

# Formby U3A Newsletter

April 2022 Formby U3A, Reg. Charity No. 1161157

Issue No 280

## 'Cause I'm going to Strawberry Fields



Author, *Elizabeth Goodwill.*

Let me take you down  
'Cause I'm going to Strawberry Fields  
Nothing is real  
And nothing to get hung about  
Strawberry Fields forever.

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The original Strawberry Field, without an "s," is unlike its counterpart in Central Park, New York. The latter is close to Dakota Building where John Lennon lived, but the former proved a popular **Local History Group 6** outing. How we wished we could have visited Strawberry Fields! The original Victorian merchant's house and grounds were gifted to The Salvation Army in 1934, opening 2 years later as a children's home for girls, later accepting boys. It gave a safe, calm and spiritual home to some of Liverpool's most vulnerable children. The young John Lennon used to jump over the

*Your Committee would like to wish Eid Mubarak! May this special day bring peace, happiness and prosperity to everyone.*

fence from his Aunt Mimi's garden to play in the grounds and talk with the children who were staying there. Coming from a similar background, it is conjecture whether he could relate to the children who resided in the home.

Today it is an interactive visitor exhibition, café and shop, with calm garden spaces, aiming to help young adults with learning difficulties and other barriers into employment.

The gardens have are being developed as a space for spiritual reflection and it is hoped that a band stand, currently under construction, will provide a focal point for entertainment. Before opening, partly as a tourist attraction to compliment The Cavern Club, Penny Lane, and The Beatles Story, Strawberry Field researched the potential and realised that thousands of visitors were already coming to stare through the iconic replica gates on Beaconsfield Road. Several groups and tour buses did exactly that whilst LH6 were there, most, not realising that the original gates are well inside the ground under constant video monitoring!

After a guided tour of the garden, the group were served a welcome and filling, warming meal of soup, sandwiches and hot drinks before being let loose on the exhibition centre. The visitor centre uses personal media guides to display fascinating archival footage, photographs and timelines. There are interviews with Salvation Army personnel, residents, Lennon's family and musicians which give an absorbing history which members could explore at their own pace. Lennon's world-famous walnut-finished upright Steinway model Z piano, which he used to compose and record "Imagine" on, is displayed on loan to the exhibition, courtesy of the estate of the late George Michael, the singer paying £1.45 million for the instrument.

We highly commend both the staff and the venue. It is a place that has the potential to appeal to so many u3a groups, Local History, Gardening, Songs of the 60s, Skiffle and Singing, as well as a destination for Cycling groups.



*A cleverly mounted glass shows the original house*



## The History Whisperer

**Author, Jeanette Smith.**

When young Livie came over from Ireland with her family to escape poverty she had no idea that her father would end up in the courts at Liverpool's St George's Hall and be transported to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania).

Her family's fate is a sad one that members of **Local History Group 6** learnt about when they recently went to the Hall to engage with the History Whisperer tour.

The tale is told through an interactive experience, with guides, film, projected images and haunting recorded testimony that takes visitors to a time when this extraordinary

building was the meeting point of both opulence and destitution. Just like this city, the History Whisperer – Livie - is full of heart, humour, emotion and dreams. The group joined her, as she led them through the sights and sounds of prison life, in an immersive journey through Liverpool's social history.

St George's which opened in 1854, is a neoclassical building containing concert halls and law courts, and is recorded in the National Heritage List for England as a designated Grade I listed building. It is one of the finest examples of neoclassical architecture in the world.

This magnificent structure stands at 169ft long and 74ft wide with a tunnel vaulted ceiling – the largest of its kind in the whole of Europe. The interior architecture is a reflection of Victorian ostentatious display with a ceiling supported on massive red granite



*LH6 members meet the virtual Livie*

columns and figures portraying art, science, fortitude and justice. The Great Hall also houses a breath-taking Minton tiled floor of over 30,000 mosaic tiles, which is uncovered from time to time. But beneath the spellbinding grandeur of the Hall lies the doldrums of the prison cells and law courts, where many a Victorian prisoner, like Livie's father, awaited their fate.

The group was taken down to these cells to learn all about the conditions in which the prisoners waited until called up to court. An interactive timeline-history of the Hall is projected along the corridor, with fascinating glimpses of times past.

Eventually the group mounted the stairs up to court to listen to the judge hand down the devastating sentence on poor Livie's father, whose only 'crime' had been to steal a fancy pen from a rich man. His son, Jack was also sought after by the law but with Livie's pleading to 'run Jack run' he left and escaped the same fate as his father.

The tour finished with a bird's eye view of the great hall from the balcony, a hall that had been built for dancing, lectures and all manner of events through the years. Even Charles Dickens had been a speaker –and had complained of the acoustics. But for LH 6 it was a peep behind the scenes that brought to life the history of both rich and poor of Victorian Liverpool.

## New Group

**Author, Christine Kennedy.**

Formby u3a now has an **Art Appreciation Group**. Some new members expressed an interest, so Christine Kennedy responded by arranging an initial meeting at the Atkinson Gallery in Southport. We shall meet on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April at the Atkinson, Southport where the work of local artists can be viewed at "The Sefton Open 2022

Exhibition." Most of the work will be on sale so you might be able to pick up a future heirloom for yourself. You can also vote for your favourite artwork on display. The work with the most votes will be awarded "The People's Prize." We can compare notes afterwards over a cup of tea in the Atkinson coffee bar. If you enjoy looking at art please come along. Book your place by emailing Christine Kennedy, as below.

The plan is to visit some of the excellent permanent and visiting collections of art in the area. Public transport is available for many locations and gives "free" railcard" access to Southport, Liverpool and across the Mersey. If anyone is interested in joining the group please contact Christine via e-mail to [christinecrkemail@gmail.com](mailto:christinecrkemail@gmail.com)

## Halsall Church

*Author, Nic Dickson.*



**Cycling Group C** enjoy combining their riding with visits to places of interest. A few weeks ago the wind conditions were favourable for a ride across the moss to Halsall. We visited St Cuthbert's Church, which dates from the 14th Century and is a Grade 1 listed building. Of particular interest is the 14<sup>th</sup> Century font, which used to be inside the church and is



shown in the picture. The other picture shows the group in the church grounds following our al fresco coffee break. The group were joined that day by two cyclists from New Zealand, Martin, in the light blue coat, and his wife Kate, originally from Formby, who took the picture.

## Group News

*Author, Gill Brady.*

I have taken over as Groups Secretary and can be contacted by emailing: [groups@formbyu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@formbyu3a.org.uk) or by telephone on 643745.

Please check the website to find out more about the activities that are available for you to take up. Sometimes a group may be full in which case it is an easy solution to form another group and we will be happy help to get things started and support anyone who would like to take on the role of Group Leader.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for a new group please get in touch.

Recently formed groups with some vacancies are:

- Line Dancing
- Local History

## Sewing / Craft

We have an experienced fisherman who has volunteered to start a small group of 10 people for fly fishing trips and get together. It will be suited to both learners and the experienced so please get in touch at [groups@formbyu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@formbyu3a.org.uk) if this is the group for you.

## National U3A News

### ***Author, Evan Bale.***

The U3a central office has notified us of the launch of their new spring learning programme that includes a range of opportunities for members to learn something new. Full details are available on the u3a news pages, [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)

The new programme includes the u3a Book Group Forum, Logic Puzzles for Fun, Extreme Crochet and Crafts, which will focus on a new craft skill each month, starting with kirigami (Origami with scissors!).

All the new initiatives and ongoing favourites are available on the learning pages on the u3a website, [u3a.org.uk](http://u3a.org.uk)

## Southport U3A Invites

“2001: A Space Odyssey” was released in the UK in 1968. The film, an interpretation of Arthur C Clarke’s novel about exploration of the universe and the origins of man, made a great impact on the screen. The movie took 3 years to make and used, what were for the time, state-of-the-art camera work and production techniques. It is difficult to realise that “2001” was made without computers and CGI in particular.

It is a movie which must be seen on a cinema screen and with optimum sound equipment.

Southport U3A is promoting a special showing of the movie at the Bijou Cinema in Post Office Avenue, Southport on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 2:15pm. The movie takes 2.5 hours. Post Office Avenue runs from Lord Street through to Anchor Street and is just up from Sainsburys. This luxurious 75-seat venue has particularly comfortable seating and a bar which permits drinks and snacks to be taken into the auditorium. The film will be preceded by a short introduction of the movie.

There is a suggestion that those interested might like to take an early dinner afterwards and details will follow later to those interested. Southport U3A need 20 people at £7.59 a head to cover costs. If they get a larger group the price will reduce and if the venue is filled, the cost would be £2 a head!

Members of Formby U3A are welcome to join the event. If interested contact Paul Carter on 07958 598326 or via [meetandeatsouthportU3a@gmail.com](mailto:meetandeatsouthportU3a@gmail.com)

# **Formby U3A Draft Minutes Of The 2022 AGM**

**Held On Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

***Author, Nikki Harrison.***

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the committee.

There being over 55 people in the meeting we met the quorum requirements for the AGM to take place. The chairman explained that the formal aspects of the AGM would take place first, then the talk by Dr Ampat, followed by an opportunity for informal discussion.

**Apologies for absence:** Noel & Viv Blundell, Ann Bailey, Sheila McGuiness, Mary Bale, Marilyn Siddons-Smith, Gillian Johnson, Pauline Price, Rodney James, Jean Huxley, Denise Nairn, Pete Andrews, David Bradley, Steve Whitefield, Barbara & Robert Gibbons

**Approval of Minutes of the 2021 AGM:** Draft minutes have been published in the April 2021 Newsletter and on the website. Approval of the minutes was proposed by Sue Parks and seconded by Judy Pike, to be signed by the chairman Frances Taylor. There were over 55 members in attendance and there were no objections or abstentions.

**Matters arising from the 2021 AGM minutes:** None

**To receive and approve the Annual Report:** The Chairman explained that the Annual Report was a formal document designed to be submitted to the Charities Commission, although this year it was not needed as the turnover was not sufficient. The report has been on the Formby U3A website for a while and the link to this was advertised with the notice of the AGM.

The Chairman talked through some of the points she wished to highlight and bring right up to date.

114 new members joined during last year. Currently there are 1,055 members.

It was another difficult year for Formby u3a. Things were kept going by arranging meetings for all members and for Groups via Zoom. However since September, apart from January, it has been possible to hold face to face meetings.

Members have been kept informed by sending regular emails. As a number of members are not on the internet other members and Group Leaders were asked to keep in touch.

The Open Day in October attracted a number of new members. Thanks were expressed to everyone who helped to make it a success.

As new members often find it difficult to join Groups, it is very important that everyone is made welcome. The Committee is looking at this, but would ask all members to think about how they can welcome new members and perhaps help start up new Groups. u3a is all about self-help and everyone contributing as much as they can, so all members were asked to please think what they could do to contribute.

A New Members meeting was held last year, and the recent one in February was very well attended by 50 new members.

There were 88 Groups at the end of the year as a number closed during the year. A couple of Group Leaders meetings were held during the year.

As the website is kept updated, this will be the best source of up to date information on Groups and other matters.

Then Chairman took the opportunity to thank some departing colleagues. Chris McIlraith is standing down as membership secretary, where she did a great job, especially sending out emails to keep everyone informed. Jane Bienias, Christine Kennedy and Ann Knowles are standing down from the Committee and many thanks to them for their contributions. Thanks were also give to Pam Ashton and Sheila Wise, who resigned during the year, for their contributions. Anne Rodmell, Evan Bale, and Nikki Harrison are staying on the Committee and are standing for re-election. Martyn Rodmell was co-opted on and is standing for election. Thanks were given for their continued contribution.

The committee are delighted that 3 new members have volunteered to join the Committee, as new ideas are needed.

Certain other members support us with their particular expertise. Noel Blundell our webmaster and latterly Database Manager, Dave Goodwill, News Editor and Tony Bonney, the Database Manager for part of the year, so a big thank you to them. Last but not least thanks were expressed to Group Leaders, the people who provide tea and coffee at monthly meetings and all of you who contribute to the successful running of Formby u3a.

No one has come forward to take the post of Chair, and there is a current vacancy for Vice Chair. As Christine Kennedy organized Speakers, there is a need for someone to take that over that role. Members were asked to think if they could help.

The members were asked if any had questions, and, as none were forthcoming, agreeing the annual report was put to the meeting. Acceptance was proposed by Martyn Rodmell, seconded by David Manning-Fox, and was approved without abstentions or objections.

### **To receive and approve the Treasurer's Report and Independently Reviewed Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021:**

Copies of the 2021 accounts, which had been reviewed and approved by the independent examiner Mr Kit Robinson, had been posted on the website in advance of the meeting, as highlighted in the notice of the meeting sent to members.

The Treasurer ran through 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 £1,689.00, with accumulated reserves of £17,334.00.

A question from the floor on the total surplus led to an explanation of how the rules for charities control how this can be spent.

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Dave Manning-Fox , seconded by Patrick Parkes and approved by the members present, 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. This was agreed with no objections or abstentions.

**Changes of Constitution:** The secretary explained the resolutions for changes in the Formby u3a constitution fall into two groups. The first group, Resolutions 22/1 to 22/3, were to bring the constitution into line with the changes made to the Third Age Trust constitution, to allow Online and Hybrid general meetings, and electronic voting, necessitated by Covid restrictions. Resolution 22/4 required to cover the situation where charity trustees had to appoint a person willing to act as a charity trustee only until appointed at the next A.G.M. Proposed Evan Bale, Seconded Anne Rodmell.

2<sup>nd</sup> Group. He then explained that there were insufficient volunteers to serve on the committee as charity trustees to comply with the existing constitution. Resolutions 22/5 to 22/6 to reduce the minimum number of trustees from 7 to 5, and named officers to 3 – chair, treasurer secretary - were needed to prevent Formby u3a closing down.

For the same reason 22/7 was proposed to allow non-officer committee members to remain on the committee as trustees for up to 9 years.

Proposed Evan Bale, Seconder Anne Rodmell. Vote - one objector. Carried.

**Election of Trustees:** The following nominations, already proposed and seconded, had been received:-

Chairman	
Secretary	Evan Bale
Treasurer	Anne Rodmell

<b>Committee Members</b>	Nikki Harrison, Martyn Rodmell, Gill Brady, Helen Beaver, Andy Dickinson
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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.*

## **If You've Still To Pay Your 2022 Membership**

### **It's Lapsed!**

(£9 per member)

Thank you to everyone who has already renewed their membership of Formby u3a for 2022. Annual subscriptions were due on 2<sup>nd</sup> January. In order to ensure that the insurance cover provided by our affiliation to the Third Age Trust is not compromised, all membership subscriptions should have been paid by 28<sup>th</sup> February at the latest.

**If you have not renewed your membership, it has now lapsed and YOU SHOULD NOT BE ATTENDING Formby U3A monthly meetings, nor group events.**

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 or by Online Bank Transfer.

#### **How to renew your membership:**

**Standing Orders:** Thank you to those members who have already set up a Standing Order for their membership fees. If you wish to set up a new Standing Order, please request details from the Membership Secretary by e-mailing: [membership@formbyu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@formbyu3a.org.uk) or phoning 674105.

**Online Bank Transfer:** The reference or description field of the payment **MUST contain your membership number followed by your surname and initial**. If you do not know your membership number you should contact the Membership Secretary (as above). Payment should be made to the following Formby U3A bank account:-

Account name: Formby U3A

Sort code: 40 21 20

Account number: 41365878

We ask that all other renewals should be by cheque.

**Payment by Cheque:** If paying by cheque (£9 per member) please make your cheque payable to Formby U3A and write your membership number on the back. (If you do not know your membership number, please write your name and address instead).

**The membership secretary will be available at the April Speakers meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April at the Holy Trinity Parish Hall, if you have any questions about your members or renewal.**

## Newsletter Contributions

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

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** that show members involved in group activities are always appreciated. 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.*

**Previous Newsletters:** can be found by following the link on the Formby U3A website, [formbyu3a.org.uk](http://formbyu3a.org.uk) Newsletter tab, or by typing [www.formbyu3a.org.uk/?page\\_id=331](http://www.formbyu3a.org.uk/?page_id=331) into you web browser.

**Owing to the shortage of reports from groups, there will not be a May Newsletter.**

**The deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is midday Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> May at the latest.**

**The next Newsletter is due** to be published and will be available on the website in early **June**. Paper copies can be collected at the monthly meeting.

## You're Far Too Smart To Fall For It

We all pride ourselves that we are too clever to fall for a scam, but the National Crime Agency estimates that more than £2.3 billion is lost to scams every year. That's 4,600,000 people who think they are as smart as you and too smart to be scammed. Everyone is wise..... until they fall for it, no matter how smart they are!

If:

- you receive an unexpected telephone call,
- you receive an unexpected e-mail,

then be suspicious.

Even if it's someone claiming to be from your bank, or from the police; be suspicious! Don't be tempted to move money into an account someone tells you is safe. Go to

the bank and check what you're being told. Alternately make a 'phone call to a friend and chat it though with them. A call to someone else will make sure your telephone line is clear before you call your bank to check what you're being told.

Never give out your personal information by e-mail, or telephone, unless you are 100% certain you are dealing with people you trust. Even if the caller claims to know some information about you, THINK – how did they know that? Did the caller find that out through Social Media you've posted? Many pieces of information about you are publically available to tricksters.

- Reject offers that come out of the blue. If it's too good to be true, then it is too good to be true.
- Beware of online adverts, even from those that look like a retailer you trust.
- Do not click on links in e-mails, especially from senders you do not know. Even if it's a message from someone, or a company you know, be cautious. Did your friend really go on holiday to Malaga and is so, would they e-mail you to say they'd been robbed and needed you to send money? You could telephone them to check. Just because the wording in a link states "CompanyIKnow.co.uk" it can hide an address in another country and to a very different company. You could manually type the suggested link to check it.

## New Members

**Formby U3A is pleased to welcome the following new members.**

Peter Andrews	Alison Baker	Eric Baker
Denise Brookfield	Eileen Cooper	Michael Cooper
Ann Cunningham	Cynthia Fayter	Mary Foster
Barbara Jones	Howard Moore	Sue Prince
Colette Quinlan	Eugene Rybinski	Michael Sloane
Eileen Stopforth	Alan Sullivan	Carol Sullivan
David Tipton	Andrea Tolman	Mary Watts

## Formby U3A Committee 2022-23

Chairman	Vacancy		chair@formbyu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Evan Bale (2020)		secretary@formbyu3a.org.uk
Treasurer	Anne Rodmell (2019)	621835	treasurer@formbyu3a.org.uk
Membership Sec.	Andy Dickinson (2022)	643971	membership@formbyu3a.org.uk
Group Secretary	Gill Brady (2022)	643745	groups@formbyu3a.org.uk
Officers	Helen Beaver (2022)		1stofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Nikki Harrison (2021)	871308	2ndofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk
	Martyn Rodmell (2021)	621835	4thofficer@formbyu3a.org.uk

## Speaker Meetings

**Christine Kennedy, Speaker Organiser.**

Speaker meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month in **The Holy Trinity Parish Hall, Formby**. The meetings start at 2.00pm and last about an hour.

**Access:** There is ramp access to the hall.

**Parking:** Please remember to enter your vehicle registration number on the electronic pad in the hall foyer each time you park. There is no charge for parking but failure to enter your number will almost certainly result in a heavy fine. If you are unsure what to do please ask for help.

**April 13<sup>th</sup>:** David Hearn, **Liverpool Links with America**. A presentation looking at the various links between Liverpool and America, some that most people will know and others that may surprise you.

**May 11<sup>th</sup>:** Chris Tynan, **The birds that visit your garden**. Chris is the leader of the RSPB Liverpool group. The RSPB is the UK's largest nature conservation charity. They work to protect threatened birds and wildlife.

**June 8<sup>th</sup>:** Ken Pye, Topic to be confirmed.

**July 13<sup>th</sup>:** Sue Prince, **Animals Asia Foundation**. Sue will give an illustrated talk about the work of the Animals Asia Foundation's work to rescue Asiatic black bears which are farmed for use in Chinese medicine and also to address the dog and cat meat industry in China.

**August 10<sup>th</sup>:** No meeting

**September 14<sup>th</sup>:** Martin Lloyd, **Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies**

**Remember to bring your current membership card to all u3a activities. The 2022 card is BLUE.**

## Important Information

### Coffee Mornings

**It is not possible to hold a coffee morning in April.**

Please check the Formby U3A website for details of future coffee mornings.