



### **The Chairman's Diary**

The latest Civic Hall water leak certainly put us in a spin. I got home at 4pm the afternoon before the AGM and monthly meeting on May 25th to find an email from Zaria at the CYC saying the Civic Hall would not be available next day. I knew we could not postpone the AGM for two reasons: we will be away this month and, as they say, there's no show without Punch, and we could not postpone it beyond June which was the month it was held last year. So I was on the phone immediately to try and book the URC hall again and, thank goodness, it was available. My next port of call would have been the Town Hall and then any other hall we could find.

Fortunately, that wasn't necessary and we tried to get the word out to as many people as possible about the change of venue. And it worked! As always, a crowd of volunteers turned up to get the place ready and the place was packed. I suspect the excellent speaker on a local topic – Smugglers in Parkgate and Heswall – was more of a draw than the AGM. Thanks to Bob, Mark and Hilary's laptop, we finally got his powerpoint presentation on the screen but the delay enabled us to slot the AGM in first. Assuming we were restricted for time, we sped through the AGM in record time – and I was even congratulated afterwards by members who told me they find AGMs very boring. We do have to comply with the rules, I'm afraid.

The success of the meeting, in spite of the obvious difficulties, was down to the volunteers without whom we could not carry on. Now that the Civic Hall has reopened, we will be back there this month.

Michael Grumett

## **GARDENING GROUP 1**

Gardening Group 1 has been in existence for over two decades. In fact, it was one of the very first Interest Groups to be formed when Neston U3A was established in 2002 and it has continued to flourish. David Rosser was its very first Leader and he is still a much valued and extremely knowledgeable member.

We meet on the second Monday of the month at 2pm. During the winter months we meet in Room 4 of the Neston URC Hall and during the summer months we visit local gardens. At our August meeting we hold our annual competition which has proved to be a thoroughly enjoyable event. For the past few years we have grown a seed potato, the winner being judged by the weight of the yield. We have also grown a plant from a plug, the most stunning specimen being judged the winner. This year we are growing a pelargonium from a plug plant and are aiming to grow the tallest sunflower from provided seed.

During our winter meetings we have discussed a variety of topics including Garden Plans, Annual Bedding, Container Plants, Growing from Seed versus Plug Plants, Gardening hints & tips, Successes & Failures and Soil Preparation for Gardens & Containers. Our 2023 summer season commences with a tour of a local plant nursery and will be followed by visits to three local gardens and, of course, we will all be aiming to win the August competition!

We are a friendly bunch of 12 who enjoy all things garden-related and we currently have space for two more green-fingered enthusiasts. So, if you feel you would like to join our merry band of fellow gardeners, or wish to find out more about the Group, please contact one of the Group Coordinators who will be happy to have a chat.

Jean Chadwick (336-3459) & Ann Roochove (378-3958)



My favourite twelve year old shrub *Leptospermum* 'Red Damask' died last year and foolishly I purchased my first climbing rose.

Whoa, is this a sucker (well three actually) that I see before me? Vigorous new RED growth, ON the union, NOT BELOW, NOT GREEN, but RAMPANT.

I've avoided climbing roses for several decades but succumbed to the charms of David Austin 'Penny Lane' with just a nod to Liverpool's Eurovision song fever and I became sucker number FOUR!!!

Maureen Kelly

The subject for the next **Neston u3a Jazz Group** will be Dave Bruebeck, including the wonderful 'Take Five'. He could play in different keys and rhythms at the same time.

[cliveedwards@talktalk.net](mailto:cliveedwards@talktalk.net)

### **The BOOK GROUP is full at present.**

We are 10 members and meet once a month in our homes. We have 3 gentlemen and 7 ladies and this makes a good mix of reviews and social chatter.

Last year we went to the Literature Festival in Buxton, a good venue with all the activities close to hand. We have visited this Festival 3 or 4 times as it has proved the most popular. At Christmas we enjoyed a meal in a restaurant and in April we met, once again, for Sunday Roast.

Pam Garner - Group Co-ordinator

*It's a shame this group is full but there's nothing to stop someone else starting a second one (ed).*

## Antiques and Collectables

At a recent meeting of the group the topic was 'Hands' I was surprised at the variety of items brought and researched. I was expecting watches, clocks, barometers and ornaments but two items stood out.

**The Hand of Fatima** - Eileen brought this box with the Hand of Fatima on the lid. She was given the present at the end of Eid some time ago.

The Hand of Fatima, the Hamsa, is a symbolic hand which represents protection in both Islamic and Jewish cultures.

Eileen also read the Prayer of Fatima:

Let no sadness come to your heart  
Let no trouble come to these arms  
Let no conflict come to these eyes  
Let this soul be filled with the blessings of joy and peace



**Miner-** Marie brought along nine Pewter figures of miners. Marie's husband was a mining engineer and bought the figures. They were produced by J Pitts.



## Bowels

Growing up as a child in war-torn Brum, my big escape was to spend holidays with my aunts and uncle in the hills and valleys of S Wales. The family house was on the side of what they called 'the Mountain'. It was in fact only a moderate sized hill but to me it seemed big enough. Big enough, in fact, to give me a life-long interest in climbing things.

One of my aunts was a health visitor. She was unmarried and seemed to take great pleasure in looking after me but I did think that she took an over -zealous interest in my hygiene. Was it really necessary to have a bath and a coating of Nivea cream before bed each night? At home one bath a week was all that was considered necessary, with the three younger children all in the bath together.

Each day, my aunt would approach me in a hushed voice and say 'Have you had your bowels open yet?' Now 'bowel' was not a word which was considered polite in our home and I was embarrassed.

I have just spent 2 weeks in Arrowe Park Hospital. I swear that every nurse who came into the ward asked about my bowels, no hushed voices here, just jolly, matter of fact questions. I am no longer embarrassed! Bowels matter, keep them moving.

Anne Taylor

**NOW RECRUITING** new committee members. A committee member's term of office is only 5 years. We need people to shadow existing officers so that they're ready to take over when the old one (figuratively speaking – no offence meant) retires. Must be computer literate.

Volunteers are invited to help out at the Village Fair on July 1<sup>st</sup>.  
Speak to Bob Kynaston at the next Speaker meeting.

If anyone has any spare third age Matters mags, please bring them to the next speaker meeting so we can give them away at the fair.

### Poetry and Prose Group 3

We have not had much luck in managing to meet in the last three months: illnesses (bad) and holidays (good) have got in the way. However, we are hoping for more luck in June when our topic will be 'Royalty'. Some of us did, however, go to the Town Hall to see a band called Casablanca Steps who played music of the 1920s, 30s and 40s, suitably dressed in white spats. It was all jolly good fun listening to songs such as 'Putting on the Ritz', 'Charleston' and 'Love is the Sweetest Thing' - very innocent and gentle lyrics compared to much of today's music. As a 1950s baby, I was amazed at how many songs I knew!

The group did get interested in one form of poetry called a Kennings and had a go at writing them for homework. To write a Kennings poem you need to think of an object or person you want to describe. Then you do this by writing a number of lines (4 is often enough) of 2-word phrases. It's like a riddle to be worked out. Eg. Who are we?

Older learners

Baby boomers

Time givers

Life livers!

Lesley Sutherland

### Chester Storyhouse

I picked up a brochure from Storyhouse (Chester) entitled '*Storyhouse Elders*'. It advertises talks, backstage tours, films, performances, an opportunity to meet new people, socialise, try something new and celebrate ageing creatively. There are Cinema Silver Screenings every Tuesday and Thursday before 5pm. Tickets from £6.50, which seems reasonable to me. Trouble is, the last 22 bus leaves Chester at 6.30pm. How uncivilised. Maybe we should start a campaign?

[Storyhouse.com/elders](http://Storyhouse.com/elders)

**[nestonu3a.org.uk](http://nestonu3a.org.uk)**



### **Earth and Beyond Group.**

Created before the pandemic as a Geology group, and then expanded to include Meteorology and Astronomy, members agreed to adopt a new title Earth and Beyond, thus covering almost any topic that appealed to the rapidly expanding membership. Meetings take place on the second Tuesday of each month - now face to face in the Community and Youth Centre, but also available via Zoom. At these meetings we hear from a wide range of speakers, most well qualified in their chosen fields, and delivered at "member friendly" levels. These talks start at 10.30 and last for approximately one hour, including the chance for questions, and are preceded by teas, coffees and biscuits. Further meetings take place on the last Tuesday of each month and at these members are invited to share ideas and experiences on topics of their choice. These meetings might take place on Zoom, face to face or on site visits.

The group also has its own online information board - via a Padlet - and over 30 members. So if you fancy expanding your knowledge on a very wide variety of topics, along with sharing an enjoyable social experience, why not get in touch?

Best wishes, Derick Cotton

The group leader is Mark Buckley, who is also our esteemed webmaster.



## Opera and Concert-Going Group

This really is the tail- end of the season. Almost too hot to be indoors.

I am in touch with the Heswall U3A so, in the autumn, we may be able to join forces to run a coach and simultaneously be eligible for a group reduction in ticket price. The Heswall group is much larger than ours. Our usefulness is that we might tip the scales , as it were.

NB: There is still no sign of WNO revisiting Liverpool.

I will certainly be going to Il Trovatore in June and to Candide in July.

So I have 3 passenger seats awaiting our trip to the sea in July. Allow £40 each, total.

### June

Sunday 18th

Trovatore: Verdi.

ROH, Vue Cinema, Cheshire Oaks,  
£24.00

### July

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>

Bernstein's musical Candide  
Welsh National Opera, Llandudno.  
Allow c £40.00

### October

10th – 14th Welsh National Opera in  
Llandudno

### November

Wednesday 8th

Agatha Christie's The Mousetrap  
Floral Pavilion, New Brighton

Contact Peter Koch  
peterkochuk36@gmail  
0151 336 5393    mobile on the day: 07955 082 706  
40 Highfield Road, Neston



**Conference and AGM 2023**

Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3BT

July 4<sup>th</sup> 10.00 – 4.00pm

**Who is it for? Anyone who wishes to attend, as well as those voting representatives at the AGM**

**Programme**

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 10.00 | Registration and refreshments   |
| 10.55 | Welcome   |
| 11.00 | First discussion group  |
| 11.45 | Second discussion group   |
| 12.30 | Lunch <b><i>Bring your own, visit a local café or book a sandwich lunch for £5.00 payable in advance to the NW region ( – see below))</i></b> |
| 13.40 | Performance by Andrew Wilde, concert pianist  |
| 14.30 | Refreshment break   |
| 15.00 | AGM   |
- We hope to finish by 3.45***

**Discussion groups: Each group will be approx. 40 minutes. Details are on the event page of the NW website. Please select two**

- a) **Interest groups** –Facilitator: Gill Russell NW Region Acting Chair
  - b) **What The Third Age Trust does**, Facilitator: Neil Stevenson, NW Trustee
  - c) **Research and Shared Learning**: There are the three topics we'll work on in our 40 minutes together. Details are on the NW website Research page. Facilitator: Maggy Simms – National R & SL co-ordinator.
- Have you got a 'wartime story'?
  - Is there a family photo that always evokes that time when,,,,,?
  - Has your bank closed its local branch?

- **Please register by Monday June 26<sup>th</sup>**.

**Online access code** <https://forms.gle/GE8eVTsRn5XByp6>

- **Or by post to Gill Russell, 71 Barn Hey Crescent, Meols, Wirral CH47 9RW**

Refreshments will be provided at no extra charge.

If you wish to book the sandwich buffet for lunch please pay £5.00pp **in advance before June 24<sup>th</sup>** to cover the cost. Please pay by BACs into the NW account:

Acc: 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**

The venue is accessible and there is a lift to all floors. It's a short walk from Liverpool Lime Street station and Central station. There is a Q Park in Hanover Street, a few minutes away. There is a discount if you book in advance using the following promocode: QUAKERSLV. Please let me know if you need directions.

**For more information please contact Gill on [u3anwrchair@gmail.com](mailto:u3anwrchair@gmail.com)**

*NW region of u3as Charity Commission registration no: 115909*

## Walking Groups

The walking groups have been enjoying the spring sunshine.

We have two groups: the medium walking group which meets on the first Tuesday of the month and the longer walking group which meets on the third Wednesday in the summer.

If you would like more information, contact Rosemary: [rhollingsbee@gmail.com](mailto:rhollingsbee@gmail.com) or Hilary: [hjeaude@gmail.com](mailto:hjeaude@gmail.com)



### Gardening Group 1

May's meeting for Gardening Group 1 was an NGS garden visit to Inglewood which is off Quarry Road East in Heswall. Mrs Fairclough provided us with tea and delicious cakes and let us roam at will. The garden was a delight with many Hostas (no sign of slugs), ponds and quirky touches such as a golf caddy bursting with bedding plants to a ceramic toilet bowl being up-cycled into a plant holder! This garden is usually open by arrangement and is well worth a visit.

## Groups running at Neston U3A

If you don't see a group that would be of interest you can always start one yourself. There is plenty of advice and information available to help anyone who wants to start a group.

|            |   |         |  |
|------------|---|---------|--|
| Art        | Antiques & Collectables<br>Craft  | Misc.   | Discussion<br>Dog Walking<br>Discussion<br>- |
| Games      | Bridge<br>Cribbage<br>Scrabble  | Music   | Exploring Music<br>2<br>Jazz                 |
| Gardening  | Gardening   | Science | Earth & Beyond                               |
| History    | History   | Singing | Singing for Fun                              |
| Language   | French Conversation & Culture<br>German Conversation<br>Italian Improvers | Sport   | Barn Dancing<br>Table Tennis<br>Walking      |
| Literature | Poetry, Prose & Plays Groups<br>Reading for Pleasure                      |         |  |

**Don't forget we are always looking for volunteers to join the committee. Don't be shy, come along.**

**Check out the website: [nestonu3a.org.uk](http://nestonu3a.org.uk) for all the information about your local u3a.**

## Editorial

Is it that time already? It doesn't seem possible that only a few days ago (according to my brain) we were in the depths of cold, wet misery and praying for Spring but now it's June busting out all over and I'm wondering how ethical it would be to water the parched garden – not to mention the amount of water recorded on the newly installed water meter! My front garden has a fan club. It's a bit hysterical and I don't remember planting half the stuff that's in there – I just madly prune to try and keep it under control. It's open to the public for free – you just have to look over the wall. (Burton Road near the corner of Badger Bait.) Feel free but don't let your dog poo outside. Weeing on the wall is acceptable but only for the pooches.

Many thanks to those who've sent contributions for this newsletter. I love Ann's bit about the bowels. (I went this morning, Ann. Thanks for wondering.) And Maureen's tale about the climbing rose amused me. See, you don't have to be a



group leader to send your thoughts/anecdotes. Odd little snippets are great. Is my nagging starting to sink in?

We'll be sending out regular Bulletins throughout the year to let you know what's going on and to remind you of group meetings etc. so please keep me up to date with events, happenings, whatever you feel we need to know.

Enjoy the rest of the summer.

With best wishes from Shelagh  
[editor@nestonu3a.org.uk](mailto:editor@nestonu3a.org.uk)