

Formby U3A Newsletter

June 2024

Formby U3A, Reg. Charity No. 1161157

Issue No 288

Ukulele Group



Author, Glyn Pike.

Four representatives of the members of Formby Uke 3A (**the Ukulele Group**) were presented with a Citizens 4 Good certificate at a ceremony in Bootle Town Hall. The award, jointly sponsored by Sefton Council and Sefton CVS, arose following their nomination by a Formby resident, Kevin Dunne, who is known as the “Stem Cell Scouser.” Kevin’s wife Mary was diagnosed with Leukaemia some years ago and as part of her treatment received a stem cell transplant with the assistance of the Anthony Nolan Trust. The treatment was successful and in gratitude Kevin volunteered to raise £100,000 for the Anthony Nolan Trust.

Kevin and Mary now devote a major portion of their retirement to this task.

A few years ago Kevin and Mary attended a musical evening at the Gild Hall, a regular event held on the second Wednesday of each month, and on that occasion Formby Uke 3A were performing. Kevin then requested that Formby Uke 3A help in the fundraising by adding musical accompaniment to his events. We were pleased to be able to help and have accompanied them on numerous ventures to various collections at supermarkets in Merseyside and also performed at musical events organised by Kevin.

The photograph may look suspiciously like two smiling “scousers” in the “dock” accompanied by their legal representatives, but it was taken in the Bootle Town Hall Council chamber where the ceremony was held.

Slaidburn and Stocks Reservoir

Author, Marcia Thompson.

It's a long time since I've been to Slaidburn and as the March trip for **Walking Group 6** coincided with my birthday it was a special treat! The walk was led by Dave Goodwill and seven of us set off from Slaidburn across fields and lanes following the Jubilee Valley Trail which goes above the



reservoir and has fine views. At the causeway we went into Guisburn forest and followed pleasant woodland paths with a stop for lunch. Coming back to the road we went into the church at Dalehead (rebuilt with the stones from the original church drowned when the reservoir was built) before taking the higher level path back to Slaidburn. We were lucky with good weather . Thankyou to Dave for a lovely walk.

Loggerheads

The April walk was led by Veronica and started at the car park. We had some mud, but bright skies, sunshine and fine views. The first part of the walk took us along the River Alyn and then into Cilcain where we had an excellent lunch stop in the garden of the Village Community Centre, run by volunteers and with a small café and shop and very friendly greeting. The rest of the route took us along paths and lanes with view of Moel Famau summit, until we re-joined the river and back to Loggerheads for tea, cake and ice cream. Thankyou to Veronica for a most enjoyable walk.



Craft & Chat

Author, Veronica Curtis



The **Craft & Chat Group** meets monthly to craft and chat, and enjoy each other's company. We tackle a variety of craft skills including patchwork, quilting, crochet and even origami.

For each session members agree on what to tackle next, always trying to widen our range of skills. Usually one member of the group volunteers to get any materials needed and do a "dummy run" beforehand. They then demonstrate the process and help the others. Projects are sometimes completed in one session but more

usually take 2 or 3 months. We often find ourselves learning new techniques that we wouldn't have tried alone. We enjoy the generous hospitality of our hostess who undoubtedly has the biggest stash in the whole world. Craft-y people will understand what I mean!



CHET & Crosby Hall

Author, John Adamson.

Members of **Local History Group 7** recently visited CHET and Crosby Hall in Little Crosby. The visit was organised by David and Glennis Poole. We all met in the Cross House, Formby, for lunch and then shared cars for the drive to the Crosby Hall Educational Centre (CHET), located off Back Lane, Little Crosby. We were met by the Manager of CHET who gave the group an overview of the unit. CHET provides day and residential courses for Primary/Junior School children. There are a number of such establishments up and down the country that give children experiences in a variety of activities, for example: craft, orienteering, rafting, climbing, archery, environmental issues, nature, etc.

We were then met by Mark Blundell, the present head of the Blundell family, and the current Lord-Lieutenant of Merseyside. The Blundell family have been in existence since the Middle Ages and were Royalists during the Civil War. The family were also devout Catholics. The present Crosby Hall was thought to have been in existence from about 1609 and extensive modifications carried out in about 1785. Mark showed the group around the ground floor of Crosby Hall and talked about his family history and about the diaries of Nicholas Blundell, a book that provides a wealth of information about life in the early 18th Century.



The visit was thoroughly enjoyed by the group. CHET organise events during the summer months which are usually sold out well in advance.

Birkenhead Priory



Author, Elizabeth Goodwill.

Unfortunately **Local History Group 6** members were unable to "ferry across the Mersey" when they recently visited Birkenhead. Woodside Terminal is closed until 2025! The visit proved an eye-opener for all; nobody had previously visited this, the oldest site in Merseyside. Birkenhead, named from the old English Bircen Heafod, meaning Headland Growing Birch Trees is famous for Cammell Laird Shipyard which

now adjoins Birkenhead Priory, our destination. The Priory is of such historical significance that it is classed in the same category as Stonehenge and reflects the spiritual importance of the Wirral, having been established by Hamon de Massey in the 13th Century.

It's not easy to interpret and decide exactly how the Priory would have looked when it was active as although there are significant ruins, more so than at Norton, much has disappeared, some to make way for the dry dock which abuts the site. In addition, the Victorians made



alterations as they attempted to preserve it. However, such is the historical significance of the site that ships brought in for maintenance cannot be spray painted but have to be hand-painted by roller. The Great Hall accommodated visitors waiting for the monks' twice daily ferry to row them across the Mersey. One window would have been the place for handing out alms, charitable donations to the poor. The Chapter House remains intact, its name coming from the fact that one chapter from the Rule of St Benedict was read each morning to instruct and remind the monks and the staff of their duties and responsibilities. The House has the original arched ceiling which no modern day stone-mason has yet admitted to having the skill to replicate. It was the heart of everyday business at the Priory, with meetings held in the round to sort all the practical considerations about the life of the monastery and the estate. Edward I held an important meeting there to determine the Welsh border. The Priory was closed in 1536 and the Chapter House eventually became a chapel. It remains a consecrated Church of England chapel, hosting regular church services, weddings, baptisms and funerals, complete with some spectacular stained glass.

The Undercroft houses a small and interesting museum which tells the story of the Priory. The stone floor is still visible either side of the present timber walkway. A spiral staircase leads up the Refectory above the Undercroft, now covered with an award winning roof, the space hosting Sunday Concerts throughout the summer. .

St Mary's, the first parish church of Birkenhead, shares the site with the Priory. It survives now as only a tower and spire, having been demolished in the 1970's. Several members climbed the 101 steps of the tower for spectacular views of the River Mersey and Camel Lairds. The tower is now dedicated as a memorial to the 99 men lost in the 1939 disaster aboard the Laird's built submarine HMS Thetis.

Birkenhead Council, now part of Wirral Council, many years ago signed an agreement to maintain the Priory in perpetuity. Our thanks go to Samantha, our guide for her enthusiastic and insightful tour of the site.

Bowls Vacancies

Author Mike Benson.

The bowls group meets on Tuesdays at the bowling green in Formby Park. The U3A

has use of the green between 2.00 and 4.00 pm. The group is mixed, and games are played in a friendly spirit. There is even a tea interval. The season lasts from April to the end of September, and the cost is £35 for the season. You are able to use the green at any time as long as there is no competition or tournament taking place. Individual visits are allowed at a cost of £3.50. It is better if you have your own bowls, but a few sets are available to try. Fresh air, healthy exercise and convivial company are available every Tuesday afternoon.

Why not give it a try? If interested just arrive at about 1.50pm, or phone, or text Mike Benson, 0755 402 9010, or 0170 487 3561 for a chat.

RAF Woodvale

Author: Paula Parker.



Local History Group 16 went on a very interesting and informative visit to RAF Woodvale. We certainly appreciated seeing it from the other side of the fence rather than simply driving past on the bypass.

The Group received a friendly welcome and the visit began with a presentation on the history of RAF Woodvale. Woodvale opened in February 1941 as a result of the bombing in the Liverpool area although it was too late to prevent a lot of the damage. It was only meant to be a temporary airfield to last the duration of the war and as we know it is located next to the bypass which was built just before the war. More information is available on YouTube an online talk called The Story of RAF Woodvale from The Atkinson.

After the presentation we were taken outside to see the aircraft that currently use Woodvale for training purposes. We were lucky enough to have a very close look inside the aircraft.

We finished the visit by looking in the Operations Room and were amazed by the amount of detail involved in running the airfield.

Third Age Matters Magazine

The Third Age Matters magazine is published five times a year by the Third Age Trust. The Formby u3a receives one copy which is available to browse at both the Speakers Meetings and Coffee Mornings. It is then left in Formby library as reference

only. So, settle yourself in a comfy seat and enjoy a read. In the recent Spring issue, there was an article about the launch of u3a Friends Extra. By signing up to the Friends Extra online newsletter you can access a range of services, discounts and offers. Friends Extra includes, Travel discounts, offers on Insurance, savings on shopping, days out and much more.

To sign up the Friends Newsletter go to u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter

From the Chairman

Helen Lewandowska.

We had a recent talk on Formby in the 50s from Bernard Nevin which as can be seen from the photo was very well attended. Your ongoing support for the monthly meetings/talks is much appreciated.



31 people have signed up for the Cheese and Wine evening at Moulin on 30th May 6pm. We still have a few places for anyone else who wishes to join us-£12 for cheese board and a glass of wine or soft drink.

22 people have also signed up for the meal at Moulin on 21st June-2 courses for £20. Again, if interested please ring me on 07548213496. We will be taking payment for this at the June Speaker meeting and Coffee morning.

Fifty six members attended our trip on 20th May to Bridgewater Gardens in Worsley Manchester and feedback was very positive with everyone saying they had had a good day-luckily the weather was kind to us. Our next trip to Trentham Gardens is on the 16th July. This is almost full so if you are interested, please contact me on 07548213496 asap. We will be collecting payment for this at the June Speaker meeting and coffee morning.



Amy Lennox-Bowley will be attending our June coffee morning to chat to you for 10 mins and hand out leaflets about a new Hearing Clinic in Formby. Amy is from Formby and specialises in Hearing and Balance care. I'm sure she will answer any questions/concerns you have.

We are still looking for someone to lead a new Theatre group if anyone is willing to volunteer and someone to recruit speakers and manage our Speaker meetings on a Wednesday afternoon once a month.

The AGM in March went ahead with no problems and the committee, some of whom can be seen in this Newsletter, were elected again for the forthcoming year. A successful Group leaders meeting took place on 9th May with positive feedback and very nice Waitrose sandwiches. We are looking at the possibility of holding a u3a Open Day later in the year as these have proved to be a good way of people finding out more about what we do, particularly new members.

Draft Minutes of Formby U3A AGM 2024 **held Wednesday 13th March 2024**

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the committee. There being 67 members attending, the quorum requirements for the AGM to take place were met.

Apologies for absence were received from: Jean Horne, Dave Goodwill, Noel Blundell, Graham Higley, Kitt Robinson and Cathy Robinson.

The chairman explained that the formal aspects of the AGM would take place first, to be followed by a presentation from this month's Speaker.

Approval of Minutes of the 2023 AGM:

Draft minutes have been published in the Spring 2024 Newsletter and on the website. There being no matters arising from these minutes, their approval was proposed by Martyn Rodmell and seconded by Andrew Hoare. The minutes were agreed by the meeting and will be signed by the chairman, Helen Lewandowska, as being approved.

To receive and approve the Annual Report:

The Chairman presented her report on the activity within Formby u3a in the past 12 months. Highlights included;

The continued popularity of both the coffee morning events and Speakers meetings each month;

The resurrection of the arranged trips, with popular trips to Llandudno and Harrogate. Due to their success work is in hand arrange further trips for the coming year;

The Christmas concert arranged by our music groups proved very popular and very successful, and feedback has been extremely positive. The recorder group put our u3a on the regional map by arranging a regional recorder day attended by over 30 players.

A number of new groups have started in the year which was very much welcomed. Overall we have 75 active groups at present with the six new groups starting and 2 closing during the year.

The newsletters continue to be published but the decision was made to reduce the frequency to quarterly (from monthly) to ensure there was adequate content.

The Chair expressed her particular thanks to Kitty and her team (coffee morning catering), Keith Jacques (puzzles and books), Noel Blundell (Webmaster) and Dave Goodwill (Newsletter) for their continued support during the year. The Chair closed with a small presentation to Anne and Martyn Rodmell, who are both leaving the committee, in recognition of their sterling work as treasurer (5 years!) and Speaker's Secretary respectively.

To receive and approve the Treasurer's Report and Independently Reviewed Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2023:

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, highlighting the significant areas of expenditure. Overall, the surplus for the year was £92 (£1,165.00 in 2022), with accumulated reserves of £18,591 (£18,499 in 2022).

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Andrew Dickinson, seconded by Michael Lewandowski, and approved by the members present, with no objections, no abstentions.

To Appoint an Independent Examiner of accounts:

The meeting was advised that our past reviewer, Kit Robinson was standing down and that Mr David Poole was being proposed as his replacement. This was formally proposed by Martyn Rodmell and seconded by Peter Kehoe. The proposal was agreed by the members present, there were no objections or abstentions. The Treasurer extended the thanks of the Committee to Kit for all his work as our Independent Reviewer in recent years.

To receive and approve submitted Resolutions.

The Secretary confirmed that no Resolutions had been received for the meeting.

Election of Officers and Trustees:

The following committee members are standing for re- election:

- Chair, Helen Lewandowska;
- Secretary, Evan Bale;
- Membership Secretary, Andy Dickinson;
- Groups Secretary, Graham Higley

Committee Members, Nikki Harrison,

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

Treasurer, Sue Robertson.

The following members put themselves forward for to join the Committee:

David Skelton, Ian Robertson and Christine Hosie.

The Chair proposed that voting for Officers and Trustees to be held en-bloc, rather than individually unless there were any objections. The proposal was seconded by Steve Bass and carried with no objections or abstentions.

The vote was then held to appoint the above listed Officers and Trustees, proposed by Steve Bass and seconded by Andre Hoare. The appointments were agreed with no objection or abstentions.

The meeting was opened up to the floor for questions or any other business, but as no items were raised, the meeting was closed at 14.20.

A Concert of Anniversaries



Saturday 8th June
7:30pm

with

The Liverpool Brass Band
conducted by Louise Hough MBE

Jon Barton - piano

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.com/uk/57801

Formby U3A Committee 2024-25

Chairman	Helen Lewandowska (2022 Co-opted)	07548 213496	chair@formbyu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Evan Bale (2020)		secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk
Treasurer	Sue Robertson (2024)	07495413860	treasurer@formbyu3a.org.uk
Membership Sec.	Andy Dickinson (2022)	643971	membership@formbyu3a.org.uk
Group Secretary	Graham Higley (2023)	07801261537	groups@formbyu3a.org.uk
Officers	Christine Hosie (2024)	882903	4thofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	David Skelton (2023)		3rdofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Ian Robertson (2023)	07922424924	5thofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk



l to r: Evan Bale (Secretary), Helen Lewandowska (Chair), Ian Robertson (Newsletter Liaison), Andy Dickinson (Membership Secretary), Sue Robertson (Treasurer) & Christine Hosie. Graham Higley (Groups Secretary) and David Skelton were unavailable.

New Members

Formby U3A is pleased to welcome the following new members.

Ann Musker	Anthony Grundy	Barbara Grundy	Berenice Gibson
Eddie McCarthy	Enna Wilkinson	Graham Dean	James Kane
Janet Phillips	Jean Burns	John Keenan	Julie Howard
Julie Vine	Keith Wilson	Lesley Draper	Liz Poyser
Matt Wright	Michael Corrigan	Norah Jackson	Pat Davenport
Peter Musker	Peter Murray	Philip Hughes	Sandra Gale
Terence Harrison			

Your Help Is Needed

Formby U3A urgently needs a Speaker Secretary to book speakers in advance for monthly meetings. There is a list of potential speakers and a budget to cover speaker costs. In addition to arranging speakers, it would be necessary to attend the monthly meetings in the afternoon of the 2nd Wednesday of each month (August excepted). The Speaker Secretary assists with the setting up of equipment for the designated speaker. If you are interested, willing or able to help, possibly sharing the role with someone else, then please contact Helen, our Chair for further information.

Monthly Meetings

Meetings are at **2.00 pm** the second Wednesday of each month in Holy Trinity Parish Hall. 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.

12th June, Bill Froggatt, from the Canal River Trust, **The Leeds Liverpool Canal.** Bill says *"I will be speaking about the construction of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, focussing on the section between Liverpool and Wigan (which celebrates its 250 years anniversary this year)."*

10th July, Ken Pye, **Murders & Misdemeanours** (postponed from May)

There is no speaker meeting in August

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, June 13th. 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 If, 7 days after submitting an article you have not received an acknowledgement, one of the e-mail systems failed, so please try again.

Please remember, it is contributor's responsibility to check articles for grammar, spelling, punctuation etc, not Editor's. Contributors' names should be given.

Photographs submitted must be members' own photos. 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 send photographs as separate attachments**, not within a word processed document.

Previous Newsletters: are available at: https://formbyu3a.org.uk/?page_id=331

The deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is midday the penultimate Thursday of the month at the latest, i.e. 22nd August. The next Newsletter can be viewed found at: https://formbyu3a.org.uk/?page_id=331 from 1st of September. Paper copies can be collected at the monthly meeting & coffee morning.