



Tarporley and District u3a October 2023 Newsletter

Though the sun is shining as I write this, there are plenty of indications that autumn has started. With the evenings drawing in we know that winter is on its way with all the pleasures and challenges that the season brings. As if we didn't need reminding, I noticed that Marks and Spencer had got some Christmas things out already. It's called a 'soft launch', just a few things to tempt the very well organised shopper. I wonder if we did a quick survey, we could find out how many of us think this is a great idea and how many of us think it is retail madness? I know where my vote would be!



Contributions to the Newsletter

I have been editing the Newsletter for several months now and I hope that you enjoy reading it. However, I am aware that the same interest groups are bringing their news to you every month. One reason is that I am associated with 3 of them and can produce copy, and there are also a number of groups who have got into the habit of sending me their news. But some groups still haven't featured, and it is my intention to shining the spotlight these groups in the months ahead.



If you are a convenor of a group, of just a member who has thoroughly enjoyed something that your group is doing, then please 'put pen to paper' and let me have your news. As we are getting new members all the time, I hope that I will be able to ensure that they can have access to up to date and personal experience of **all** our activities.

Please send your contributions to me, Sue Hardacre at bandshardacre@btinternet.com. If you have photographs, that would be much appreciated.

MONTHLY MEETING

Tarporley Community Centre

Thursday 26th October 2023

Doors open at 9.45 for refreshments.

10.10 Annual General Meeting

10.30 - Rosie Lee A Reluctant Shepherdess



Life on Weaver Dairy House Farm, near Winsford Flashes, where traditional cattle and sheep are reared, and conservation practices and habitat management are an important part of the farm ethos.

Tarporley Community Centre Appeal

A recent change in fire safety regulations has prompted the Tarporley Community Centre Trustees to realise that that improvements are needed to fire doors and the Committee Room seating, and that these improvements should be made as quickly as possible.

To help raise the anticipated £13,000+ of the cost, up to 75% off which could come from Cheshire West and Chester Council, the Trustees are turning again to Spacehive, a crowdfunding platform that helps to provide money for small local projects. As the grant provider, CW&C look at Spacehive to assess the level of local support which helps them allocate scarce resources to projects that have **proven** community support.

The Community Centre Trustees are asking the wider local population to donate a small amount, **minimum £2**, towards the improvements. The local authority will look at the **NUMBER** of donations rather than the just amount raised as an indicator of the value the local community puts on the project. In this context, 100 donations of £2 would be judged to be more valuable than 2 donations of £100, though of course donations of any size are welcome. The number of donations can decide the percentage of the grant that the Council may give towards the total cost.

The Trustees have found this to be a very effective way of gaining access to grants and encourage all who value the Community Centre to contribute using this link:

www.spacehive.com/tarporley-community-centre-fire-safety



Pic2. Main Hall Doors.
Replace with new fire doors
with intumescent seals &
Dorgard hold.



**Replace bench seating with new
fire retardant seating.**



Pic1. Inner foyer door.
Fit intumescent seals &
Dorgard hold open.

Ed: This information has been received from the Community Centre Committee. As u3a is such a major user of Tarporley Community Centre, all members will benefit from any improvements that are made.

Striders Head for the Hills

Twenty members geared up and strode out on 23rd August, to walk from Tegg's Nose in Macclesfield Country Park, to a British folly called White Nancy, which is a well-known bell-shaped structure at the top of Kerridge hill, overlooking Bollington. It's a steady climb, demanding in places, with stunning views on all sides. It's very exposed on the ridge, so they were grateful for the good weather. Setting out from Tegg's Nose, they walked through country lanes bordered by Derbyshire dry stone walling. It was interesting to notice on the way, relics of the industrial heritage; Mill workers' paved paths, mine shafts and a ruin of a mill, which in its day had been first a cotton mill, then a silk mill and finally a bleach works. The climb was steep in places, but the group coped well.

White Nancy was the perfect stopping point for lunch and a group photo. It was built originally in 1817 to commemorate victory over Napoleon's forces at the Battle of Waterloo, and is generally painted white, but is occasionally decorated for special occasions: In 2012 it displayed a Jubilee Crown and the dates 1952-2012, along with the Olympic rings, in 2015 it was painted with a 200th anniversary motif to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo and later that year a bee symbol was painted on White Nancy in remembrance of those who lost their lives the Manchester Arena bombings. More recently it was painted with bands of blue and yellow to mark the UK's support of Ukraine in the war with Russia. The group made their way back via the Kerridge Ridge, which is a sharp dividing line between the hills of the Peak District and the Cheshire plain. The panoramic views from up there are stunning. They had been fortunate to enjoy good weather, which meant the lovely views could be admired, especially by those who had remembered to pack their binoculars. Arriving back at Teggs Nose Country Park, they took over the café in the car park where they enjoyed tea and cakes before the drive home.



Ed: The Striders are the most energetic of all the walking groups and a reasonable degree of fitness is required to enjoy their walks, but there are other groups that do not go as high or as far, or who are Srollers, or even the slightly faster Trotters. You can also walk with your 4-legged friends.



Please
check
on the

website www.u3asites.org.uk/tarporley for more
information on this most excellent of activities.

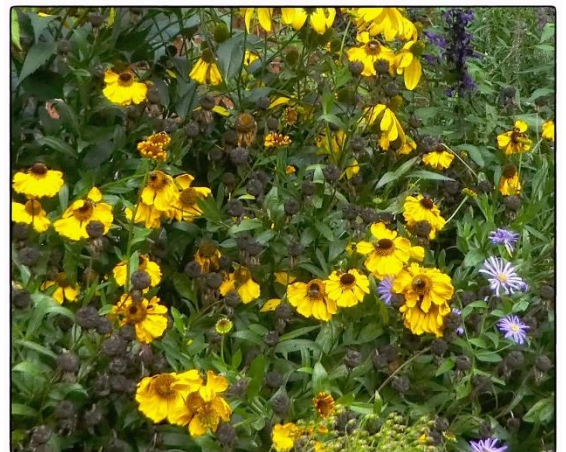


Visit to Hodnet Hall Gardens, 13th September 2023

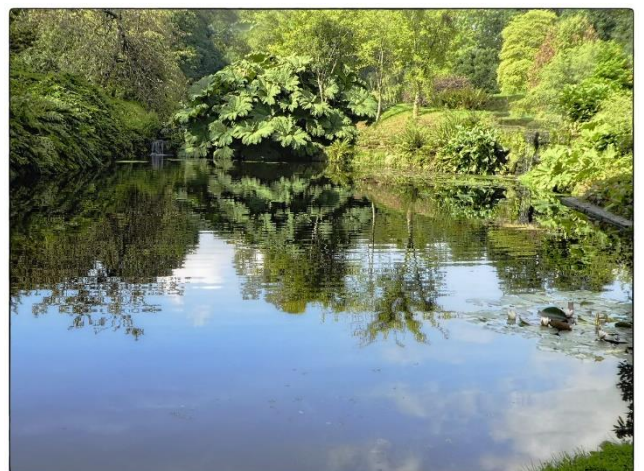
Report from Paul Bujac

It was a glorious day for our trip to Hodnet Hall Gardens, the country estate just south east of Whitchurch. The particularly hot spell had passed, and the wet weather had yet to arrive. Hodnet estate, still privately owned, was established in the 16th Century but was developed with a new house in 1870 and with new gardens in 1922. These gardens cover some 60 acres with the main feature being a series of lakes, complete with croaking frogs and dragonflies. Walking around, one is overwhelmed by the variety of flowers, shrubs and trees, particularly as the gardens were on the cusp of summer and autumn. The bright colours of the late flowering perennials such as rudbeckia were balanced by the emerging colours of trees such as Persian Ironwood.

The impressive walled kitchen garden was fun with all varieties of fruit and vegetables. Another very impressive feature was the excellent restaurant and café. With good timing, members could manage a morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea. An excellent day out; many thanks to Jan Linsell for the arrangements. I must go back there in Spring for the rhododendrons and azaleas.



Ed; Tarporley and District u3a seeks to arrange a trip of some kind every month to a variety of venues to enable members to enjoy an outing without the bother of driving, parking and entrance fees. They are advertised at the monthly meeting and by email and are very popular, so do be prepared to act quickly if an enticing trip is announced.

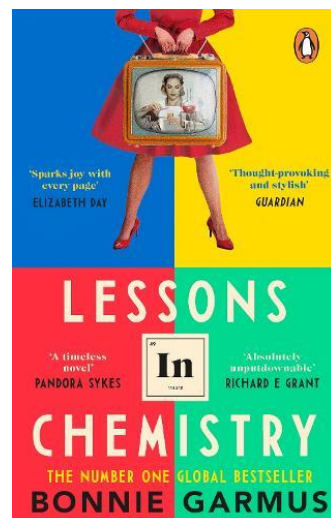


Book Club 1

Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus

This book, a first novel. is an international best seller and soon to be a TV series. It tells the tale of Elizabeth Zott, who, when fired from her job as a research chemist, is offered a role as a TV cook. By bringing her scientific knowledge to the job - “a pinch of sodium chloride and a dash of acetic acid” - she challenges the sexist stereotypes of the 1950s and 60s.

The author uses a fairy tale genre which allows her to weave much that is impossible into a complicated and often surreal plot. It begins in a 1962 present then goes back to 1952 to give a back story. Half way through, the novel returns to the present to continue the tale where, eventually, all is resolved. She uses flashback and film techniques to give a very tight structure to her novel. The all-knowing narrative voice is satirical and often uses the character of a dog and her incredibly bright child to convey essential story elements.



Science plays an integral part of the novel. The author, although not a chemist, was a copywriter for educational science texts and is deeply concerned that science should be better understood. Her heroine links chemistry and cooking to metaphors for marriage and social cohesion bringing a constant smile to the reader. Her uncompromising and controversial stance on the accepted views of the day challenges everything from the pervasive sexism of the time to the use of processed foods.

All members of the group enjoyed the humour, often laugh-out-loud, despite the irony with which many serious issues were tackled. However, there were diversions of opinion within the group. Some felt the author was too critical of the life for women in 1960s and that greater freedoms had come at a great cost for women who think they can have it all. Others felt that although the book was set in 1962 many of the criticisms were relevant to today's society.



Book Club 2

Entirely by coincidence, the same book was on the agenda for this group!

Their review says “It is an amusing and very readable book but also covers serious issues around the restrictions placed on women at this time.

The book provoked a lively discussion of feminism and how much things have improved for women since the 60s. Opinions of the book itself were also widely varied, though some felt it was the most enjoyable read we have had so far. A 4 out of 5 rating”.

ED: If you have access to Apple TV+ then you can see the TV production from October 13th with Bree Larson in the role of Elizabeth.

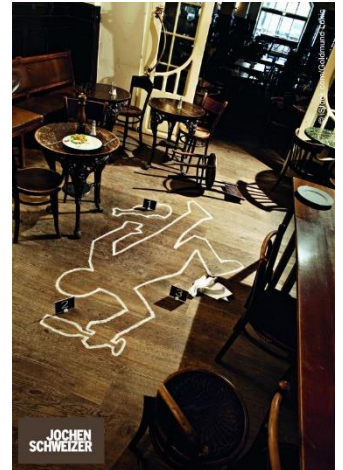


New Group Starting

The Murder Mystery Book Club

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 starting up in November 2023, on the 1st Tuesday of each month, in the morning, 10.30am until 12. The aim of the group is to explore a different murder mystery novel each month over a drink 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 you wish to join.



Science Group

In our Science meetings, we like to discuss topical subjects. We have explored a variety of subjects, including renewable energy and Net Zero, and artificial intelligence (AI), trying to understand the science and technology behind the headlines. At a last meeting we chose RAAC, a building material that was crumbling to pieces all over the newspapers and media.

I think we had all done some research and worked out that RAAC stood for 'Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete' and that this material, which looks like a certain chocolate bar, had been used in buildings, such as schools and hospitals, in 1960s-80s. The problem, reported by the media, was that this material was now past its sell by date and was likely to disintegrate causing buildings to collapse, potentially injuring people.



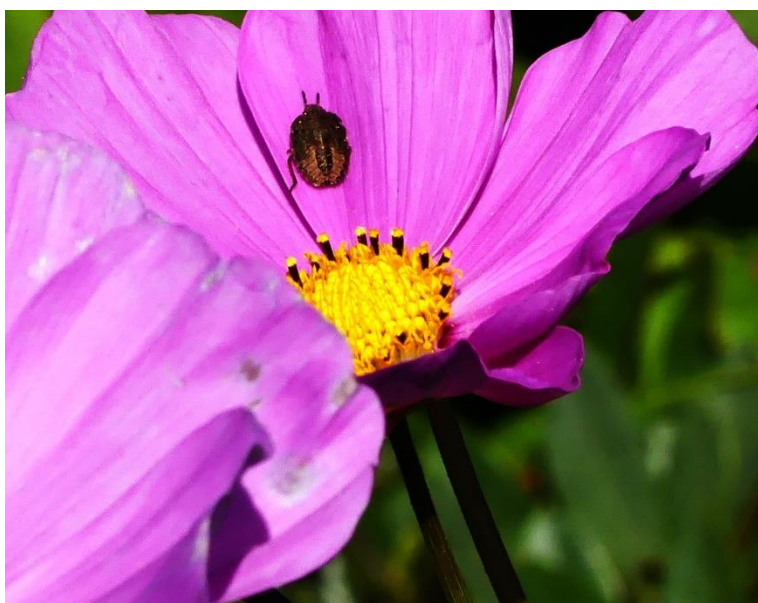
Exploring what literature was available, and with the help of one of our members, a retired structural engineer, we discovered that RAAC wasn't concrete. Concrete contains stone aggregate and is heavy and strong. RAAC is a factory manufactured lightweight, mortar encased, steel reinforced plank often used to support roofs. Although effective when they were installed, these planks could deteriorate if, for example, due to poor building maintenance, water penetrated the material and caused corrosion of the steel reinforcing.

These concerns had been known about since the 1990s and RAAC is no longer used. The problems now faced by the authorities include the challenges of identifying vulnerable structures and effective repairs, and then finding the resources and money. One significant local problem is Leighton Hospital which is promised a complete rebuild.

We didn't manage to solve any of these challenges in our meeting, but we did come away with a much better understanding of the problems.

Digital Photography.

No Newsletter would be complete without the wonderful images provided by this very talented group of photographers. These are from a trip to Mount Pleasant Gardens in August.

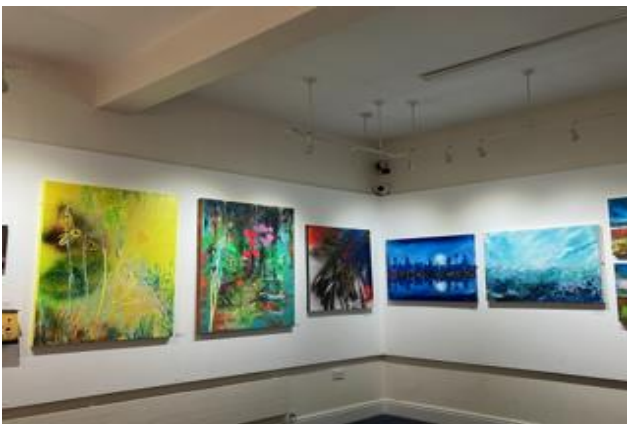


Art Appreciation

The Art Appreciation Group have continued to meet monthly and at the last meeting we looked at and discussed some of the art we had seen and some of the group had purchased during the summer.

There was a lovely ornate bevelled green glass vase that a member had bought from the Oriel Glasfryn Gallery in North Wales. The recent art exhibition in Bickerton had been visited by a few people in the group and had been greatly admired and a wonderful watercolour landscape was shown. Another had visited the Castle Art Centre in Frodsham and admired an incredibly detailed image of a polar bear smashing through the waves, painted in oil by a young man, George Davies, starting out on his artistic journey. Another member showed the group pictures of a visit to Iceland and the range of art that was made there.

The group would welcome new members to come and join us, and to gain an appreciation of the huge variety of art both modern and traditional that we look at and discuss. We also share information about upcoming tv programmes such as some recently on portrait painting, the American artist Georgia O'Keeffe and Picasso which members also enjoy and usually discuss at the next meeting.



Ed: The following information has been received from the Citizen's Advice Bureau and has been included for your information.

Household Support Fund

Our Heating Bank, supported by Cheshire West and Chester Council's Household Support Fund, is aimed at assisting vulnerable community members with energy costs. The fund primarily targets low-income households.

Last year we allocated **over £400,000** of Household Support Funds to the residents of Cheshire West and Chester on behalf of the Council. We **issued 3500 awards** and **helped 3000 households** with their energy, or energy related, costs.

Eligibility

Before completing the online form, please review the eligibility criteria outlined below:

You must be a resident of Cheshire West and Chester and:

- Provide evidence of receipt of a means-tested benefit or household income below £25,000
- Provide proof of address
- Details of pre payment meter or copy of most recent energy bill

When to apply

- Dates when the Heating Bank is open are detailed on our website [Heating bank | Citizens Advice Cheshire West](#)

Funds are limited for each application window and applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis until the funds are exhausted.

The form will close once the funds have been allocated.

Number of Awards:

- One award per household, per month.

Unsuccessful Applications:

- Incomplete or incorrect application forms will not be processed and will be deleted from our records.
- Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria, fail to provide evidence, or do not grant consent for personal data processing will not be considered.

Struggling to Pay Bills or Emergency Situations:

- If you are in an emergency situation, please contact your energy supplier directly.
- If you are experiencing difficulties in paying your energy bills and have not yet sought assistance, it is recommended to reach out to your energy supplier, as they may be able to provide support.
- For assistance with energy debts or concerns about potential disconnection, please consider the following options:
 - Citizens Advice Cheshire West Adviceline - 0808 2787806
 - Cheshire West HELP Scheme - 0808 1753599

Alternatively you can find out more information on our [website](#).

Energy Saving Advice

Our Energy Saving Team offers free workshops to community groups based in Cheshire. These workshops aim to help reduce energy costs by providing information to help make sustainable changes in behaviour to reduce consumption, and raise awareness of grants and schemes available. Click [Energy advice workshop | Citizens Advice Cheshire West](#) for more information.

Please take a moment to look at the following tips on how to save money on your energy bills provided by the [Energy Saving Trust](#).

Out and About

Film Nights

Friday October 20th

Tarporley Community Centre at 7.30pm

Empire of Light with Olivia Colman and Colin Firth

Tickets £5



Tarvin Community Centre at 8.00pm
Friday October 20th

A Haunting in Venice with Kenneth Branagh

Tickets £6



Live Music at Tarvin Community Centre

Saturday 14th October - CRTA

Daniel Smith Blues Duo

Doors - 7.00pm

Show - 7.30pm – 9.30pm (2 x 40minutes, plus interval)

All Tickets £12.00

Tickets available [online](#), at Tarvin PO, or on the door subject to availability

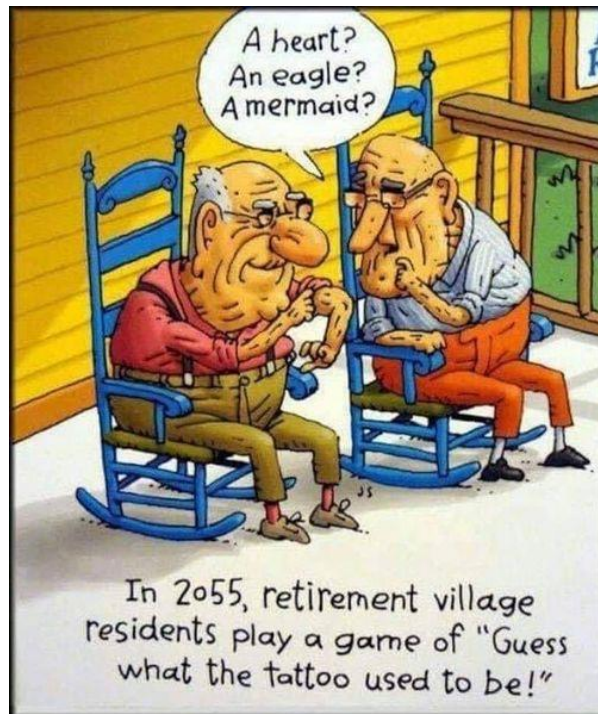
Acclaimed Daniel Smith Blues Duo bring their unique blend of sensational blues, boogie-woogie, classy soul-jazz, and foot-tapping piano to Tarvin.

Engagingly self-effacing, yet jaw-droppingly dynamic, Daniel Smith Blues Duo will immerse you in an authentic old-time feel-good show of exceptional music, packed with humorous, and informative, anecdotes.



.....and finally.....

Is there a young person in your life who is keen to get some ink? Perhaps you could show them this.....!



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 phone

the Secretary, Liz Carter, on 01829 732863 or email 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

Tarporley & District U3A is a Registered Charity – No 117137