



# March Newsletter



## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

With the easing of Covid restrictions there seems to be a more relaxed aura in our meetings and a new found freedom missing for so long. I believe it can only improve. Colin Stredder in recent meetings has been keeping us informed of the local History of Liverpool and the Wirral in years gone by; the 3rd March will be no exception with a DVD "Wirral in The 40's to 50's."

What an interesting and knowledgeable speaker in Rob Jones and his subject "Birkenhead Tramways" on 17th February. I think I can safely say that all who attended that meeting were suitably impressed with the history of travel in bygone days. How it stirred the memories of some of our members with the questions asked and the romance of the time imparted after the talk.

### WHERE DO THE NAMES OF OUR MONTHS COME FROM?

Our lives run on Roman time. Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries and Public Holidays are regulated by Pope Gregory XIII's Gregorian calendar, which is itself a modification of Julius Caesar's Calendar, introduced in 45 B.C. The names of our months are therefore derived from the Roman Gods, leaders, festivals and numbers. If you have ever wondered why our 12 month year ends with September, October, November and December- names which mean the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months - you can blame the Romans!

### The Calendar of Romulus:

The Roman year originally had 10 months, a calendar which was ascribed to the legendary first King, Romulus. Tradition had it that Romulus named the first month, Martus, after his own Father, Mars the God of War. This month was followed by Aprilis, Maius and Iunius, names derived from deities or aspects of Roman culture.

Thereafter however the months were simply called the fifth month (Quintilis), sixth month (Sixtilis) and so on, all the way to the tenth month, December. The inclusion of two additional months, Ianuarius and Februarius, at the beginning of the year, was attributed to Numa, the second King of Rome. Despite the fact that there were now 12 months in the Roman Year, the numerical names of the later months were left unchanged.

**Gods and Rituals:**

While January takes its name from Janus, the Roman God of beginnings and endings, February comes from the word februum (purification) and februa, the rites or instruments used for purification. These form part of preparations for the coming of spring in the northern hemisphere. The februa included spelt and salt for cleaning houses, leaves worn by Priests and strips of Goat Skins. These strips were put to good use in the festival of the Lupercalia, held each year on 15th February. Young men, naked except for a Goatskin Cape, dashed around Rome's sacred boundary playfully whipping Women with the strips. This ancient nudie run was designed to purify the city and promote fertility.

To follow next month:  
The Origins of some Months were debated.

**Just a little Geography:**

In Algeria there is a town named Tidikelt situated in the Sahara Desert that did not receive a drop of water for ten years. Technically, though, the driest place on Earth is in the Valleys of the Antarctic near Ross Island. There has been no rainfall there for two million years

Kind Regards

**Alan Harding - Chairman**



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**ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!**

Remember to bring correct change for the £1 at the door – this goes towards the hire of the hall and refreshments.



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**Social Meetings 2022**

March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022

Colin's Quiz



March 31<sup>st</sup> 2022

George Stevenson, retired MP and MEP, will give a light and entertaining talk about his experiences.

## Speakers (so far) 2022

17 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	Behind the Scenes on TV Theatre	Fiona Martin
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	Jean Finley.	Nursery Rhymes
12 <sup>th</sup> May 2022	John Michael Corfe.	The China Farm Story
9 <sup>th</sup> June 2022	Keith Warrender.	Dunham Massey Ship Canal.
7 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	Philip Caine	Barrow to Bagdad

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## WALKING GROUP

**February Walk now to take place on March 4<sup>th</sup> – Liverpool “The 3 Parks” - An Old favourite of the Group. See below following the “Trams” piece.**



**New Walking Group Leader.**

When we re-started the group after lockdown I agreed to lead the group on a temporary basis until the New Year until a long term leader came forward!

No new leader has as yet volunteered!!! I will continue arranging walks until Easter, but cannot promise to take on this role long term!!

If the group is to survive I need members of the group to come forward to arrange and lead walks. Please contact me if you are prepared to do this.

Thanks to all who have supported the group in 2021. We all look forward to some interesting walks in 2022.

**Tony Swarbrick**

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**We wish our Welsh members a happy St. David’s Day on March 1<sup>st</sup> and our Irish members a happy St. Patrick’s Day on March 17<sup>th</sup>!**



## ART APPRECIATION GROUP



On Wednesday February 16<sup>th</sup> Pauline Horner, one of our talented members, gave a really interesting talk on the Spanish artist Sorolla. Many of us knew nothing about this artist who, during much of his life had been well known and admired greatly in his native Spain but was relatively unknown in the UK.

Pauline showed many pictures of his works, explaining salient points along the way and I think we all found them absolutely wonderful, particularly in his use of light which became a hallmark of his paintings.

Thank you so much Bernadette for organising things and Pauline for a most interesting and illuminating talk.

Ed.

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## GROUP NEWS

**Debating: Tony Sullivan**



Tony led the new Discussion Group at its first meeting on Monday February 21<sup>st</sup>. Members spent an enjoyable afternoon in lively debate, covering a wide range of subjects and are meeting again on Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Anybody else interested in joining the group should email Tony Swarbrick at the address below.

[groupcoordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:groupcoordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk)

**A Book and a Glass of Wine: Judith Whale**



Meet on last Thursday of month. The group is full at the moment, but vacancies may occur if all do not return.

## Amateur Astronomy

Paul Cullen, Judith Wylie

Paul will inform members of what events to watch out for.

## Bridge:

Tony Swarbrick, Joan Parfect [bridge@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:bridge@oxtonu3a.co.uk)



Meetings will be in "The Cabin" at Trinity. Meetings on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays each month, 10.30a.m. to 12. We meet to play friendly relaxed bridge, Joan and myself are on hand to offer advice to less experienced players and from time to time offer "teaching" sessions for people new to Bridge.

## Book Club: Mary O'Neill

Mary will contact members shortly to make arrangements for restarting.



## Creative Writing:

Monica Price

Anyone interested should get in touch with Monica, please. She will shortly be contacting group members for details of her restart.



## Lunch Circle: Colin Stredder

Sadly the meeting for February had to be cancelled at the last minute due to a plumbing problem at the venue.

The March meeting will be at the Travellers' Rest, Mount Rd., Bebington on March 15<sup>th</sup>, at 1pm



## Music Appreciation:

Paul Cullen

Next meeting March 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Session Room at 2-4pm. Please bring some music you really enjoy. Unless the attendance numbers increase the group may have to fold and so we look to music lovers to support this enjoyable group. There needs to be enough people to cover the room rental. Further information will be provided at the next meeting.



## New Book

Monica Price.

This Group has continued to operate via Zoom during lockdown.



## Boules: Maureen Oldham

Anyone interested in joining this group this group, to play Boules at Ashton



Park, West Kirby, please contact Maureen Oldham.

## Art Appreciation - Bernadette Hamilton

Group will meet on Wednesday March 16<sup>th</sup> at 10.30 am to view 'A Day in the Life Of', the Graham Perry Exhibition. Gallery opens at 10am.



[groupcordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:groupcordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk) Tony Swarbrick

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## Committee Vacancy

We are still looking for another Committee Member to plan Social meetings once a month and help take part in the general running of our U3A. Colin Stredder has taken over the booking of the main Speaker Meetings. Anyone interested in taking this on should contact a Committee Member at the next meeting.

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## TEA AND COFFEE ROTA 2022

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|------------------------|--|
| March 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Norma Finlayson<br>Ann Greenhalgh<br>Gwyneth Thomas    |
| March 17 <sup>th</sup> | Hilary Robinson<br>Maureen Oldham<br>Margaret Yeadsley |
| March 31 <sup>st</sup> | John Roberts<br>Greig Roberts                          |
| Arlene Hunton          |  |
| April 14 <sup>th</sup> | Sue Berry<br>Maureen Jones<br>Joan Benton              |



Joan Benton

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## Birkenhead Trams – A talk by Rob Jones

On Thursday February we were entertained with a most interesting talk about the history of trams in Birkenhead which Rob is a formidable authority on. He had been involved with the Birkenhead Tram Museum for many years, where the old trams are lovingly restored to their

former glory.

For those who have not yet visited the museum it is well worth going to and holds numerous models covering many years. Originally drawn by horses, they were an essential form of public transport for many years during the late eighteenth hundreds and the first half of the nineteenth hundreds. Rod's collection of photos is a fascinating look into a part of our history. It was good to see a good number of members attending and everyone more relaxed! The talk had finished when this photo was taken – they weren't running away!



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## WALKING GROUP \*

**Note New Date NOW 4<sup>th</sup> March.**

**Meet:-** Sainsbury's Convenience Store  
at Liverpool Central Station

**Time:-** 10.15am

**Distance:-** Approx 6 miles

**Leader:-** Ken Jackson / Gerry Riley

**Lunch:-** Britannia Inn about 1.30.

A walk of just under 6 miles, starting at Liverpool Central Station and finishing at the Britannia Inn on Liverpool Promenade, where we will take lunch at around 1:30pm  
The walk is initially on ordinary roads then takes in 3 of Liverpool's Parks – Princes, Sefton and Otterspool, with the final leg along the Liverpool Promenade to the lunch venue.

We will stop for a short break in Sefton Park for toilets and optional coffee/tea.  
The walk is all along good paths.

After lunch there is a short walk of just under a mile back to St Michael's station to get the train back to Liverpool Central.

**Tony Swarbrick**

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# A friend sent me the following, it did make me smile:

## Excellent medical advice

I do not understand why prescription medicine is allowed to advertise on TV or why anyone would think of trying one of the medicines after listening to the laundry list of warnings of possible side effects. But this is definitely an exception.

Do you have feelings of inadequacy? Do you suffer from shyness? Do you sometimes wish you were more assertive? Do you sometimes feel stressed?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist about Cabernet Sauvignon.

Cabernet Sauvignon is the safe, natural way to feel better and more confident. It can help ease you out of your shyness and let you tell the world that you are ready and willing to do just about anything.

You will notice the benefits of Cabernet Sauvignon almost immediately, and, with a regimen of regular doses, you will overcome obstacles that prevent you from living the life you want. Shyness and awkwardness will be a thing of the past. You will discover talents you never knew you had.

However - Cabernet Sauvignon may not be right for everyone. Women who are pregnant or nursing should not use it, but women who would not mind becoming pregnant and nursing are encouraged to try it.

Side effects may include: Dizziness, nausea, vomiting, incarceration, loss of motor control, loss of clothing, loss of money, delusions of grandeur, table dancing, headache, dehydration, dry mouth and a desire to sing Karaoke and play all-night Strip Poker, Truth or Dare and Naked Twister.

Warnings: The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may make you think you are whispering when you are not.

The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may cause you to tell your friends over and over again that you love them.

Consumption may cause you to think you can sing, or it may create the illusion that you are tougher, smarter, faster and better looking than most people.

Please feel free to share this important medical information! And remember,

**LIFE IS A CABERNET OLD CHUM!**

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## Book Exchange

Please help us to "clear the decks" of our stock of books - It would be helpful if you could take 2/3 books each and donate these to your local charity shop.

Please note this is an EXCHANGE not a way to get rid of large quantities of unwanted books!!  
Please donate no more than 2 books at a time, unless taking away a similar amount.

Please only donate books in Good Clean Condition.

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## KEEP YOURSELVES AND OTHERS SAFE

Please continue to wear face coverings during our meetings. Hand sanitising gel is available on entry.  
Do not gather in large groups. If a queue develops please keep at a safe distance. Thank you, but  
please do not stack the chairs at the end of the meeting they have to be sanitised before stacking away.

[www.u3asites.org.uk/north](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/north)



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*A Rather Beautiful Photograph taken in Birkenhead Park by Corinne*



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## *And finally,*

I hope that you are all enjoying more freedom and are keeping well!

It does seem as though the world is going through a period of change and with the news around Putin's activities, many will be facing great hardship. On top of Covid which has caused so many problems around the world, the Russian attack on Ukraine could not have come at a worse time. Plans to put sanctions on Russia will not help Ukraine in the short term but nations around the world are united in their disgust of Putin's actions and there is huge determination to try to avert disaster and support people as much as possible.

We must try to be optimistic and help where we can, with funds, with kindness to those driven out of their country and with our prayers.

Regarding our U3A things are returning to a more even keel. Regretfully we have lost a number of members during lockdown and could do with recruiting some to replace them. If you have friends who are newly retired (or not), do tell them about us; as always they will be made very welcome.

As always I ask you to send me any news that you think might be of interest to members. I hope that you find the newsletter useful and if you have any suggestions of anything else you would like included, do please let me know.

My best wishes to you all,

*Eliane Davie - Editor*



