



# October Newsletter



## CHAIRMAN'S MUSINGS

With the Autumnal Equinox behind us, the time we spend in daylight will decrease as we move towards December 21<sup>st</sup>. As well we know, there is a significant festival or two to negotiate before the year turns once again at the Winter Solstice. The festivals in October/November of this year seem to have acquired an additional importance this time round. It is worth noting here that evidence suggests that we are probably not evolving as a species as quickly and efficiently as we might like to suppose and are in fact caught up in behaviours, memes and algorithms that anchor us firmly in an ancient past. These are still firmly imprinted on our collective behaviour.

Though the Celts were not the first people to occupy the British Isles they became well established both here and across Europe and their dependence on the seasons and nature determined much of their behaviour and continues to influence us to this day. But putting all that aside for a moment, they had something of vital importance that we seem to have lost. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, for four days, they honoured the concept of 'no time.' It was the beginning of their new year and they seem to have marked it, not with drunken orgies but with honouring a dimension that does not and cannot register in time and place.

I must have mentioned before that when Hamlet wondered whether or not to BE, he rather missed the point. An enlightened Celt would have advised him to discover the art of both being and not being, (the Druids knew a thing or two!) We spend a great deal of time trying to live up to other peoples' expectations, not to mention our own. As we grow older we might experience the loss of functions that we thought at one time defined us. To recognise oneself as being good or competent at something can add much to our sense of whom and what we are and our consequent value. When these are taken away from us it is easy to feel redundant; but the mystical traditions to be found at the heart of any long established culture, assure us that it is also good to explore the possibility of being nothing. They recognised that the whole of creation issues from a dimension to which we have no direct access.

Such an exercise can offer invaluable relief when hard pressed by dualistic conflicts. A wise teacher I once knew used to ask if it had to be 'either,' 'or,' - might it not be both? Or else it could

just be nothing – at least for a time, until the energy changes. In science the zero-point-field has no dimension or definition yet it mysteriously generates energy. It does not require definition or dimension; it simply IS. Connecting with such a notion when one just does not have the energy or sense of well-being to be all that we feel we should, can offer us an oasis of rest and recuperation.

Tradition seems to acknowledge that the demons of Halloween need to be honoured and incorporated into our lives, and why not? We tend to forget that they are there as a prelude to the celebration of conscious humanity. Just BE.

**Brian Gill**  
**Chairman**

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## **TEA AND COFFEE ROTA 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019 TO 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2019**

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

10<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Doreen Alig  
Corinne Whitham  
Valerie Edwards



24<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Dorothy Mathews  
Barbara Baker  
Kathy Sullivan

7<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Sylvia Hunt  
Ann Jou  
Brenda George

21<sup>st</sup> November 2019

Marion Jackson  
Barbara Riley  
Judith Wheat



What an optimist I am! I am still hopeful of finding more volunteers. Please ring me (Joan Benton) on 608 6226 if you would like to offer your services.

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## LUNCH GROUP

Dates up to Christmas: Meet at 12.45 for 1pm

October 15<sup>th</sup> 2019                      The Queens Arms

November 19<sup>th</sup> 2019                    The Shippons

In December the Christmas Dinner takes the place of the lunch group.



**COLIN STREDDER**

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## Lunch at the Refreshment Rooms

The Group enjoyed an excellent lunch at the refreshment Rooms on September 17<sup>th</sup>. Our thanks to Colin for organizing it.



Photos by Corinne Whitham

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

26<sup>th</sup> September 2019                    Heswall Disabled Childrens' Holiday Fund.

24<sup>th</sup> October 2019                        Quiz by Colin.

21<sup>st</sup> November 2019                    Brian's play – "Whatever Happened to Baby Dalling"

More information later.

**Colin Stredder**

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## **SPEAKERS 2019**

**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.

**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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### CREATIVE WRITING MAY 2019 'THE GHOST SHIP'

Jill gasped with delight; the walk on the cliff top meandered along for at least five miles and as it curved sharply to the right the view took her breath away. “Ben, quick - just look at this! Isn't it magical?”

The path had been climbing for the last half hour and now they were quite high up looking down on the most beautiful little bay. Surrounded by pine trees backed by hills, it was an almost perfect horse shoe shape with a strip of fine golden sand lapped by water the colour of sapphires and deserted, except for two distant figures looking out over the water towards a sailing boat anchored a short distance from the shore.

“Let's go down darling. We must get a picture of that! What a beautiful craft, I wonder who it belongs to? Just look at those sails, it looks as though it is from another era! Come on.” Jill, eyes shining pulled Ben towards a path leading down the hill.

Ben was equally struck by the view and the moment. They had enjoyed several holidays in the Greek islands but this one was the most unspoilt; Corfu minus the crowds. He followed Jill down the path towards the cove, remarking on the colourful wild May flowers along the way. The water shimmered in the sunlight, an occasional sea bird swooped across their view and a couple of cottages, a tiny bar (closed), seemed to be the only signs of life other than the two men they had noticed earlier. The two were standing on a small landing stage, still looking out towards the sailing ship, dressed, Jill now saw, in some kind of uniform – all white.

Jill, never a shrinking violet, walked up to them, “Isn't that ship just wonderful – do you know anything about it? Where is it from I wonder? It looks like an old sailing ship but still seems in very good condition.”

The men turned to them and she saw that they both sported beards. “We're from that ship young lady. Would you care to come aboard for a short sail on her?”

“Oh, we'd absolutely love to wouldn't we Ben?” The sparkle in her eyes told him that she would not be diverted from this opportunity and he laughingly concurred.

The men indicated an old rowing boat tied to the small pier, inviting them to step in, which they did without more ado. Minutes later, lapped by gentle water, they reached the the ship where a rope ladder hung over the side. "I'll go first," said the taller of the two men, "you two follow and the Captain will come last to make sure you board safely."

It was quite exciting boarding the ship in this way; a little scary too. The deck was much higher than they had realised but they managed to reach it without mishap. She appeared to be mainly constructed of timber and they admired the highly polished rails and the spotless deck. "Well done, you managed the climb really well. If you will follow me I will take you to the Captain's quarters where you will be able to relax while we concentrate on guiding the ship out of the bay and into the open sea." He opened a heavy wooden door leading them into a panelled cabin furnished with a large desk and a couple of comfortable armchairs. A sofa and several wooden lockers with brass handles completed its contents. Through another door they could see a large bunk and a locker with a bowl and large water jug on top. "If you want to go on deck go through that door. Now we must leave you for a while, please make yourselves comfortable and enjoy your sail."

Ben and Jill looked at each other; this was going to be quite an adventure. Minutes later they sensed that they were under way. A creaking of timbers and a slight rocking motion gave them to realise that she was turning and they thought they heard voices shouting orders in the distance. "I didn't see any crew," Ben murmured, "but I think this ship is too large to be manned by only two people. Shall we go on deck?" Jill nodded and they opened the door the Captain had indicated.

It led directly to the deck where they saw a short ladder leading to the wing of the bridge. There was a warm breeze filling the sails and taking them rapidly away from the little bay towards the open sea. Looking back the bay was getting smaller and ahead the sea stretched far into the distance. Ben decided to climb up to the bridge to ask the Captain where they were sailing to. He didn't think that he would mind if he went up; he hadn't said anything about not going there. "Won't be long Jill, see if you recognise any landmarks."

Having reached the wing of the bridge he took a moment to admire the vista of sea around him with the coastline far in the distance, and then knocked on the door of the bridge. Getting no reply and assuming that he hadn't been heard he pushed open the door. Empty! The steering wheel was moving gently but no one was holding it; slight creaks signalled some motion as the swell from the open sea made the ship roll slightly. A table was covered with maps but no one was checking them. Ben gazed around searching for signs of some kind of automation but she was an old ship built before radar or any kind of artificial aids to navigation. What was going on? An uncomfortable feeling of unease cramped his stomach and he climbed quickly down to where Jill waited. She stared at him open mouthed, "But that is impossible, there must be people on the ship steering her!" At that moment a laugh caused them to turn, voices rising and falling in the distance. "See, there *are* people on board, but where?" To her relief at that moment the Captain and the other officer approached them smiling. There must surely be some explanation.

"How are you enjoying your voyage?" he asked. "We wondered if you would care for something to eat or drink. If you would like to return to the cabin there is some refreshment."

"She's a beautiful ship but an unusual one. Could you tell us more about it please? We would love to know where we are going and how long it will take to get there. Where are the crew? How is the ship sailing with no one on the bridge?" Ben paused for a moment; the two men were regarding him strangely.

"Ah, you have not realised. Come into the cabin and sit down – we will try to answer some of your questions." and with that they led the way back to the cabin. "Do you remember walking on the cliff top enjoying the view?"

"Oh yes, it was great, so high up and so peaceful." Jill smiled and Ben nodded his agreement, "Then we turned a sharp bend and saw that magical little bay and spotted the ship and you two standing on the beach. There was a path leading down and it looked so inviting we headed towards it...."

The Captain interrupted: "It was a sheer drop down from the cliff top and as you pulled Ben behind you to a steep path you both fell not having realised how close you were to the edge."

Jill and Ben looked at each other aghast, "That can't be right – we spoke to you and you invited us on board. What are you saying, who are you?"

"We are here to guide you. Your death was sudden and you have not understood but you will soon." They stared at the two men noticing for the first time that their skins had a pallor to them that was strangely ethereal.

"Are you saying that we are dead and you are ghosts? But this ship? The crew? Where are we going to?" Jill felt totally disorientated now realising that the whole situation which had appeared normal to her now felt surreal. She could only gaze wordlessly at the two men.

"This is a ghost ship. She will take you on a voyage with a ghost crew. Our job is finished now; we just brought you aboard to start your journey. When you reach your destination you will know. Don't be afraid." his voice faded as did his face until he and his partner disappeared. Voices murmured all around gradually fading until Jill and Ben were left in the silence.

It had certainly been – still was - an adventure and they would have to make the most of it. At least they were together – for now.

Eliane Davie

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## WALKING GROUP

.U3A Walk on Friday 20th September 2019.

A circular walk of approximately 5.25 Miles was led by Gwyneth Williams and Corinne Whitham. It started and ended at the Seven Stars pub in Thornton Hough, where the group enjoyed lunch after the walk.

The group was blessed with a beautiful early autumn day which made the day really ideal for walking and enjoying the countryside.

Many thanks to Gwyneth and Corinne for organizing the day.

Photos by Corinne Whitham



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### Walk on Friday 18th October 2019.

A walk led by Gerry Riley of just over 5 miles starting at Bache Station and finishing at the Bunbury Arms pub in Stoak village, where we will take lunch at around 1:30 – 1:45 pm.

The walk is mainly along the towpath of the Shropshire Union Canal towards Ellesmere Port, with a small amount on roads and well-made field paths at the back of the Countess of Chester Hospital.

There are two options for meeting as follows:

1. At the Bunbury arms pub in Stoak for no later than 10:15 am to catch the 10:29 bus to Bache. This requires a car and is the preferred option It will require a few drivers to give lifts to those travelling by train back to a convenient station or other location after lunch.

2. Just outside the main entrance to Morrison's store by Bache station. Get a Chester train to arrive at Bache no later than 10:35 am. You can then join the others travelling by bus. We can make use of the toilet facilities in Morrisons before we start, as there are no toilets on the walk.

Directions to Stoak:

Take the M53 motorway towards Chester and exit at junction 10 (Cheshire Oaks). Turn right towards Cheshire Oaks but keep in the Left lane through the traffic lights and turn first left into Little Staney Lane. Continue under M53 motorway for about ¾ mile and take second left into Church lane and park in the Bunbury Arms car park. If you cross the canal you have gone too far.

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

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## U3A Christmas Walk Friday 13th December 2019.

A History Walk around Oxton Village led by Oxton Society Guides starting in Oxton Village Centre near the Post Office at 10:50 am for 11:00am start. Full Details are not yet available, but it is likely (depending on numbers) that there will be two different walks to choose from to keep the numbers to around 10 – 12 people per party.

Afterwards we will take lunch in The Queens Arms at around 1 pm.

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## ART APPRECIATION GROUP

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

Here is our programme to November 2019

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

**Matisse talk - Bernadette leads.**

**Wednesday November 20<sup>th</sup> 2019:** Matisse Exhibition: Drawing With Scissors.

**NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**



Please make a note in your diaries

Bernadette Hamilton

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## Wassily Kandinsky Exhibition at the Tate

Bernadette led an interesting visit to the Kandinsky (1866-1944) Exhibition on September 18<sup>th</sup>. Few of us were familiar with his work and found Bernadette's introductory talk a great help in understanding his aims and those of artists whose works were influenced by him.



Seabass + watercress sauce

Veg Brie Crumble

**Desserts**

Christmas pud

Meringue nests + fruit

Profiteroles + chocolate sauce

Cheese & Biscuits

and

Coffee

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**THEATRE**

Reminder

**LES MISERABLES**

**EMPIRE Theatre**

**Tuesday 15 OCTOBER @ 7.30pm**



**AMELIE - The Musical**

Liverpool Playhouse

Monday 14 October @ 7.30pm

*Tickets available for collection*



**NOW BOOKING**

**THE NUTCRACKER**

This year's English National Ballet production

Liverpool Empire

Thursday 28 November @ 2.30pm

Tickets £31.50

*Booking will close 24 October*



**THE KING & I**

Liverpool Empire

Part of world tour

Thursday 19 March 2020 @ 2.30pm

Tickets £35



**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

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# Group Leaders!

## Craft Group

Elaine Mercer has volunteered to re-launch the Craft Group.

She has a wide range of craft skills herself and wants people to contact her to suggest what craft activities they would like to pursue.

The re-launched Craft group will be open to Men as well as Women!

Are there any guys out there with crafting skills such as Wood Turning, Model Making, Painting or Drawing etc?

Would you be prepared to share or demonstrate your skills?

If you were a member of the craft group coordinated by Joan Benton, please get in touch with Elaine to let her know you are still interested. [craft@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:craft@oxtonu3a.co.uk)

## Local History Group

Pauline Pinnington has volunteered to co-ordinate the Local History Group.

Meetings will re-start in September.

email address to contact Pauline is [history@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:history@oxtonu3a.co.uk)

## Rummikub – New Group

Joan Parfect will be starting a group to play Rummikub in September.

Rummikub is a cross between scrabble and the card game Rummy, it is easy and fun to play, but beware it can become addictive!!!

More details of the game are on the Group Notice Board.

If you want to join this new group, contact Joan Parfect using:

email address [rummikub@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:rummikub@oxtonu3a.co.uk) Craft Group

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## 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 -----**

Autumn is upon us and hopefully you have all enjoyed a pleasant summer. Having just returned from a break in Turkey where the weather was a comfortable 82-84 degrees, I feel ready to engage with all the numerous activities our U3A offers, (well maybe not ALL there are so many). As always I would ask you all to let me know if you have any suggestions to insert into the newsletter, or news you would like to share.

***Eliane Davie***  
***Editor***





