



Flintshire u3a Newsletter

Exploring Science



Interested in Science? Why not come along to our Exploring Science meetings?

The group meets once a month to listen to a talk given by one of the members, or occasionally an external speaker, about a topic of scientific interest. Recent meetings have covered a wide range of topics such as The Grand Canyon, Bricks, the Britannia Bridge, Winter Stars, Zeppelin, Glass and Microscopy. We welcome new members. There is no requirement to have any sort of scientific background, you just need an inquisitive mind, and a wish to expand your knowledge and understanding of the worlds of science that surround us. We will especially welcome anyone happy to give a talk or lead a discussion. Coming up for the remainder of 2026 we have a talk on the Thames Barrier in October and a look at the stories behind Pi, the mathematical constant, in November. In December we are going to have another in our very popular series of talks about 'Twenty Things You Didn't Know You Didn't Know'.

We meet at St Davids Church Hall in Mold, at 2pm on the second Tuesday of the month.

Contact details can be found on the Flintshire u3a website: https://flintshire.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/exploring-science/

Archaeology

In June our Archaeology group enjoyed a very interesting and thought provoking presentation by Dr Sally Longworth.



Figure 3.6: Locations of the four microsites.
Longworth, Sally, "Map of micro and comparator sites" PDF map, Scale 1:8,000,000, OS Strategi Land-Form PANORAMA, 2009, Ordnance Survey, using Digimap Ordnance Survey Collection, <https://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>, created 2 December 2024

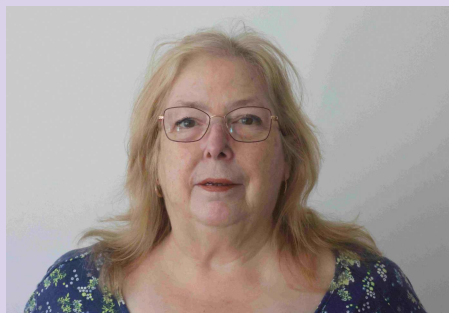
Site	Lairg	Tormore	Dalehead Close	Oversley Farm
County	Sutherland	North Ayrshire	Cumbria	Cheshire
OD	200 - 300m	70-100m	300 - 375m	70m
Location	Rolling upland	Island	Upland valley	Lowland plain
Occupation period	EBA to MBA	MBA	EBA	Beaker and EBA
Excavation report/field survey	McCullagh and Tipping 1998	Barber ed.1997	Style 2011a	Garner 2007

The title was 'Bronze Age Farmers, In Four Sites In The North of England and Scotland'. See the attached charts. Sally posed a number of questions about each site and looked to compare the topography from the low lands to the wild east coast of Scotland and the way Bronze Age people sought to live, work and survive. It was obvious from each site that community was a huge factor in how successful the people were. They worked as a unit and divided tasks according to the seasons. The husbandry of wood was a major part of their lives, growing, coppicing, collecting, storing and using it for a variety of different tasks at different times of the year. The growing of grains, barley for example, was a staple crop yet grew more successfully in the far north and indeed was the only crop in Lairg. The excavation of grain remains, although tiny, formed a big part of Sally's research and suggested how the Bronze Age inhabitants responded to both climatic and social change. Sally's talk was long and detailed and really a short article doesn't do it justice but hopefully you get a flavour of her talk. I have more details if any one wishes to get in touch with me.

A reminder about October, a 'Members' Meeting' where six speakers from our group will present findings from their visits to anything archaeological to us. It was really good last year so I am looking forward to that! So, keep an eye out for any places, sites or areas on your travels or holidays that you could tell us all about. **Julie Harvey, Coordinator.**

Editorial Team: Martin Hampstead and Jo Shone. The newsletter can be viewed on the Fu3a web site and copies will be available at the Open Meetings. Submit articles to newsmem@flintshire-u3a.co.uk by October 1st for inclusion in the November newsletter. The QR code has been added to the top right hand corner to enable members to access our website faster and easier.

Chair's Report



Hello Everyone,

We have had quite a long spell of extremely hot weather with more to come yet I am constantly in awe of how groups continue to offer our members such a varied programme. Thank you, your efforts are much appreciated. Recently, there was our first Coordinators meeting with Joan and Cath, our Groups' Liaison. It was a successful meeting with lots of information for the Group Coordinators to disseminate to you all. In July there was a wonderful Social Event with the violinist, Philip Chidell. Our Social Events team planned and organised the evening which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. We are lucky to have the Team who organise all our Social Events. Their efforts are appreciated by all of us. We have a number of outings still to come this year. They are an immensely popular aspect of Fu3a and are run by

Lesley Roberts. Group Coordinators also organise group specific trips which are looked forward to by members. So, looking forward, the committee and myself are completing pieces of work on many aspects of policy and governance to ensure Fu3a is compliant with the Charity Commission and Insurance, for example. We have an Action Plan for 2026 and have already hit the target of nine hundred members! Our u3a is thriving and that is such an achievement. I thank you all for your personal contributions as members and volunteers in our organisation. **Julie, Chair Fu3a.**

Danny - The Tug That Survived To Sail Again



The Danny is the UK's last remaining steam-powered tug still running with her original machinery. At the June Open Meeting Chris Ellams and Stuart Wood, members of the Daniel Adamson Preservation Society, gave a talk on the history of the tug. Chris who is a steward on the Danny and Stuart who is a retired Mersey Pilot split the presentation into two parts.

Part One told us the tug's history from its launch in 1903 till it was retired to the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum. Originally named 'Ralph Brocklebank' after a director of the owners The Shropshire Union Railway and Canal Company. Its principal task was to tow barges between Liverpool and Ellesmere Port. The Manchester Ship Canal Company (MSC) bought the tug to manoeuvre

ships using the canal. A tug would lead a ship along the canal and a second tug follows behind the ship. The Danny had two propellers which made it very suitable as a stern tug whose main function was to act as a brake on the ship to ensure a low speed was maintained to prevent damage to the canal. In 1936 coal fired steam tugs were replaced with diesel engined tugs but the Danny was retained for promotions and to operate as a reserve tug. The interior was transformed to include catering facilities and restaurant areas in the art deco style. The tug was renamed 'The Daniel Adamson' after the first MSC chairman. In 1986 the tug was retired to the Boat Museum where it stayed for the next 18 years falling into disrepair and subjected to vandalism. Plans were made to scrap it.

Part Two described the process of saving the tug for posterity. Mersey tug skipper Dan Cross got the ball rolling. Dan's employer Svitzer Marine, on hearing of the steam tug's plight, offered to dry dock and survey her for free to assess whether she was in fact worth saving. An agreement was reached with MSC and the Boat Museum that Dan could buy it for £1 but it had to be removed from the museum within one week. This was achieved. The Preservation Society was set up, sponsors were found and a grant from the National Lottery for £3.8 million allowed the Danny to be restored to its 1936 art deco configuration. The transformation was completed in 2016. The tug costs £300,000 a year to keep going and this is possible through donations, sponsors and hiring the tug for special events. **Martin.**

Outings



In July a group of Fu3a members enjoyed a day at Lytham Hall. The Hall is a Grade 1 listed Georgian mansion with lavish interiors, a lovely courtyard and gardens. **Lesley Roberts.**

July Social Event



On a lovely warm summer Saturday night at ESSC, we were entertained by Philip Chidell, a Chester based violinist who has become a favourite with Fu3a members. He told us of his journey from a very young musician at Cheethams Music School to busking in Chester and finally fulfilling his dream of forming his own orchestra. The stories were interspersed by beautifully played pieces of music, starting with 'Meditation' by Jules Massenet and pieces from West Side Story and Phantom of the

Opera. He added other music including 'You'll Never Walk Alone' making everyone laugh about the tale of an Everton fan paying him £10 to stop playing the tune. However this was topped off by the Chinese lady who asked him to play the same tune – for £100! He finished the evening with a wonderful rendition of 'Nessun Dorma' which raised goosebumps. The Social Events team served simple snacks at the midtime break having organized it all perfectly. Another first for Fu3a, a Saturday night event, but it appears to have been a great success. **Hilary Jones, Speaker Organiser.**

Artificially (un)Intelligible

Oh, please, do excuse me, if you don't mind, but I can't help feeling I've been left behind.

I don't want to spend my time doomscrolling, while years I still have left to me are rolling past so much faster than they have ever, and leave me constantly wondering whether I can keep up with all these changes in tech, but then, on the other hand, what the heck - there'll always be someone around to help - but then, I suddenly let out a yelp!

What if that someone is in fact AI?

Someone that you cannot see eye-to-eye, someone whose language does not relate to how you perceive your own problem state, or quite how you choose to say it with words that better reflect your view of the world; who then replies to you in speech so bland you know in an instant they do not understand the human dimension of ageing with apps, and deepening generational gaps.

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Coach Trip To Aberystwyth.



Pat Kenyon submitted this picture of The National Library Of Wales which featured in the July coach trip organised by the Social History 1 Group. Not surprisingly this is the biggest library in Wales holding a huge collection

of 7 million books and newspapers, 950,000 photographs, 60,000 works of art, 1.5 million maps, 7 million feet of film and 40,000 manuscripts.

Flintshire u3a Week.



Flintshire u3a are celebrating u3a Week on 22 September at Ewloe Sports and Social Club. The event will start at 10:30 until 12:30. The

programme will include performances by Singing for Pleasure, Drama, Writers Group, Music Live and Jukebox. Refreshments will be served. This is a free event. Further details will be sent by email soon.

Boccia

1st and 3rd Mondays starting September will see the newly resurrected Boccia Group meeting at Community Club Gardens, Mold.

Boccia is a precision indoor ball sport that requires players to throw leather balls as close as possible to a white target ball/jack. Players are seated and is an inclusive sport which can be played by anyone regardless of age, gender, ability or disability. The game is designed to test both muscle control and accuracy, making it a unique and engaging sport for all. Contact groups@flintshire-u3a.co.uk for further details.

Diary ESSC = Ewloe Sports & Social Club.

Date	Open Meetings	Venue
Friday 18 Sep 10-12	'The History Of Bodnant Gardens'. A talk by Ned Lomax, Head Gardener.	ESSC
Tuesday 22 Sep 10:30-12:30	Fu3a is celebrating 'u3a Week'.	ESSC
Saturday 10 October 10:00 -11:00	Coffee Morning An opportunity for members to mix.	St David's Church Hall, Mold

Social History Group 2

10 Sep	John Roberts	So You Think You Know North Wales - Part 3
8 Oct	Graham Loach	A Musical History Of The Music Hall
12 Nov	Kevin Matthias	Sailing Away-Local Stories Of Emigration

No meeting in December.

Social History 1

June's speaker was Bob Smith who gave a talk entitled 'American Civil War 1861 - 1865'. America has been a passion of his from his teenage years.



The war between Billy Yank and Jonny Reb may only have lasted four years but it was many years in the making. The main factors were the socio-economic difference between the North and the South. The northern states had a population of 22 million people and produced 90% of the country's industrial goods. The southern states had a population of nine million and they had an antiquated social order that was resistant to change. Their economy was based mainly on farming with cotton the biggest contributor. The plantations relied on slaves to work the fields. The two sides were chalk and cheese. The conflict came to a head when President Lincoln was elected in 1860. The South did not want the power of the Federal Government in Washington to have greater power over the state legislators so they separated to become the Confederate States of America with a capital in Richmond and a new president Andrew Davies. The Federal Government led by President Lincoln would not allow these states to secede. As the war progressed the slave abolitionist movement ensured that the southern states must give up owning slaves. The South had to win the war quickly or it would be overwhelmed by the strength in numbers and resources of the North. 6000 battles were fought by three million participants of which 200,000 were boys under sixteen. After the battle of Gettysburg the Confederate cause deteriorated. It continued for so long due to having the better generals headed by the overall commander Robert E Lee. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House on 9th April 1865. Legally, the war did not end until a proclamation was signed by President Andrew Johnson on 20th August 1866. **Martin.**

Jukebox



My husband and I recently moved to North Wales and having been members of the u3a where we previously lived and seen the benefits of membership, one of the first things we did on moving was to join the local (Flintshire) u3a as we saw it as a way of meeting new people and participating in various activities. One of the groups which we had participated in, and enjoyed, in our previous u3a, was Jukebox, and as there did not appear to be a similar group in Flintshire we put a proposal to the Committee to set up a group. Our proposal was approved and Jukebox Flintshire came into being in August 2025 with an initial membership of 42. The ethos of the group is to bring together like-minded people who enjoy music from the 60s, 70s and 80s and give them the opportunity to share their love and knowledge of music with the idea being that they bring along their favourite music to be played via a music centre and loudspeakers. Some of the music is also provided by our 'In-House Music Man', who usefully is a radio presenter with the online station 'Radio Caroline Flashback'. The group meets monthly on a Thursday morning from 10 to 12 in the Edith Banks Memorial Institute, Northop. As word has spread, membership has slowly increased and we have a core group of 35 attending each month.



As with the previous group we belonged to, it was assumed that members would sit back and listen to the music with their toes tapping, and share memories of what the music meant to them and where possible give brief details of the singer/s. However, we soon realised that members wanted more from the group and within a short period of time, they had made their way to the open area in the hall and were giving it their all whirling and twirling to the music, either on their own, in a circle or with a partner and even sometimes with the aid of a walking stick. Refreshment break is usually a good time to sit back and catch one's breath! It is uplifting to see the number of men that attend the group, not only to share and listen to the music, but also to get up and boogie. The session usually starts off with an upbeat number and ends with the Beatles Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (Reprise). We feel that the group gives members an opportunity to relax and remember good times and uplift their spirits. This article and photos has been submitted to the 'u3a Matters' magazine, in response to an article that was in the summer edition, page seven, headed 'Let's Go, Disco' where they asked to know if any other u3as had dancing groups. **Jane Moore.**

The August meeting celebrated the first year anniversary of the Jukebox Group. Cakes replaced the usual choice of biscuits with our tea and coffee. The picture shows Brian Cullen, 'The Jukebox Music Man' flanked by Group Coordinators Jane and Ray Moore just

before the anniversary cake was cut into segments to be devoured by the Group members.

COME AND JOIN US

Do you enjoy a good old chinwag once in a while? Well, if you do, you will be very welcome at our table to enjoy a bite to eat, or just a coffee, in the company of ladies who share a light-hearted lunchtime together. We frequently put the world to rights or just sound off about almost anything from the goings on in Number Ten or at The White House to issues on our own doorstep. Most importantly we have plenty of laughs along the way, and don't take ourselves too seriously. Come and join Flintshire u3a's 'not so Grumpy Women,' on the first Thursday of every month at The Penybont Farm Restaurant in Mold. Our next meeting will be October 1st at 12.30pm. Just ask for Sue's table. Hope to see you then. **Sue Cocker, Coordinator.**