

Skelmersdale U3A April 2019 Newsletter



Pigs at the Eco Garden Centre, Newburgh

Gardening News

On Tuesday 12th March six members braved the cold and wind and visited the Eco garden centre in Newburgh. One member had just driven from Scotland and thought it was quite warm!

There were plenty of spring flowers and bulbs available and some perennials but we all decided it might be better to wait for warmer days before stocking our gardens for summer.

This garden centre has a wealth of hidden gems. At the back of the centre are a Snowy and Tawny Owl, Sheep, Shetland Ponies, Goats, Rabbits, and Pigs.



True to form after a couple of hours we retreated to the cafe for mugs of hot chocolate laced with cream and marshmallows.

U3A Monthly Meeting Report 21 March 2019



D Ben Rees

A good turnout of more than thirty, some 50% of our membership and some new faces. A busy meeting with distribution of AGM notices and nomination forms, announcements of outings and the start of the membership renewal season! I hope that members consider they get good value from their annual subs and meeting fees!

Our speaker, D Ben Rees is an orator with an astounding memory for facts, names and dates. The Reverend Doctor Professor D Ben Rees was admitted to the Roll of Citizen of Honour of Liverpool in October 2018 in recognition of his enormous contribution to the City and its Welsh community since 1968. Leading his beloved Bethel Church and supporting other Welsh Churches of every denomination, he is known in the city as not only a great community leader, prolific author and for his ambassadorial work but as the founder of the Liverpool Welsh newspaper 'Yr Angor'.

He informed, educated and amused with brief biographies of three very famous women who devoted their lives to improving the condition of the people, particularly the women, of Liverpool;

Kitty Wilkinson, whose efforts with the mangle and boiler helped in reducing the impact of the 1832 Cholera epidemic in the slum tenements by the docks, fortunately long since demolished. With support she established the first public washhouses for people and laundry in the country.



Eleanor Rathbone, daughter of William Rathbone 6th. Educated as one of the earliest female students at the fledgling University of Liverpool and at Somerville College Oxford, she became a Liverpool City Councillor and one of the first female Members of Parliament in the UK. Initially a Liberal, then as an independent for one of the now abolished University seats. Her ideas for improving the lot of the poor and introduction of family allowance for the second child were implemented during her lifetime by the post war Labour Government.



In passing he mentioned that her grandfather William Rathbone 4th had arranged for 14 young Liverpool women to be trained as nurses by Florence Nightingale at St Thomas Hospital, London, and so established the first team of district nurses in England in Liverpool.



Bessie Braddock and her husband Jack were consummate dedicated politicians who moved from the idealist communism of the 1920ies to the Labour party. After winning seats on the City Council he became Chairman while she achieved considerable fame as an MP. Bessie was a lifelong atheist who, in Ben's opinion mistakenly, asked Harold Wilson to conduct her funeral service. Ben was present at her funeral and imagined her seeking to correct Harold for attributing Christian virtues to her.

His talk mentioned almost all the familiar left wingers of our childhoods and adolescence. In her vote of thanks Monica mentioned that she had gone to school with the daughter of one of the Members of Parliament he mentioned. DC



Our next monthly meeting will be on Maundy Thursday, 18th April, 2pm at the Ecumenical Centre, with guest speaker lecturer and freelance author Fran Sandham. He has travelled in over fifty countries. The topic will be 'Walking through Africa'.

Easter Chick Knit to date has netted over £50 towards our Pick and Mix Social Fund. Thank you everyone.



By popular request Trentham Gardens has been chosen for our coach trip which will be on Thursday, 5th September. The cost will be around £18. A 28 seater coach has been provisionally booked. A non-refundable deposit of £5 will be needed. Further details will be given at a later date.

Members are reminded that renewal subscriptions are due. The membership fee remains at £12.

Hopefully all members will have received Committee Nomination forms and invitation for proposals. The closing date for submissions [31st March] has been extended to Thursday, 4th April.

Our 8th AGM will be on Thursday, 16th May, 2.15pm at the Ecumenical Centre. In order to keep printing costs down please remember to bring copies of the 2018 AGM Minutes, the 2019 Agenda, and Accounts. These will be distributed at the April General Meeting.

There will be a short slide show of Skelmersdale in the early days of development after the Meeting.

Sadly news that Isobel Rae, one of our founding group leaders has passed away. Isobel introduced us to the delights of Local History and many organised meetings and trips were enjoyed by all. She will be sadly missed and our sincere condolences have been conveyed to her family.



Throughout the year Lin has cheerfully catered for hungry and thirsty members at our various events. Lin is retiring as refreshments organiser so a volunteer is needed to carry on the good work. This involves buying tea, coffee, milk and biscuits for the General Meetings and the Coffee Afternoons. Our many thanks go to Lin.



News from the Trust

Social Prescribing

The national office has noticed a significant increase in enquiries about joining U3A from people who have been referred by their GP.

Social Prescription is for people who visit their GP but who would benefit from friendship, learning and exercise instead of drugs or medicine.

You can find out more about social prescribing at <https://www.socialprescribingnetwork.com/>

ARRIVA

U3A is supporting Arriva buses Connecting Communities campaign and the website is now live.

'Unfortunately the only benefit from this campaign useful to many of the members of Skelmersdale U3A is if members are fortunate to live within an easy walking distance from a bus stop'.

To receive the full newsletter members are advised to sign up at u3a.org.uk/email and it will be sent to you directly.



Sheep at the Eco Garden Centre