



**July Newsletter**  
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## **CHAIRMAN'S MUSINGS**

**Greeting Fellow U3A Members!**

It is strange and a little alarming to think of our U3A as an organism that has a life and vitality of its own. It is far from being static as each member explores the possibilities of the U3A for themselves, against the already rich background of their own, personal lives; added to which there is the possibility of relating, through mutual interests and countless other possible connections, to each other.

Though we have structures and formulas in place to order and direct some of these energies, I cannot imagine that we are ever any more than their servant. One sees, at every level of social gatherings, how easy it can be to become overwhelmed by energies and possibilities over which we sometimes have less control than we might like to admit.

It is all too easy to attribute our successes to our own efforts whilst blaming our failures on negative, external factors that seem set against us. I am inclined, for example, to believe that the computer we use in order to project information onto a screen when we meet together on alternate Thursdays is inclined to dumb insolence; added to which it has a special programme of spite and malice reserved for innocent and vulnerable operators. A psychotherapist would probably suggest that in fact my own relationship with machinery, of any kind, is in need of serious examination, leading to greater tolerance and understanding. After all it cannot be very nice just sitting there and having people poking at you with their fingers every time you are brought out for an airing. I doubt that I will ever come to love the thing but I concede that it would help enormously if I stopped seeing it as 'the enemy.'

When I attend meetings of any of the three committees on which I sit, either as a member or as the Chair, there is always an agenda and a space for Any Other Business, but I am also aware that any gathering, up to and including the U3A in its entirety or even our government, is far greater than the sum of its parts and the triumphs and difficulties of which those parts are composed. There is always a mysterious, silent and unwritten agenda of possibilities, potentials, descensions and dissolutions yet to be revealed - or not. Who can say? One thing for sure; we are all sharing in a huge adventure and it is an adventure with plenty of creative potential.

**Brian Gill**

**Chairman**

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## TEA AND COFFEE ROTA

If you cannot do a duty, please ring me, JOAN BENTON, ON 608 6226

July 4<sup>th</sup> Grieg Roberts  
John Roberts  
Ann Hillier

July 18<sup>th</sup> Doreen Alig  
Valerie Edwards  
Margaret Yeardsley



I would like to call on more members to volunteer to help serve tea and coffee at our meetings. It is a really good way of getting to know other members and is not onerous. I would probably call on you to do this duty only twice a year and the more volunteers we get the less there is to do.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Joan Benton: tel. 608 6226

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## LUNCH GROUP

July 16<sup>th</sup> Sheldrake's – afternoon tea **Please note time 2.30 pm**  
**and change of venue**

COLIN STREDDER

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## THEATRE OUTINGS

LES MISERABLES  
EMPIRE Theatre  
Tuesday 15 OCTOBER @ 7.30pm £39 Circle seats  
(Best medium priced seats for an expensive show)  
**Tickets available for collection on August 29<sup>th</sup>**



**There will be no Social Desk during July until August 29<sup>th</sup> when we return from our Summer Break.**

Christmas lunch bookings will then be available.

AUTUMN and WINTER THEATRE visits will be advertised for sale from August 29<sup>th</sup>.

Please note that there will be no further outings until such time as we find someone prepared to take it on. If two friends feel that they could organise events together they would be given every help to get started. Anyone interested please let a member of Committee know.

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### Visit to the RLB 360 exhibition 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Barbara again organised another delightful excursion. This time to the RLB 360 exhibition i.e. the Royal Liver Building open balcony giving a 360 degree view. This was opened for the first time in February this year. We started the tour in the basement Visitor Centre with a quirky Health & Safety video which included a chirpy Liver bird. Then by lift to the tenth floor by way of a reconstruction of a small part of the engine room of the Cunard ship the Lusitania. This was recently installed with background sound effects of the ship's engine noises. Then onto the first outside balcony and Merseyside vista including a closer view of the Liver birds Bella and Bertie and one of the large clock faces. There is always a wind near the river Mersey and this was no exception. So out of the wind and onto the first set of stairs. The next stop was the clock mechanism room. This included a very impressive video which showed snippets of Liverpool history and of course a Liver bird, this time flying. Up the next set of steps to the balcony with the complete 360 degree view of Liverpool and beyond. This was well worth all the stairs and wind. Then slowly back down via the staircase and lift to the basement after a very enjoyable and new experience of  
Liverpool.



Judy Wiley

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### MEETINGS and SPEAKERS 2019

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

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## ***NOTES OF ACTIVITIES AT NON- SPEAKER MEETINGS***

Thursday July 4<sup>th</sup>

Colin is doing a dance anagram – on dance.

***Colin Stredder***

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## **CREATIVE WRITING**

**NOTE:** Monica Price, who leads the Creative Writing Group, has space for about four more members. The group meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 2pm – 4pm. Enquiries to Monica on 200 2728



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## **RECIPE    Short Story by Sarah Nance**

The old front door slammed shut and a blast of damp, cooling air blew onto Jane's face. She stepped back from the porch and into the warmth and open arms of her chaotic kitchen. The oven was roasting away and various pots and pans with their lids were playing to their strengths in a musical percussion ensemble, beating, rattling, scraping and clattering against each other with growing impatience. Steam clouds rose from the gaping lids as they bounced up and down and drifted towards the smeared windows, where upon, as if by magic dinner scented droplets of water ran skittishly down the panes and pooled on the tiled window sills. Open cupboard doors revealed items piled higgledy-piggledy against each other in jumbled confusion. The table at the centre of the space was covered in bowls, utensils, books, mugs of half drunk cold tea, paper, notes, pens and scribbles and lots of packages. The spillage of all Jane's creative mess overflowed the table, how much of her life happened around this unassuming piece of furniture. The comfy sofa pushed against the long window was full of exotic cushions soaking up anyone who sank into its' velvety depths. However it was mainly occupied by a very unpredictable fickle feline whose mood fluctuated with the weather. Tiddles rubbed, head butted, bit and scratched, clawed, kneaded and purred overtly loudly at anyone who dared to place a cheek bottom on so much as a corner of that inviting space. Everyone who knew of her ways gave her a very wide berth and the sofa remained her domain.

Jane was considered locally as an unconventional woman, off-centred, a free spirit ....and to the curtain twitching brigade in the road she was watched constantly for petty wrongdoings. THE LIST WAS LONG. She fed stray cats and talked to strangers. She sang outside in the garden and hung up her colourful underwear on the washing line for all to see. She went to bed late, very late and had visitors at all hours. She played the piano by an open casement and was always smiling. She rode a bicycle, wore bright flowing clothes and large floppy hats! But worst of all were the most mouth watering and delectable smells drifting from her open windows of her gingerbread house and filling the air making everyone in the area hungry and vaguely sending people slightly potty! The mean spirited, jealous curtain twitchers were waiting in their tight ordered inedible houses for one violation, one misdeed to be punishable by law, to bring her DOWN and return suburbia back to a more palatable, sanitised, less controversial odourless place. Jane did not fit the mould. She did not attend church, she did not keep her home or garden tidy, she had no children, no husband, and no car! However it was the smell of her cooking that was beyond the pale. Aromatic and pungent, yeasty and fresh, sugary and scented. A baking of cakes smell or a spicy richness strong with the aroma of garlic and herbs from faraway lands Recipes filled every nook and cranny with such succulence, that catching a whiff of her luscious cooking, would draw one in to knock on her door and enter into the scrumptious , yummy, heavenly saliva inducing house. As a spider spinning its' near invisible web to trap its' prey, so Jane cooked food to entice people into her lair. People were seen entering into Jane's parlour and some would say.....never seen leaving again. Those that did emerge hours later were said to be different. It was whispered amongst the church going twitchers that people changed forever when they went into the house of tantalising smells. Sullen and sour people came away smiling and bright and cheerful full of BON AMIE and wishing their fellow neighbours a cordial, friendly "Hello." Stiff older folk returned from a feast at her house with a spring in their step, a foot taller, backs straight, hair glossy, skin smooth and eyes sparkling with clear sight. The depressed and glum, downhearted and despondent remerged merry and gleeful, content and elated, overjoyed with their lot, walking away on cloud nine. The isolated and alone ate such nourishment that filled them with foods tasting of care and hope and love. The spiteful and mean spirited, jealous and unkind were fed different fare. Mrs. Pratt the curtain twitcher and chief amongst the neighbourhood spies was pruning her already over pruned roses and staring out across the road to Jane's disorganised garden. It was in complete disarray. She had had enough. Jane let the road down, the area was not what it used to be.....a calm oasis of tidy borders, quiet gardens, and clean nets at closed windows. Instead disorder had descended and people laughed and chatted. They sat sunning themselves sharing pieces of Jane's cake over cups of HERBAL TEA ! Curtain nets had vanished windows were wide open and no one seemed to be pruning anything anymore. The grass had grown long and everywhere the flowers ran in a riot of colour. Voices were loud and children were playing and racing together all stuffed with delectable cake! Carefully Mrs. Pratt removed her gardening gloves and marched stridently towards Jane's front door. The smells were quite extraordinary, how did she do it? There was a mixture of scents on the breeze of all Mrs. Pratt's favourite childhood foods and her mind began to wander aimlessly down memory paths long ago forgotten. Happier times, carefree and brimming with love and laughter and surely wasn't that the tug of her mother's soft hand slipping over her own?.... Before she could knock the door was flung open wide and Jane smiling sweetly said "Ah Mrs.Pratt I have been expecting you, do come in and have something to eat."... Unable to speak, Mrs. Pratt drifted into the messy kitchen and approached the sofa. Tiddles was stretched out like fatty bacon across the length of the seat. "Sit down, Tiddles won't mind." Of course Tiddles did mind. As Mrs. Pratt sat on a corner of the sofa the cat sank her dagger fangs into Mrs. Pratt's rump and dug her claws into the tops of her legs, pinning her in place and not letting go. Nothing would come out of her mouth try as she might but the hypnotic effect of the odours were inducing a feeling of calm and sleepiness . Presently Jane stood before her with a bowl of liquid and instructed Mrs. Pratt to "DRINK." With her eyes half closed and Tiddles still firmly fastened to her bottom, she drank deeply of the strange Amber nectar. Immediately a wondrous feeling spread throughout her body in all directions and

scattering around, circulating in her veins. She could feel she was growing smaller, shrinking, fainter, and weaker. She felt as if she was being spread out thinly and was finally moving in one specified direction. She was being reduced to tiny molecules; she was as light as a feather and never wanted this sensation to end. She was unravelling to nothing. Tiddles rolled her fat body over and unclenched her claws. She loved having her tummy tickled and Jane fed her morsels of such cat like delight that she purred appreciatively. The dust motes dancing around the cat's head suddenly surged in volume and then drifted away on a gust of air towards the open window and were gone. No one could remember a Mrs. Pratt. Her house was sold and before long a happy, open windowed, long grassed, laughing family moved in. Jane continued to cook. After all there were so many more people that needed to try her food.

Sarah Nance

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### VISIT FROM WALLASEY U3A GUITAR GROUP ON JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>



We enjoyed a very pleasant hour being entertained by the Wallasey Guitar Group and this time we could read the words on the screen and were able to join in for an enthusiastic sing song.

Many thanks to Brian Gill for arranging the visit and to the Wallasey group for coming along. ED.

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### WALKING GROUP

On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June Gerry Riley led the Summer Walk from Eastham to Parkgate with stops at Rabymere and Willesden for refreshment. We were fortunate to have glorious sunshine throughout and though only Gerry, Ann and Tony completed the full eleven mile walk, we all had a really enjoyable day. Thank you Gerry.



## July 19<sup>th</sup> Walk

A circular walk round West Kirby and Caldby Hill will be led by Judith Wiley and Eliane Davie. Details at the next meeting on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

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## Congratulations and best wishes to June Wilson who celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on June 12<sup>th</sup>!

June is still very active and leads the Play Reading Group as well as a Movement Dance group – truly ‘young at heart’.



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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:  
Here is our programme to November 2019



**Wednesday July 17<sup>th</sup> 2019:** Meet at 11 am, address to follow:

Hazel at Home

**NO MEETING IN AUGUST 2019**

**Wednesday September 18<sup>th</sup> 2019:** visit to the Tate Gallery, Liverpool. Meet in foyer at 10.45 am.

Constellations, Interactive Exhibition

**Wednesday October 16<sup>th</sup> 2019:** In Session Room start at 10.15 am.

Vasili Kaninsky, (1866-1944). Bernadette leads.

**Wednesday November 20<sup>th</sup> 2019:** In session Room start at 10.15am.

Caravaggio (1571-1610) Bernadette leads

**NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**

Please make a note in your diaries      Bernadette Hamilton

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## VISIT TO LADY LEVERHULME GALLERY TO VIEW REMBRANDT EXHIBITION



**Bernadette organised a visit for the group to see an exhibition of Rembrandt's etchings and engraving. Most of us had no idea of how prolific these were. Although many are very small when seen through a microscope they are full of amazing detail and mood. He experimented with etching, engraving and dry point often incorporating all three.**

**Thank you Bernadette for yet another insight into the world of art and for the knowledge you and Jutta bring to help our appreciation.**  
**Ed.**

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## **SUMMER OUTING TO ERDDIG HOUSE JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup> 2019**



**Our u3a visited Erddig on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June. We all look forward to these visits and this one did not disappoint. Although the weather was not good the house and the views were excellent.**

**Erddig is an estate, with a fine house built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was owned by the York family through seven generations. The family were evidently hoarders of extraordinary dedication. We find that thirty or forty year's accumulation of objects too much. Imagine 260 years of furniture and ornaments. This is what makes the house so interesting it is almost as though the family still resides there. You can imagine the family sitting down to dinner and going about their business, servants cleaning and chattering. Philip and Simon Yorke wrote poetry about the members of the household. There are photographs on the walls in the kitchen area of the servants with poems about them. We always think that servants, in those days, were overworked and underpaid. The Erddig servants were underpaid but stayed on working for many years. They were obviously very much part of the family.**

The present day workers at Erddig are just as dedicated and so very knowledgeable about the house and family and so very helpful. Well worth another visit.

Sadly this is the last of such outings. Barbara, who has been arranging these outings, will not be doing any more and will be concentrating on theatre trips. We have been unable to attract members to take on this work. May we suggest that if anyone has an idea for an outing you would receive every help from Barbara to organise it. We have been to so many interesting places it is a shame they have to stop. Heartfelt thanks to Barbara Lloyd for all the effort she has put in, it has been much appreciated.

Jean Mawdsley

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## RETIREMENT DINNER FOR SANDRA LAKIN



The Committee and a few close friends invited Sandra and Chris for a meal at The Manor to thank Sandra for her work as chairman particularly in relation to the big reorganization due to our U3A getting charity status – a huge undertaking.

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## SEE AROUND BRITAIN

I am contacting you from See Around Britain, we are a registered charity which has set up a website, [www.seearoundbritain.com](http://www.seearoundbritain.com) with the intention to provide photographic and detailed written information regarding a large variety of public venues throughout the UK. The information we provide gives a brief description, along with contact details, transport information and accessibility information so that potential visitors, including those with disabilities, can decide whether or not a venue is suitable for their particular needs.

The charity currently has a number of exciting volunteering opportunities available and we feel they could be of potential interest to your members. In particular, we are looking for volunteers to write venue descriptions to accompany the backlog of photographs of various venues and/or submit photos or videos of new venues themselves, all of which can be done from home and online via our website. There are online video tutorials available to help volunteers, but we can also provide additional support via email if needed.

If you feel this would be of interest to any of your members, we would be really grateful to hear from you (contact email address: [cara\\_sab@outlook.com](mailto:cara_sab@outlook.com) and/or [support@seearoundbritain.com](mailto:support@seearoundbritain.com)). Alternatively, they can register their interest and join directly via the website's volunteer section at the bottom of the About Us page, [www.seearoundbritain.com/about-us](http://www.seearoundbritain.com/about-us). I understand that some University of Third Age groups have monthly newsletters; there would be potential to include a short addition to let your members know of these opportunities?

We look forward to hearing from you.  
Thanks for your time.  
Cara Crockett  
See Around Britain

The above letter arrived and I am printing it here in case any of you might be interested in getting involved after checking the website. Ed.

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# Group Leaders!

## Local History Group, Film Group and Craft Group

Meetings of these groups are currently suspended.

If you are a member of one of these groups could you take over as group leader?

Is there anyone else who would like to volunteer to lead either of these groups?

Please contact Tony Swarbrick or Eve Felton  
[groupcoordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:groupcoordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk)

## OUTING ORGANISER

So far no one has come forward to take over the important job of organising outings, which is a part of our U3A that we have hitherto all enjoyed. Until we have a volunteer (or volunteers) to take over this position there can be no more outings, other than theatre ones which Barbara Lloyd will continue to organise. Barbara has reiterated that she will help and advise anyone willing to take it

on and has suggested that perhaps someone might like to try one outing initially to see how it goes. Anyone interested should inform a committee member.

Ed.

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**AND FINALLY** ----- *The next Newsletter will be for September as we close for August. I would like to take the opportunity to wish you all a happy holiday season and to remind you that contributions to the newsletter are welcome so long as they are in by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the previous month.*



*Eliane Davie - Editor*



