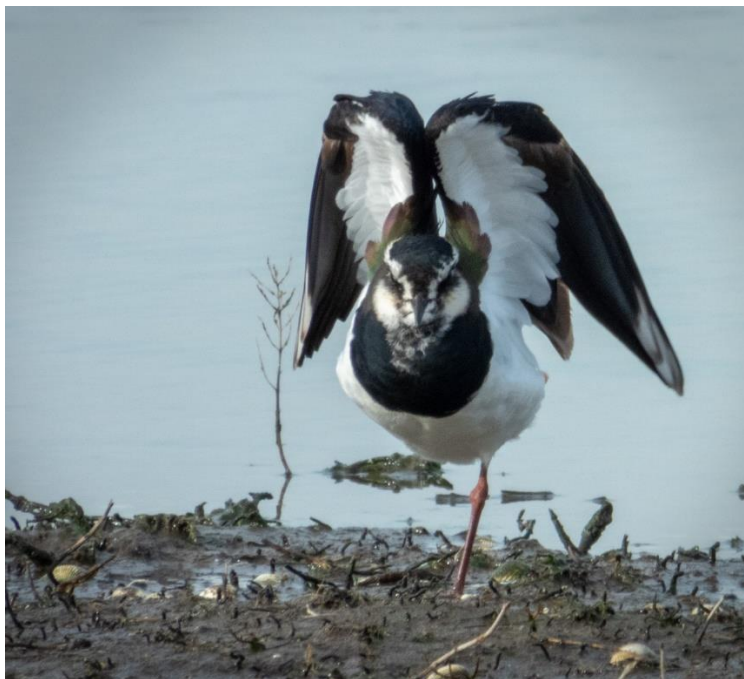
BIRDWATCHING GROUP

On one of the few dry, sunny days in February the Birdwatching Group met on Two Tree Island in Leigh. We had a few misgivings - would the paths be deep in mud and would the Golf Range Cafe be open for our usual hot drink after our walk??



Lapwing and Wigeons

Luckily the walk was fine with only a few muddy patches. However, the Lagoon on the west of the Island was very disappointing. Due to the recent torrential rain the islands were greatly depleted and the normal nesting sites were under water. There were a number of very 'fed up' looking wigeons (dabbling ducks) and a few other breeds on what was left of the islands. We did, however see 16 varieties of bird and the walk in the sunshine was lovely, plus our hot drink in the cafe.



A Lapwing throwing a wobbly!





Photographs by Linda Boar

**Peta Turner
Group Leader**



GARDENING NOTES

JOBS FOR THE GARDEN IN MARCH

- As soon as they look untidy, deadhead daffodils by removing the flower heads and seedpods behind them. Never cut the foliage away.
- Weed and tidy your borders before the onslaught of the coming months.
- Lift and divide herbaceous plants on a dry day. When you replant them, they will be raring to go. Don't forget to water them in.
- Go around the garden checking for frost damage. Cut back any affected stems.
- This is a good time for planning. Walk around the garden, looking for potential problems and things you'd like to develop or change.
- Re-pot pot-bound plants using fresh compost. Check for vine weevils while doing so.
- Prune repeat-flowering Roses.
- A tip from Cyril: As it has been excessively wet the rain leeches off the basic beneficial elements from your soil. To counteract this when rain eases off, and your soil dries out, add a dressing of blood fish and bone and also Epsom Salts. Do not get Epsom Salts from a chemist – get it from a garden centre.

QUIZ – ANSWERS

1. Mary	11. Stone	21. Peppers
2. Music	12. Runners	22. Delmonts
3. Sisters	13. Jeans	23. Miracles
4. Pistols	14. Dead	24. Fizz
5. Wailers	15. M.G.'s	25. Revival
6. Spoonful	16. Nash	26. Waves
7. Gang	17. Quiver	27. Dakotas
8. Gees	18. Tremeloes	28. News
9. Fire	19. Cookin'	29. Twins
10. Palmer	20. Mann	30. First Edition



SPOTLIGHT on The Church Visits Group

Our Church Visits Group was one of the first groups to be formed when our u3a began nearly 14 years ago when our Group Leader was Mary Biss. Mary moved out of the area about ten years ago and now in her mid 90-s is resident in a Care Home in Hertfordshire.

We have, in those years, visited 115 churches most of them in Essex but occasionally we do venture out of the county. A plan of where we would like to visit is drawn up and responsibility for organising the visit and booking our meal is shared by members of the group. A car-sharing scheme is used and we all make a donation to the church. Whoever is organising the visit will contact the church to book the date and organise for someone to be available to guide us round and tell us about the history of the building. There has only been two occasions when we have been left to our own devices to wander round with a guide book. At many churches refreshments are waiting for us and are much appreciated on chilly days.

The history of our county is encompassed in these wonderful buildings. We can now identify a Norman archway, a Tudor porch, hatchments, Kentish ragstone and battlemented towers. There is always something different to see. We have visited cathedrals, abbeys and priories, Medieval, Tudor, Victorian and 20th century places of worship.

Our visit over we then have lunch at a nearby pub – hopefully we can find a picturesque village inn where our lunchtime meal is very welcome. We take a break during the coldest months of the year – we don't expect our drivers to cope with wintry conditions on unfamiliar roads or the churches to incur the expense of heating.

Our winter break is now over and we look forward to our first visit of the year this month.

Ann Rawlinson
Group Leader



FROM THE EDITOR

It may seem that Christmas has only just gone however, this year, Easter is hot on the heels of Christmas. It is one of the earliest dates it can be on 31st March (the earliest is actually the 22nd March). Hopefully this wet weather will improve as we change our clocks to British Summer Time at the end of the month and we can celebrate the forthcoming Easter break with dry weather.

I would be grateful if contributions for the newsletter could be sent to the designated newsletter address and look forward to receiving your group news or contribution for our April edition. I have added a new feature to this newsletter "**Spotlight on**" to feature one of our groups and their activities – some Group Leaders regularly tell us what they have been doing – but we hear nothing from others. I am starting this off with one of my own Groups – the Church Visits Group. Hopefully there will be contributions from other Group Leaders in the coming months.

The deadline for receiving articles for the April 2024 Newsletter is

Sunday 24th March 2024

rgu3newsletter@gmail.com

Ann Rawlinson

Newsletter Editor

Our next monthly meeting at the Grange will be on **Wednesday 3rd April**
when 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."

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	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	10.00 – 12.00	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
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.