

Leighton Hall



The **Outings Group** set out on a sunny morning for Carnforth station, the setting for “Brief Encounter,” made in 1945, starring Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard. On arrival we were taken to the platform where it all happened; all still original, the clock, platform and tearoom.

Inside there is a small museum and the film is playing. It still gave me a lump in my throat and there were lots of relics from that era, all very interesting. We moved on to the tearoom where we had coffee and teacake at very rustic old tables chairs and music from the 1940s, before travelling to Leighton Hall a grade II listed building. The view as we approached was just stunning.

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We were met by the lady of the house, Susie Renels. What a joyous lady! She said hop off the bus and scurry across to the Music Room. We were divided into two groups and I was glad we got Susie. As we sat in the Music Room, there was a beautiful grand piano and Susie said that if someone would like to play it, or sing, she would be frightfully delighted. The Music Room was lovely, a huge bay window added in 1870 and the view was fabulous. You could tell the house was lived in. It was warm and cosy.

The Hall goes back over 750 years, to 1246.



Adam D'Avranches' original fortified manor was burnt by government troops in 1715 because the family was loyal to the crown during the Jacobite uprising, but in 1722 it was sold at public auction and bought by a friend and given back to the Hodgson family. George Towneley rebuilt it as it stands today. His nephew sold it to Alexander Worswick, a banker married to Alice Gillow. His son began the 200 year association with the Gillow family, the son Richard Gillow founder of the famous furniture business. As you can imagine, the furniture contained beautiful chairs from 1750 and two carver chairs from 1671. The Drawing Room was my favourite being sunny and warm, having a massive bay window with a fabulous view.



After viewing the house, we enjoyed afternoon tea, consisting of lovely, very fresh sandwiches along with homemade cakes and lashings of tea and coffee. We then had time for a walk around the lovely gardens displaying lots of daffodils, greenery and new plantings before getting back on the bus for the journey home.



A really interesting, great day where, despite hail on the way home, we did not get wet and were very lucky with the weather. Thanks to Ann and her team.

Irene Lambert, photos David Skelton

Astley Hall



The original timber-framed house, later to become Astley Hall, was built by the Charnock family around a small courtyard, in the late 16th Century. The name derives from “easterly” which describes the wood, or clearing to the east of the family’s earlier home. The layout seen today, with the four wings of the house extended by the subsequent families who lived there, dates from the mid 17th Century, although the original brick frontage with a vast and grand pair of mullion and transom bay windows was later clad to make it more fashionable. Most of the original features are retained, wattle and daub walls merging with more modern brickwork and woodwork recycled. Nothing changes!

The Hall is gradually being re-opened after undergoing emergency restoration when investigation of a crack revealed that the oak foundation beam which ran the depth of the house and supported a 400-year-old internal wall had rotted and needed replacement.



The Hall is best known for its stunning plasterwork ceilings which depict heavy wreaths and cherubs. They are thought to be unique and are generally acknowledged as some of the finest in Britain, being plastered wood and twisted leather, shaped into fabulous figures created at ground level and later pinned onto the ceiling.

The walls of the Great Hall are panelled and painted with figures of Elizabethan and Stuart era worthies, placed to impress visitors that the occupants were educated and knowledgeable. The selection of figures is unusual, including the monarch, Elizabeth I, as well as her battle rival Philip II of Spain, explorers Francis Drake, Magellan,

Columbus and Turkish Sultans.



During the Civil War the family were keen royalists, but politics dictated that they hosted Oliver Cromwell at Astley during the Battle of Preston. On leaving, Cromwell is alleged to have left behind a large pair of boots which are now on display, although doubt remains about whether they

actually belonged to him.

The long gallery, which runs the length of the upper floor, is currently out of bounds, for safety reasons and is only visible via photographs. It was a space for exercise in inclement weather and hosts an exceptional shovelboard table. At over 23 feet length, it is thought to be the longest in the country.



The house and its contents were given to Chorley Corporation by Reginald Tatton in 1922, as a memorial to the local men killed in World War I and hosts the "Golden Books." These volumes were compiled during the

1920s and 1930s by local Susannah Knight, in memory of the town's soldiers who had died during the First World War. Susannah spent 15 years, travelling thousands of miles to collect signatures from the great and good, including Douglas Haig, the Prince of Wales, the American and British cabinets, Winston Churchill, before he became Prime Minister, Pope Benedict XV, European monarchs, and the Presidents of France and the USA, asking each to sign as an acknowledgement of the sacrifice that the men had made. The original oak furniture remains throughout much of the house, one notable item being the Sirloin Chair, which is reputed to have been used by King James I when he knighted the loin of beef. The Drawing Room contains a magnificent set of Flemish tapestries depicting Jason and the Golden Fleece.

After an excellent and informative talk by our guides, **Local History 6** members retired to the on-site Café Ambio for lunch, before free time to explore the surrounding grounds which contain a small lake, landscaped by John Webb and a picturesque meandering stream running through a wooded ravine.

Kirk Lake

Whitby



It was clear that our **Outings Group** members were keen to make an early departure to Whitby as everyone was on time so we left Formby 5 minutes early in glorious sunshine. With very few delays, we arrived at Hartshead Service Stn for a comfort break and it was suggested by Anne that we grab a takeaway drink etc and we were invited by the driver to enjoy it on the bus, so long as we took our empty containers with us on arrival at Whitby. We were on our way again in a very short time; a very good idea as we still had some miles to cover.

Our English spring is a most wonderful time of the year in which to see the countryside. The pink and white cherry blossom, the brilliance of the rapeseed fields and the yellow gorse, the lambs frolicking on the rolling hills so much to enjoy all made even more complete with the blue sky and no rain on the windows! The expanse of the Yorkshire Moors was, again, a wonderful vista and it was interesting to learn that the heather is burnt deliberately in patches in rotation so as to keep the

heather moors in a good state of health. We then reached RAF Fylingdale, the early warning station, which is radar based and is also part of the Ballistic Early Warning System. Hopefully it will never be used!



On reaching Whitby, the sun was still shining but it was quite obvious that we had arrived at the East Coast as jackets were soon donned and zipped up! There was a definite chill in the air! By this time everyone was feeling peckish and wasted no time following our noses in search of the best fish and chip establishments for which Whitby is well known. There was an abundance of these eateries so no one went



hungry.

Whitby has two headlands, not unlike Llandudno with which we are all familiar, the difference being that Whitby is a fishing port. Whitby Abbey is a ruin perched high on the East Cliff and can be reached by climbing the 199 steps from the port below. Those who had the stamina and energy to reach the top would be rewarded with spectacular views across the North Sea, the port, town and beyond. Looking across from the Abbey was the West Cliff where a monument of Captain Cook stands tall, again looking

out to the sea that he fell in love with. History tells us that he was born not many miles away and it was here in Whitby that he was offered an apprenticeship with ship owners and was eventually given the opportunity to sail the seas. It was from this beginning that he became the explorer of whom we heard during our history lessons at school. There is a Captain Cook Memorial Museum in the port for all to visit. There are also many unusual and quirky shops to be found in the narrow, winding, cobbled streets of Whitby. Amongst them are shops selling "Count Dracula" outfits and "Goth clothing" as every year a Victoriana Festival is held in Whitby and as many as 10,000 people come from all over the country and dress as Dracula and the character Lucy Westenra and parade the streets. Should we make that our next trip? Scarey!

Our journey back to the warmer West Coast again went remarkably well. To complete a perfect day the sunset was magnificent and didn't disappear from sight until we reached Formby. Thank you Anne and your team for arranging everything to perfection.

Val Truman, photos David Skelton

Welcome To May's New Members

Kaye Adams	Mary Bale	Margaret Barlow
Florence Bigley	Arthur Blackhurst	Jennifer Blackhurst
Anne Breaks	John Harpin	Judy Haselhurst
Alice Joyce	Patrick Joyce	Annette Mullard
Neville Yarwood		



Morecambe Bay Walk 2016

Help us protect Cumbria's amazing landscapes for future generations



Friends of the Lake District are inviting you to join them for their 2016 **Morecambe Bay Walk**. This popular event will take place on Saturday, 30th July, starting at 2:30pm from Arnside Promenade. The walk will end at Kent's Bank, near Grange-over-Sands at approx. 6.00pm. Last

year over 250 intrepid supporters joined them to wade across the notorious Bay, raising an incredible £5,000 to protect the awe inspiring yet fragile landscapes of the Lake District.

The Morecambe Bay walk is a sponsored walk like no other. It crosses the shifting sands of the beautiful yet potentially dangerous Morecambe Bay. To keep us safe, participants will be led again by Cedric Robinson MBE, the Queen's Official Guide to the Sands, who has been leading walks across Morecambe Bay for more than 50 years. The walk is approximately 8 miles long and suitable for anyone who is comfortable walking for three to four hours. Children under the age of 16 must be



accompanied by an adult and well behaved dogs are welcome. The majority of the walk will be on sand but **there will be times when you will need to wade through some channels** so be prepared to get wet up to your knees.

This year the Friends hope to raise £5,000 which will go towards their vital work looking after native woodlands and hay meadows; running campaigns to protect the Lake District from inappropriate developments and helping people volunteer, learn skills and engage with this spectacular landscape.

Registration costs £10 for adults and includes a free event t-shirt. Children cost £5 and get a free water bottle. To register phone us on 01539 720788 or sign up online at www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/Event/morecambe-bay-walk-july-2016 If you have any questions about the event please contact Sophie Hodge, Fundraising Officer, on the number above or email Sophie-hodge@fld.org.uk



This Is Sefton Cancer Support Group...

- Friendship and a listening ear
- Emotional and moral support
- Experience of cancer
- Caring and home visits
- 24-hour telephone contact



Sefton Cancer Support Group was launched in Autumn 1994. A Registered Charity run solely by Volunteers, many of whom have been touched by cancer in one way or another.

Our aim is to have one of our group available to talk to you, your relatives and friends, in complete confidence. If there is no one available at the time of your call or visit then please leave a message and we will make every effort to respond within the same day.

Sefton Cancer Support Group work collaboratively with the Primary Care Trust, complimenting the services within the NHS by providing holistic care for those touched by cancer.

We are funded by Primary Care Trusts - Hospitals and the Community Care Trust enabling information to be shared and linked to other Agencies within Sefton and Merseyside.

Social Events

Our social calendar consists of Group Lunch once a month, light refreshments during the week, Day Trips and other events to be advised.

Additional Therapies

Aromatherapy, Auricular Acupuncture and Relaxation Therapy, Chiropody, Reflexology, Reiki. (Call for availability)

We are here for you..



"Safe and Sincere" "Peaceful Environment" "Support when I needed it most"
"Easy to talk to" "Never alone, help always available"

Charity Registration number: 1058183

Sefton Cancer Support Group is a charity that has been in Formby for some 25 years and exists to care for anybody who is suffering from cancer in all its forms. It also provides services to their carers, as well. The group's centre, at 1 Duke St, Formby L37 4AL, is open from 10:00-16.00 Mon-Thurs and Friday 10:00-13.00. Every day it provides a drop-in for refreshments, the possibility for private conversations to identify needs, or just space and time to chat. Complementary therapies are available if needed. Please be aware, you are never alone; the Support Group is always available to help and support you.

Tel: 879352

Mersey Estuary



Walking Group 3. Morning trains from Formby to Conway Park, Birkenhead. Then walked to Birkenhead docks. Short explanation of how the docks were built then onto Seacombe Ferry Terminal for coffee. From there we walked along the promenade to New Brighton viewing Guinea Gap Baths, Egremont Pier and the locations of the former Tower Ballroom. Finally, the pier and landing stage.

We had lunch at Wetherspoons. Weather was fine and a good day was had by all.

Walk was led by John Taylor and Jessie Gorman.

John Taylor

Thornton Hough

Local History Group 4 visited Thornton Hough which lies in the heart of rural Wirral. Its development is principally due to the efforts of two philanthropic landlords in the 19th century. The village boasts two churches, a smithy, and for many years two schools. We met our guide, Gavin Hunter outside The Seven Stars Inn. From that moment on we were taken on a delightful and informative guide of the village with its fascinating history and picturesque setting it is a place well worth visiting. Gavin has



such a fund of knowledge and imparts it to his audience so enthusiastically that time passed all too quickly and it was time for lunch. The Village Hall provided morning coffee before our tour and lunch afterwards and is itself an interesting building. Thank you Peter for finding this little gem it is indeed amazing what delights can be found not too far from home.

Joan Hilton

Group News

You will be asked to show your green 2016 membership cards when you attend group meetings. All groups are for current, paid up members, so please remember your 2016 subscription was due on January 1st, £9 per annum. Any members who have not renewed their subscriptions by 28th February will be removed from membership lists and should not attend any U3A activities or groups.

Art Appreciation: Interest has been expressed in forming a group which would meet to research artists, or genres, visit art galleries (maybe with a guided tour) etc.

Bridge 4: This newly formed beginners group is up and running and at present is full. However, they are taking names for a sub list. They meet weekly on a Monday afternoon at Holy Trinity Tennis Club. Contact Lynn Burrows on 382633 or e-mail: burrows.lynn@yahoo.co.uk

Cookery: We would like to bring together keen but basic cooks with more experienced cooks to have the opportunity to exchange tips and to improve cooking skills in a friendly setting. Please contact me.

Creative Writing Group: We need a few more names before we start this new group.

Italian For Beginners: A leader has come forward to run this new group. Having lived in Rome, he has a great knowledge of Italian life.

Poetry: Do you enjoy poetry? If you would like to share your interest with others, please let me know.

The full list of group vacancies is on the website. Contact group leaders if you are interested.

Linda McAuley, Groups Secretary
Tel: 871890 or e-mail: groups@formbyu3a.org.uk

Theatre and Music Group

(Events are open to all members of Formby U3A)

Sat. 16th July. “Last Night of the Summer Pops,” Philharmonic Hall, 7:30pm.

This is a celebration of the 90th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II. John Suchet hosts a gala of favourites that have become synonymous with Royal celebrations. The Royal Philharmonic choir will raise the roof with Handel's, Zadok the Priest and Parry's, I Was Glad and of course Walton's, March from Crown Imperial, Purcell's Trumpet Tune and Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance. **There is a small number of tickets left**, but they have been going fast, cost £35.00 including transport. The coach leaves the Cross House bus stop at 6:15pm.

Thurs. 15th Sept. “Chicago,” Liverpool Empire, 7:30pm. The international and award winning Broadway and West End musical starring EastEnders actor and Celebrity Big Brother star John Partridge as Billy Flynn. Based on real life events back in the roaring 1920's, nightclub singer Roxie Hart shoots her lover and along with her cell block rival, Velma Kelly, they fight to keep from death row with the help of smooth talking lawyer, Billy Flynn. Tickets including transport £35. The coach will leave The Cross House bus stop at 6.15pm.

Thurs. 1st Dec. “Nutcracker” (English National Ballet), Liverpool Empire, 7:30pm. Over 100 dancers and musicians bring Nutcracker to life with exquisite dancing, beautiful sets and Tchaikovsky's glorious score played live. Expect enchanted toys, mischievous mice and sparkling snowflakes in a colourful ballet. Centre rear stall tickets, including transport cost £35. The coach will leave The Cross House bus stop at 6.15pm

Dave Irving can be contacted directly, if necessary tel: 630192.

Eileen Jones

Outings Group

Outings are only open to all paid up members of the U3A. All we ask is that you have the ability to get on and off the coach independently. We cannot be responsible for providing assistance. The coach can accommodate mobility aids which are kept in the luggage compartment on the bus.

Owing to increased demand, we cannot reserve tickets: **Tickets will be allocated on a first come and paid for – first served basis.** A separate cheque is required for each outing and ***it is essential that members include their telephone number with each booking.*** Several cheques have been received with no information and I have struggled to identify what they are for. If no contact details are provided, I am unable to contact people when outings are fully booked.

Bookings and information are available at U3A monthly meetings, or coffee mornings. Alternatively please send a stamp addressed envelope to:
Ann Blackman, 9 River Close, Formby, Liverpool L37 6DJ, enclosing a separate cheque for each outing made out to **Formby U3A Outings Group**, having your name, address and telephone number **on the back.**

Saturday 25th June, please note change of date, Caernarfon Castle and Welsh Highland Railway. Tickets £37.00 each include return coach travel from Formby to the Castle, where we will be entertained with a historical costume drama. We will then have time to explore the castle and grounds before being transferred by coach to the railway station. We have a reserved carriage on the steam train, which travels along a narrow gauge railway to Porthmadog, where we will have some free time before we re-join our coach. You can purchase refreshments on the train, or bring a picnic. **Please note earlier departure time, Cross Green 8:30 am.**

Thursday, July 7th, Ullswater Lake Cruise & Lunch. Tickets £36.00 include return coach to Ullswater. We will cruise the length of the lake from Pooley Bridge to Glenridding to be transferred by coach to the Inn On The Lake for a two course lunch with tea/coffee. The hotel enjoys one of the most spectacular settings in the Lake District. Set in 15 acres of grounds with lawns sweeping down to the shores of the lake, it is renowned for excellent food and award winning chef. We return via Kirkstone Pass, arriving back in Formby late evening. Depart Cross Green 9:00am.

Monday August 1st Plas Newydd. Tickets £21.00 for Non-members of the National Trust or **£12.50** for National Trust Members. The outing includes return coach travel and entrance only. Refreshments can be purchased on the day, or take a picnic. Plas Newydd is an elegant house set in amazing gardens with stunning views of the Menai Straits. Depart Cross Green 9:00am.

Friday, September 9th, Fleetwood and Blackpool Ice show. Tickets £46.00

include morning coffee in Fleetwood, with time to explore the sea front or market. At 5pm we will travel to Blackpool for a two course fish supper with tea/coffee before going into the stunning 80th Celebration Ice Show. **Later departure time, Cross Green 10:00am.**

Wednesday, October 26th, Salford Quays Shopping Mall & Imperial War Museum. Tickets £11.00 include coach travel only. Salford Quays has an indoor shopping outlet with cafes and easy access to the canal and War Museum which is free entry. Depart Cross Green 9:00am

Monday, November 28th, 2016 Bartle Hall Celebration. Tickets £30.00 include coach travel, meal and excellent entertainment. Dress to impress for an outing/party to celebrate over 50 coach tours over the past 5 years by the Outings Group. We will have a brief visit to Barton Grange to see their splendid Christmas decorations before continuing on to Bartle Grange Hotel for an afternoon of fun, music and mirth. We begin with a two course lunch with tea/coffee. Our entertainer for the afternoon is Judith Hibbert, an extremely popular and versatile artiste who travels far and wide to entice you back to the beguiling Good Old Days of English comedy. Having performed in opera in America and numerous pantos in UK, her singing will have you begging for more. To enhance the event you may like to bring along a small gift which we can use in the free raffle. Depart Cross Green 9:00am

Ann Blackman, Tel: 871127

Monthly Meetings

Are at 2:00 pm in Holy Trinity Parish Hall, the second Wednesday of each month

July 13 th	Under the Influence (Music)	Andrew Smith
August	No meeting	
September 14 th	My Eggheads Experience	Betty Hayhurst
October 12 th	Iceland - Fire and Ice	Frank Nicholson

Please remember to bring your current (green) membership card to all events, including group activities.

COFFEE MORNINGS are from 10:30 to 12:00 on Thursday, June 9th and each Thursday, the day after the monthly meeting, except August. These are held in the Workshop, Holy Trinity Church, with free coffee and the chance to pick up information about other groups and meet some of your Committee.

Formby U3A Committee, 2016/17

Chairman	Glyn Pike	0151 929 2996	chairman@formbyu3a.org.uk
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To Help You

If you need to tell us that **you have changed your address, telephone number, or e-mail address** please contact ***datamanager@formbyu3a.org.uk*** or tel: 873597, remembering to include your full name and address, or membership number.

If you need **information about your membership card, or subscriptions** please contact ***treasurer@formbyu3a.org.uk***

The next edition of the Newsletter is due to be sent by e-mail and be on the website on 1st July. Paper copies can be collected at the monthly meeting & coffee morning.

Contributions are always welcomed. **The deadline for receiving articles is the penultimate Thursday of each month; midday 23rd June at the latest to:**

The Editor, Email: ***newseditor@formbyu3a.org.uk***

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