

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome back to a new academic year of U3A activities. I hope that you have all enjoyed a really good relaxing break during the summer weeks and are now looking forward to a productive autumn.

I know that there are some people who mourn the passing of the summer with the days getting shorter and nights getting colder but I really enjoy the autumn. I enjoy the harvest of the crops that have been growing through the warm months, the apples and pears are at their juiciest best. I enjoy the changing colour of the landscape as green turns to the oranges and browns of autumn. Autumn is a time to get out and enjoy the countryside on a pleasant walk, or drive, before winter sets in and orange turns to grey and the trees are left leafless like a skeleton. And you never know we may have a wonderful Indian summer in October so we can break out the shorts and tee-shirts once more!

Whatever the weather, you can be assured that your U3A will have something to offer in the coming months that will brighten up your day. I hope to see you all for 'A Little Summer Holiday Madness' on Thursday 1st September

Colin Burkitt

Chairman

MEETINGS and SPEAKERS

1st September - Colin Burkitt & A Little Summer Holiday Madness

15th September- Ann Hughes & Impressions of Armenia

29th September - Colin Stredder presents 'Wirral the Way We Were'

SOCIAL OUTINGS

Full booking details available at meetings, please see your social organisers at the back of the hall OR e-mail barbara@oxtonu3a.co.uk

REMINDERS

Thursday 8th September 2016 SAFER DRIVING FOR LONGER
Free session provided by Wirral Council
Session Room TWPG 9-30 a.m or 11-15 a.m
BOOKING ESSENTIAL



Monday 19th September 2016 GUIDED TOUR of THE ALBERT DOCK
Albert Dock Heritage Project
Free but BOOKING ESSENTIAL



NOW BOOKING

THEATRE

Wednesday 5 October 2016 THE RIVALS
The Playhouse 7-30 pm £14.50
Limited booking time

Thursday 27th October 2016 TWO GENTLEMEN of VERONA (Globe Touring)
Everyman Theatre 7.30pm Tickets £17.00
Booking closes 1 September 2016

Thursday 1st December 2016 THE NUTCRACKER English National Ballet
Liverpool Empire 2.30 pm Tickets £21.50

*** NEW ***

SOCIAL

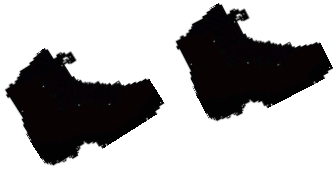
Tuesday 1 November 2016 The Old Dock Experience
10.30 am – 11.30 am
Free but booking Essential

NEW

Friday 16th December 2016 CHRISTMAS LUNCH
Wirral Ladies Golf Club 12.00 for 12.30 pm
£24-00 per head



**IMPORTANT :PLEASE SEE STOP PRESS NEWS ON LAST PAGE
OF THIS NEWSLETTER**



WALKING GROUP

HILBRE JULY 2016

A huge thank you to the wonderful stalwarts of the walking group, who stuck with it through the wind and rain, to see the seals at Hilbre Island and enjoy their lunch at The Dee Hotel.

Chris Lakin



SEPTEMBER'S WALK

Friday 16th September 2016

Meet at Pollards Inn, Willaston at 10-00 am for a six mile walk, mainly on footpaths in the countryside, guaranteed NO significant inclines !! Leaders Carol & Colin.

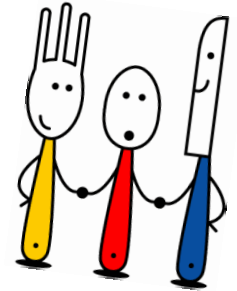
Lunch about 1-00 pm at Pollards Inn.



LUNCH CIRCLE

The next meeting of the lunch circle is on September 20th 2016 12-15 for 12-30

The Queens Pub, Storeton Road, Oxton, Birkenhead



The Nordic Walking group does the Birkenhead Race for Life 26th June 2016.

Oxton and Prenton U3A members :- far left Corinne Whitham, far right Val Edwards and next to her Judith Wheat.



BRIAN GILL and THOUGHTS of SEPTEMBER

It's September already and the summer is largely behind us; but what of that!? "September stands for sun" we are told and from the same song, "I'll be your dahlia all my live-long day, if you'll be my chrysanthemum." and is not our U3A an ideal setting for the later blooms? Traditionally autumn gives way to melancholy, a state that can hardly be avoided if we refuse to let go of the past and have invested heavily or unwisely in the forgoing seasons. It's no good hoping for more of the same. The flowers of September are not remotely like those of spring. It's time to wear purple, carmine and gold ladies, and perhaps be a little outrageous! And for the men, traditionally the hunters and adventurers of the piece; we can set ourselves new objectives, new territories to explore and inhabit, different paradigms and ideologies to enlighten and inspire us without going a step further than a U3A group. In the winter that lies ahead we might be glad of some such inner resources.

In September we traditionally gather in and store the nourishment that growth and expansion has given us in the summer. Well some of us might not have been feeling quite as outgoing and adventurous as in former years but ideas, interests, contacts, communications and friendships are generally there to hand without going anywhere near an airport, and surely U3A is a more effective setting in which to explore these than a departure lounge, though I have known some interesting exceptions.

It's time to be mellow and reflective, to share notes and experiences and to wonder what it was all about, and that is perhaps better done in company. Is it not great that we have our U3A to help us in this process?

Brian Gill

TEA ROTA FOR AUTUMN 2016

1 ST September	Sylvia Hunt	Dot Matthews	Eve Felton
15 TH September	Sue Porter	Margaret Yeardsley	Doreen Alig
29 TH September	Val Edwards	Rod Paddock	Joy Thompson
13 TH October	Rita Lillie	Barbara Wall	Carol Burkitt
27 TH October	Barbara Baker	Kathy Sullivan	Steve Cottam
10 TH November	Margaret Cullen	Paul Cullen	Pauline Pinnington
24 TH November	Gerry Riley	Barbara Riley	Marion Jackson

Please ring me (Joan Benton) on 608 6226 if you are unable to do a duty

PENDLE WALKING FESTIVAL

It was a chilly and grey early Sunday morning in mid August when 10 hardy members of the Oxton & Prenton U3A walking group assembled in a lay by on the edge of Pendle Hill for a walk led by a local walk leader. Along with around 30 other walkers from all over, including Germany we set off uphill at a cracking pace. The walk was one of a group of walks associated with Charlotte Bronte's bicentenary. Our first stop, after about 90 minutes of fairly strenuous walking over undulating terrain was at the site of the Norman Manor House at Ightenhill. A local parish councillor met us and explained that although nothing visible remains of the Manor House a geophysical survey has established where the house stood and its probable layout. The parish council are now trying to raise funds to undertake an archaeological excavation on the site.



After leaving Ightenhill a 30 minute walk along the Bronte Way long distance footpath brought us to Gawthorpe Hall and our lunch break. Gawthorpe Hall is a superb Jacobean historic house, nestled in the shadow of Pendle Hill, now owned by Lancashire County Council but looked after by the National Trust. Built between 1600 and 1605 for the Shuttleworth family it had an iconic and important role in the local area. After lunch it was a brisk 60 minute walk, mostly uphill, to our starting point.

We retired to our hotel to rest our weary bones in the jacuzzi and swim a few leisurely lengths of the hotel pool. After a good night's sleep and a 'modest' breakfast we were ready to meet our walk leader again on a beautiful sunny and warm morning. The Monday walk was another Charlotte Bronte centenary walk, using the Pendle Way and the Bronte Way long distance footpaths. We met at the Pendle Heritage Centre in Barrowford and set off with the walk leader along the river. Then rising steadily through Admergill to the top of Slipper Hill where we had a short picnic lunch stop. The views from the top were stunning and after lunch we started the downhill stretch towards Slipper Hill reservoir and the Leeds Liverpool canal. A stretch along the towpath brought us back to Barrowford Locks and the Heritage Centre.



Monday evening we celebrated Brenda and Les's wedding anniversary over dinner. Next morning dawned hot and sunny and we decided that our



walk today would be DIY, just the ten of us. We had a great 4 mile circular walk along Colne Water and Wycoller Beck to the delightful village of Wycoller, where we had a well earned coffee stop and looked around the village at the Pack Horse Bridge, the Clapper Bridge and ruins of Wycoller Hall. Our walking complete by lunchtime we all said our goodbyes and set off for home.



Colin Burkitt

U3A SUMMER CRUISE July 2016.

I'm sure all agree that we had a great time. Thank you Barbara, for putting it together.

For me the fun began the minute we set off as in the elevated position that the bus affords one can see into gardens and front rooms beyond the reach of those at street level. Oxton is quite a different place from this exalted vantage point. Also, as a driver, it is so good not to have to think about how we might arrive at our destination and just to sit back and let it happen.

The starting point of our canal cruise in Manchester was a culturally enriched environment in its own right, loaded as it was with history back to Roman times. I could happily have spent several days there without moving on.



Before actually embarking there was the matter of beverages to be negotiated. They were to be obtained from a machine. When Barbara asked the attendant where we were to pay for them a hand was proffered accompanied by the word "Here!" It was not quite so simple for those who followed on and getting the best out of the device required a bit of technical know-how. But there was time and we were able to sit a while, some of us in the sun, and enjoy an amazing location.



The actual cruise began slowly as we manoeuvred gently away from the quay and found our direction, which was one of several possibilities. We were in an exciting confluence of waterways populated by wild ducks and geese. I was trying to look everywhere at once as we moved under whatever the collective noun is for a lot of bridges: (a spanning?). They came in a variety of shapes, sizes, levels and functions, the most spectacular being those embellished by beautifully intricate gothic ironwork on grand scale. I just wanted to stay there and absorb it all.

Our journey was accompanied by an excellent commentary but given that half of us were facing backwards and that the items being referred to were either on the right or the left of the vessel, it took a little time for some of us (well me and Barbara to name but a few) to adapt to the fact that when our Skipper said 'left' he actually meant 'right' and that 'right' for us was 'left'. I have problems with left and right under quite normal conditions so this required some serious neuronal application and a lot of head swivelling. At least he refrained from referring to port and starboard.

This wealth of new impressions was accompanied by drinks and a goodly three course meal, two courses of which were eaten on the way out and one coming back; all served on golden table cloths with luxurious, real linen napery to match. The crew were very helpful and friendly. Ushka, Monica's guide dog, appreciated this particularly as she got her own portion of chicken, a bowl of water and lots of fussing. She was not so appreciative of the few bumps and shudders that accompanied the negotiation of a lock, during which she clung to me as though the devil was up her tail.



Salford Quays is full of interest at any time of year but we arrived on graduation day, so there were lots of people posing in academic robes accompanied by relatives of all races, creeds and colours in the exciting and vibrant apparel of their respective cultures. It's a good place to walk, to explore or just to be and though I have been there many times before it all seemed very different when arriving in the midst of it all by water, knowing that our vessel was waiting patiently to take us back, which eventually, together with our apple crumble dessert, it did.

Looking back, it was a jewel of a day, full of rich facets and coruscating impressions of sunlight on water to carry with us through the year until our next U3A summer outing.

Brian Gill & Monica

THE POETRY GROUP

At the July 2016 meeting of the Poetry Group Helen Roberts presented a selection of poems she had chosen. Helen said that the meaning of the poems she had chosen would be enhanced by listening carefully to the individual poet's use of language.

The first two poems the group discussed were philosophical reflections on a cameraman's work by the Scottish poet Douglas Dunn and the troubles in Northern Ireland by the Ulster poet Michael Longley.

Douglas Dunn's poem 'I am a Cameraman', ending with five lines, the last four of which make almost the same point:

'Life flickers on the frame like beautiful humming birds.

That is the film that always comes out blank.

The painting the artist can't get shapes to fit.

The poems that shrugs off every word you try.

The music no one has ever heard'.

suggests that individual life is unique and its essence well-nigh impossible to record.

Michael Longley's poem 'All of these people' tells of an ice-cream man 'whose continuing requiem is the twenty one flavours children have by heart', before posing the question: 'Who can bring peace to people who are not civilized?'

Poems by Imtiaz Dharker and Kapka Kassabova (who both live in the United Kingdom) drew our attention to values that we should consider more carefully.

The third pair of poems were by e. e. cummings and Maya Angelou, the former white and the latter black citizens of the United States. Maya Angelou's poem 'Still I rise' with the refrain 'I rise' challenges stereotypical views of some white people about the black population.

Cummings (whose poems never featured capital letters) provided us with an anti-war poem which alluded to the inevitable consequences and fall from grace of a well born and bred American.

For its imaginative power, pace, 'stuttering' and sense of fear, Cairan Carson's poem 'Belfast Confetti' was considered the first among equals:

*'Suddenly as the riot squad moved in, it was raining
exclamation marks,*

*Nuts, bolts, nails, car-keys. A fount of broken type. And the
explosion*

*Itself - an asterisk on the map. This hyphenated line, a burst
of rapid fire....
I was trying to complete a sentence in my head, but it kept
stuttering,
All the alleyways and side streets blocked with stops and
colons.*

*I know this labyrinth so well – Balaklava, Raglan, Inkermann
Odessa Street –
Why can't I escape? Every move is punctuated. Crimea Street,
Dead end again.
A Saracen, Kremlin-2 mesh, Makrolon face shields. Walkie-
talkies. What is
My name? Where am I coming from? Where am I going? A
fusillade of question marks.*

If this report has tickled your fancy for Poetry, why not join us on the first Tuesday afternoon of each month for discussions about poems by selected poets (ancient and modern), themes such as railway poems ('Adlestrop' for instance), or poems selected by a member?

My contact details are: martinhesketh32@btinternet.com or 653 8065

STOP PRESS VERY IMPORTANT BREAKING NEWS

HOLIDAY 2017

In response to quite a number of requests from our members I have put together another 'holiday', which I hope will be of interest.

To help me ascertain interest levels I would very much appreciate an email to the following address: barbara@oxtonu3a.co.uk

If there is insufficient interest obviously the trip will not proceed.

Deposits of £25 per person are required to secure a place and these are needed within the next 2 meetings or we may lose our option on the booking.

Deposits are by CHEQUE ONLY – payee details will be provided at meetings.

OXFORD & THE COTSWOLDS

THURSDAY 4th to MONDAY 8th MAY 2017

INTENDED DESTINATIONS INCLUDE OXFORD / STRATFORD-upon-AVON

BLenheim PALACE / BLETCHLEY PARK (code breakers)

SUDELEY CASTLE GARDENS & SNOWSHILL MANOR (both COTSWOLDS properties).

APPROXIMATE COST: TWINS/DOUBLES £480 p.p SINGLES £580 p.p
