

# Lymm & Thelwall

March 2024 Newsletter

Registered Charity Number 1182457

#### Dear All.

By now you will have received the AGM notification documents and, soon, your renewal for next year's membership. All the Committee have agreed to serve another year. However, if you would like to join us on the Committee you will be made most welcome. We have 11 members now and can have a maximum of 15. Help is always appreciated.

On that note there is an advert further down for a backup person to help with the Web page and Beacon system. This does not need to be a Committee Position but it would be useful to have more than one person familiar with Sue, Chair the systems.

## Members' Meetings - Christine Ballance

Our Members' Meetings are normally held in Thelwall Parish Hall on the third Thursday of the month. Visitors are welcome to attend two meetings before joining. The next meeting will be on Thursday 21st March at 10.00 a.m. for a 10.30 a.m. start. Refreshments will be served from 10.00 a.m. until 10.15 a.m. Do come along early for a drink and a chat. Thursday 21st March **David Skillen** Starfish, Stripes and Decoys A look at Camouflage and Deception from the Trojan Horse to Desert Storm. Camouflage and deception has been an integral and fascinating part of military tactics from the time of the ancient Chinese to today. This talk covers some successful (and sometimes less effective) ideas for fooling your opponent. Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April **Angela Berry Merseyside & Cheshire Blood Bikes** MCBB is a non-profit making charity that provides support for the NHS through carrying urgently required blood, medicines, samples and donated human milk between hospitals, clinics, hospices and laboratories across Merseyside and Cheshire. They are all volunteers and provide free transport 365 days a year, whether that be by manning the phones or riding motorcycles to deliver urgent items for the NHS. Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May Cambodia and the ancient kingdom of Ankor **Jim Holmes** From its bustling capital, Phnom Pen, to the stunning 12th century temples of Angkor, there can be few greater contrasts than modern-day Cambodia. Forgotten in an all-consuming jungle for centuries, these towering temples hold fascinating stone friezes that depict everyday life 900 years ago. This enigmatic country, with the only river that reverses its flow, will fascinate, with landscape, history and culture.

## Wanted



We are keen to have a backup person to assist with our Website and our u3a Beacon system. This position does not have to be a Committee Position (but could be if the person was happy with this). If you think you could help Lymm and Thelwall u3a in this way please ask for more information by contacting John at it@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk.

The Refreshment Team have been doing a fantastic job at our meetings, serving 90 plus drinks these past few months. Thankyou. However, they have asked please arrive before 10.15 a.m. if you want a drink as late arrivals are proving difficult to cater for. Thanks.



Membership Our Membership year runs from April to the end of March. Please when rejoining remember to tick the Gift Aid Box if you are able. Rod says that we receive another 25% of your membership fee on top from the Government! Well worth doing!!

# Events and Social Any ideas for events please contact <u>socialevents@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk</u>

The Events and Social Team met last Tuesday to plan some fun events for this year. More details will emerge, however. Please put these dates in your diary.



## 'u3a Group Leaders Wanted' or 'Words of Wisdom From a Group Leader!'

#### by Shirley

Your u3a cannot function without group leaders. I am hoping to persuade some of you who may have an idea for a new group but are wary of actually starting one up that it's easy to do, and can be a lot of fun.

I moved up from Norfolk two years ago. I was in a genealogy group, a writing group and a bowls club. When I moved up here I found bowls at High Legh and our u3a, which was great. However, there wasn't a creative writing group or a genealogy group. So what did I do? I started them up. And it was easy!! Am I an expert in genealogy? No. Have I published lots of books and know a lot about writing? No. But that doesn't matter at all.

#### Common Misconceptions:

#### Do I have to be an expert to start a group? NO!

Take Local history. If you wanted to start up such a group, do you have to know all of the local history here? No, you don't. More than likely, each member of your group will know a little bit that they can share. And, if not, you and your group members can research and learn all about the area together. In my genealogy group, at least half of my members know a lot more about genealogy than I do!! It doesn't matter. We all share the knowledge we do have.

#### Do I have to do most of the talking in group meetings? NO!

I just tell everyone what the monthly presentation is about going and direct group members to help others with research. That's about all the talking I do, officially anyway. As everyone who knows me knows, I do talk a lot! *Do I have to be a confident, outgoing person?* **NO!** 

If you're not, you will soon relax in your group and realise that you CAN do it. It's only like chatting to a group of friends. (And if you can't make it, fake it.)

#### Do I have to be a financial expert? NO!

If you can find a free venue, like a pub, or even someone's home, then there is no money to collect from members and nothing to pay. If you have to hire a room or hall, Marcia (Venues Co-ordinator) can help you to find your venue, and sort out the room hire agreements for you. You just collect however much you decide you need to charge your members to cover that cost, collect it each month and give it to our lovely Treasurer, Rod, who sorts out all the invoices and keeps the accounts for your group.

#### Do I have to keep detailed records? NO!

Just a notebook. Money in recorded. Money out recorded. Receipts kept if you buy anything for the group, like refreshments. I have one plastic sleeve. That is all I need to keep group records in. Just in case we're ever asked for them.

#### Do I have to give lots of time? NO!

Your meetings might only be once a month. Two hours out of your life once a month. Maybe another hour a month doing the other stuff. That's all it is. Even if you meet weekly or fortnightly, it's not that much to take on, is it? You can always pass the group on to another member. I did. Or share responsibilities.

You will always get lots of support from committee members. John Bower (IT contact) will help you with anything to do with computers if you're going to be using one for your records. If you really are a technophobe, I'm sure one of your members could work with you to take care of that side of it. It will be YOUR group. You can organise it to suit yourself.

And **Sue Mitchell** (Chair) will probably ask you once a month what your group have been doing, - just a few lines that she can put in the newsletter.



#### Tiles

If you have any tiles that you no longer need please donate them to the Mosaic group! You can bring them to the Members' Meeting where, hopefully, a Mosaicer will gladly receive them! You will get your members when **Muriel** (Interest Groups Coordinator) puts out a sheet on the monthly meeting day and anyone interested will sign up. As soon as you have what you consider to be enough to start up the group, then off you go! You will have fun, I promise you! So what have you got to lose?



#### Jigsaws

Thank you to all those members who kindly donated their jigsaws Members are welcome to

borrow the jigsaws on display at monthly meetings. Please return them when you have finished. Any further donations will be gratefully received.

# News from our Interest Groups - Muriel Howarth groups@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

Does anyone fancy joining a **Photography** group? We have a couple of members expressing an interest in this. The members could use cameras or cameras on their phones. No pressure!! Also we have had an idea for a **Discussion Group** put forward from Mandy. Please contact Muriel if you are interested in either of these. New groups do need Group Leaders and we are pleased that Shirley was able to give a presentation at the Members' Meeting about how easy it is to set up and lead a group. Above is a resume of what she said! If you have any ideas for other new clubs. You don't have to be an expert. We all learn together. **Please contact me, Muriel**, on the email address above.

## National Trust Dunham Massey Community Access Pass

We now have a Community Pass from Dunham Massey for Groups of up to 15 people to visit free without pre-booking (15 to a maximum of 30 have to pre-book.).

This is for normal entry. It is not for use for special events such as the Christmas Lights.

If any of or groups would like to use this pass the Group Leader should contact Sue Mitchell

chair@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk and I will arrange for you to collect it from me.



### Drop In

Twenty-four members and a couple of potential members attended our first Drop-In, held at the Spread Eagle. Ideas for future Drop-Ins included games like Qwirkle and Mexican Train and cards (no gambling, though!). There was a warm and convivial atmosphere and we look forward to the second such event, on Tuesday5th March.

**To the card players among you** - would anyone like to play Kierki at our next drop in on 5th March? This is a Polish whist-based game for 4 people which is in 2 halves, losing points then winning them back and takes about an hour. Google it if you want to find out more. I will bring my playing cards and hopefully some of you will join me! Caroline Barr

I am a garden volunteer at Dunham Massey and I would like to share with you how we maintain the garden and get it ready for visitors. I still don't know the names of all the plants but I can tell you how we look after them! Meet me at the entrance of the Visitors Centre on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 11.00 a.m., first come, first served and I can

take 12 people. I won't do anything about lunch this time, but there are plenty of options for people to make their own arrangements. There is the restaurant at Dunham as well as local pubs such as the Swan With 2 Nicks, Axe and Cleaver etc. For non-National Trust members there is an entrance fee.

If this is a success I would be more than happy to do this on a quarterly basis so that you can see how the garden evolves throughout the year. This is a flat walk with plenty of seating as you walk round the gardens.

Please contact Caroline through the Book Club 1 page on our web site if you are interested in joining me at Dunham Masseyy.



## **Group Gossip**

Thankyou to all the group leaders who sent in updates for the Group Gossip. Please send any updates to me, Sue Mitchell, at newsletter@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk by Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March

#### Art and Mosaic Groups

When I joined Lymm & Thelwall u3a the first group I attended was the friendly weekly Art Group. We meet every Friday at 10.15 during school term time at St Mary's Church Hall, Lymm. After a few minutes chit-chat, we settle down to 2 hours of creating art. I try and complete a piece of art during the session, while some people choose to perfect a picture over several weeks. We either do our own thing, or take inspiration from a list of subjects previously decided upon. I tend to use collage, acrylics or water colours, but any medium can be used to create a piece of art. One of my recent efforts was from our inspiration list, entitled 'Street scene', which is pictured. We sometimes share our techniques with one another when one member does a short demonstration



to the group. I recently showed the group how to use acrylics to produce a simple, but effective picture of a group of figures. Many of us intend to do art on our own at home, but never seem to get round to it, so joining the u3a Art Group is a fun way of being with others who enjoy creating art together.

#### Bowling

Lesley

Official U3A Outdoor Crown Green Bowling will resume at High Legh Bowling Club on Monday 8th April. Although not an 'official' u3a activity, indoor short-mat bowling takes place on Monday afternoons in High Legh Village Hall from 1.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. Subs for Winter Indoor Season: £6. Weekly Session Fee: £2. Outdoor Crown Green

#### Badminton

This group is now at capacity so I have opened a "Waiting List. Please email Geoff for addition to the "Waiting List" via our web page, noting that you need to have played Badminton previously.

#### I.T. Group

This group has 5 members, all of whom have joined with enthusiasm to learn new, or revise, their skills in the use of MIcrosoft Office.

Each session is almost 90% 'hands-on' with laptops, quite laid back, fun and non-scary - at least no-one has been frightened away yet! So far, in 2 weeks, everyone has learned how to organise their files, make new folders to suit their individual needs and how to save documents - in the right place. They can now all screenprint, having learned that these are just like photos so cannot be worked on and have all gained a good number of skills in the use of 'Word' for writing documents, especially letters - those things that we still need from time to time. Lots of tips and shortcuts have been tried out - along with a look at how letterwriting has changed in the last 50 years. Being a grammarian I have also passed on some useful tips on grammar and how to almost certainly gain a reply from a firm letter - a useful skill!

It is onward and upward for the group; watch this space for some individual feedback next month. Well done to all members!

#### Genealogy

For those of you who weren't able to attend the last meeting, firstly Elaine's presentation on "Finding your Gateway Ancestor" was fascinating. We were treated to a history of Wales, battles, murders, treason. A great start to the morning. We also decided to use the Sanctuary Hub as our meeting place from now on as we have enjoyed the facilities room. However, some third Tuesdays in the month aren't available for this coming year, so we will meet the week before in that case.

#### German

The German conversation group had its monthly meeting on Monday. This included our Stuttgart friends on Zoom who will be paying us a return visit in early April. They will stay in private homes and the German group members will accompany them on visits to Liverpool, Chester and Manchester; walks in Dunham Massey and Lyme



Park; a steam train ride to Ramsbottom plus plenty of lunches out, pub visits, concerts, etc

#### Lunch Group

The Lunch Group met at the Barn Owl this month and could not speak highly enough about the good food and the good service. They had a very happy sociable time catching up with the other members.

#### Poetry

The newly-formed Poetry Group had its second meeting this month, in the Sanctuary Hub at the Lymm Library. Urban Poet and u3a member Rick Varden convened as we offered our own poems on the subject of 'Family'. It has been a good start and we would encourage new members.



#### Walking Groups Striders

Our February, walk led by Strider Kath Brown, took us through the Sankey Valley trail, round Carr Mill



reservoir and up onto Billinge Hill where we had extensive views across, Merseyside, North Cheshire and the Welsh hills. A competitive atmosphere arose as to who could name what in the distance! We heard yellowhammers and skylarks much to the delight of the birdwatchers amongst us. We then dropped down to Billinge Village where lunch was taken next to an empty playground- very strange at half term! Next we walked through the wooded Goyt valley and back. There was then a comparison of tracking devices but it looked like it was around 10 miles covered. It rained for some of the way well what could you expect on a Striders walk! Big thank you to Kath for an excellent walk. Next walk-Kerridge Hill, White Nancy and Ingersley Vale. Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March.

#### 4-6ers

Eighteen members supported the monthly walk led by David and Susan. It was a five and a half mile route from Hartford Hall Hotel through Vale Royal Woods towards Vale Royal Abbey. We walked along the edge of the golf course towards the Vale Royal Locks and back along the River Weaver to the iconic 'Blue Bridge' and up to Hartford Hall for lunch.



#### **Theatre Group**

After organising many events and fun outing to the Theatre Elisabeth has decided that she is moving on. We thank Elisabeth for all her hard work and wish her good luck in her new adventures!! This means we therefore we need someone to step up and help with the arrangements for our future outings! Please contact Muriel, Groups Coordinator, at the above email address if you feel you can help.

#### Wellbeing/Birdwatching

The Wellbeing Birdwatching group enjoyed a trip to RSPB Burton Mere at the foot of the Wirral, always a popular destination for our group. Birds and humans alike were out in good numbers with an impressive range of water birds to view through the binoculars. Sadly, the Cetti's Warbler could not be coaxed out of the reeds. We had to be content with its song. A well-appointed new cafe added to the attractions.

#### Writing Group

This is a relaxed fun group which meets on the first Friday of every month in the Spread Eagle in Lymm. Each month we write to a topic that is set the previous month – this can include looking at a specific genre such as comedy or horror. We discuss our attempts in a positive way and hope to learn from each other. We also do sessions on self-publishing and we have a go at poetry writing as well. You do not need to have written anything before – just come along, have fun and hopefully gain some tips for the future as well.

#### Ukulele 4 Fun

Every 4<sup>th</sup> week we practise our performance songs. These, we hope, are songs that our audience will be able to sing along too and also ones we enjoy and are good at playing. For the other 3 weeks we play a selection of songs some pop, some traditional. It is a fun evening. Do come along and join us even if you are a ukulele novice! You will soon pick it up!! Contact Rod if you are interested.

> Contact Us Lymm and Thelwall u3a web site:

Lymm & Thelwall u3a: Welcome To Lymm & Thelwall

u3a (u3asites.org.uk)

Lymm and Thelwall u3a Facebook page:

Lymm & Thelwall u3a - Home | Facebook

enquiries@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

#### Recycling

We collect old glasses without the cases and also stamps. stamps (please leave 1cm around the stamps when removing from the envelope)

## **Risk Assessment Advice**

Members are reminded that, when participating in Lymm and Thelwall's u3a activities, they do so at their own risk. This is particularly relevant when undertaking any physical activity.

### National u3a News

If you would like to sign up for the National Newsletter or the North West Region Newsletter please use the links below

u3a National newsletter <u>https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter</u> North West Region Newsletter <u>https://u3asites.org.uk/north-west/page/25318</u>

## **Committee Contact Details**

Chair Susan Mitchell Vice Chair Marcia Dale Secretary Treasurer Rod King Allen Sealby Membership Marcia Dale Venues Group Coordinator **Muriel Howarth** Social Lynn Bryant **IT Support** John Bower Catherine Bower Publicity Committee member Jim Owen **Committee Member** Barbara Price

Susan Mitchellchair@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukMarcia Dalevicechair@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukPauline Hollowaysecretary@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukRod Kingtreasurer@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukAllen Sealbymembership@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukMarcia Dalevenues@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukMuriel Howarthgroups@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukLynn Bryantsocialevents@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukJohn Bowerit@lymmthelwallu3a.org.ukJim Owenjim@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

Non-Committee:

Speakers Newsletter Christine Ballance Sue Mitchell speakers@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk newsletter@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

# u3a – Online Learning Events

As well as joining our groups you can subscribe to Interest Groups Online (formerly called Trust u3a). Interest Groups Online is a platform for collaborative learning. It is an online community, bringing people together from across the u3a movement and beyond. There are around 70 different groups that meet online across a wide range of subjects. Groups are interactive and vary depending on the needs of the participants. Find out more on our <u>Interest Groups Online page.</u>

#### How to join these events

These online events are free for members. Use this link below to discover the online learning events <u>www.u3a.org.uk/events</u>

# **Artificial Intelligence News**

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 3.30 *p.m. -4.30 p.*m.

Are you interested in learning about AI? Join other likeminded members discovering the world of AI. We will be reviewing recent news headlines about AI. A presentation or a guest panel will discuss a topic. There will be opportunity for members to 'show and tell' what they have been doing with AI, if they would like. Members are invited to visit the <u>AI for everyone</u> online library of AI articles written by u3a members. **About the Speaker:** Barry Claydon is the u3a Subject Adviser for AI. Read his <u>AI Subject Adviser page.</u> **This event is for u3a members only.** 



# Aviation Network Meeting: Time is money, Concorde was Prestige

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> 10.00 a.m. - 12 mid- day

Concorde graced the skies giving passengers an experience that combined luxury, speed and exclusivity for just over three decades. No other commercial aircraft before or since has travelled the world in excess of the speed of sound. A typical flight time from London to New York was 3 hours.

With relatively limited passenger capacity and the extravagant fares, the clientele typically included celebrities, business executives and diplomats. The opulent interior, gourmet cuisine and personal service made the experience seem more like a private jet. Flying the Concorde became a status symbol for that clientele.

We invite you hear Captain John Hutchinson share his experiences as a British Airways Concorde Captain. He will delve into the intricacies of flying this **responsive**, **thoroughbred** of an aircraft, which was not only a technological marvel but also a symbol of elegance and speed. Whether you're an aviation enthusiast, a history buff or simply curious about the golden age of air travel, Captain Hutchinson's first hand accounts are sure to leave you inspired.





#### Join the National u3a Festival 24

The u3a movement is holding its first ever Festival in 2024, at the <u>University of York based</u> around their exhibition centre 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> July, where members will be running a wide variety of activities – talks, sporting events, musical entertainment and workshops which will make this u3a national festival something to remember.

To discover more http://us9.campaign-archive.com/?u=656ad5962b370cc9e2731d1ed&id=b806ff1867

## Our Groups If you would like to join any of our groups please always contact the Group leader via the group

page on the website. Click the icon to email the Group Leader. They will reply to you!! If you have any ideas for a new group please contact Muriel <u>groups@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk</u> our Group Coordinator and she will be able to advise how a new group can be formed.

Activity	Regular Meeting	Venue
	Contact	
Art	Friday a.m.	St Mary's Church Hall
Badminton	Wednesday a.m.	Grappenhall Community Centre
Book Club	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday a.m.	The Spread Eagle, Lymm
Book Club 2	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday a.m.	The Little Manor, Thelwall
Crown Green Bowling	Monday p.m.	High Legh Bowling Club
Climate and Environment	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday p.m.	
Cinema	Occasional Outings	Various
Cycle maintenance	As and when required	
Cycling	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday and 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	Various, see web site
Flower Arranging	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday p.m.	St. Mary's Church Hall
French (Advanced)	2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday a.m.	The Sanctuary Hub Lymm
French Conversation Intermediate and Advanced	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday p.m.	The Spread Eagle Lymm
Genealogy	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday am	Sanctuary Hub Lymm
German	Monday	Private home and via zoom
I.T.Group	2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday a.m.	Lymm Baptist Church
The Lunch Group	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	Contact via website
Mosaic	Friday a.m.	St. Mary's Church Hall
Music Appreciation	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday p.m.	Lymm Youth / Community Centre
Philosophy	2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday a.m.	The Spread Eagle, Lymm
Poetry	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	Sanctuary Hub Lymm
Sketching Out	Last Monday of the Month	Various
Stitch 'n' Natter	Wednesday a.m.	The Little Manor, Thelwall
Theatre and Concert	See web site	Various
Ukulele 4 Fun	Tuesday evening	United Reform Church
Walking Strollers	See website	Various
Walking 4-6ers	See Website	Various
Walking Striders	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	Various
Wellbeing Birdwatching	Friday a.m. fortnightly	Various Locations
Writing Group	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday	The Spread Eagle





For those members who have no online access this letter can be posted to them.