



February Newsletter

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I am certain that, if when asked to show their appreciation of the ladies that man our social desk, every single member of our U3A would get to their feet and applaud them heartily. The two Barbaras and their assistants are the hardest working volunteers I have ever known, and if I am honest they deserve the highest of accolades.

I am not certain when they first took on their roles but I know they were there when I joined Oxton, Prenton & District U3A over 10 years ago. The heaviest burden has obviously fallen on Barbara Lloyd and since we became a registered charity her job has become a little harder.

Following discussions with Barbara, it is clear to me that she immensely enjoys anything to do with the theatre, so with that in mind she is asking for volunteers to take over the role(s) of booking our social events and excursions, while she concentrates on the theatre bookings. Whilst it is quite an onerous task, whoever takes it on will have her full support and assistance. Bookings will have to be made, reservations taken and above all accounts must be kept. But with all the expertise available in our U3A there must be someone, or maybe two friends, amongst our members happy to take on this challenging role(s).

If you have any interest in considering taking on this task, I am sure Barbara will tell you how rewarding it is and explain the role in much greater detail.

Talk to her here on a Thursday morning or contact her at events@oxtonu3a.co.uk

Sandra Lakin Chairman



BRIAN'S MUSING



It is part of the human condition that we attempt to create for ourselves a world that is knowable, understandable, ordered and secure and in which we can feel safe. Such a world is not without its problems, for once we shut out the 'dark unknown' we also limit the possibility of change, creativity, invention, and diversity. Even so, one has to acknowledge that the negative aspects of life can be annihilating in their severity.

Looking at February with this in mind we find a month caught between the end of winter and the earliest beginnings of spring, when weather-wise, anything can happen. It is a time of great uncertainty from which a whole new season of growth is about to emerge; though not everything will have survived the winter. It is a time when psychologically, either elation or depression can rule, according to ones disposition.

The trouble is that it is generally just too difficult to stand back and see the whole picture. A planet without seasons could not support life as we know it. And a life without extremes would severely limit our potential. Within this vast field of infinite potential our relationships unfold, bringing with them an endless array of opportunities for choices, decisions, adventures and exploration; though unfortunately one can also get bogged down in the nasty bits.

Science informs us that our sensory awareness reveals to us no more than a fraction of the totality of what is actually out there and nobody knows what that is in its entirety. The greater part is not only beyond our perception but scientists and mystics alike assure us that it is also beyond our understanding. The life, consciousness, energy, matter, space-time, infinity and eternity of which we are composed become ever more mysterious the more we attempt to understand them.

It is always tempting, when confronted by great uncertainty, to cling to the bits we think we can and do know, but as previously indicated, this is a self-limiting strategy, offering no real solutions. I have been taken to task, quite understandably, for my apparently careless use of the word 'magic'. As I understand it, the word refers to a whole field of knowledge that once lay well beyond the reach of common humanity. It included metallurgy, astronomy, mathematics, algebra, geometry and medicine, all of which became the basis of western science. They were brought to us from the East by scholars who had access to dimensions of knowledge well beyond the comprehension of most people at the time. These scholars were referred to as 'Magi' and their knowledge was initially mistrusted as being inferior to prevailing religious paradigms and systems of belief.

Apparently ignorance was preferable to the informed exploration of hidden dimensions that was the real business of the Magi. With their example in mind and an unfolding season of possibilities before us, some of which appear to be darkly negative, I feel I can do no better than wish for us all a truly magical and transformative time ahead.

Brian Gill



LUNCH GROUP

Dates to note for 2019 MEET AT 12.45 for 1pm

February 19th

The Shippons

SOCIAL OUTINGS

EVENTS

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

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

EVENTS

TOUR OF LIVERPOOL JOHN LENNON AIRPORT

THURSDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2019

Guided tour of Landside & Airside (indoors)

11.30am to approx 2.00 pm

Cost £7.50

Intention is to travel by public transport

Meeting at Liverpool One bus terminal by 10.15am

500 bus stop

Those wishing to drive should park in Multistory and will be issued with passes on the day making parking *free*

All to assemble within terminal at 11.00am

There is time for a comfort/tea or coffee break – Starbucks

Everyone must give details to social organisers of Passport/Driving Licenses which are **required prior to tour for security purposes** and **MUST** be produced again on the tour.

Waiting list only

BRING SECURITY DOCUMENT TO MEETING ON 31 JANUARY IF NOT ALREADY PRODUCED



Tour of Liverpool Empire Theatre

Thursday 7 March 2019

Tour starts 11.00am and lasts approx 1 hour 15 mins

Takes us through theatre with commentary on the theatres history and information on the running of the theatre

Cost £5.00

Booking will close 14 February (latest)



THEATRE

Reminder

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

Thursday 11 April 2019 @ 2.30 pm

Liverpool Empire

Meet at Theatre



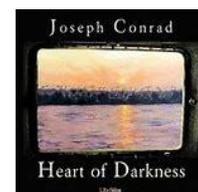
Now Booking

Liverpool PLAYHOUSE

STONES IN HIS POCKETS
(personal recommendation by member)
Tuesday 19th MARCH @ 7.30pm
Tickets £22



PLAYHOUSE
HEART OF DARKNESS
A retelling of this classic – includes digital technology
THURSDAY 2 MAY @ 5.30pm
Tickets £17



MEETINGS and SPEAKERS 2019

Thursday 31st January

The Origins of Place Names - Anthony Poulton-Smith. You are welcome to bring interesting and mysterious place-names of your own for the speaker to consider. There can be a great deal more to a name than we might think.



Thursday 28th February

Grand Narratives and Political Language - Mary Clinton. We welcome back Mary Clinton whose insightful examination of the way in which we speak might help us to understand what our politicians are really saying when they address us at this crucial time.

Thursday 28th March

British Humour: 18th- 20th Centuries - Michael Murphy.

It is so easy to take humour for granted when really it can afford us amazing insights into the way we function. This talk offers an interesting development from our previous speaker.

Thursday 25th April

The Canal Dukes - Bernard Dennis. Our canals are currently taking on a new lease of life. Their early development supported the industrial revolution and changed our history; thanks to those who had the money, influence and insight to develop them. We can rely on Bernard Dennis to be his usual insightful and informative self.

Thursday 23rd May

Witches and Superstitions: their effect on modern culture - Jean Finney. We might like to think that in an age of scientific rationalism we are free from the effects of demonology. Not so! Jean Finney has entertained us on two previous occasions and is returning in response to popular demand.

Thursday 20th June

Confessions of a Probation Officer - Ray O'Brien. We know that whatever Ray O'Brien shares with us will be a subject of great mirth. His talks are always a rare treat.

Thursday 18th July

Major Predators of Liverpool Bay - Matthew Clough. Matthew Clough will be sharing with us aspects of the work that he knows and values. He may well reveal aspects of which we might not be aware when we survey or even enter the waters of Liverpool Bay.

Thursday 12th September

Through the Eye of a Magician - Peter Turner. Peter Turner comes to us supported by a wealth of professional experience. He might possibly challenge the way in which we see things.

Thursday 10th October

Viking and Saxon History on Merseyside - Diana Goodier. Diana Goodier, a devoted historian, will make her talk particularly relevant to The Wirral and promises to dress for the occasion.

Thursday 7th November

English Village Life in the Middle Ages - Stuart Elliot. Stuart Elliot has the ability to bring to life ways of living and being that seem to be lost in time. He comes to us highly recommended and offers an interesting continuation and development from the previous speaker.

Thursday 5th December

Hollywood Drama Queens - Rina Tullinger. And now for something completely different! Having chatted with the speaker on the phone I am sure that all who hear her will enjoy her originality and dynamism as she addresses this fascinating subject.

NOTES OF ACTIVITIES AT NON- SPEAKER MEETINGS

Thursday February 14 th	Neil Thompson from John Moore’s University will talk about stair safety.
Thursday March 14 th	Wallasey U3A’s Ukulele Band (via Brian)
Thursday April 11 th	Colin Stredder will give a Quiz.
Thursday May 9 th	Tony Storey will talk about the Liver Building.
Thursday June 6 th	Wallasey U3A’s The Replay (via Brian)
Thursday July 4 th	Colin is doing a dance anagram – on dance.

Colin Stredder

WALKING GROUP

U3A Walk on Friday 18th January 2019.

A circular walk of 7 miles led by Tony Swarbrick starting and finishing at Chester Railway station. We were ready for our lunch, as can be seen in the photo below, having enjoyed an interesting walk in somewhat mixed weather.



Our walk took us through streets from the Station to “The Greenway” footpath. We followed the Greenway to Guilden Sutton continuing south via lanes, tracks and field footpaths to Littleton. Then on to Christleton, where we joined the canal tow path back to Chester and our lunch stop. After lunch a short two mile walk took us back to the station.

Many thanks to Tony Swarbrick who led the walk.



Photos by Corinne Whitham



Friday February 15th 2019

A linear walk of 6.5 miles led by Gerry Riley starting at West Kirby Concourse and finishing at Goodwins Pub & Restaurant Greasby around 1:15 pm, where we will take lunch

The walk takes us on to the Wirral way then up to Caldy Beacon. From there across Caldy Hill then via paths to Royden Park, for a coffee/toilet Stop. Continuing through Royden Park then on to Irby Mill and via road and paths to Arrow Country Park, where we follow the Arrow Brook through to Greasby and our lunch stop around 1:30 pm. After lunch if your car is not at Greasby then you can use the frequent 437 bus service to go back to West Kirby or to Birkenhead park railway or bus stations.

Meet outside West Kirby Concourse no later than 10:30 am. If contemplating coming by car, you can either park in West Kirby behind the Morrison's car park or park at Goodwins pub (previously Twelfth Man) and use the 437-bus service to West Kirby (every 10 minutes).

Gerry's phone number on the day is 07751807007 and his email is gerry@riley1.me.uk.

Where does Money Come From?

You may think you know the answer to this. Why, it is the bank of England together with the Royal mint that creates our money supply; doesn't it? Well no actually!

It may seriously surprise you that that around 97% of all money (or what purports to be money and is indistinguishable from money) is created by the banks every time they make a loan to an individual or a business or even when they approve an overdraft. The remaining 3% in volume terms is the familiar notes and coins that we are all used to. This means that 97% of the money that is spent by us all is credit i.e. every penny of it is all our collective debts to the banks.

You may well now be saying this is a ridiculous. How can any private organisation simply create money? Most of us though, including many politicians and others, think that the Banks simply act as intermediaries by taking most of the savings deposited in the banks and loaning it out. By charging a higher interest rate on the loan than the interest paid to the saver gives the banks their profits. Well let me tell you this has never been the case, although at one-time banks where legally

obliged to keep back a percentage of their reserves deposited in their respective accounts at the Bank of England, these reserves being real sovereign money on the same level as physical cash. This would mean that the banks would have to limit their lending and thus the amount of money in circulation to say 10 times their reserves if a 10% reserve ratio was set. However, since 1971 there has never been any such reserve ratio imposed by the government or the bank of England, so nothing limits the growth in the money supply other than the people's and businesses' need for loans and the confidence of the bankers that the loans will be paid back.

So, what does happen when a loan is made. Well if I wished to borrow say £10,000 from my bank, the bank on agreeing to the loan, would simply make me sign a loan agreement promising to pay the money back over an agreed term with interest. This loan agreement is worth £10,000 to the bank so it is considered an asset on its balance sheet. Therefore, all the bank needs do to give me the money is simply type the necessary numbers into my account giving me a credit of £10,000. This is known as a demand deposit and this, along with all monies deposited with the bank, are considered liabilities of the bank as they are a promise to pay back the money in an account to the holder at some time in the future. The bank now has an asset in the form of my loan agreement and a liability to me of £10,000, so the banks' balance sheet balances and lo and behold there is now £10,000 of newly created money conjured from thin air, which I can now spend as I wish, and the money supply of the nation has just grown by that amount. Conversely when I pay the loan back the bank simply writes off the loan or any part of it, thus reducing their assets at the same time debiting my account by the repayment, thus the money simply disappears and the nation's money supply shrinks accordingly. Therefore, nearly all our money supply is in the hands of the 46 licensed banks that have accounts with the bank of England.

At present with the banks being more conservative around 15 times the base money created by the Bank of England makes up our money supply. However, on the lead up to the financial crash of 2008 this stood at over 80 times.

Now you may well ask what stops the banks from just growing the money supply forever? Well, nothing other than their confidence and the fact that all the licensed banks need to increase their lending in step with each other. Should one rogue bank go it alone and increase lending far more than the others, say because it offers a much lower interest rate, then this bank would risk insolvency. This is because there is nothing to stop the borrower paying someone else who has an account with another bank, thus forcing the loaning bank to settle with the receiving bank by transferring the money from its reserve account at the Bank of England to the receiving bank's account. So long as all the banks are receiving and sending matched reserves on average then there is no long-term problem. However, if the bank was to run out of reserves it either must borrow off another bank or from the bank of England, which is perfectly acceptable in the short term but is not sustainable in the long run. Thus, so long as the confidence of all banks to lend is high the money supply will grow and when it is low and people repay their debts, the money supply shrinks, which is most often the wrong way around as ideally, we want the money supply to grow during a recession and shrink when the economy becomes over-heated.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION go to www.positivemoney.org.uk. There is an excellent 6 part video on Utube lasting around 30 minutes at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyl80QTKi0gPBcb32paMvXxcq7UUeJskV>.

Note that although the above is fact (little known) what should be done about it and our economy is a matter of conjecture and I will leave it to the reader if interested to follow up this line.

Gerry Riley

MUSIC GROUP



Paul Cullen organised an afternoon on Wednesday 9th listening to the music of Mahler, with a talk about his works and life by well known conductor, Bruce Dunn, now retired from the Kamloops Symphony Orchestra in Canada.

Bruce Dunn has given us several talks on composers and they are always of interest. He brought a number of recordings for us to hear of Mahler’s work many of which were new to us. Few of us had realised their variety and range. Thank you Paul for a most enjoyable afternoon treat.

Ed.

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

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



Here is our programme to April 2019

- February 20th – “Every picture tells a story” Talk by Steve Cottam (Walker Art Gallery)
- March 20th - Leonardo da Vinci – Talk by Bernadette Hamilton (Sessions Room)
- April 17th – Leonardo Drawings Exhibition (Walker Art Gallery)



Please make a note in your diaries

Bernadette Hamilton

Visit to the Tate Modern – Fernand Leger Exhibition

Bernadette organized a visit to the Tate Modern to view and exhibition of paintings by Fernand Leger on January 16th. An excellent guide explained a selection of his paintings and showed us how his style changed over the years. His style was modernistic and was, to start with, produced with a limited colour palette and many cylindrical shapes, developing later into more experimentation with blocks of primary shades. In 1924 he and fellow artist Amedee Ozenfant opened a free school in Paris, The Academie Moderne which drew students from across Europe and America. He was deeply interested in the interdiscipline of the arts, collecting photographs from nature to use in collages later. Born into a humble farming background he became communist after serving in WW1 and meeting men of diverse backgrounds. He felt strongly that all should have access to the arts but that poorer workers did not have time to avail themselves of it. Having a good guide makes a huge difference to our appreciation of an artist’s intent and history. Thanks so much to Bernadette who takes great trouble to research these interesting venues for us.

Ed.



JANUARY 24th AN INTERESTING TOUR AROUND THE ADELPHI HOTEL FOLLOWED BY LUNCH



Once again our thanks to Barbara Lloyd for organizing yet another interesting tour.

BLITHE SPIRIT BY Noel Coward

I am directing the play, "Blithe Spirit" for the Carlton Players at the Little Theatre, Grange Road West. It opens on Tuesday February 5 and runs to and including, Saturday 9th. Tickets @ £9, OAP=£8, NUS/U18S= £7

Tickets can be obtained at the theatre on the night, on line, Boxoffice@carltonlittletheatretrust.co.uk

Etickets.www.ticketsource.co.uk/thecarltonlittletheatretrust Phone:0151 647 6593

Doors open at 7pm – Performance commences at 7.30pm



This is one of the best loved plays by "the Master" and is full of wit. Do come along if you would like a well written escapist comedy – I think I can promise you an enjoyable evening. I have certainly enjoyed directing a good cast in a jewel of a play.

Eliane Davie

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*

AND FINALLY *Almost February already! As always I hope that you find the Newsletter interesting and useful. I have to ask you to please bear with me this month as your next newsletter (March) will be later than usual. I am going away on holiday on the 16th and will not be back until March 4th when I promise to get it to you as soon as possible. If anyone who has material to go into it could let me have it by February 13th I should be able to have it almost ready before going. I'm sorry for the inconvenience*

elianedavie@hotmail.co.uk Eliane Davie Editor

