

Monthly Meeting 1. Presentation

Our June speaker was Clive Brookes who enlightened us about 'Marbury Hall through the Centuries'. Clive covered eight centuries, beginning in the 13th, when John de Merburie, a rich farmer who owned much property and land in mid Cheshire, acquired the estate. The Merburie family were sheriffs of Cheshire in 1413 and 1414 and Sir Lawrence de Merburie presided over the court. The first house was built of timber and thatch, but in Tudor times, it gained a brick façade.

In the 18th century, Marbury changed hands and passed to the Savage family, notably Richard Savage, 4th Earl Rivers. The hall passed to the Barry family in 1712 when his daughter Elizabeth Savage married James Barry, 4th Earl Barrymore. During the following years, the hall was changed and wings added.

In 1784, Hugh Smith Barry inherited Belmont Hall, another large, local house. He also inherited an estate in Cork and Marbury. Many of the rich families at this time, sent their sons on the 'Grand Tour' around Europe and up until 1942, there were many items which had been brought back from the tour in Marbury Hall. Significant items, included some which are now in America's Getty Museum. There was a bust of Alexander which, was sold for over \$500,000 and a bust of Marcus Aurelius which was sold for over \$2,500,000! In addition, there was a piece of the Elgin Marbles which is now in London and the Jenkins' Vase which is in Cardiff National Museum.

By 1910, the hall was very large and the façade was 'dressed up' to look like an 1850 Fontainebleau chateau.

The last dynastic owner was Robert Smith Barry who was a pilot in WWI. Unfortunately, he was crippled by death duties, and he sold the estate. It was bought by George Smith, and subsequently made into a very exclusive country club. It could seat over 120 for lunch, had an

airstrip in case a member wanted to fly in, a motoring club and eventually an eighteen-hole golf course. It had 60 bedrooms, and the outdoor swimming pool was one of the first in the country.

From 1940-48 Marbury housed both allied troops and prisoners of war (British, American, Polish, German and probably Italian). Clive regaled us with many anecdotes and photos of the men who lived there at that time.

1948-74 were the ICI years. ICI bought it and housed employees, single men in the hall and families in the huts in the grounds.

Sadly, the hall was demolished in 1969, but there are reminders all around the park of what was there, for example, the foundations of the lodge, remains of the icehouse, the mill and the summer house.

This was an absolutely fascinating talk about a mansion which was on our doorstep but which few people saw or knew anything of the history. To see so many photographs and maps etc. of the Marbury history was truly absorbing.

Clive has offered to lead an evening walk around the site. If you are interested please contact Janice Jackson (janjacu3a@gmail.com)

2. Charles Darwin School

Alison Massey, chair of Governors at Charles Darwin Primary School, came to talk to the members attending the monthly meeting about the need for school governors. The role of a governor is to ensure that the school follows the guidelines set down by the Dept. of Education. The role involves one meeting of about two hours per half-term. It would involve some online training but nothing too taxing. A background in Education is not a requirement. People from different

backgrounds, experience and skills can bring their knowledge and interest to the position. Charles Darwin School is a busy, vibrant community which offers a wide range of experiences to all its pupils who are engaged in learning and enjoy a wide range of facilities on offer.

If you are interested in becoming a governor in the school please contact

Marian Bennett

- office@charlesdarwin.cheshire.sch.uk

Next Month's Meeting

Come and join us at the next meeting on 16th June 2025 at 2pm at Owley Wood Recreation Club, Weaverham, when George King will talk to us about, 'Solar Energy'.

Committee News

The Executive Committee continue to look for a volunteer to provide support to Susan Humphries in her role as u3a Northwich Website Coordinator. In this role Susan is responsible for managing the website, keeping the content up to date and the presentation attractive, in compliance with legislation and Third Age Trust guidelines. If you are interested, please contact Susan for more details. Shumphreys_hallwood@hotmail.co.uk

Along with other u3as, the committee will be considering issues of succession planning to encourage members to actively support the committee/existing group leaders, and to ensure that we can continue to deliver and grow the number and range of groups available for members. This is within the context of the continuing growth in membership.

Date for Diary

The Christmas Lunch has been for scheduled for Wednesday 17th December, at Vale Royal Abbey Golf Club. Details to follow soon.

U3amatters

The Summer 2025 edition of the magazine contains lots of interesting features ranging from, taking perfect pictures on a phone camera, telephone landlines are going digital, and wising up to scammers. There are also health features, puzzles, recipes and online learning events, notably Laughter Yoga on 9th July and Taste and Smell on 31 July. Learning events can be booked via the u3a website – <https://www.u3a.org.uk>

NORTHWICH

www.u3asites.org.uk/northwich July 2025

	Tuesday 1	Wednesday 2	Thursday 3	Friday 4	Saturday 5	Sunday 6
	10:00 WG2 Striders 10:00 WG3 Stride & Stroll 13:00 Sociology 14:00 French Conversation 14:30 French 2	10:30 WG6 Walking 14:00 Drama/Script Reading 14:30 Art Appreciation	10:15 Art 10:30 WG4 Walkers 10:30 WG5 Strollers 13:30 Mahjong 1 14:00 Knitting	13:15 Bridge 13:30 Outdoor Bowling 14:30 Cinema Group Coffee Meet Up *		
Monday 7	Tuesday 8	Wednesday 9	Thursday 10	Friday 11	Saturday 12	Sunday 13
10:00 WG1 Striders 10:30 Spanish 1 11:00 German 14:00 Latin	10:00 WG2 Striders 10:00 WG3 Stride & Stroll 14:00 French Conversation 14:30 Wine Appreciation	10:00 Dog Walking 1 14:00 Drama/Script Reading 14:30 French Reading	10:15 Art 10:30 Walking Group 4 10:30 WG5 Strollers 14:00 Boules 14:00 Whist	13:15 Bridge 13:30 Outdoor Bowling		
Monday 14	Tuesday 15	Wednesday 16	Thursday 17	Friday 18	Saturday 19	Sunday 20
10:00 WG1 Striders 10:30 Spanish 2 14:00 Scrabble 14:00 Walking Cricket	10:00 WG2 Striders 10:00 WG3 Stride & Stroll 14:00 Mahjong 2 14:00 French Conversation 14:30 French 2	10:30 WG6 Walking 10:30 Archaeology 14:00 Drama/Script Reading 14:00 Monthly Meeting	10:15 Art 10:30 WG4 Walkers 10:30 WG5 Strollers 13:00 Local and Social History 14:00 Knitting	10:00 British History 13:15 Bridge 13:30 Outdoor Bowling		
Monday 21	Tuesday 22	Wednesday 23	Thursday 24	Friday 25	Saturday 26	Sunday 27
10:30 WG1 Striders 10:30 Spanish 1 1.30 Canasta	10:00 WG2 Striders 10:00 WG3 Stride & Stroll 14:00 French Conversation	10:30 WG6 Walking 14:00 Drama/Script Reading 14:30 French Reading 15:30 Geology	10:00 Dog Walking 1 10:15 Art 10:30 WG4 Walkers 10:30 WG5 Strollers 14:00 Boules	13:15 Bridge 13:30 Outdoor Bowling 14:00 Reading		

Monday 28	Tuesday 29	Wednesday 30	Thursday 31			
10.00 WG1 Striders 10.30 Spanish 2 13.30 Rummikub 14.00 Walking Cricket	10:00 WG2 Striders 10:00 WG3 Stride & Stroll 14.00 French Conversation	10.30 WG6 Walking 14.00 Drama/Script Reading	10.15 Art 10.30 WG4 Walkers 10.30 WG5 Strollers 14.00 Tea and Quiz		14.00 Tea and Plants	12.30 Singles Sunday Lunch