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## From the Chair

'Tis the Season to be Jolly and I hope you are, unlike last year when we were in the midst of Gloom and Doom. Christmas is really a time for children but as I, along with a lot of my ageing friends, in getting more child-like than ever, really enjoy the excitement of wondering which new toy I'm going to play with (perhaps with a grandchild even!). This year has flown by, possibly due to all the work undertaken on your behalf. I'd like to thank especially members like Paul Carter who set up the u3a Facebook page at the start of the year. It wouldn't be viable without its Monitors who continually watch over and update the system. This was swiftly followed by months of endeavour by Ian Homewood, Dave Eyes, helped by Brian Tyler and Jim Hay, to produce the excellent new u3a website. Jim Hay continues to produce some beautiful artwork in brochures and posters and his son has again provided the lovely Christmas card from the Committee to all of you.

Thanks are also due to the helpers, Meeters and Greeters, Tea and Coffee ladies, the Book People, Liz and Keith, and those people who helped beforehand for our General Meetings. In particular, we're very grateful to our Group Leaders who picked up all the activities following the last lockdown and went back to normal as fast as they could. It was nice to see so many members again at our first General Meeting and to hear their enthusiasm for the future.

Talking about the future – that's what we're doing now. The Committee is moving onward and upwards and we have big plans for 2022. In wishing you a very Happy Christmas and all good wishes for the New Year, I sincerely hope you'll be around to help us move forward.

*Paddy*



# NEWS ROUNDUP



Following the retirement of Alan Patmore from the committee, Moira Ralph has kindly agreed to become our Interim Treasurer, pending the next AGM.

**Lets's Go** also kept their members occupied, with Treasure Trails around Liverpool, a tour of Burtonwood Air Base and a guided walk around the Formby coast.



Let's Go is a brilliant start for members interested in learning about being a group leader. They will help you set up and run an event, to give you a taste.

Our **Local History** group continued to educate members, with guided walks in which they learned about Waterloo (not the Abba version), the original streets of Liverpool and the Strawberry Fields Exhibition.

**Photo Group 1** unfortunately had to cancel their planned field trip to Mere Sands Woods, due to stormy weather. However they did manage a visit to the Liverpool 'River of Light' festival later in the year.

The members rose to the various monthly challenges, including 'Food Glorious Food', 'Orange', and 'Sounds & Smells'.

Several groups returned to normal service, for the first time since the first lockdown.



Badminton 2, the Choir, the Quiz Night and Jazz all restarted. In addition, our 'Beyond The Comfort Zone' group has now become 'Outside Your Comfort Zone' and has a number of challenges organised. Brian is always open to ideas, so if you think of something which fits the bill just let him know.

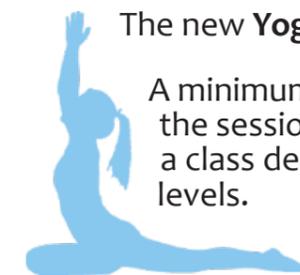
There are calls for new members from a number of the groups. These include Table Tennis 6, the Choir, Chess, Knitting & Crochet, Floral Art, Singalong, Guitar 1 and Outside Your Comfort Zone.

In addition, a number of groups need new Group Leaders. These include Gardening, Whist and Meet & Eat.

The **Outside Your Comfort Zone** group have run two more Pottery Workshops at Fish Fingers Pottery. The themes were 'Christmas Tree' and 'Toadstools', both of which hopefully ended up as night lights.



The new **Yoga group** is going well. A minimum of 14 people attend the session each week and enjoy a class designed to cater for all levels.



## YOUR COMMITTEE



**Chair**  
Paddy McNeish



**Vice-Chair**  
Sharon Partington



**Treasurer**  
Moira Ralph



**Secretary**  
TBC



**Social Secretary**  
Vivienne Pulman



**Members & Publications**  
Jim Hay



**Group Co-Ordinator**  
Dawn Oldfield



**Newsletter & Website**  
Ian Homewood

## YOUR COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Chair (Paddy McNeish)	
Vice Chair (Sharon Partington)	
Secretary (Sharon Partington - interim)	
Treasurer (Moira Ralph)	
Membership Secretary and Editorial Content (Jim Hay)	
Social Secretary (Viv Pulman)	
Group Activities Co-Ordinator (Dawn Oldfield)	
Newsletter Editor and Web Admin (Ian Homewood)	

## OTHER CONTACTS

<b>SPEAKER SECRETARY</b> Jamie Gaskin	<b>BEACON ADMINISTRATOR</b> Brian Tyler
<b>TAM MAGAZINE SUBS</b> Brian Mitchell	<b>ROVING REPORTER</b> Diane Fitton



# NEWS FROM AROUND

**Jacky Carter** is exploring the idea of a UK Guided Walking holiday with 'Involved Holidays' – a company advertising in the U3A magazine. It would be good to gauge interest before advancing any detailed planning.

The break would be 3 or 4 nights in a three or four star hotel, half board, 2 guided walks about 7.5 miles. We are considering travel by coach depending on numbers.

If you are interested, contact Jacky Carter via the Let's Go group page on our website or join the Let's Go Walking Mini Break group on Beacon.

**N**ot content with throwing pots, the OYCZ group also organised a trip to 'Shiverpool', the ghostly guided walks of Liverpool.



Members also had a taste of chocolate making at Chocolate Whirled in Southport.

As the name suggests, this group is all about doing things you would not normally consider.

If you have an idea for something which would be outside your comfort zone, get in touch with Brian via the group page on our website, or at the monthly meetings.

# THE GROUPS



**Let's Go** were on the move again in November, with a trip to the Liverpool River of Lights Festival. This is an annual event in Liverpool and hopefully will become an annual Let's Go event.

Each Let's Go event is run by different members. It is a great way to try your hand at running a one-off event. If you have something you want to run, contact Jacky Carter and she will give you lots of help to set it up. (see the Let's Go write ups later pages)

## U3A AMAZON SMILE ACCOUNT

A year ago, I registered Southport u3a on my Amazon Smile account. I see from my Amazon statement that I have earned £5.60 for the u3a. To sign up for this was a 5 minute job and my Amazon account is still **exactly the same** as it was before.

All I did was go into "Amazon Smile" on my Amazon account and nominate Southport u3a as my charity. Then I made Amazon Smile account my preferred account rather than the normal Amazon account. From then on, I have been earning money for the u3a, ordering things exactly as before.

Now, what I have earned does not seem much – I am not a big Amazon customer! However, if 100 members signed up that would mean £500, and if 1000 members signed up that would mean £5000 to our u3a funds. Just think what a difference that would make to us.

**So – don't wait – sign up TODAY!! - Jim Hay**



**Dancing for Leisure** started their activities in October and already this Group is a great success.

Run by Eileen Gallagher, the Group meets each Thursday from 2 till 4 in St Johns Church Hall in Birkdale.



Dancing is informal and all to 60s and 70s music. No previous dancing experience is necessary - just get up and dance to the music.



If you want to bring your own wine along that is ok too!!



**N**ow that we have three outlets for our news items we obviously have more scope for snippets, brief notes and full articles about our activities.



Step forward our new 'Roving Reporter', Diane Fitton. You may already have seen some of her contributions on the website and in the monthly newsletter.

Diane is busy researching items of interest for our publications and would love to hear from our members and Group Leaders. If you have an item of interest, or would like Diane to come along to one of your meetings, get in touch with her.

You will find Diane's contact details at the front of the magazine.



## THIS YEAR'S PRIZE DRAW CHRISTMAS HAMPERS



The ten hampers for this year's **Prize Draw** have been bought from, and specially created for us, by **Churchtown Deli**. The owner, Gilly, has owned it since 2018 and specialises in supplying a whole range of locally produced products. These include

cheeses, bakery products, deli products, pastas - together with a whole range of soups, quiches and cakes - all produced in-house by them.

And, of course, a wide range of good quality wines!!



They also have a delivery service which ramped up during the Covid months.

**We hope to let you know who the winners are, in next months Newsletter.**



Southport u3a has many groups and even more members. The dynamic nature of our u3a means that we regularly announce news about group activities, whether it be spaces opening up, new events or even entirely new groups.

The best place to keep up with news from across our u3a is our website, which you will find at southportu3a.org.uk. You can even sign up to be automatically notified when we publish new items.



# MODERN MOVIES GROUP BACK IN FULL SWING

The group is run by Linda Watling and with 217 members is by far the largest individual group in the u3a.

Linda started the group about three & a half years ago, initially with the idea of a small group of like-minded cinema goers getting together to see films of choice, but the group soon grew to the size it is today.

In normal times when there's plenty of choice, she organises a cinema session at the Vue Cinema once a fortnight in the afternoons. Unfortunately good films are a bit thin on the ground at the moment so will probably not meet quite so often yet.



Places are booked through Beacon at a bargain price of £4 each. Groups are always well attended & lots of fun, it's ideal if your friend / partner / significant-other prefers a different type of film (we do get to see quite a lot of 'girlie' ones!)



Twenty-eight u3a members joined Linda at the Vue on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September for their first visit since the end of lockdown. They enjoyed the movie **RESPECT**, the story of how Aretha Franklin rose from abused child to the Queen of Soul, while battling her alcoholism and an abusive marriage.

Jennifer Hudson looks and sounds like Aretha and belts out many of her most famous hits in this fabulous 2 ½ hour movie.

**NO TIME TO DIE** - & No time to go to the loo!! Over two different sessions in October, the group had 48 members enjoying this. The movie is long, but very action packed. We were all sat bolt upright in our seats, mouths agog, just for the intro even before the name of the film came up!

The scenic shots are amazing & the stunts incredible; the baddies are horrid & the goodies mostly female, gorgeous, & very good with a gun. There's a lot of shooting, massive explosions & folk falling in baths of acid, but the baddies die quietly & efficiently so it's not at all upsetting.



There is a small child in it but I'm sure they put the gunfire/explosions noise in later, she spends a lot of scary time with Safin (the main baddie) but I'm hoping he was really reading her 'Room on the Broom' or similar, & not saying all the frightening stuff we heard on the soundtrack.



All in all, it's a cracking good film & not one you're likely to fall asleep in. Personally, I think it's the best Bond film yet.

Dianne



# BANJOLELE GROUP ENTERTAIN WORLD BLACK PUDDING THROWERS!!

On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> of September, 21 members of Southport u3a Banjolele Group (also known as The Banjaxed Banjolele Group) played at the World Black Pudding Throwing (or Lobbing) Championships in Ramsbottom.

The championships involve people lining up to 'lob' (throwing underarm) black puddings high in the air to knock off as many Yorkshire Puddings as they can from a rampart (7.6 metres high) built outside The Oaks pub on the main street. Each competitor has 3 puddings at each attempt.

Local legends claim that the tradition dates back to the War of the Roses. Warring factions of the House of Lancaster and the House of York at a battle in Stubbins, Lancashire, in 1445, are said to have run out of ammunition and resorted to throwing food at each other.



The winner this year was from Wolverhampton, Andrew Ferrier, who had also been the 2018 champion. Former champions have come from as far away as Australia and Turkey.

We left Southport by coach at just after 10am and parked up in Ramsbottom's main street for the afternoon. During this time we watched the championships and then entertained the crowd on the green outside the church for over an hour.

This was our second time taking part as we had performed in 2019 at this annual event but obviously 2020's event had been cancelled. We



were invited back to play again this year and as it's such a crazy, jolly event we were keen to repeat our 2019 success.

We were all a little nervous I think, as we had been apart for so long and have only had a few short weeks to practice but on the day we had the crowd singing along and dancing so came home feeling very proud of ourselves!





# DEREK & ANNE'S WONDERFUL WORLD OF COACH TRIPS



Yes, they are off again. Our dedicated Coach Trip organisers have got off to a great start as soon as the Covid restrictions have been lifted. They have kicked the year off with four trips to Bowness, Llandudno and RHS Bridgewater twice!!



## BOWNESS, LAKE WINDERMERE

On Saturday 4th September we had our first outing for eighteen months to Bowness on Lake Windermere in South Lakeland. What a great joy to be back on our outings, welcoming some new members to the group, along with some of our regular travellers, thus making a



total of forty four members. We all had an enjoyable day out with the sun shining through during the afternoon. The stay in Bowness entailed having approximately five hours free time to explore the area. Many people took the opportunity to have a cruise on Lake Windermere with sailings to the South of the lake, to Lakeside, which connects to the Lakeside and Haverthwaite railway. Some sailed to the North, to Waterhead, which is approximately one mile to Ambleside. Others took a round trip sail around the islands on the Lake.



Some people explored the area by bus, for example, going to Keswick whilst some others walked to Orrest Head which is a hill on the eastern shores of Windermere. It is the subject of a chapter in Wainwright's 'The Outlying Fells of Lakeland'.



## LLANDUDNO



On Saturday 25th September 2021 the coach trip group had a enjoyable day out in the Welsh Victorian town of Llandudno. During our stay it was mostly sunny with temperatures reaching 21 degrees. This resort offered a variety of things to do, from strolling along the promenade, shopping in many of the independent stores, enjoying a trip to the top of the Great Orme on the tramway system, or by cable car to see some spectacular scenery - and of course for indulging in one of the many flavours of ice cream on offer!



## RHS BRIDGEWATER

On the 15th September and 6th October 2021 a total of 84 members explored the recently opened Royal Horticulture Society (RHS) Bridgewater near Salford. The site being the former grounds of Worsley New Hall which was once home to the third Duke of Bridgewater, and adjoins the historic Bridgewater Canal.



The original gardens were created by the Duke over 50 year period in the 1800's. They were visited by Queen Victoria twice during her reign. In fact, for the first visit the Queen arrived by barge on the Bridgewater Canal and the canal was dyed blue in her honour! It is now a beautiful green space for the local community and visitors to enjoy all year-round.

When it opened in May 2021, it had been the RHS's biggest project in its history and it became the RHS's fifth national garden in the country with Bridgewater and Harlow Carr in Harrogate being the only two in the North of England.

The members were given a guided introduction to the site to help them find their way around, then it was off to explore!





# LET'S GO VISITS HILBRE ISLAND



On a beautiful September day, 14 members of Let's Go had a day out to Hilbre Island, a wonderful beauty spot near West Kirby on the Wirral

We set off on the train from Southport just before 10 am and arrived at West Kirby at 1-15 Before we embarked on the walk out to Hilbre, we stopped for elevenses at the **Sail Loft,**

sitting on the terrace with a wonderful view over the expanse of beach to the sea.

The weather forecast had been pretty dismal but we were very fortunate to have really good weather for our walk. To walk out to Hilbre you have to ensure it's low tide to enable you to walk the 2 miles out and back before the tide starts coming in.



There have been stories of people having to be rescued by the coast guards and some even having to stay on the island till the tide goes out.

Hilbre is a wonderful place and we all had a great time including watching the seals.



We arrived back from the island at 3-30 and went for a lovely meal at **Figos,** very close to West Kirby station. We were all safely home by 7pm. A great day was had by all

**Brenda**



It was a beautiful sunny day when a group of sixteen members from Let's Go ventured off to Liverpool to sample a whole variety of delights. We were led, of course by our culinary expert Brenda, ably assisted by our resident Sommelier, Bob.



The idea was that we would taste six different food and drink delights from across Liverpool. For this we had our guide from Liverpool-Tours, Gareth, who gave us a lot of information about the city and our locations as well as introducing us to the six venues.

In each of the venues we were given a talk by the proprietor about their specialities, both from a food and drink point of view.



## TURNCOAT

After meeting Gareth at Albert Dock we descended into the underground delights of Turncoat. This is a small distillery which started in Liverpool only in 2017 and which produces eight different varieties of gin. We were each invited to sample the gin and along with it a variety of pizzas.



## MADRE

Still in Albert Dock we walked round to Madre, where we were able to sample a Mexican based spirit called Mezcal, much like Tequila but with a smoother taste. This we used to wash down delicious Tacos. All this in their courtyard under umbrellas to the accompaniment of a guitarist.



## LIVERPOOL TEA WAREHOUSE

Then it was off for a walk away from the dock into a whole new development of apartment blocks. As we followed Gareth through the maze we suddenly across The Tea House, a delightfully of over 200 teas from all treated to a range of prefer good old English



came Liverpool modern tea house which stocks a range around the world. Here we were different teas to try. I, however, still Breakfast Tea!!



# A year in the Life of Southport u3a Contemporary Jazz Group

*As he starts up the Jazz Group meetings again, Geoff Matthews looks back on our last full year of jazz before the lockdown. His aim is to create another bumper year and has started with October and November at Boulevard West to be followed by his Film, Dinner and Jazz evening at the Bijoux Cinema in December.*

We had some great music in 2019, our fourth year since the group was formed. In all 15 live jazz events enjoyed by more than 700 u3a Jazzers over the year. Quite an eclectic mix of jazz styles including Big Band, Rhythm & Blues, Jazz & Poetry, Vocal Jazz, Mainstream Jazz, Modern Jazz, Gypsy Jazz and Classical/Jazz Fusion.

We were royally entertained by some touring international stars, some top UK national players and some more locally based excellent musicians. We've organised concerts at The Royal Clifton Hotel, The Cinnamon Club (Altrincham), The Southport & Birkdale Sports Club, The Southport Flower Show and eight gigs at our regular Boulevard West Bar in Lord St.

Our annual August 'Party In The Park' during the Southport Flower Show had the corporate marquee rocking to the jump-jive music of King Pleasure and The Biscuit Boys with dancing the order of the evening. Likewise in May at The Cinnamon Club, Dominic Halpins Honey Bees' rock n roll crammed the dance floor following our lunchtime visit to Altrincham's excellent foody market.

Big Band fans had a good start to the year with a swinging January concert by The Tom Sharp Jazz Orchestra and some Fred Astaire style vocals from young London based debonair singer James Hudson. Internationally acclaimed singer-songwriter and broadcaster Joe Stilgoe fronted up the Swingtime Big Band in a full house February concert.

Rarely do we get to hear a new and original jazz suite, which is exactly what we got on our first ever concert at the S&BSC in October. In an Arts Council of England sponsored collaboration between poet Josie Moon and composer/arrangers Alan Barnes and Pat McCarthy we were treated to a star filled Alan Barnes Octet as part of their UK wide album launch tour. Fourteen jazz 'movements' interspersed by Josie reading her poetry.

Last and by no means least we had some great musical and social evenings at 'our' Boulevard West bar. It's a mite crowded and busy but everyone gets a seat and Bobbie cooks and serves a tasty interval supper. The venue is widely praised for its atmosphere by visiting musicians. Musically speaking we had a bumper year of small group jazz in 2019 with great contributions from saxophonists Alan Barnes, Liam Byrne, Mike Hall and Phil Shotton and L.A. based Benn Clatworthy. British Jazz Award winning trumpeter Jamie Brownfield really impressed. Dutch violin maestro Tim Kliphuis concluded our season with his trio, with an astounding session of purely acoustic swing jazz combined with his interpretations of classical themes from JS Bach and Richard Strauss. An inspiring could-have-heard-a-pin-drop concert.

**WATCH OUT FOR OUR UPCOMING 2022 SEASON OF CONCERTS!!**

## LOVE LANE BREWERY



Back through the flats we went, and came out at a newly developed, former industrial area near The Baltic Triangle and into the Love Lane Brewery. This is a micro brewery established in 2016, in an old rubber factory, just as the whole area was



starting its transformation. With lots of steel girders and impressive brick, this has been transformed into a very attractive bar on two levels, with a view of the brewery behind the glass. Of course we had to sample their beers, a selection of which came in third pint glasses. Those not into beer could choose from a variety of local gins.



## LUNYA



A stroll back into the city centre took us to Lunya, a Catalan deli and restaurant. There, the owner took us through the history of Spanish sherry while we sampled his sherry and ate genuine Catalan cheeses. He also told us how they had survived through the Pandemic by establishing a very successful online business, which, of course has helped him as we come out of it again. Although we did not sample their Tapas dishes, the writer can guarantee their excellence, having eaten there before.

## BRUNCHIN



This Italian owned deli specialises in home made wraps, salads, sandwiches and pastries - all of it looked delicious. Of course, after such a big day of eating and drinking we were here to sample their pastries and drink their coffee. What a treat this turned out to be and what a great way to finish a very enjoyable day. Well done Gareth and Brenda. Jim



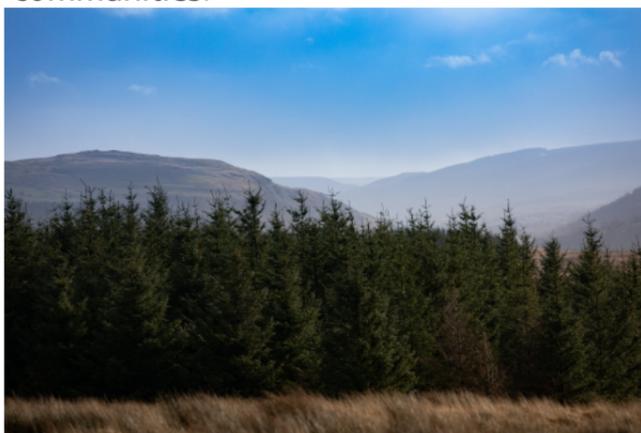
# NEWS FROM U3A NATIONALLY & AROUND THE COUNTRY



To mark the u3a movement's 40th Anniversary in 2022, the Trust are creating a u3a anniversary woodland situated in the Brecon Beacons.



This project is launched in members' magazine, Third Age Matters. u3a members can buy individual trees or a copse of 100 trees and u3as are also encouraged to plant trees within their own communities.



The money for the trees goes towards establishing the trees and part of the cost for each tree is reserved as future payments for maintenance. Once they are fully established, they will be looked after as part of routine woodland management. We are fortunate to have secured the Woodland in an area of outstanding natural beauty and the trees will be expertly looked after by skilled arborists.

Burnham u3a's Archaeological Group discovered a medieval building.

The group, set up in 2018, is made up of enthusiastic amateurs. After seeing an interesting crop mark in a 2018 Google Earth image, they sought permission and started digging near to Southminster Hall.

They soon found three sides of a building, all with substantial walls built of septaria, on the eastern side of the lawn. A central



area with an east/west wall cut into by a (working) 17th century drain, and two substantial parallel walls running north to south, up to 13 courses of stone deep at the western end of the site.

The group's finds have spanned from flint tempered prehistoric pottery – late Bronze/early Iron Age, to Saxon, to medieval and later. Roman brick and tile, also large amounts of animal bones, amounting to over half a pig.

The group's excavation work will end in October and there will be a year long display of the excavation in Burnham Museum in 2022.

U3A members are being asked to help keep track of our garden birds.



You are invited to join Garden BirdWatch, a free online tool to record your own bird sightings and keep up to date with trends.

Provided by the British Trust for Ornithology, BirdWatch allows you to manage your own personal records and contribute data to BTO science; supporting species conservation on local, regional, national and international scales.

The website address for the Garden Birdwatch tool is <https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/gbw>

# PUZZLES PAGE

A COLLECTION OF PUZZLES TO DO NOW - OR ENTERTAIN YOUR FRIENDS AT CHRISTMAS

## WORD SEARCH

### Christmas

I	K	M	M	D	N	O	D	G	Y	M	A	S	B
J	O	S	A	A	C	L	E	I	T	A	E	N	H
A	C	A	A	E	T	N	D	M	I	N	Y	O	D
C	T	M	E	R	S	M	C	A	V	E	N	W	E
K	F	T	F	B	S	E	O	N	I	G	S	F	C
F	R	S	A	R	E	R	C	G	T	I	A	L	O
R	I	M	E	N	R	R	E	A	F	N	A	R	
O	E	R	I	G	A	Y	A	R	N	T	T	K	A
S	N	H	L	N	C	C	C	Y	E	S	A	E	T
T	D	C	Y	I	Y	S	K	A	I	N	C	Y	I
E	S	R	N	G	D	E	E	A	A	C	L	G	O
R	G	G	K	O	N	T	R	E	E	L	A	N	N
F	J	E	N	I	A	S	S	S	O	O	U	L	S
A	N	G	E	L	C	F	M	J	N	A	S	A	I

- CANDY CANES
- TREE
- JOLLY
- JACK FROST
- GINGERBREAD
- SNOWFLAKE
- CRACKERS
- MANGER
- CHRISTMAS
- MERRY
- FRIENDS
- DECORATIONS
- NATIVITY
- SANTA CLAUS
- GIFTS
- FAMILY
- ANGEL

## SUDOKO

	1	3			5			
5	9			3	6			
			1					3
2				5	8			1
		4				8		
6			9	4				7
8					9			
		6		8			4	5
		9				1	2	

Software © 2015 crossword-compiler.com

## CHRISTMAS ANAGRAMS

Can you match these phrases to popular Christmas phrases?

- 1 Shh Tarmac Refits
- 2 Pa Prawn Rip Peg
- 3 Grail Fit Shy
- 4 Nets Light In
- 5 Anagram Ya Wine
- 6 Lava Dance Trend
- 7 A Decking Ogles Snow
- 8 Beor Once Geezers
- 9 Name Mi Post
- 10 Omelet Its
- 11 Him Sweetener
- 12 Caste Indoor
- 13 Nearby Cars Cure
- 14 Racer Catch Smirks
- 15 Hmm Saints Dig

Answers on page 27

## CROSSWORD



### Christmas Crossword

#### ACROSS

1. Pumpkin or mincemeat
3. Santa's ride
6. Celebration
8. Newborn
9. Northpole crew
13. Word of praise
14. Words on a Christmas card
17. It's opened on Christmas

#### DOWN

1. Alternative word to 17 across
2. Christmas drink
4. Christmas dinner centerpiece
5. Dec. holiday
7. Christmas warmer
8. "Jingle \_\_\_\_"
10. Christmas tree
11. O. Henry's "The Gift of the \_\_\_\_"
12. What carolers do
15. French Christmas.
16. Snow glider

# A TALE OF TWO SOUTHPORT VICTORIANS

A hundred years ago, Southport, like the rest of the country, woke up to find itself at the end of an era. After fifty years of widowhood and an astonishing sixty-four years on the throne, Queen Victoria had gone to join her beloved Albert at last.



For my own grandparents it must have seemed that the world could never be the same again. Like many people living now, they had never known another monarch, had only ever asked God to send "her" victorious, had only ever spoken the "Queen's" English.

They themselves, born in the 1870's when Queen Victoria was just getting into her stride, were true Victorians: Grandpa the son of a village policeman when villages still had such archaic beings and Granny the daughter of a character who could have stepped straight from the pages of a Catherine Cookson novel.



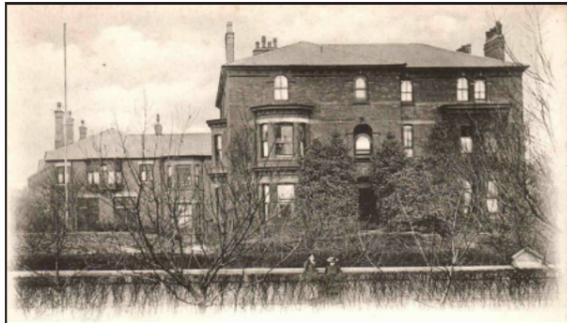
Sent down the pit at twelve years old, her father had started a penny-a-week burial club. Soon, it was so successful that the Prudential paid a small fortune to buy him out. He retired to Southport on the proceeds and lost the fortune not once but twice as his investments followed the switchback ride of "King Cotton".

In fact, it may have been these rather odd family circumstances that accounted for Granny's legendary



meanness. After all, not many people send a darned tea-cosy for a wedding present and not many people, perhaps, cheat so spectacularly at bridge.

From 1943, she lived with Grandpa in a rambling flat at the top of an enormous, Victorian house in York Road, Birkdale. They were there purely and simply because Granny hadn't been able to resist



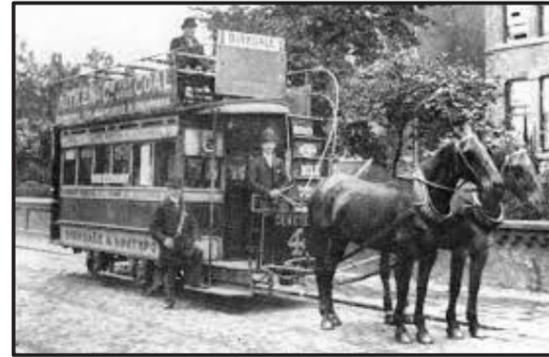
cash in hand. It came from an impecunious vicar who'd turned up in wartime with a hard luck story and an offer of £750 for their semi-detached in Windy Harbour Road. "Never trust a parson," my father said bitterly when he came back from the army.

Their days followed an unalterable routine. Porridge and roaring gas-fire toast cut neatly into squares by Grandpa. Chores in the morning, lunch and then an afternoon nap for Granny. The nap was prescribed by Grandpa as suitable for the weaker sex and gave him the chance to do the washing-up in the way he thought it ought to be done. Every plate was rubbed as many times as Mr Gladstone had been reported to chew each mouthful of food!!

This done, he'd don his gardener's tweed hat and potter down to Birkdale village to work through his minuscule and



unvarying shopping list, always beginning at Walmsley's baker's and always ending with the superior charms of the lady in the pay cubicle at Leigh's High-Class Family Butcher's.



They ate bacon and tomato at six and then it was through to the cavernous and freezing drawing room where the one, low-watt lamp cast gigantic shadows from the huge and ancient furniture. While Granny knitted surgical pink socks on four needles, listened to the Home Service and ate the regulation four squares of Terry's bitter chocolate, the woodworm ate their way through the regulation amount of Granny's carefully collected antique furniture.

To an outsider, it might have seemed as if Grandpa was the boss in this most Victorian of households. Certainly, he was boss of the old-fashioned, walk-in larder and every pound of flour or blue bag of sugar had to be asked for. If he wasn't in, then Granny had to wait until he was.



As in many Victorian households, however, appearances were deceptive. A more than usually pompous delivery would find Granny behind his back, holding an elegant thumb to her nose and

wagging the other four fingers.

I only know of Granny's going out twice between 1948, the year of my birth, and 1964 when she died. Both occasions involved the ceremonious parting with money in order to buy school uniform for my brother, first for Winterdyne and then for Merchant Taylor's. Each time she was dressed in her own uniform, which made her look



exactly like the "old Queen", Queen Mary: wedge hat, fox fur, powder-blue suit, four strings of pearls and a boiled egg expression.

After my grandfather's death, my father took over the shopping and she continued her unvarying routine unchanged. Space travel, the permissive society and the glory days of Beatlemania passed her by, unnoticed, and unreflected in the Edgar Wallace and Agatha Christie of her library borrowings collected by my father from the green-tiled Carnegie library on Weld Road.



In any case, she had her own "glory day" to remember. In 1898, together with the other fashionable young ladies of

Southport, she was presented to Edward, Prince of Wales on the occasion of his visit to the town to review the Lancashire Hussars. Beatlemania it was not, but to someone whose social circle consisted of the teetotal members of Mr Hartley's "jam chapel" it must have seemed just as exciting.

## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF STEVE

With the onslaught of Covid, one of the Photography 1 members had a rethink of his activities. No camper-van holidays, no meeting other people in social settings. With these sudden changes to his life, **Steve Birchall** rediscovered a passion which he thought had long been forgotten. He set about taking photographs, mainly around Ainsdale, which did not involve travel. He has just completed a stunning album of photos taken over the last eighteen months, which includes some which have won competitions at local Photographic Clubs.

*We bring you a small selection of these to enjoy.*



## APPOINTMENT OF U3A VICE-CHAIR

Sharon Partington is relinquishing her role of Vice Chair, having finished her three-year appointment, in February. We thank her for her commitment and support to the Committee and Chairman. and our good wishes go to her for a very happy future.

In accordance with our Constitution, it is essential that this role be filled as otherwise **Southport u3a must close**. So, this is an urgent plea to members who feel they might be able to contribute by agreeing to be a Trustee and, over the next three years, be familiar with all the necessary knowledge of all the Committee roles. Mentoring will be provided for you in the early days.

For your own part, it would be helpful to have some computer skills, to be able to work as part of a very friendly team, good communication and leadership abilities and on occasion, you might have to deputise for the Chairman. The best thing is that you won't be alone and the Committee would be really grateful for your contribution.

*If you would like to have an informal chat and more information, please get in touch with me, Paddy McNeish, Chairman, on 01704 531661.*



## VACANCY FOR BUSINESS SECRETARY

The person we seek for this vacancy needs to be able to get heavily involved in the practical tasks needed to help run Southport u3a, by keeping the organisation running. You will need to be someone who enjoys dealing with people and be part of a team working together for the benefit of all our members.

**Key attributes should be** - Efficiency, confidentiality and the ability to communicate clearly. Possession of current IT skills an advantage, as is a sense of humour!

### Tasks & responsibilities

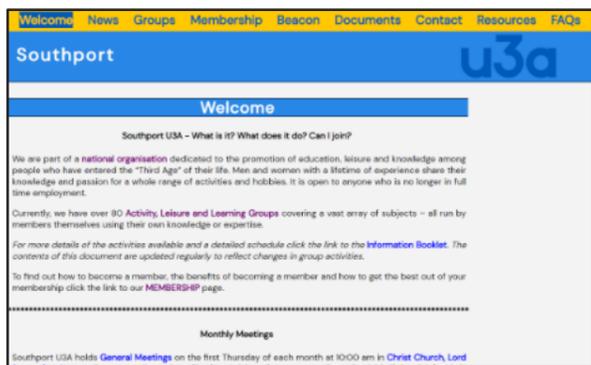
- Be a signatory for financial matters
- Provide documentation for meetings and ensuring meetings are quorate
- Deal with correspondence as required
- Operate as the contact for external or National u3a bodies ensuring that updates are relayed to the Committee and/or passed to the membership
- Maintain a current list of Committee members and keep the annual charities commission register up to date.
- Maintain the Policies and Procedures documentation

### Committee responsibilities

1. Be aware of the requirements in being a u3a Trustee and adhere to the Code of Conduct and the Data Protection Act.
2. Attend all Committee meetings and be prepared to perform any other tasks at the request of the Committee.
3. Be familiar with the Constitution of Southport u3a.

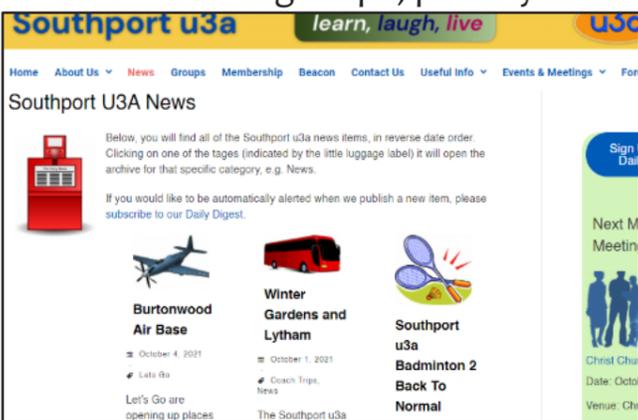
*If you would like to have an informal chat and more information, please get in touch with me, Paddy McNeish, Chairman, on 01704 531661.*

# New Southport u3a Website Launched



Early in 2021, the committee decided it was time to work toward the retirement of the existing website (above left). The post pandemic world deserved a fresh new face and the limitations of the Sitebuilder platform made that difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.

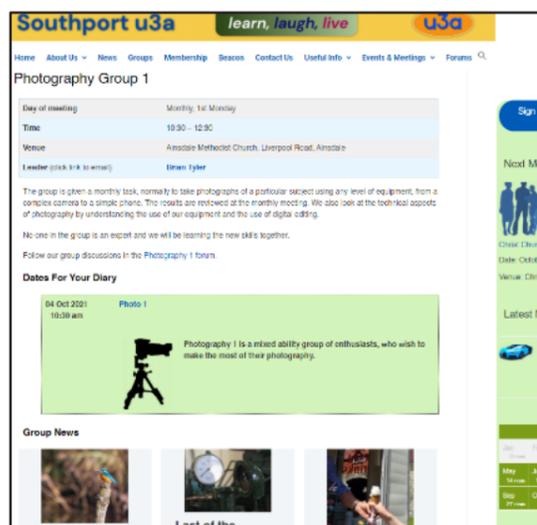
In April, work started on the new site (above right). Thanks to a sterling effort from Dave Eyes, we were able to copy across a large amount of content from the old site, saving a great deal of typing. A colour scheme and theme was agreed and the new site started taking shape, proudly boasting a new page banner created by Jim Hay.



The original target for launching the new site was to be the December monthly meeting. However, progress on development and testing went so well that we were able to launch the site at the October meeting, two months early!

The concept of the new website is to not only provide comprehensive and up to date information for members. By making it dynamic and informative, with news about what our groups have been up to, we hope that it will help encourage new members to Southport u3a.

The home page contains a photo and message from our Chair, together with information about the date of the next monthly meeting and the latest news items. It also has a direct feed from the National u3a Facebook page. To support the desire for a dynamic site, the News page has been given a bigger presence and a 'Daily Digest' created to notify subscribers of new items on the news page. In addition, a brand new section has been developed to show group meetings and single events, in either calendar or list format.

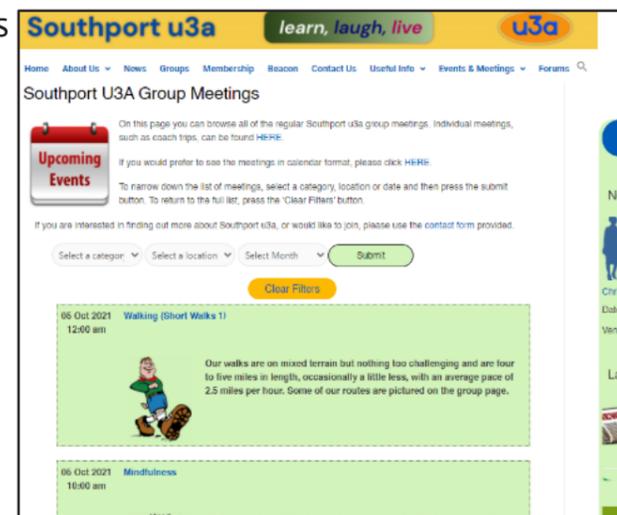
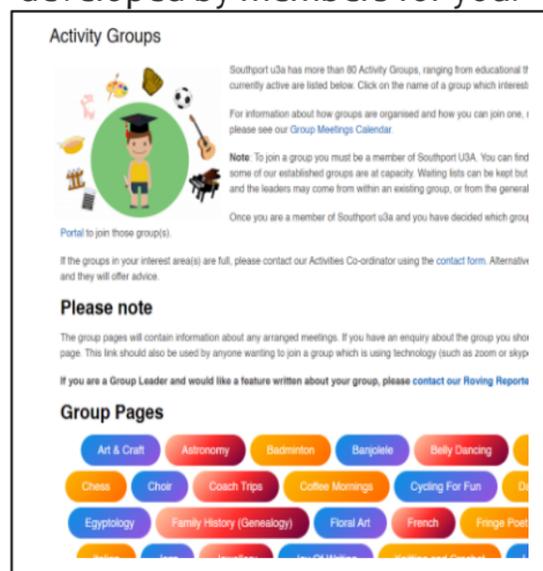


Both the News and Meetings/Events sections link to the group pages. When visiting a given group page, the viewer will be able to see upcoming events for that group, together with that group's news items.

Even though the website has only been live for a short while it is already showing well in search engine results. Anybody searching for Southport u3a will find it right at the top of the results page.

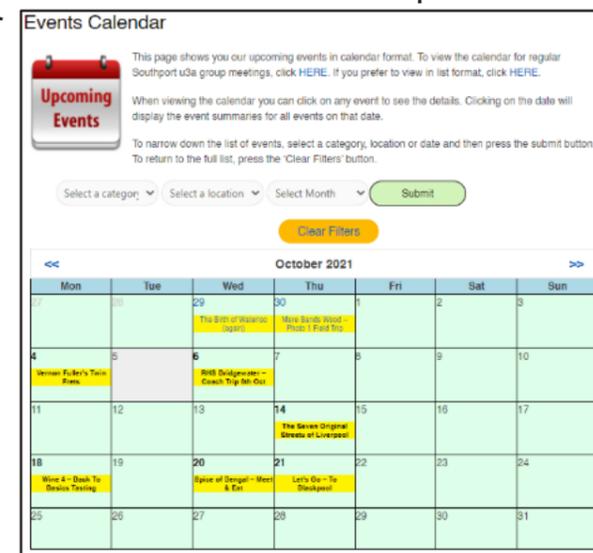


Of course, a website is only as good as the content it contains and how up to date that content is. Just as the u3a is all about 'for members by members', this website has been developed by members for you.



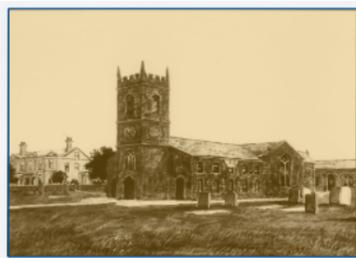
If you haven't already seen the new website, why don't you take a look now. You can find it at southportu3a.org.uk. Click on the 'Sign up to our Daily Digest' button and you can subscribe to notifications about new items on the news page.

A lot of work has gone into making the information interesting and accurate. However, if you do find an error or think something is missing, please report it to the normal editor@southportu3a.org.uk email



Now you can help to keep it up to date and interesting by contributing news, articles, photographs and anything else which may be of interest to our members. This includes news about events in the Southport area. Over to you.

Ian Homewood



# CHRIST CHURCH CELEBRATES IT'S 200TH ANNIVERSARY

Southport owes its origins to the discovery, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, of the pleasures of sea-bathing and its perceived benefits. An area of empty shoreline between the village of North Meols and the small farming hamlet of Birkdale began to grow in popularity for this new pastime.



An enterprising gentleman, named William Sutton, began to see the possibilities of a holiday trade in this area and in 1792 built what could be described as a bathing house near what is now Duke Street and Lord Street; and this eventually became the first hotel in 'South Port'. By 1810 two inns and some other lodging houses had been built and by 1825 there were about 200 houses.

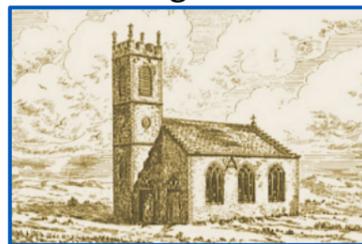
There was only one church in the area, St Cuthberts, North Meols. However, to serve the spiritual needs of the visitors, occasional services were held in the hotels during the holiday season, particularly at William Sutton's 'Original Hotel', as it was known.

Founded by Rev William Docker in 1821 Christ Church was the first church in Southport and started out as 'a simple building of red brick with a small tower of 57 feet', able to seat 600 people. Rev Docker built a parsonage and a school and both the church and the school were developed and extended over the years, the Christ Church school finally closed in 1974.



He was well known and respected across the town and played a part in the town's growth and development. He was a lessee of much of the land that became Lord Street, was the first chair of the Southport Improvement Commission and created a school for the poorest families, who lived mainly in Birkdale. He was known as a scholar and a "man of the poor".

On 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1820, Rev Docker held a public meeting to discuss the possibility of building a church for the growing town. At the meeting it was decided to request funds



from visitors to the town, to move the idea forward.

Robert Hesketh, a local land owner, had some land at the north end of town that he gave for the church. He also contributed £100 (approx. £12,000 today) and all the building materials. People were also able to buy rights to pews at £40 (approx. £4500 today) which helped to raise the remainder of the money needed.

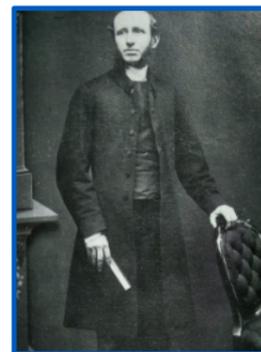
One year after the initial meeting the building was completed.

This painting is probably a number of years after the church was built. Originally it was the most northern building of the town, here there are houses to the right. However, Lord St is still basically sand!



At this point the Church was called Christ's Church and it was on Lord's St.

The town was growing rapidly and the church grew with it, both in terms of number and also size of church.



Just a short time after Rev Docker's death in 1849 Christ Church's second Vicar arrived. Rev Benjamin Strettell Clarke served at Christ Church for 47 years. He proved to be a much loved and highly respected Vicar.

He played a key role in three areas of the life of Christ Church. Firstly, he continued to develop the building. Secondly, he is responsible for the creation of three daughter churches in Southport – St Andrews, St Philips, and St Paul's.

Thirdly, he is responsible for establishing Christ Church as a church that puts the Bible at the centre of its spiritual life. His memorial stone, in the old entrance, describes him as an 'eloquent preacher of the Gospel, an able expositor of the Holy Scripture'.

Ever since then, Christ Church has had a reputation as a 'preaching' church, a tradition that remains to this day.

One of the changes that Rev Clarke oversaw was the addition of a spire to the building.



With a growing economy there seemed to be a desire to make Christ Church, with its prominent position, more attractive.

William Atkinson, one of Southport's greatest benefactors, paid for a new stone façade, tower and a spire was also added. A peal of 8 bells was added two years later. The spire was beset with problems from the beginning. On top of the spire was a

weather vane that blew off soon after the spire was erected and was never replaced.

60 years after the spire was put up it was found to be leaning to one side and repairs to correct it were made in 1921.

There was also some doubt about whether the tower was actually strong enough to hold the weight of the spire. In 1953 the tower was eventually removed.



Problems began to appear in the church building and by 1986 an inspection of the building declared it unsafe and led to it being closed to the public in November 1987. The timber frame roof and some of the foundations were faulty.



The reason for this might have been due to the building having been extended and altered several times. It might also be due to the building being built on sand!

Plans were drawn for a new building costing £1.3million. The church council considered a number of options and eventually decided to blend the old and the new by keeping the front façade and tower and rebuilding everything behind it. The vision was to have a church building that would serve the community, not just for Sundays but every day of the week.



Last month Christ Church celebrated its 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a marvellous exhibition of its long history, and stories about the people that made it the triumph it is today. They also held an outdoor celebration in the church grounds, to mark the anniversary.

Jim Hay

# LETTER..... .....to the Editor

Dear Sir

Under your heading 'Cars of the 60s' I was reminded of the following.

In about 1960 I was with a team of Royal Engineers who built roads and airfields and were deployed to the 'Fighting Vehicles Research and Development Establishment at Chobham in Surrey'. They had a test track that required re-routing.

This track was used for testing vehicles the military were about to purchase and were almost tested to destruction. It was rough with many rocks and small boulders along with cambers being wrongly aligned and going the opposite direction.

We had other work to complete first and during this period what looked like a furniture van arrived and unloaded a car that proceeded to go hell for leather about the track we were about to alter. At the end of the day it was taken away by the same wagon and returned the following day. It had no markings identifying it.

On one occasion it blew a tyre, but carried on regardless and returned to the wagon to be taken away. It's visits eventually came to an end and we altered the track and saw no more of the unidentified vehicle.

About six months later Ford launched it as the Mark One Cortina. **Colin Weir**



Dear Sir,

To all Southport u3a members.

For the great majority of us, the U3a revolves around what happens in our 80 or more groups.

There's an enormous diversity of interests, from current affairs discussion, through ukulele playing to wine appreciation.

But our groups are suffering through one problem: a lack of leaders.

There is no shortage of members or enthusiasm but, to flourish, every group needs people to plan ahead, welcome new members and make sure it keeps itself solvent. The problem is the people who do that need help.

I urge you to think about how you could help to share the load. It's far easier than you might think and quite rewarding when you see your members enjoy themselves and learn.

You don't need to jump in the deep end. Many of the existing leaders would love to support you.

We even have a group, Let's Go, which is an ideal opportunity to try running activities with the help of experienced people.

Let me know if you would at least like to talk about it. You can contact me by email on:

[meetandeatsouthportu3a@gmail.com](mailto:meetandeatsouthportu3a@gmail.com)

I am also often at the Christ Church monthly meetings.

Thank you

**Paul Carter**



# PUZZLES PAGE ANSWERS

## WORD SEARCH

I	K	M	M	D	N	O	D	G	Y	M	A	S	B
J	O	S	A	A	C	L	E	I	T	A	E	N	H
A	C	A	A	E	T	N	D	M	I	N	Y	O	D
C	T	M	E	R	S	M	C	A	V	E	N	W	E
K	F	T	F	B	S	E	O	N	I	G	S	F	C
F	R	S	A	R	E	R	C	G	T	I	A	L	O
R	I	I	M	E	N	R	R	E	A	F	N	A	R
O	E	R	I	G	A	Y	A	R	N	T	T	K	A
S	N	H	L	N	C	C	C	Y	E	S	A	E	T
T	D	C	Y	I	Y	S	K	A	I	N	C	Y	I
E	S	R	N	G	D	E	E	A	A	C	L	G	O
R	G	G	K	O	N	T	R	E	E	L	A	N	N
F	J	E	N	I	A	S	S	S	O	O	U	L	S
A	N	G	E	L	C	F	M	J	N	A	S	A	I

## SUDOKO

7	1	3	4	2	6	5	8	9
5	9	2	8	3	7	6	1	4
4	6	8	1	9	5	2	7	3
2	3	7	6	5	8	4	9	1
9	5	4	3	7	1	8	6	2
6	8	1	9	4	2	3	5	7
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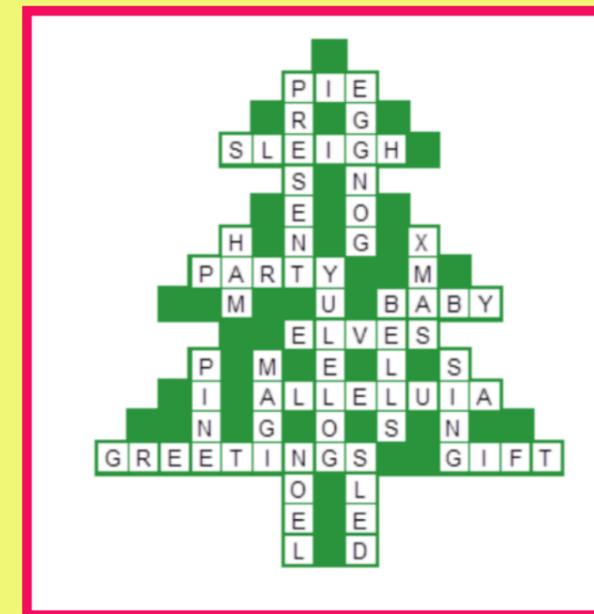
Software © 2015 crossword-compiler.com

## CHRISTMAS ANAGRAMS

- 1 Father Christmas
- 2 Wrapping paper
- 3 Fairy Lights
- 4 Silent Night
- 5 Away in a Manger
- 6 Advent Calendar
- 7 Good King Wenceslas
- 8 Ebenezer Scrooge
- 9 Pantomimes
- 10 Mistletoe
- 11 Three Wise Men
- 12 Decorations
- 13 Cranberry Sauce
- 14 Christmas Cracker
- 15 Midnight Mass

## CROSSWORD

### Christmas Crossword



# AND FINALLY.....

## .....'Muriels' are all the rage

Everybody of a certain age will almost certainly remember Hilda and Stan's 'Muriel' in Coronation Street, even those who never watched the program. In actual fact, the Ogdens had two different scenes over the years, due to various incidents in the storylines.



Murals have been around for as long as people, originally in the form of cave paintings. They have been used to portray lifestyles, political and religious messages, comedy and philosophy.

Often, murals have been used by dictators and other regimes, to convey propaganda and dogma.

In recent times, Southport has become a home for three notable murals. Thankfully, they do not involve political, religious or military messages. Rather, they honour and celebrate.

We have the world's largest mural of Capt. Sir Tom, on Houghton Street. Capt Tom came to fame not because he was a war hero, but because he captured the nation's hearts with his fund raising efforts in the run up to his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

An enormous mural of Red Rum graces the building at the Promenade end of Scarisbrick Avenue. As I'm sure everybody knows, Red Rum trained on Ainsdale beach and is still the only horse to win the Grand National 3 times.



Finally, painted by the same artist as the Red Rum mural, Toad Hall at Ainsdale beach now has the largest mural in the UK. It celebrates our position as the home of one of the UK's rarest animals. It has captured the attention of the national newspapers, including the Financial Times. The commission may be controversial locally, but there is no doubting the quality of the work, nor the attention it has brought to the area.

Hopefully, celebratory murals are here to stay. Now, how about one on the front of Southport Station?