



The Southport U3A Facebook group is up and running and currently has 61 members. It's a good place to catch up with other members and have those conversations you've been missing without all of our meetings.

If you would like to join the group, click [HERE](#) to go to the page and click the 'Join' button. You will need your membership number.



If you have ever visited Istanbul there is a good chance you will have gone to the Hagia Sofia, a 1,500 year old Basilica. Like Turkey itself, it has a long and interesting history. Click [HERE](#) to read an article about its history and how it has been returned to its original purpose.



The Universe fascinates many people and even the best brains don't fully understand it.

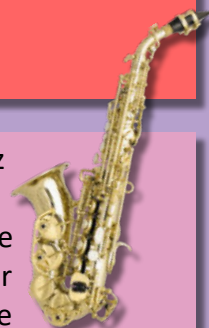
If you want to learn a little more about black holes, dark matter and the like, click [HERE](#) to read a reasonable summary of some of the remaining mysteries.



International Women's Day was a little while ago, but an article has just popped up which is well worth a read. I'm pretty sure there won't be many of you who know of all the women featured.

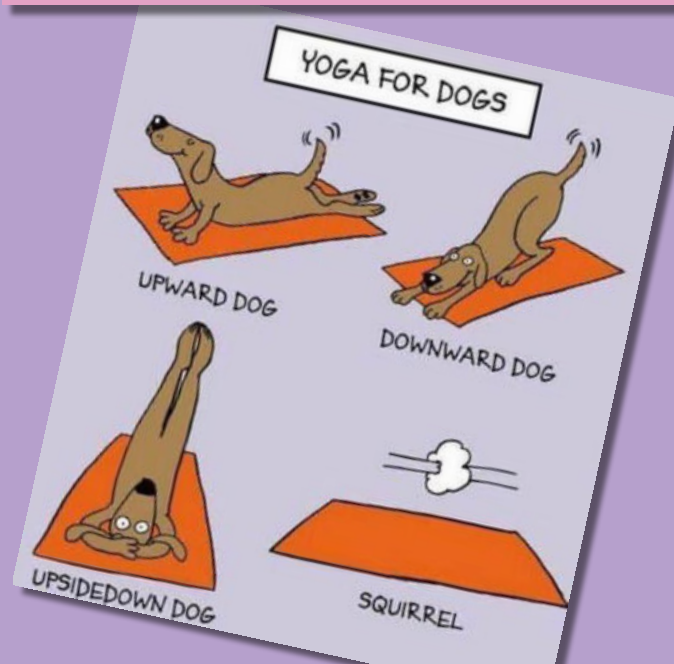
Click [HERE](#) to read the article.

Do you think you don't like Jazz music? I have to admit I'm not keen on some forms, in which the musicians get so wrapped up in their improvisation that the structure seems to be totally lost.



There is another form though, smooth jazz. Think of the end of the evening in a (formerly) smoky jazz club, everybody is relaxed and winding down...

Click [HERE](#) to read about smooth jazz and listen to some examples.





## ZOOM TALKS AT HOME

While the monthly meetings are suspended we have organised a series of speakers who will give talks using zoom

**Wed 10th March at 2pm**

**Cyber Security, being Safe and Secure** by Dave Carlos from Lancashire Constabulary

**Wed 24th March at 2pm**

**Dark Light, The Flannan Island Lighthouse Mystery**

told by Fools Gold who are Carol & Steve Robson, Acoustic Musicians

**Wed 7th April at 2pm**

**Ladies of the Air, 'Grandma Flew Spitfires'**

by Tim Young, a U3A member from Eastern England

**Thur 22nd April at 2pm**

**Wrecks of the Southport Coast**

by Martyn Griffiths, who will talk about the many wrecks that have foundered on our coastline

**Thur 6th May at 2pm**

**Rivington Terraced Gardens**

Its history and how recent efforts have been made to secure its future as a magical place for all to enjoy

**Thur 20 May at 2pm**

**Apitourism - travelling for bees** by our very own Francine Segar

Francine will talk about her trips to Ethiopia and to Trinidad and Tobago, which she undertook on behalf of UK-based charity Bees for Development.

**Thur 3 June at 2pm**

**John Dempsey, on the Sefton Coast**

John who many of you know, will talk about the flora, fauna and history of our wonderful coastline and the work that is carried out to protect it.

To take part in these sessions, first go into your Members Portal and click on the "Southport u3a Groups" heading. When in Groups, go to the "Zoom Talks at Home" heading at the bottom of the page and add yourself as a member by clicking "Join Group". You will be sent a link before each meeting which you can click on to enjoy the talk. Maximum numbers for each talk are currently 100.

If you have any problems, please contact Beacon admin with your membership number

[peteru3abeaconadmin@btinternet.com](mailto:peteru3abeaconadmin@btinternet.com)

### Whose Nicknames Are These?

(Answers on Tuesday)

1. THE BROWN BOMBER
2. THE RED BARON
3. GREAT WHITE SHARK
4. OL' BLUE EYES
5. THE MAN IN BLACK



6. THE DESERT FOX
7. SLOWHAND
8. THE LITTLE TRAMP
9. LA STUPENDA
10. LOUISVILLE LIP



**W**e've all been there, admit it. Something has fallen off our car and we don't have the money and/or time to get it fixed by a garage, so we do a bodge job ourselves. Here are some which may bring back memories, or at least give you a laugh. Thanks to Colin Weir for sending them in.







## Weather Watching

(an article from [Walking World](#))

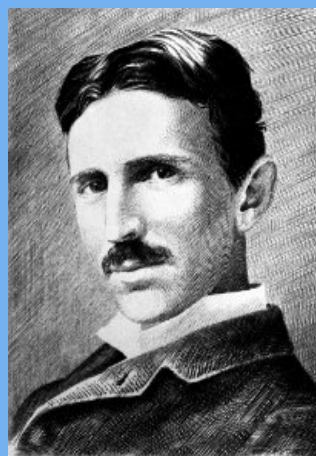
We have probably all been doing a bit more weather watching over the last month, as it's been quite tumultuous. It's always worth checking the weather forecast, even if it's just to work out what to wear on your daily walk. There are plenty of good weather resources and apps, including from the BBC and MetOffice. It's sometimes interesting to compare them, because they don't always agree!

Taking it to a slightly different level we have had personal weather stations for quite a few years now. Over time they have become more sophisticated. Our first couple of stations had separate measurement instruments, communicating with a central console. Via a bit of 'handmade' software and an old laptop or computer, it was possible to rig up a regular upload to an online service like Weather Underground. However the system had many points of failure, including when the computer decided to do a system upgrade and bits of software didn't restart.

Later systems brought all the instruments into one device that could be mounted on a single pole. The device communicated with its own hub to upload readings every few seconds to the web. This was much more reliable from an information transfer point of view but the devices were still prone to failure, especially the wind vane, wind speed cups and rain gauge, all of which were mechanical.

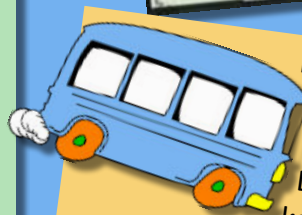
We have been testing our latest device which is quite revolutionary in a couple of senses. Firstly the Tempest from WeatherFlow has no moving parts, with rainfall and wind sensed through sound and touch sensors. Secondly the readings are transmitted online and corrected using 'machine learning', so the device is constantly calibrating better readings and forecasts. It is an interesting development - one of the benefits is that it's possible to get a weather forecast for the precise location of the device. In our case, some 370 metres up a hill, the super-local forecast can be quite different from one given for the town in the valley. You can see our own device and its forecast here. Will it last longer than the others? We'll see.

Submitted by Francine Sagar. Credit '[Walking World](#)'.



**N**ikola Tesla was a brilliant scientist and inventor, but mention his surname these days and people are probably more likely to think of expensive electric cars. Click [HERE](#) to watch a video about him.

learn,  
laugh,  
live



If you are a member of the coach trips group you may already have received an email from Derek & Anne Kershaw. They are keeping a close eye on the government Covid guidance and will be in touch as soon there is any news about trips, whether already planned or new ideas. They will not go ahead until there is full guidance and approval.

The parachutes which helped Perseverance land safely on Mars carry two hidden messages. Click [HERE](#) to read the article.



**Saturday 27th February 2021**

Man City v West Ham United  
12:30 BT Sport

West Brom v Brighton & Hove Albion  
15:00 Sky Sports

Leeds United v Aston Villa  
17:30 Sky Sports

Newcastle United v Wolves  
20:00 Sky Sports

**Sunday 28th February 2021**

Crystal Palace v Fulham  
12:00 BBC One / BBC iPlayer

Leicester City v Arsenal  
12:00 BT Sport

Tottenham Hotspur v Burnley  
14:00 Sky Sports

Chelsea v Man Utd  
16:30 Sky Sports

Sheffield United v Liverpool  
19:15 Sky Sports

**Monday 1st March 2021**

Everton v Southampton  
20:00 Sky Sports

**Tuesday 2nd March 2021**

Man City v Wolves  
20:00 BT Sport

**Wednesday 3rd March 2021**

Burnley v Leicester City  
18:00 Sky Sports

Sheffield United v Aston Villa  
18:00 BT Sport

Crystal Palace v Man Utd  
20:15 Sky Sports

**Thursday 4th March 2021**

Fulham v Tottenham Hotspur  
18:00 BT Sport

West Brom v Everton  
18:00 Sky Sports

Liverpool v Chelsea  
20:15 Sky Sports

**For a laugh some student bloopers**

- Ancient Egypt was inhabited by mummies and they all wrote in hydraulics. They lived in the Sarah Dessert and travelled by Camelot. The climate of the Sarah is such that the inhabitants had to live elsewhere.
- Solomom had three hundred wives and seven hundred porcupines.



- Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him. Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock. After his death his career suffered a dramatic decline.
- William Tell shoot an arrow through an apple while standing on his son's head.

**Joe Forshaw**

Nuns are not known for their dancing abilities, but this group defy that perception, where else but in Ireland. Click [HERE](#) to watch the video.





## One man and his camera

A little over a year ago, Steve Birchall joined U3A Photo Group 1. Here is his story of what has happened since then.

Just before our regular orderly world was turned upside down by Covid a Photographic Group was formed in the U3A. In fact two groups were formed such was the interest.

I became a keen early member and to a large extent it has given me a real focus during these last 12 very strange months. We managed a few live meetings before lockdown, getting to mix with the members and I was pleased to find that that we had attracted some real experts in Ian Homewood & Julie Pigula, who's input and guidance has been invaluable.

The group has awakened my long dormant interest in Photography, that started way back in the 70&80s when I was an obsessive Underwater Photographer. Since then whilst always enjoying taking photos I never used anything more than a Compact Camera and lately just my Smartphone. But as good as the modern Smartphones are they do have their limitations when it comes to taking serious Photos.

So 12 months on and spurred on by our new group I now have 2 Olympus Cameras, 4 Lenses, 2



Tripods, 2 Flashguns and all sorts of bits.

Like most other U3A Groups we do miss real

live get-togethers, but thankfully Photography is very doable as a lockdown pastime and as a group we have been able to continue setting ourselves a monthly Photographic challenge, and meeting via Zoom once a month to show and discuss the results.

These challenges are wide and varied, everything from the Colour Red to Festive Scenes and the members certainly come up with some imaginative results.

As photographers (when allowed) we have great inspiration on our doorstep with our wonderful Beach, Dunes, Pinewoods and Moss and for me the odd Church & Graveyard. I'm often drawn to these areas to photograph atmospheric and moody scenes and in-particular movement - whether it be stars or a trail of car lights.

So a big thanks to the U3A Photographic Group for all the help and encouragement over the last year, its been quite a ride.

If you're interested in Photography do come along and join us.

