



# February 2024 Newsletter

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Hello Everyone,

We the committee are still waiting for members to come forward to fill the posts of Membership Secretary and Social Secretary.

Our AGM in April is fast approaching and these posts must be filled.

This is for the survival of our U3A. It would Take JUST two members to ensure our future.

Just Some Thoughts:

The people whose first instinct is to smile when you make eye contact with them, are some of Earth's greatest treasures.

Wrinkles mean you laughed.

Grey hair means you cared.

Scars mean you lived.

Be proud of your wrinkles, because you earned every one.

Kind Regards

**Alan Harding – Chairman.**

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# **Merseyside and Cheshire Blood Bikes**

## **Presented by Kirk Phillips**

I'm aware of the 'blood bikes' having spotted them out on the roads but I never realised their riders were volunteers. That impression was put straight during our first speaker meeting on this year on 4<sup>th</sup> January when the talk was given by Kirk Phillips, the chairman of Merseyside and Cheshire Blood Bikes.



We learned about the MCBB which is a non-profit making charity providing support to the NHS. The group transports urgently needed breast milk, tissue samples, medical equipment as well as blood supplies, between laboratories, patients, hospices, milk banks and various NHS departments across Merseyside and Cheshire. All done free of charge!

Set up in 2012 the group now has 100 volunteers who give their time in roles including riding the bikes, manning the phones, and providing essential support. The charity needs £35,000 a year to run – most of which is spent on fuel. Those BMW motorbikes I've seen (and they have 8 of them along with a van) cost £17,000 each to buy and put on the road. Along with specially adapted panniers and high visibility markings, speed and position trackers help to ensure safety of the riders and those unusual cargoes.

They assist with 6000 runs yearly between places from Wirral to Warrington to Chester to the border with Shropshire, including St John's Hospice, Countess of Chester and Arrowe Park Hospitals, Clatterbridge Cancer Care both in Wirral and in Liverpool. Previously taxis provided this service with their corresponding charges but the charity believes that providing their couriers for free has saved the NHS £250,000.

Kirk spoke of his pride that MCBB was given the Queens Award for Voluntary Service in 2018. Currently they need volunteers for various roles and full training will be provided including being 'buddied' with an experienced volunteer. It certainly

seems a worthwhile cause - helping the NHS save money, assisting sick people and premature babies.



As Kirk said, 'I'm just going out for some milk' can certainly take on another meaning. I'll look at those bikes and their riders in a different light when I see them again.

Before leaving this well attended meeting, we queued to donate via the very popular collection tins. The MCBB Facebook pages state that this collection amounted to £281 - which they thought was amazing.

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## Lunch Group

<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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## 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.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> February 2024</b>	<b>Judith Wylie</b>
	<b>Julia Turner</b>
<b>15<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>	<b>Brenda George</b>
	<b>Sylvia Hunt</b>
<b>29<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>	<b>Hilary Robinson</b>
	<b>Maureen Oldham</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>	<b>Marian Jackson</b>
	<b>Barbara Riley</b>
<b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>	<b>Greig Roberts</b>
	<b>John Roberts</b>



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 January – March 2024

- 1<sup>st</sup> February - **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'
- 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 Water’s 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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### 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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## Group News

**Book Group: Judith Whaley:**

Meet on last Thursday of month. The group is full at the moment. Next meeting February 29th





**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 February 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.



**Book Club: Mary O’Neill:**

Meetings take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 2pm. Next meeting is on February 13<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 at The Arrowe Park Hotel on February 20<sup>th</sup> at 12.45 for 1pm lunch. Please sign in at the notice board at the meeting or contact Colin.



**Walking Group: Ken Jackson:**

The next walk will be around Bidston Moss, Leasowe and Moreton, led by Tony Swarbrick on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Meet outside Wallasey Station 10.22am (10.10am train from Hamilton Square). Lunch will be at the Farmers Arms, Moreton. Distance is approx. 5-6 miles. Please sign in at meeting.



**Art Appreciation Group: Bernadette Hamilton**

The next meeting is on 21<sup>st</sup> February in the Session Room. Meet at 10am for a 10.15 start - Bernadette Hamilton will give a presentation on Vermeer. The group is still open to new members.



**Drawing Group: Pauline Horner:**

Classes are held in “The Cabin” on the first Friday of the month 10.00 till 12.00. The next class is Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> and the subject is catch up on Tone & Texture. It would be helpful if you could bring a small object with you. A small jug, bowl or box would be ideal. The following class is March 1<sup>st</sup> and Composition is the subject.



**Play reading group: Eliane Davie:**

Meetings are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month. Next will be February 13<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month; next meeting January 29<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. Open to all, why not give it a try? A pair of poles is essential; standard walking ones will do to start.



**New Book Group: Joyce Woosley:**

Meetings are on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month. Next meeting is on February 15<sup>th</sup> at her house in Wallasey at 10.30am. Anybody wishing to join this group should contact Tony.



**Music Appreciation: Paul Cullen.**

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



**Rummikub – Proposed New Group, will meet Wednesdays twice a month in Cabin. Sign Up now if interested**

**New Groups welcome!!**

Do you have an interest or hobby which you could share? Advice and assistance is available to setup and run a group – Contact our Group Coordinator Tony

Do you have a suggestion for a New Group? Contact Tony, our Group Coordinator who will try and find a Group Leader.

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## Nordic Walking

For just over a year, I've taken part in many of Corinne's Nordic walks around Birkenhead Park. The weather has to be extremely bad for a walk to be cancelled and we have been very lucky so far. So, one fine Tuesday earlier this month I went along at 10.00 am to blow the cobwebs away and get some much-needed fresh air.



The weather was dry and the sun was shining so it was a lovely day to get outdoors for a walk. The general peacefulness of our surroundings was glorious and was broken only by our quiet chats and the occasional sound of the geese and ducks who seemed unhappy that we hadn't come to feed them, and voiced their opinions noisily. Breaking through from the paths around the lakes and trees to see the beautiful clear sunny sky above the surrounding fields was gorgeous.

From the usual 10 or 12 of us in good weather to 4 participants in very poor weather, we come along and walk in small groups at our own speed, assisted by our poles and Corinne's encouragement, whenever we have the time and the inclination. We always start and finish at the visitor centre and every week at the end of our walk we head to the café, find a place to put all those poles, sit together (outside whenever possible), and enjoy coffee and more chatting, feeling wonderfully invigorated. That is part of the appeal. My Tuesday routine would not be the same without it.



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## Visit a Georgian Merchant town house Grade II listed

The owners of a refurbished townhouse on Canning Street in Liverpool are offering members the chance to see around the house, be given a talk on its history and the work required to turn it from a series of bedsits to a beautifully restored Georgian family home. Up to 10 people on each tour.

**THURSDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2024, 11 am, 2pm**

**THURSDAY 22nd FEBRUARY 2024 11am, 2pm**

**£5 to include tea/coffee and homemade cake**

**Money raised will go to the Multiple Sclerosis Society**

**Sign Up Sheet and details on the table**

**Please note that there is limited parking (on-street meters) in the Canning Street area, although paid parking is available at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral (5 minutes walk) and buses 75 (Catharine St/Falkner St), 80 (Catharine St/Falkner St), 86 (Catharine St/Falkner St), 86A and 86C run from Liverpool One bus station.**



# 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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## Chester Circular Walk led by Ken Jackson

Not surprisingly, seeing as we had glorious weather for this early in the year, a very enthusiastic group of 25 of us turned up for our first walk of the year on January 26<sup>th</sup>. Led by Ken and Marian we set off from Chester Station under an almost cloudless sky. Pausing in Flookersbrook in Hoole, Ken told us some of the area’s history before we moved on along a traffic free (apart from cyclists) path. It was a great sunny day for views of the canal, Roodee, river, and park, as we made our way into central Chester. Our lunch reservation was at Panda Mami, an ‘all you can eat’ buffet restaurant where we enjoyed essential sustenance before starting off for our final mile walk back to the station





At the end of the day Eileen, a fellow walker, told me how she “really enjoyed hearing about Arni of Neston being the first owner of Flookersbrook. Also walking along the Millenium Greenway, which is so interesting - along the path of the old railway track and canal and then on to Chester city walls. There was such a variation on our walk. And what a good choice of restaurant - as we all like something different. I think everyone enjoyed the day”. I think everyone would have agreed with her.

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### 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

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.

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

This is my first newsletter as editor and I'd like to thank Eliane for the work she has done during her time as editor and also for the help and support that she has kindly given me. Taking over is a daunting task and I hope that no one notices any detrimental changes - but if anyone has any suggestions about your newsletter, please get in touch with me.

So many events were cancelled due to the effects of the snow we suffered but I want to comment on the wet weather we had and the naming of those storms. The Met Office has this responsibility along with their associates in Ireland and Netherland. They get thousands of suggestions yearly which anyone can make through

messages on social media but the best way of contacting them is through email at [pressoffice@metoffice.gov.uk](mailto:pressoffice@metoffice.gov.uk)

Of course, the names follow alphabetical order and are traditionally female. So far this year we have had Henk, Isha and Jocelyn, and I hope the next storm isn't anytime soon, but waiting at the top of the list is Kathleen (my full first name), all I can say is, 'It wasn't me!'

*Kathy Binns - Editor*



