



## **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

On 27<sup>th</sup> April, the planned talk from The British Red Cross was cancelled due to the non-availability of the speaker. The replacement speaker was Richard Weaver from Caudwell Children. The charity is based at Keele, and largely funded by the entrepreneur John Caudwell. Both the talk and the question and answer session were enjoyed by those present.

On 29<sup>th</sup> June, Nicholas Minshull from the Co-op Group will present a talk titled “Tax, Care and Toy Boys.” It’s an intriguing title isn’t it? Please turn up if you wish to satisfy your curiosity.

Please encourage other members to attend, what is always a good afternoon out.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

At the last count the number of members was 350, which is a good start to a new membership year. Many thanks again to everyone who persuade family and friends to join us.

Should you know anyone who would like to join, application forms can be obtained from our website, or from membership officer, Alan Stevenson, Tel. 01782 395760: or by emailing: a.stevenson09@btinternet.com

You can also find us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/StokeSouthU3A/>

## **COMMITTEE MATTERS**

### **Annual General Meeting**

The branch held its AGM at Methodist Central Hall, Longton on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

The main content of the meeting was taken up by presentations of an annual report from both the chairman and the treasurer. Both reports reflected on the business of the last 12 months, and looked forward to aspirations for the coming year.

Committee vacancies comprised the honorary officer post of business secretary, and two general committee members. Unfortunately, no applications were submitted for the business secretary post. Since the branch constitution requires such an appointment, committee member and publicity

lead, Phil Rowley, offered to take on the role and retain his publicity duties. Accordingly, Phil completed a valid application and was duly elected to the post.

Only one application was received in respect of a general committee role. The Chairman stated that he was delighted that Pauline Williams again wished to join the committee after a short break. Additionally, Pauline has indicated that she is willing to accept the vacant and important role of Groups' Co-ordinator. Accordingly, Pauline was duly elected to the committee.

Due to the lack of applications, we must therefore operate over the next year with a shortfall of two committee members. The committee can, however, co-opt up to two members during the year, who will still have full voting rights.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Mel Baines Trio (minus 1) provided the musical entertainment.

### **Pre-AGM refreshments**

The usual arrangement prevailed whereby refreshments were provided during the 30 minutes prior to the commencement of the meeting at 2pm. Our catering officer, Diane Ellis, came up with the topical idea of baking cup-cakes with a coronation theme. Everyone in attendance was delighted and enjoyed them very much. A big thank-you to Diane for going the extra mile. The photo below reveals Diane's baking prowess.



### **Pensioners Convention**

Branch publicity lead, Phil Rowley, accepted an invitation to attend the Pensioners Convention on Monday 15th May, to give a presentation about Stoke-on-Trent South u3a. The audience numbered about 60. He covered the extent that embers were appreciating the opportunity to get out and about, meet their friends, and make new friends post Covid. He then covered how the branch operates and the activities available.

General enquiry from Phil revealed that about half of the audience had heard of the u3a, but only a few of those present were currently members. Phil distributed our activity timetables for attendees to peruse at their leisure. He stressed that, although we are largely based in Longton, there was no restriction on where our members lived, in fact he reassured someone that living in Werrington was not a barrier to membership. Phil was delighted with the support from the Pensioners Convention, they have provided publicity about the u3a in no fewer than 2½ pages of their latest newsletter. Many thanks to Phil in his quest to boost recruitment. Below is a photo of Phil's attendance at the meeting (seated on the left).



## **FOCUS ON GROUPS**

### **Badminton Group**

A reminder that the Badminton Group has moved to a new venue, i.e. Michelin Athletic Club Sports and Leisure, Rosetree Avenue, Trent Vale. ST4 6NL. Weekly meetings take place on Tuesday afternoons, and the session time is 1.30 to 2.30pm.

Group Leader, Dave Darby, may be contacted on 01782 317408.

### **Discussion Group**

The next group meeting is confirmed for Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 10.00am to 11.15am. It will take place in Stoke Library, which is located in the Council Hub close to the Market. Unfortunately, due to the constraint of the room size, the group is now fully subscribed.

The subject under discussion will be: **Demographics**

Group Leader Bob Jones can be contacted on 01785 817743.

### **Family History Group**

The next meeting will be held at the Tollgate Hotel, Blurton at 2pm on Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023. The group normally meets in the restaurant. New members are welcome.  
Group Leader is Les Waller, who may be contacted on 01782 394431.

### **Gardening and Nature Lovers**

During the summer months, the group meets every second Friday of the month. Details of the next planned gathering are as follows: Meet at the Clock Tower inside Longton Park at 10.30am on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023. After the meeting, the group will assemble in the park café.  
Further details may be obtained from new Group Leader, Christine Whitfield, who may be contacted on: Mob. 07939 621499 or email. [blue.angel007@live.co.uk](mailto:blue.angel007@live.co.uk)

### **Parchment Craft/Beading Group**

This new grouping meets weekly each Thursday, 10.30 to 12.30pm. The next planned meeting will take place on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023.  
Joint Group contacts are: Joan Crozier, 01782 213459, or Catherine James, 01782 331700 or 07761 107828.

### **Outdoor Bowls**

Weekly meetings take place every Wednesday, 1.30 to 3.30pm. The venue is, Fenton Private Bowling Club, Claud Street, Fenton. ST4 4LL.  
Group Leader, Dave Darby, may be contacted on 01782 317408.

### **Walking Group**

The next two planned walks during the month of June are:

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June: Canal towpath walk to and from Hanley Park. Mainly flat, with some steps.

Meet for 10.30am start at the "NEXT" car park on Festival Park shopping complex, Etruria. (Four and a half hours free parking.) Off Etruria Road, ST1 5SJ.

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June: Circular walk around Rudyard Lake. Mainly flat with some easy slopes.

Meet for 10.30am start at the free car park of the Leek & Rudyard Railway, ST13 8PF. From Leek, take the A523 then turn left to the B5331.

If you have ideas for future walks, or could lead one; or if you require further information please contact Ali Townsend on 07450 791153.

## **U3a NATIONAL/REGIONAL MATTERS**

### **u3a Radio**

The u3a Radio Podcast is broadcast on 17th of each month, but you can view them all via u3a's YouTube channel. If you have a story to share, you can email it to: [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk)

### **National u3a Newsletter**

You can still sign up on the national website at <https://u3asites.org.uk> to receive the National Monthly Newsletter by email. It's worth taking a look to see what is going on in other u3a's and you might even be inspired to try something new yourself.

## **OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST**

### **Day Trips**

The Branch has a number of members who are also members of the "Closer to Home" Walking Group. The group arranges a day trip by coach each month to a variety of interesting locations. The group has kindly offered vacant seats to u3a members at a cost of £25 per trip, and there is no obligation to join the Walking Group. Any bookings made by u3a members will of course be private transactions, and not related to u3a membership.

The Group's next trip is to Bridgnorth on June 10<sup>th</sup>. You may contact Carole Arrowsmith on 07871231767 for further details.

### **Staffordshire Archives**

Ray Johnson is offering a free presentation at the Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, titled "Those were the days." The screening will take place on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June at 11am. Further details are below:



### **Walking Connects group**

The City Council recently held a Mental Health Week. During which they highlighted the “Walking Connects group” that meets in Hanley Park every Wednesday from 11am.

Walking has many physical as well as mental health benefits and can help to reduce stress and anxiety as well as lower blood pressure

If you would like to know more about the Walking Connects group or get involved, pop down to Hanley Park on Wednesday for 11am every week or email [preet.sandhu@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:preet.sandhu@livingstreets.org.uk)

### **ANSWERS TO THE MAY QUIZ**

- |                                  |                   |                      |                   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Emerald                       | 2. French Open    | 3. Taurus and Gemini | 4. November       |
| 5. Lily of the Valley            | 6. Morris Dancing | 7. Anita Dobson      | 8. Francisco Goya |
| 9. Five minutes                  | 10. Hawthorn      | 11. Eastbourne       | 12. 8th May       |
| 13. On a cold and frosty morning | 14. Memorial Day  | 15. Speedwell        |                   |

This Newsletter is also accessible on our website (via the News Button). Please try to share information with fellow members who do not have access to the internet.

**Items for publication in the next newsletter will need to reach Andrew Devin by Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Tel: 01782 942352 or email: [a.devin2@gmail.com](mailto:a.devin2@gmail.com)**