



APRIL 2016 NEWSLETTER



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

This is my favourite time of the year. The clocks have just gone forward so we now have lighter evenings and the whole of the summer to look forward to. The Barbara's have a number of great days out in the summer planned for you, including a visit to the Nordic Centre and Church in Liverpool and Arley Hall and gardens in Cheshire.

It is wonderful that we have these and other events and outings to look forward to in the summer but please do remember that if you belong to a group and will miss a group session please let your group leader know well in advance. Our group leaders work very hard preparing for each session and organising refreshments. It is very frustrating and demoralising if after all that preparation members fail to turn up.

Enjoy the spring; I certainly hope to do so!!

Colin Burkitt Chairman

LUNCH CIRCLE



The next meeting will be on Tuesday 19th April 2016

The Queen's Arms, Storeton Road, Oxton

12-15 for 12-30 pm

Times are hard at Oxton & Prenton U3A lunch circle!!

MEETINGS and SPEAKERS

Thursday 14th April 2016 – Karmat Sering – Redeeming Tibet

Thursday 28th April 2016 – Our AGM

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

SOCIAL OUTINGS

EVENTS - NOW BOOKING

Thursday 21 st April 2016	Manchester Tour & John Ryland's Library Cost £26-00 including lunch Departs 9-30 am
Monday 23 May 2016	Nordic Church & Centre Meet outside James Street Station at 11-00 am Cost (including lunch) £9-00
Tuesday 7 June 2016	Arley Hall & Gardens Cost £8-00 plus coach fare

THEATRE – BOOKING CLOSING

Tuesday 24 May 2016	Merry Wives at the Playhouse £14-50
Monday 11 th July 2016	Merchant of Venice at the Playhouse

*******PROPOSED NEW GROUP*******

SUNDAY SOLOS LUNCH GROUP – The proposed new group is aimed at members who may find themselves alone on a Sunday. It is planned to meet for lunch on a regular Sunday at venue locally. Any member who would be interested please contact Joan Farrell on 0151 201 8237



WALKING GROUP

WALK FRIDAY 15TH APRIL 2016

The walk will be about 6-7 miles. We will start at Bidston station and do a loop around Bidston Moss after which we will head towards the coast and pick-up the Wirral Circular trail, which we will follow along the River Birket to Moreton and then to Leasowe lighthouse. After the lighthouse we will turn inland again and head to the Farmer's Arms at Moreton for lunch at about 2.30.

Terrain – Mainly semi-hard surface tracks, except for the stretch along the Birket which can be VERY muddy. (I will do a last-minute recce of this stretch as there is a road-walk alternative). Facilities along the route – none!!! So bring a bottle of water and a chocolate bar.

Meet at Bidston station at 10:15. (9.45 Or 10.00 from Hamilton Square arrives 9.55 or 10.10. 9.36 Or 9.51 from West Kirby arrives 9.51 or 10.06.) If you drive to Bidston, meet at Bridge at station entrance. After lunch you have a short walk (10 mins) to Moreton station for a 5 minute ride back to Bidston.

Any queries please contact walk leader Tony Swarbrick – 0151 378 7872.

Sadly Colin has decided to hang up his boots as our walking group leader in April. He has decided that after six years of leading the group, it would benefit from a new leader. However, luckily for us, Terence Whaley has agreed to take on leadership of the group when he and Judy return from their visit to family in New Zealand.

On behalf of the walking group I would like to say 'THANK YOU VERY MUCH' to Colin and Carol for all their commitment and all their hard work over the years. The wonderful walking weekends in Yorkshire and Ironbridge and the many, many enjoyable walks with varying degrees of undulations and inclines organised by Colin and Carol have made our walking Group very special, the camaraderie and friendship enjoyed by all the walkers is valued immensely.

A very warm welcome to Terence, hope your mileage calculation is better than Colin's! Our first request is – "How about a walking weekend in New Zealand?"



SEFTON PARK FIELD OF HOPE & PETER PAN STATUE

SHORT STORIES

Another member of the creative writing group, Sarah Nance has sent us two of her short stories, here is the first one, hope you enjoy it.

CHRISTMAS SECRETS

The house was prepared; everyone was wrapped in the warm hug of Christmas, just as the presents under the tree were wrapped in their festive patterns waiting to be opened to reveal their secrets. Everyone in the Duncan household was in their allotted place. The two grannies were next to each other on the big, squashy family sofa. Sherries in hand, they were decked in surplus jewellery worn to outshine each other and the Christmas decorations. Cheeks aglow with alcohol, voices loudly trying to out-do each other at tall story telling.

Martha dashing between pots and pans, head constantly in the oven wearing a worried expression and a creased apron, reflecting how she felt. "Timing," she muttered, "everything is always about timing."

Loud laughs and bangs from the sitting room as big boys with big voices pitted their wits against their jolly dad and the latest computer game. Dutifully John would pop his shiny, polished head into kitchen to check all was BON AMIE! "Get you a drink darling?" "Sherry," muttered Martha. "And you two rogues!" said John glancing at the grannies. "Top up?" They both held their crystal glasses aloft, "Please!" they said in unison, like parrots Martha thought.

The tight knit feel of the Christmas house seemed impenetrable, nothing would break it. Martha always felt depressed and lost at Christmas. She found it impossible to explain to anyone why this was. The stress, the build up, the endless lists of things to do, these were not the reason. It was something else deep down inside, far away but she knew was getting nearer and nearer. She stood still and gulped the bitter sherry staring out of the window at the fading light. Sad shadows hung in the air making her feel empty.

"When's it ready?" yelled a big voice from somewhere deep inside the house. "We're starving!"....."Soon," was all Martha could say So quietly no one heard. Her lonely thoughts were pushed away and evaporated into the cooking steam as the sound of the door bell ringing reached the inner sanctum of the kitchen.

"Are we expecting anyone else? Who's that?" said one of the grannies. "Of course not," snapped Martha as she continued to stir the gravy. "Answer the door someone I'm busy." Martha strained and alert tried to gather who it was. "Who is it?" "It's for your Mum, she wants you." Martha shuddered inwardly and dropped the stirring spoon into the bubbling liquid, her stomach turning summersaults she stumbled to the front door.

The warm safe air of the Christmas house was escaping fast into the dusk and cold, unforgiving, dangerous air was rushing in.

John's shape filled the frame of the large front door, not allowing Martha to see the figure standing on the porch. The porch light was shining down creating a halo.

"She's asking for you," said John.

"Move then so I can see her." "What does she want?" "MOVE JOHN," Martha said with unfamiliar sharpness and John dissolved back into the depth of the long hall.

"Hi," said a thin, tall, familiar girl. "Are you Martha Greene?"

Martha breathed the damp air deep into her lungs and looked hard at this thin, drawn creature. "Yes I am, well I was, I'm Martha Duncan now Married." "Yes," answered the girl. She leant forward and thrust her thin arm forward to place her hand on Martha's, but instinctively Martha

backed away causing the girl to lose her balance and fall forward onto the wooden floor with a thud.

"God John, she's fainted, help me get her into the warm." Big John moved swiftly and with strong arms supported the girl into the heart of the home, the kitchen. She was guided to a battered chair by the radiator.

"Who is she?" mouthed John quietly to his wife. Martha looked into her husband's eyes and knew he was kind and would forgive her. "She is my secret."

Large boys appeared around the door and were sent on missions to fetch duvets and make sweet tea.

The grannies were twitchy, "shouldn't we call the police? Who is she? What's she doing here? Is she ill?" --- Martha bent down and knelt by the girl. She was hunched to the side of the chair, eyes close, and hair long, lank and greasy pushed back from her face, revealing pronounced cheek bones and dry, cracked lips.

Martha knew exactly who she was; she had known her all her life. She turned and spoke slowly....."She is my secret," Martha managed to say it again, only louder.

"Secret, secret, what secret?" her slightly sherry drunk mother said. Martha looked carefully at her mother,"Now" she thought, "Now."

"She is my secret, my regret, my sin, my humiliation, my failure, my fault, my forgiveness, my need, my love, my daughter."

There was utter silence in the Christmas house.

"Your daughter?" The colour rushing from her mother's cheeks as she pushed her hand up to her mouth.

"Yes.....do you remember all those years ago, my last term at university when I did not come home and stayed away all summer? Then I told you and Dad I was taking a sabbatical abroad?..... Well here is what I was doing...." Martha drew in great gulps of air and continued, it had to come out. "I had a beautiful baby daughter, I loved her father, he left me and I could not cope so I gave, I gave my daughter, my love away."

The girl had been listening; she placed her bony hand on Martha's arm. "Can I stay?" she whispered. Martha's secret had come home.

Sarah Nance

TEA ROTA FOR THE NEXT 4 MEETINGS

14 th April 2016	Barbara Walker	Cathy Sullivan	Arlene Hunton
28 th April 2016	Dot Matthews	Eve Felton	Corinne Whitham
12 th May 2016	Gwen Burrell	Jean Sheratt	Mary O'Neill
26 th May 2016	Ann Hillier	Kate Walton	Carol Burkitt

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

U3A HELPS OUT ALDER HEY HOSPITAL

When Diane Adams, chair of Wirral U3A, saw a message on Facebook from Sharon Greenwood, a sister from Alder Hey Children's Hospital, asking for urgent help to replace decorative cot sheets that had gone missing in the move to the new hospital, she knew that U3A could help resolve this problem. With Joan Benton, leader of the craft group at Oxton & Prenton U3A they organised a morning workshop involving the multi talented members from both U3A's. As a result of this joint enterprise Alder Hey Children's Hospital now has 34 new decorative cot sheets which Sister Sharon Greenwood says will make a real difference to the families of children when they come to visit.



North West Regional Summer School 2016

Newton Rigg Agricultural College, near Penrith

Tuesday August 30th – Friday September 2nd

Courses include

Art* *Architecture* *Medieval Archaeology* *The Works of Elizabeth Gaskell

Recorder* *Ukulele* *Japanese Encounters* *Geology

Costs: *early bird discount for all bookings before May 31st.*

Residential *(in student accommodation)*

£275 (with discount: £240)

Non-residential: £155 (£120)

Includes tuition fees, gala dinner, evening activities and entertainment.

**For details and registration please go to the North West Regional website
u3asites.org.uk/north-west Or phone David Joseph: 07831473157**



www.u3asites.org.uk/north-west

Registered Charity number 159091

MUSICAL MOMENTS

Led by Gill Russell (Regional Chair) and members of NW U3As

A day to investigate different ways to organise music in your u3a

Friday 13th May 2016. 10.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

at

**Hoylake Community Centre,
The Parade/ Hoyle Road
Hoylake, CH47 3AG**

Who is it for?	All U3A members
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Refreshments available from 10.30 a.m.

PROGRAMME

11.00 Guest speaker Andy Smith 'Life in the Music'

12:00 – 1.00 Lunch break – buffet lunch provided

1.00 – 2.30 workshops – *Please choose 2 from the following*

- Singing for Health and Pleasure
- Ukulele experience –have a go!
- Different ways to organise a music listening group
- Decoding Musical notation
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2.30 – 2.45 refreshment break

2.45 – 3.30 – a Musical Timeline – a brief explanation of music history

The cost is £10 (includes lunch)

FILL IN THE APPLICATION FORM BELOW

North West Region of U3As
Musical Moments
13th May 2016

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email:	
U3A:	

Please select your afternoon sessions.	
First choice	
Second choice	

Please enclose a cheque for £10
payable to: **North West Region of U3As**

Please return this form and payment at the earliest opportunity to:
G. Russell, 71 Barn Hey Crescent, Wirral, CH47 9RW

For more information call Gill 0151 633 2796 or email gillruss71@gmail.com

DON'T FORGET OUR AGM IS ON THURSDAY 28th APRIL 10-00 a.m

VISIT – LIVERPOOL MEDICAL INSTITUTION

Wednesday 27 January 2016

An interesting tour around an impressive building, an excellent lunch, good company. What more could one ask for?

We were participants in an historical tour of this Grade II listed building, found in Liverpool, next to the Everyman Theatre, on Mount Pleasant. We were welcomed there by Adrianne, our guide, who struck a good balance between information and anecdote.

As one of the oldest medical societies in the world, the Liverpool Medical Institution traces its origins to the founding of the Medical Library in 1779. The building we were in was opened in May 1837 after a campaign to raise the funds was successfully led by Dr John Rutter.

Adrianne told us of their plans to achieve museum status in the future. Unfortunately the doctors in the area no longer rely on printed matter for their studies and research.



Did I mention the delicious lunch served in the attractive curved gallery?

Some of the leading characters associated with the Institution were totally unknown to me but I was pleased to hear more about one of Liverpool's true heroes Noel Chevasse.



As well as the important historical medical books the L.M.I owns and impressive collection of medical equipment. Some was displayed for our perusal.

If you missed this tour I believe the building opens during the Heritage Open Day scheme.

Meanwhile.....more of the same please Barbara!



Judith Wheat

TOUR OF LIVERPOOL TOWN HALL



We all assembled in the entrance hall and were greeted by our guide Steve Binns. The entrance hall contained a magnificent 17th century carved Flemish fire surround. The floor is of encaustic tiles which includes depictions of the arms of Liverpool and the liver bird. It has a groin-vaulted ceiling and in the lunettes are murals painted in 1909 depicting events in Liverpool's history. Below these are brass tablets containing the names of the freemen of Liverpool. Also in the hall are two bardic chairs from Eisteddfods held in the city.

The town hall was built between 1749 and 1754, to a design by John Wood, replacing an earlier town hall nearby. Following a fire in 1795 the hall was largely rebuilt and a dome designed by John Watt was added.

In the centre of the ground floor is the staircase hall. A broad staircase rises between two Corinthian columns; to a half landing and narrower flights climb from that to the upper floors.



On the ground floor on either side of the staircase are display cabinets showing off the Liverpool silver. Including a magnificent silver galleon. On the half landing is a statue of George Canning. Hanging above is a portrait of the Queen.

Above the staircase the dome is carried by four pendentives. It rises to a height of 106 feet. Around the base of the dome is the Liverpool motto.

We proceeded to the central reception room. We were allowed to go onto the balcony. We moved into the dining room which has been described as the most sumptuous room in the building. Around the walls are Corinthian pilasters. The next room on the circuit was a small room leading to the large ballroom. Massive mirrors are placed at the short ends of the building. Hanging from

the ceiling are three Georgian chandeliers, each 28 feet high and containing 20,000 pieces. Weighing over a ton. The floor is of maple and is a sprung floor.

The ground floor contains a hall of remembrance for Liverpool service people killed in the First World War.

The town hall is not an administrative building but a civic suite, Lord Mayor's parlour and council chamber.

The tour ended back where we started and we showed our appreciation for a most interesting tour.

