

## Harewood House



**Author, Pam Skelton; photos David Skelton.**

What a glorious day! Although a bit grey when we left Formby, by the time we reached Hartshead Moor service station the sun was clear of all its clouds. That of course was only a short comfort stop and we soon back on the M62 en-route for Harewood. Travelling through a built-up area, I was astonished to discover that

"Pudsey" is a place, not just the name of a yellow bear with a spotty eye patch. We live and learn don't we?

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On arrival at Harewood House Ann had organised all entrance tickets so the rest of us could just stay on the bus (a very comfortable one) until, well within the grounds, we disembarked and began our day proper. Ann had also arranged that we be met with tea/ coffee and biscuits in a private room in the former stable block, which was very welcome. The biscuits were homemade and of various flavours, chocolate chip, ginger and plain among them. Our cups were cheerfully refilled as often as wanted and the whole atmosphere was welcoming and bright. Then we had to make a choice - to start in the house or in the

gardens? David and I chose the house and walked up the path to the grand entrance, although we could have taken the free shuttle bus from the courtyard and others enjoyed this more leisurely way.

Harewood House is beautiful and in each room is a pleasant, knowledgeable steward, happy to answer any questions, or contribute to any discussion a visitor may initiate. In many of the rooms there were examples of modern arts and crafts. In a bedroom, for example, the period bed was covered by a shimmering blue/green throw that fell in folds from the bed to cover part of the floor. This mixing of old and new is a deliberate policy of the present Countess of Harewood who is herself, as Diane Jane Howse, a well known artist. When the house was built it was thought to be vulgarly modern, definitely OTT. How times change and move! Moving through the house one is not overwhelmed by the grandeur as in the case with many stately homes, but a feeling of homely beauty. In many minds was the thought, "Yes, I can imagine living here"!

From the house we passed through the shop to the Terrace & it was time for lunch. Some of us had brought our own sandwiches and just needed a take-away-coffee, others bought from the cafe. It was relaxing sitting on the terrace looking over the formal garden to the landscape beyond, chatting with friends, before setting off to explore the grounds. The lake was a magnet and this time we were glad of the shuttle-bus. A free ferry operates across the narrowest part of the lake and the bus took us to the jetty. We did not have to wait long as the ferry runs constantly, every few minutes, but while we waited we caught sight of the Flamingoes further down the shore, the bright sun picking out the pretty pink of their feathers. On the other side we had a quick walk around the walled garden, though there was little growing at this time, but it was pleasant sitting outside the Horsebox Kiosk with another coffee.

Back on the House side of the lake we found the aviary. We saw what we thought was an injured pigeon - it had blood on its chest, but it was moving about and cooing quite happily and the blood wasn't spreading but when we read the info on the side of the cage the mystery was solved! It was a "Bleeding Heart Dove" and the colour was plumage. Then another surprise, the penguin pool. They had been fed at 3.30 and a heron, who regularly drops in to help them get rid of the fish, was still there when we looked in.

We left at 5.00pm, making our way back to Formby, very contented with the experience. Thanks to Ann for all the time and effort she put into making a truly magical day.



## Fulwood Barracks

*Author, Stephen and Pauline Joyce.*

Members of **Local History Group 9** visited Fulwood Barracks in Preston which houses the Museum of the Lancashire Infantry Regiments. As the barracks are still used by the Army we needed to produce photo id on our arrival. This museum houses a very large collection of artefacts and information that has been collected over the centuries. Over the course of many years a large number of local Lancashire regiments have been amalgamated to form The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment. The Museum has a number of rooms including The Waterloo Room, The Somme Room, The Council Chamber and the Regimental Chapel. The visit was made particularly interesting by the extremely informative guide Dominic, the assistant curator. His knowledge of the history and the many battles that these regiments were involved in was explained with humour and certainly kept us all entertained. In the Somme Room there were amazing stories of heroism from individuals, these were both inspirational and emotional. We would recommend a visit to other groups or just individuals as the museum is open most days of the week, there is a good website with information about opening times and a downloadable guide.

## Anyone For Ping Pong?

*Author, Keith Jacques.*



The **Table Tennis Group** meet every Tuesday & Wednesday morning from 10 to 12 in The Beauford Hall next to Holy Trinity Church in Formby village. We are affiliated to the Holy Trinity Sports Club Table Tennis section, but they play serious table tennis

and compete in league matches. By comparison we play ping pong!

We are looking for additional members (especially for Tuesdays) and anyone who has enjoyed a game of table tennis on holiday with the family, or perhaps has played a long time ago and would like to have another go would be most welcome. There is no charge for U3A members to join or to play but if, after a couple of taster sessions you do decide to join us you will need to become a member of the Holy Trinity Sports Club. If you are interested please come along (just ring the doorbell) or e-mail: [secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk)

### **The North West Region U3A Big Sing**

Thursday 5th September, 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.at  
The Friends' Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool.

Led by Stuart Overington, a conductor from the Halle and  
Members of the North West Regional Team

#### **PROGRAMME**

Refreshments and registration from 10:30 a.m.

11:00 – 12:15 First practice session

12:15 – 1:15 Lunch - bring your own or use the local cafes

1:15 – 2:15 Second practice session

2:15 – 2:45 Refreshment break

2:45 – 3:30 The Big Sing – putting together everything you have learned

There is a lift at the venue. Please indicate if you have any special requirements with regard to seating.

Cost for the event: £15.00 including refreshments. Please send your registration form, and cheque payable to 'North West Region of U3As' to G. Russell, 71 Barn Hey Crescent, Meols, Wirral, CH479RW

Please note, lunch is not provided. Bring your own or use nearby cafes. There is an excellent café at the venue which serves a vegetarian menu only.

***Please try to register by August 20<sup>th</sup> to ensure your place.***

## Golf

**Author, John Adamson.**

There are currently three Golf Groups that meet weekly, Tuesdays between 10:00 and 11:00 am; Wednesdays between 11:00 am and 12:00 pm; Fridays between 10:00 and 11:00 am.

Each group lesson is held with David Lloyd, a golf professional at the Formby Golf Centre, Moss Side, Formby. The lesson costs £6 per 1 hour session payable each week on attendance. After the lesson we usually go for coffee in the onsite café.



The lesson fee provides for 50 golf balls and a Group Lesson with David. He talks to us as a group and provides individual tuition and comments. The advantage of the individual comments is that he can spot bad techniques creeping into our game as we progress.

The Groups join up the summer months to enter the monthly golf competitions. These competitions are for players who have reached a suitable standard. An annual golf presentation evening is also arranged at the end of the year.

If you would like to join one of the Golf Groups you will be very welcome. You should contact the Group Leader of the golf group you would like to join. Details can be found on the U3A Website.

## RLB 360°

**Author, D Gee.**

The Royal Lyver Burial Society was formed by 8 men who met in the Lyver Pub in order to provide for decent interment for deceased members. The inclusion of the word "burial" sounded too sombre, so was soon dropped from the title which morphed into the Royal Livers Friendly Society.

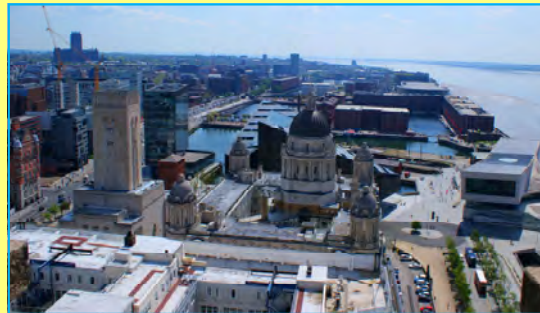
It was probably one of the better weather days of the year when **Local History Group 6** members visited the Royal Liver Building for a tour. Commissioned in 1907 and designed by Birkenhead born architect Walter Aubrey Thomas, the freehold of the land was purchased for £75,000 with construction starting in 1908 and being



completed in record time in 1911 at a cost of £621,000 (£58m). The lift took members to the first external viewing platform on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor. The iconic building is Grade I listed, being architecturally important because of its pioneering use of reinforced concrete and its impressive size. We subsequently climbed 3 floors to watch an excellent audio visual presentation, which provided a welcome rest before the final climb to the roof, above the largest clock faces in the UK and below one of the Liver Birds. The 2 birds, each weighing 4 tonnes and 5½ metres high, were designed by Carl Bernard Bartels, a German who moved to Britain aged 21, although such an acknowledgement was unthinkable before his recognition in 2011. The Bromsgrove Guild, the company also responsible for the main gates at Buckingham Palace manufactured the birds in 1 month, with a severe penalty clause written into the contract should they not be finished in time. Members had heard of the male Liver Bird looking into the city to check whether the pubs were open, but had never before heard him called Bertie and whilst they had heard that the female looked out to sea to watch for homecoming sailors, they had never before heard her called Bella. Whilst on the upper roof we were not only surprised by the chiming of the clock bell, but also surprised to find that the chimes, so familiar to us, are in fact an electronic recording of the original bells now broadcast through an enormous loudspeaker.



Members had to book individually on-line and read the copious health and safety notices about steps to be climbed; narrow passageways; steep spiral staircases; loud noises from the chiming clock; risk from strong winds, etc. After the visit it was their collective conclusion that whoever wrote the advice had



never visited a lighthouse, a National Trust castle, any of Britain's old cathedral towers, nor wandered down many of our homes' hallways. It was a truly magnificent visit made all the better by excellent views over the city and region, which we would highly recommend to those able to climb 124 steps.

**Local History Group 6** currently has vacancies. The group meets monthly to visit places across the North West, generally the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month and tries to alternate between Mondays and Wednesdays to avoid venue closures. Upcoming meetings are to Williamson Tunnels and an interactive session to "Seized," the Customs Excise exhibition at the Maritime Museum. A Royal Institute of British Architects 2 hr guided walk around Liverpool's landmarks is being planned. For more information please contact Elizabeth Goodwill, Group Leader, by e-mailing: [egoodwill@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:egoodwill@hotmail.co.uk)

## Group News

**Author Ann Knowles, Groups Secretary**

**To All Group Leaders:** Just a reminder that every Group has its own 'information page' on the Formby U3A website. These are accessed by clicking on the Groups tab at the top of the page and then clicking on the alphabetical listing of groups. Some of these pages seem to need updating. Could all Group Leaders please check their page and e-mail any additions or amendments to the Group Secretary.

**Chess For Beginners:** Our purpose is to introduce beginners to Chess, or help members who already know the rules of the game to improve their play.

For further information please contact Ray Derricott on 876661.

**Gardening Group 1:** Meets on the 2nd and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays of the month from 10:15am – 12:15pm, and was the first gardening group formed in the Formby U3A. We meet in each other's houses, when tea/coffee and biscuits are provided. We are a friendly group, with gardens of all sizes, and discuss a wide range of issues, including garden problems, topical jobs, and propagation. We also swap plants and some members grow fruit and vegetables. Occasional visits to other gardens may be arranged. We are suitable for garden novices as well as those more experienced.

For more information please contact Mike Belshaw on 874940.

**German For Anyone:** We have a member who has volunteered to lead a Group for anyone wishing to learn, improve or just practice their German. Anyone interested in joining should contact the Groups Secretary in the first instance.

**Swimming Group:** The swimming group meet on Mondays at 12:00 in the Formby Pool and then meet in the cafe for a snack and a chat after our swim. We swim lengths (and chat) and are usually in the cafe at 12:45. We need to show our U3A cards at the reception when we pay because as members of the group we pay a reduced fee. We also get a discount on our refreshments if we show our cards as we buy them. For those of us who need to come by car the car park fee is refunded when you get to the reception to pay for the swim. Be fitter and feel better with new friends at the swimming group.

For further information please contact Judith Pike on 0151 929 2996.

**New Uno Group:** Since the current Uno Group is full, there has been interest in starting a second Group. Anyone who is interested in joining, please contact the Group Secretary.

**Vacancies:** There are also vacancies in the following groups: Art, Bird Watching, Boules, Bowling, Bridge Groups 1, 3 & 22, Cycling, Folk and Country Singing, Floral Art, French, Gardening Group 3, Guitar, Golf, Knit and Natter, Lunch, Needlecraft, Science, Scottish Dancing, Table Tennis, various Walking Groups, and Whist.

If you wish to join a group that has no vacancies, please inform the Group Secretary.

You should show your **yellow 2019 membership cards** when you attend group meetings.

## Forthcoming Outings Group

**Author, Ann Blackman, Phone 871127.**

**Thursday July 4th Liverpool Wheel and New Brighton** Tickets £36 include return coach journey. We will first experience a unique ride on the Liverpool wheel from where we will have a fantastic view over Liverpool and the Mersey. For those who prefer not to ride on the wheel we will adjust your ticket price. Mid-morning we will cross the Mersey by ferry, using your bus pass. If you do not have a pass we will offer to pay for you. We will be met at Birkenhead by coach to drive to the Floral Pavilion New Brighton. We will dine in the restaurant overlooking the Mersey, having a two-course lunch with coffee, followed by free time in New Brighton before our return.

August or September dependent on coach availability.

Menai Straits and Penryn Castle Wales. Date, ticket price itinerary etc will be available at the next U3A meeting and coffee morning.

### Outings Group Issues by Ann Blackman

Prior to the 2019 Formby U3A AGM, the past and present Chair person were bombarded by numerous members who supported the idea that the Outings Group Leader should have a free place on the trip which they were responsible for. The report following the meeting unfortunately only identified one member's comment on the day who stated the Theatre Group did not have free places. Comparisons should not be made as there is a profound difference between the two groups. To justify why a free place should be negotiated with the federation I was invited to meet the new committee. I was accompanied by Howard Curtis, June Falkner and Jen Whishart. Joan Capper was on holiday.

#### Case presented by Ann Blackman Outings Group Leader

##### Outings Group History

I joined Formby U3A Jan 2011 having recently moved to Formby and widowed in 2010. I was not disabled at that time. All existing groups were full and Marian Young ran two outings per year which were oversubscribed. A seventy-seater school bus was used on the trip I attended. It was suggested if I could do any better to get on with it. Marian was very helpful and I took over the outings.

The outings are open to all members who can access the coach without assistance. Since I became disabled this has encouraged other less able members to join the trips.

Over the eight years we have organised 96 outings which on a number of occasions we have required two coaches. The most we have taken on any outing was 96 members on at least two occasions. The most popular outings include a meal enabling the lonely among us to socialise and make friends. The least popular was a trip to Fleetwood when we did not include a meal and only 16 members attended.

##### Statistics

4513 members have attended the trips

96 outings total income over the eight years is £102502

The average ticket is £23 but can range from £57 to £16.

##### Diversity of outings.

Each year we have visited the Lake District, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Wales, Lancashire and further afield to Cadbury World Birmingham Pilkington's Glass factory, Saltair art gallery and Trentham Gardens.



We have visited Stately homes, castles, cathedrals, a Buddhist temple, shopping centres, markets and historic places of interest

Events have included Buxton Military Tattoo, Carols at the Cathedral, Christmas events in the Palm House Sefton Park, Chester Zoo, Ice Show Blackpool, Christmas show at Chatsworth, Llangollen international festival and many others.

Mode of transport apart from the coach has included steam train, Raven Glass railway, Snowdonia railway, Manchester ship canal, narrow boats, lake cruises and open top bus trips.

#### **Risk Assessment.**

With such a diverse selection of outings always many miles from Formby it is essential to assess the potential risks and prepare for possible management of incidents.

As the leader I have a Duty of Care and am responsible to act in an emergency or incident. It is also essential to ensure those with dietary requirements do not get the wrong meal. This detracts from my always taking part in the activity or to enjoy the meal or events, which it is proposed as leader I should pay for.

#### **Examples of incidents include:-**

A hotel in Wales allocated an unsuitable dining room for our use. It was up two flights of stairs which members were then told to go down for their drinks. I insisted the one and only waitress organise someone to serve drinks as it was a hazard. On our return I was able to speak to a senior manager who agreed with my concerns and we were invited back and benefitted from a free meal for everyone.

There have been two instances where members have become unwell and ambulances needed to be called.

A member got lost and was unable to find their way back to bus. Leader had to find them.

Coat stand fell on two members at a hotel.

When managing an outing it is impossible to relax until everyone gets off the bus on our return to Formby.

The U3A constitution like most legal documents is open to interpretation and those in authority currently believe a free place to be a benefit. I disagree as the person running the trip on the day cannot enjoy the activity which they are expected to pay for. It is a working expense. I believe other charities including the National Trust allow free places for the outing organisers.

I pointed out the committee pay £41 for two first-aiders to attend monthly meetings to manage incidents when there is almost a full complement of committee members present. I sincerely hope the committee understands the responsibility the leader has especially as we have attracted more lonely, older members; many with disabilities including mobility issues, visual impairment and mental health problems. Socialisation of the older person being the ethos of the U3A I hoped the committee would agree and negotiate with federation.

One outing we had eight roller walkers, one wheelchair user, two ladies with crutches apart from those with walking sticks. We are an inclusive organisation and many members have only the monthly outing to look forward to.

It is the extra meals entrance to events which make the outing expensive but it is what the members want. It does take a lot of organising before and on the day but I feel it is worthwhile for the benefit of our growing older generation many of whom are lonely and need something to look forward to.

Eight years ago I did not expect to be a widow and develop mobility problems. It can happen to anyone no one is exempt from the aging process and the problems it

brings. The U3A was developed to improve the quality of life for the aging population. Formby have the potential to be a leader in this field if the federation could be more sympathetic in its interpretation of Charity Commission Rules. I have approached the Charity Commission who believe it is up to the U3A how it interprets their guidance. A replacement leader may be found but unless they are prepared to include meals etc sales will decline as local coach companies run day trips which do not include the extras and do not always cater for the less able.

Howard as a past chairperson of a number of charities agreed with the presentation pointed out that it is all about interpretation of rules and this could be addressed by the U3A.

June stated how much she has benefitted from the outings as they were so well organised.

Jen stated she would not feel as safe with a different leader and would not be going on future trips if Ann was not the leader.

The committee seemed to favour a change of leader who would not have a free place. The advantage to the committee is they would close the outings bank account and transfer the assets to them as they believe the money belong to the U3A. My thoughts are the money in the bank belongs to the people who paid to come on the outings and should be retained for their use only.

We have had eight good years and I regret this conflict which has arisen.

If something is not broken why change it. I am going to continue running the outings, reluctantly paying for the privilege, in order that I can protect the money for the members who use the service.

Ann Blackman.

### **Note From the Trustees.**

*Ann Blackman met the Trustees on 7 May. Following the meeting the Chairman wrote to her having again consulted the Third Age Trust. Our letter explained in detail why we considered that for the Outings Group to conform with U3A Principles she should pay her fare. We also recognised that organising Outings takes a great deal of work and that she had done an excellent job. Ann Blackman asked to put her case in the Newsletter if the Trustees were not able to support her position and this is printed above. We are pleased to see that she has decided to continue to lead the Outings Group as our understanding was that she would step down. We would ask that participants give her as much help as possible. We should clarify that we have explained to her that the Outings Group money is available to the Group to organise outings whoever is the leader. Only if the Outings Group should close will the money need to be transferred to central Formby U3A funds, where it could be ring fenced for a future Outings Group. We should also point out that members can bring a carer on the Outing but members should not "care" for each other as this was not covered by U3A insurance. Ann Blackman told us that despite mobility problems members could cope on their own.*

### **Welcome To May's New Members**

Jacquie Bolshaw  
Shirley Duignan  
Michael Heverin

Peter Cox  
Allan Robson  
Pauline Heverin

## Forthcoming Music & Theatre Events

### ***Author, Eileen Jones.***

These events are open to all paid up U3A members. Can I please remind you to book tickets as early as possible, to avoid both your disappointment and our financial loss on the event. We have to pay for the tickets some months in advance. It is extremely helpful if you pay for tickets when the initial booking is made. Please write the event name and your telephone number on the back of the cheque. If you cannot attend an event let us know as soon as possible and we will attempt to sell your ticket to someone on the waiting list.

### ***The coach usually leaves The Cross House bus stop at 6:15pm. Prices include ticket and transport.***

Any variation on these details will be specified with the event detail.

### **Thurs 6<sup>th</sup>. June, "The Comedy About a Bank Robbery."**

**Fri 14<sup>th</sup>. June, "Great Directors and Composers: Steven Spielberg and John Williams,"** Philharmonic Hall. £40.

**Thurs 19<sup>th</sup>. Sept., "Motown the Musical,"** Liverpool Empire. The musical extravaganza tells the fascinating story of the how the iconic sound was created. Over 50 classic hits e.g., 'I heard it on the Grapevine, Dancing in the Street and What's Going On;' from legendary artists including, Stevie Wonder, The Temptations, Marvin Gaye and many more will transport you back in time, along memory lane. £50.

**Thurs 28<sup>th</sup>. Nov., "The Nutcracker,"** Liverpool Empire. An English National Ballet classic, it is danced exquisitely to Tchaikovsky's magnificent score and tells the delightful story of how a young girl's enchanted present, a beautiful, wooden nutcracker doll comes to life and leads her on a wonderful Christmas adventure, defeating the evil Mouse King and eventually arriving in a magical kingdom. £40.

Dave Irving can be contacted, if necessary, on 630192.

## Formby U3A Committee

**2019-20**

Chairman	Frances Taylor (2017)*	577205	chairman@formbyu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Keith Jacques (2018)*	870906	secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk
Treasurer	Anne Rodmell (2019)*	621835	treasurer@formbyu3a.org.uk
Membership Sec.	Christine McIlraith (2018)*		membership@formbyu3a.org.uk
Group Secretary	Ann Knowles (2019)	872333	groups@formbyu3a.org.uk
Officers	Linda Smith (2019)		1stofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Lillian Coop (co-opted, 2019)		2ndofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Linda Sharratt (co-opted, 2019)		3rdofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk

*\* year appointed to the Committee*

## Monthly Meetings

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

**Parish Hall alternative access:** To avoid the front steps, an entrance at the rear of the building can be accessed by following the footpath to the left of the main doors.

**June 12<sup>th</sup> .Sing Me Mersey.** This is their 3<sup>rd</sup> visit and they have previously been lively & well received.

**July 10<sup>th</sup> . Behind the Scenes in Theatre & Television,** Fiona Martin

**August        *No monthly Meeting; No Coffee Morning***

**Please remember to bring your current YELLOW membership card to all events, including group activities.**

**Coffee Mornings are from 10:30 to 12:00 on Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>** 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.

**Discounts:** Formby U3A has negotiated discounts for members with local firms. A list is on the website or available from the Secretary.

**Contributions** informing members of your group and its activities are always welcomed.

Please send contributions to the Editor, e-mail: ***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.

**Previous Newsletters:** are available at: [www.formbyu3a.org.uk/newsletters.html](http://www.formbyu3a.org.uk/newsletters.html)

**The deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is midday Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> June at the latest.**

**The next Newsletter is due** to be distributed by e-mail and be on the website early next month. Paper copies can be collected at the monthly meeting & coffee morning.