



Tarporley and District u3a November 2023 Newsletter

Without a doubt autumn is now with us and winter is sneaking in behind. The darker evenings have arrived and with it the increasing tendency for us to draw the curtains and retreat to our homes. While there is much satisfaction to be had from being warm, cosy and inside, we must remember that our personal relationships and social contacts are a vital part of maintaining good health, both mental and physical.

Tarporley and District u3a can play an important role in keeping us in touch with others. If you have any mobility issues or feel hesitant to come out in the bad weather, please do let another member or a committee member know so that they can see if a lift can be arranged.



Final Demand!

We are delighted that most of our membership – currently standing at 514 – have renewed for the coming year. They will be able to enjoy the full range of activities, including the monthly meeting and a wide range of interest groups.

However, there are still some members who have yet to renew and the date for this to be completed is rapidly approaching – November 30th.

If circumstances have got in the way and you still want to be part of our lively organisation, then please contact Anita Langford our Membership Secretary. You can send a cheque for £15, payable to Tarporley and District u3a to Anita at 7 The Crescent Utkinton, CW6 0LT or go on line at www.u3asites.org/tarporley/welcome and fill in the membership form.



MONTHLY MEETING

Tarporley Community Centre

Thursday 23rd November 2023

Doors open at 9.45 for refreshments.

The talk will commence at 10.15

Bill Powell

Ellis Island and the Making of America



Happy Birthday to Us!

There was an excellent turn out of members to celebrate the tenth anniversary of Tarporley and District u3a on Thursday September 28th. 170 members came along; indeed the Committee were concerned that the numbers limit for the Hall might be breached.

The meeting was introduced by **Bill Harrison**, one of the leading early members. This is his account.



"I won't bore you with a long story about how it all started, but once upon a time there was no local u3a but after lots of emails, phone calls, pre-meetings and meetings and the bending lots of arms and the calling in of favours, we got going. We had lots of support from Jenny Carley from the u3a Trust and from a small group of very enthusiastic people,

Our first meeting was in the now demolished British Legion Club Hall with Charles Hardy from the then Old Fire Station Chocolate Shop as our first speaker. He talked about the family business and showed us how handmade chocolates were

assembled. He brought a delicious chocolate sample for every member. It was a lovely start, but after a while the venue left a lot to be desired, so we decided to move to the Community Centre, where we have flourished ever since. As you can imagine, at the start there were no interest groups. So Lin (Harrison) and I, plus a courageous few other members, started and ran quite a few to get things going, otherwise why would members join? We were soon a thriving part of the local community. We had a stall on the field on Carnival Day as part of our initial publicity campaign, and dressed as samba dancers in the Carnival Parade



Lin organised a monthly coach trip to interesting places within a couple of hours drive and to some evening concerts, plays, ballets and operas. This was soon followed by a foreign trip, with the first one, an economical 3-day coach trip to Paris. We crammed so much into those 3 days. A tour around Paris and a lunch cruise on the Seine followed by a guided tour of the Eiffel Tower basement. Next day was Monet's Garden, then in the afternoon either the Musee d'Orsay to see Monet's paintings or the Louvre; followed by an impromptu trip to the Sacre Coeur. A Sunday morning guided tour of the Opera with all its gold fittings, was followed by a race for the ferry."



The morning event was punctuated by performances from the Playing for Pleasure Group, the Singing for Fun Group and the Ukelele Group.

The icing on the cake was literally that, iced cup-cakes washed down with not only tea or coffee, but by some lovely fizz.

Let us hope that we can celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Tarporley and District u3a in a similar spectacular style in 2033!

Playing for Pleasure

A report from David Benn

Many of you saw three of our group perform on stage at the 10th anniversary party on 28 September – unfortunately we were not mobbed by groupies and agents at the end, but judging by the applause and the kind words afterwards it was well received.

We were only three because our total numbers at present are just seven, but with two of those currently indisposed for a while, and two on holiday, we were down to the trio of electric guitar, acoustic guitar and acoustic bass. Nevertheless, we enjoyed it immensely and gained enormous satisfaction from putting in the effort to practise and perform in public.



Clearly, we have space for new players, and would welcome some different instruments. We were just guitars on the day and feel the group would be really enhanced by some new sounds. I'm sure there were people in the audience thinking "I could do that on my accordion, harmonica, banjo, mandolin, piano, fiddle....." to name but a few instruments, any of which would blend in well. We have access to a keyboard for anyone who used to play a bit but would like to start up again.

For the performance we concentrated on leading with the singing which is not representative of our normal sessions. We usually have a recorder to lead with the melody and the singing happens only when we get more confident and familiar with a song. Some of us can read music, or even play by ear, but others just follow chord sheets as best they can. The group is therefore ideal for late starters, or people who learnt an instrument years ago but stopped playing because of other commitments, and now find they have a bit of time. The beauty is the fun from playing with other people, this can be a big step if you've not done it before, but, speaking from my own experience, enormously satisfying if you take the plunge.

Our repertoire is naturally a reflection of the interests (and age) of the group – it's mainly songs from the 60s and 70s and the great American Songbook, but we can have a go at others as well.

We currently meet twice a month, on the first and third Wednesday, for about two hours. If you are interested to find out more, or wish to join us, please contact me [via the U3A website interest group page or email me on david_benn@btinternet.com]

Singing for Fun

A Report from Ken Wood

The singing group were really pleased with the reception that we received at the U3A Anniversary Meeting. We hope that you enjoyed the songs as much as we enjoyed singing for you all.

We are always looking for more members to join the group. As you heard at the meeting, we are not a choir, but just a



group of people who enjoy singing, regardless of how we sound. We sing because we want the social side, including at least two lunches a year, Xmas and Summer, and enjoy a couple of Garden Parties.

Our meetings are in the Craven Room, that is the one with the entry off the car park, in the Tarporley Community Centre on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Our next meetings are on November 21st and December 19th, at 10,00am.

Come along, we don't bite, you will get a warm welcome and a brew and biscuit during our meeting. There is no obligation to join, come along, have a go and if you enjoy, then you can join, if you don't, you at least get a brew.

We are short of male singers, so come on you are a budding Frank Sinatra. have a go and enjoy the camaraderie. What have you got to lose!

Contact Ken Wood on unome@live.co.uk or via the website interest group page.

UKE3A - Ukelele Group

This group has featured a number of times in the Newsletter and are very familiar to many of you. They gave not one, but two cheerful sessions, to the delight of the crowd. Playing the ukelele does not take musical knowledge, but it does take practice. If you are interested then please do contact the leader of the group, who will be delighted to welcome you to the group, via the website interest group page.



New Committee

At the AGM that preceded the October meeting, a new committee was elected to run Tarporley and District u3a. Except for the Treasurer, officers hold a post for a maximum of three years, though they can remain on the committee if they choose in another role, or as 'non-officers'. While working within the framework of the guidelines set by the national organisation, local groups develop and are run in response to the wishes of local members. Volunteers are the backbone – indeed the complete skeleton - of both local and national groups, without people being willing to stand up and take on the responsibilities, the organisation could not flourish.

Here is your new Committee:

Chair – **Don Igoe**



Vice-Chair and Seaker Secretary – **Gill Moroney**

Vice Chair – **Gwyn Jones**

Treasurer – **Graham Parker**

Secretary – **Kim Harding**

Interest Group Organizer – **Pat Tyson - Jones**

Membership Secretary – **Anita Langford**

Newsletter Editor – **Sue Hardacre**

Raye Hurst

Jan Linsell

Paul Bujac

Andy Barson

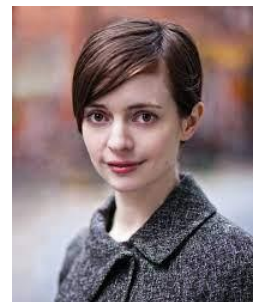
(ED; - I was hoping to include pictures of all the Committee but I regret that my digital manipulation skills proved inadequate. However, Committee members are smiling at you on the website)

Book Club 1

Station Eleven by Emily St John Mandel

This novel is by a young Canadian author and was the one which propelled her to fame. As it deals with the world after a devastating pandemic, its sales have recently increased.

Published in 2014, Mandel portrays a world where a highly infectious pandemic has wiped out 99% of the world's population, destroying civilisation, but not humanity. Mandel does not dwell on the devastating and terrifying events in the immediate aftermath, though such events are hinted at. Instead, she creates a world 20 years later, where small groups are surviving and beginning to create a new reality for themselves. She weaves a delicate web of characters, from both before and after the pandemic, whose lives touch and intertwine. As examples of the tenacity of humans, she creates a Travelling Symphony, a group of players and actors who take Shakespeare's plays around communities in the Great Lakes area, and also a community that coalesced around a small airport where planes landed as everything collapsed but with passengers who were plague free. Mandel explores the need of survivors both to remember and forget what has brought them, and the world, to such a place.



One survivor contemplates the fact that, if there had been one very minor genetic change in the virus, millions of others could have been saved. In the light of our recent Covid experience, this was a sobering thought.

While the book created much discussion, it was not universally liked. Though the ending thought was hopeful, some found the subject matter quite disturbing. While the intertwining lives were interesting, some felt that the coincidences were difficult to both believe in and to follow.



Book Club 2

"Elizabeth is Missing" by Emma Healy.

Maud, an ageing grandmother, is slowly losing her memory and ability to live safely on her own. The book is written from Maud's point of view and gives an insight into how someone suffering from dementia might be thinking and feeling.

The one thought that Maud is clinging into is that her friend Elizabeth is missing. An incident at the start of the book, which takes place in Elizabeth's garden, introduces a murder mystery element which runs through the book and eventually resolves issues from Maud's childhood.



The group all felt that the book was very well written and gave a real insight into dementia. Several members found it a difficult read as it brought back memories of experience of dementia in their own families. However, there were moments of humour, and the plot was interesting.

Book Group 2 rating - 4/5

Book Club 3 - Murder Mystery

The popularity of murder/crime books is as strong as ever and a demand has arisen from members to investigate this genre, magnifying glasses and deductive brains at the ready!

The Murder Mystery Book Club is hoping to start up in November 2023, on the 1st Tuesday of each month, 10.30am until 12. The aim of the group is to explore a different murder mystery novel each month and to introduce group members to new murder mystery authors they may not have heard of. If you are interested, please check out the U3A Tarporley website, go to Groups and click on Murder Mystery Club. Use the link to let the convenor know you wish to join.



Ed : This article has been carried over from last month as the response has been a little slow. This is a very popular genre and should generate many interesting discussions.

Sunday Lunch Group

There are places available on our new venture of a Sunday Lunch Group. We plan to meet at a local hostelry once each month. Of course, not every member of the group will be able to come to every lunch date so we will send out the dates and venues in advance and one week ahead of the event, you will be able to book a place, first come, first served! We expect to have 10 or 12 places at each lunch, depending on the venue.



Once we reach 25 members the group will be closed and put names on a waiting list for any future vacancies.

If you would like to be a member of this group, please email rayewirral@aol.com for details.

Art Appreciation



In the October meeting of the Art Appreciation Group, we watched a really interesting film on the life and art of Mark Rothko. We all agreed, I think, that finding out more about his life helped us to appreciate his work better. Some of us had thought the art he is most known for was just simple blocks of colour as in this example (pictured) but we found it was more complex than that. We finished off with a short clip about Brancusi's sculpture and his version of The Kiss (pictured).



We also said a big thank you to Audrey Wraith for being the group convenor for some years as we appreciate the hard work and enthusiasm, she put in. Being a convenor is voluntary, but we felt it was important to acknowledge her work. We gave her this bouquet of flowers and a book 'The Paintings that Revolutionized Art'. Audrey will continue to take part in the group and our group Facebook page, while Pam Lees takes on the convenor role for the group.



Midway Walkers

Monday 2nd October saw the Midway Walkers embark on their first educational Nantwich Explorer; a 6 mile flat circular route around Nantwich starting in Acton and comprising a mixed terrain of footpaths, roads, canals, railways and even the town park.

It was also paired (like fine wines alongside a tasting menu) with 12 fascinating facts on the history, architecture and industrial heritage of this salt-rich area which first attracted the Romans and then everybody else for the next 1600 years.



We were blessed with a pleasing break in the weather after leaving in fine drizzle and ending with coats off having over-heated. One small diversion to the route was made after some cows with attitude lay across the public footpath with an 'I dare you' expression on their faces. Returning safely, and after feasting on Andy's homemade ginger flapjacks, those with nothing better to do went to the Barbridge Inn by the Shropshire Union canal for light beverages.

This was a walk that stretched the mind more than the legs.

Trips

Places are still available on this trip to Liverpool Empire Theatre on Saturday 24th February 2024

Members can book at the members' meeting on November 23rd or by post using the details sent out with the flyer.

Based on the classic Tim Burton movie and featuring the hauntingly beautiful music of Danny Elfman and Terry Davies, Bourne and his New Adventures Company return to this witty, bittersweet story of an incomplete boy left alone in a strange new world.

In a castle high on a hill lives Edward; a boy created by an eccentric inventor. When his creator dies, he is left alone and unfinished with only scissors for hands until a kindly townswoman invites him to live with her suburban family. Can Edward find his place in the well-meaning community which struggles to see past his curious appearance to the innocence and gentleness within?



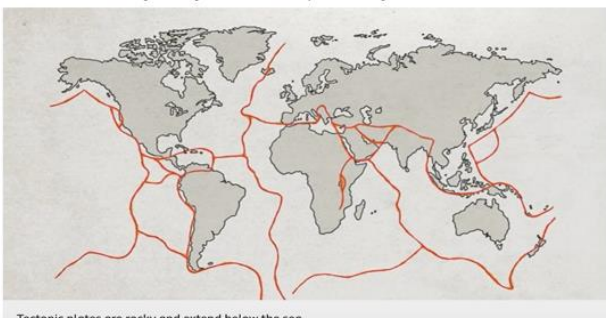
"Straight from the heart. A stunning finale that knocks you sideways"

- THE METRO

Science Group

On a very wet Friday morning, 9 members of the science group managed to gather in the Tarporley Community Centre for a short presentation about earthquakes given by Cathy Peel, who has had experience of living in an earthquake prevalent country of Japan. About half of the group had experienced at least one earthquake, usually abroad.

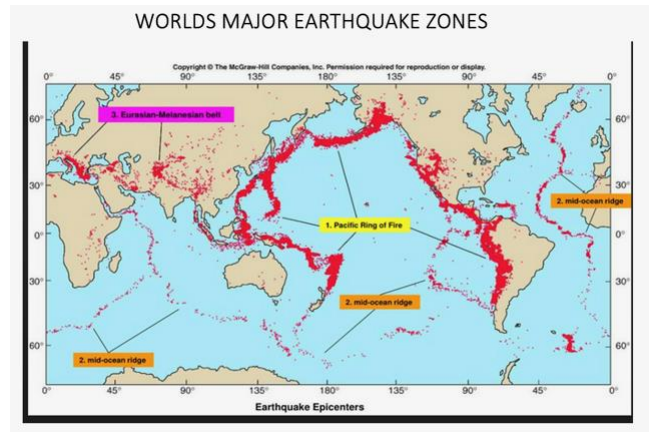
The crust is made of huge pieces of land called **tectonic plates** which fit together like a huge jigsaw. These plates move around because they are floating on the **semi-solid** mantle below them, and this moves very slowly. The tectonic plates only move a few centimetres each year.



Tectonic plates are rocky and extend below the sea

The presentation began with a children's video about earthquakes and where and why they occur. This was followed by slides showing the mantle on which we live, and it's hot and liquid inner core. The mantle formed one large land mass named Pangea which began to break apart, extremely slowly, into the continental land masses as we now know them now.

These land mass parts are called Tectonic Plates which move in different ways -up, down, or sideways - causing different kinds of fault lines in the ground at differing levels. Earth movements become earthquakes and it is possible for hot liquid volcanic matter to push upwards along fault lines and fissures to reach the surface, and volcanoes result. Well known fault lines are The San Andreas Fault, Thingvellir in Iceland and the African Rift Valley



There are also many faults and volcanoes around the Pacific Ocean, known as the Ring of Fire. Another area of movement that we commonly hear about is where the movement of the African mass northwards results in earthquakes around the north side of the Mediterranean.

We then discussed faults in the UK and where and when some of the most recent earthquakes had occurred in Britain. These are usually not strong enough for us to feel at the surface as we go about our daily lives. This was surprising and interesting information for all of us.

Digital Photography.

I do hope that you enjoy the images that the Digital Photography Group send in regularly.



Out and About

Film Nights

Tarporley Community Centre

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

Starring Jim Broadbent and Penelope Wilton

Friday November 17th at 7.30 pm



Friday December 1st at 7.30pm

The Fabelmans

Starring Michell Williams and Gabriel LaBelle



Tarvin Community Centre

The Great Escaper

Starring Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson

Friday 24th November at 7.30pm

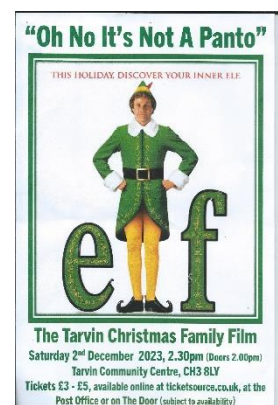


Elf – instead of the usual panto!

Saturday December 2nd at 2.30pm

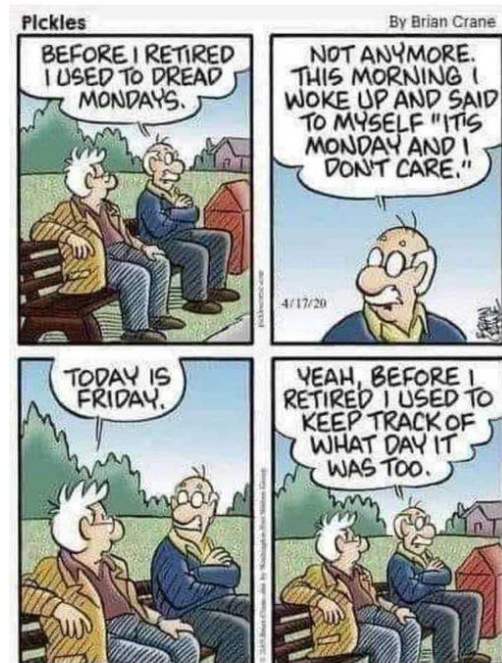
Starring Will Farrell

(Please note there will be no Christmas Market after the film)



.....and finally

I suspect that I am not the only one that has to think hard about what day it is when I wake up!



Just a brief word about any images of members in the Newsletter. They are sent with the participants agreement but are intended for inclusion in the Newsletter only. Please do not send images of u3a individuals in the Newsletter to other public, digital spaces.

To respond, or contact any Committee member, please get in touch with the Secretary, Kim Harding by email at Tarporleyu3a@outlook.com

For contributions about your group's activities, please get in touch with the editor at bandshardacre@btinternet.com

For wider information on the activities of Tarporley and District u3a go to

www.u3asites.co.org/tarporley/welcome

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