

u3a Wirral

[Website] <https://u3asites.org.uk/wirral/home>

Chair's message

Hi, As your new Chair I am still finding my feet. I am around from 10am at the meeting day, so please make yourself known to me. I would like to encourage you to attend our coffee mornings. We meet fortnightly on the Wednesday mornings in the weeks we don't have a meeting. We meet at 11am in the Williamson Cafe. It is a good opportunity to chat, socialise and raise any ideas and issues you might have.

Also, I would like you to know there are several WhatsApp groups, Theatre, Walking, Interest and also a coffee and chat group. If you would like to be added to these groups let me know.

See you all soon.

Ros

Newsletter Editor's message

Dear Wirral u3a member,
May has been a strange month and I don't only mean the weather! The two bank holidays meant we had only one meeting with a speaker. Unfortunately, the speaker booked was at the very last minute unable to attend. I know several of you were very disappointed. A couple of points. Monica did an excellent job at finding a speaker at very short notice and she needs a round of applause for arranging a good replacement under challenging circumstances. I had updated the website as soon as I was told about the change – so it is worthwhile checking the website on the Sunday before a meeting to ensure that you aren't surprised when you turn up the next day!

Joy

Groups

Message from Groups Co-ordinator

If you think you could lead a group, or if you are just interested in participating, please do not hesitate to contact me (Ros) either at the meetings or an email via Derek.

I'm pleased to report that new groups have started including Quaff Quorum (next meeting 16th June 2pm at Rigbys in Dale Street, Liverpool – Mike is the contact person) but there is always room for more. There are spaces in the French and Music Appreciation Groups. There will be more information at the Monday meetings.

Ros

Meetings

June 10th

Suffer Little Children

Anthony Annakin Smith

Anthony is a member of the Wirral History and Heritage Association. He will tell the story of the eighteenth-century Founding Hospital in Chester which took in London's unwanted children. I am told that the content of this talk is different to Judith Foxon's talk we had earlier this year.

June 24th

Winchester Geese. Prostitution in Mediaeval London

Lesley Thomas

Lesley is an active member of The Richard Third Society.

In the Middle Ages the Borough of Southwark was home to thieves, cut-throats, murderers and a thriving prostitution business which goes back to the Romans. Lesley will tell us how the Bishops of Winchester, who set up residence in Southwark, took advantage of the hapless women who were working as prostitutes. The Bishops exploited the women, who became known as the Winchester Geese, and their brothel-keepers and create a lucrative business.

Coffee corner moment

Book Group

Unfortunately, Janice who has been the group facilitator is leaving the area, so the group needs a replacement. It is not an onerous task. It requires someone who will be happy to liaise with Sophie Rose who is the Librarian at Bebington Library by e-mail or phone letting her know of new members so that she can order the required number of books. Sophie is lovely, she does all the hard work, she chooses the books and ensures that they are at the library on the right day. We do not buy the books. They are on loan from the library for one month, so we book them out individually on our own library cards. Sophie is very helpful and really hopes that the group will continue to meet and increase in numbers. Books have been chosen up until July 2024.

If you would like to become the new group facilitator, please contact either Janice or Ros.

Spanish Conversation Group

The Spanish Conversation Group has started. We meet weekly for an hour in the cafe of the Williamson Art Gallery starting at 10am. We use both Iberian and Latin American Spanish. Beginners are welcome. There is no fee to participate but the café appreciates you buying some refreshments.

On alternate Wednesdays you can stay on for another coffee and chat (in English!) – see next item for details.



Coffee Mornings, Williamson Café

Everyone is welcome to meet up for a cup of coffee and a chat in the Café in the Williamson Gallery. We are meeting at 11:00 on the Wednesdays in the weeks we don't have a talk. No

need to tell anyone you are coming. Just turn up.

Walking Group

The walking group meets on the Mondays (unless it's a public holiday) that alternate with the Williamson meetings.

Quiz Group

This group meets once a month at 10:30 usually on the last Friday in a member's home. **Jenny**

Answers to the April General Knowledge Quiz

1. Which legendary surrealist artist is famous for painting melting clocks?
Salvador Dali.
2. In which US state is the city Nashville?
Tennessee.
3. Which Tennis Grand Slam is played on a clay surface?
The French Open (Roland Garros).
4. In which part of your body would you find the cruciate ligament?
Knee.
5. What was the Turkish city of Istanbul called before 1930?
Constantinople.

May Puzzle

$\Delta = +, -, \times \text{ or } \div$

Insert one of the operators into the equations below:

$$2 \Delta 1 \Delta 6 \Delta 6 = 48$$

$$2 \Delta 1 \Delta 6 \Delta 6 = 38$$

How can the same 4 numbers give different answers?

Visits

Forthcoming

Wed Jun 26th

A trip on a **canal boat** from **Christleton** to the centre of **Chester**. Contact Chris at the Monday meeting.

This is a whole day trip, passing through several locks. £16 p.p.

Bring your own lunch or visit a local eatery.

Report

Hawarden

On 15th May, 9 members of the Days Out Group set off for the village of Hawarden, near Wrexham, the place where William Gladstone (4 times PM in the 19th century) ended his days. This was a double first for me. I'd never heard of Hawarden (despite growing up on the Wirral and taking many coach trips to Wales) and taking the train down the Dee-side of the Wirral. The train ride is well worth it – offering some spectacular views across the Cheshire Plain.

On arrival we enjoyed coffee and cake in the café based in Gladstone Library – a magnificent sandstone building donated by Gladstone including his collection of material on history, literature, theology, and politics. The Library continues to support research in these fields.

Suitably refreshed, we set off to explore which included a visit to the parish church, St Deiniol's, which includes a large Arts and Crafts style monument to Gladstone and his wife Catherine.

The group then headed to Hawarden Park which is wooded and contains the remains of a tower used to keep an eye on the Welsh.

Before heading home, we enjoyed a very good lunch at the Glynne Arms which allowed time to chat and get to know each other.

We are planning to go again next year to include a guided tour around the Library which has to be booked in advance. Definitely recommend it. Join the Days Out Interest Group on WhatsApp – contact Stephnie at the meeting or via the form on the website.

Joy



Meetings

The Beautiful Witch: the story of the Cutty Sark.

Due to a late problem with the intended speaker, we were fortunate that Monica was able to arrange, at very short notice, for Derek Arnold to step in and tell us the history of the Cutty Sark. The Cutty Sark is what is known as a clipper and was purpose built in Scotland to transport tea from China to the UK. In this competitive market, speed was of the essence resulting in a very elegant and streamlined design. The ship even had a copper skin on the hull to resist barnacles that can slow a ship significantly. Cost seems to have been of little importance and we were shown pictures of luxurious panelling in the officers' mess and the crew had cabins on the deck (albeit with short bunks to make sure they didn't linger) rather than hammocks down in a dank hold as would have been the norm in the Merchant Navy at that time.

It first set sail to Shanghai in 1870 with a mixed cargo ready for its first run home with a cargo of tea. Setting sail from Shanghai on June 25 it arrived back in London on October 13, a journey of some 110 days. In all, with steamships entering the market and the Suez Canal recently opened (but not to sailing ships), the Cutty Sark made only eight such crossings. No doubt, the owners were disappointed that the Cutty Sark never won the unofficial race and the associated kudos (and higher teas prices) for the first ship home, and Derek entertained us with the story of the year it

seemed poised to win but then suffered the disaster of its rudder breaking off in the Atlantic. Rather than put into port in West Africa, the crew were ordered to construct a new one to keep going and were fortunate that a discovered stowaway claimed to be a blacksmith. Somehow the crew created a forge (on the wooden deck!) and a temporary rudder was constructed. For his efforts, the stowaway was given crew status and so avoided arrest on return to the UK. The ship arrived safely back in London but well beaten.

Seeking new business, the owners identified bringing wool back from Australia and again the ship gained a reputation for speed. The captain at this time developed an interest in the new art of photography and we were shown an early photograph of the ship off Australia. This trade too fell away, and the owners sold the ship in 1895 to a Portuguese company who changed the name and used the vessel to move goods around its colonies.

In 1922, the ship, now the *Ferriera*, put into Falmouth for emergency repairs after a storm and a local captain, Wilfred Dowman, became determined to buy it and restore it to its former glory. This took some time, and the ship first returned to Portugal where it was again sold and renamed. The restoration was a slow process, particularly with a shortage of materials after the First World War, but Dowman persevered, with the ship becoming a cadet training ship based in Falmouth. On his death in 1936, his widow gifted the ship, once again called the *Cutty Sark*, to the Incorporated Thames Nautical Training College in Greenhithe. The voyage round the coast from Falmouth to the Thames marked the last time it went to sea.

It continued as a training ship until after the Second World War and with no obvious use was allowed to fall into a very poor state. With the threat of the scrapyard looming, the *Cutty Sark* Preservation Society was formed and raised public funds to secure its future. Work started in 1954 and in 1957 it opened to the public. Fifty years later, while undergoing a major refurbishment, fire broke out and the wooden hull was largely destroyed in the resulting inferno. Fortunately, the iron framework survived and, furthermore, the masts, most of the rigging and fittings had been removed for storage elsewhere during the restoration of the hull and so, after further donations from around the world and Heritage Lottery Funding, the *Cutty Sark* was once again returned to its former glory and remains open to the public in its permanent home at Greenwich.

Around Wirral and its Environs

Williamson Art Gallery and Museum

Going to the Match

19th April - 27th July

An exhibition of Lowry's paintings including 'Going to the Match' will be on show alongside some of his other works together with a selection of pictures from the Williamson's collection. The intention is to place Lowry in the wider context of painting in Northern England in the mid-20th Century.

Entry is free.

Leasowe Lighthouse

<https://leasowelighthouse.com/wp/2023/07/22/a-visit-to-the-lighthouse/>

Open days are on the first and third Sunday of the month. The opening hours will be from 12 Midday until 4 pm with the last tour starting at 3:30 pm. The ground floor is free to enter where you can buy Tea, Coffee, cold drinks etc. there as well as small gifts and information leaflets. To visit the rest of the building you need to buy a ticket for one of our regular guided tours which cost £2 for Children and £3 for adults. There are some restrictions for children – so check the website or ask Janet.



The Big Sing

Saturday 15th June 2024, 10.15 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.

The Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool.

Cost for the event: £15.00 including refreshments but not lunch.

Registration by June 7th.

There's a flyer with more information on the u3a region website:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/north-west/events>

Also, you can contact the organiser Gill Russell: mob: 07710531876 u3anwrchair@gmail.com

English Country Dancing

Heswall U3A Country Dancing Group has space for new members. They meet on alternate Friday afternoons from 2pm-4pm at St. Michael & All Angels Church at the corner of Gills Lane and Pensby Road.

You are welcome to visit to try it out. It's a very friendly group & beginners are most welcome.

There are no more sessions this term and the new term starts on 6th September at a cost of £15.

Remember to bring your Wirral u3a membership cards with you.

See Janet or Lorna if you have any queries.

Heritage of Eastham Country Park

Guided walks by Dr David Mottram, which last around one and a half hours. During the walk, you will learn all about the history of the area and relive the 1840s to 1920s, when the area was Eastham's Victorian Pleasure Gardens providing extensive attractions and entertainments for day trippers on the Liverpool to Eastham Ferry. The attractions included circus acts, a boating lake, water chute, loop-the-loop railway and a zoological garden.

Walks will be taking place on the following days:

Saturday, June 22: 11am to 1:30pm

Friday, July 26: 11am to 1.30pm

Saturday, August 17: 11am to 1.30pm

There is no need to book to attend, just turn up on the day at the meeting point on Eastham Ferry Landing Stage, 1 Ferry Road, Eastham CH62 0AU.

Everyone taking part is advised to wear appropriate clothing and footwear for a woodland walk.

Southport Flower show

15-18 August 2024

It's the show's centenary. There is discount for all u3a Members: £10 off gate tickets if purchased before 31 July (£19 instead of £29). Use the promo code 'u3a' when purchasing online. For tickets and more information: www.southportflowershow.co.uk.

Southport u3a is actively involved with a rather special show garden, a design that charts the history of gardening over the last 100 years. This will be a large 17 metre curved garden which emulates the path of a garden since 1924 to present day, depicting five period

gardens linked by a path.

Southport u3a Photography Group will be there every day so have your photo taken by the garden and say hello.

If you need buggies or wheelchairs, please email Chris at southportu3aflowershow@gmail.com.

NW REGION OF U3AS Special General Meeting

Tuesday 18th June from 10.30 – 11.30 On ZOOM

Joy will represent Wirral u3a, although any member can participate. More details on NW Region website on how to register not later than Monday June 10th.

<https://forms.gle/wDC1EcVHxReYCwWw7>

North West Region Conference and AGM

Tuesday 2nd July 2024 at the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool

Programme

10.00 Registration and refreshments

10.55 Welcome

11.00 1st Discussion group (see below for details)

11.45 2nd Discussion group

12.30 Lunch – bring your own, eat at local cafes or order a sandwich buffet at the venue for £5, payable in advance to the NW account (see below)

13.40 Performance by Fool's Gold

14.30 Refreshment break

2.45 AGM (Joy and Ros are participating from Wirral u3a but all members have the right to attend)

We expect to finish by 3.45

Discussion groups: Each group will be approx. 40 minutes. Please select two

a) Flash Fiction – Can you write a short, interesting (dynamic) item in less than 50 words?

b) Write a Haiku A short verse in the style of a Japanese Haiku

c) Loud and Proud – Shout out about your u3a!

d) EDI – an informal discussion about Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity

Register using this link <https://forms.gle/D3xwEbCP5tgquHC96> or by contacting Gill (see below)

Please note, refreshments will be available on arrival, at lunch time and at the afternoon break. There is no charge for these.

If booking the lunch buffet, please send £5 in advance before June 27th by BACS to the North West Account no: 00197002 Sort code: 30-90-16 and use NW AGM as reference or by cheque payable to NW Region of u3as. Send by post to Gill Russell, 71 Barn Hey Crescent, Meols, Wirral, CH47 9RW. Mobile: 07710531876