Registered Charity No **1134068**

Rayleigh u3a

Learn,Laugh,Live

Newsletter- February 2021

Issue No 100

Message from the Chairman

Welcome to this the 100th edition of the Rayleigh u3a Newsletter.
It is a new year and with it new expectations; with the introduction of the vaccine and stricter government guidelines we all hope that 2021 will bring forth a rosier picture. Some of our members have already received their first COVID 19 vaccination and others are expecting theirs next month.

We have booked our new venue for monthly meetings at Trinity Church Main Hall and Under Spire but have had to change the date to the 1st Wednesday of the month. When we are able to meet up again, we have a guaranteed booking and can plan ahead.
I hope that 2021 will bring optimism and a time when we can all meet up again.
Take care.

Val Whitehouse Chairman

2021 AGM This years AGM will be deferred until later in the year, we feel this is a prudent decision whilst we are in these uncertain times. We will let members know when a date has been arranged.

100th Edition of the Rayleigh u3a Newsletter

This is the 100th edition of our Newsletter which started back in November 2007 but before the 'counting'system started!
The first 'official'Newsletter was produced in December 2007 and the second Newsletter in January 2008 with Janet (sadly now passed away) and David Carlton as Editors. They were assisted by other members who designed, and proof read with articles from Maureen Huntly, Irene & Fred Carter, Sue Taylor, and Roger Baker.
David and Janet were editors for five years until Roger& Liz Baker and Irene & John (sadly now passed away) Tyson took it over in 2013 for three years until April 2016.
June Jennings took over the reins and then was joined by Sheila Farrant and they continued the good work. Sheila was later joined by Viv Smith until November 2020 when Jim and Val Whitehouse became Editors.
David Carlton used to email the Newsletter out to members then Jim Whitehouse took over when David was unable to continue.
Pete Huntly put the Newsletter onto our website from 2011, when the present website was set up until last year.
Terry Gouldsmith must be congratulated for posting out the Newsletters to those without email almost since the beginning –she still continues to do this!
You can look back on our Website at previous Newsletters in the Archive section –they make interesting reading.
We would like to thank all those members who have contributed over the years to make our Newsletter an interesting read. We hope that future Newsletters will provide an insight into the activities of our u3a.

Val & Jim Whitehouse Editors Rayleigh u3a Newsletters

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

£5 per member for 2021/22 –due by 20th March 2021

Already pay by **Standing Order**?

- Remember to change the amount of your payment by either contacting your bank or altering via your online/telephone banking. If you do not change the amount, we will treat the excess paid as a donation to Rayleigh u3a.

Paying by **Direct Transfer**?

- Process as you have done previously remembering to include your postcode in the reference.

Normally pay by **Cheque**?

- We appreciate that majority of our members prefer to pay by cheque, but I am sure you will all appreciate that we are somewhat uneasy with this method due to the **CORONA** virus. (opening envelopes, handling cheques and making a journey to the bank to pay them in)
- Do you know of anyone who would make the payment for you by direct transfer? Alternatively, ring Wendy, our treasurer, on **01268 770845** or **07770 762684** who will be very happy to help and may be able to talk you through the process.
- However, if there is no alternative for you, please make your cheque payable to Rayleigh u3a making sure you remember to write the name and full address of the person you are paying for on the back of the cheque. Send to Amanda Lowe, 24 Hambro Avenue, Rayleigh SS6 9NJ

As a reminder, any amount paid over £5 will be treated as a donation (**Thank You)**

The forms to renew your membership for 2020 were emailed to you in January, where email addresses were known. Paper copies of the renewal forms are enclosed with this newsletter where appropriate. We have three methods of payment, but we encourage you to consider paying your subscription by standing order or direct transfer.

If you have not already done so and are able to claim, please remember to fill in a Gift Aid Declaration when submitting your Renewal Form and return it to me at the address on the Gift Aid form.

Wendy Edwards
Treasurer

Thank You

I would like to send a big Thank You to all Rayleigh u3a members who have been sending in jokes, pieces of interest, quizzes, poems, photos, puzzles, and videos in 2020.Without you, I would not be able to send out the Members Contributions every week.

The feedback I receive has been incredible so many of you enjoy receiving this little bit of light relief every week thank you also for taking the time to email me with your messages.Please keep sending me anything you think might be of interest to other members .

Val Whitehouse Chairman

NEWS FROM THE SECRETARY

I have been looking on the National Office website www.u3a.org.uk to see what I may be able to tempt you with! If you click on 'nline Events'you will find some very interesting talks/presentations that are taking place mostly via Zoom. For example:

The Role and History of the National Trust –free event via Zoom. Join Paul Boniface, Secretary of the National Trust, for a talk about the role and history of the organisation. Paul, who has worked for the National Trust for more than 20 years, will chart the history of the organisation from the end of the 19th century explaining the charity's mission and how it has responded to changing conservation challenges of the past 125 years.

A Taste of Japan –free event via Zoom. Taking place on 24th Feb and 24th March, three speakers will share experiences of many different aspects of life in Japan.

Maths Activities and Games –free event via Zoom. Taking place on 18th and 23rd February, this fun session of interactive games and puzzles is a repeat of a previous event that took place during Maths Week 2020. Come along to try out your maths and numerical ability and share your solutions with others. The workshop will be hosted by David Martin, U3A Maths and Stats Subject Adviser.

There are many more on the website, which is updated regularly. I do realise that all of the above can only be accessed if you have a computer, or tablet or smartphone, but our Third Age Matters magazine will contain more details of these projects for those of you without devices.
Hopefully many of you will have received your vaccines by now and are starting to be able to look positively towards what 2021 will bring. So in the meantime, stay safe and take care,

Debbie Bamber, Secretary of Rayleigh U3A

Bridge Group

Some of the u3a Bridge Group have been playing online using BRIDGE BASE ONLINE.

If you play Bridge and are interested, you can contact Sheila Farrant to find out more details.

Mobile : 07724095299
Email : sh.fa.40@gmail.com

Painting & photograph by Amanda Lowe

News from the Groups

Patchwork Groups

All Patchwork Groups are carried out in Kate Sawyer's conservatory, and in rather close quarters, so all 3 groups are having to wait for the all clear before they can proceed.

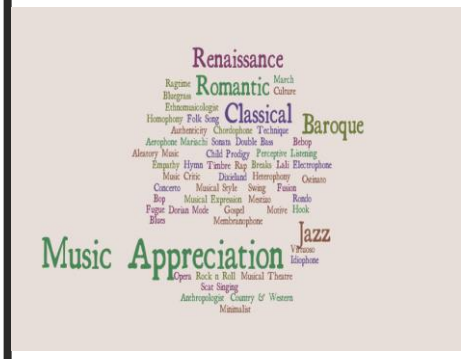
The Group did hold a few informal meetings outside in September through to November when it got too cold for sitting around. However, as an ex-teacher Kate could not bear the thought of the Ladies doing nothing, so she set them a task of making some 'blocks' that could be turned into a quilt/hanging/cushions etc. as they see fit. Hopefully, they have all managed the first batch - another batch is due out soon!

When they met in the Autumn, they also ran several MacMillan coffee mornings and raised the grand total of £159.30. Well done!

When they do resume, Kate is thinking of running just one group, from a hired hall. When Kate has contacted the Ladies with the details, she might have spaces.

Music Appreciation Groups 1 & 2 & Jazz Appreciation Group

David Sawyer runs the Music Appreciations Groups 1 and 2 and the Jazz Appreciation Group. Since all three depend on members being able to sit around the hi-fi system in his lounge and listen to recorded music, he has not been able to start up the groups again. He did manage to hold two mini-group meetings (subject to the rule of six and the approval of his neighbours) outside in his garden in early September of last year (with a smaller hi-fi system) when the weather was still fine, but clearly the winter weather and the ban on garden gatherings do not make these possible at the moment. The moment conditions allow, he is ready to restart at short notice, even on a reduced-scale basis.



Walking Group 5

A small group who meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month. There are vacancies in the Group should anyone be interested. They meet at 10am at a prearranged site and walk for approximately 2 hours. Before COVID-19 they would have a meal at a local pub after their walk. Meetings have been few and far between due to the situation, but they did manage a couple of walks between lockdown.

They are a friendly group who welcome new members. Each month they take it in turns to suggest suitable walks, usually in the local area. More recent walks have included Hockley woods, Hullbridge and Southend Pier.

Please contact Sheila Loveridge: sheilaloveridge@gmail.com

News from our Groups

Digital Photography 2 took photos depicting Autumn

THE U3A CRUISE

by Les Shrubsole

1

Rayleigh U3A is back in business,
and has booked a world cruise.
It is free for each and every member,
with gratis food and booze.

2

The boat is manned by the U3a
It will be just great
Jim Whitehouse is the captain
Val is the first mate

3

We sail the ship from Tenerife,
and the African coast, it looms:
but we are boarded by Somali terrorists,
and imprisoned in our rooms.

4

They steal our clothes and money,
and throw us over the side.
but we are carried to a desert island,
by the incoming tide.

5

We arrive there wet and naked,
a pretty sight it is not.
We quickly dress in reeds and leaves,
but the locusts eat the lot.

6

Kate Sawyer has a mini sowing machine,
making loincloths with coconut shell tops.
David Sawyer done a music show,
Desert inland discs and top of the pops.

7

Les Poole has become Tarzan,
his body for all to see.
Marilyn, his Jane, clings to him,
as he swings from tree to tree.

8

He flexes his beautiful body,
as with wild animals he tussles.
he did a Charles Atlas course,
but they forgot to send the muscles.

9

Amanda Low paints us all,
Val Fowley writes about our plight.
Ian Haynes digs up buried treasure,
but it is stolen in the night.

10

Ray Low catches loads of fish,
and harpoons a whale with a stick.
We eat all the blubber,
and call Ray Moby Dick.

11

Sue Taylor and Stella Lutterloch,
do keep fit as a pair.
But just like Barbara Windsor,
their coconut shell tops fly off in the air.

12

David and Heather build a raft,
to go back to the UK.
Not to get us all rescued,
but form a desert island U3A.

EATING IN THE UK IN THE FIFTIES

For those of us who are old enough to remember –enjoy.
For the rest –it`s a history lesson!!

Pasta had not been invented.
Curry was a surname.
A takeaway was a mathematical problem.
A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower.
Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time.
All crisps were plain; the only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not.
A Chinese chippy was a foreign carpenter.
Rice was a milk pudding, and never, ever part of our dinner.
A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining.
Brown bread was something only poor people ate.
Oil was for lubricating; fat was for cooking.
Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves, and never green.
Coffee was Camp and came in a bottle.
Only Heinz made beans.
Fish didn`t have fingers in those days.
Eating raw fish was called poverty, not sushi.
None of us had ever heard of yoghurt.
Healthy food consisted of anything edible.
People who didn`t peel potatoes were regarded as lazy.
Indian restaurants were only found in India.
Cooking outside was called camping.
Seaweed was not a recognised food.
`Kebab` was not even a word, never mind a food.
Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days and was regarded as being white gold.
Prunes were medicinal.
Surprisingly, muesli was readily available –it was called cattle feed.
Pineapples came in chunks in a tin; we had only ever seen a picture of a real one.
Water came out of a tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol, they would have been a laughingstock.
The one thing that we never had on our table in the fifties –were elbows!!
Very surprising how time and memory has taken its toll.
Have things really changed this much in our time?
Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.

(This was taken from the Rayleigh u3a Newsletter in March 2014!)

We would like to thank all members who have helped with the 100 issues of the Rayleigh u3a Newsletter by sending in all the contributions that have made it possible keep them coming !!!

Interesting photos from our member Janet Warner

These photos were taken at Warner's Hotel, Sinah Warren. Someone obviously has a good sense of humour & imagination.

The "Catapult" had the title of Spouse disposal Unit! This caused a great deal of hilarity among the guests!

The second picture we were convinced was a children's play area, until we saw it close up. We discovered it was a very high class Rabbit run!

Family History Research in Lockdown

Family History is not just finding your roots, but reliving times gone by through documents, photographs, records, gravestone inscriptions and much more –bringing your family history to life and into the present.

The introduction of Zoom on computers has given us the opportunity to meet up online and discuss our findings and research from home. I have been running my Group remotely using Zoom and it has been working very well. I have a free Zoom account which means members need to rejoin the meeting after the first session which lasts for 40 minutes. This gives us all an opportunity to make a cuppa before we restart!

Many talks on Family History and conferences are being held online now and members of my Group have been able to take advantage of this.

There is an opportunity for up to four members who are interested in researching their ancestry to join our group - first come, first served. Clear guidance will be given about what you need to do to join online. Our meetings are held between 10am and midday on the 4th Wednesday of the month.
Please contact me at pa.huntly@btinternet.com to find out more.

Pete Huntly Group Leader - Family History Group 2

THEATRE TRIPS 2021

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE

We hope that you all have a healthy, safe and COVID free 2021.

The London theatres are currently advertising new productions scheduled to open in Spring/ Summer 2021.
Whilst we wish them every success, we have decided that we will not book any shows for the foreseeable future. Social distancing in the theatres and on transport is still very difficult and until we are confident that it is safe to attend the theatres we will remain cautious.
We would like to thank Wendy Edwards, our Treasurer, for all the time and hard work she undertook last year dealing with the refunds for shows that were cancelled.

We wish you all a safe New Year, and hope that the vaccinations will be available to all of us very soon and that we can resume some sort of social life in the near future.

Very Best Wishes,
Sandra and Joan

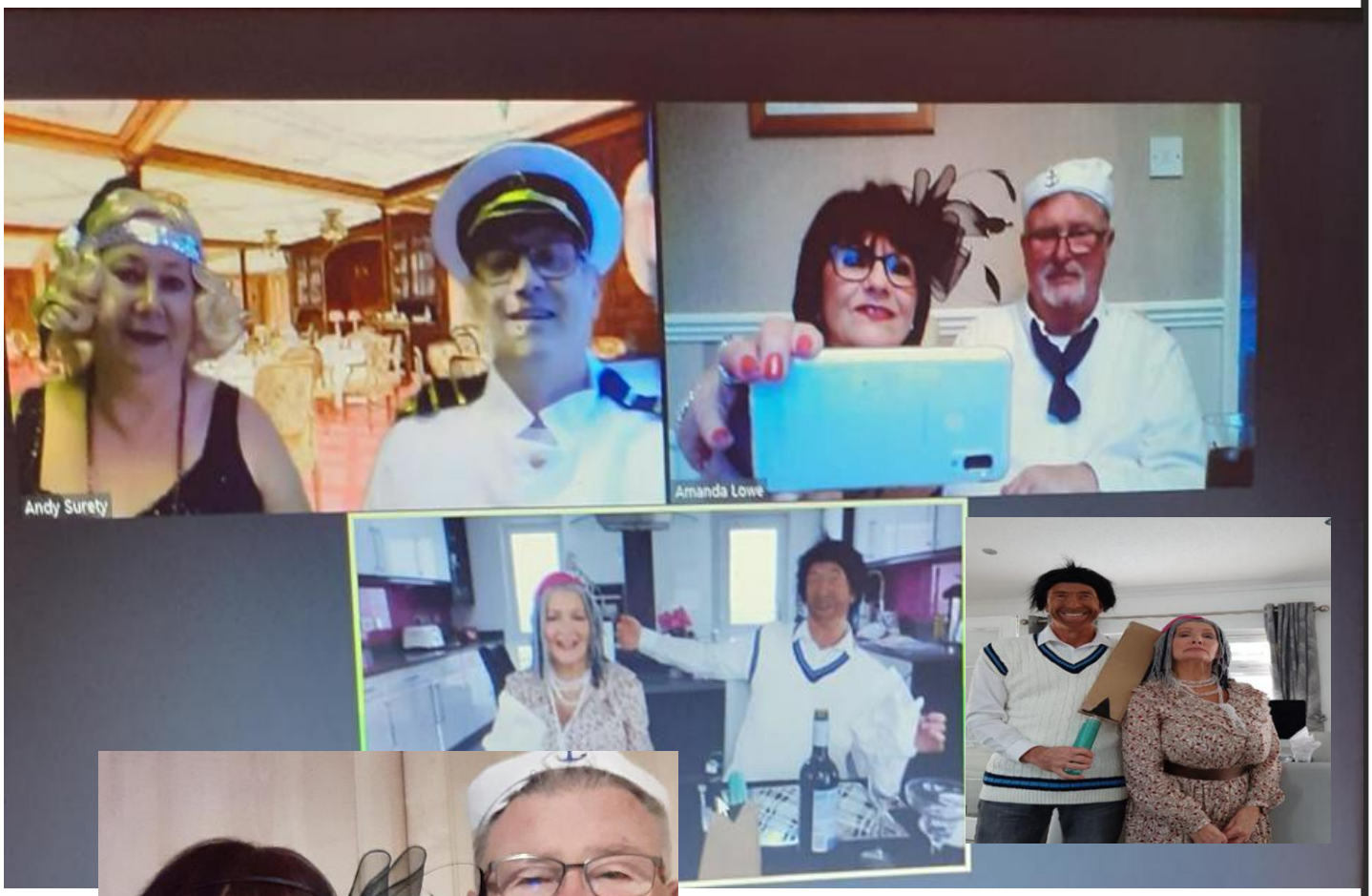
Members take part in a Zoom Murder Mystery

On Saturday 14th November 6 of our Rayleigh u3a members got together to play a Zoom Murder Mystery. Linda & Ray Osborne, Anne & Andy Surety & Amanda & Ray Lowe. A donation was made to McMillan.

It was set on a ship; the Doctor had been murdered with a cricket bat. They had dinner together whilst taking part. They all dressed up in character and had great fun. It transpired that Amanda murdered the Doctor. Ann and Andy played 2 parts.

It was a wonderful way to spend an evening with friends they have become in the Rayleigh u3a.

Amanda & Ray are Committee members and Linda & Ann are Welcomers at the monthly meetings.



It brightened up a very dreary day

Receiving Christmas wishes from u3a

We all would like to see this virus beat

So meetings and groups again meet

It seems it's up to that man Boris now

Let's hope the vaccine helps somehow

Thank you and Christmas Cheer

Good luck for all in the New Year

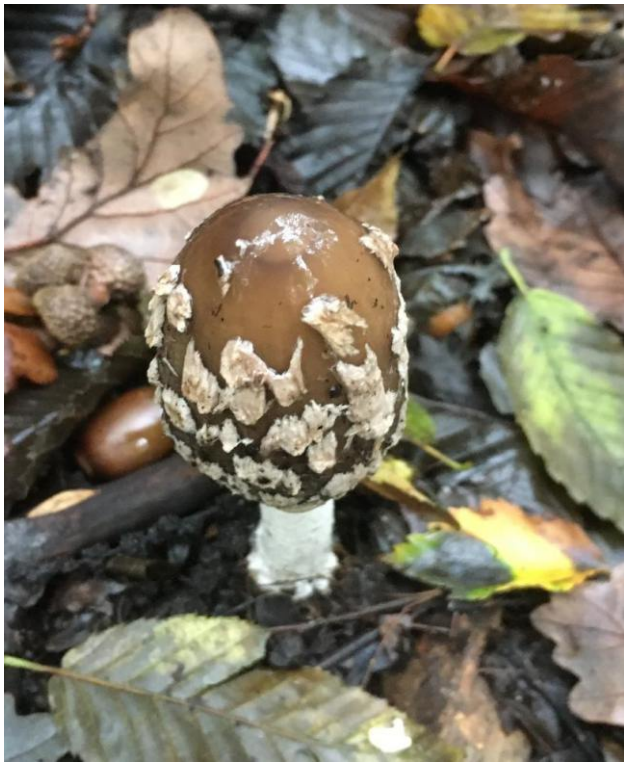
Sylvia Mitchell

Dance In the Rain

Life isn' just waiting for
stormclouds to pass,
It's learning to dance in the rain,
It's looking for rainbows and
seeking for joy
And knowing that love will remain.
This life has its problems, its
worries and woes,
And each of us must take our share,
But look to the seasons and all they
can give,
There's beauty around everywhere.
And seek for the wonder, the
laughter and love,
The friendship to warm heart and mind,
Go forward with courage and
follow your star,
And leave past misfortunes behind.
Hold fast to your hopes and keep
them all safe,
Your daydreams are never in vain;
Be strong and be cheerful in all of life' storms,
And learn how to dance in the rain!

Iris Hesselden This poem was sent in by June Jennings

FASCINATING FUNGI



Interesting fungi found during our local walks in Autumn

Photographs by Jim Whitehouse