



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

On the 5th October the Wirral U3A group which meets in the Williamson Art Gallery will celebrate its 30th anniversary. I am sure that you all would like to join me in congratulating the Wirral U3A on 30 years of successful existence. As many of you will know we have close links to Wirral U3A. Diane Adams, Wirral U3A Chairman and Derek Adams, Wirral U3A Treasurer and Webmaster, are both supportive members of our U3A. We can only hope that in 22 years time our U3A is still thriving like Wirral U3A, although I suspect at least some of us may not be around to witness it.

Congratulations to Wirral U3A on 30 years of active service to the third agers of Birkenhead!!

Colin Burkitt

LUNCH CIRCLE

20th October we are meeting at The Shrewsbury Arms, Claughton Firs, Oxton.

17th November we are meeting at The Refreshment Rooms, Bedford Road, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead.

Meet at 12.15 pm for 12.30pm in all cases.

SOCIAL OUTINGS

NOW BOOKING

Friday 18th December 2015 Christmas Lunch at Wirral Ladies Golf Club **LIMITED PLACES**

EVENT REMINDERS

Tuesday 6th October 2015 Guided Tour of Liverpool Everyman Theatre
Followed by optional lunch. Tour £5-00 **FULL**

THEATRE REMINDERS

Tuesday 13 October 2015 THE GLASS MENAGERIE Liverpool Playhouse 7-30 PM
Collect tickets & meet at Theatre - Booking closed

Thursday 19th November 2015 Le Corsaire – English National Ballet at Liverpool Empire
Matinee 2-30 pm Tickets £21-00 **Booking closed**

NEW

Wednesday 17 February 2016 MATTHEW BOURNE'S SLEEPING BEAUTY
Liverpool Empire Matinee Tickets £12-00

Full booking details available at meetings please see your social organisers at the back of the hall
OR e-mail barbara@oxtonu3a.co.uk

MEETINGS and SPEAKERS

Thursday 8th October 2015 William Boyce ' Anything that flies '
Thursday 22nd October 2015 Monica & The Creative Writing Group
5th November 2015 Colin Simpson - The Williamson Art Gallery
19th November 2015 Open Forum

Do you remember your Wedding Day?

At the Williamson Art Gallery, Heswall U3A members are going to display a selection of their wedding dresses. There will be a temporary exhibition running from mid October to 20th December. At present 11 dresses have been collected from members ranging from 1920s to 1990s with one exception - the 1940s (war years!!); Also exhibited will be photographs of members in their dresses and some interesting background information.



WALKING GROUP

FRIDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2015

A walk of just over 7.5 miles starting and finishing at Daresbury village near Warrington. We will be walking on a mixture of footpaths, fields, some minor roads and alongside a canal. The possibility of some muddy paths is possible depending on rainfall. There is a stop of approx. 30 minutes about half way at Walton Hall Park where toilets and a café are available, however, suggest that you bring a bottle of water to prevent dehydration during the walk.

Meet at the church at 10am to sort out car share for the journey to the start/finish. The drive to the start of the walk will take about 30 – 40 minutes. Free parking is available at the Lewis Carrol Centre, which is part of the parish church. Lunch will be at the Ring O' Bells pub in the village at around 3pm.

Please sign up to this walk at the Thursday meeting or email Gerry gerry@riley1.me.uk

FRIDAY 20TH NOVEMBER 2015

Sandra and Chris Lakin will be leading a walk in the West Kirby area with lunch in the Dee Hotel (Weatherspoons) at the finish.

FIRST AID COURSES

These were so successful in the North West last year that more have been arranged.

U3A members are charged £5. They may take along a friend or relative who is not U3A member - they will be charged £10. They will need your permission to use your membership. Anyone else i.e. the general public will be charged £30

Venue: St John Ambulance. Mather Avenue, Birkenhead CH43 1TS

Date	Time	Course reference	Max people
30 September 2015	10am till 1pm	MSY15G0334	14
05 October 2015	10am till 1pm	MSY15G0330	14
26 October 2015	10am till 1pm	MSY15G0333	14
11 November 2015	10am till 1pm	MSY15G0331	14
14 December 2015	10am till 1pm	MSY15G0332	14

HOW TO BOOK? The courses listed are exclusive to U3A members. To book, members should call the Training Department on 0161 443 0106 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday. Quote the course reference for the course you wish to attend and give your U3A membership number. Payment will be taken at the time of booking by credit or debit card. Confirmation of booking will be sent to you by email or post.

U3A Poetry Group

School-masterly he scans his eager school,
Presiding bird-like on the only stool,
Disdaining comfy chairs that line the room.
On A4 paper, pregnant poems loom.
Avoiding carefully the post-lunch snore,
Your ardent acolytes flock to the door,
Our steps converge on number thirty- nine
As to poetic muses we incline,
Keen to imbibe the wisdom that will flow
In both directions like an undertow.
'Recite, not read' dear Martin's mantra rules,
Ignoring weaker less discerning schools,
And, on the whole we manage to comply,
An eye on those refreshments by and by!
'Read with the ears' cried Hopkins, though he died
Before his unique voice could reach flood tide.
Poet or theme provides our monthly fare.
Under our company's collective glare
In close forensic detail, line by line,
Each nugget is extracted from the mine.
Each gem examined for a facet flow,
With scorned 'contrivance' swiftly shown the door!
Opinions are encouraged- what a range,
Though some may be considered rather strange!
Two hours intensive labour, no one bored,
Tea, coffee, biscuits our much- prized reward
As happily we congregate to bless
Martin, the architect of our success.

Paul Cullen 26-07- 2015

On Being Speaker Secretary

When I first came to U3A, not very long ago, I immediately saw it as something of value that I wanted to support; so when it was announced that there would be an open committee meeting that all could attend I duly turned up. Just to be supportive.

When it was suggested that I might actually be on the committee, (with my palpable lack of U3A experience,) I was a little surprised but thought that I might just manage to sit with a group of sympathetic people once in a while and offer an opinion on current issues. It was with a degree of shock and horror that I found myself designated 'Speaker Secretary'.

I really do not mind standing up in front of people and speaking. I have been doing it for much of my life. Given a role to play I'm happy to give it a go. I have played a mad scientist, an evil magician, a brothel madam, an evil lord, Miss Whiplash, Titania, a flapper and so on. The list goes on and on. Introducing a speaker once a month should be a doddle. But it isn't.

The post comes with lists of potential people who are prepared to speak to groups and institutions on a variety of subjects so it's just a matter of booking them in, or is it? The fact that people put themselves forward does not necessarily mean that they are actually up to the job. There have been some spectacular failures. A good speaker can take a dull subject and bring it to life, filling it with interest. A bad speaker can take a subject that is potentially full of interest and potential and kill it off. This is 'high risk' territory! One false move and we know where the blame is likely to fall. "Where ever did you find him!?" the more intrepid might say to my face. Others might just think it.

However there are ways round this dilemma so it's not for me the most pressing issue, that position is reserved for the telephone, with which I have a relationship verging on phobia. Left to my own devices I never initiate a call, though I am happy to answer them. Friends and family will bear witness to this. The problem goes as follows: if one calls before nine it will be too early, after nine people are out or busy, at mid-day until early afternoon people are having lunch, in the afternoon people are either busy again or resting (I opt for the latter whenever possible), from five to eight people are eating or relaxing or coping with domestic issues, anything later is an intrusion. So you see there is no good time to phone, and that is that.

As a psychologist and psychotherapist I should have sorted this one out long ago but I have not. For many years I lived with no neighbours, no electricity and no running water: very low tech! Telephones were never an issue. An exchange of information generally took about three weeks. It suited my temperament.

Now I have to phone total strangers, whose skills and abilities as speakers might be questionable and ask them to come to Oxton and Prenton U3A and speak to us in a year's time. It's the stuff of nightmares! It is not all bad though. I actually have a role, I am 'Speaker Secretary', and as long as I can remember that and stay within it, all is well; also

people like being asked to speak so they are immediately warm, obliging and friendly. Added to which, casting around amongst the people I already know, it is amazing the amount of experience and information there is out there within easy reach. There are also some very real issues and concerns about which we need to be informed and people willing and able to inform us so amazingly it all seems to be coming together and I might almost admit to enjoying myself, though I am bracing myself for the occasional dud speaker. Even then it is not all bad. For a pound we get tea or coffee, a biscuit, the company of quality people and an excellent place to meet. It's up to us to make the best of it.

Brian Gill

New Group Started in September

We all have stories to tell. Sad ones, funny ones, exciting ones, romantic ones

and, of course excruciatingly embarrassing ones! So how about writing some of them down for posterity – or even for yourself?

Mo Kermode started a Life Writing Course in September 2015

The Group meet in **The Cabin** on the **Second Tuesday** of the month Time: 1:30 to 3:30

There is a signup sheet on the Groups table at the back of the hall

SPANISH CONVERSATION

We have had a request from one of our members for a Spanish conversation group, so if there is any member who would be willing to lead such a group then we have members ready and waiting. If you are unsure about leading a group please have a chat with Judy Whaley she will be able to tell you what's required and give you her full support. E mail her at groupsleader@oxtonu3a.co.uk

Furthermore if any of our members have an idea for a new group or would like to start up a new group, again please contact Judy.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

It is nearly that time of year again, doesn't it come round quickly? Your annual membership of Oxton & Prenton U3A is due for renewal on 1st November 2015.

The first date for this will be Thursday 22nd October 2015. The cost is £12-00 per person. Because this is always a very busy time for Gwyneth our membership secretary at the desk, could you all please assist her by offering the correct money or make your cheques out in advance to Oxton & Prenton U3A.

Can I remind you all that your membership will cease unless you renew by 1st January 2016

A HILL BY ANY OTHER NAME-----

Explore inclines, synclines and anticlines in the beautiful county of Shropshire----



How many people would carry on reading let alone book a holiday which started like this? Of course these particular words weren't used and we were all well committed before the members of the walking group got the notes on the proposed holiday and walks. They were described as a 'a bit more hilly than our usual walks' varied terrain' 'fairly flat ' 'some undulations' and 'only a couple of steep bits ', but even so most of us felt a little trepidation about how well we would

cope with the itinerary, particularly as we had had torrential rain in the days before we set off.

We needn't have worried, our intrepid leaders Carol and Colin had everything organised in minute detail from the route to get to the hotel; the hotel itself (some people had four poster beds; corner baths; balconies and even walk-in wardrobes; with one couple who shall be nameless having almost everything); to the glorious weather and choice of walks

Of course there is no such thing as a free lunch we did have to pay for all this with a bucketful of sweat, a few twinges here and there in the muscles and joints; Colin's attacks of deafness when we were moaning and absorb historical facts about Ironbridge in order to fail miserably in the quiz. Last but not least we had to keep up our fluid intake by forcing ourselves to drink several pints of beer, so you can see it wasn't all a bed of roses.



Had we not taken up the challenge when it was thrown down we would have missed some of the best days of enjoyment we could ever experience, as other members of the walking group who went on our recent holiday will confirm. Over the four days we had wonderful



sunshine, excellent food, beautiful scenery; plenty of fresh air, healthy exercise and good company. Most of all we benefitted greatly from the time and effort put into planning, recceing; and sheer dedication to making sure we were happy. What a wonderful group of friends this U3A is—THANK YOU SO MUCH Carol and Colin for what you have put into it.

By the way a hill is described as---a natural mound smaller than a mountain I wonder how you would describe a mountain.

Brenda George

Gas, Galaxies and Gut Reactions

The Wonderful World of Science

- 09.30 Extracting Gas with Extreme Pressures and Underground Fires
- 11.00 Things that go Bang in the Night
- 13.30 Elucidating the Mysteries of the Universe through Gardening
- 15.00 How the Senses don't make Sense: The Multisensory World of Perception

4 Lectures to entertain, challenge, and inform.

Thursday 8th October 2015

9.30 am – 5.00 pm

Heswall Hall

Telegraph Road

Heswall

CH60 0AF

Admission per lecture £1.00

For further details contact Dr. Keith Foggin on 0151 625 4201 or keith.foggin@live.co.uk

THURSDAY 19th NOVEMBER 2015

We will be holding an open forum on Thursday 19th November at 10-00 am, please do try to come along and let us know how you feel about Oxton & Prenton U3A and give the committee some feedback.

We will be handing out questionnaires during the meetings prior to that date for you to complete and return. These questionnaires are entirely anonymous and will be very helpful for our future plans, please complete them and hand in.

For those of you who prefer it there is a copy of the questionnaire on the next and last page of this newsletter, please feel free to print it out yourself and return by 5th November. Thank you.

COME ALONG AND HAVE YOUR SAY

THIS IS YOUR U3A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Our communications

Do you use our website.....YES / NO

Do you read our newsletter.....YES/NO

Do you read the notices at our meetings.....YES / NO

Do you have any comments about our communications.....

Thursday Meetings

Do you normally attend speaker meetings.....YES / NO

Do you normally attend our social mornings.....YES / NO

What do you think of the venue.....

What speakers have been the best / worst for you.....

What social mornings have been the best / worst for you.....

Do you have any comments about the Thursday meetings.....

Groups

How many groups do you belong to.....

Do you have any comment about our groups.....

Social events and outings

How many social events have you been to in the last 12 months.....

What types of outings / events do you prefer.....

Any other comments

Please feel free to leave any comments about any items not included above.