



## Tarporley and District U3A

### Newsletter June 2022

At last, the Platinum Jubilee is here and hopefully some sunny weather for the weekend when you may or may not be going to some sort of outdoor celebration!

I hope those of you who attended our last monthly members' meeting enjoyed what was a fascinating talk from Dr Mark Baldwin and I particularly want to thank our volunteers who gave up their time in advance to learn how to use the audio-visual system in the Community Centre and then arrived early on the day to ensure it was all set up and working correctly for the talk.

It is no easy task to ensure that everything works as well as possible and I feel we achieved it on this occasion, in fact one member of the audience commented that the sound was almost too loud! I know the vast majority of our members do appreciate people giving their time and expertise freely in this way, from taking contributions at the door, to providing refreshments, sourcing and arranging speakers and all the numerous tasks it takes to organise the meetings and are kind and complimentary. But if you do have a complaint, we would be grateful if you voiced it in a sympathetic way, in the knowledge that we are all trying our very best to offer you a good experience. Better still, please volunteer to help us!

**Raye Hurst**

### **THE PLATINUM JUBILEE**

We welcome this grand celebration,  
For our sovereign, who's long served our nation;  
In street or on green,  
Let's join with the Queen  
And unite for a festive occasion.

To duty she pledged dedication  
Through good times or sad tribulation;  
Dignified, serene,  
With our charismatic Queen  
Let's rejoice with great jubilation.

**Keith Barker, June 2022**



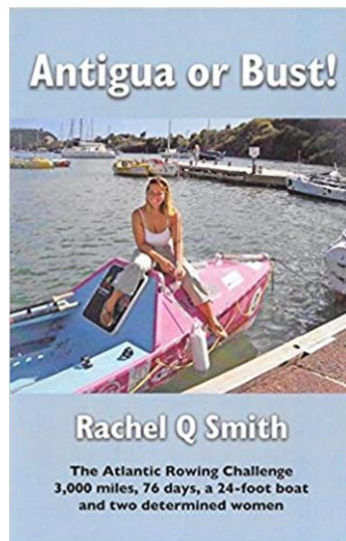
**Members' Meeting on Thursday, 23rd June at  
at Tarporley Community Centre**

**(Doors open 9.45 am, Speaker at 10.30 am)**

**Antigua or Bust -**

**Rowing 3000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean**

**By Rachel Smith**



Rachel never excelled in sport at school and isn't really designed for rowing! But in 2007, she and a friend took on the challenge to row 3000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean for 11 weeks in a 24 ft boat facing 30ft waves and wildlife with big teeth!

**(NB Please remember the cost of the monthly meeting is £1 per person and we would appreciate you bringing the correct amount on the day.)**

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Instead of a sign saying "Do not Disturb" I need one that says already disturbed, proceed with caution.

There are two types of people in this world, people you want to drink with and people who make you want to drink.



## Photography Group

This month's theme is Water:



Alan Durbin



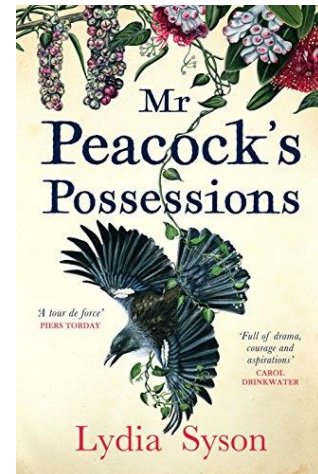
## Book Group

### **Mr. Peacock's Possessions, by Lydia Syson**

**Published in 2018**

**Kindle Edition £3.99. Paperback £7.37**

This is Lydia Syson's debut novel for adults, following her success as a writer for Young Adults (12 – 18's). After achieving a double first at Oxford in English and then an MA in critical theory from Southampton, she was also awarded a PhD from Birkbeck University of London, where her thesis examined "the changing status of Timbuktu in the English Speaking cultural imagination in the early nineteenth century and the relationship between poetry, travel writing and the emerging discipline of geography"(from the Royal Literary Fund).



Mr Peacock's Possessions is described as being an intelligent, beautifully written book. Set in the late 1800's, Mr Peacock, his wife and six children struggle to make a remote volcanic island known as Blackbird Island, off the coast of New Zealand, their home. (Blackbird or Monday Island is in fact Raoul Island in the Kermadecs and it featured on the migration route for early Pacific voyagers). Mr. Peacock and to an extent, his family, have a vision they will turn this into an idyllic settlement where they can build a home, tend animals and grow crops.

After two years a ship appears and six Pacific Islanders on board have travelled many hundreds of miles in search of new horizons and it is hoped, will help to tend and tame the land. Their arrival, however, coincides with the sudden and shocking disappearance of Albert, the eldest Peacock son. Dark secrets from the past are uncovered which threaten and could destroy them all.

The narrative is told through the voices of two characters - Lizzie the eldest Peacock daughter, and Kalala – a serious and thoughtful young man who is one of the six Pacific islanders.

There is a strong sense of foreboding from the start. The island at once beautiful, is cloying and over-ripe and the heat, the vegetation and the difficulties of controlling the land have parallels with the unfolding story.

The members of the book group wondered whether Mr. Peacock is a monster or are his actions monstrous? Was his wife an enabler or a stoic? Lizzie the eldest daughter appears strong, independent and brave but trusting of her adored father. The style of the book is slow and the language used has lots of verbs, adjectives and good metaphors. The characters are multi layered which adds interest. It is a thought provoking read, but a couple of the members whilst finding it interesting could not say it was enjoyable. One member thought



it a dismal story which progressively worsened, although agreed it was undoubtedly well written, with an interesting approach to story-telling.

One review from a member who could not attend is worth including in its entirety:

“There is a certain amount of background where we learn a little about the Peacock family’s history and early insights into their characters. Swindled by a ship’s Captain the family start with very little and spend the first two years on the island battling to eke out an existence and keep starvation at bay. I thought there was some fascinating detail on the harsh reality of their daily lives, how their days were structured, how all the children had chores and were expected to contribute. None of the children are literate. It certainly made me reflect on the issues many settler families must have encountered and struggled with as they attempted to create a better life for themselves. in the late 1800’s and 1900’s.

After two extremely hard years Kalala and some Pacific islanders arrive to become the workforce Mr Peacock has long hoped for to tame his wilderness and create a lush Eden. On their arrival however Albert, the eldest Peacock son, goes missing and the world of both the family and the islanders unravels.

There is a strong sense of darkness in the island itself, a constant battling to tame a wilderness where beauty and decay vie with one another, together with a dark history. As time passes after Albert’s disappearance there is also a gradual shift in the perceptions and interactions between family members and between the family and the islanders. From the start there are interesting differences between the islanders and the family. The islanders have been converted to Christianity and unlike the Peacock children, are literate. They have a strong sense of their own identity and value base and an innate connectivity to both the natural and spiritual world. The story is told from both the perspective of Lizzie and Kalala. We see the lives of all become increasingly brutal as family ties unravel and the realities of abusive power and relationships more apparent. The pace and tension quickens as the climax approaches.

I thought the book raised many issues to explore from the realities of settler life, the hardships and isolation - the physical and mental toll on individuals - the potential of descending into madness. The realities of Christian conversion and "native labour " at this time, The nature of abusive familial relationships, acceptance, compliance, denial through to retaliation. Power and the manipulative and overt ways it is used and maintained. I also thought about the importance of some form of moral value base, in such situations to tether and evaluate decisions and actions. The nature of betrayal by family members and amongst friends and the consequences. I thought the end was a little rushed and abrupt and I would have liked to have learned a little more about Lizzie and Kalala subsequently. Nonetheless a thought provoking read.”

**Ann Schuberth**



## AN AUTUMN DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!

The u3a are holding a **Family Ceilidh** on 28<sup>th</sup>  
October 2022

at Tarporley Community Centre from 7.30 to 10.30

Open to all u3a members, bring a friend and children are welcome, provided they are accompanied by a well-behaved parent or grandparent!



A live band 'The Time Bandits' who recently played at the Chester Folk Festival, will be playing for us



Soft drinks and nibbles provided

Bring your own booze, glasses and food

£6 per adult and £3 for children under 16.

No experience necessary, all dances will be called

by our own Mo Waddington.

You can walk, trot, shuffle or skip.

A great fun evening for all the family.

**Tickets available at the next Monthly Meeting on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.**



## History Matters Visit to Port Sunlight



Eleven members visited Port Sunlight recently and we booked the Port Sunlight Experience which allowed us to have an excellent guide who gave us a wonderful two-hour tour. If members are thinking of a visit to Port Sunlight I would certainly recommend a guided visit as it is a much larger site than I had expected with 900 Grade II listed buildings.

There is an Edwardian worker's cottage which you can view which surprised me with its generous sized rooms. Lord Lever provided his workers with some very attractive housing and a good number of amenities. The village has wide boulevards and green spaces and is very attractive.

We were told that the land was cheap when Lord Lever purchased it at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century because at that time it was marshy and had tidal creeks but between 1899 and 1914 eight hundred houses were built, designed by 30 architects. The houses are in the style of the Arts and Craft movement, attractive and well built. It was not the first model workers' village but the green spaces, parkland and public buildings make it stand out.



There is the famous Lady Lever Art Gallery, a museum, a memorial to Lady Lever and an impressive war memorial amongst other things to see at Port Sunlight.



**Liz Carter**



### **Wanted: Keyboard Player.**

The **Singing for Fun** group needs a keyboard player for our monthly singing sessions. We are an active group of about 16 who get together on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, except July & August, from 10.15am until 12.15pm.

We currently have a player, but need someone to take on the roll, to allow the present incumbent help to improve the standard of singing. We have our own keyboard and music, so, unless you want to join in the singing, you only have to “tinkle the ivories”. We also have a social side with Garden Parties and Christmas Parties all in the planning stage.

Interested? Call Ken on 01829 733561, no obligation, to discuss what we need.

**Ken Wood**

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My missus said to me “you’ve put a lot of weight on”. I said I’ve had a lot on my plate recently.

Asked my mate if he had any phobias?? Not sure if I heard correctly but I think he said he had a fear of grey tights.

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### **Trips and Outings**

I write this in anticipation of our visit to the RHS Garden Bridgewater near Worsley on 1st June. This will be a very different experience from the trip to Bodnant Garden in the Conwy Valley on 4th May. That day was not the best but, after showers along the North Wales Coast, it remained dry if overcast as many of us made our way through the vividly colourful banks of Rhododendrons. The stretch from the Waterfall Bridge to the Old Mill had reopened following the winter storms although the sound of chain saws at work up in the Dell was noticeable. Fifty substantial trees were felled including the tallest in Wales.



*Waterfall  
Bridge*



*Banks of Rhododendron*



*Picnic with Mrs B on Mr Puddle's Bench*

Looking forward we have the afternoon at Gawsworth Hall with an evening performance by the Ronnie Scott's All Stars on 3rd July. There are still a few places available for this event, giving an excellent opportunity to look inside an ancient manor house near Macclesfield.

Further ahead is Gilbert & Sullivan's Iolanthe at the Buxton Opera House at the end of July. I regret that all seats on hold have been taken for this occasion.

Arrangements for the autumn are in hand but at the moment only a concert at the Liverpool Philharmonic is pencilled in. This is a Beethoven evening on Thursday 20th October including the "Emperor" with soloist Nobuyuki Tsujii followed by Symphony No 6, "The Pastoral". Details are awaited from the booking office.

Just in time for Christmas we have a three-course festive lunch booked at The Queen Hotel Chester arranged by our friends Greatdays. This is a Mamma Mia themed event commencing at 10:30AM through to 3:00PM. A coach will be available from Tarporley and Kelsall. Several Interest Groups are taking the opportunity to use this for their "pre Christmas party". We will be with around 200 folk in the hotel and T&D U3A expect to have four or five tables of 10. This should cost no more than £40 including the return coach trip but only a £5 deposit to hold a place is required!

**Edward Baskerville**



**Tele. 01829 751967**

My neighbour just showed me his large collection of "Exit" gates. Bob really does love the Out doors.

So I bought a couple of goldfish yesterday and named them one and two. That way if one dies, I'll still have two left.

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To respond, or contact any Committee member please phone the Secretary, Liz Carter, on 01829 732863 or email [Tarporleyu3a@outlook.com](mailto:Tarporleyu3a@outlook.com)

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