

Bird Watching



The **Birdwatching Group** is now under the new leadership of Phil Collins and Viv Powell. We would like to begin with a huge vote of thanks to Andrea Burton and Ann Wilkinson for their commitment in running the Group over these last nine years and for ensuring its continuation.

Now, can you tell a Dunnock from a House Sparrow or the song of the Blackbird from that of a Song Thrush, or even better, a Whimbrel from a Curlew? You can? Well, if you are not already a member why not join us? Even if you can't, but are interested in finding out, we'd love to welcome you and show you how it's done.

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Here are a few facts about the Group:

Its purpose is to enjoy and learn about the birdlife (and wildlife) of our area both local and a little further afield.

To put in your diary regular monthly dates (the 2nd Tuesday in the month) for our field trip meetings.

We will email a reminder to you one week in advance and would ask you to confirm or otherwise by return email if you will be attending. (This is very important!)

In our email we will give details about the venue, the birds you might see, details of any facilities and any other relevant information.

Each field trip assembles in the car park of the Cross House Pub (free parking) for departure at 9.30am (unless otherwise advised).

We like to car share where possible to minimise the number of cars used. We aim to be back in the car park mid- to late- afternoon.

Our email contact details are: Phil Collins ornithologist41@outlook.com Viv Powell vpowell056@gmail.com

Seasoned birdwatchers or beginners, ALL are welcome!!

Mersey Tunnel Tour



Author, Alan Thomas.

Back in September 2014 **LHG 9** visited the Mersey Tunnel to tour the tunnel and learn of its history. After many changes/additions to our group, we decided a repeat visit to the tunnel would be a good starting point for 2024.

Along with “guest U3A members” from the Monday Cycling group, the visit was planned into our 2023-2024 season and completed at 5pm on Thursday 11 January 2024.

We were met by guide Phil and the first thing was to be kitted out in hard hats and high vis jackets. He gave a brief history of the tunnel and why a tunnel under the Mersey and not a bridge over was the answer to vehicle Wirral access.

It was chosen as the better option by a fact-finding group lead by Sir Archibald Salvidge, then leader of Liverpool City Council, with a bridge rejected on the grounds of a higher estimated cost and impracticalities of the necessary supporting piers which would obstruct shipping, affect the current and cause silting.

In 1925 the Mersey Tunnel Joint Committee was created and work started on December 16 1925 the Tunnel was opened July 18 1934 by King George V.

Phil went on to say the way to remember both tunnels was “The Queensway Tunnel was opened by the King and in 1971 the Kingsway Tunnel was opened by the Queen”.



It was such an engineering achievement and the first in the world at that time, the longest road tunnel, all built by manual labour without machinery being involved. It was referred to as the “Eighth Wonder of the World”.

After our introduction we set off to climb up

to the fourth floor of the building which housed the original control room and Alison, the other guide, gave us talk about the old control room where two engineers controlled the ventilation system for the tunnel.

On the control board to this day was the motto “Failure is not an option.” We then descended many flights of stairs into the ventilation clean air section and viewed one of the main ventilation fans 27 feet in diameter.

From there we further descended into the emergency/safety area under the tunnel and were given the chance to view the passing cars, but with a warning that it can have a strange effect on your eyes if you watch too long (see photo).

The Queensway Tunnel has a life span of a hundred years and in an effort to extend the use of the tunnel further, it was decided to ban all large lorries and coaches from using the Queensway Tunnel and for them to use the Kingsway tunnel instead to cross the Mersey. We had a thoroughly informative and entertaining tour by two excellent guides, Alison and Phil.

Quiz

Author, Steve Whitefield, Quiz Group Leader.

- 1 Eric Bristow was a world champion in which sport?
- 2 Which Verdi opera had its premiere in Cairo in 1871?
- 3 What name is given to the system of classification of library books?
- 4 Which method of cooking involving frying quickly in hot fat has a name derived from the French word for jump?
- 5 In Greek myth whose wings melted when he flew too near the sun?
- 6 Yarg cheese originated in which county?
- 7 Ulan Bator is the capital of which country?
- 8 Sororicide is the murder of which relative?
- 9 What is the smallest city in Britain by population?
- 10 In betting slang what odds are represented by the phrase Burlington Bertie?

- 11 Which artist painted the Potato Eaters?
- 12 In the Shrek films what is the name of the Princess?
- 13 What is the name for a baby oyster?
- 14 Who was the first British monarch to visit China?
- 15 In Dallas what was Sue Ellen's favourite drink?
- 16 Give a year in the life of Lord Byron.
- 17 What is the sum of a pre-decimal florin, crown and guinea? Give the answer in decimal currency.
- 18 Which retail business was founded by Anita Roddick?
- 19 Rajasthan is a state in which country?
- 20 Who wrote the novel A Town Like Alice?

Yoga (Tuesday)

Author: Anne Rodmell.



The picture above is the u3a **Yoga Tuesday group** having fun displaying their "warrior" pose. We are ably led by our supportive leader Alison Craggs, a qualified yoga teacher, whose mantra is "Yoga is not for the flexible but for the willing" – thankfully in my case! The class is a space where you can nourish the mind and body.

Sounds interesting? Good news, we have vacancies. If you'd like to join us at 10am Tuesday mornings in Raven Meols Community Centre please contact Alison on 07954 581 818 or email alisoncraggs@icloud.com

Formby U3A New Activity Groups

The Formby U3a website includes details of over 80 various groups but even this number sometimes doesn't meet your needs. The answer may be – start your own. In the past year we have been able to welcome a number of new groups into the fold and want to establish more. The new groups have included; Beer Appreciation, Wild Water Swimming, Running, Yoga and Line-dancing as completely new activities as well as new groups for existing activities such as Spanish and Local History. The Committee have made funds available to help Groups get established and will support where they can new groups in the initial stages, for instance with mentoring and providing contacts. So if you can't get into a group or have an interest that's not listed, how about starting your own group with like-minded members? Contact the Groups Secretary at groups@formbyu3a.org.uk to get the ball rolling.

Sick to Death

Author, Elizabeth Goodwill.

A recent journey to Chester's new "Sick to Death Museum" was rewarding for **Local History Group 6** members. They were guided by the Grim Reaper and Asclepius, the ancient Greek God of medicine, through the weird and wonderful history of medicine and explored the history of Chester's deadly diseases which lurked on every surface. It provided a light-hearted insight via the Turdis, the only time travelling toilet in existence, an assessment of who were the Quacks; who are the villains of medicine and an assessment of which remedies were magic & which real.

Outings Trip to Harrogate

Author: Helen Lewandowska.

The 2023 Christmas trip was to Harewood House and Harrogate. Despite a slight detour by our coach driver through St. Helens we arrived safely and the rain had stopped on arrival. We all enjoyed a spot of lunch and a tour round the House before departing for Harrogate town centre. A wander round the stalls, a bit of Christmas shopping and a nice afternoon tea at Bettys or other good coffee shops meant a good time was had by all. I know some members are keen to do Chatsworth in 2024 and we'll do our best to get in early for this so as not to miss out.





Formby U3A Christmas Concert

Author: Helen Lewandowska.



Our Christmas concert at the United Reformed Church in Formby proved a huge success. It was particularly special as our own music groups led the event and our



thanks go again to Singing for Pleasure, the Folk Group, Ukuleles and Recorder players. Over 100 people attended and all reported having had a good time.



Coffee Mornings



Our coffee mornings remain the place to get together to catch up with friends and find out what is going on. At our March coffee morning we will be consulting with members about our next Garden trip in May.

Boules

Author: Andy Dickinson.



The **Boules group** is thriving. Members meet on a Wednesday morning behind the Formby Pool. An enjoyable hour or so is spent bowling with plenty of friendly banter followed by a brew at the Cafe in the Park. A reminder to Formby U3A members that there is a 10% discount on drinks. Current membership cards must be shown.

Walking Group 6

Author: Marcia Thompson.



Group members enjoyed their recent walk at Frodsham Hill.

Message from the Chairman

Formby Recorder Group are hosting a regional recorder day at the Quaker House in Liverpool on the 24th February. This has been a challenge to arrange but appears to have now come together and we wish them all a very enjoyable day.

As well as our Garden trip in May we hope to do a Summer trip in July. We are thinking of Windermere or York but suggestions are always welcome.

Don't forget U3A members can get a £10 reduction to the Southport Flower show this year thanks to Southport U3A who sort this out for us.

A few people have asked me about the Group Leaders meeting which we have had to postpone a couple of times. Apologies for this and hopefully we will go ahead with this in April 2024, date to be confirmed.

We are having some changes to our Committee due to some long serving members retiring for a well-deserved rest or further adventures. We would like to thank Helen Beaver, Nikki Harrison, Anne & Martyn Rodmell who have worked very hard for Formby U3A over a number of years. We welcome new members to the committee to take over but would like to remind you that we are still looking for someone to

organise our Speakers on a monthly basis so if you are able to help it would be much appreciated.

Quiz Answers

1 Darts	2 Aida	3 Dewey Decimal
4 Sauté	5 Icarus	6 Cornwall
7 Mongolia	8 Sister	9 St Davids
10 100/30	11 Van Gogh	12 Princess Fiona
13 Spat	14 Queen Elizabeth II	15 Vodka
16 1788-1824	17 £1.40p	18 Body Shop
19 India	20 Nevil Shute	

Bay Horse



Author: Paula Parker.

Local History Group 16 held their quarterly meeting at The Bay Horse in early December followed by Christmas lunch. To check everyone was still on the 'good' list a visit from Father Christmas was arranged. Thankfully it was good news for all.

Plaza Cinema

Author: Paula Parker.

Local History Group 16 underwent a really interesting behind the scenes tour, film show and refreshment break on a bright day in January at the Plaza Community Theatre in Crosby. Following an exciting train journey on one of the new 4 carriage trains from Formby and short walk from Waterloo station, members were met by Martin Lol, the Cinema Manager. Martin gave an informative background and history talk, showed us all areas of the cinema (including the Projection Room and Art Deco decorated toilets). This was followed by a 42 minute detailed film featuring staff members and volunteers. It was amazing to see the



commitment from all involved to save the Plaza since it first opened on the 1st September 1939.

Changes To The Newsletter

As the number of group reports has diminished since lockdown, Committee has decided that Formby U3A Newsletter will be published each quarter, rather than on an ad hoc basis, until further notice. The Newsletter will be published with March, June, September & December editions. The Newsletter is meant to report on the 47 different activities that are available to all Formby U3A members.

The Newsletter needs ***your group reports to show the diversity of the people and activities in Formby U3A.***

Why Not Have A Try At Crown Green Bowling?

Author, Keith Jacques.

The first meeting of the new season of the Formby U3A: Bowls 2024 will be at the bowling green at Holy Trinity church (Formby Village Sports ~Club) will take place ***from 10.00 am to 12 noon on Thursday 4th April*** and continue each week thereafter. I hope to welcome back all those who came along for the end of last season and anyone else who would like to join us.

Crown green bowling is a great way for men and women to do a little gentle exercise, meet people and to learn a new sporting skill in a friendly atmosphere. No prior experience is required as everything you need to get started (bowls, mats and some basic instruction) will be provided – although those with experience are also welcome.

The bowling green is located behind the Beaufort Hall next to Holy Trinity Church in the centre of Formby.

The cost (which covers use of the green, clubhouse and equipment) is be £3 per session.

Please contact Keith Jacques on keithjacques01@gmail.com or by telephone on 0771 306 8312 and come along if you can.

Annual General Meeting of Formby U3A

To be held 2:00pm Wednesday, 13th March 2024 at Holy Trinity Church Hall

Agenda

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) Approval of the Minutes of the 2023 AGM,
- 3) Matters arising from the minutes
- 4) To receive and approve the Annual Report
- 5) To receive and approve the Treasurer's Report and Independently Reviewed

- 6) Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2023
 7) To appoint an Independent Examiner
 8) To receive and approve submitted Resolutions.
 9) Elections of Officers and Trustees. The following trustees have been nominated and have agreed to stand for re-election:

Chair	Helen Lewandowska
Secretary	Evan Bale
Membership Secretary	Andy Dickinson

The following have been nominated for election as trustees in specified roles:

Treasurer	Sue Robertson
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The following have been nominated for election as trustees:

Trustees:	Graham Higley, David Skelton, Ian Robertson
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- 9) Any other business.

All members of the Committee (the Trustees) are required to stand down at the AGM. Although some have indicated their willingness to stand for re-election, these positions can be contested and there are several vacancies for committee members. New names would be most welcome.

A Nomination Form for any of the positions on Committee is available on the website (www.formbyu3a.org.uk), at either the Wednesday and Thursday meetings or by emailing secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk. Completed forms should be returned to the Secretary.

Formby U3A Draft Minutes of The 2023 AGM

Held Wednesday 9th March 2023

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the committee. There being 62 members attending the quorum requirements for the AGM to take place were met, with no objections or abstentions.

Apologies for absence: Philip Collins, Pam Ashton, Pat Dunne, Chris and Steve McIlraith, Val Tibbitts, Pamela McKee Noel Blundell, Marylin Siddons-Smith, Sheila McGuinness, Barbara Gibbons, Jeff Gibbons, Evan Bale.

The chairman explained that the formal aspects of the AGM would take place first, then the talk by Gillian Russell (North West U3A Vice-Chair), followed by an opportunity for informal discussion.

Approval of Minutes of the 2022 AGM: Draft minutes have been published in the April 2022 Newsletter and on the website. There being no matters arising from these minutes, approval was proposed by Martyn Rodmell and seconded by Graham Higley, to be signed by the chairman Helen Lewandowska.

To receive and approve the Annual Report: The Chairman talked through some of the points she wished to highlight.

Formby U3A adopted the Beacon system last October as their computerised record system.

The membership as of the end of December 2022 was 1129. 19 new members joined during January 2023. The Committee have continued in their efforts to support new groups. The regular monthly Coffee mornings have been re-started on the second Thursday of the month, and thanks to all those who have supported these. In addition a monthly informal new members coffee morning has been started at the Queens Social Cafe in Formby.

At the end of December 2022 there were 78 groups. 2 new groups have started during the year and 8 have closed. A couple of groups have closed as leaders have resigned. The committee would welcome volunteers to take on the role of Group Leaders for these, and new groups.

The committee would welcome additional volunteers to join the committee.

Our singing and music groups have been approached about them performing a Christmas concert in 2023 and a keen response was received.

To receive and approve the Treasurer's Report and Independently Reviewed Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022:

The Treasurer reported on the financial statements highlighting the principal sources of income (membership subscriptions) and expenditure. Accounts were prepared on Receipts and Payments basis. She ran through the figures in the report, explaining major expenses. Overall the surplus for the year was £1,165.00, with accumulated reserves of £18,499. A question from the floor on the total surplus led to an explanation of the rules that control how charities can spend these.

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Graham Higley seconded by Patrick Parkes, and approved by the members present, with no objections, no abstentions.

To Appoint an Independent Reviewer: The re-appointment of Kit Robinson was proposed by Nikki Harrison and seconded by Patrick Parkes.

The Chair expressed her thanks and appreciation of the work done by all committee members, to Noel Blundell (Webmaster, Data Manager, and Formby u3a Beacon Site Administrator), Dave Goodwill (Newsletter Editor), and all members who have helped run Formby u3a for the past year.

Election of Trustees: The following committee members are standing for re-election:

Secretary, Evan Bale
Treasurer, Anne Rodmell

Committee Members

Nikki Harrison,
Martyn Rodmell,
Helen Beaver,
Andy Dickinson.

Election of Committee Officers: The following new committee members put themselves forward for Committee Officers:

Chair - Helen Lewandowska

Groups Secretary - Graham Higley

These names were confirmed en bloc with no abstentions or objections.

Informal discussions were held after the Speakers presentation, but as no items were raised the meeting was closed.

What Has Your Group Done?

The Formby U3A Newsletter is empty without group reports and committee members are grateful to all who write reports, or send in photographs for publication. A picture and/or report could inspire others to set up a similar group, or if you have spaces, join your group!

Book Groups - what have you recently read; what did you think of the plot

Beer & Wine Groups - what have you recently sampled; would you recommend it?

Boules, Bowls, Bridge, Mahjong - who have you recently played; who won?

Cookery Group - what have you recently created; how easy would it be for others to create?

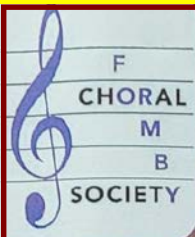
Folk, Ukulele, Singing, Skiffle, Recorder Groups - what/where have you recently performed; how was it received?

Opera, Music Appreciation - what have you recently listened to; would you recommend it?

Swimmers, Sea Swimmers, Runners - what were conditions like at your last meeting; how easy/difficult was the activity?

Walkers, Amblers, Fell Treckers - where have you walked; how easy/difficult was it?

Remember to send your reports to newseditor@formbyu3a.org.uk



BACH Magnificat MOZART Requiem

Saturday 23rd
March
7:30pm

with

Jocelyn Somerville, Louise Ashdown,
Philip Clieve, Julian Empett

Jon Barton - organ

Conducted by **David Holroyd**

Formby High School

46 Freshfield Road, Formby, Liverpool
L37 3HW

Tickets - £13

Under 19s free

Available using the QR Code.

☎ 0151 929 3617

or online: www.trybooking.co.uk/CYYU



Welcome To New Members

Formby U3A is pleased to welcome the following new members.

Katherine Barry	Vincent Barry	Carole Bell
Alan Bradburne	Ann Byrne	Miriam Cartwright
Jannene Devereux	Michael Devereux	Jennifer Ferdinand
Linda Gregory	Irene Grek	Janet Harrison
Cyn Hill	Julia Holcroft	Katherine Howard
Paul Howard	John Hyland	Nina Killen
Susan Lissett	Francis Muir	Basil Penney
Carol Penney	Marjorie Potts	Rita Quemard
Lawrence Singer	Moira Spedding	Ian Thomson
Karen Thomson	Alan Walmsley	Rob Webster
Sue Welch	Stephen Willams	Darren Wood

To Help You

An **audio version of the Newsletter** is available *on request* for members who are visually less able. It is distributed through the post. If you are aware of any Formby U3A member who would prefer to receive an audio version of the Newsletter, please let a member of the Committee have their details.

If you: have changed your address, telephone number, or e-mail address, or now have an e-mail address and wish to subscribe to electronically receiving the Newsletter, or no longer wish to receive e-mails from Formby U3A, or have an enquiry about your membership card, or subscriptions, **please contact membership@formbyu3a.org.uk** or write to: Membership Secretary, Formby U3A, PO Box 216, Liverpool L37 1XQ Please remember to include your full name and address, or your membership number.

Formby U3A Committee until the 2024 AGM

Chairman	Helen Lewandowska (2022 Co-opted)	07548 213496	chair@formbyu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Evan Bale (2020)		secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk
Treasurer	Sue Robertson (2023)	07495413860	treasurer@formbyu3a.org.uk
Membership Sec.	Andy Dickinson (2022)	643971	membership@formbyu3a.org.uk
Group Secretary	Graham Higley (2023)	0780 1261537	groups@formbyu3a.org.uk
Officers	Nikki Harrison (2021)	871308	2ndofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	David Skelton (2023)		3rdofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Martyn Rodmell (2021)	621835	4thofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Ian Robertson (2023)	07922424924	5thofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk

Monthly Meetings

Are at 2.00 pm in Holy Trinity Parish Hall, the second Wednesday of each month.
The main door is now accessible following the laying of the new car park

If you have any suggestions of Speakers/talks that you think may be of interest to members, please email us at speakers@formbyU3a.org.uk or use the suggestion box at monthly meetings.

13th March David Hearn, **Soldiers on the streets & warships in the Mersey**

10th April Bernard Nevin, **Formby in the 1950s**

8th May Ken Pye, **Murders & Misdemeanours**

12th June William Froggatt, **The Leeds Liverpool Canal**

Please remember that you need to show your 2024 Membership Card at all events, including group activities.

Coffee Morning will be from 10:30 to 12:00 on Thursday, March 14th. This will be 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.

Newsletter Contributions informing members of your group and its activities are always welcome. Please send contributions to the Editor, e-mail: [**newseditor@formbyu3a.org.uk**](mailto:newseditor@formbyu3a.org.uk) No e-mail providers guarantee 100% delivery rate and if, 7 days after submitting an article you have not received an acknowledgement one of the e-mail systems failed, so please try again.

Formby U3A Committee would like to remind contributors that it is their responsibility and not the Editor's to check their submitted articles for the grammar, spelling, punctuation etc. Contributors' names should be given.

Photographs submitted must be members' own photos as copyright of third parties' photos remains with the owner and the Newsletter cannot publish such photos.

Please ensure that all people shown in photographs are aware that photographs are being taken for inclusion in the Newsletter.

Please do not send more than 4 photographs.

Please do not send photographs within a word processed document. It results in poor quality images which are pixelated with members often unrecognisable. **Please send photographs as separate attachments.**

Previous Newsletters: are available at: www.formbyu3a.org.uk/newsletters.html

The deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is midday the penultimate Thursday of the month at the latest, i.e. 23rd May. The next Newsletter can be viewed at: [**www.formbyu3a.org.uk/newsletters.html**](http://www.formbyu3a.org.uk/newsletters.html) from 1st of June. Paper copies can be collected at the monthly meeting & coffee morning.