



March Newsletter

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

A Date to Remember: 27th. April 2023 - Our Big AGM

It is in every Members interest to attend this meeting. Several Members of our Committee are nearing the end of their tenure. Needless to say, they will have to be replaced, in order for our U3A to continue as a functioning concern.



I am sure that amongst our Members there are some who could help us solve this problem. Given the date of our AGM there is enough time for you to consider joining the Committee. We really need your help for our U3A to survive.

I thank you in anticipation.

Something Different: Reasons Why English is Weird

1. The bandage was wound around the wound.
2. The Farmer was used to produce produce.
3. The tip was so full that it had to refuse refuse.
4. We must polish the Polish furniture.
5. He could lead if he could get the lead out.
6. The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
7. Since there is no time like the present he thought it was time to present the present.

8. A base was painted on the head of the bass drum.
9. When shot at the Dove dove into the bushes.

Kind Regards

Alan Harding - Chairman

BRIAN'S MUSINGS



March is the month of the Vernal Equinox, at which time the days and nights are of equal length. Having lived through eighty-seven of such I am still a little surprised to find that the event brings with it an element of surprise. How did we get here? Winters bring their own trials and tribulations and the struggle to free ourselves from the aegis of this inclement season can seem interminable, then suddenly we are at last finally free.

The equinox speaks of balance and equilibrium, of a time in which seasonal conflict is, for the moment, on hold. The stage is set for a new order of potential growth and we watch with eager anticipation as it begins to unfold. The bulbs, corms and rhizomes that have survived the winter, awaken to repeat and augment the welcome forms of previous years, making an assured contribution to what should be a well-adjusted and ordered ecology.

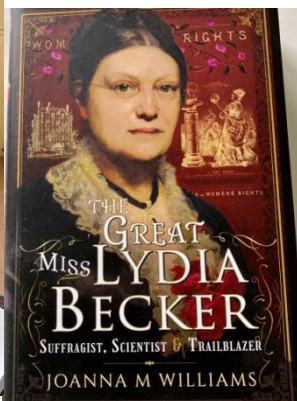
Alas! We cannot reliably make the same assumptions concerning the contributions that we ourselves make. Who knows what forms and patterns of behaviour humanity are likely to contribute as the new season unfolds? Nature allows for conflict and in doing so makes appropriate adjustments that allow for life forms to achieve their optimum expression. Humanity, in repeating genetically imprinted algorithms can often find itself lacking as we fail to adapt to the rapidly changing conditions in which we find ourselves. An increase in population and the competitive demand on planetary resources that this engenders renders us extremely vulnerable to our own needs, demands and insecurities. Chronic conflict is inevitable.

Politics, science, theology, education and cultural norms, together with the handful of people who actually own and run the planet, will no doubt try to adapt and adjust, each from their own particular position but it is unlikely that anything balanced and harmonious will be achieved in a hurry. Meanwhile I cannot help but wonder what can be done by individual effort that will not actually exacerbate the struggle for survival already well established. Bingo! - I can create my own, personal, internal, conflict-free zone. To do so does not require permission from the local council or the government or even family and friends. All I need to do is create an ego-free space within my own psyche. When motivated by fear of loss and failure, it is only too easy to identify the enemy as being some external force, power or influence – there is no shortage of candidates, but unfortunately identifying enemies places us in the role of the wronged warrior or the hapless victim and such identities are very expensive to maintain and largely ineffective.

Conflict-free zones are certainly needed, though one has to admit that they are not always practical. On occasion one might even feel compelled to take sides and join in the fight. Individuals who become aware of the possibility of creating a place of pause have the capacity to contribute an energy that is capable of healing the wounds everywhere apparent, created by the interminably competitive struggle to survive. An ounce of honey, we are told, catches more flies than a tonne of gall. As a metaphor this is highly appropriate as honey has a number of healing qualities. As a metaphor for human behaviour it offers us the ability to hold, in conscious awareness, the tension generated by opposing forces, without judgment or condemnation - even where fault is egregiously apparent. In a conflict free zone we can simply see and be. Few, if any will be able to spend more than moments in such a state but we should not forget the healing power of the 'ounce of honey.' With practice one might not only find that it is possible to spend longer in 'the zone' but also, having used less energy by not joining in the fight for survival we actually feel so much better; one might even have given the immune system a boost – both personal and planetary. At a time when we are being encouraged to be energy aware It is worth noting that personal, conflict-free zones actually *create* energy and offer us an invaluable place of refuge.

Brian Gill

Talk at the meeting on February 16th by Joanna Williams



The talk given by Joanna Williams on the great suffragist, Lydia Becker, was excellent. I think everyone would agree that it was informative and interesting, particularly as few of us had heard of Lydia, a Manchester woman who preceded the suffragettes of later note. She really prepared the ground for Emmeline Pankhurst's later movement in 1903. Lydia was born in Manchester in 1827 and died in Aix-les-Bains, France in 1890. She

was also an amateur scientist, interested in Biology and astronomy as well as founding the Woman's Suffrage Journal between 1870 and 1890. Joanna has written a book about her which was on sale at the U3A meeting. Ed.

TEA AND COFFEE ROTA OCTOBER TO JULY 2023

Please contact Joan Benton on 0151 608 6226 if you would like to change your duty date.

2nd March

Poppy Lewis

Sue Berry

16th March

Hilary Robinson

Maureen Oldham

30th March

Barbara Baker

Kathy Sullivan

13th April

Joyce Roberts

Jean Skillicorn

Beryl Davies

27th April

Norma Finlayson

Ann Greenhalgh

11th May

Brenda George

Maureen Jones

25th May

Greig Roberts

John Roberts

8th June

Mary Hamilton

Gwyn Thomas

22nd June

Elizabeth Harding

Sylvia Hunt



6th July

Barbara Riley

Marian Jackson

(so far) Speakers 2023

16th March 2023: Roger Devonside: 'Devil Wing Walker'

13th April 2023: David Hearn: 'Wirral Peninsula'

11th May 2023: Rob Dolphin: 'Friends of Flaybrick'

8th June 2023: Pauline Roberts: Travel, holidays

2023 Social meetings

March 2nd Colin's Quiz

March 30th DVD: Cammell Laird's Old Ships and Hard Ships.

April 27th Colin's Quiz

May 25th DVD: Liners and Launches

. Colin Stredder

Lunch Group Dates

Colin Shredder

21st March 2023 The Basset Hound, 107 Barnston Road, Thingwall.CH61 1AS

18th April 2023 The Kings Arm, Kings Lane, Bebington. CH63 8NR.Pest

16th May 2023 Pesto, 50 Dibbinsdale Road, Bromborough. CH63 0HJ.

20th June 2023 Three Stags, Church Road, Bebington. CH63 3EA.

18th July 2023 AFTERNOON TEA. Venue to be arranged.



Group News

A Book and a Glass of Wine: Judith Whaley

Meet on last Thursday of month. The group is full at the moment.



Amateur Astronomy

Paul Cullen, Judith Wylie

Paul will inform members when an interesting event is due.



Bridge: Tony Swarbrick bridge@oxtonu3a.co.uk

Meetings will be in "The Cabin" at Trinity and are held on 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays each month, 10.15am to 12.30. Tony will inform group members of meeting dates during periods when he will be away on usual days. (Mainly in March)
We meet to play friendly relaxed bridge and new members are always welcome.



Book Club: Mary O'Neill

Meetings take place on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 2pm. The next meeting is on March 14th. Mary has room for one or two more members; anyone interested should contact Tony Swarbrick our Group Co-ordinator.



Lunch Circle: Colin Stredder

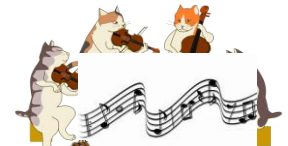
The Lunch Circle meets on the 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 12.45 for 1pm lunch. The next meeting is on March 21st at the Bassett Hound, 107 Barnston Rd., Thingwall. CH61 1AS



Music Appreciation:

Paul Cullen

The next meeting will be on March 6th at Paul's house. Bring some music you like along. Meetings are now on the 1st Monday of the month 2-4pm.



Walking Group:

The next walk – no news yet; to be advised.

Art Group Bernadette Hamilton Cottam.

March 15th – A presentation on Van Gogh by Bernadette Hamilton in the Session Room at TWPG.



Drawing Group: The next meeting will be on Friday, March 3rd in the Cabin, from 10am to 12.

The Play Reading: Eliane Davie

The Group meets at Eliane's house on the second Tuesdays of the month at 10am- 12.30pm. The next meeting is on March 14th when we will be reading "Billy Liar" by Keith Waterhouse & Willis Hall.



Craft Group ! Joan Benton

Meetings take place on the 4th Monday of each month at her home; next meeting is on March 27th. Places on this group are full at the moment.



Nordic Walking, Corinne Whitham

Meets every week at 10am Tuesdays at the Visitor Centre in Birkenhead Park. If you can't come every week simply come when available, as often or as little as suits. Open to all, why not give it a try? A pair of poles is essential, standard walking ones will do to start. Lightweight walking shoes or trainers are best. Expect to walk for one hour at a smart pace.



Scrabble: Joan Perfect

The group is now full.

Walking Group

Circular Walk round Chester on February 24th



Our February walk around Chester, led by Tony Swarbrick, was very enjoyable. The weather stayed dry for us and our walk followed a circular route, taking in part of the canal path and crossing the river over the metal bridge where the pleasure boats ply their trade during holiday periods. We lunched at a lovely old pub where they served many varieties of real ale and afterwards walked back to the station via the Park. Many thanks Tony for organising a very pleasant day! Ed.

Art Appreciation Group - Visit to Lady Lever Art Gallery on February 15th, led by Steve Cottam. Pre Raphaelite paintings.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

/Summary of Main themes by Steve:

The presentation took place at the Lady Lever Art Gallery in Port Sunlight. After coffee (and a few cakes!) we began our tour of the gallery's Pre Raphaelite collection. Following a brief introduction to the Brotherhood, founded in 1848, and its three main artists, Holman Hunt, Millais and Rossetti, we looked first at pictures by Rossetti and Millais. The Rossetti, a highly symbolic religious piece called "The Blessed Damozel" is based on his poetry and the Millais work is "Bubbles", famous for its use in Pears' soap adverts.

Next we proceeded to look at Millais' "Sir Isumbras at the Ford" with its theme of chivalry and an almost photographic quality; then his "Apple Blossom" with thoughts of the fragility of youth and life itself (also linking to the theme of "Bubbles")

We then met the final member of the PRB (Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood) trio, William Holman Hunt, who stayed true to the Brotherhood's ideals until his death, through two of his pictures, "The Scapegoat" and "May Morning on Magdalen Tower". Very different works; "The Scapegoat" (for which he visited Palestine for two years) being linked to the Jewish tradition of placing the sins of the people onto a living creature (with its subsequent adoption by Christianity) and "May Morning," (a large depiction of a ceremony which still takes place), with a number of eminent singers and musicians depicted in actual portrait. We looked at the vibrant colours and painting in the natural style along with the detailed figures.

The rest of the journey around the Lady Lever Gallery concentrated on the works of Millais. He had several phases in his life: a fantastic piece produced when he was just 18 and moving into realms of the PRB ("Cymon and Iphigemia"), his full PRB years, ("The Black Brunswickers") and a couple of later works when he had moved into portraiture and landscape work. These being "An Idyll of 1745" showing an English boy playing the pipe for some Scottish girls, (fraternisation which was not wise at the time) and "Lingering Autumn" with its Scottish landscape reflecting his love of the country. Like the 1745 depiction, the "Black Brunswickers" also tackles ideas which may seem controversial; that of the call up for military service and the fact that the girl depicted in the picture may have sympathies for the man's enemy.

In the time we had we were able to look at about 10 pictures in this world class collection of Pre-Raphaelite art tucked away in a delightful corner of Wirral. If you have not been, then go as soon as you can; there's much more to see than these pictures and you can always enjoy the café and gift shop. **Steve Cottam**

Lady Lever Gallery

Our thanks to Steve for an enjoyable and informative morning and to Bernadette for organising it. Ed.



Art Appreciation Programme - Bernadette Hamilton

March 15th -Trinity with Palm Grove

Van Gogh: - Presentation by Bernadette Hamilton

April 19th - Trinity with Palm Grove

Paula Rego: Presentation by Bernadette Hamilton

May 17th - World Museum Liverpool

Return of the Gods Exhibition: Led by Bernadette Hamilton

June 21st - Walker Art Gallery Liverpool

Renaissance Rooms: Led by Bernadette Hamilton

July 19th – To be arranged

Please make a note in your diaries

Corinne Whitham with her Nordic Walking Group

Corinne would like to remind you that the Group meets every Tuesday at 10am outside the Visitor Centre in Birkenhead Park. She doesn't mind if you can't come every week but do try it. As you can see below, it is fun and great exercise without being overtaxing. (See above in Group News & photo below)



Photo by Corinne Whitham

After walk coffee!



Books and Jigsaws



Thank you everyone for thinning down the books and jigsaw collections; they are at a much more manageable number now and we can return to bringing in books and jigsaws for exchange again. In the interest of not getting stock in excess of storage space again, please keep to only bringing the number of books that you take – it seems to work really well!

Friendly Ear

If you know of any member who is sick, in hospital or in need of a friendly chat please let Mary Hamilton or Dot Matthews know. They will contact them to see whether they need help and send cards (where applicable)



And finally

Firstly may I wish all our Irish and Welsh members a happy St.Patrick's Day and St. David's day respectively!

You will have noticed that we have asked you all to consider volunteering to come on Committee at the AGM in April; it is not far off and we need to think ahead. We will have two vacancies on Committee this year, while next year the positions of Chairman and Secretary will become vacant and if we are unable to fill these places our U3A Group could fold. Anyone interested but unsure about whether they could manage, be assured that you would be assisted initially and if you speak to a Committee member the jobs will be explained to you.

I myself am looking for someone who could take over as Editor of the newsletter towards the end of this year. It would take up to three months possibly to hand it over after working in tandem for a while to learn the ropes. I have been Editor since summer of 2016 and enjoy doing the job; however, I am not getting any younger and feel that a replacement is in order!

Eliane Davie - Editor

