

Here is the archive of talks given online since Covid-19 stopped us meeting in person.

Tuesday Meeting replacements

* The **September** online talk was **Murder Investigations**. An introduction to the world of a Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) in today's police force. Ever watched Morse, Midsomer Murders, or the like? Have you wondered how it is really done in today's police force? Then watch this talk by Simon Price, former SIO and now a Chester University lecturer in Policing. A live webinar, with Q&A, and a recording available for around a month afterwards.

* The **August** was **What is biodiversity and why do we need it?** by Dr Tom Barker of the Centre for Alternative Technology. What can ecosystems teach us about the world? Are species of any practical use? What constitutes ecosystem health and, most importantly, why should we care?

* **The July** Monthly Meeting was replaced by this specially commissioned online talk - **Forensic Linguistics** by Dr Claire Hardaker of Lancaster University. Could you tell who was texting you just by looking at the message itself? If someone said, "I wouldn't do that if I were you..." would you consider that kindly-meant advice, or a subtle threat? Could you spot a leading question designed to trap you into confessing to something you've never done? Is it possible to tell when someone is lying not just about past events, but even about their future intentions? Can we detect psychopaths from their language alone? Is it possible to tamper with someone's memories simply by talking to them? How much can a short spoken sentence reveal about you? Forensic linguists look at all these questions, and a world of others besides. In this talk, Claire Hardaker will give you an introductory tour of the various topics, from leading questions to lying and pronunciation to plagiarism. You'll have a chance to test your own skills throughout the talk, and you'll get pointers to a range of different cases where you can learn more. The link to it will be emailed to everyone beforehand.

* Our **June** meeting was **Hidden Narratives of Medieval Art** - Have you ever wondered about the stories behind objects like the Arnolfini portrait or medieval tapestries? How were they made? Who commissioned them and, more importantly, why? What sort of effort went into producing them? How many men and women were involved? How does the way we 'read' them now contrast with their makers' intentions? Everyday life in the Middle Ages could be very uncertain: you might begin a commission, only to learn that your royal purchaser was no longer around to accept it; payment might be delayed or not made at all; supply chains perhaps slow and unreliable, so why bother to commission medieval art at all? Watch this fascinating talk by Dr Katherine Wilson and find out.

* Members enjoyed the specially commissioned video talk that replaced **the May** monthly meeting. We could all watch Jim Holmes talk on **the Mongolian Altai** on-line. The landscapes were breathtaking and the stories of peoples nomadic lives intriguing. We saw how the United Nations Children's Fund is helping remote communities with a serious education shortage and learn how difficult it is to reach the very far west of this vast country. Visit remote communities that hunt with

eagles and drink tea with camels' milk, then travel with herders as they prepare to move to spring pastures, and see how the schools follow them.

Thursday Meeting replacements

* Our **September** webinar was **The Hidden Life of Trees**. Are trees the most successful life form on the planet? Critical for our survival and a model for sustainable living, a force for good across the world's climatic range and a net contributor to the health and well-being of all the other life forms that have flourished and faded over the millennia. #Stuart Murray# of Chester U3A discusses the wonders and complexities of these essential organisms, and invites you to describe and celebrate your own favourite tree. If there is sufficient interest from members then 'Trees' could form the basis of a short course over the Autumn.

* **Our August Thursday Webinar was on Reptiles**. When Chester U3A member Juliet Leadbeater retired from her post as a University Lecturer in Biology, she wanted to continue her research into our wildlife. She now volunteers for Cheshire Wildlife Trust, and is co-ordinating a survey on reptiles locally. So if you want to answers to the following - What is a reptile? How many types are there any in Britain? Where are they found? Why are they important to our ecosystem? How can we tell if numbers are declining? then sign up for our webinar on August 13th at 10:15am.

* **A Festival Rises From The Ashes** In July Mal Waite of Chester U3A, and also one of the organisers of Chester Folk Festival, produced a YouTube video of how a team of volunteers organised the Festival this year. This involved getting singers and bands to perform concerts, they also had online Morris dancing, mumming, workshops, singarounds, and even a Zoom bar. It was an ambitious project. They proved that the show really must go on. In the video she tells us how it was done, exactly how steep the learning curve was, and what she learned by doing it.

* For **April, May & June** our speaker secretary compiled a list of online materials (blogs, videos, podcasts, etc.) that we hope will be of use to members. These links are freely available, and will mostly continue to be so after the month in which they have been sent. We are happy for you to share the links with anyone you think might benefit from them.