



**Your Chairman reviews a historic
and eventful year**

This year has seen the return of face-to-face monthly meetings here at the Civic Hall. We celebrated our 20th anniversary in fine style at the April monthly meeting with a great spread of food, a Prosecco bar, a fascinating talk and musical accompaniment provided by the Neston Strummers. Everyone said it was a great 'do' and I would particularly like to thank Ann Roochove who was the leading light in organising the event. It was probably the best attended monthly meeting in 20 years and it was particularly good to see some founder members also present.

We had a stand at the Health and Wellbeing Fair at the Town Hall on June 17th when some new members were recruited and we also had a stand at the Village Fair on Comrades' Field.

The interest groups have been very active: Antiques and Collectables combined with the History Group to organise a trip to the Walker Art Gallery's The Tudors Exhibition and Doreen Higgins' trips are back with a vengeance: Bridgewater Gardens and the Southport Flower show are her latest offerings. The Singing for Fun Group is almost back to its former numbers and the Discussion Group is back this month with plenty to talk about! All this activity is despite the role of Group Co-ordinator not having been filled on the committee. We are still looking for someone to take on this role and we also need volunteers to serve on the committee as Minutes Secretary and Publicity Secretary.

At the AGM last month it was agreed that it is necessary to increase the annual subscription to £15 from April 1st 2023 and to increase the members' meetings charge to £2 from the July meeting. It was also decided that any amounts paid to members in connection with Group meetings for refreshments and travel should be left to the Group Leaders to decide.

Your u3a would not function without volunteers. My job as chairman has been made easy thanks to the support I have enjoyed, especially from our new Secretary Tracey Hardcastle, the ever efficient Hilary Eaude, our new Treasurer Kim Kaminski and Bob Kynaston, who is far more than just the Speaker Secretary. He is the person to go to if you want anything fixed or arranged. Ann Hine has had to resign as Vice Chairman but Shelagh Nugent has stepped forward to fill the vacancy and we are grateful to her. Kenny Bird keeps the raffle running very successfully and I would also like to thank John Brignal for all his work on the committee. Mark Buckley is the technical wizard behind the website and also the Group Leader of the very popular 'The Earth and Beyond' Interest Group. Not forgetting Liz Young and her team of tea ladies. Finally, I must mention Geoff Gibson, who has been our Honorary President this year. As the previous chairman, his help and advice have been invaluable to me. Thank you, Geoff. Everyone I have mentioned – and many I haven't – have helped to make your U3A the success it is and we would not be here today without them.

Michael Grumett



Our brilliant 20th anniversary party at the April monthly meeting in the Civic Hall: holding the banner are Ann Hine, John Brignal, Ann Roochove, Hilary Eaude, Bob Kynaston, Kenny Bird, Geoff Gibson and Michael Grumett.



Garden Group 2

On a gloriously warm, sunny day Garden Group 2 paid a visit to a group member's garden in Willaston on 21st June. The garden is full of interesting shrubs and perennials and also has a fruit and veg plot which was showing signs of being very productive. The garden was looking its best in time for Willaston's Hidden Gardens and

Allotments event the following weekend as it was one of the gardens that would be open. Group members were also treated to scones with jam and clotted cream as well as muffins with a cup of tea.

Gardening 2 Leader: Pat Mann

Contact: 0151-342-2101

Meeting venue: a different person is responsible each month

Meeting Date/Time: Every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Maximum Number: 17

Meeting Cost: When we visit somewhere each one pays on the day, sticking to rules

regarding petrol, otherwise 25p for tea/coffee when visiting a member's home.



Gardening 1

Group Leaders: Jean Chadwick and Ann Roochove

Contact Telephone: 0151-336-3459

Meeting venue: Members' homes and Burton glasshouse.

Meeting Date/Time: Every 2nd Monday of the month at 2pm

Maximum Number: 15

Meeting Cost: When visiting NGS and private gardens

Poetry and Prose Group 3

We have had an enforced break of a couple of months due to my being indisposed but we are hoping to get back on track in August with lunch at my house and a thorough exploration of John Keats's 'The Eve of St Agnes'. Unfortunately my garden never looks at its best in August so I hope the Group uses their imagination when we go out for a wander around.

Sometimes I can be a bit 'nerdy' and I thought you might be interested in some statistics. In the five months that we have met this year, we have read the works of 112 writers and 20 of them have been women, a mere 17.8%. This includes both prose extracts and poetry. I am also ashamed to note that only 6 of our chosen writers come from outside of the UK, Ireland and USA, just 5%. There is obviously a gap in our reading! The challenge to the Group, therefore, will be to not only find poems to do with the forthcoming topics as usual, but also to find poems by writers from other countries and more women!

Lesley Sutherland

Poetry, Prose and Plays Group 3	
Group Leader: Lesley Sutherland Contact: Lesleypet@aol.com Meeting venue: Group Leader's house, Willaston Meeting Date/Time: 3rd Thursday of the month; 10:30am – 12 noon Maximum Number: 8 Meeting Cost: Nil	
Bridge Group 1 Group Leader: Shirley Prior Contact: 0151-336-1574 Meeting venue: 5 The Leightons, Neston. Meeting Date/Time: Every Monday at 9:45am Maximum Number: 10/11 Meeting Cost: Small subscription to cover cost of refreshments Is there a waiting list? 2 vacancies for Improvers	Bridge Group 2 Group Leader: Shirley Prior Contact: 0151-336-1574 Meeting venue: 2 Swift Weint, Parkgate. Meeting Date/Time: Every Wednesday at 9:45am Maximum Number: 10/11 Meeting Cost: Small subscription to cover cost of refreshments Is there a waiting list? 2 vacancies for Improvers

A Walk on Thurstaston Common

On 3rd May about 20 members gathered at Thurstaston Common for a walk on the Common and Royden Park. It is a familiar walk but quite popular as it is a pleasant woodland stroll, mostly on well-defined paths, about 4 miles long – and on this occasion we avoided unplanned diversions on the confusion of tracks through the trees. The weather was kind, being cloudy but dry; ideal for walking. Whilst the party kept to fairly level ground the opportunity to climb up to the



look-out point with views over the Dee to Wales was there for those who felt up to it at the end of our trek. The café in Royden Park has not re-opened since Covid and Benty Farm tearooms are closed on Tuesdays so there was no easy way of gathering for refreshment, but nevertheless the morning was very enjoyable - it is always good to meet up with friends on these occasions.

Cribbage Group

Group Leader: Michael Maden
Contact Telephone: 0151-336-8586
Meeting venue: Each member takes a turn to host.
Meeting Date/Time: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Discussion Group

Group Leader: Michael Grumett
Contact Telephone: 0151-336-5474
Meeting venue: At Leader's house. Members take turns to choose the topic
Meeting Date/Time: 3rd Monday of the month. PM

There are two further groups but each has a waiting list. Perhaps you would like to start a second group in these popular subjects to address the need?

Antiques and Collectables
Liz Marrs 0151 336 3265

Beginners' Bridge
Doreen Higgins 0151 336 5108

How the Queen nearly sank my career before it started by Ann Hine

In February 1952 I was a second year student reading for a degree in Pharmaceutical Chemistry at Cardiff University when King George died. We were on our way from Cathays park to the old hospital for a lecture on bacteriology. As we passed the City Hall we saw that a crowd had gathered so we stopped to see what was going on. The Lord Mayor was about to read the Proclamation so it seemed rude not to stay and hear it. 'Since it 'ath pleased halmighty God to call to 'is blessing hour most gracious sovereign lord etc...' Cue much giggling! By the time the crowd had dispersed it was too late for the lecture. Like most people in South Wales the lecturer was very left wing and he was very cross! We had to do some serious grovelling.

The following year, the coronation fell in the middle of the finals with an all day Chemistry exam the next day. A group of students had looked at the possibility of going up to London and coming back on the milk train but we were warned that anyone missing an exam without good cause would not only fail, but would be expelled. Missing a train was not a good enough reason. This was too big a risk for me as I was dependent on my grant so I settled for watching the event on next door's tiny TV and partying into the small hours. Needless to say, I failed.

A year after working and attending uni one day a week, I gained my degree but I had to wait six months before I could register with the Pharmaceutical Society. I filled the time applying to all the big pharmacy firms, signing myself as A.C. Parry. Mr Parry was enthusiastically invited to an all expenses paid visit to the factory. Miss Parry was met with consternation and amazement, shown round the factory and then shown the door – but not before collecting said expenses, which was the object of the exercise. (I had a brother living in London so could do quite well with expenses.)

Now my daughter works in the pharmaceutical industry and drives a nice big car provided by the firm (an ambition of mine) and my son has learned never to waste time applying for a job whose advert includes the words 'we welcome applications from women'. My grandson is bemused.

**Check out the website: nestonu3a.org.uk
for all the information about your local u3a.**

Barn Dancing

Group Leader: Ann Taylor
Contact Telephone: 0151-327-4667
Meeting venue: U.R. Church Hall,
Parkgate Road, Neston
Meeting Date/Time: Fortnightly
from 2:00 pm to 4:00pm

Craft

Group Leader: Joyce Seaton
Contact Telephone: 0151-342-4414
Meeting venue: 28 Latchford Road,
Gayton.
Meeting Date/Time: Monthly on the
third Wednesday at 10:00am

Jazz

Group Leader: Clive Edwards
Contact Telephone: 0151-336-1190
Meeting venue: 22 Woodlands
Road, Parkgate.
Meeting Date/Time: Every 2nd
Tuesday of the month at 2:30pm

Exploring Music 2

Group Leader: Celia Grumett
Contact Telephone: 0151-336-5474,
email: c.wg@hotmail.co.uk
Meeting venue: 4 Turrocks Close,
Little Neston
Meeting Date/Time: 2nd Monday of
the month. PM

Scrabble for Fun

Group Leader: Pat Dix
Contact Telephone: 0151-342-4330
Meeting Date/Time: 2nd Tuesday of
the month at 1.30pm
Maximum Number: 8

Scrabble Group 1

Group Leader: Lyn Jack
Contact Telephone: 0151-342-4330
Meeting venue: We take it in turn to
host the meeting
Meeting Date/Time: 1st and 3rd
Wednesday of the month at 2pm

The Earth & Beyond

Group Leader: Mark Buckley
Contact Email: Mark Buckley (webmaster@nestonu3a.org.uk)
Meeting venue: Neston Community and Youth Centre
Meeting Date/Time: 2nd & last Tuesday of the month at 10:30 am
Meeting Cost: There will be a small subscription to cover the cost of the room
hire and any speaker expenses

Walking Group's Medium Walk

Our outing on 7th June was led by Jill Thompson and started from the Banks Road Car Park in Heswall. Her route took us along the Wirral Way towards Heswall Fields before we turned and headed up to The Dungeon, somewhere a few members had never visited before. We then headed down to Heswall Dales and returned to our starting point. A circular route of 4 miles, with fine, warm weather was enjoyed by all.



Walking Group

Group Leaders: Rosemary Hollingsbee and Hilary Eaude

Contact Telephone: Rosemary: 0151-336-3320

Meeting venue: varies

Maximum Number: Open group i.e. no maximum number of members

Meeting Cost: Small charge for car sharing to start of walk

Long Walking Group



The U3A long walking group resumed in April and, so far, we have had beautiful walks in almost perfect weather.

We meet on the third Wednesday of each month in the spring, summer and early autumn. Walks are about 6-8 miles depending on the terrain and usually take place in Cheshire or North East Wales.

If you would like to join us, please contact Rosemary Hollingsbee (rhollingsbee@gmail.com)





Reading for Pleasure

Group Leader: Viv Waring **Contact Telephone:** 0151-336-6477

Meeting venue: Members' houses.

Meeting Date/Time: Every 3rd Tuesday of the month at 2:00pm

Maximum Number: 12 **Meeting Cost:** 25p for refreshments

Poetry, Prose and Plays Group 1

Group Leader: Jean Chadwick

Contact Telephone: 0151-336-3459

Meeting venue: Members' houses.

Meeting Date/Time: Every 1st

Thursday of the month from
10:00am to 12:00pm

Maximum Number: 10

Meeting Cost: 25p for refreshments

Poetry, Prose and Plays Group 2

Group Leader: Jenny Davies

Contact Telephone: 0151-353-0804

Meeting venue: URC community hall

Meeting Date/Time: Every 1st

Wednesday of the month at 2pm
until 4pm

Maximum Number: 8

Meeting Cost: £2 per session to
cover URC community hall costs

Literature

Group Leader: **Pam Garner**

Contact Telephone: **0151-336-2746**

Meeting venue: **Members' homes.**

Meeting Date/Time: **Every 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:30am**

Maximum Number: **13** Meeting Cost: **£6 to £7 per year**

French Conversation 2 and Culture

Group Leader: Jill McLeod

Meeting Date/Time: Wednesdays, 2-4pm, except 1st Wednesday of month

Contact Telephone: 0151-336-7531

Meeting venue: 5 The Leightons, Neston.

Meeting Cost: To cover refreshments

German Conversation

Group Leader: Annabel Dickson

Contact Telephone: 0151-327-5424

Meeting venue: Members' homes.

Meeting Date/Time: Normally 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 10:00am, but flexible.

Maximum Number: 10

Meeting Cost: None.

Singing for Fun

Group Leader: Celia Grumett

Contact Telephone: 0151-336-5474;
email: c.wg@hotmail.co.uk

Meeting venue: U.R.C. Hall, Parkgate Road, Neston.

Meeting Date/Time: Fridays
fortnightly from 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Maximum Number: No limit

Meeting Cost: £10 per term, payable
Jan/Apr/Sept plus £1 per rehearsal.

Table Tennis

Group Leader: Gill Miles

Contact Telephone: 0151-336-4972

Meeting venue: Little Neston
Methodist Church Hall.

Meeting Date/Time: Every 2nd and
4th Thursday of the month from
10:00am to 12:00pm

Maximum Number: 20

Meeting Cost: Approx. £16/year for
14 meetings dependent upon
numbers. Payable in advance.

Neston3a.org.uk

The Editor's bit

First of all, many thanks to those who've sent material for this newsletter. You don't have to be a group leader, anything of interest will be very welcome. (See the article from Ann Hine. Thanks Ann.) You can send your words (and pictures) at any time and I'll put them on file for the next newsletter.

You may have noticed, from our esteemed Chairman's report, that I seem to have volunteered myself to be vice chair – I'm not sure how this happened but I'm honoured to be of service. I've never been on a committee – the word always puts me in mind of the Wheel Tappers' and Shunters' Social Club. Anybody remember that? Or are you not owning up to being so old? Me neither, my mum told me about it. I don't remember Wilson, Kepple and Betty either!

I was chatting to a lady at the town hall and she's inviting over 50s to join the Brightlights Theatre Company. Free. No acting experience necessary and plenty of behind the scenes roles. It might be fun. mail@littleactorstheatre.com or 0151 336 4302.

I've included details of groups this time, for people who are not on-line. There's plenty to do and never any excuse to be bored. Request from Mark who runs the website – will group leaders please check and update their details ASAP, otherwise your entries will be removed. webmaster@nestonu3a.org.uk

Enjoy the rest of the summer, stay well and be happy.

Best wishes from Shelagh

Send your contributions for the next newsletter to
shelaghnugent@hotmail.co.uk

Or put through the door of 45 Burton Road, Little Neston (near the bottom of Badger Bait)

Gift Aid

This is an appeal to everyone who pays tax and who has not completed a Gift Aid form to please do so. Gift Aid is a vital income stream for Neston U3A and helps keep our membership fees as low as possible. Every £10 membership fee is worth £12.50 to Neston U3A.

You can download a form from the website nestonu3a.org.uk, click on General and then Documents. Or pick one up from Hilary at the next meeting.