

## December Newsletter

### CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Christmas is upon us yet again arriving faster and faster with each passing year. I feel very fortunate to be part of our Oxton & Prenton U3A. I consider it to be a very friendly, warm and kind U3A. For this I thank all of you, for it is you that make it so.

I am now asking for any help you could give to the Committee; it would be very much appreciated. It should be emphasised that in most cases it is not necessary to be a Committee Member.

At this juncture in time we will need:

- a) Membership Secretary.
- b) Social Secretary.
- c) Web Master: possibly familiar with Power Point.

In lesser roles, but just as important, we need:

1. 'Greeters', at fortnightly meetings; to welcome members at the door.
2. Help with setting up the room prior to our Meetings.

If we have sufficient volunteers for these functions we could perhaps organise a rota system similar to that of the Tea and Coffee rota.

If you have any suggestions for organising outings Examples: 'The World of Glass', 'Liverpool Airport' and 'The Liver Building' etc. It would be very much appreciated. All support by the Committee would be given.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Committee and myself of wishing you all, "A Very Merry Christmas and a Joyful New Year".

Kind regards,



Kind regards,  
**Alan Harding -Chairman**

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## Note for Team Leaders

Could Team Leaders please let Tony have notice of changes by lunchtime on the Friday before a meeting, in order to give him time to do the PowerPoint. Thank you.

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**Christmas Lunch November 30<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon for 12.30.  
Thornton Hall Hotel, Thornton Hough, Wirral . CH63  
1JF**



**See you there!**

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## Lunch Group – 2024

**There is no Lunch Group in December 2023 as we have our Christmas U3A Dinner.**



- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>16<sup>th</sup> January 2024:</b>  | <b>The Egremont Ferry</b>                |
| <b>20<sup>th</sup> February 2024:</b> | <b>The Arrowe Park Hotel</b>             |
| <b>19<sup>th</sup> March 2024:</b>    | <b>The Basset Hound</b>                  |
| <b>16<sup>th</sup> April 2024:</b>    | <b>Hickory Smoke House</b>               |
| <b>21<sup>st</sup> May 2024:</b>      | <b>The Ship Hotel</b>                    |
| <b>18<sup>th</sup> June 2024:</b>     | <b>The Irby Mill</b>                     |
| <b>16<sup>th</sup> July 2024:</b>     | <b>An Afternoon Tea (to be arranged)</b> |



**Colin Stredder**

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## Friendly Ear Friendly Ear

If you know of any member who is sick, in hospital or in need of a friendly call or card please let Mary Hamilton or Dot Matthews know.



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## TEA AND COFFEE ROTA FROM JANUARY TO 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024

Please contact Joan Benton on 0151 608 6226 if you would like to change your duty date.

4<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Joan Beedles

Val Hewitt



18<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Joyce Roberts

Jean Skillicorn

Beryl Davies

1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Judith Wylie

Julia Turner



15<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Brenda George

Sylvia Hunt

29<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Hilary Robinson

Maureen Oldham



14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Marian Jackson

Barbara Riley

28<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Greig Roberts

John Roberts

I am still hopeful of finding new volunteers to go on the Tea Rota. We have a very good willing team and I hope there are still more members who would like to participate. It is not an arduous and it is a good way of getting to know other members. Please ring me on 0151 608 6226.

**Joan Benton – Team leader**

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## Speakers December 2023 – March 2024



- 7th December - **Barry Humphries - 'The Great British Christmas'**
- 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024: - **'Merseyside & Cheshire Blood Bikes'**
- 18th January 2024 - **Mary Clinton - 'A.L. and the influence of Linguistic Research'**
- 15th February - **Ken Pye - 'Curious & Amazing Tales of Merseyside'**
- 14th March - **Su Thomson - 'Victorian Millinery & Prostitution'**
- 11<sup>th</sup> April – **Gillian & Peter Bolt – 'Thomas Brassey – Railway Builder Extraordinaire'**
- 9<sup>th</sup> May – **Richard Mawdsley: Update of development of Wirral Waters major regeneration project – 'Left Bank' of the Mersey.**
- 6<sup>th</sup> June – **Chris & Barbara Kay: The National Waterways Museum – a passage through time.**
- 4<sup>th</sup> July – **David Hearn: The great Liverpool Sculptor – George Herbert Tyson Smith**

**Pamela Southall**

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## Group News



### Book Group: **Judith Whaley:**

Meet on last Thursday of month. No meeting on November 30<sup>th</sup> as we have our Christmas Dinner! The group is full at the moment.



**Bridge: Tony Swarbrick:** Meetings will be in “The Cabin” at Trinity and are held on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays each month, 10.15am to 12.30. We meet to play friendly relaxed bridge and new members are always welcome. Next meetings are December 13<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>.



**Book Club: Mary O’Neill:**

Meetings take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 2pm. Next meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup>. Mary has room for one or two more members; anyone interested should contact Tony Swarbrick our Group Co-ordinator.



**Lunch Circle: Colin Stredder:** The next meeting will be on January 16<sup>th</sup> at the Egremont Ferry, Egremont, Wallasey. at 12.45 for 1pm lunch. Please sign in at the notice board at the meeting or contact Colin. **No Lunch Circle in December.**



**Walking Group: Ken Jackson:** December 8<sup>th</sup> Walk is The Three Parks, Liverpool. Meet at Central Station by Sainsbury’s at 10.15am. Please sign up to take part.



**Art Appreciation Group: Bernadette Hamilton**

The next meeting is on December 20<sup>th</sup> at the Williamson Gallery. Meet at 10am. Steve Cottam will give a short presentation on Della Robbia Pottery. Coffee later!



**Music Appreciation: Paul Cullen.** Next meeting on December 4<sup>th</sup>. Bring a CD that you enjoy. Meetings 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month.



**Drawing Group: Pauline Horner:** Next meeting December 1<sup>st</sup> 10-12am in the Cabin. The topic will be TONE in drawings, with particular reference to sketch books of well know artists.



**N.B. the JANUARY meeting will be on the 12<sup>th</sup> the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month and the Topic will be PERSPECTIVE. Classes normally remain the first Friday of the month.**

**Play reading group: Eliane Davie:** Meetings are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month. Next will be December 12<sup>th</sup> when we will be reading:”Up Pompeii” by Miles Tredinnick. (Based on characters created by Talbot Rothwell & Sid Colin.)



**Craft Group: Joan Benton:** Meetings take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month; next meeting November 27<sup>th</sup>. Joan may be able to fit in another couple of members.



**Nordic Walking: Corinne Whitham:** The group meets every Tuesday at 10am, at the Visitor Centre in Birkenhead Park. If you can’t come every week simply come when available, as often or little as suits. Open to all, why not give it a try? A pair of poles is essential; standard walking ones will do to start. Lightweight walking shoes or trainers are best. Expect to walk for one hour at a smart pace. Walks will continue through the holiday period!



**New Book Group: Joyce Woosley:** meetings are on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month. Next meeting is on December 21<sup>st</sup> at her house in Wallasey at 10.30am. Anybody wishing to join this group should contact Tony.



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## ART APPRECIATION GROUP NOVEMBER 15th



Bernadette had arranged for Carolyn Conroy to give the Group a presentation on Simeon Solomon at the last meeting and she gave us a fascinating insight into his life and work. Unusually he started off with a great deal of promise and ended his life rather sadly. Few of us had heard of him before.

Born in 1840 into a Jewish family of artists and something of a child prodigy, he followed his parents, Mickail and Catherine, brother Abraham and sister, Rebecca into the world of Art. To the disappointment of his parents he was not interested in the 'narrative painting' style that they followed with success but instead became interested in the Pre Raphaelites through a group of rebel painters who's hero was Gabriel Rosetti. They were also interested in Medieval Art.

Simeon 's work became very popular during the 1860s when he enjoyed considerable success and painted biblical subjects under the influence of Rosetti sometimes using darker skinned models to illustrate Old Testamont characters. These included "Mother of Moses" and "Finding of Moses". Around 1864, members of his group of friends included: George Ray, an art collector and Algerine Swinbourne the poet, ('Love of art for art's sake'). At his peak in the 1870s Simeon produced much of his best work including: "A vision of Love Revealed in Sleep and "Love dreaming by the Sea" in 1871.

Sadly in 1873, at the height of his popularity, he was arrested for gross indecency in a public toilet and sentenced to eighteen months prison, later suspended. Deserted by his friends and Victorian Society he spent some time in an asylum before turning to alcohol while living on charity and a meagre income from selling reproductions of his work. He continued to draw although he was no longer able to afford paint and spent some years in St Giles Workhouse in London prior to his death in 1905.



His work has been recognised more recently when, in 2005-6, his work was highlighted in an exhibition at the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, "Love Revealed: Simeon Solomon and the Pre -Raphaelites". It was also shown at the Ben Uri Exhibition, London and the Museum Villa Stuck, Munich.

Self Portrait of Simeon Solomon as a young man.

Ed.

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## Art Appreciation Schedule -

**Wednesday 20th December** - Visit to The Williamson Art Gallery where Steve Cottam will give a short talk on the Della Robbia Pottery.

**Wednesday 19th January** - Pauline Horner will give a presentation on Bridget Riley in the Session Room at Trinity with Palm Grove.

**Wednesday 21st February** - Bernadette Hamilton will give a presentation on Vermeer in the Session Room at Trinity with Palm Grove.  
In all cases we meet at 10am in time for a 10.15 am start.  
The group is still open to new members.

**Bernadette Hamilton**

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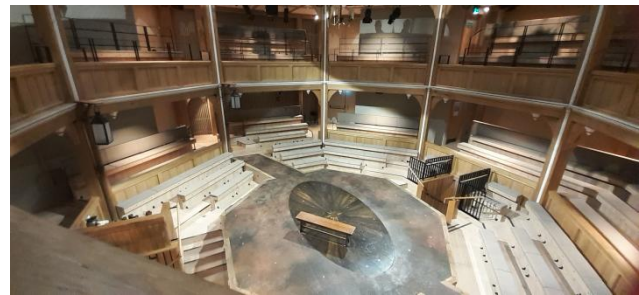
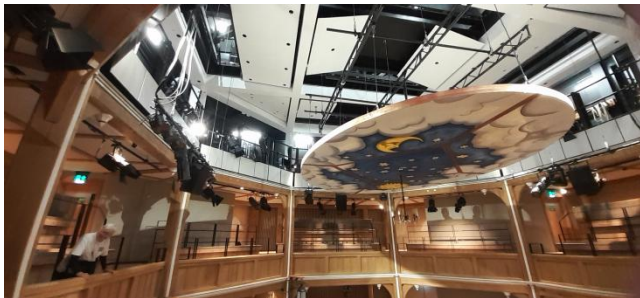
## Shakespeare North Playhouse, Prescot.

Thirty six members of our U3A spent an hour and a half being shown around the New Shakespeare Theatre at Prescot on Thursday November 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was a really interesting day, starting with a coffee before being divided into two groups led by our separate guides.



We learnt that the theatre is very much a Community venture with lots of different activities taking part there, including, play reading and writing, children's sessions, wardrobe and set design, pottery, (a potter helps children and young adults to make Elizabethan type money boxes, some of which are displayed and each is a little different from the others!) There is an outdoor 'amphitheatre style' area in memory of Ken Dodd and backed by his widow. A variety of performances are staged there, weather permitting. The theatre has a real Community feel to it.

Of course the 'jewel in the crown', so to speak, is the actual theatre built in Elizabethan style using solid oak and old building methods and materials, (apart from the very modern metal electric light fittings up in the lighting gallery). It is a 'theatre in the round' but can be adapted for use as a proscenium stage. The photos below will give you some idea. Ed.





Ed.

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## Nordic Walking Group



Relaxing with a coffee after their Tuesday Nordic Walk! Smiles all round.

Photos by Corinne



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## The Athenaeum Club

**Guided Tour 1½ hours      Group rate £17pp**

Price includes glass of their own label Club wine.

The Athenaeum is an iconic institution; a place to relax, and entertain friends, family, colleagues and clients in the most luxurious and historic surroundings the City of Liverpool has to offer.

For More information Google “<https://theathenaeum.org.uk/>”

Put your name on the list.

Date(s) will be arranged if sufficient interest.

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## November 9th “History of Parkgate”

Anthony Annekin-Smith delivered an excellent talk on Parkgate. I think most of us learnt something new about an area familiar to us. Anthony described the people



and buildings that were around in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the ships that sailed to and from Parkgate bringing in goods and ferrying people to Ireland and back. Only the smaller ships could tie up next to the road, larger ones anchored further out and were rowed to shore.

He also gave us the history of some of the older houses and described how, in the late eighteenth hundreds, the burgeoning town became a magnet for people looking for sea and sand. As we know the area was also popular for cockling. This of course was before the sea gave way to marshes and the river, silted up, no longer allowing the passage of ships.

I believe that Anthony has several other talks in his repertoire so perhaps we might see him again. He is certainly a knowledgeable and entertaining Speaker. **Ed.**

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### **A Surprise talk: “Across the Mersey” on October 26<sup>th</sup>**

Members who attended the meeting on October 26<sup>th</sup> enjoyed an unexpected but really interesting talk from Gavin Hunter, about the Mersey and all its Piers, past and present; who would have thought there were so many! It was illustrated with some wonderful photos of the river, going back to the days of sail up to the present day. Sadly, as it was unexpected, the audience was smaller than usual but very appreciative. Gavin has talks on several fields of local interest and we hope to invite him back. **Ed.**

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### **Pauline Horner’s Drawing Group**



A popular Group concentrating hard! **Photos by Kathy Binns**

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### **Late News: A really cheery visit by the Heswall Ukulele Band**





The visit of the Heswall Ukulele Band on November 23<sup>rd</sup> proved hugely successful. A large turnout sang along to well known songs from the mainly 60s songbook; some Country and Western, some Beatles numbers; familiar numbers. When we didn't remember the words we waved our arms anyway!

The voluntary collection for a charity supported by the Band on lieu of payment, 'The Eye Fund,' **raised £94**, a great result which delighted them and was well earned.

Many thanks to the Band for giving us such a cheery morning and to Tony for organising the event!

**Ed.**

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### Joan Benton's Craft Group



Looks very interesting; I wonder what they're making! **Photos by Kathy Binns**

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### Barbara Winstanley's son, Stan, Reaches the End and passes his target!



Stan has finally reached to end of his amazing three years of running ten miles every day, rain or shine, for his two charities: RAFA Fundraising & Cancer Research UK Fundraising! What an achievement! U3A member Barbara Winstanley is understandably proud of her son who has lost over five stone in the process.

If you would like to help you can do so by visiting Just Giving pages for: RAFA fundraising Stan W, or Cancer Research UK fundraising Stan W.

## Books and Jigsaws

Thank you everyone for thinning down the books and jigsaw collections; they are at a much more manageable number now and we can return to bringing in books and jigsaws for exchange again. In the interest of not getting stock in excess of storage space again, please keep to only bringing the number of books that you take – it seems to work really well.



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## Committee Members

Chairman: Alan Harding

Secretary: Carole Lapping

Business Secretary: Treasurer: Margaret Cullen

Groups Co-ordinator: Tony Swarbrick

Speaker Secretary: Pamela Southall

Membership Secretary: Pauline has resigned from this position for family reasons, so we are looking for someone to replace her in this important job. N.B. She will continue to lead the Drawing Group.

Newsletter Editor: Eliane Davie: Leader of Play Reading Group

Ken Jackson; Leader of Walking Group

Brian Jones



## S.O.S Positions to be Filled (not all are Committee)

**Chairman** (at the next AGM in April)

**Membership Secretary;** Currently vacant.

**Social Secretary:** To organise quizzes, games or talks by members for non meetings.

**Web Master:** To oversee Web (possibly able to combine with PowerPoint).

**Power Point:** To gather information and do the PowerPoint for fortnightly meetings.

**Technical Adviser:** To set up the computer, screen etc.

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## Lunch Circle November 21<sup>st</sup>

The Group enjoying their lunch at the Caernarvon, Oxtou.



A large group of us enjoyed a very pleasant lunch at the Caernarvon on November 21<sup>st</sup> with a definite Christmas atmosphere starting to appear! There is no Circle Lunch of course in December as many of our U3A will be attending the Christmas Lunch on the 30<sup>th</sup> November and the Lunch Circle will be meeting next in January. (As stated elsewhere.)

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## Kathy Binns to Take Over as Editor

I am pleased to tell you that Kathy Binns will be taking over from me as Editor in January, starting with the February Newsletter. Many of you will know Kathy who, you may remember, designed our great recruitment poster. She is very capable and I feel sure will prove an excellent replacement as Editor. I know that you will all wish her well.

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## ***And finally.....***

As our Chairman, Alan, pointed out, there are a number of ways that members can be involved with our U3A without being on Committee. The ethos of the U3A is for everyone to take part as far as possible, whether by organising new groups or outings (for example: a visit to a stately home or perhaps to the Liver building), or perhaps by helping on rotas for teas and coffees etc. 'Many hands make light work' is a very true saying but it is also good for our health as we age to keep as active physically and mentally as we are able.

Many of us might be able to give a talk, (on a Social Week perhaps,) about an interesting holiday/s or job they have experienced. We have done this occasionally in the past and we all found it really interesting. It doesn't need to be a long one, maybe 30-40 minutes. Perhaps someone might like to organise a Quiz or game occasionally?

If anyone has ideas in any of these directions we would love you to come forward.

It was great this month to have so many photos and news to publish; thank you to those who contributed, please keep up the good work. As you will have read, Kathy Binns has agreed to take over the newsletter from me in the New Year, so the January issue will be my last. I will have edited it for eight years by then and have enjoyed doing so but it is time for a change and of course like all of us, I am getting older and hope to fit a bit more travel in before I get past it!

May I, on behalf of the Committee wish you all a very Happy Christmas!



***Eliane Davie - Editor***

