



# October Newsletter

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Whilst writing my message I heard with great sadness the death of our Head of State, Her Royal Highness; Queen Elizabeth II. Her reign of 70 years and 214 days was the longest of any British Monarch and the longest recorded of any female Head of State in History, serving with great integrity and empathy and earning the respect, deservedly so, of millions of people around the World. She will be sorely missed.

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The Vikings, final episode.

Age Old.

What is usually seen as the final phase of the "Viking Age" from the 990's to the 1070's saw Military and Diplomatic Relations between Christian Kings in both the West and in Scandinavia. By this date Denmark at least had become part of Latin Christendom. Characterising a ruler like Cnut as a "Viking" is nonsensical. He attended the Imperial Coronation of Conrad II in Rome in 1027 and founded and endowed Churches across both his English and Danish Realms. Similarly, Harold Hardrada, often termed "The last of the Vikings", was the brother of a Saint and spent much of his Career in Byzantium. His invasion of England in 1066 was a political action in which he was supported by factions within the Kingdom he was invading. Eleven Century Scandinavian Kings such as Cnut and Harold had far more in common with their successors in 12th and 13th Century than they had with 8th and 9th Century heathen raiders.

Sporadic seaborne raiding on Britain and Ireland by small groups unconnected to any Political or Military action continued into the 12th Century. Indeed, activity of this sort, classic "Viking" behaviour, is perhaps more characteristic of this later period than it is of what we might consider the "Viking Age" proper. These raiders originated from the Scandinavian Diaspora the Scottish Islands. Hebrideans, and even Orcadians, like the infamous Sveinn Ásleifarson, plagued the coast of Ireland and Western Britain for a century after the Norman Conquest; it was only the English invasion of Ireland that put an end to it. The Western Isles in particular had little capacity for supporting anything beyond subsistence farming and predation on rich land was the key to local Chieftains maintaining their position at home.

Goodbye

The construct of the "Vikings" conflates and blurs the distinction between 8th and 12th Century Pirates. 10th Century Kings based in Dublin and Christian Rulers such as Cnut, all of whom lived in very different societies, had different belief systems and political and economic objectives. Each of these contexts needs to be dealt with on its own terms and not within a 19th Century construct that has more than a hint of Racist Essentialism to it. Perhaps it is time that Historians both Academic and Popular ditched the Vikings as an outmoded and a flawed way of thinking. The Vikings never existed. Perhaps it is time to put this fantasy to bed.

Did You Know

A 2 Megawatt Windmill is made up of 260 Tons of Steel that required 300 Tons of Iron Ore and 170 Tons of Coking Coal, all mined, transported and produced by Hydrocarbons. A Windmill could spin until it fell apart and never generate as much energy as that invested in the building of it.

**Alan Harding – Chairman**

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## **BRIAN'S MUSINGS**

As I write, wildfires rage. They are the product of a climate too hot to safely support human life. Roads and railways can no longer accommodate the vehicles for which they were intended and our reserves of water are under threat, just when we need plenty of cooling drinks.

Yet I know a number of kind and well-meaning people, either personally or indirectly, who are happily availing themselves of long-haul flights to Mexico, thereby ensuring that our excessive carbon footprint, which we are assured is the cause of these disasters, is not only maintained but actively increased.

We are not the only life-form on the planet given to destroying the habitat that sustains it but interestingly we are probably the only one that, while knowing that it is destroying itself, continues to do so.

On a personal level I have to admit to indulging in behaviours that are detrimental to my health so I am in no position to be critical, though I do try to limit my activities to those that are not unduly detrimental to my fellow human beings – not easy!

During the Black Death we are told that people danced in the streets, determined to enjoy their few remaining hours of healthy life. Our current rush to the nearest airport might well be unconsciously motivated by a similar psychology, though there is a difference. The plague came with a certain inevitability, whereas now, science, on which we faithfully depend in so many other areas, assures us that the change in climate is largely of our own making and that we are therefore in a position to do something about it.

As a psychologist I am very interested in this urge to self-destruct. We frequently make choices, either planned or on the spur of the moment, that can have no

positive outcome and adhere to them, even when their negative effect is assured. This destructive behaviour can be acted out for us by people in positions of authority. We see them indulging in attitudes that will inevitably bring about their downfall, often taking many others with them. They seem to be quite incapable of moderating a mode of being that is deeply rooted in our collective psyche. We are therefore destined to keep repeating it. The ego, we are told, works inevitably towards its own isolation and destruction.

Fortunately there is a solution to this dilemma, though it is one that few would be prepared to adopt. The ego has to be modified. Rather than assuming ownership of the vehicle over which it has taken total control, its influence needs to become secondary to the vehicle's true owner. But who might that be? Who or what is the truly authentic self? This is clearly not the place to embark on the dissertation that a worthy answer to the question demands. But we can begin by recognising that the ego is a construct – a sense of identity assembled from a number of different sources. It is a very questionable phenomenon with its own relationship to truth and reality, as our leaders clearly demonstrate.

**Brian Gill**

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## Tea and Coffee Rota, October to 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

13 <sup>th</sup> October	Brenda George Sue Berry Poppy Lewis
27 <sup>th</sup> October	Barbara Baker Kathy Sullivan
10 <sup>th</sup> November	Ann Greenhalgh Norma Finlayson
24 <sup>th</sup> November	Gwyn Thomas Mary Hamilton
8 <sup>th</sup> December	Barbara Riley Marion Jackson

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## Speakers (so far) 2022 - 23

**13<sup>th</sup> October 2022:** Robert Knowles presenting 'Edith Smith Britain's first police woman.'

**10<sup>th</sup> November 2022:** David HEARNER  
[bobknowles38@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bobknowles38@yahoo.co.uk)

**8<sup>th</sup> December 2022:** Barry H.More; What Was On the Telly

**2023**

**19<sup>th</sup> January 2023:** Ray O'Brien.                      A Magical Mystery Tour.  
[Rayo1@ntlworld.com](mailto:Rayo1@ntlworld.com)

**16<sup>th</sup> February 2023:** Joanna Williams.              The Great Miss Lydia Becker; a Suffragette, Scientist and a Trailblazer!

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## Lunch Group Dates

Colin Shredder

**2022.**

**18<sup>TH</sup> October 2022**              Pesto, 50 Dibbinsdale Road, BROMBOROUGH. CH630HJ.

**15<sup>th</sup> November 2022**              Shippons, 8A Thingwall Road, IRBY. CH613UA.

**20<sup>th</sup> December 2022**              Toby Inn, Arrowe Park Road, WIRRAL. CH495LW.

**2023**

**17<sup>th</sup> January 2023**              Caernarvon Castle, BIRKENHEAD. CH43 2JZ.

**21<sup>st</sup> February 2023**              Travellers Rest, 169 Mount Road. Bebington.

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2023**              The Basset Hound, 107 Barnston Road, Thingwall.CH61 1AS

**18<sup>th</sup> April 2023**              The Kings Arm, Kings Lane, Bebington. CH63 8NR.Pest

**16<sup>th</sup> May 2023**              Pesto, 50 Dibbinsdale Road, Bromborough. CH63 0HJ.

**20<sup>th</sup> June 2023**              Three Stags, Church Road, Bebington. CH63 3EA.

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

Colin Stredder

## Social Meetings 2022-23

October 27 <sup>th</sup> :	DVD: The Mersey Tunnel.
November 24 <sup>th</sup>	Colin's Quiz
December 22 <sup>nd</sup>	DVD: Reflections of Liverpool and Wirral.
<b>2023</b>	
January 5 <sup>th</sup>	Colin's Quiz
February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	DVD: Wirral Memories – 1960s and 70s.
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Colin's Quiz
March 30 <sup>th</sup>	DVD: Cammell Laird's Old Ships and Hard Ships.
April 27 <sup>th</sup>	Colin's Quiz
May 25 <sup>th</sup>	DVD: Liners and Launches.
June 8 <sup>th</sup>	Pauline Roberts will talk about Holidays.

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## Group News

### **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 when an interesting event is due.

### **Bridge: Tony Swarbrick, Joan Parfect [bridge@oxtonu3a.co.uk](mailto:bridge@oxtonu3a.co.uk)**

Meetings will be in "The Cabin" at Trinity. Meetings on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays each month, 10.30a.m. to 12.30. The next meeting is on the 14<sup>th</sup> September. 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. New members are always welcome.



### **Book Club: Mary O'Neill**

Meetings take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 2pm. Mary has room for one or two more members; anyone interested should contact Tony Swarbrick our Group Co-ordinator.



**Lunch Circle: Colin Stredder**

The next Lunch Circle meeting will be 12.45 for lunch at 1pm. On Tuesday October 18<sup>th</sup> 2022 at Pesto, 50 Dibbinsdale Road, Bromborough. CH630 7PW



**Music Appreciation: Paul Cullen**

There will be no meetings in July and August – return on 5th October at Paul's house. Bring some music you like along. 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month 2-4pm. October 3<sup>rd</sup>!



**Walking Group: See below.**

**Rummikub: new group Joan Parfect**

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 10.15 - 12 noon in the Cabin. There is a charge of £2 pp to cover room rental and coffee.



**Art Group Bernadette Hamilton**

The October Group Meeting will be in the Sessions Room at Trinity & Palm Grove Church on Wednesday October 19<sup>th</sup> at 10.15am. A presentation on Rembrant by Bernadette Hamilton.



**Sketching: new group! Pauline Horner**

The first meeting is on September 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Cabin from 10am to 12.

This Group will meet in the Cabin on the first Friday of the month.

**Play Reading: new group! Eliane Davie** The Group meets at Eliane's house on the second Tuesdays of the month at 10am- 12.30pm. The next meeting will be on October 11th.



**New group: Craft Group ! Joan Benton**

Joan will shortly be starting a new Craft Group and would be interested to hear from anyone considering joining a friendly group. Further information and dates will be available at the next meeting on



**New Group: 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.





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## BLACKPOOL OUTING

Tony Swarbrick organised the trip to Blackpool to see the lights; it will take place on October 20th. Meet at TWPG car park for departure at 1pm prompt; you are advised to arrive early to allow time to use toilet facilities if required. We should arrive at Blackpool in plenty of time for a walk around and a fish and chip supper before getting back into the coach to view the lights. Expect to return to the church circa 9.30pm.



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## Art Appreciation Dates for Autumn 2022

Wednesday October 19<sup>th</sup>. A presentation on Rembrandt by Bernadette Hamilton in the Session Room at TPG at 10.15am

Wednesday November 16<sup>th</sup> A visit to the Tate Gallery, Liverpool to view: JMW Turner with Lamin Fofana's 'Dark Waters' Exhibition.

Bernadette Hamilton

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## 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!



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## 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)

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## Membership Fees

Membership Fees are due at the end of October. The membership fee will be increased to £15, which includes £4per head payable to 3<sup>rd</sup> Age Trust (Head Office). This is the first increase for several years and compares favourably to other local

U3As. New members will pay the new fee but this covers the remainder of the current year and the 2022/23 year.

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### CHRISTMAS DINNER



Barbara Winstanley has organised the Christmas Dinner this year which is booked for December 15<sup>th</sup> at the Prenton Golf Club. Bookings and a menu is available. Barbara has been organising these meals very successfully for some years now and we are grateful to her for offering to do so again. The cost this year has unfortunately risen to £31 but as this seems to be the going rate now, the Committee decided to go ahead with the booking as we feel most people will still want to come.

Cheques only, for £31, made out to: Oxton & Prenton U3A please.

Our thanks to Babara for all the work she puts in on organising this popular occasion.

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### Walking Group



### The October walk – Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>

This walk will be led by Gwyneth Williams and Barbara Winstanley on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

We will meet at the Old Baths Car Park where we leave the cars to start walking at 10.30am. The walk goes along the seaboard walk to Gayton Cottage where we turn off to meet the Wirral Way and walk back towards the Old Swan where we take lunch. After our meal we will walk back along the Parade to collect our cars

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Spirit of Christmas Bookings now closed – speak to Gwyneth in case of any cancellations.

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Corinne Whitham in Birkenhead Park  
Nordic Walking





## Second Elizabethan Age; End of an Era 1926-2022



Like me, you probably remember the funeral of her father, George VI, who died at the early age of fifty-six. The sadness at the death of a popular King and the sympathy for his elder daughter, Princess Elizabeth, who had to take on the responsibilities of a Constitutional Monarch while only in her mid twenties and a young wife and mother. A majority of the present population have known no other Monarch during their lifetime

Seventy years on we can reflect on her long reign as the second Elizabethan Age, the longest reign of any monarch in British history. The sheer outpouring of grief, affection and respect for our Queen Elizabeth at her death, demonstrated just how faultlessly she had succeeded in her role. We remember her as a vibrant, attractive young woman, a radiant bride of Prince Philip, a devastated daughter returning from a trip to Kenya with her husband when she heard of her Father's death, a serious young Queen taking her Coronation vows. Later, as she gained experience, we remember how she put people at ease, meeting Heads of State and the general public with equal interest and charm. We observed her love of country life; her corgis and horses; her enjoyment of family life with Prince Philip her Consort. Our lives ran alongside hers in tandem; the same world events, high notes and low notes. No wonder many felt that she was part of their lives in some way. Even as she aged she continued to take on visits abroad for a long time, always interested and knowledgeable with that wonderful smile that lit up a room! Her sense of duty was formidable as we saw only two days before her death when she greeted her latest Prime Minister, stretching out her hand with such a welcoming smile to put her at ease, while she could not have been feeling at all well.

What a send - off our Queen Elizabeth had and a well deserved one! The throngs lining the streets as the cortege passed each procession; the gratitude, love and respect for her commitment to her country, the Commonwealth and their peoples were evident. A celebration of a life well lived and sorrow at her passing; so many tears shed. The pageantry was wonderful too – something our country does so well. Every regiment appeared to be straining to do their very best for her as she had done for them. It was awe inspiring too to see the endless lines of people queuing to pay their respects as they passed the coffin at the Lying in State and the absolute silent respect as they did so.

Our hearts went out to her close family who filled their roles with quiet dignity at a time when they must have been grieving; so many Services and Official Ceremonies to perform at a time when they must have been exhausted.

We now have a new King, Charles III, who has big shoes to fill but who has had a long apprenticeship with excellent example. The world has changed beyond belief during the Elizabethan Era and will no doubt carry on changing. Let's wish our King Charles Godspeed!

Eliane Davie

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## *And finally .....*

Firstly I must apologise for sending out the newsletter a little later than usual; I only returned from holiday in Cyprus on Saturday. Although I prepared as much as possible before going quite a bit had to wait for my return. I flew out on September 16<sup>th</sup>, so had followed most of the coverage following Queen Elizabeth's death but saw the funeral from my hotel in Cyprus. I found it deeply moving and deeply impressive as did other guests who watched, many who were not from the UK.

We temperatures of 30% plus and wall to wall sunshine and I really enjoyed the break, particularly as it looks like it could be a chilly winter this year!

I'm looking forward to the Blackpool outing coming up shortly and was sorry to have missed the house in Oxton. Keep the ideas coming in and don't forget to let me have your comments. I look forward to seeing you all at the next meeting.

**Eliane Davie - Editor**



