



Newsletter – May 2020

We hope that you are all keeping safe and well and that when the crisis is over we can all meet up again and get back to normal.

Sadly, we have taken the decision to cancel the visit to Portmeirion. This is, of course, because of the unpleasant and uncertain development of the Covid-19 pandemic. This had proved to be a popular outing, and we are aware that many of you may be disappointed. However for all concerned, it is better to be clear about our intentions. We will endeavour to run it next year at a similar time. There will be a full refund of all deposits made when we are able to get back together.

The canal trip was taken out of our hands, as the company running the trips refunded our money without even letting us know!! We will try and run this later on in the year if it is feasible.

Don't forget that we have two particular sites that Wallasey U3A have created for our members: the Wallasey **U3A Facebook group** and also Things to Do and Coronavirus pages of our Wallasey U3A website <https://u3asites.org.uk/wallasey>.

Do you remember

During this period of lockdown we are using our monthly newsletter as a means of keeping in touch with each other and getting to know one another better. At our age we all have stories to tell and so we have started a new feature whereby we are asking our members to tell us their own stories. This month we have two contributors, Rita Corcoran and Mike Rudzinski. Rita is well known in Wallasey for her very successful businesses and Mike also well known for his major contribution to the music industry. If you would also like to write your story then please email Cathy Morgan at cathymorgan@live.co.uk


Rita's Story

After I gave up my nursing career in Liverpool in the early 70s, I, along with my husband and children moved over to Wallasey to a lovely big house in Seabank Road, The Clifton, where we set up as a Bed and Breakfast for several years.

We let out three rooms and provided a full English breakfast for people who were working in the area. We later moved to a larger house on the prom on the corner of Elgin Drive, The Walsingham, where we continued with our B & B and also set up a restaurant with 36 covers and a terrace overlooking the river where we served afternoon teas. On the lower floor I ran a small beauty business, called Face and Shape, all of which became very successful with good reviews.

During that time I made new friends at the local slimming club and we would meet regularly for coffee mornings. It was at one of our coffee mornings that we all decided to rent out two of the chalets that stood in a row at Harrison Drive. We arranged to rent two weeks every June, when the men were still at work and the children still in school. It was purely for us women to enjoy a bit of time out, no kids, no men. We would pack up the wine (which had priority) some food and a few clothes. The chalets were provided with a gas cooker, sink, table, chairs and deck chairs. You weren't allowed to stay over night.

HOLIDAY CHALET—WALLASEY BEACH
ONE OR TWO WEEKS ONLY

EACH CHALET CONTAINS GAS COOKING APPLIANCE TABLE, 4 GAR- DEN CHAIRS 2 DECK CHAIRS & WINDBREAK		DAYTIME USE ONLY — NO SLEEPING FACILITIES —
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WEEKLY RENTALS PAYABLE IN ADVANCE: APRIL & OCT.
25/-, MAY 30/-, JUNE 45/-, JULY 55/-, AUG. 65/-, SEPT. 35/-.
EARLY APPLICATION ESSENTIAL TO ENTERTAINMENTS MANAGER:
MUNICIPAL OFFICES, BRIGHTON STREET, WALLASEY
Phone: 051 - 638 - 7070 (ext. 333)

Once at the chalet we would get a pot of stew or similar going on the cooker, set out the deckchairs and sit and chat until it was time to fetch the children from school for their lunch. Before taking them back we would wipe them down with a flannel (I think one between them all) and take them back to school.



In the afternoons the children were brought back and the men were allowed to join us on the Friday. Evenings were spent playing games, inside if it was raining, or out on the beach until 9 at night until we had to pack up to go home. The chalets cost from 24/- up to 80/- per week depending on the size.

But then one night in the early 80s a big storm blew up and washed our lovely chalets away, never to be replaced. Our lovely summer fortnights were ended for good.

Rita Corcoran

Mike's Story 1

I first started to get interested in guitars when I was at school, I must have been about 12 or 13 at the time. I had a best mate at school, Ron Smith. We were really close mates. My interest in music picked up on hearing the song *You Got What it Takes* by some guy called Johnny Kidd, but more of that later. I was also taken by the Rock and Roll music of Elvis, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry, our own Cliff Richard and The Drifters/Shadows and Marty Wilde, and would you believe Ray Coniff and his Orchestra (theme from *A Summer Place*, just fantastic).

Ron and I lived near each other so used to meet up in the mornings and walk through Birkenhead Park to St Hugh's school. We would talk about nothing else but music. We would talk about different guitars and drums, Ron was really into drums, and played them in the Scouts. His big hero was Sandy Nelson of *Let There be Drums* fame but at the ages of 12/13 we were too young to go to clubs etc so we used to watch *Oh Boy*, *Six Five Special* and *Wham* on the television or listen to some of the pop songs on the radio, when they decided to play them, because as you most probably know all we had was the Light Programme on the BBC or Radio Luxembourg. Wonderful as it was, it kept fading in and out. Ron and I used to go to the local youth club's or the Jive Hive's and it was either orange juice or Coca Cola to drink.

I am sure you all remember that at the time, if a band was playing we would push past the girl's dancing around their handbags and watch the guys in the band, listening to their sound and watching how they played chords to the songs they were singing. Ron would be more interested in what the drummer was doing and in how he played.

In the next episode I will tell you how we broke into Merseybeat and playing at the same concerts as the Beatles and some of the other Merseybeat stars. How we made friends with many of them and how I became a professional musician, joining one of the biggest bands around at the time. I will also tell you some of the tales from touring.

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25th May 2020