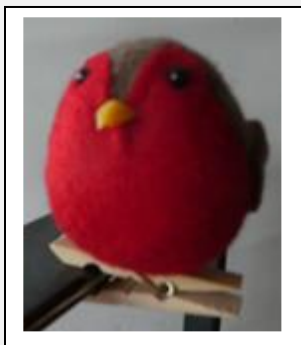


u3a Wirral

<https://u3asites.org.uk/wirral/home>

Dear Wirral u3a member,
Welcome to the December newsletter. There are quite a range of contributions from several members in this edition. An early Christmas present for the Newsletter editor! Thank you to everyone who contributed. I hope you enjoy the variety of styles. I would like to apologise for the lack of photos of Christmas sweaters and headgear – there were some very good one. Something went wrong with my photography skills and several of the pictures are blurred.
I had hoped for more members' contributions to the highlights of 2022 but the turn out at the Christmas meeting restricted the inputs. Still, I hope the memories shared bring back your own. There seemed to agreement that the Jubilee lunch was a memorable event, and it is good to be back at the Williamson. If you get some groan-worthy Christmas cracker jokes, perhaps you'd like to keep them and pass them on to me at the next meeting for inclusion in the January newsletter. It remains for me to send you and your family, seasons greetings and a happy, health and above all peaceful 2023.
Kind regards

Joy



Upcoming Events

Meetings

2023

9 January

Queen Victoria
Elizabeth Davey

23 January

A Journey through Liverpool past and present
Cledwyn Thomas

Outings

3rd February

September in the Rain

The Little Theatre, Birkenhead
7:30pm
£8.00

An evocation of a lost working-class way of life, with something a little darker below the surface. The play tells the story of a lifetime of holidays with Blackpool at its heart.

Important Announcement

The good news is that we have returned to the Williamson!

Tea and coffee are served at 10.00am. The speaker starts at 10:45.

Entrance fee is now £2.

January 2023

You might read in the local newspaper or hear on local radio that the Williamson will be closed in January. Don't panic! While that might be generally true – they will still be open for our two meetings.

Buddy System

If you think that you would like to visit a place or see a show, but don't want to go on your own, we can help you find someone who would also like to go. Just give one of the Committee members your name and brief details of the event. We can put it up on the screen at a meeting. Alternatively, you can put the information on the notice board which is located at the back of the meeting room.

Meetings

Welsh Copper

On Monday 28th November Robert Toomey gave us a thought-provoking talk on Welsh Copper and described for us the importance of Welsh copper throughout history with Wales being the centre of the industry. Robert took us on a conducted historical tour starting with the discovery of a magnificent Bronze Age gold cape in 1833. The cape adorned the remains of a young princess for whom it was probably made some 4,000 years ago. With colourful power point illustrations showing us the Great Orme copper mines uncovered as recently as 1987, our journey took us through four millennia up to the present day. The legacy the copper miners left behind is extraordinary with a labyrinth of passages extending over five miles. This incredible Bronze Age find of a gold cape unleashed many questions about the sophistication of those times as the mines were dated to be working 4,000 years ago – the same time as the Mold gold cape showing the importance of the area so long ago. Robert took us through the engineering process and metallurgy from mixing the copper ore (malachite) with tin creating bronze for making arrowheads as the copper was too soft for this purpose. From the smelting process and the involvement of Cornwall for the tin (and later copper) the distribution was all over Europe. This remarkable feat could have been run by a powerful prince or king from Mold – but whoever he was, he was certainly the most powerful man in Europe. From the Cornish 'Poldark' days of the eighteenth century and the wealth of the copper mining Hughes family in the nineteenth century who resided in Kinmel Hall (well worth a visit too we are told) poor 'Poldark' couldn't compete. The Parys mine in Anglesey, discovered by Thomas Williams, a lawyer who found copper ore in the spa water, was the largest copper mine in Europe. This was smelted down in Swansea and returned to Anglesey to be used for copper bottomed boats as Liverpool was nearby. Other smelting sites included Greenfield which was set up in the Industrial revolution using steam power. The whole process was commercial genius, Sadly, the heady days of the

Coffee Break Moment

Here are the answers to November's puzzles.

The anagrams.

Ringo Star
Nigel Farage
Richard Osman
Richard Branson
Paul Merton
Lewis Hamilton

Maths challenge!

60; $\div 5$; $\times 3$; double it; $+5$;
 $+6$; -15 ; $-3/4$ of it; square
it; $-157 = 132$

18; square it; $\times 2$; $\div 8$;
 $+40$; -73 ; $-1/4$ of it; $\times 9$;
half of it; half of it = **27**

112; -25 ; $\times 3$; $+46$; -295 ;
 $\times 5$; double it; -75 ; $\div 5$;
triple it = 33

copper mining industrial revolution are now over but we do have many places to visit:- the Great Orme, Greenfield Park, Parys Mountain (Anglesey), Copperopolis (Swansea), the Sygon Copper Mine (Beddgelert) and of course, the gold cape at the British Museum.

As for our Bronze age princess, the site of the beautiful Mold gold cape is now at the bottom of somebody's garden.

Lesley

Barrie Humphreys

It may have been grey and dismal outside on Monday morning but inside the Williamson Art Gallery our U3A Christmas social went with a swing. It was a truly festive occasion with several members, including the social committee, sporting Christmas jumpers and head gear.

A special thank you to
our coffee/tea ladies

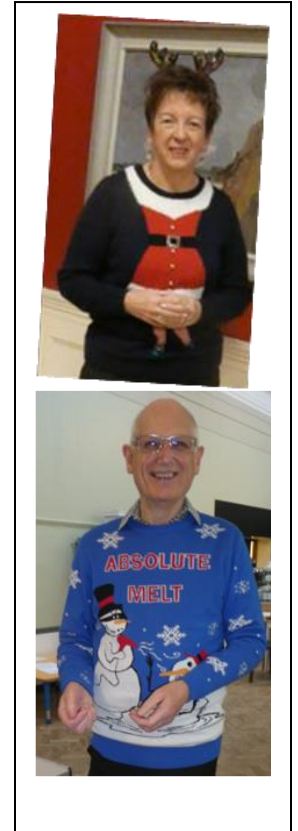


Barrie Humphreys entertained us royally with his songs which spanned several decades and shared background information on these and the singers who performed them. He presented Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Abba, Madonna and Paul McCartney to name but a few. We learned that the best-selling song of all time was Bing Crosby's White Christmas which earned 63 million dollars and that Paul

McCartney's "I wanna hold your hand" had been top of the music charts eight times.

Barrie also provided some visual support with a set of Christmas themed slides including some from his childhood with visits to Santa. His good-natured responses (especially when we didn't remember the songs or came in at the wrong time) and the warmth of his personality made our Christmas gathering a truly enjoyable occasion for which we owe Barrie and our social committee special votes of thanks.

Monica



Outings

Norfolk

Last September, a small but enthusiastic group of members and their partners threw caution to the wind and hazarded a trip to Norfolk, bedding down in a hotel on the front at Great Yarmouth. For one reason or another a few of the travellers have had their reputations either enhanced or slightly dented but enough said and we won't go into any further detail. The hotel accommodation was a little bit like the Curate's Egg – good in parts, but the meals were good, and the dining room staff were lovely. Also, our coach driver in the face of many setbacks continued to put on a brave not to say, cheerful, face. Two trips beyond Great Yarmouth were included in the holiday, and a third to Norwich was an option.



Our first trip was to Sheringham and Cromer on the north coast of Norfolk. The famous Pavilion Theatre is one of only five UK end of pier theatres and home to the award-winning Cromer Pier Show, the only full season end of pier show in the world.

Our visit to Norwich coincided with market day where many of us took the opportunity to have a mooch around for bargains amid the items which never seem to crop up outside markets. Norwich is a beautiful city with a 12th Century cathedral and for good measure, a 12th century castle. The history of the castle was of note to me. Castles are normally built on high ground for obvious

reasons, but Norfolk is for the most part entirely flat. This did not deter the builders of Norwich castle as they simply built a hill, and then waited twenty years for the ground to settle into a firm base.

A trip to Wroxham and surrounding area saw us first on a narrow-gauge steam railway which was interesting as it was a little like a large model train set. We have some photos of our engine but not the coaches which reminded me of visits to a primary school where all the seats and tables are miniaturized. The train took us to Wroxham where we boarded a paddle steamer for a trip along the river, passing some eye wateringly expensive properties. I think things were very different when I had a holiday on the Broads sixty years ago!



So, all in all a lovely break with lots to remember about Norfolk, but most of all, the company of a group of people who got to know each other a little better by the time we got back to The Wirral.

Dave (photos by Christine)

Red Riding Hood.

Six members went to the Panto at the Everyman Theatre. Unfortunately, since it was a sell-out, we couldn't sit together but split into two groups but were directly opposite each other so at least we could wave!! The audience this year was mostly primary age schoolchildren, whereas last year, it was secondary school. It was a good show, very loud with lots of audience participation. I thoroughly recommend the Everyman, as no matter where you sit, you have an excellent view and also it seems an intimate experience.

Chris

Wirral u3a: Highlights of 2022

The turn of the year is a time for reflection, so I asked members what their most memorable moments from u3a this year. Here's what you said.

Christine: Wallasey u3a entertaining us at the Queens Celebration lunch:



Keith: Also enjoyed this event. The meal was very good.

Chris: I enjoyed the Queens Celebration lunch last June.

Dianne: the highlight of the year for me was the jubilee lunch at St Stephen's Church. I know I was very involved with the organisation and serving the meal, but I did enjoy it. Looking back, it was particularly poignant given the demise of our lovely Queen not long afterwards. It has been said of course that this event is not likely to be repeated for various reasons. For me it was a occasion to remember.

Joyce and Jean: The trip to York. We got some great Christmas presents!

Janice: I'm a new member. I've liked the informality of the meetings, as well as the variety of speakers.

Janet: Difficult to choose, but the trip to Great Yarmouth is high on the list and getting back to the Williamson of course!

Dave, Chris and Christine: The Norfolk trip!



Derek: my highlight has been getting back into the wonderful surroundings of the Williamson. St Stephens was very good in that it had everything we needed for our meetings, but it was not quite the same.

Joy: I agree with Derek!

Jo: I first joined Wirral U3A about 2015 but had to give up attending meetings as my hearing had become too poor for me to derive any benefit from the talks. However, I was fortunate to receive a cochlear implant in April 2019 and, once I had learned to hear again, I re-joined U3A.

The highlight of the 2021-2022 year for me was Anthony Annakin Smith's talk in July on the Slave Ships of Neston and Parkgate. Anthony proved to be an excellent and knowledgeable speaker and made a rather daunting talk interesting, by linking the slave trade with Neston businessmen in the 18th century. However, what was special for me was that I was able to hear at least 95% of the talk and afterwards felt sufficiently confident to write a report.

I have written scientific reports in the past, so applied similar principles: write in a clear and concise style and do not make any statements that cannot be verified or corroborated. However, writing a report that was readable and not too tedious was a challenge at times. So, I was very pleased that my report on Anthony's talk was published in the U3A newsletter and seemed to be well-received. More recently, I wrote a report on the Mutiny on the Bounty, which I believe people found interesting.

From becoming so deaf that I stopped socialising to being able to attend talks, and even write reports, has been a major step forward for me.

Coffee corner moment

(Thank you to Derek for providing the material)

