

May Newsletter

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I would like to start by thanking Steve Cottam for stepping in at such short notice when the booked Speaker failed to arrive, and for giving us such an interesting talk on "Bus and Tram Travel of a Bygone Age on The Wirral" It was very well received by all.

Elizabeth and I will be unable to attend the AGM on the 26th April, as we will be flying to San Francisco on that day. We will be visiting family and friends in both San Francisco and Seattle. More importantly we will be visiting Elizabeth's sister Donna who is in her 91st year and recently suffered a stroke. It will be their first reunion in 14 years.

I sincerely thank Tony Swarbrick, who will be chairing the AGM meeting on April 26th in my absence.

On a Lighter Note:

It is impossible to lick your elbow.

When you sneeze your heart stops for a millisecond.

It is physically impossible for Pigs to look up into the sky.

The "sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep's sick" is said to be the hardest tongue twister in the English language.

"Rhythm" is the longest English word without a vowel.

What do bullet proof vests, fire escapes, windscreen wipers & laser printers have in common? They were all invented by Women.

Wishing you all a successful AGM.

Alan Harding – Chairman

BRIAN'S MUSINGS



'Now is the month of Maying' goes a traditional song that I have known about and accepted as part of my birth culture for as long as I can remember; strange that I have never actually done it. There are a great many activities in which my fellow human beings indulge and from which I seem to have been excluded. I missed out on 'Maying', whatever it involves and it never seemed to manifest in any of the locations in which I subsequently found myself. Now it is almost certainly too late. I cannot imagine it taking place in a shopping mall, on line or via social media. Maypoles and dancing were probably involved as too was dabbling in the dew after a night spent in the woods. Fertility certainly had something to do with it.

As a transpersonal Psychologist I have to acknowledge that, one way or another, I have been culturally deprived. By way of recompense I gave some serious scholarly attention to the symbolism and significance of the maypole – a most rewarding study – so much so that I shared as much as I could with my study groups and where possible would even set up an actual pole for them to dance and weave patterns around – leaving the fertility bits for them to manage elsewhere. The participants were well aware of the density of power and meaning that potentially accompanied this ancient ritual. They wanted very much to be able to 'braid the maypole' and thereby connect to some extent with their ancestral past but alas they could not; having a professor of mathematics in the group did not help.

Our minds and bodies no longer co-ordinate appropriately and by now, probably do not need to. Most people seem to get everything that they need via a smart-phone. No need to dance complicated patterns in a circle and weave patterns in the air with ribbons. Press a button on a key-pad and you can have everything delivered without further effort.

I find myself in an interesting situation in this regard. I clearly missed out on the culture in which 'Maying' was a meaningful enactment, (the church forbade all but a watered down version for pre-pubescent children) and I have yet to feel moved to acquire a smart phone. Fortunately I am of an age at which none of this really matters. Watching the world going on around me provides all the excitement, stimulation and interest I could possibly wish for.

I mention all this because, as things stand, we are clearly suffering collectively from a paucity of meaning. Second-hand and theoretical meaning, via the media and the dramatized lives of others, is not enough. Direct participation, face to face, is essential. Key-pad meaning is seriously affecting our mental health.

May is a month dense with energy and significance at a time when the collective psyche is undergoing profound changes. In an age of instant gratification, we are impoverished. The great death and rebirth cycles by which all planetary events are

regulated pay little heed to our push-button economy. The great cosmological dramas, of which we are an integral part, prevail, whether or not we are aware of their enactment. But might life not be more meaningful if we could find ways of participating with a degree of conscious awareness?

Artificial Intelligence deprives us of the need to be intellectually and emotionally involved whilst at the same time assuring us that we are. This can leave us feeling confused, uncertain and disadvantaged. We are not alone. We need to take every opportunity that offers - and create some of our own – to be together in a meaningful way and share the simple fact of being. U3A makes an invaluable contribution in this respect.

Brian Gill

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.

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



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

8th June 2023: Pauline Roberts: Travel, holidays

2023 Social meetings

April 27th **AGM** -+

Colin's Quiz

May 25th DVD: Liners and Launches

. Colin Stredder

Lunch Group Dates

Colin Shredder

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.



As Colin is recuperating after his operation he will be unable to organize the Lunch Group dates. He expects to return to normal activity after our August break, in September. A list was on the table but only a couple of people signed up for the May 16th lunch, so as there are insufficient numbers in Colin's absence it will be cancelled for now, resuming in September. Ed.

Group News

A Book and a Glass of Wine: Judith Whaley

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



Bridge: Tony Swarbrick

Meetings will be in "The Cabin" at Trinity and are held on 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays each month, 10.15am to 12.30. We meet to play friendly relaxed bridge and new members are always welcome. Next meetings are on May 10th & 17th.



Book Club: **Mary O'Neill**

Meetings take place on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 2pm. The next meeting is on May 9th. 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 May 16th at 'Pesto,' 50 Dibbinsdale Rd., Bromborough.CH63 OSJ. **These meetings have been paused until Colin has fully recovered from his operation; he hopes to return in September. He is now home from hospital and having physiotherapy.**



Music Appreciation: **Paul Cullen**

There will then be a break until September. Meetings are now on the 1st Monday of the month 2-4pm.



Walking Group:

Gwyneth and Corinne led a walk in the Freshfield area with lunch to follow on April 28th; see below. Walks for June and July will be posted later in the month.

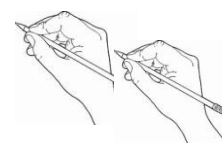
Art Group **Bernadette Hamilton**

The next meeting is on May 17th at the World Museum, Liverpool, to view: 'The Return of the Gods Exhibition' led by Bernadette Hamilton.



Drawing Group: **Pauline Horner**

The next meeting will be on May 5th when we will be sketching outside the church. Please bring sketch book, pencils and a folding chair (if possible). 10am to 12.



The Play Reading: **Eliane Davie**

The Group meets at Eliane's house on the second Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on May 9th at 10am. We will be reading: "The Killing of Sister George" a comedy by Frank Marcus.



Craft Group ! **Joan Benton**

Meetings take place on the 4th Monday of each month at her home; next meeting is on May 22nd. 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.



Rock Park Walk

Rock Park: Walk and talk on May 15th is now fully booked but another Group (for 15) will be arranged in June. Lunch at the Refreshment Rooms will follow the walk. No charge but suggested donation of £5.

Art Appreciation Programme - **Bernadette Hamilton**

May 17th - World Museum Liverpool

Return of the Gods Exhibition: Led by Bernadette Hamilton.

June 21st – Presentation on Paula Rego given by Bernadette Hamilton.



July 19th – To be arranged. **Please make a note in your diaries**

Steve Cottam Saves the Day

Sent in by **Corinne Whitham**

“ Hi Eliane

I got this picture of Steve doing his excellent “off the cuff” talk about the history of Wirral buses when our booked Speaker didn't turn up for the meeting on April 13th. You might like it for the Newsletter.

Corinne”

Thank you Corinne, Steve certainly came up trumps talking fluently for some time without any preparation! Many thanks Steve. Ed



Walking Group



Gwyneth and Corinne led a walk in the Freshfield area followed by lunch on

April 28th. See below.

Walking Group: April 28th

The Group enjoyed fair weather for their walk round the Freshfield area; although a little overcast it remained dry and mild. Gwyneth Williams and Corinne Whitham led a most enjoyable circular route through countryside, woodland and sandhills, with only a short part on pavements to reach the pub in Formby, where we ate a hearty lunch. These outings are always sociable, friendly events and recommended for new members as a chance to meet people in a relaxed way. After lunch the sun shone brightly as we took a short walk back to Freshfield Station to catch our train home!



This painting is A Homage to Vincent Van Gogh by Pauline Horner, who leads the Drawing Group and has had her paintings shown in amateur Exhibitions around Merseyside.



Pauline has painted pictures in various styles; this one she produced shortly after Bernadette's excellent talk on the works of Van Gogh. I think she has captured the style of some of his later work particularly in the colours she has chosen. Ed.

Art Appreciation Group

Unfortunately I was away for a few days and missed the group visit to the Williamson Gallery but heard very good reports of the Photographic Exhibition. The Group always enjoy these visits organised by Bernadette which are also a social occasion commencing with coffee in the cafe there. The Williamson is always worth a visit and has many interesting exhibitions, frequently showing work by local artists as well. It has a welcoming feel to it and I really recommend popping in when you are nearby. Ed.

AGM 2023 April 27th

Tony Swarbrick chaired the AGM this year, in lieu of Alan Harding, our Chairman, who was unable to attend as he and his wife, Elizabeth, were in San Francisco visiting her sister, who is ninety one and has suffered a serious stroke Apologies for absence were sent by several members who were unable to attend due to various reasons. The meeting went smoothly and the new Committee was voted in. We have been having difficulty in finding members willing to stand for Committee and it was pointed out that unless we can keep the spaces filled, particularly for the main

positions of Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary and Group Leader, we will be unable to continue running the Group as these are obligatory.

Votes of thanks were given for retiring officers, including: Gwyneth Williams, who has completed nine years as Membership Secretary; the maximum time allowed under the rules. Ken Jackson, who has handed Treasurer over to Margaret Cullen after serving for six years, (This is two terms of three years each). Colin Shredder, who has served as Speaker Secretary and Social Secretary, (as well as leading the lunch Group). We are sorry to lose them on Committee but welcome those who are stepping in to take their places. Next year's AGM will see Alan and Elizabeth retiring from Chairman and Secretary and it is imperative that we start thinking about who will take their places if we want to continue with the Group.

Welcome to Pauline Horner, who will be taking over from Gwyneth as Membership Secretary, Ken Jackson will assist in taking the cash. (He will also take over the Walking Group). Welcome also to new member, Pamela Southall who has bravely joined Committee with a view to organising Speakers. Brien Jones, who has also joined the Committee, having been co-opted on last year. Tony Swarbrick will continue to serve as Group Organiser (and numerous other jobs he has taken on) Eliane will serve for another year but then wants to come off Committee and hand over the Newsletter (which she has done since 2016). If anyone wishes to take over the newsletter please contact me so that we can work together to make the changeover as smooth as possible. Eve Felton will continue as Deputy Groups' Organiser on Committee. At the moment we still have not got anyone to replace Barbara Lloyd and Barbara Winstanley who did an amazing job over many years, in organising Group Outings. In the meantime if anyone would like to take it on we would love to hear from them OR if a couple of friends would like to organise an outing on a one off basis please talk to Committee.

Covid forced many changes but we have a great membership and would love to get things back to where they were **with your help**. So let's look forward to a happy year ahead.



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

We have quite an exciting month to look forward to, what with Liverpool entertaining the European Song Contest for Ukraine and the Coronation of Charles 111!

I expect that many of us will be glued to the TV to watch such a historical moment with all the pageantry. Most of us will have some memory of Queen Elizabeth 11 being crowned and many will have watched it on a small black and white TV and marvelled at history being made with the young queen being crowned; wondering how she coped with the weight of it!

This time we are fortunate to be able to see it all in colour and on much larger TV sets; I imagine families and friends will get together, much as they did last time, to wish our King and Queen a happy reign.

I hope that you enjoy the day and that the sun shines!

Eliane Davie - Editor



