



Welcome to the New Year, welcome to our members and welcome to this, the very first edition of our new monthly newsletter.

Many of you will remember that previously we have issued a printed Newsletter every six months, unfortunately printing costs have become far too prohibitive for this to continue, so the aim of this newsletter is to keep you, our members, informed of all forthcoming events, group activities, scheduled walks and speaker programme. Space permitting we will try to include photographs of recent events and also anything our members might wish to share with others, news, outside events, ideas, pictures and comments.

Please let me have any items you want included in the monthly newsletter, comments, or any news by 20th of each month at the latest to newsletter@oxtonu3a.co.uk

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I hope you are all ready to return to U3A fully refreshed after a good festive break. Your committee's New Year resolution is to improve the communication with all our members. This edition of the monthly newsletter is the first step to achieving our aim. We will deliver the newsletter to your inbox on or around the 1st of every month. I hope you find it informative, and helpful, when planning the events that you would like to attend. We welcome any feedback from you about how it can be improved, and/or how useful you find it. I wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year. Colin Burkitt

FORTHCOMING EVENTS – See Barbara, Carol, Judy or Barbara at the back of the hall if you want to book your place, or e-mail barbara@oxtonu3a.co.uk

- 27th JANUARY - Edward Scissorhands at The Empire, Liverpool at 7-30pm
- 29th JANUARY - Guided Tour of the Little Theatre, Birkenhead with Eliane **FULL**
- 2nd February - Transmitting Andy Warhol at Liverpool Tate **FULL**
- * PAYMENT REQUIRED ASAP TO CONFIRM YOUR PLACE *
- 11th FEBRUARY - Tour of Victoria Gallery & Garstang Museum **FULL**
- 25th FEBRUARY - Mamma Mia – The Musical Liverpool Empire 2.30pm
- Booking closes 8 January 2015**
- 20th MAY - Barnum at Liverpool Empire 2.30pm
- Booking opens 8 January 2015**

WALKS

Final details of the September walking weekend are available now. Speak to Colin Burkitt or email him

chairman@oxtonu3a.co.uk

30th JANUARY - Gerry Riley will lead this walk of 6.1 miles from Bromborough Rake station to Hooton via Raby Mere and Willaston. We will be walking on a mixture of footpaths, fields and some minor roads. The possibility of some muddy paths is possible depending on rainfall. There is one toilet and rest stop of approx 30 minutes at the 4 mile point in Willaston, where we can have refreshments in Ashton’s café or the Pollard Inn, however, suggest that you bring a bottle of water to prevent dehydration during the walk. From Hooton we will get the train back to Bromborough, where lunch is booked at the Merebrook pub (around 300 yards from the station) for 13:30.

Meet on the platform of Port Sunlight railway station at 10:00 am. There are toilets available here to use before we get the train to Bromborough Rake station (No facilities). Trains leave Birkenhead Central at 09:30, 09:37, or 9:52 taking 9 minutes to reach Port Sunlight, We will wait for walkers catching the 09:52 from Birkenhead Central arriving Port Sunlight at 10:01. Hamilton Square station is closed for re-furbishment!

MEETINGS AND SPEAKERS

8th JANUARY : Social morning comprising of a quiz.

22nd JANUARY : The Butterfly Park – Hilary Ash

5th February : The Poetry Group will entertain us

19th FEBRUARY: The Bibby Line - Christine Spencer

A Big Thank You!

I would like to thank Mike Benton for being such a fantastic Speaker Secretary for the last few years. He has found speakers to entertain and enlighten us month in and month out - not an easy job as I have come to realise. I have big shoes to fill and will always be grateful for suggestions for subjects and speakers from our members.

Judith Whaley (New) Speaker Secretary

Thank you to participating members for writing the following reports and although a couple of these events happened a while ago, they bring back happy memories for us all to enjoy.

Have you got anything to let our members know about???? Why not get in touch and have your say email newsletter@oxtonu3a.co.uk

BODNANT TRIP MAY 2014

On boarding our coach at the church, our ears were assailed by a strange clicking noise, what was it we asked? It turned out to be “Captain” Barbara’s new “high-tec” head counting device, very useful when you run out of fingers and toes. Anyway count over, on an overcast morning we headed off to Wales crossing the border at Queensferry and arriving at Bodnant we were delighted to see that the sun had broken through the cloud. Our leader Barbara sorted the party into the “National Trust” group and then sorted out the entry payment for the rest of us and we were duly escorted in. I think at this point most people took a coffee break before commencing the exploration. Starting near the house there were some beautiful borders with Alliums (like purple pom-poms), a fantastic Laburnum arch which inside resembled 50 foot long cave dripping with masses of yellow stalactites, some fantastic



Bothriums “Chilean fire bushes” which looked like the tree was aflame and many Azaleas and Rhododendrons, unfortunately just past their best.

Descending down to the next level we found the formal canal with beautiful borders and the lily pond which was swarming with tadpoles, when these turn into frogs I don’t think the gardens will suffer many slugs.

Then we found the “easier” path down to the Dell which fortunately saved us having to abseil, perhaps next time, it was still steep but it was worth it to see such a beautiful wooded valley with a river flowing through rocks and grassy banks surrounded by some really impressive, huge trees. We took lunch in various places, a snack bar in the Dell, the coffee shop by the entrance and for more substantial meals at the Pavilion, back by the car park. The food in the Pavilion was very good but the service arrangements were not well organised and a bit chaotic. Still, lunch over; there was still time to explore more of the gardens or the craft and garden centre shops before returning back to our coach and home after a really enjoyable and well organised trip, well done Barbara.

Ken Jackson

CANAL OUTING U3A July 11th 2014

Our thanks must go to Barbara Lloyd for organising yet another excellent outing, this time a canal trip including lunch! Having heard about the success of a similar trip last year which I had unfortunately missed, I was looking forward to the day with anticipation and was not to be disappointed.

A merry crowd of thirty-four U3A members duly met outside Trinity and Palm Grove Church in good time for the 10 A.M. departure, and the coach arrived on the dot! A smooth drive through Liverpool and out into the Lancashire countryside eventually brought us to the banks of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Riley Green, (near Chorley). We piled out and into the Boatyard Inn where refreshments were available. The weather could not have been better; warm and sunny, in sharp contrast to the previous Friday when the walking group arrived at our lunch destination soaked to our undies! (we had a lot of fun though!)

The Leeds and Liverpool Canal was constructed between 1770 to 1816 and brought much prosperity to the area with the subsequent increase in trade at that time. Riley Green is part of the Withnall Fold Nature Reserve and the scenery by the Canal there is really pretty!

Unfortunately on this occasion we were unable to go through the locks at Wheelton and Johnson Hillocks due to one of them being inoperable – not that this spoiled the occasion as we were to be taken on a slightly different route!

Suitably refreshed at the Boatyard, we sallied forth to find our lunch venue; a canal boat equipped to feed us all in style whilst wending its way slowly and sedately along the canals. The countryside was all around us – lambs gambolled in the fields whilst the ewes kept a close eye on them; Canadian geese and their young played and swam at the water’s edge – the sun shone brightly; it was England at its best!



As is usual with U3A events, the company was great with everyone determined to enjoy the occasion! We were royally looked after by a small crew who somehow managed to produce an excellent three course meal (with menu options) from a tiny galley! All the food looked very good and was eaten at a gentle pace and followed by coffee. Drinks were available as desired. We were surprised to hear that these trips continue through the winter and are well supported!

All good things come to an end and three hours after embarking we were back on dry land ready for the drive home! Our driver negotiated some pretty heavy traffic – lovely to be driven – and we arrive back safely in time for tea, having spent a most enjoyable day! Another great success thanks to the organisers.

Eliane Davie

Personality & Perception Psychology Study (hosted by The University of Warwick)

Do you have a spare few minutes to help improve our understanding of changes that occur as we get older?

Warwick University are currently conducting an experiment investigating personality and perception, with the hope of understanding how these factors change across one's lifespan. If you choose to participate, you will watch a short video and answer some questions about what you have watched and about your personality. The experiment is online, so can be completed in your own home at a time that is convenient to you. The experiment takes approximately 15 minutes. Full feedback about the aims and findings of the study will also be available when data collection is complete. If you wish to participate, please type the following web address in your internet browser and follow the instructions on screen:

http://colloff.warwick.ac.uk/expt/pandp_2/

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Melissa Colloff (Email: M.F.Colloff@warwick.ac.uk. Telephone: (024) 7657 3469).

VISIT TO MEDIA CITY, SALFORD QUAYS

On the morning of 4th November, at the unnaturally early hour of 9:00 a.m., about 40 of us set off from TPG in Alan's bus for a visit to the BBC on Salford Quays. The size of our party meant that we had to be divided into two groups: this report concerns group 1, but I understand that group 2's experience was in all important respects similar.



and I had actually heard of some of them.)

Welcomed by two young and enthusiastic BBC staff members, and trailed by four BBC trainees, we were given badges and briefed on health and safety. Suitably apprised of the risks involved in the use of stairs, doors and light switches, we were taken to visit three studios (one radio and two televisions).

First, a studio used by Radio 6 Music – the size of an average office, with a desk, imposing Mastermind-style chairs for presenter, producer and guests, a large and impressive array of electronic equipment and, rather incongruously, a piano and drum kit, to accommodate live performances. (Our guides rattled off an impressive list of presenters' names,



Secondly, in a different building, the Blue Peter studio. This was much smaller than I would have expected, about the size of a school gym, the impression of space being created by the use of wide-angle camera lenses. It looked reassuringly Blue Peter-ish – home made Halloween decorations, etc. Thirdly, in yet another building, the BBC Northwest news studio. Again, this was much smaller than expected – the presenters' sofa is only a few feet away from the cameras, and the spacious effect is created by wide-angle lenses and back projection. At the end of the evening news, when the weather presenter walks over to the sofa to join the others, she has to take very short steps because of the distorting effect of the lenses. So what appears lifelike is actually produced by an optical illusion – a slightly unsettling thought.

Finally, in a mock-up of the news studio, three of our number (all volunteers!) tried their skills at presenting news and weather items, and all did very well.

Following the visit to the BBC, we were left to our own devices for a few hours, giving ample time for shopping, the Imperial War Museum or, in our own case, lunch at the Lowry restaurant (highly recommended).

Thanks again to Barbara for organising a most enjoyable outing.

Terence Whaley

LATEST GROUP NEWS

LOCAL HISTORY

This will recommence the 3rd Monday in each month starting 19th January 2015 2pm-4pm Session room TWPG

THE NEW BOOK GROUP

This will commence 1st Tuesday each month starting 3rd February 2015 10am-12md 10 Kings Mount. (More members welcomed)

BASIC INSTRUCTION ON LAPTOPS, TABLET, IPADS ETC

This will commence on Tuesday 13th January at Colin's house, he will have contacted everyone who expressed an interest by now. This Group is now full.

ART GROUP

Start date to be announced

BASIC KNOW YOUR CAMERA.

Start date to be announced

COMPARATIVE BELIEFS

The next meeting is January 20th 2015 STORIES FROM DIFFERENT FAITHS from Monica Price

N.B. This meeting will be held at 10 Kings Mount (more members welcome but tell Val Noble if you are coming)

MEDITATION

Next meeting Friday then February 6th 2015

There are still groups who would like more members

Scrabble, Lunch Circle, Astronomy, Comparative Beliefs

Any ideas for short or taster courses will be welcomed.