

THE MEOLS MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Meols (Southport)



www.meols-u3a.org.uk

Issue 14 – June 2011

FROM YOUR EDITOR

As many of you have found out during my spell as Editor, I am “quite” keen on using the Internet to improve and speed up communications between members! In particular the use of e-mailed articles for the Messenger would be of great help to me as I can transfer these directly into my computer and edit them as I go. However, please believe me when I say I recognize how difficult this can be for some, or most, of our members who are not computer literate, or don't want to be, or can't keep up with the expense and bother of the ever changing “improvements” and up-grades of the various systems.

I will always accept hand written or preferably typed submissions for the Messenger. Meanwhile the following poem which was e-mailed to my wife from our granddaughter, might raise a giggle or two.....

Where, oh where has Grandma gone?

THE COMPUTER SWALLOWED GRANDMA

The computer swallowed grandma.
Yes, honestly its true!
She pressed 'control' and 'enter'
And disappeared from view.

It devoured her completely,
The thought just makes me squirm.
She must have caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm.

I've searched through the recycle bin
And files of every kind;
I've even used the Internet,
But nothing did I find.

In desperation, I asked Google
My searches to refine.
The reply from him was negative,
Not a thing was found 'online.'

So, if inside your 'In-box,'
My Grandma you should see,
Please 'Copy, "Scan' and 'Paste' her
And send her back to me.

This is a tribute to all the Grandmas who have been fearless and learned to use the Computer..... They are the greatest!!!

FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN – A Visit to Myerscough college.

It was a bright sunny day when we arrived at the college to partake in the NW Region of the U3As Spring Residential School. The journey from Southport had been trouble free and we arrived in good time to register. The grounds of Myerscough Agricultural College are lovely in springtime covered with wild garlic and bluebells under mature trees. There was a variety of courses to choose from and I had chosen "Looking at Paintings" which included, as well as a study of art in general, a visit to Manchester Art Gallery. Our group consisted of twelve "students" from U3As all over the North West. Our teacher had previously taught at 25 summer schools so was well qualified. To begin with we each brought along a painting and said why we liked it. None were the same and it was interesting to see the variety of tastes ranging from a picture of Liverpool by a local artist to a painting by Ford Maddox Brown - one of the Pre-Raphaelites. In fact we had to study one of his paintings called "Work" which was most interesting as the painting was a pictorial image of various characters from Victorian times. The next day was a trip to Manchester Art Gallery to look at the original. The Gallery is divided into two parts - a traditional building and a new structure, an unusual combination. Apart from the course we had evening entertainment in the form of a pub quiz, a canal walk and one evening a talk by a cellist from the Halle Orchestra. During the lunch and dinner breaks was a good opportunity to talk to other people from the various U3As. Our meals were in the canteen with a wide variety of food. Of course, the student accommodation was spartan but clean with our own bathroom. Each floor had a kitchen so that we could make a drink if we wished. After a few days it was time to go home after a stimulating and enjoyable spring break.

GROUP CONTACTS

MUSIC APPRECIATION – Steve 536830	Continues to meet 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month.
THEATRE – Pam 549841	The Theatre Group starts again in September. Please advise Pam if you wish to join them as she has to make the bookings in August. In the Autumn we are hoping to organise visits to the Playhouse Theatre in Liverpool. They will take place for each production on a Thursday afternoon. If you are interested, please contact Eleanor Bowden 01704 231966 so that we can organise a group visit.
CREATIVE NEEDLEWORK Eleanor - 231966	The next meetings will be on 23rd June and 27th July. Sandra Kedzlie would like to thank all members of this group who have knitted a total of 14 blankets to date, for the Linus Charity Project, who make quilts and blankets for traumatised children.

LUNCH CLUB
Eunice – 213419

For your diary, every other Wednesday 29th June until 24th August 2011 at 12pm;

- 29th June The Crown, Liverpool Road, Birkdale
13th July Reuters, 26 Hoghton Street, Southport
10th August Prince of Wales, Lord Street, Southport
24th August Salvatore (formerly The Curzon) 519 Lord Street

WALKING GROUP
Nat – 224805

The recent 'Owd Nells' walk started at Barton Grange garden centre just off the A6 Preston to Lancaster road and took the group out to Longridge Fell, but with the rain and poor visibility, it just wasn't the usual glorious countryside.

Heading on, the walkers arrived at the Lancaster canal and the thatched hamlet known as Old Nells, which is now a thriving boating and entertainment complex, which boasts a cricket and bowls area, plus dining and accommodation facilities.

After a lunch break the group of 13 headed along the canal towpath. There were plenty of water fowl with their young but the elusive Kingfisher has yet to be sighted. Arriving back at Barton Grange, which is an excellent garden centre and well worth a visit, the group had tea, coffees etc., and then after a look at a wonderful array of goods, headed for the bus.

Finally I am sure all the members will wish Jack Ramsden, who has returned to his home town Bolton, all the best for the future.

Forthcoming Walks -

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| June 20. | Clitheroe. | Early Bus 2X. | Leader, Fiona. |
| 27. | Scarisbrick to Burscough. | Eastbank St 10.00 am for Bus. | Anne |
| July 4. | Freshfield/Formby. | Southport Station 9.50 am. | Owen. |
| 11. | Appley Bridge/Parbold. | Southport Station 9.50 am. | Nat/Walter. |
| 18. | Hoylake To Seacombe. | Southport Station 9.50 am. | Val. |
| 25. | Burscough/Latham Chapel. | Cars Meet Churchill Ave 10.00am. | Pat. |

Alternative arrangements will be made if cars are unavailable

GARDENING CLUB
Sylvia - 224099

The visit to Robinsons Seeds on April 14th started with a warm and friendly welcome from Margaret Robinson who gave us an interesting guided tour of the greenhouses and information on the family business, where they have been growing ornamental vegetables for top garden designers for the past 70 years. The "fruits" of their labours can be seen at the Chelsea Flower Show and in celebrity's gardens. Afterwards afternoon tea was enjoyed at the nearby Holly Inn.

Two for one was the order of the day on April 21st when 2 very different gardens were visited. First stop was a garden in Marshside, where Auricula's took centre stage. A super show of these delicate, but tough Primulas were present in a wide range of colours and varieties. Roses will follow later, a fern collection and vegetables in a very well-tended garden.

Thence to the Banks garden of Mike and Sandra Kedzlie, where Tulips from their trip to Amsterdam were in full bloom in a superb range of colours. Heucheras and Hostas were also looking good. As a bonus the air was filled with the fragrance of Daphne Bramhope. Thank you both for a double delight!

Earlier in the year the gardeners visited Bank Hall to view the snowdrops. Sadly on what was an otherwise pleasant day the sun decided not to shine, but some snowdrops were purchased by members to begin our own collections.

Following on from the snowdrop walk, the group paid a visit to Dobbies Garden Centre to enjoy a talk by local garden expert Alan Foxall from the Southport Botanic Gardens, when he showed us how best to sow seed in the spring and how to plant up tubs and basket with the best colouring displays.

Afterwards tea and scones were enjoyed, followed by a good look around to see what Dobbies had to offer before leaving for home.

Visit to Altcar Rifle Range

On a cool and breezy evening, nine members of the gardening group arrived at Altcar Rifle Range - not to learn about how to shoot but to look at wild flowers! A surprising location you may think but, because of the restricted access to the site, wildflowers grow in abundance. I made a note of 30 species, including the rare green winged orchid, adders tongue fern, twayblade, marsh orchids, and quaking grass, just to name a few.

A careful mowing regime helps to maintain this superb site. These areas were first marshland resulting from land reclamation in the 19th century. They have since been partially drained but remain damp in parts.

We were accompanied by several botany experts, including some from Liverpool Museum, the Altcar Rifle Range Conservation Advisory Group and also the Major in charge of the site who helped us to identify the various species.

We did have a look at the rifle range but did not try any target practice - perhaps just as well! Thanks to Sylvia for organising this most unusual and interesting visit.

Future meetings -

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| June 23rd | Lavender Farm, Rainford. 1.50p.m. Guided tour. Travel arrangements to be announced at the June meeting. |
| July 14th | 4 Brocklebank Road 1.50 p.m. Visit to a special garden for tour and afternoon tea. £5 charitable donation. |
| Aug 25th | Harvest with Sylvia. Nurture your plants for a bumper show. |

OUT AND ABOUT GROUP Margaret - 380012

Future Visits June and July 2011

Wednesday 15th June The West Lancs Flower Club have invited members to their monthly demonstration of Floral Art. Andrew Lloyd is a North West Demonstrator and will produce some exquisite designs. Tickets are £3.50 payable in advance from Margaret. Meet at St. James Church, Lulworth Road at 1.30pm.

Thursday 28th July The British Commercial Vehicle Museum, Leyland.
This is a journey in time exploring almost 120 years of transport. As Museums go this one has the "wow factor". We will meet at 0945am at Emmanuel Church to leave at 1000am.
Unfortunately there is no public transport so we will need to car share. The cost will be £4.50 per person and refreshments will be available at extremely reasonable prices.

Further information on any of the above will be available at the June meeting.

NEW MEMBERS

Molly Douglas, Joan Moore and Maureen Gregson, Shirley Richardson, Jim Taylor and Alan Poole are the latest members to join us. We welcome them to our meetings and Interest Groups and look forward to meeting them.

U3A Diary 2012 – the order form for the new diary is now with us. £2 each is a good bargain. Please let Eleanor know if you want to order at the next meeting.

AND ANOTHER THING.....

Two slightly different "events" were organized during May.

On the 3rd the Committee organized a coffee morning – partly to introduce some of our newer members to one another and to let them know about our various Interest Groups, partly to attract one or two new members and partly as a social get-together to enjoy a scone and cup of tea or coffee. Although we had hoped to attract new members to this event, this did not happen but it turned out to be a successful social occasion for members to chat and get to know one another. Perhaps we could all make an effort and bring a friend to the next one, who might be interested in joining.... In retrospect it could be considered a qualified success!! Over 20 people turned up, enjoyed their refreshment and talked to one another. We will organize another one later in the year.

On May 10th we were supposed to hear a talk on the Botanic Gardens Museum but this was cancelled for obvious reasons. At short notice, Avril Summers our new Speakers Secretary organized a Quiz and Shirley Hepworth, one of our members offered to devise the quiz and ask the questions.

It is several years since Meols ran a quiz and the Committee were unsure how successful such an event would be. We needn't have worried - well over 30 members attended. Shirley's questions were topical, varied and fun! The quiz was very well presented and judging by the number of people who stayed on for a chat, coffee and a biscuit, it was a resounding success.

Our Webmaster– Eunice Owen, wants to see more input onto our Website from Group Leaders, particularly up to date information that cannot wait for the next Messenger to be published. Any problems regarding input please contact Eunice on 213419

BOOK STALL

Thanks to those of you who have donated books to the bookstall in the past and we hope you will continue to do so. However, for the future we are only accepting fairly new, good, clean hardbacks and paperbacks which can be sold to our members. Of particular interest are gardening, arts & crafts, wildlife and autobiographical books.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Contact Doreen for the Raffle, and Eunice for the Book Stall.

PLEASE NOTE:

Deadline for copy for next issue is July 22nd, if possible by e.mail.

Mike Kedzlie