



February Newsletter

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Thursday the 3rd February sees the resumption of our U3A meetings. I feel confident that they will continue unimpeded for the foreseeable future. Obviously we shall adhere to all Government Guidelines and rules, but I believe we will take all necessary precautions to protect ourselves and others.



WELL SAID:

This is one of the nicest articles I have read in awhile: no politics, no religion and no racial issues, just food for thought!

You know...time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young and embarking on my new life. Yet in a way, it seems eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams.

But here it is...the last quarter of my life and it catches me by surprise...how did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that I was only on the first quarter and the fourth quarter was so far off that I could not visualise it or imagine fully what it would be like. But, here it is...my friends are retired and getting grey... they move slowly and I see an older person now.

Some are in better and some worse shape than me...but, I see the great change. Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant...but, like me their age is beginning to show and we are now those older people that we used to see and never thought we would become.

Each day now, I find that just having a shower is a real target! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore... it is mandatory! Because if I don't, of my own free will...I fall asleep where I sit!

And so...now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do the things that I wish I had done but never did!! But, at least I know, though I am on the last quarter and I am not sure how long it will last... this I know, that when it is over on this Earth...it is over. A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I had not done...things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I am happy to have done. It is all in a lifetime.

So, if you are not on the last quarter yet, let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life do it quickly! Don't put things off too long. Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether you are on the last quarter or not!

You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one - live it well!

With most of the rules being lifted it does give a sense that, although not quite there yet, we are at the threshold of reclaiming our pre Covid lives. Let's not waste the lessons learnt from the experiences we have endured together; the small joys that it has taught us to appreciate. Watching the seasons change, the voice of a friend over the phone, watching out for each other, love of family,

Enjoy today! Do something enjoyable! Be happy!
Have a wonderful day.

Alan Harding – Chairman

Brian's Musings



I believe there are people out there, loose in the world, running marathons at the age of a hundred and sky-diving from aeroplanes past the age of ninety and I see in magazines aimed at the elderly, that there are whole groups of people, old enough to be great-great- grand-parents, wearing shorts, short sleeves and cheesy smiles, tramping for miles across unforgiving countryside by way of recreation. I gather that I am supposed to be impressed by this information and see these people as worthy exemplars. I am neither impressed nor intimidated. Alas! Whilst age and physiology may eventually produce skills and abilities and the trading of information contribute to a common fund of knowledge and culture these activities, of themselves, frequently fail to confer wisdom. I would define wisdom as

the ability to enhance relationships and make practical, good sense of experience within an extended ecology.

One cannot fail to be aware that, by the ages demonstrated in these examples, many of our fellow humans have long since given up material existence on planet earth in favour of something extra-dimensional. Being elderly and active, though it might be a cause for gratitude, is not, in itself, an occasion for showing off or boasting, nor does it necessarily serve as a useful example to those who, for any number of reasons, are unable to follow suit. I refuse to be intimidated. When much of my life has been spent feeling inadequate it is with some relief that the acquisition of years of planetary life is something that I can do in a way that best suits me personally, regardless of what others get up to.

Growing old is an art form. 'Art', I would define as the process of exploring the relatedness and creative potential of the energies and materials to hand. An aging physical body makes a good starting point. Though it might be tempting to use as a model the activities of youth, in so doing we are likely to deny ourselves the insight and understanding that can come from functioning in a body whose faculties have become impaired. It is possible to learn a great deal more from loss than from gain. Loss creates a void and confronts dependency. It can be devastatingly painful but with grim determination and a willingness to allow the over-riding authority of life itself to take over from the vanquished and diminished ego, we might discover that there are ways of living and being beyond our conditioned imagination.

When I think of all the time and energy I gave to creating and maintaining a viable, functioning identity, trying to 'get it right' and to 'fit in' and never quite measuring up, it is with enormous relief that I discover that the older I get the less it seems to matter. The fact that my inner space is just as palpably real and authentic as ever my outer life pretended to be becomes increasingly apparent. Our shared culture is full of examples of those who have suffered the loss of faculties that seemed vital to their existence and who were even so, able to find ways of sharing with us something of their originality, their insight and their wisdom.

I was discussing the problem of Christmas presents with my friend John. He has very little sight left and uses a guide dog. He wondered if he would ask for his sight back in time for the festive season and decided against it. His world now, surrounded by people with similar losses, is more real, richer and more fulfilled than ever it was when fully sighted. Have you noticed that people who seem to have everything can be surprisingly shallow and self absorbed. That was certainly John's experience. Yet there are some, who whilst seeming to own very little, are nevertheless extremely rich in being and one becomes enrich just be being with them.

One thing is certain; the longer we live the more losses we are going to experience and the more spaces we are going to find in our inner worlds. Important as memories can be we might try not to allow our inner spaces to be overly filled with the life that we have lived. There is a whole creation of Consciousness and Being to explore and it can be done without getting out of your chair.

Brian Gill

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!

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



All outstanding subs need to be paid by the end of this month - please pay by cheque!

Social Meetings 2022

- February 3rd 2022 DVD Merseyside at War 1939-1945
- March 3rd 2022 Colin's Quiz
- March 31st 2022 George Stevenson, retired MP and MEP, will give a light and entertaining talk about his experiences.

Speakers (so far) 2022

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 17 th February 2022 | Birkenhead Tramways | Rob Jones |
| 17 th March 2022 | Behind the Scenes on TV Theatre | Fiona Martin |
| 14 th April 2022 | Jean Finley. | Nursery Rhymes |
| 12 th May 2022 | John Michael Corfe. | The China Farm Story |
| 9 th June 2022 | Keith Warrender. | Dunham Massey Ship Canal. |
| 7 th July 2022 | Philip Caine | Barrow to Bagdad |

WALKING GROUP - December walk

After the walk, a circular one from Moreton to Meols along the coast returning to Tony's house for refreshments, donations were invited for the Motor Neurone Disease Association and a staggering £123 was raised. THANK YOU.



February Walk – Liverpool “The 3 Parks” - An Old favourite of the Group

Hopefully Ken Jackson and Tony Sullivan will be leading this walk in February – more details will be emailed to walking group members and some further news towards the end of this newsletter. **N.B. This walk will take place on March 4th**

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

ART APPRECIATION GROUP



The meeting on January 19th took place in the Session Room and was about William Blake - Artist, Poet, Printmaker and Visionary. A good group attendance enjoyed an interesting talk with illustrations of some of his paintings, from Bernadette while Martin provided a reading of his poem “London”.

Born in 1757 – Died 1828, a devout Christian who disliked organised religion, Blake was known for his early Romantism and Nationalism. William Rosetti called him a ‘glorious luminary’ who was difficult to classify due to his idiosyncratic views. His best known works include: Songs of Innocence and Experience. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, The Four Zoas, Jerusalem and Milton. Bernadette’s talk was full of information and interest as always, giving us an appreciation of the background and aims of the artist and poet.

Our thanks to Bernadette Hamilton for all her research and work; a great Group Leader. **Ed.**



GROUP NEWS

Debating:

Tony Sullivan has offered to lead a new Discussion Group.

Tony will host this group from his home in Upton – day and time to be decided. Those interested should e-mail me at the address below.

If you are interested in taking over as leader of any of the groups above or starting a new group with similar aims / interests please e-mail Tony at the address shown below.

groupcoordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk

A Book and a Glass of Wine: Judith Whaley

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

Meetings will be in “The Cabin” at Trinity. Meetings on 2nd and 3rd 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

Next lunch is at the Toby Carvery, Arrowe Park on Tuesday 15th at 12.45pm for 1pm lunch.

Music Appreciation:

Paul Cullen

Next meeting March 2nd in the Session Room at 2-4pm. There will be no meetings of this group during February. 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.

groupcoordinator@oxtonu3a.co.uk Tony Swarbrick



New Book
to

Monica Price.

This Group has continued



operate via Zoom during lockdown

Boules: Anyone interested in joining this group this group, to play Boules at Ashton Park, West Kirby,

please contact Maureen Oldham.



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

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.

TEA AND COFFEE ROTA 2022

- February 3rd Barbara Baker
 Kathy Sullivan
 Joan Benton

- February 17th Margaret Cullen
 Paul Cullen
 Brenda George

- March 3rd Norma Finlayson
 Ann Greenhalgh
 Gwyneth Thomas

- March 17th Hilary Robinson
 Maureen Oldham
 Margaret Yeadsley

- March 31st John Roberts
 Greig Roberts
 Arlene Hunton

- April 14th Sue Berry
 Maureen Jones
 Joan Benton



Joan Benton

Pauline Horner will be Exhibiting at Gordale Garden Centre

Popular member of our U3A, Pauline exhibits widely around Wirral and is a member of several painting groups.



January Walk:-

13 members finally managed to do the Walk on the Crosby Coast yesterday. Weather this month was excellent compared with November when we had to postpone walk due to Storm Arwen. Lunch at the "Hightown Pub and Kitchen" was enjoyed by all.



Thank you Tony for leading a most enjoyable walk. Ed.

***February Walk will take place on MARCH 4TH due to Ken's availability to lead.**

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 with no MUD guaranteed, or your money back! After lunch there is a short walk of just under a mile back to St Michaels station, to get the train back to Liverpool Central.

Tony Swarbrick

Art Group

The next Art Group Meeting will be at 10am on February 16th in the Session Room where Pauline Horner will be giving a talk on Sorolla, a Spanish artist.

Bernadette Hamilton

Book Exchange

We will be re-starting the Book exchange at Thursday meetings shortly. 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.

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



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And finally,

This time it really does feel as though we can make plans for the rest of the year with a reasonable expectation of being able to carry them through! Unfortunately we felt unable to run our fortnightly meetings through January with so much uncertainty; the Committee apologises for this.

Due to the closure of meetings last month, Gwyneth has extended the window when people who have not already paid their Subs can do so, up to the end of February, after which they will be removed from the database. We are delighted to see that so far a majority of our members have chosen to remain with us.

I hope that many of you can spend Valentine's Day on the 14th with a loved one and wish you all a happy day. It is a time when we can remember all our loves, past and present, giving thanks for the happy memories we have shared.

We are hoping to start reopening some of the groups or start some new ones during the coming months. As things become more settled we should be able to arrange some trips and would appreciate suggestions from you. If any of you know of people recently retired, who might enjoy our activities please tell them about us! We need new members to help run our U3A in due course, especially people prepared to come on Committee or run a Group.

If you have done anything that you think could interest the group, or been anywhere special (difficult in recent months), please let me know or write a short article and send it for the newsletter. In the meantime I look forward to seeing many of you on Thursday morning, February 3rd,

Kind regards,

Eliane Davie - Editor



