

For the last few years our Christmas Lunch has not been particularly well attended so after much discussion both at the executive committee meetings and also the main meetings, it was decided to try something different.



On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October we went to the Riverhill Restaurant in Oxton for an Anniversary Lunch Celebration. October 2016 marks thirty one years since our U3A started, so certainly something to celebrate. The meal, service and general atmosphere was excellent and a good time was had by all, particularly the people who won the 'free' draw.

We provided a box of chocolates and the Riverhill generously donated a complimentary Sunday Lunch Voucher for two people. Nan Roberts gave us an entertaining reading about behaving disgracefully by wearing purple which brought the afternoon to a jolly conclusion. In conclusion, I think we might well be back next year.

Diane Adams

Hallowe'en,  
Bonfire night  
and  
Remembrance  
Sunday are now  
behind us.

I was delighted  
to find a poppy  
with a fob to  
attach it. Much  
easier to  
manage than  
one with a pin.



Wot! No peanuts

Did you  
know?

According  
to pet shop  
staff there is  
a worldwide  
shortage of  
peanuts.

## Regional Events

Weds 18<sup>th</sup> January- understanding Tomorrow's World - Warrington 1-4 pm See website for details :- [www.u3a.org.uk/north-west](http://www.u3a.org.uk/north-west)

At the annual Summer School at Newton Rigg college in Penrith some of our network U3As helped with travelling expenses. One enterprising member of Bromborough laid on a minibus then opened it to members of other U3As. 90 folk between them enjoyed the 7 courses available. Feedback was positive and the 2017 Summer School is now being planned.

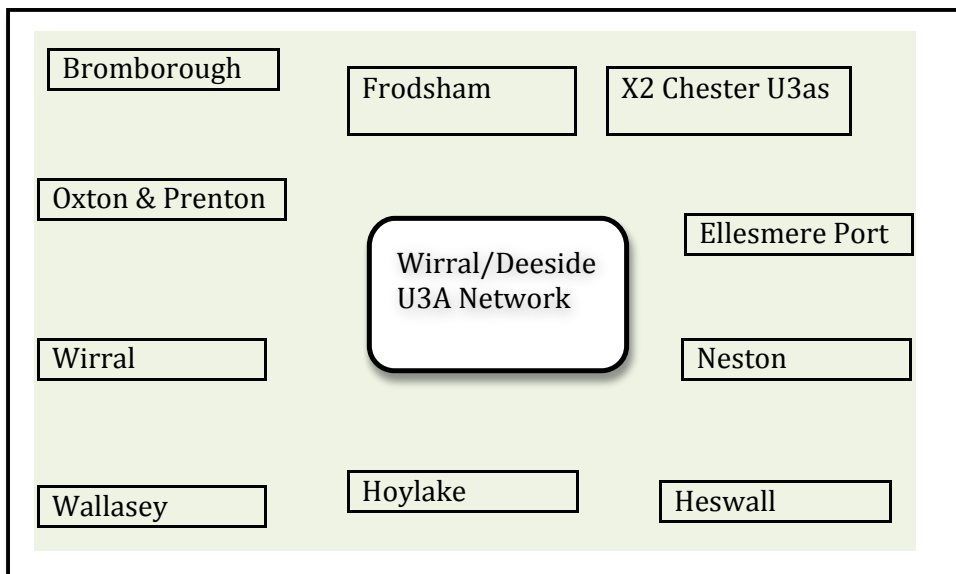
Regional annual conference and AGM.

I attended this in 2016 at the Quaker Meeting House in School Lane, Liverpool. After an excellent talk on the development of a global communications system we had a choice of small groups including entertainment laid on by St Helens U3A before finally finishing with the AGM.

This successful model is being repeated for 2017 but will move to the Quaker meeting House in Manchester. Guest speaker will be musician and raconteur Neil Smith.



Northwest region of U3As  
As well belonging to the Deeside network we are part of the northwest region of U3As in the company of Liverpool, St. Helens, Preston Ormskirk, and other Lancashire U3As.



Look out for news of forthcoming network events. They are good fun and good value for money. The Health Day and Music Day have been written about in earlier editions.

Have you joined Wirral U3A since September 2015?

A coffee morning is being planned most probably at the Williamson Art Gallery on a Monday. New members will be invited to come along. Details later.



## Dates for your diary

Outings- Coach to Bridgemere Garden Centre near Nantwich 14<sup>th</sup> December. Cost £11. Coach leaves the Art Gallery at 10 am.

Theatre visit- *Down our Street* at the Floral Pavilion, matinee performance on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Cost £15. Deposit £5. A drama about Cammell Lairds. 10 of the 15 tickets have already been sold on the day booking opened.

## Housekeeping

Christmas Event, Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December a pianist has been booked to entertain us.

### Raffle

Our regular raffle generates extra income to subsidize costs of speakers, outings and social events. Your help would be appreciated in buying tickets and volunteering to sell tickets.

### Fire safety procedures

At each meeting we are to be made aware of the fire exit route from our usual meeting room and procedures for gathering in the car park- the designated location for checking all have safely left the building.

 Exit

## Seasonal tips

Are you still eating your way through pumpkins? Have you tried out the soup recipe in the September edition?

Don't discard those pumpkin seeds. The Internet has advice on cooking them in the oven, microwave or my favourite method, on the stove top. You have to be pretty nippy on your feet as they explode around you!

Wondering what to do with all those leaves you've been sweeping up?



Buy some clematis mesh. Tie the 2 ends together. Place upright on an empty spot in a garden border. Push in 4 canes to keep it in position. Pile in the leaves. The action of the weather and microbes will decompose them into wonderful soil conditioner faster than leaving them in a plastic bags.



I should have known from Maths group that a squat shape with a large diameter holds more than a taller structure with a narrower diameter. There was just a metre of clematis mesh in the first leaf holders I rigged up. My latest and most successful effort consists of 2 metres of mesh.

I was keenly watched by a robin who inspected the brush head for titbits.

## Everyman Theatre Visit organised by Chris Andrews

This production was also my first introduction to the newly refurbished Everyman and what a joy it turned out to be!

Two gentlemen of Verona was Shakespeare's first play and in simplistic terms is a story of two boys meeting two girls. True love is thwarted by all kinds of trickery, interfering fathers, servants, false friends etc but of course eventually all is sorted and "happy ever after" usually ensues- but not in this production!

The story moved forward a few centuries to our lifetime and was skilfully played out through the Teddy Boy/Hippy Flower Power era complete with music. It was full of pace, colour and toe-tapping music, very much appreciated by the whole audience.

We had a really excellent afternoon's entertainment and in wonderful seats  
Thank you, Chris!

June Kerr

### Group News

**Strollers:-** We meet once a month at 11 am for a 1 hour stroll. Walks information is posted on the website a week beforehand. You can also give your details to receive a text or email reminder. New members welcome.

We splashed round Eastham Country Park in typical November rain before repairing to the pub café to warm up and dry out. Can you guess the name of the pub from its doorknocker?



**Maths for fun:-** If you notice some familiar faces missing from U3A it could be they have been secretly recruited by GHQ Cheltenham after hearing how members of the Maths group coped with the sort of puzzles GHQ set potential code crackers. Our last session saw us using Morse code to unravel hidden names of animals. Not easy when you've left your best glasses at home.

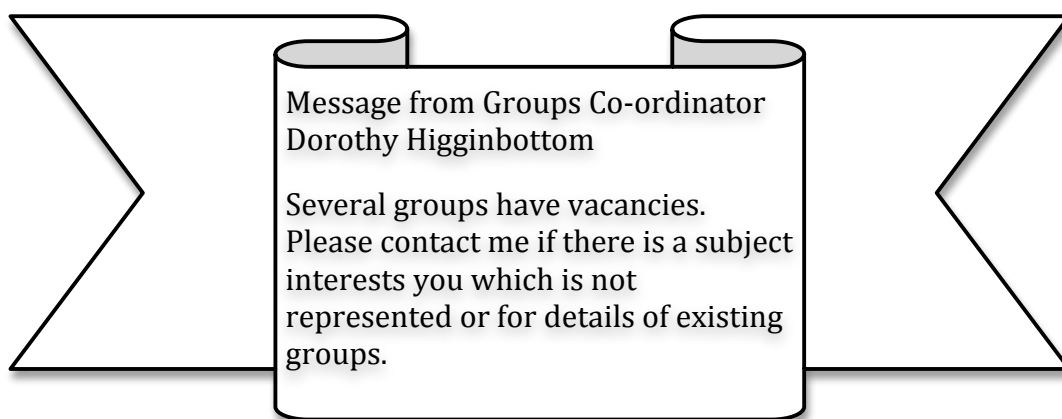
Here's a puzzle for you to try. When can  $1\ 2\ 3\ 4\ 5\ 6\ 7\ 8\ 9 = 100$ ?

You can add, divide, multiply or subtract but you must only use the numbers in the order they are written e.g. you cannot do  $1 + 8$  or  $9$  divided by  $3$ . It is possible to achieve 100 in just 3 steps.

Answer on back page.

**Sunday Lunch group:-** continue to meet at the Grove House Hotel, Grove Road Wallasey at 12:30 for 1 pm. Contact June Kerr for date of next lunch.

**Walkers :-** see back cover page for details of our October outing. In November Janet Belton led a 5 strong contingent on a circular walk from Hoylake station. Walks information as for Strollers. New members welcome.



Group	Leader	Meeting time	Location
Astronomy	David Moore	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday 2 pm	Hoylake
Book group	Val Thorns	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday 7 pm	Meols
Craft	Diane Adams	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesdays	Upton
Creative writing	Monica Price		
French	Janet Belton	Alternate Fridays 10 am	Moreton
Local History	Betty Nesbitt	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday 1pm	Oxton
Maths for Fun	Derek Adams	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday 10 am	Upton
Music Appreciation	Janet Belton	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday 10 am	Moreton
Philosophy	Brian Gill	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	Oxton
Science	Mary Green	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday 2 pm	Birkenhead
Scrabble	Beryl Keggan	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday 2 pm	West Kirby
Sunday Lunch	June Kerr	Sunday 1pm Varies monthly	Grove House Hotel Wallasey
Strollers	Margaret Elston	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday 11am	Meet at start of walk
Topical Discussion	Shirley Taylor	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 10 am	West Kirby
Walking	Margaret Elston	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday 10 am	Meet at start of walk
Wine Appreciation	Sue Shaw	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday 2 pm	Newton Village Hall £6 per session

N.B. Monday groups like the walking groups can be affected by Bank Holidays and a 5 Monday month. Walking and Strollers move to 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays.

Heswall Science day Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October.  
First speaker of the day went in 1995 on a Winston Churchill foundation scheme to study and compare the practice of forensic crime scene investigation in the U.S. with the UK. Later on in this newsletter you can test your forensic awareness but here's a sobering thought. Since his visit the equivalent of the population of Gloucestershire have been shot dead in the U.S.

The next speaker explained how 160,000 computers can be harnessed together to work on simulations. He called simulations the 3<sup>rd</sup> pillar of science. Each computer looks after part of the main picture. Various areas are processed at different rates. A lot of heat is generated.

Simulations speed up the introduction of new designs. The 10 year development of a new car design was shortened to 2 years. The Met office has been using a 25 year-old simulation system which the Daresbury scientists are re-writing ready for 2022.

Our next speaker kept us busy with little tasks, in the process reversing some of what we'd been taught at school. Shining a laser pen through sellotape we saw colour so the invisible light became visible when it hit an interface. You can have a light lock for a bank vault and a compass for use by folk who are blind. This was the most popular session of the day.

The event concluded with the topic of rare Earths. These 17 substances are listed on the base and sides of the periodic table and all had been isolated in pure form by 1947. They are used in alloys, optics, magnets and as catalysts. Its no coincidence that Dong Energy are keen to install wind turbines since each requires a whopping 650 kilos of expensive neodymium.

And for security in printing currency, embedding a rare earth shows up in UV light. Fluorescent light tubes are coated with a rare earth to absorb red, green and blue light resulting in a visible white light. Rare earths aren't actually the rarest elements being more abundant than iodine and mercury. 97% are produced by China who put the U.S. out of production.



Simulations  
are the  
Third Pillar  
of  
Science!

## A Compass for the blind?



The annual  
Heswall Science  
Day is sponsored  
by Heswall U3A  
who fund the  
cost of the hall  
hire.

## Forensic awareness quiz

Some contact materials have been recovered from a crime scene.

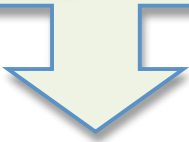
Using the scale

- 1:conclusive
- 2:strong
- 3:limited significance
- 4:no evidential evidence
- 5:don't know

..... how significant do you think an individual forensic science test could be in associating the following?

1. Soil recovered from a shoe to a particular flower bed
2. A multi layered and multi coloured paint flake to a damaged car
3. Debris from clothing to safe ballast
4. A footwear mark to an item of footwear.
5. Semen stain to a donor
6. A tyre impression to a tyre
7. A single hair to a person [assume no DNA]
8. A DNA analysis to identify a person
9. Fibres to a particular jumper
10. Broken pieces of an object to make a mechanical fit

The first speaker at Heswall Science Day gave us this quiz. Here are my answers.



- 1 {4}
- 2 [2]
- 3 [2]
- 4 [1]
- 5 [1]
- 6 [2]
- 7 [3]
- 8 [1]
- 9 [2]
- 10[1]

In this particular set of questions I made 2 errors. Can you spot where I went wrong?

## Sundials

Before the advent of railways the country ran on local time but with a national railway network it became impossible to run a nationwide timetable so Standard time took over. Folk used to set their time pieces by the station clock.

It is possible to have a sundial that will allow the owner to calculate Standard time. Mike Shaw our Speaker on Sundials told of the occasion when he gave his sundial talk to a group of golfers. No doubt overwhelmed by the mathematical calculations involved a mystified golfer asked Mike why he didn't just use a clock. Mike asked him why he didn't just walk round the golf course and drop the golf ball into each of the 18 holes.

The most memorable detail I recall from an earlier talk Mike gave on sundials was how the sun over a period of a year moves unexpectedly through a figure of 8 pattern. This phenomenon was discovered by an observer taking a daily photo of the sun's position from the same spot at the same time for 365 days. See back cover for some of Mike's highly sophisticated sundials.



U3A walkers in N. Wales  
 As mentioned in our last newsletter U3A walkers finally completed an autumn walk from Loggerheads before winter weather set in. Having reached Maeshafn in good time we climbed Moel Findeg. From its summit we had a panoramic view of Wirral and Cheshire, Ruabon mountain and the Llandegla moors, the Clwydians with the Berwyns and Carneddau lurking in the background. Our return route took us through the grounds of the former Colomendy school. We had intended to visit the viewpoint atop the cliffs behind the Loggerheads tea garden but sadly missed the path.

Sampling the delights of the Loggerheads tea garden before heading for home. Since Beryl and I had to be rescued by the RAC we went back to the tea garden for another round of tea and cake whilst awaiting our knight of the road.



2 of the many sundials Mike Shaw brought along to his lecture

The best of the cracker jokes on our table at a recent celebration.  
*"What's the main ingredient of golden vegetable soup?"*  
*"9 carats!"*



123  
 -45  
 78  
 -67  
 11  
 +89  
100

Thanks to contributors  
 Diane and Derek Adams, Dorothy Higginbottom and June Kerr  
 Editor Margaret Elston