

# Formby U3A Newsletter

**U3A**

Nov 2019 Issue No 277 Formby U3A, Reg. Charity No. 1161157

## Rivington



*Author, Frances Taylor.*

Members of Walking Group 5 went to Rivington in September. The weather was fine after a damp start and had some good views across Lancashire from the higher points. We started at Rivington Barn walking through the woods to the road across Rivington Reservoir then around the Anglezarke Reservoir and back via the Air Crash

Memorial, Lead Mines Clough and Yarrow reservoir. The picture shows the Group around the memorial which commemorates the crew of a Wellington Bomber which crashed in poor weather in November 1943. We also looked at some old lead mines workings in the Clough. The walk was about 8 miles and 1,100 feet of ascent. Tea, cakes and ice cream were enjoyed in the cafe after the walk. Many thanks to Joanne Surguy and George Fordyce for leading the walk.

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## Bickerton



**Author, Bill Farr.**

**Walking Group 6's** recent walk was led by Brian and much appreciated by all.

Having negotiated with the landlord at the Bickerton Poacher, it was possible to leave cars in the car park and enjoy refreshments there on our return. The walk went up Bickerton and Larkton Hills, around Hart Hill and up to the summit of Rawhead before returning to the Poacher. There was much debate with comparing different trackers to establish the actual distance and ascent and it was agreed that it was approximately 8 miles with 1,000 feet climbed.

## Southport



*LH6 Members at the commemoration to "Sutton's Folly"*

**Author, Dave Goodwill.**

During their walking tour of Southport, **Local History Group 6** not only learned something about the history of Southport, but also some of Southport's landmarks that designers had cut their teeth on, before going on to grander things elsewhere.

Wellington Terrace contains probably the oldest surviving buildings in Southport.

They were originally built in 1818 as fisherman's cottages when they were situated in a wilderness of Sandhills. The cottages were re-fronted in the Regency style in 1881, by which time Southport had already become the North's premier resort. A nearby inscription commemorates a house built in 1792. This was a bathing house, built on the beach, near the village of North Meols. A later house created for the same owner, was for many years called a Folly. This was a hotel, the South Port Hotel, from which the town derives its name and dates. A settlement quickly grew up by the hotel with Southport becoming a fashionable watering place, growing as staying by the sea and bathing in seawater became a pastime for the rich and famous.

Lord Street, first called Lords' Street after the founding families, became a spacious street when the joint Lords of the Manor began the policy of granting building leases which stipulated that development should not be of an industrial, or offensive nature. This policy, continued by the town's leading citizens, was a deliberate attempt to develop the town as a seaside resort for the 'refined' and 'well to do'.

Southport's growth owes much to the development of the railways and the town centre was at one point served by at least 5 railway stations. The current Ribble Building is the remains of Lord St station. Lord St Railway station opened in 1884 as the terminus station of the Southport and Cheshire Lines Extension Railway which ran along what is today known as the "Cheshire Loop." Circling back to Liverpool Central, High Level, it was no competition to Lancashire & Yorkshire's more direct coastal route. Consequently, the line only proved popular during the summer months and in 1941 when the competing L&Y line was severed by German bombing in the May Liverpool Blitz.



After the Winter Garden Opera House was burned down in 1929, the site was cleared and plans for a new theatre, The Garrick, which opened in December 1932, were prepared. The massive building, a designated a Grade II listed structure, is in the Art Deco style and seated 1,600 (later reduced to 1,500). It was advertised as the most beautiful in Europe. The stage was

particularly large to accommodate touring drama, musicals opera and ballet and a pantomime was produced at Christmas. Front of house provided the Garrick Lounge for the use of all patrons and the exclusive Garrick Club, a special room close to the "Star" dressing rooms on the Lord Street front where specially invited guests could meet the principal performers after the show. Live shows ended in 1957 with the pantomime "Robin Hood on Ice," when the follow-spot box was converted into a projection booth. The building was not a great success as a Cinema as several large super cinemas were already well established along Lord Street. Bingo was introduced in 1963 but the building was closed in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2021 Mecca announced that the closure would be permanent, as their lease was about to expire.

The Atkinson was designed by a Manchester partnership which had previously only designed relatively small buildings around Bury. Cambridge Hall, as the Atkinson was originally called, was their first major commission and led to the firm being appointed as architects to Southport Winter Gardens, the first such building for the seaside leisure market. The firm's subsequent most notable commission was for Blackpool Tower, which then prompted New Brighton Tower and Recreation Company to commission the company to design New Brighton Tower which at the time it opened was the tallest building in Britain. The Atkinson's has a "coach gateway" through which a horse and carriage could originally pass, providing arriving and departing patrons with protection from the elements. The gateway provided the group with good shelter from the rain. The Municipal Gardens were originally privately owned and were taken over by the Improvement Commissioners, a body of men formed and given powers to pave, clean, and light the streets. Perhaps the best feature of the Gardens was the bandstand with its paired columns and domed roof but this was demolished in 1969. The current bandstand was provided by the local branch of Marks and Spencer's to celebrate the company's centenary.

Wayfarers Arcade, originally known as Leyland Arcade in honour of Southport's Liberal MP, was the forerunner of the shopping mall. Many original features can still be seen. The balconies were intended to be Southport's answer to the 'rows' at Chester, creating a pleasant and fashionable promenade on which to view the shops and the shoppers! The original idea was for an arcade to link Lord St with the Promenade, not just West St, but the developer made enemies and the farmer who owned the much needed adjoining West Street land refused to sell his valued plot. The developer, who owned the vast majority of Lord Street's shops, did not want to lose rent from any of them by decreasing their size and the arcade consequently only has a narrow entrance.

Some members later enjoyed lunch at a nearby venue.



## Sefton Park Palm House

**Author, Geoff Jones.**

Trade and commerce with North America during the nineteenth century left a legacy that made Liverpool rich in local history. The Palm House, visited by **Local History 14**, is a fine example of that legacy.

Our visit started with a steady walk so that through the trees we could see 70 feet high pinnacle emerging. The autumn colours of the treescape of the park was a work of art in itself but before reaching the palm house we passed the magnificent fountain which is a sister of the better known fountain in Piccadilly Circus in London. The winged Greek god standing on one leg with his bow and arrow draw in readiness is



not Eros the God of Love but his brother Anteros the God of Requited Love.

After being purchased by the Liverpool Corporation, Sefton Park was officially opened in 1872. The Palm House was completed a little later in 1896 and was a gift from the Liverpudlian, Henry Yates Thompson at a cost of £12,000 (equivalent to £1,600,000 today). After dilapidation in 1970s, a renovation took place and in 2000 it is back to its former glory.

We were guided around the botanical collection which consisted of specimens from five different continents with reference to the original 1895 planting scheme. Each plant, of which there are over 1,400, had its own story to tell and could be edible, useful or toxic. For the botanists the Citrus Paradisi was spotted by a keen member of our group, but for the rest of us it was the grapefruit. We learned that early Australian settlers used the

Livistona Australis, also known as the unflattering Cabbage Tree Palm, to make hats to protect themselves from the sun whilst the Angel's Trumpet, or Brugmansia, is a magnificent large trumpet shaped flower but is extremely toxic.

We ended the morning with tea and coffee under exotic palms, bouganvillia dripping with colour and dazzling hibiscus. The treescape in its autumn colour was picture perfect and the autumn day was warm and sunny as we eventually headed towards St Michael's Station for the train to Formby and all hoping for a leisurely lunch.

## Groups News

**Author, Pam Ashton, Groups Secretary.**

First – good news! Around 30 people have signed up for line dancing. I am now looking for daytime availability in large halls. I also need an “expert” so please ask anyone you know who has previously taught it. Also please call in to the coffee

morning on 11<sup>th</sup> November if you are interested. Also good news is the fact that many groups are up and running again. My impression is that members are very pleased to be seeing their friends again.

We also have some vacancies in some lovely groups. Linda Sharratt tells me that Poetry for Fun is a very relaxed exploration of the world of poetry and the existing members would love a few more people to come along.

Mary Higgins has taken the reins for Ambling Group 1. Quite a few members wish to carry on with this group but they particularly need new members who feel able to drive and give lifts to the start of ambles. Please contact Mary if you are interested.

Local History groups have now accommodated all members who have asked to join them and that means that they are all full. However if this is not the case please let me know. We can at least ensure that the groups have waiting lists.

Unfortunately our member offering metal detecting has found that the difficulties, both legal and practical are overwhelming so I am afraid that we are not able to offer that group.

Current vacancies; Art and painting; Bird watching; Book clubs 3 & 4; Boules & bowls; Bridge 1 (beginners), 10, 15, 4, & 8; Canasta 4 & 5; Cycling & Cycling for softies; Fell walking; Floral art; French improvers 1; Gardening1; Guitar; Literature 2; Lunch group 2 Sundays; Mahjong; Music App1; Poetry for Fun; Opera 1; Recorder (if able to play and read music); Science group; Scottish dancing; Singing for pleasure; Sew & chat; Songs of the sixties; Swimming; Ukelele; Walking groups 2 & 6; Watercolour painting 2.

## **U3A Diaries 2022**

***Author, Evan Bale, Secretary.***

A limited number of U3A diaries will be available to purchase at our October and November coffee mornings and speaker events. These are £3.90 each. If you wish, you can reserve one of these by emailing: [secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk) (please indicate when you would like to collect your diary in your email).

## **Membership Subscription: Payment method**

Formby U3A now has to pay bank charges of 40p on each cheque we receive. If you do not already do so we would be grateful if you could arrange to pay your membership fees for 2022 by Standing Order.

Please contact the Membership Secretary [membership@formbyu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@formbyu3a.org.uk) for a standing order mandate to be sent by e-mail or collect a form at either the Speaker's Meetings or Coffee Morning in November or December.

## New Members

Formby U3A is pleased to welcome the following new members.

Clinton Cheang

Stuart Coldwell

Joan Croasdell

## Formby U3A Committee 2021-22

Chairman	Frances Taylor (2017)	577205	chairman@formbyu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Evan Bale (2020)		secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk
Treasurer	Anne Rodmell (2019)	621835	treasurer@formbyu3a.org.uk
Membership Sec.	Christine McIlraith (2018)	874787	membership@formbyu3a.org.uk
Group Secretary	Pam Ashton (2020)		groups@formbyu3a.org.uk
Officers	Christine Kennedy (2020)	577774	1stofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Nikki Harrison (2021)	871308	2ndofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Jane Bienias (2020)		3rdofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Martyn Rodmell (2021)	621835	4thofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Sheila Wise (2020)		5thofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
Accessibility Officer	Ann Knowles (2019)	872333	6thofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk

\* year appointed to the Committee

## Newsletter Contributions

Articles 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: [http://www.formbyu3a.org.uk/?page\\_id=331](http://www.formbyu3a.org.uk/?page_id=331)

**The deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is midday Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> November at the latest.**

## Speaker Meetings

**Christine Kennedy, Speaker Organiser.**

The speaker meetings will be held in The **Holy Trinity Parish Hall** from **2.00pm** on the second Wednesday of the month.

**Step-free alternative access:** There is a ramp at the hall entrance for easier access.

**Car Parking:** Please be aware of the new parking system at Holy Trinity. You need to **enter your car registration number on the electronic pad in the foyer each time you park**. There is no charge, but if you fail to comply you will almost certainly receive a heavy fine. If you are not sure what to do there will be someone on hand to help. We look forward to welcoming everyone back.

**November 10<sup>th</sup>:** "The True History behind Viking Voices" is the title for this presentation by historical author, **Paul Atherton**. Paul has a special interest in the Cuerdale Hoard, the greatest Viking silver treasure trove ever found outside Russia. Over 8000 items were in the hoard of silver coins and bullion when discovered in 1840 by workmen repairing the banks of the River Ribble.

**December 8<sup>th</sup>:** Wendy Williamson will entertain us with her **Sing me Merseyside** show.

Please remember to bring your current **ORANGE** membership card to all events, including monthly talks and group activities.

**Coffee Mornings:** are from **10:30 to 12:00 on Thursday, November 11<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.

## Committee 2022/3

**Author, Frances Taylor, Chairman.**

Please think seriously about joining the Committee next year. Frances Taylor, the Chairman, comes to the end of her 3 year term of office. We do not have a Vice-Chairman and other Committee members will also be at the end of their terms of office. Without a strong Committee, Formby U3A cannot go forward effectively. Please get in touch with the Chairman [chairman@formbyu3a.org.uk](mailto:chairman@formbyu3a.org.uk) or 'phone 577205 to find out more.

## **Your Newsletter Needs Your Group's News**

*The best way to tell other U3A members about your group and any potential vacancies is by a Newsletter article & photo!*

**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.