



# September Newsletter

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## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

By the time you are all reading this, the nights will be getting that much longer and the days shorter. But for the time being Chris and I are making the most of this beautiful summer, eating our meals out in the garden, sleeping with windows wide open and enjoying leaving the obligatory waterproof at home when we go out. I know some people don't enjoy this hot weather and prefer the cooler days. It's like sports too, even I have become a football fan (shame about the world cup, but didn't we do well?) since moving to the Wirral but I couldn't watch cricket even if you paid me.

So it's really good to know that we have a wide selection of interest Groups for you all to choose from, one man's meat really is another man's poison. So, as we start the beginning of a new term, if you are looking for a different Group to join, why not have a chat with our Group's Co-ordinators, Tony and Eve who help out with all the information on the boards at the back of the hall. They can point you in the right direction.

I sincerely hope that you have all had a good break and I look forward to seeing you all fighting fit and raring to go on 30<sup>th</sup> August.

Sandra Lakin  
Chairman

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## BRIAN'S MUSINGS



Some events seem to register with us more than others of a similar nature. They call our attention and even engage our emotions in a way that calls for greater understanding and involvement; and so it was one morning recently when, before it was properly light, I walked round the bed to discover a small lump of something that may or may not have been alive. We have three extremely well fed cats. Apart from occasionally honing their hunting skills, they are generally too lethargic to attend to their own nutritional requirements. When they do actually 'bring home the bacon' I

remind myself that we are constantly bringing back bits of dead animal from the shops and frequently whole corpses, so we are in no position to complain. I have never known them eat what they catch. They prefer to leave them in prominent locations as contribution to the general larder.

However cats are not noted for dispatching their victims with the minimum of suffering. This is a function usually taken on by myself, speedily but with a degree of reluctance. In this instance something stayed the moment of delivery, if indeed there remained anything suffering there needing to be delivered. What I eventually held in my hand was a small and totally inert bird. It lay on its back, eyes wide and unmoving in the stare of death. For some reason, though I am no stranger to suffering and death, this was all profoundly moving. As it lay in my hand, an object of awe and wonder and as I watched it, totally transfixed, it began to breath. It seemed impossible that it could survive but still I could not dispatch this living, breathing miracle of life. I carried it down to the garden. By now its eyes were blinking and it was moving its head. Its breathing had become more pronounced.

Once in the garden I sat in a chair with this barely alive scrap of creation at my feet trying to brace myself to perform what was truly intended to be an act of mercy yet quite incapable of accomplishing it; and thus we both remained for several minutes. Suddenly, with no warning or indication of any kind the little creature was off its back and flying. It landed in a plant pot from where it was possible to transfer it to the dense interstices of a clipped yew. There it could consider its position without further interruption from any felix vulgaris.

There had to be something for me to learn from this event, so powerful was its effect. One obvious lesson is clearly to the effect that that which appears to be dead and lifeless is not necessarily so. It may yet have some flight left in it. Point taken! It is only too easy to write myself off when feeling debilitated. But the lesson applies equally to projects and relationships and all manner of things. It is getting difficult to know where to draw the line now. Importantly it is vital not to act precipitously. My messenger did not thrash around. It waited and gathered its strength. We actually looked at each other. It felt as though we were communicating and who can say for certain that it was otherwise. In the space that we both shared, something happened that gave both of us a new lease of life.

**Brian Gill**

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## LUNCH GROUP

Dates to note for 2018 MEET AT 12.45 for 1pm **Note new time**

Tuesday September 18<sup>th</sup> The Traveller's Rest, Bebington

Tuesday October 16<sup>th</sup> The Queen's Arms, Oxton.

Tuesday November 20<sup>th</sup> Carnarvon Castle, Oxton.



**COLIN STREDDER**

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## **NOTICE FROM Palm Grove Church Community**

Trinity with Palm Grove Church Community has invited any of our members, who wish to do so, to take part in the following event which will be part of Wirral Arts Festival. As you can see it has a varied programme of words and music and I am sure there are some of our talented Members who would be interested in taking part.

Please contact Paul Franklin [paulfranklin.tpg@gmail.com](mailto:paulfranklin.tpg@gmail.com)

**Sandra Lakin**

**Chairman - Oxtou, Prenton & District U3A**

[chairman@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:chairman@oxtonu3a.co.uk)

### **WIRRAL ARTS FESTIVAL & TWPG**

*As part of the Wirral Arts Festival, Trinity with Palm Grove Church are presenting a programme of words and music on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October and it is being organised by Janette Webster.*

*The title is '1914-18 A programme of music, words and art'. This is a broad remit including World War 1, the art, music and drama of that era, how religion was affected and the politics of the day, including the Suffragette movement.*

*This enables the concert to have classical music performances, light hearted dramas and an exploration of abstract art. This will balance the mood of the concert with the more sombre subject of WW1. This will include an exploration of WW1 art, songs, letters from the front and reflective passages from those who stayed at home and readings of poetry and drama on the subject.*

*Along with this being the centenary of the end of WW1, the inspiration for this concert was the 'Role of Honour' for Trinity of Palm Grove from this era. It was discovered last year in the basement of the church and has been framed and displayed in our church. There will be a short talk about this in the concert.*

*We envisage a mixture of all the elements from above to make up the concert. Each item will last from 5-10 minutes*

*Please contact [paufranklintpg@gmail.com](mailto:paufranklintpg@gmail.com) if you are interested in taking part,*

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**Wirral Arts Festival**  
**Science Day Lecture Series**  
**Thursday 4th October 2018**



**9.30 am – 5.00 pm**

**Heswall Hall, Telegraph Road, Heswall, CH60 0AF**

**Admission Charge for each lecture £1.00**

**Heswall U3A members free on production of membership card**

**Sponsored by Heswall U3A**

**Organised by the Rotary Clubs of West Wirral and Mid Wirral**

**Tea/Coffee/Biscuits available**

**For further details contact Dr Keith Foggin 0151 625 4201 or [keith.foggin@live.co.uk](mailto:keith.foggin@live.co.uk)**

**Programme**

**Thursday 4th October 2018**

**09.30                    The Use of Drones in the Conservation of Animals and their Habitat**

**Professor Serge Wich, Department of Primate Biology**

**Liverpool John Moores University**

**11.00 Why don't Sundials Tell the Right Time?**

**Mike Shaw British Sundial Society**

**Lunch Break**

**13.30                    Sleep and Society**

**Dr Thomas Gent Section of Anaesthesiology, Vetsuisse Faculty,**

**University of Zurich**

**15.00                    The Anatomy of Friendship**

**Professor Robin Dunbar, Department of Experimental Psychology,**

**University of Oxford**

**All lecturers give their services without charge, for which we are most grateful.**

**Arthur Maltby from Heswall U3A has asked us to draw your attention to the above.**

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**WE WOULD ALL LIKE TO EXTEND OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO BARBARA BULLOUGH WHO  
CELEBRATED HER 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY ON AUGUST 14TH**



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## SOCIAL OUTINGS

**No bookings or reservations can be taken without payment.**

This is necessary in order to be fair to all our members

**PLEASE try to book events BEFORE the START of meetings**

**Payment at end of meetings MUST be either cheque or correct cash only**

Full booking details available @ meetings - see your social organisers

### EVENTS

#### **Wirral Transport Museum & Heritage Tramway visit**

**10 OCTOBER**

For Local History group and general membership.

**Meet at Woodside for 10.30am journey by coach to museum**

**Talk & free time until approx 12.00 noon when we travel back to Woodside**

**Cost 5.00**

*Possibility of optional lunch if suitable venue can be found.*



#### **CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2018**

**This year's venue is Prenton Golf Club**

**Golf Links Road , PRENTON CH42 8LW**

**Thursday 20 December**

**12.00 noon for 12.30 pm**

**3 course meal £25.00**



### THEATRE

**The Habit of Art by Alan Bennett**

**Liverpool Playhouse**

**Wednesday 24 October at 7.30 pm**

**Tickets £21**



**A feast for all Ballet lovers – Two completely different versions of the same ballet!!**

**Derek Deane's SWAN LAKE**

**The 2018 production is by The English National Ballet**

**Liverpool Empire**

**Thursday 22 NOVEMBER 18 @ 2.00pm**

**Tickets £22.00**

***Booking must close soon***



### PLUS

**Matthew Bourne's re-imagined version of his iconic Swan Lake**

***This ballet is almost certain to sell out very quickly so***

**Tickets have been reserved for Thursday 11 April 2019 @ 2.30 pm**

**Liverpool Empire and are on sale now.**

**COST £34.00 – can be reserved by deposit of £14.00 with balance payable later in year**

**COACH COSTS** are dependent on numbers travelling so it may be necessary to adjust prices slightly from time to time.

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## MEETINGS and SPEAKERS 2018



2018

Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> September	The Cultural Significance of the Belly Dance – Fatma
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October	Ephemera – Glynn Parry
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> November	The Christmas Tree: where Culture, Science and Magic Meet.
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> December	Faith, Fun and Fellowship – Michael Burgess

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## NOTES OF ACTIVITIES AT NON- SPEAKER MEETINGS

- 30th August: Colin's Quiz.  
27th September: (1) Jackie Ritson and her experiences during her time with the pupil referral service.  
(2) Colin's time as an office boy.
- 25th October: Eliane Davie – Life as an airline stewardess in the 60's.  
22nd November: Lyn Ebbrell - Magic of reflexology. How it can help you.

Colin Stredder

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### AN INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE FROM STEVE COTTAM ON HIS ROUND THE WORLD ADVENTURE.

#### Around the World in 108 Nights



Where does one begin to describe the kind of odyssey I had earlier this year. I could go into the months of preparation that had to be made; injections, visas and assuring that my house, as well as my health would be fully insured while I was away. That I feel is all another story and, in Mary Poppin's immortal words, I shall start at the very beginning, a very good place to start.

I was due to depart from Southampton on January 5<sup>th</sup> returning towards the end of April. To ensure that I arrived in port on time, I left early. It was a strange feeling locking the house up and leaving the neighbourhood knowing that I would not be back until late spring. I had a team of friends and neighbours who would keep an eye on the house (all part of that insurance agreement) and who would act as points of contact while I was away. Leaving early was no bad idea because we were just experiencing Hurricane Eleanor which would cause more problems as and after we left.

As you can imagine I had a large suitcase to hold the clothes necessary for those fifteen formal dining nights while on board, as well as additional bags containing the little extras, so a taxi was the only way. Also, the taxi drivers know their way around the port and where to drop off passengers and luggage; not always in the same place.

The port was busy; at the check- in desks the passengers were being processed and I was able to get my first look at those with whom I would be sharing the next three and a half months. As you check in they ensure you have all the necessary documentation, especially an Indian visa without which you cannot sail, even if you are not getting off in India. You have to declare you have no symptoms which might indicate you have the norovirus or any other dreaded bug which could be spread on board. As you check in your photograph is taken

and put on to a plastic card which becomes your “ship’s passport” while on board. It enables all you buy to be charged to your account which is automatically debited via your bank card at the end of the cruise. It is also your security pass and is swiped each time you disembark. It also shows that you are safely on board before sailing.

We were boarding “Black Watch,” a Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines’ vessel. Built in the early 1970’s and extensively refurbished over the years she can take just over 800 passengers. On our cruise this number would vary between 600 and 700, much of the reduced capacity due to the large number of cabins on single occupancy. This is another story in the cruising world. I was on deck 4, cabin 4075 which was situated roughly in the middle of the ship. This, I would come to realise, was an excellent location when things got a bit choppy as there was little or no movement. At about 3-30pm, believe it or not, a late lunch was being served in the restaurant. I did not partake but used the time to unpack (quite a large operation for one who usually travels light) and to have a wander around the ship.

At 4-30 we had the lifeboat drill during which time we had to report to our lifeboat assembly point and be led to the correct lifeboat on the deck above. This was all set off by the sounding of the ship’s alarm system and the captain and cruise director telling us what to do. It also provided an opportunity to get to know a few more passengers, “guests” as we were referred to. This exercise was repeated whenever we had new passengers joining us; in Peru, Sydney and Mumbai.

It was at dinner we met those with whom we were to share meals during the cruise. I am sure that one’s table companions could make or break a cruise experience. I was very lucky as they had put five single travellers together (we never saw the 6<sup>th</sup> member of our group) and we got on well throughout the voyage. Quickly, just to give you a feel of that first part of the cruise I will tell you about them. There was Sue, from an RAF family, she had been everywhere and could tell us all about our upcoming shore visits. She lived in Salisbury which became a talking point when the attack on the Russian couple took place in early March. Ruby was an East-ender who now lived just outside London. She liked plain food and had to be reminded by the rest of us that what she thought was a simple piece of fish or meat actually came with “fancy sauces”. Cheryl was from Dover and used to work in the Bureau de Change on the cross channel ferries. Finally there was Mick the Builder (as opposed to Mick the Brick, another passenger) who had an even larger appetite than mine, but unlike me went to the gym on deck 10 every day to work it off.

We were still in port as they served dinner. It suffices to say that this meal really is the highlight of the day. Sailing was booked as somewhere around 10-00pm and I wondered what would happen. After dinner I went back to the cabin and soon realised we were moving. No brass bands, no fireworks, just slipping away from the quay and as I estimated, more than an hour early. My great voyage had begun. So far I have made no mention of the weather and the state of the sea. The storms on land were beginning to blow themselves out but they had left a legacy of keen winds, rain and a noticeable swell on the sea. As we headed out through the Channel (and while enjoying our first evening’s entertainment, part of which was getting to know the crew) the ship was pitching and rolling quite a bit. We were not far from land and heading out towards the notorious Bay of Biscay, so it looked as if things might get interesting.

I settled down for the first of 108 nights on board. If you look at your calendar you will discover that it is really 109 nights away but we lose a day as we cross the dateline; more of that later.

I slept well, the sea at least did not get any rougher and I was ready the next morning to discover the delights of breakfast. Unlike dinner this was served on an open sitting principle with a buffet of hot food and a continental selection. As you will realise, the temptation is to eat too much food too frequently.

After breakfast the day’s programme of activities would begin. I gradually got into a routine with these; a walk around the deck, a lecture or concert before lunch and then a game on the deck during the afternoon. Demonstrations of various skills were also given, including the chef trying to teach the cruise director to cook a meal for the passengers. These kept us interested for the whole voyage. The lecturers were changed regularly as we made our port calls and we had changes of entertainers. As I was to discover, there was plenty to do on board and we never got bored!

Some of these activities, especially the on deck ones, did not really get up and running immediately. We had a weekend at sea crossing the Bay of Biscay and out into the Atlantic before we would make land in the Azores. It was generally quite rough, I was amazed that my sea legs were holding out and am proud to say that, despite the several areas of quite rough weather through which we passed (including a lot of the Pacific Ocean) I was not ill. Neither did I succumb to any of the bugs or “Kennel Cough” that seemed to be going round the ship. Hand cleaning hygiene really does work and you have to be more careful that you would be at home. The captain had altered our course to avoid the worst of the Bay of Biscay as we had our first Sunday on board. There was a full time chaplain, Rev. Edward Pogmore, who was from Leicester. He was to prove a very worthwhile member of the team, doing quite a lot of work behind the scenes in the pastoral department. On such a long cruise, things happen; for example family members back home are taken ill and there is often little that can be done. The chaplain was a point of contact in these matters.

Everybody on board was getting excited as Sunday turned to Monday (we had already begun to gain extra hours in bed to make up for that lost day we would have) because the first of our ports of call was near. This would be Ponta Delgado in the Azores. Sadly we had heard that another Azores visit, to Horta on a different island, would probably have to be cancelled due to the aftermath of the Atlantic storms that had come that way. To see how we got on when we landed and also how we crossed the rest of the Atlantic and headed towards the Panama Canal, you will have to read my next instalment.

Steve Cottam

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## WALKING GROUP

U3A Walk on Friday 17th August 2018.



A walk of just under 6.5 miles led by Gerry Riley started at Hooton Railway Station and finished at the Dibbinsdale Hotel in Bromborough where we stopped for lunch at around 1:30 pm. The walk took us along the Wirral way to Willaston then across field paths, the Bromborough golf course and the road to Raby mere. From here it was through Dibbinsdale and a little bit of road to the Dibbinsdale Hotel (Pesto). Lunch was followed by a short walk back to Bromborough station to get the train home. Many thanks to Gerry for organising this walk during the holiday break.



Willaston Station



Dibbinsdale



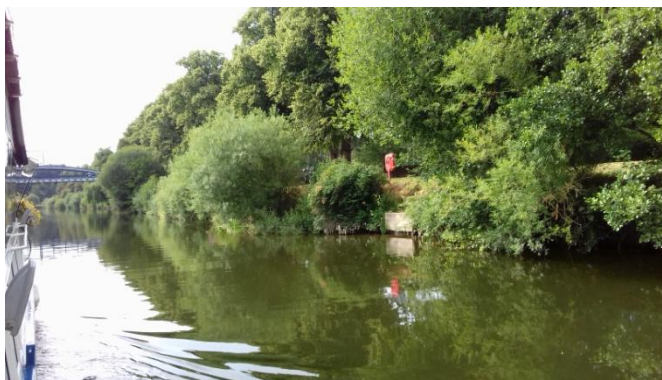
Rabymere



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## SOME PICTURES OF AN EXCELLENT DAY OUT IN SHROPSHIRE

INCLUDING MUCH WENLOCK, A CARVERY LUNCH AND A BOAT TRIP IN SHREWSBURY



Thank you Barbara Lloyd and Barbara Winstanley for organising yet another great day out.

Ed.

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# ART APPRECIATION GROUP

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



On September 19<sup>th</sup> there is a visit to the Tate Gallery to view an exhibition of the works of Egon Schiele. There will be a charge for this as we have a guide. Further information at the August 30<sup>th</sup> meeting after the break.

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## CREATIVE WRITING

Monica Price who leads the Creative Writing Group would welcome another three or four members. This is a really enjoyable group for those interested in developing their writing skills and meets on the Tuesday afternoon of the fourth week of each month at 2.30

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### LETTER FROM HEAD OFFICE WHICH COULD BE OF INTEREST

*The latest newsletter has gone out direct to the 'opt in' list of U3A members. It is packed full of news from U3As, news from the Trust, including upcoming events and new subject advisers and much more.*

*You can view it here if you have not already signed up yourself. Your members can view all back copies and sign up to receive it direct on our website <https://u3a.org.uk/about/newsletter> and also by clicking on the link below.*

**U3A EMAIL NEWSLETTER** Click here to add your name to the U3A email newsletter list, or visit [u3a.org.uk/email](https://u3a.org.uk/email)

## AND FINALLY

*Thank you once again for all your contributions, please keep them coming! I hope that you all enjoyed the great weather this summer.*

[elianedavie@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:elianedavie@hotmail.co.uk)

Eliane Davie



Editor