

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2018



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

By the time you are reading this, the festivities of Christmas will have finished and we will all be looking forward to the coming year. I hope you all had a very enjoyable time and are ready to greet the new year. I always look forward to a new beginning and wondering what it holds in store for us.

SO MAY I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH YOU ALL

A VERY HAPPY AND HEALTHY 2018

My sincere hope for 2018 is that our U3A continues to grow and continues to have the support of you all. With that in mind, I would welcome any feedback from you, our members, of any improvements you would like us to make. Tell us what you think! Are the Speakers interesting? Are the social mornings enjoyable? Are our communications sufficient? Do you enjoy reading the monthly e-mail newsletter? Can you suggest any outside activities that would appeal? This is your Group and we organise all these things for you, but are we doing what you want? My email is chairman@oxtonu3a.co.uk please let me know.

Sandra Lakin
Chairman

BRIAN'S MUSINGS

I question the value of making New Years' resolutions and even of wishing people a Happy New Year, though I say it frequently. Happiness is one of those socially convenient concepts that enable us to address each other without too much effort; and why not? It just is not possible to go about relating deeply all the time but even so with some people, however light and buoyant they might seem on the surface you can sense that the depth is there and would be available if appealed to. They would listen to your deep concerns and give you a considered answer if need be.

As for resolutions: I like the idea but in practice I am only too aware of the internal stress and conflict that they can generate. The problem is that they mostly involve some sort of deprivation as in 'I'm going to eat less and exercise more.' We might well regard exercise as an actual gift to the human organism but the part of one that prefers to sit, uninterrupted, in an arm chair will most certainly see it as a deprivation. And that is the trouble with resolutions. We fail to acknowledge that our psyche is anything but unified. We are many different and



often conflicting personas and sometimes one only has to look at a person to see which ones are winning and which are firmly repressed.

Pantomime has a great deal to teach us in this respect and January is a good month in which to see one. Whatever the story, they generally show us that our authentic self is disadvantaged and that there are any number of reasons why it is not allowed to have a voice; often represented by greedy siblings or needy relatives. The evil influence of the ego generally tries to ensure that our authentic voice will never be heard and that more importantly it will never realise or assume its true status.

But all is not lost. The 'consciousness principal', (often in the form of an other-worldly being), is there to help the authentic self to reclaim its true status of inner unity, to put all recalcitrant sub-personas in their places and establish a benign and unified rule in the realm of the psyche. Unless or until this happens there is no hope of there ever being a happy ending. With the evil uncle (ego) in charge of the light of consciousness, (the magic lamp) how can Aladdin possibly be happy, let alone marry the princess? (rescue authentic being).

With dualistic and divisive attitudes rampant in the psyche, (ugly sisters) and a weak and nearly bankrupt ego in control (Baron Stoneybroke) who is to prevent the greedy and avaricious stepmother (negative anima) from dominating the emotional life of the psyche? The consciousness principal, here represented by the prince, must turn from pleasure and status and realise that his true identity is shut away in the servants' quarters below stairs.

So, in the hope that the pantomime that is our life should come eventually to a happy ending I would actually prefer to wish people an insightful, thoughtful, understanding and more aware New Year.

Brian Gill

LUNCH CIRCLE

DATES TO NOTE in 2018 - to meet at 12.15 for 12.30 lunch.

Tuesday January 16th	Queens Arm Pub, Oxton
Tuesday February 20th	Toby Carvery Pub
Tuesday March 20th	Carnarvon Castle Pub, Oxton.
Tuesday April 17th	Presto (Dibbinsdale)
Tuesday May 15th	The Shippons Pub, Irby.
Tuesday June 19th	The Refreshment Rooms



Colin Stredder

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

EVENTS

Tour of WESTERN APPROACHES MUSEUM

WW2 Secret bunker

5 mins from James St Station

Thursday 25 January 2018

10.30 am £6.75

Meet at venue @ 10.20 am

1-3 Rumford Street

Exchange Flags Liverpool L2 8SZ

Please be aware access via staircase ONLY

Booking closing 4 January 2018



Tour of Liverpool Medical Institution

114 Mount Pleasant – Opposite Metropolitan Cathedral

Wednesday 28 February 2018

Morning & Afternoon tours

With Lunch for both tours @ 12.00 noon

Cost £11.50 inclusive

FULL

Morning tour meet 10.40am for 11.00 am tour

Followed by lunch @ noon

Afternoon tour – meet for lunch @ 12.00 noon

Tour to follow lunch 1.15 pm to 2.15 pm



NEW

WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH 2018

Guided visit to Liverpool Mosque

Will meet at city centre bus stop approx 10.20am

Tour 11.00 am to 12.00 noon

Essential information on dress code – see notice boards

Cost £3.50



PLUS

Optional afternoon guided tour of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral

Cost (to include Lutyens crypt) £5.50

Tour 2.00 pm to 3.00 pm followed by visit to Crypt



THEATRE

NOW BOOKING

Matthew Bourne's CINDERELLA

Liverpool Empire 2.30 pm

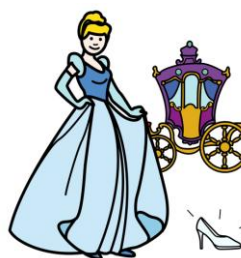
Thursday 12 April 2018

£29 booking closing 4th January 2018

Important notice

No bookings or reservations can be taken without payment.

This is necessary to be fair to all our members.



PEOPLE OF OXTON

Portrait Photography Project by James Deegan

I am a local photographer currently producing a series of portraits of people who live, work, or regularly visit the Oxtan area of Birkenhead. The portraits would all be taken in different Oxtan locations, such as the home, place of work or favourite spot etc. These are called environmental portraits, where the photographs give the viewer an insight into the subject's life and surroundings.

The portraits are intended to show the rich variety of life in this particular part of the Wirral; a place that to me, as a local, has always had the feel of a small village within the broader Wirral area. I am approaching local businesses as well as people who simply have an interesting look or a great story to tell.

Typically, because of the natural approach I am taking, the photo shoots would take up to 10-30 minutes. The aim is to be as natural and unobtrusive as possible, although these are formal portraits with the subject fully aware of the presence of the camera and not documentary pictures of people at work.

I am aiming to shoot all the portraits over the next few months and I am flexible with times, day or evening. Anyone willing to take part would give their time for free, but would receive a copy of their best images for their own use, and maybe even some free publicity where appropriate!

The ultimate aim for 'People of Oxton' is to mount a public exhibition of the work in the local area. I hope also to produce a book or pamphlet with the images accompanied by text including information, quotes and stories from the people in the pictures. I am sure this would be of great interest, particularly in the local area itself.

I would love to hear from anyone interested in getting involved in this project so I can arrange a convenient slot for me to visit, explain further and take some images. Also if anyone can pass on my contact details to anyone else you think might like to take part, be it friends or fellow employees who fit the criteria, I would be most grateful. My contact details are – jamesdeegan10@gmail.com or 07930 985 442.

Please also visit my website www.deeganphotography.com and the James Deegan Photography page on Facebook to see examples of my work.

MEETINGS and SPEAKERS 2018

2018

Thursday 4th January -

The Real James Bond. - Derek Arnold

Thursday 1st February

The Policeman's Lot is a Digital One. – Bill Jonstone

Thursday 1st March

Confessions of a Registrar – Carole Codd

Thursday 29th March

Now There's a Funny Thing.. – Brian Lloyd

Thursday 26th April

Grand Narratives and How We Live. – Mary Clinton

Thursday 24th May

Joyce Grenfell. – Jean Finney

Thursday 24th June

Thomas Edgerton and the Earls of Derby – Bernard Dennis

Thursday 19th July

Behind the Scenes in Theatre and TV. – Fiona Martine

Thursday 13th September

The Cultural Significance of the Belly Dance – Fatma

Thursday 11th October

Ephemera – Glynn Parry

Thursday 8th November

The Christmas Tree: where Culture, Science and Magic Meet.

Thursday 6th December

Faith, Fun and Fellowship – Michael Burgess



Creative Writing Group

A DARK STRANGER



It all began when I saw a dark figure watching my house; or at least I thought he was doing so. My house was situated on the edge of a small town, not much more than a village really and I was driving home from my friend Ruth's when I first spotted the shape of a middle aged man looking up at the house in the early winter twilight. As I neared my gates and indicated left to drive through them, he hurriedly turned away and walked quickly on towards the town centre. Apart from wondering what it was that had caught his eye I thought no more of it and hastened inside where I knew the heating would be on and a welcome cup of tea on hand.

He reappeared a few days later, this time during the day, when peeping out from behind my bedroom curtain I was able to get a better sight of him. Now he appeared a bit taller than my first impression led me to believe; more upright, quite well dressed in a casual way, dark but greying at the hairline. He could have been of Latin extraction. There was no doubting his interest in the house now; he was staring at it quite intently and seemed to be taking notes.

Curious, I went downstairs and walked down the garden drive, "Can I be of any help?" I volunteered. "Didn't I see you outside the other day when I drove home; it *was* you wasn't it?"

"How long have you lived here?" the abrupt question took me by surprise and before I could wonder at his rudeness I found myself replying.

"Actually only about eighteen months, the house was left to me by my aunt. She had no family apart from me and wanted me to be secure after my marriage broke up." What on earth was I thinking of, telling him my business. I drew a sharp breath and closed my mouth firmly.

"Interesting." was all he said with a final stare at the house, then he abruptly turned and walked away.

Although I looked out for him the next few days passed without any sign and I was beginning to think that his interest was purely random curiosity with no underlying purpose. It was Saturday evening and I was meeting friends for a meal. Unsure of which dress to wear I eventually pulled out a deep blue velvet one that usually gave me confidence and looked for a piece of jewellery to set it off. Something made me pull out a little diamond clip given to me by the same aunt who had left me the house; it was perfect.

Smiling, I thought of my Aunt Joyce, my mother's only sister. They had been very close as children with only fourteen months between them and when Mother had died, too young, from breast cancer, she had taken me under her wing. A teenager on the threshold of spreading my wings and going off to college, Mother's death had come as a huge loss and I was desolate. It had been Aunt Joyce who had made me realise that the best way for me to honour my mother would be to go forward with my studies and make something of my life. She was the one who came to see me get my degree and the one who invited my friends round, delighting them with her personality and warmth.

Later, as the wine flowed and six old friends enjoyed each other's company helped along by an excellent menu, I realised that I was finally over my divorce and felt free to make a new life for myself. I looked round at these people who had supported me through some pretty rough days and raised my glass to them. It was getting towards the close of the evening and we were about to call a couple of taxis. Still laughing I made my way towards the cloakroom to collect my coat. A hand on my arm halted my progress. Expecting it to be one of my companions I turned and with shock realised that it was the man who had been watching my house.

“Hello again,” my heart started pounding and I searched fruitlessly for sight of one of my group to rescue me – but from what? He was staring at my brooch, “What a lovely brooch and it sets off your outfit so beautifully! It reminds me very much of a jewel that I once gave to someone many years ago. Do you mind telling me where you acquired it?”

Like an animal transfixed I stood silent with my mouth opening and closing as I searched for a reply. Who was this man questioning me so insolently? “Have you been following me?” at last the words escaped. The moment was broken by a tap on my shoulder; it was Marie, one of our party, come to see what was holding me up. “Haven't you got your coat yet June? The taxis are here; hurry up!” Without a word I hastily ran towards the cloakroom, grabbed my coat and made to follow Marie to the door.

As I passed the man he caught hold of my arm; “So you're June – pretty name. *My* brooch had two entwined initials on the back, JK. I'll catch up with you again soon. By the way, this *is* a popular restaurant – I merely wished to dine.” So saying he smiled and released my arm and without a backward glance I shot to where my friends were growing impatient.

As our taxi neared my house Marie's curiosity got the better of her, “Who's the guy, June? Rather distinguished looking – I would have thought he was a bit on the old side for you though.”

Jack and Chris, one of the two married couples we were out with joined her, teasing me mercilessly. “I don't know him at all. He just keeps appearing!” As I explained what had been happening my friends' attitudes changed completely, their faces becoming serious.

“You mean he's been stalking you? Hadn't you better call the police?”

“And tell them what? He hasn't trespassed on my property; the restaurant is open to the public. They would just laugh at me. It's probably something I have built up in my imagination because I'm living on my own – I'm not really used to it yet and get jumpy.” We were approaching my house and I picked up my handbag ready to jump out.

As I turned to say my “good nights” Jack took my hand, “Don't hesitate to give us a ring if he becomes a pest; one or other of us could soon come over. Please, promise us.” Marie and Chris nodded their agreement and I reflected again on my luck in having such good friends.

Removing the diamond clip as I prepared for bed I turned it over; with a slight shiver I realised that there were initials engraved on the back – J entwined with K – just as the man had described on his brooch. My aunt's name was Joyce but her surname was Moran so what did the K signify? What, if any, was the connection? Could this be the same brooch that the man described as having been given by him to someone? Suddenly I desperately needed to know more. My thoughts turned to my Aunt Joyce; she had never married and for most of my childhood had been part of my life, living nearby. Apart, that was, for around five years when she had been working in Italy. I remembered my mother saying that something had happened there which had changed her considerably. She seemed rather sad about it but by that time had become ill herself with the cancer which was to end up killing her. Sleep was slow to come that night as my thoughts turned over memories which had been buried for years.

Some days later I was shopping in Town when I bumped into the mystery man once more; this time he stepped up to me and asked whether I would take a coffee with him, “Why June – we meet again! We really should talk, there are a few things I would like to explain to you. Would you like to let me buy you a coffee?”

Against my better judgement I agreed, my curiosity getting the better of me and we stepped into a nearby Costa. As we took our seats he spoke and I detected a very slight accent, “I am Keith Roberto and you are June...?”

“Bates,” I supplied quickly, “are you the “K” on my diamond clip? My aunt was Joyce and when you mentioned the engraved letters on the back of your brooch I checked and the letters were JK”

“Your aunt and I became close friends years ago when she was working in Italy; we were attached to the same company. I was very much in love with her and planned to ask for her hand in marriage. We spent a glorious summer together sharing some wonderful memories. I gave her the diamond clip which had belonged to my mother, after getting our initials engraved on it. Then she flew to England to see her sister, your mother I think, whom she was very close to. I was expecting her return after a few weeks when we were to marry. Then out of the blue I received a letter from her to say that she would not be returning; her sister was terminally ill and she was staying to nurse her and support you. I was heartbroken but realised that she had made her mind up; she was a very caring woman. Over time I recovered and eventually married my present wife but often wondered how life was treating my first big love. Recently I heard via the grapevine - we both worked in similar circles - that she had died and I felt that I wanted to meet you, her family and to see where she had made her life. My wife gave me her blessing and I flew over. I knew the address of her house – where *you* live now – and came to look it up. You blurted out that your aunt had left the house to you so I guessed that you were the niece that she had told me about; the daughter of her much loved sister. I really meant you no harm and had no intention of startling you but it would be lovely to get to know you better and to hear more about your aunt's life. My wife, Gina, asked me to invite you to our home in Italy; she would love to get to know you.”

I must have sat staring at Keith open mouthed for a good minute. Nothing I had imagined had quite prepared me for this; what a story to tell my friends. Dear Aunt Joyce had given up so much for us and yet had seemed to live a fulfilling life. Keith was looking at me intently, “You do like the brooch don't you? It represents a lot of love and its history embraces my mother as well as Joyce; I do hope that you will value it. Joyce must have cared for you very much to have given something of such emotional value to you.”

I smiled at him, “And they say never talk to a dark stranger!” The rest as they say is another story.

Eliane Davie

WALKING GROUP



Mobile: Colin – 0743 4284666 Carol – 0757 0492993. Landline: 0151 651 2947

Email: carol.colin@talktalk.net

CHRISTMAS WALK 2017

On December 14th a goodly number of the Walking Group enjoyed an excellent walk led by Colin. We were fortunate with the weather as, unusually lately, the sun shone on a crispy morning. The walk was followed by mulled wine, homemade soup, bread, cheese and mince pies supplied by various members and heartily downed by hungry walkers. Our hosts, Carol and Colin, made us very welcome and are to be congratulated in coping with quite a crowd. Our sincere thanks to Carol and Colin and to all those who provided food and helped out.

Ready for the “off”



ART APPRECIATION GROUP

Dates for U3A history of art meetings.
All meetings in Trinity Session room start at 10.15a.m. unless otherwise stated:



2018

Wednesday January 17th in Session room ANGELS – Bernadette leads

Wednesday February 21st MEET AT TATE GALLERY 10.45a.m. for curator led exhibition of JOHN PIPER'S art.

Wednesday March 21st in Session room THE GHENT ALTARPIECE Terence Whaley

Wednesday April 18th in Session room To be advised

Wednesday May 16th MEET AT TATE GALLERY 10.45a.m. KEN'S SHOW: exploring the unseen.
Celebrating the 30th Anniversary Special Exhibition of the gallery's Collection.

TEA AND COFFEE ROTA – JANUARY



January 4 th 2018	-	Rita Lillie, Carol Burkitt and Margaret Yeardsley
January 18 th 2018	-	Steve Cottam, Gwyneth Thomas and Ann Hillier
February 1 st 2018	-	Chris Lakin, Margaret Cullen and Paul Cullen
February 15 th 2018	-	Jill McCloy, Ian McCloy and Brenda George
March 1 st 2018	-	Jean Dickie, Maureen Jones and Bernadette Hamilton
March 15 th 2018	-	Lilian Evans, Joan Parfect and Helen Roberts

NEW GROUP FOR BUDDING PLAYERS !!



John Bews from Heswall U3A would like to know if any of our members are interested in Walking Football, Tuesday afternoons at Tranmere Rovers ground. Anyone interested should contact John direct at johnbews@btinternet.

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR MEMORY EXPERIMENT!

Are you an aged 50 or above?

Are you interested in helping “memory and ageing” research?

Great!!! You may be eligible to participate in a study at Liverpool John Moores University exploring how individual memory strategies predict future cognitive decline.



The procedure lasts approximately 1 hour and it includes some “pencil and paper” and “computer-based” tests to evaluate your cognitive functioning.

All participants are reimbursed for their time with a £10 Tesco or Amazon voucher and free car spaces are available at the campus, if needed! Consecutive bookings are available for couples or friends

Please, contact Deborah Talamonti for further information: D.Talamonti@2016.ljmu.ac.uk

A LETTER FROM HAZEL PALMER at U3A NORTHWEST

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Hello Eliane, wondered if the following would be of interest for your Newsletter.

Last year and this a group of members from several different U3As on the Wirral, set off by mini bus for Newton Rigg, Penrith, an Agricultural College set in glorious countryside. The accommodation is in brick buildings looking out onto a green and housing four students, two up and two down, with all you need for a short stay including a communal kitchen where you can make a cup of tea and meet with friends.

The courses are many and varied but best of all is the welcoming and friendly atmosphere and being with like minded people who still want to learn new things; plus the food is delicious. There are lovely gardens to explore on site at break times and the chance to go to the Theatre on the Lake, with transport laid on; a treat not to be missed. The tutors give of their time free so don't miss out, take advantage of the U3A Summer Schools, rejuvenate the brain cells, feel young at heart and spirit. It is all arranged especially for YOU.

Hazel Palmer

It certainly sounds very appealing and I for one will be looking over next summer's prospectus with great interest! The photos below show some of the facilities. Ed.



CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2017

A big thank you to Barbara Winstanley for organizing our Christmas Lunch again. The venue at the Tranmere Platinum Room proved very popular and everyone enjoyed an excellent meal, nicely hot and served by attentive staff. Both Barbara Winstanley and Barbara Lloyd do a huge job in finding outings and venues for us to enjoy and we do appreciate their efforts.

Ed.



AND FINALLY.....

I would love to hear from Group Leaders regarding the various activities under way in our U3A. If you would like to share any items please e-mail them to me at the address below before the twentieth of January and I will try to include them in the next newsletter.

Eliane Davie e-mail elianedavie@hotmail.co.uk Editor

2018

Happy New Year!

