



April Newsletter

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I find it very hard to believe that almost a year has passed since I was appointed Chairman of our U3A, and a very steep learning curve it has turned out to be! But also, what very enjoyable year, especially as we celebrated our tenth anniversary and what a privilege it is to serve you all. A huge thank you to everyone who has supported me in so many different ways. It is so good to have so many people you know you can rely upon.

But it also means that we are fast approaching our AGM which this year will be held on 26th April at 10-30 am. AGM's are notoriously boring for most people but I am afraid they are a legal requirement. So, I intend to follow in Colin's footsteps and make sure ours is over as quickly as possible and hopefully within 15 minutes!! Which gives us time to enjoy our guest speaker who this year is an old favourite of us all, the loquacious, knowledgeable, charismatic Mary Clinton, I personally could listen to her all day. She is going to speak to us about 'Grand Narratives and how we live'.

All the paperwork for the AGM has been sent out, if you haven't received a copy and would like one, please let me know at the Thursday meeting or contact me at chairman@oxtonu3a.co.uk

So, please don't give the AGM a miss this year or you will be missing a super treat.

Sandra Lakin, Chairman

BRIAN'S MUSINGS

We have had a refugee problem here at number ten. When the weather turned really cold, Gustavus, a feral cat who had been living in our garden, surprised us by coming indoors. We were able to see him properly and assess his condition for the first time. He was in an appalling state. There was clearly so much wrong with him that we assumed that he had chosen the interior of our house as a suitable place in which to spend his last days. He climbed into an arm chair and slept. The house stank and we were obliged to adapt our social calendar accordingly.

What interested me in this course of events was the reaction the six sentient beings who considered themselves to have a prior claim on the living space our house affords. Monica and myself agreed that, however inconvenient, we had to do whatever we could to accommodate such



a needy animal. Ushka, the guide dog, pretended that it was not happening and even though she and Gustavus spent a great deal of time sleeping within a few inches of each other, she ignored him completely. Rumpus, a rescued animal and very much his own cat, decided that although the situation was not too his liking he would view the matter philosophically for now and make us suffer later. Tom, an economic migrant, indulged in operatics, delivering several dramatic, counter-tenor/castrati arias over the next day or two until he eventually ran out of steam. Flossie, a refugee and the most intelligent though certainly not the wisest, took to swearing prolifically in the direction of the chair in which Gustavus slept, even when he was not occupying it. She also complained vociferously to the effect that there was an alien cat in the house and someone should be doing something about it; ideally by throwing him out.

This new addition to our household was certainly problematic. I was in favour of leaving him to get on with his life – and death – as best suited him but eventually we took professional advice and were assured that the services of a vet' were essential. We were advised to leave the cat-carrier where Gustavus could see it so that it would not be a shock or surprise to him when we put him in. It transpired that the poor animal was perhaps not quite as feral as we had supposed. He already knew a thing or two about cat-carriers and at the sight of ours he left home and has not been seen since. It seems that he would rather die in cold isolation than pay the price of social integration, which in his case would have been an all out assault on his physical condition up to and including castration.

This small domestic drama brought into focus the situation that prevails in so many communities where rough sleepers, refugees and economic migrants are to be found. On our pathetically small scale we demonstrated a whole range of attitudes and options. That Gustavus was sick and needy cut no ice with Flossie, the most recently come! For her empathy and compassion are indicative of a weak personality. Integration, on the other hand tends to insist upon a healthy and preferably neutered conformity. Let's be honest, the possibility of demanding visitors proliferating and taking over is as alarming to humans as it is to cats. These primitive fears run deep and are logically justifiable. On the other hand, when incomers begin the process of integration (or rejection) they find that it is invasive, expensive and demeaning and like Gustavus, those who can tend to disappear.

Assuming that Gustavus had responded to veterinary intervention his integration would have cost us a small fortune that we could ill afford but neither could we afford to ignore the situation. History repeatedly demonstrates that collective failure to acknowledge the condition of the sick, disabled, the diverse and socially inadequate will, in the end, bring about the disintegration of the socio/political structures that were its primary cause. Insisting that the impoverished and disadvantaged learn to play the very game that engenders their condition is not a viable solution.

Should Gustavus return I will try to be more aware of his needs as he feels them to be rather than as I assess them but then, one might well ask, how would I respond to a human refugee, economic migrant, rough sleeper or social reject in similar condition? Now there's a question.

BRIAN GILL

REQUEST FROM BARNADO'S

I am writing on behalf of Barnardo's to ask whether you are able to do anything to help us promote volunteering in the local Oxton community.

The Oxton store based at Downfield Lane Shopping Centre are currently looking to recruit volunteers to join our friendly team. Our aim is to provide all of our volunteers with a quality volunteering experience, where volunteers gain from meeting new people, learning new skills and having fun. Many of our existing volunteers

have shared that volunteering has increased their self confidence and given them a sense of achievement by helping the UK's most vulnerable children and young people.

We would be happy to speak with any of your members who would like to find out more, if they would like to drop into the shop for an informal chat or they can call the shop manager, Linda Dean on 0151 651 2100 to arrange a visit. Linda's e-mail address is linda.dean@barnardos.org.uk if you would like any further information or have any questions.

Julie Goodrum



SCIENCE DAY

DEESIDE AND WIRRAL U3A NETWORK

www.u3asites.org.uk/deeside-wirral

Monday 30th April 2018 10.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m. at

Heswall Hall, 111 Telegraph Road, Heswall CH60 0AF

Refreshments from 10.00am

Following a successful Languages groups workshop in late 2016 a similar event has been arranged for Science.

It is intended for leaders of science groups and others who are group members interested in science and potentially interested in forming a group in their U3A.

Attendance costs £5 per person and members of U3As beyond the Deeside and Wirral network are welcome to attend.

Parking is available close to the venue, including a pay and display car park behind Heswall Hall at Mount Avenue CH60.

Applications, with cheque made payable to Deeside and Wirral network, can be sent to the Network Chair, Arthur Maltby at 5 Pinewood Drive, Wirral CH60 2SD

PROGRAMME Refreshments and registration from 10.00am

10.30 Welcome & Introduction – Arthur Maltby, Chair , Deeside and Wirral network

10.40 am Unconscious bias in gender and in science: (an interactive talk) Hannah Renshall, Institute of Physics

11.40 am Discussion sessions in groups. The first of two sessions will be introduced by Mike Hollingsworth, the U3A National Advisor for Science.

12.30 am Lunch - bring your own or use the local cafes 1.40 Introducing people to science. Hannah Renshall

2.30 pm Second discussion sessions. 3.00 Refreshments 3.20 Conclusions from group discussions

The event will end at about 3.45 pm.



LUNCH GROUP

Dates to note for 2018 MEET AT 12.45 for 1pm [Note new time](#)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Tuesday April 17 th | Presto (Dibbinsdale) |
| Tuesday May 15 th | The Shippons Pub, Irby. |
| Tuesday June 19 th | The Refreshment Rooms |



COLIN STREDDER



Tuesday March 20th saw members of the Lunch Group enjoying a merry lunch at the Carnarvon Castle Pub.

SOCIAL OUTINGS

EVENTS

CHINA'S FIRST EMPEROR & THE TERRACOTTA WARRIORS

World Museum William Brown Street Liverpool

Thursday 17 MAY 2018 @ 10.30am

£12

Selling fast!!



THEATRE

An evening with Dan Snow 'The History Guy'

Join some members of our Local History Group Floral Pavilion Friday 22 June 2018 @ 7.30 pm
Tickets £20

PAINT YOUR WAGON

Liverpool Everyman Theatre Thursday 31 May @ 7.30pm Tickets £19

Matthew Bourne's CINDERELLA

Liverpool Empire 2.30 pm

Thursday 12 April 2018

**Booking closed – Collect Tickets &
Meet @ Theatre**



AN OFFICER & A GENTLEMAN – The Musical

World Premiere prior to London

LIVERPOOL EMPIRE

Wednesday 23 MAY 2018 @ 2.30 pm

Tickets £33.50 (Rear stalls – centre)

Booking closing next meeting – 29 March

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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

A MEMORABLE VISIT TO THE LIVERPOOL MEDICAL INSTITUTE

On Wednesday February 28th some of our members braved a bitter east wind to attend a tour of the Liverpool Medical Institute, originally founded by a group of local doctors in 1779.

On our arrival we were ushered through a series of rooms (a bit like Alice in Wonderland) to a wood paneled room where, seated round a large table we learned the fascinating history of this beautiful Greek Revival style building and its contents. We were able to see some of the instruments and paraphernalia from the past, view the old books and manuscripts in the library, still used today by students. Portraits of some of the men who contributed towards the building were displayed in the lecture theatre; our guide regaled us with the interesting stories of some of them.

We then proceeded upstairs where we were treated to a delicious lunch before braving the weather once again. There is much more to see and learn; we were told of several areas in which Liverpool led the way, so another visit is a must.

Thank you Barbara for another great day.

Hazel Palmer

MOSQUE VISIT

On the 14th March, 38 members of Oxton and Prenton U3A made their way to Liverpool's largest mosque. As we entered the mosque, a group of young children were finishing their tour, so we had a short wait to meet our 'tour guide', the Imam. During our wait we were served tea or coffee and biscuits (something that they don't normally do but they made an exception for us) which we very much appreciated on this very cold day. Whilst we warmed ourselves with the hot drink we watched a couple of short films in which firstly a little girl sang a recitation, and in the second a little boy sang a different recitation. Both sang beautifully.

The Imam turned up a little late because he had been saying his farewells to the visiting children. He introduced himself as Abu Usamah – Imam. He gave us a potted history of the Mosque which originally was a very small house, then they built the present building which is very large, although surprisingly, unadorned. He informed us that their Liverpool mosque was the oldest and the largest Muslim community in the country.

The Imam's message to us was one we could all appreciate – Muslims are like everyone else – there are good and bad people in all communities. The meeting concluded with a question and answer session where the answers were very predictable but overall I have to say I enjoyed the experience.

Many thanks to Barbara for arranging this visit for us and also to the Islamic community for giving us this glimpse into their religion.

Ann Hillier

LIVERPOOL MASONIC HALL, HOPE ST.

On Tuesday 6th March a group of us visited this historic (grade 2 listed) Liverpool building. After a sandwich lunch, during which our guide told us something of the history of Freemasonry (founded in the 18th century, basing its iconography and practices on those of the fraternities of 14th century free stonemasons). Freemasons today see themselves as a fraternal and charitable association, open to all who acknowledge a supreme being. They are anxious not to be seen as a secret society, or as having undue influence in public life.

The Masonic Hall in Hope Street is used by a large number of lodges in the West Lancashire area. As numbers of members are declining, the hall is now made available to performing arts groups and others (one of the rooms we were shown is currently being transformed into a theatre space).

We were shown four lodge meeting rooms – all having a generally similar layout, but totally different in style and deco : Egyptian, Adams, Roman and Corinthian (the Corinthian room is the one being converted to theatrical use). Some Masonic practices were explained to us, especially the ceremony whereby a new member is invested as an apprentice.

(Some of us also enjoyed a trip – or two! - in the wonderful New York style lift.)

Thanks to Barbara Winstanley for arranging this instructive visit.

Judy Whaley



Tuesday March 13th THE LITTLE MATCHGIRL

Another thanks is due to Barbara Lloyd for organizing our recent visit to the Liverpool Playhouse where we enjoyed a great performance of “THE LITTLE MATCHGIRL”. This proved to be a highly unusual play which was performed by the Bristol Old Vic Company and Shakespeare’s Globe co-production directed by Emma Rice.

A young, multi talented cast treated us to a show which included not only the Hans Christian Anderson story of “The Little Matchgirl”, but also “The Princess and the Pea”, “The Emperor’s New Clothes” (easily the funniest) and “Thumbelina”.

Some members of the cast played instruments, some danced, all sang and as the Matchgirl and Thumbelina were both puppets, the puppeteers played an important part too! A most unusual and unexpected show which I think we all agreed was highly entertaining.

We are so fortunate to have two ladies in Barbara Lloyd and Barbara Winstanley who put so much work into finding great outings for us; thank you both.

Eliane Davie

NOTICES FOR MEMBERS

TEA AND COFFEE VOLUNTEERS:



I am looking for more volunteers to serve tea and coffee at our meetings. I would only call on you two or three times a year. It is not an onerous duty, in fact it is very pleasant and a good way of getting to know other members or to catch up with those you already know. It involves setting up, pouring drinks and washing the dishes. It is also a good way of feeling that you are "doing your bit" towards the smooth running of our U3A.
Ring me.....Joan Benton, telephone number 608 6226.

CRAFT GROUP



Do you want a social afternoon, with a cuppa and maybe a slice of cake, if so why not join our Craft Group? We have changed the format so that members usually bring their own work instead of learning a new skill every month, but occasionally one of us will demonstrate a new technique.
We meet on the second Monday afternoon in the month at my house at 2 p.m.
Ring me.....Joan Benton, telephone number 608 6226

COLIN STREDDER would like to hear from any members who would like to give a short talk at one of our non visitor speaker meetings about a subject of interest e.g. an unusual holiday; an interesting work experience. Any volunteers please speak to Colin.

TEA AND COFFEE ROTA -2018



April 12th Valerie Edwards
 Doreen Alig
 Dorothy Pittard

April 26th Maureen Oldham
 Hilary Robinson
 Dorothy Mathews

May 10th Sue Porter
 Ruth Trace
 Sue Phillips

May 24th Kathleen Pugh
 Mary Hamilton
 Steve Cottam

June 7th Marion Jackson
 Barbara Riley
 Gerry Riley

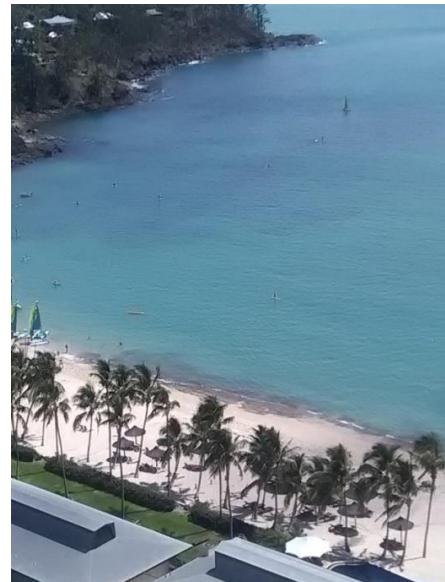
MEETINGS and SPEAKERS 2018

Thursday 26th April	Grand Narratives and How We Live. – Mary Clinton
Thursday 24th May	Joyce Grenfell. – Jean Finney
Thursday 21ST 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

News From the High Seas

Steve Cottam sent these photos of a koala bear taken at the Koala Sanctuary in Brisbane and a rather lovely beach in Hamilton Island. He is just over half way through his round the world trip and should be somewhere round Singapore now via Darwin. After that he will be travelling to India and eventually the Med. via Suez. It must be the trip of a lifetime and I am hoping that he will write something for the next Newsletter on his return.

Ed.



WALKING GROUP

Next Walk on Friday 20th April 2018



A walk of approx. 6 miles led by Tony Swarbrick starting at and finishing at the George and Dragon pub in Tarvin Cheshire, where we will take lunch at around 1:45pm. The walk takes us across farm land to Oscroft village then across the golf course to Duddon Mill and thence to the village of Duddon, where we take mainly minor roads back to Tarvin town centre. There will

probably be some mud in places after rain so recommend walking poles and gaiters if you have them.

Meet at Trinity with Palm Grove Church no later than 9:45am where we will arrange car sharing for the drive to Tarvin. It is expected that passengers contribute around £3.50 to cover the costs of the Driver. Driving directions will be available. If you wish to go straight to the walk start then contact the leader as per below.

Tony's phone number on the day is 07478 726650 and his email is tony.swarbrick@talktalk.net.

March 16th Walk in Liverpool

A group of nineteen intrepid walkers enjoyed a walk of approximately seven miles on the Liverpool side of the Mersey. Led by our new Group leader Gerry it was new territory for many of us and proved, in spite of somewhat inclement weather, to be most enjoyable. The route circled around the Lydiate, Maghull, Aughton and Town Green areas and much of it was alongside the Liverpool – Leeds Canal; a rural farming part of Lancashire. We stopped for coffee at a very quaint old pub, (Why is it so far from Birkenhead!) then carried on for a few more miles before stopping to enjoy a very fulsome and welcome lunch at another excellent pub. As we emerged to walk to Town Green Station to catch the train homewards the sun burst forth for the first time to send us on our way. Many thanks Gerry for organising a most enjoyable walk in spite of the weather.

Sandra will be leading the walk on May 18th – details later.

Ed.

We liked the crocus behind the group

After lunch the sun shone!



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 April 18th in Session room To be advised

Wednesday May 16th MEET AT TATE GALLERY 11.45a.m for 12 noon

KEN'S SHOW: exploring the unseen.

Celebrating the 30th Anniversary Special Exhibition of the gallery's Collection.

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 \[u3a.org.uk/email\]\(https://u3a.org.uk/email\)](#)

Best wishes,
From the National Office team.

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 April and I will try to include them in the next newsletter. Thank you to all those who have contributed to this month's Newsletter.



Please note that the AGM for 2018 will be held on April 26th.

Eliane Davie Editor

elianedavie@hotmail.co.uk



HAPPY EASTER

