



autumn

November Newsletter

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Greetings fellow U3A members.

Our U3A is certainly moving through interesting times and your committee is trying to adapt and be flexible according to its lights.

At the time of writing we have just held a Zoom committee meeting and just ahead we look forward to our first Zoom AGM. It certainly is possible to teach new tricks to old dogs.

I think that the on-line AGM is to be something of a formality as so many of you responded to our request for votes on the issues that we need to resolve that we have more than enough to carry the resolutions and proceed into another year. I tried to respond to every voter personally but would also like to add here my most grateful thanks to all who voted and expressed their appreciation.

The committee will continue to meet on-line from time to time and I see no reason why interest groups should not keep in touch with each other; we also have our invaluable website; but we have decided for the time being not to invite on-line speakers. They would still have to be paid for and some members do not have internet facilities or actively dislike using the ones they have.



In a state of semi-hibernation there is not a great deal of news to share so a formal newsletter will not be circulated until the situation changes. **HOWEVER**, I do want us to be in touch on a regular basis and want to continue to write something each month to that end, so you will still be hearing from me and I will ensure that you are kept up-to-date with any developments.

Also, please feel free to comment or ask questions both in relation to anything I write and any other issues on which I might be able to shed light or offer an opinion. I would greatly enjoy hearing from you.

The way things are developing it looks as though the whole of humanity is going to have to re-examines its priorities, its aims and objectives and find a different way of organising its affairs. I doubt that there will be a quick fix and we therefore have to feel our way towards a new way of doing things. I say this because I know enough of science and nature to know that nature does not react kindly to the establishment of monocultures and that is precisely what the human race has become. Monocultures create the very conditions in which their way of functioning ensures their eventual demise. Monocultures militate against diversity. A lack of diversity enables negative organisms to proliferate unchallenged. If it is not one virus it will be another and for all our best efforts we have yet to find cures for several ailments that have long tormented us.

I do not intend to be negative or alarmist but we are all affected by certain common cultures and paradigms that we have taken for granted and are now no longer adequate.

There are other ways of being!

In U3A we are changing our logo and trying to appeal to a wider public but I wonder: if we stopped calling ourselves Human Beings and painted ourselves a different colour, would the virus lose interest in us and might we not attract something more benign? I doubt it.

Monocultures all carry in common a reckless disregard for the subsidiary cultures of which their ecology is composed. They lack understanding compassion, empathy and imagination. History demonstrates that systems failing in these areas have only a limited life.

We find ourselves at this very interesting cross-road at which, both individually and collectively our survival will depend upon our ability to make a shift in consciousness. Hanging on to the remnants of old cultures may keep us going for a while but I think we can do better and now, perhaps is the time to try.

Brian Gill – Chairman

A DIFFERENT AGM FOR OUR U3A

The Committee would like to thank all those who managed to follow our Zoom AGM and those who sent in their votes in good time. As sufficient postal votes were e-mailed to make up a quorum, the Zoom AGM was just a formality and the Committee remains as:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Brian Gill - | Chairman |
| Sandra Lakin - | Temporary Business Secretary |
| Eliane Davie - | Vice Chair, Newsletter Editor |
| Ken Jackson - | Treasurer |
| Gwyneth Williams - | Membership Secretary |
| Alan Harding - | Speaker Secretary |
| Tony Swarbrick - | Groups Coordinator |
| Barbara Lloyd - | Theatre Outings |
| Eve Felton - | Deputy Groups Organiser |
| Colin Stredder - | Social morning Organiser |

Our next AGM should take place in April 2021 by which time the way ahead should be much clearer and any changes to the Committee can take place.

In the meantime if any of you have ideas for ways we could meet on line; possibly quizzes or talks from Speakers etc.; please contact Colin or Tony. There is another Committee Meeting booked for next month so if you have any suggestions please let us know before November 19th so that we can discuss them.

As we all know it is difficult at the moment to plan ahead, with so much uncertainty due to the Corona virus but hopefully by early next year we should be able to see whether our future, as a group, is viable.

I know that we all value the company and interest that we enjoy with U3A and are missing it greatly. Let's keep in touch and hope that before too long we can once again meet up to pursue friendships and shared activities.

Ed.

MORE LOCKDOWN WALKS

View across the Dee from West Kirby – unusual light at circa 5.30pm. October 2020



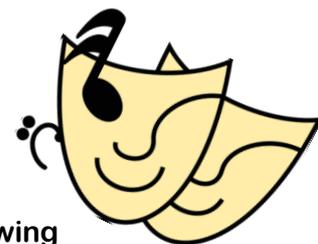
Eliane Davie

View from the Duke St. Bridge – October 2020



Eliane Davie

A Treat for Theatre Fans!



In the absence of theatre evenings at the moment, I visited The Light Cinema in New Brighton to see Anton Chekhov's 'Uncle Vanya', directed by Ian Rickson. It is a new adaptation by Conor McPherson and was showing in the West End as lockdown started. It was filmed in the empty theatre and directed for the screen by Ross Macgibbon.

A long play, 155 minutes with no interval, it says a lot for the quality of acting that it held the audience right through. A superb cast with Toby Jones in the title role, each gave excellent performances while the new interpretation made the characters more accessible than I remembered. My son, who saw it with me, also really enjoyed it.

We are so fortunate in having the opportunity to see these recorded shows of such high calibre. There were few in the audience due to Covid, with only every other row being used and plenty of space between groups. Masks were worn and film shows staggered to avoid crowding – Booking is on line. If you do get a chance to see it in the future do go; for lovers of theatre it is a real masterclass. The second of two performances is on Sunday November 1st.

BRIDGE GROUPS

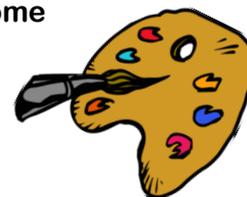


Tony Swarbrick would like anyone interested in joining on-line Zoom groups for Bridge during this time to e-mail him at: groupcoordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk this works quite well and started up during lockdown; Tony will explain and advise on how to go about it.

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

Bernadette has recommended checking out the National Gallery on line: nationalgallery.org.uk where there is a choice of virtual programmes and some interesting talks about a selection of paintings and painters to be found.

Ed.



ARSON AT THE LITTLE THEATRE

Some of you may have seen the news in the Wirral Globe regarding a break in at the Little Theatre involving arson and I thought you might be interested in 'the progress we have made in clearing up. Having been a member of the Carlton Players over many years I was saddened to think that people could do such wanton destruction to a building that has given much pleasure to many over the years; the company was formed ninety years ago in 1930.

In fact, I am pleased to report, it could have been so much worse, had not a neighbour who was getting ready to go on a very early shift, heard the alarm and on seeing the smoke alerted the Fire Brigade (just down the road). They were able to contain the fire and by the time our theatre manager arrived, had almost got it under control.

It was the area at the back of the theatre used for storage of props, furniture, curtains etc. where they broke in by knocking through a bricked up window. It is connected to, though not an original part of the main building which remained undamaged, apart from a smashed window which they had thrown a fire hydrant through to make their escape. You can see from the picture below that it was quite a jump down.



The other two photos were taken after the burned debris had been cleared – as you can see the floor caught fire and the firemen said that had they been ten minutes later it would have gone through and the whole area would have been blazing – the floor below had a lot of timber in it. The area from where I took the picture was full of curtains, cushions, table linen, lampshades; all totally destroyed. The section in the centre picture contained a huge variety of props including period telephones, old

leather suitcases, brass ornaments, picnic hampers, a skeleton, a dummy and much else;, clocks, toys, period kitchen utensils and desk furniture, most of which were too badly damaged to save. Surprisingly we did rescue quite a lot of ornaments, crockery, pans, glassware, trays and teapots etc., which though completely blackened, have cleaned up well with a lot of elbow grease. The floor will need replacing and the room plastered and decorated as will the one below. Also the passage leading into the main theatre and the passage outside the dressing rooms will need redecorating – all these things the insurance assessors have agreed to. The area will also have to be rewired as the lighting went in the fire. Fortunately the lighting in the main building is separate.

Our Chairman started a Fundraiser to help with the refurbishment, to which there has been a good response and we have been offered some replacement props for when the repairs are complete. All in all we are very grateful for all the help and kindness that people have shown.

Eliane Davie

Regional Web site: www.u3asites.org.uk/north-west/events



And FINALLY.....

The Newsletter is a very short one this month due to the inevitable shortage of news that doesn't concern the virus! I do hope that you are all managing to stay well and occupied and don't forget to keep in touch. What a great celebration there will be when things return to normal!

Eliane Davie - Editor



