



March 2025

Newsletter

Chair's Message

Hello Everyone

With a little bit of sunshine over the last couple of days I'm starting to think that Spring and the warmer weather might at last be on the way. It certainly feels as if we've had a long winter!

We as a u3a have a lot to look forward to, a great programme of speakers thanks to Pam Southall, our Speaker Secretary, some interesting trips out thanks to our wonderful Wil Edwards who took up the challenge and at long last some development with our Interest Groups, thanks to Margaret Wycherley stepping up as Group Coordinator. I feel as if we are going from strength to strength.

However, we could still build on Eliane Davie's fine work putting together a programme for our Social meetings where individual members stood up and spoke about their lives and life experiences. If you think that you have something that you could share, please speak to any of the committee members, we can offer help and support. I know that it is not easy standing up in front of your peers and sharing - many years ago I gave a talk about my visit to The Philippines, and the school I attended which supported children with cleft palates and other physical disabilities, I was passionate about their need for support but it didn't make the delivery any easier for me!

On a personal note, many of you will know that 18 months ago I adopted Rex a rescue cat who turned out to be a very vocal Bengal. Rex has been very unwell with Sepsis and I thought I'd lost him. But he's battled through despite the poor prognosis and is almost back to his normal self! I realised that I had got quite fond of him in the short time he's been Chez Whitham so when you see me smiling at meetings, you'll know why! (Even Chairs need someone at home to talk to!)

So hopefully with the warmer weather on the way we will all have something to look forward to, Speaker meetings, trips out, Interest Groups and a warm group of friends.

Corinne

Slave Ships of Parkgate & Neston

Anthony Annakin-Smith



Anthony is a local historian whose research often focuses on maritime history – and his presentation looked at Parkgate and Neston’s many links to the slave trade, including accounts of the voyages of many of the locally-connected ships involved in the ‘triangular trade’.

British manufactured goods would be transported to be sold in Africa where hundreds of captured men, women and children would be packed in to the decks to be sold in America or the West Indies to do back breaking work on plantations. The empty ships would load goods produced from these plantations such as cotton, rum and sugar to be taken back to England.

We saw maps and pictures showing where shipbuilding took place in Parkgate. Although not directly built for the slave trade – ships built for other cargoes could be renamed and transformed to carry enslaved people in barbaric conditions. Local people including brewers and merchants invested in shares in these ships including one called ‘Neston’.

Other locally owned ships such as the ‘Eadith’ and ‘Good Intent’ completed at least 17 voyages each. The risks faced by the investors included bad weather and attack by France whilst the terrible conditions aboard for the human cargo led to a high mortality rate, tragically not thought of as particularly exceptional.

Slave ships carried millions of people from Africa to the New World and this talk, which focused on the locally-linked ships that plied this trade, adds a new dimension to the story for those who were present.

Ed.

Three Parks Walk

Monthly walking group

I always enjoy a walk on a dry day and with the weather being forecast as dry but cold I ventured out and met the rest of the group at Central Station. We travelled by train to St Michael's to start our walk around 3 of Liverpool's parks. The first part took us through the Festival Gardens, then along the riverside before we reached Otterspool



Some of us needed help to get by the muddy entrance onto Aigburth Road where we used the underpass to take us across to Sefton Park. The Palm House was a welcome break before we moved on to have coffee in the park café.



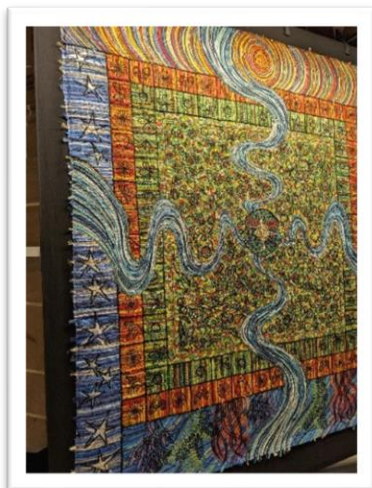
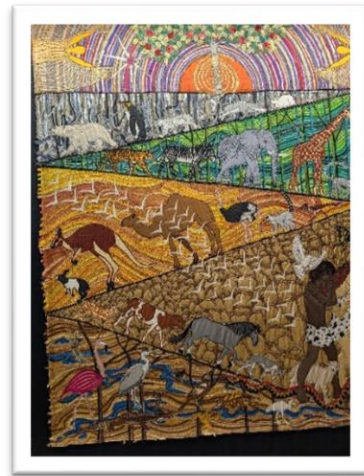
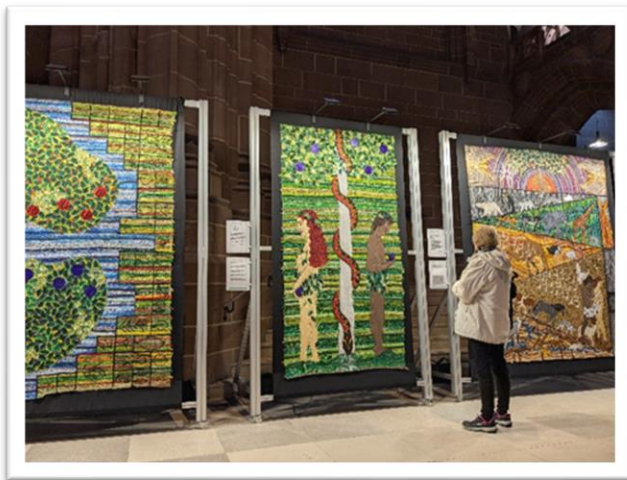
Refreshed, we set off for the next walk on to Princes Park and out to Princes Road and the walk back through the Georgian Quarter into the city centre.



Ken leads a walk around a similar route each year but this is the first one I have done. Although I am familiar with each park individually, I've never seen them as part of the one walk before, so this was a bit of a revelation for me. A very enjoyable day spent walking in lovely parks and reminiscing about Liverpool with great company.

Passing the Anglican Cathedral at the end of our walk several of us grabbed the opportunity to view the wonderful art and textile exhibition there.

25 Million Stitches. Admission Free. On display till 2nd March.



Art Appreciation



Bernadette took us on the 'Piero Trail' for our latest meeting. Many can name several Renaissance artists in this period, but after a fairly recent re-discovery Piero della Francesca (c.1410-1492) has earned his place in the roll call.

We heard how he travelled from his hometown Sansepolcro, to Arezzo, Florence, Rome and the east coast of Italy working on commissions for churches and private individuals. He is known as a mathematician who added landscapes and architectural forms to give incredible perspective and depth in his paintings. Bernadette, as always, put together her research with numerous images to give a very enjoyable and educational presentation.

Nordic Walkers

Most of Corinne's group of Nordic walkers enjoying a well-earned lunch (a late Christmas celebration) at Lunya in Liverpool.



SPEAKER MEETINGS – July 2025

- 13th Mar. [A History of Wirral Hospitals.](#) Gavin Hunter
- 10th Apr. [Jessie Gavin- Gentleman Jack of Oxton.](#) Rowena Beighton-Dykes
- 8th May. [The Olympic Games - A View from the Athlete Village.](#) D. Mottram
- 5th Jun. [Creation of a Garden.](#) Michael Corfe
- 3rd Jul. [Elvis - That's the Way it Was](#) Barry Humphreys

Pamela Southall

[Trips out 2025](#)

[Saltaire](#)

Thursday 3rd April

Coach approx. £18.00

Entrance is free.

Payment required at the next two meetings

13th and 27th March

Saltaire Village was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2001.

There are shops, places to eat, wonderful architecture and a lovely park.

[Bodnant Gardens – Thursday 15th May](#)

(possibly including a visit to Betws-y-Coed)

Coach approx. £14.00

Entrance £18.00

National Trust members – free entrance.

A world-famous garden, home to National Collections and Champion Trees
80 acres including formal gardens, shrub-filled glades, meadows and woods,
dells and water gardens.

[Chirk Castle and Shrewsbury – Thursday 26 June](#)

Coach approx. £17.00

Castle entrance £10.00

National Trust members – free entrance.

Magnificent medieval fortress of the Welsh Marches

Tea and Coffee Rota

13 March	Barbara Baker Kathy Sullivan
27 March	Poppy Lewis Richard Lewis
10 April	Sylvia Hunt Norah Murray
24 April	Mary Hamilton Joan Beedles
8 May	Ellen Wilson Dorothy Matthews
22 May	Hilary Robinson Maureen Oldham
5 June	Greig Roberts John Roberts
19 June	Hazel Stoll Eileen Slater

Would you like to help out and get to know more members? Please contact Joan on 0151 608 6226 or 07568563329

Joan Benton

GROUP NEWS



Meet Margaret Wycherley. I'm sure we are all grateful to Margaret for taking on the position as our new Group Coordinator, and wish her success in growing our groups.

Do you have an interest or hobby you could share? A suggestion for a new group? Advice and assistance is available to set up and run a group.

Contact Margaret at: groupcoordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk

Art Appreciation

Held in the Session room in TWPG. 3rd Wednesday each month. 10am for 10.15 start. Next meeting 19th March. Contact Bernadette – <mailto:art@oxtonu3a.co.uk>

Natter and Read

Meets at 10.30. – 12.00. in Wallasey at Joyce Woosley's home near Wallasey Town Hall on Thursday following the first u3a meeting in the month. Next meeting: 20th March Contact Joyce: <mailto:book2@oxtonu3a.co.uk>

Book Group 1

Meets in Oxton at Val Edward's house on the second Tuesday in the month. Full at the moment. Contact: book1@oxtonu3a.co.uk

Craft Group

The meeting is on the last Monday of the month 2.00 – 4.00. At Joan Benton's house. Contact: craft@oxtonu3a.co.uk

Lunch Group

Our lunch group hosted by Joan Benton is held monthly at the Refreshment Rooms. Numbers are limited so watch out at TWPG meetings for the signup sheet. This has proved to be a popular event so please let Joan know if you are not going to be attending once you have signed up. It is held on the third Wednesday in the month at 12:45 for 1:00pm.

Nordic Walking

Come and join Corinne's Nordic Walking Group every Tuesday at 10.00 am at Birkenhead Park visitor centre. We walk for an hour then have refreshments at the café. All year round.

Play Reading

2nd Tuesday monthly usually. Held at Eliane Davie's house. Full at the moment. Next meeting: 11th March. Reading 'Waiting in the Wings' by Noel Coward. 10.00am – 12.30
Contact Eliane: <mailto:playreading@oxtonu3a.co.uk>

Bridge Group and Rummikub

Bill Nock is the leader with Tony on hand to teach bridge to new members. Meets in the cabin at TWPG fortnightly from Wednesday 5th March at 10.00am

Walking Group

Usually 3rd Friday in month. <mailto:walks@oxtonu3a.co.uk>
Information and Sign-up sheet available in meetings

Invitation to a public lecture

2025 Festival of Neuroscience

The Liverpool Neuroscience Group would like to draw your attention to a public lecture they are hosting at the beautiful Liverpool Medical Institution on April 2nd.

This free, evening lecture, commencing at 18.30 with a welcome drink, will be given by retired Walton Centre neurologist Dr Andrew Larner. Further details and booking information can be found here:

<https://lng.org.uk/BYOB0204>

It is the opening event in a month long, neuroscience themed public engagement programme curated as part of the British Neuroscience Association's 2025 Festival of Neuroscience.

We hope it may be of interest to members.

Care of members

If you know of any member who is unwell, in hospital or in need of a card please let Mary Hamilton or Dot Matthews know.

Please give some info – a different type of card is required for someone who has a broken leg to someone who has had a major heart attack!

Also, a bit of information for sympathy cards is helpful.

marycare@oxtonu3a.co.uk

dotcare@oxtonu3a.co.uk

And finally.....

Thanks to Steve Cottam for his excellent proofreading, which he manages to fit in his busy schedule – much appreciated by me. Thanks also to Corinne for photos, groups leaders for sending updates and Carole Lapping for additional information.

Kathy Binns