



January Newsletter 2024

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Hello Everyone,

It would appear that our U3A is now in a better position than it was during the early and middle part of last year. 2023 was somewhat of a roller coaster year for us, our survival being of concern. Fortunately it culminated in a very successful recruitment campaign, in which we were able to welcome so many new members. I thank you all.

We are not out of the woods yet but, as I stated before, we are certainly in a better place than we were. The big push now is for the appointment of a Membership Secretary, a most important role and a Social Secretary. If anyone of you would be prepared and willing to help us, we as the committee would be most grateful.

I think I can safely say that all of those who attended the Christmas Dinner at Thornton Hall had a very enjoyable experience. Our grateful thanks go to Barbara for organising this event.

On behalf of the committee and myself I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all, a Very Happy New Year.

Kind Regards,

Alan Harding – Chairman.

Christmas Dinner 2023 at the Thornton Hall Hotel



Many thanks to Barbara for organising a most enjoyable Christmas Dinner. Here she is flanked by husband Ron and Gwyneth with a bit of Steve caught in the frame. Ed.

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.

Lunch Group – 2024.

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



Colin Stredder

A History of Christmas presented by Barry Humphries

On December 7th we were treated to a highly entertaining talk by Barry Humphreys on the history of Christmas celebrations and how they have evolved over the centuries. Lots of illustrations were included to show how the original pagan winter rites morphed into much of the folklore which over time got passed into parts of our Christian celebrations; e.g. Christmas trees were part of the German culture and were brought to the U.K. by Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband. Father Christmas followed on from an earlier figure of an elderly bearded man who was part of European folklore centuries ago.

It was a lovely subject well suited to the Season and handled with humour and lots of research by Barry. As he has many more talks, (one of which he gave here before lockdown, on the Beatles) we hope to see him again before too long! Thank you to Barry and also to Pamela who organised it.

Ed.



TEA AND COFFEE ROTA FROM JANUARY TO 28th MARCH 2024

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

4th January 2024

Joan Beedles

Val Hewitt

18th January 2024

Joyce Roberts

Jean Skillicorn

Beryl Davies



1st February 2024

Judith Wylie

Julia Turner



15th February 2024

Brenda George

Sylvia Hunt

29th February 2024

Hilary Robinson

Maureen Oldham

14th March 2024

Marian Jackson

Barbara Riley



28th 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 task and it is a good way of getting to know other members. Please ring me on 0151 608 6226.

Joan Benton – Team leader

Speakers December 2023 – March 2024

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

Pamela Southall

Group News

Book Group: Judith Whaley:

Meet on last Thursday of month. No meeting on November 30th as we have our Christmas Dinner! The group is full at the moment. Next meeting January 25th 2024



Bridge: Tony Swarbrick: Meetings will be in "The Cabin" at Trinity and are held on 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays each month, 10.15am to 12.30. We meet to play friendly relaxed bridge and new members are always welcome. Next meetings are January 10th & 17th 2024.



Book Club: Mary O’Neill:

Meetings take place on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 2pm. Next meeting is on January 9th. 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 16th at the Egremont Ferry, 48 Tobin St., Wallasey at 12.45 for 1pm lunch. Please sign in at the notice board at the meeting or contact Colin.



Walking Group: Ken Jackson:

Next walk will be a Chester circular walk on January 26th. Meet outside Chester Station to commence walk at 10.30am. Distance is approx. 3.5 miles before lunch and 1mile to the station after lunch; 4+ in total. Please sign at meeting if coming – further information below.



Art Appreciation Group: Bernadette Hamilton

The next meeting is on January 19th in the Session Room. Meet at 10am. Pauline Horner will give a presentation on Bridget Riley.



Music Appreciation: Paul Cullen.

Meetings are suspended for the moment due to lack of support.



Drawing Group: Pauline Horner:

N.B. the JANUARY meeting will be on the 12th (the 2nd 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 2nd Tuesday of the month. Next will be January 9th when we will be reading: “Run for Your Wife” a comedy by Ray Cooney. We have room for one more member in the Group.



Craft Group: Joan Benton:

Meetings take place on the 4th Monday of each month; next meeting January 22nd. 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.



New Book Group: Joyce Woosley:

Meetings are on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Next meeting is on January 18th at her house in Wallasey at 10.30am. Anybody wishing to join this group should contact Tony.



Art Appreciation Schedule – Bernadette Hamilton



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.

Williamson Art Gallery December 20th

Bernadette arranged for the Group to meet at the Williamson Gallery to view the large collection of Della Robbia Pottery housed in the Gallery and to hear a short presentation from Steve Cottam on the subject. Steve's talk was interesting and informative with lots of information on the development and history of the Collection which were new to most of us even though it was a local one.

After a further wander round the Gallery we met up in the welcoming coffee bar for refreshment and of course a last chat before Christmas! Many thanks to Bernadette for all the planning she puts into these meetings and to Steve for an interesting talk.
Ed.



November 30th - Nordic Walkers at Thornton Hough

Ringin' the changes, a change of venue for Corinne's Nordic walkers as they take their sticks to Thornton Hough! Here they are again on December



13th at The Refreshment Rooms enjoying a pre Christmas lunch! It is certainly a joyous Group; must be all that fresh air and exercise. Ed.

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.

Walking Group December 8th

Our last walk of 2024 was led by Ken Jackson and commenced at Liverpool’s Central Station. The “Three Parks Walk” is a popular one, particularly at this time of year as it is mainly on solid paths and level ground.



The day started off damp but dry and quite a large group of us were in cheery mood as we set off for the Parks via the Cathedral pathway,(which drops down at the side of the building and is lined by many gravestones built into the sandstone wall). It has grassed areas and in spring is full of snowdrops and crocus. Leaving the Cathedral we headed towards Toxteth, itself an interesting area with some beautiful old houses and connections with the Slave Trade. As we reached the first of the parks it started to rain lightly but even in the rain Princes Park is beautifully laid out with lakes and myriad trees and well worth a visit. Close by is Sefton Park probably best known for its huge glasshouse, the Palm House, now restored to its former glory after years of dereliction. It also boasts a boating lake, replica statues of Eros and Peter Pan and a cafe where we gratefully gathered as the rain became heavier!

We stayed in the cafe until the rain eased then proceeded to Otterspool Park which took us through to the Promenade. As we headed towards the Britannia Inn, where lunch awaited us, the view across the Mersey, as always, impresses!

Many thanks to Ken for another really enjoyable walk, in spite of the rain. Ed.

January 26th Chester Circular Walk led by Ken Jackson

Meet outside Chester Station for 10.30am start.

Distance: Circa 3.5miles to lunch – after lunch, 1mile to station. (Total 4+miles)

Via: Flockersbrook, Millenium Greenway, footpath along the canal towards the Water Tower, the city Wall past the Roodee, then the Amphitheatre to Panda Mami for lunch at 12.30pm approx.

Please sign up at the meetings if joining the walk.

Diane Adams R.I.P.



We heard the sad news that U3A member, Diane Adams has passed away very suddenly with an aneurism, in early December. Diane was mainly involved with the Williamson Group of U3A where she was an active member but was a member of our Play Reading Group. Her funeral took place on December 22nd at Holy Cross Church, Woodchurch and, I am told, was very well attended.

It must have come as a huge shock to her family and friends and I am sure you would all want to offer your sincere sympathy to her husband, Derek and their children at this time.

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.

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.



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

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

Chairman: Corinne Whitham has agreed to stand for this position.

Membership Secretary; Currently vacant.

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

Newsletter Editor: Cathy Binns is taking this over from February

And finally.....

As you will know, this is my last newsletter for our U3A as I will be handing over to Kathy Binns who will be editing the February issue. I have really enjoyed the privilege of editing your newsletter over the last eight years but I think it is time to pass the job on to a younger member with fresh ideas. I know that in Kathy you will have a very capable replacement.

I will still be around so won't say "Goodbye", just wish you all from myself and the Committee:

A Peaceful, Prosperous and Happy New Year! Looking forward to seeing you all in 2024.



Eliane Davie - Editor

