

FROM THE CHAIR

High Lane U3A continues to thrive; we currently have 430 members and 37 groups and play an active role in the local community and the regional U3A movement through our membership of the Greater Manchester Network of U3As. This is reflected in this larger than usual edition of the newsletter; clearly our groups have been very active over the last two months.

I recently attended the Annual AGM and Conference of the U3A North West region and shared ideas with representatives of other U3As in our area. There are almost 100 U3As in the North-West region; around 10% of the UK total.

Your Committee is organizing two social events for the Autumn; a repeat of the very successful wine tasting evening in late September and a music evening in November. We hope you will support us in these events.

Groups are the life blood of the U3A and we are often surprised at how difficult we find it to get new groups started. We currently have some people who have offered to run a new group but there are no takers; and some people who are interested in being part of a new group but not able or willing to co-ordinate the group. In practice, running a group doesn't take up a lot of time and is rewarding. Several of our groups share the co-ordination role between various members and that works very well. An idea I gathered from the conference was having groups that might just meet for a few sessions to cover a specific topic rather than becoming an ongoing group.

If you have ideas or are willing to help please talk to our Groups co-ordinator, Doreen Scotte, at the monthly meeting. Don't be afraid to offer to help!

Diane Saxon

WEBMASTER



Jeff Mortimer has very kindly agreed to take on the role of Webmaster and will be keeping our website up to date. You can contact him on webmaster@highlaneu3a.org.uk

GROUP LEADERS MEETING

Group Leaders and the Committee had their annual joint meeting on Friday 23 June, where, over sandwiches and a glass or two of wine, group leaders shared experiences as they reported on the activities of their groups.

You can find out more about any of our groups from the group pages on the website or by speaking to Doreen or the relevant group leader at the monthly meetings.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Items for the newsletter from members are always welcome so if you have any suggestions for content or articles of interest to U3A members please contact me at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Offers of help to produce the newsletter are also very welcome!

The next edition of the newsletter will be the September 2017 edition. Please can you get your contributions to the editor by 31 August?

MONTHLY MEETINGS

MAY MEETING

At the May meeting Pat Osborne spoke about the 'Mysterious life of Agatha Christie'.

Agatha was initially an unsuccessful writer, but this changed for the better when *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* was published in 1920 featuring Hercule Poirot. During the Second World War she worked as a pharmacy assistant and acquired a good knowledge of poisons which featured in many of her novels.

In late 1926 her husband Archie asked for a divorce and after a quarrel in December, she left the family home. Her car was found at Guildford but it was 10 days later that Agatha was found at a hotel in Harrogate where she had checked in using the name of Neele, the surname of her husband's lover.

She later married Max Mallowan an archeologist and their travels in the Middle East inspired many of her novels. Guinness World Records lists Christie as the best-selling novelist of all time with sales of two billion.

JUNE MEETING

At the June meeting Keith Warrender talked about the Kinder Mass Trespass which occurred in 1932. The Trespass was the start of all the effort to combat the landed gentry's ban on the general public, hiking, climbing, trekking, etc. on the footpaths on the Derbyshire moors between Glossop, Hayfield, Castleton, Edale, and further afield.

The talk was accompanied by comprehensive photographic coverage of the violence which took place and the arrest and imprisonment of the main organisers of the protest.

Those of us who have used this wonderful facility over the years have a lot to be grateful for. Our thanks to Mr Warrender for coming to High Lane with his very informative presentation.

Eunice Beesley

WINE TASTING EVENING

At this event members and friends will present a series of six different wines for you to taste. There will be three whites and three reds of varying styles to suit all tastes plus a selection of cheese and savoury biscuits.

Tickets cost £6 and will be on sale at the July and August meetings.



The flyer is framed by a decorative border of wine glasses. At the top and bottom are blue flourishes. The text is centered and reads:

High Lane U3A

Wine Tasting Evening

6 wines to taste
3 Whites and 3 Reds
 Introduced by U3A Members and Friends
 Includes cheese and biscuits

Friday 29 September 2017
 7:30 pm
 High Lane Village Hall

Tickets £6

Numbers are limited.
High Lane U3A Members only please.

BRIDGE AND AFTERNOON TEA AT HIGH LANE VILLAGE HALL



There will be a Bridge event on Saturday 16 September from 2pm - 4.30pm in the Large Hall. The cost will be £6 per person or £20 per table of four and includes afternoon tea. All proceeds will go to Village Hall Funds

Tickets are available from Margaret McDermott or June Gibbs



MUSICAL EVENING

Also in the Autumn, we have organized a musical evening on 10 November. We will be treated to a selection of Country and 60s music by multi British award winning singer, musician and songwriter Nancy Ann Lee. A hot meal will be available at the start of the evening. Tickets are just £10 and we expect demand to be high. Please put the date in your diary. Tickets will be on sale at the September and October meetings.

FORTHCOMING TRAVEL EVENTS

Contact: Margaret McDermott or Ruth Smith

28 Aug – 1 Sept	IRELAND. Details after August meeting
22-23 Sept	STAMFORD. 1 night HB at Park Inn By Radisson Peterborough. Visit to Calke Abbey and Georgian event in Stamford Cost £99, SS £20. PAYMENT AT JULY MEETING
23-27 Oct	BERLIN. Cost £466, SS £94. Includes flight, hotel, transfers and some entrance fees. PASSPORT DETAILS REQUIRED FOR E TICKET. BALANCE AT JULY MEETING
15 Dec	EAST LANCS RAILWAY. Christmas Lunch. Cost £40. PAYMENT AT OCTOBER MEETING

OUR U3A ACTIVITIES

12 July	The King and I: talk by Norma Walmsley
9 August	Tax, care and Toy Boys: talk by Oliver Hill
13 Sept	Antiques, Auctions and TV: talk by Nick Hall
29 Sept	Wine Tasting evening. Cost £6. Tickets available at July and August meetings. Numbers limited. Members only.
10 Nov	Music evening. Cost £10. Tickets available at Sept and Oct meetings. Numbers limited. Members only.
20 Nov	Greater Manchester Network of U3As Quiz. Friends Meeting House, Manchester.

NATIONAL U3A EVENTS

8 - 11 Aug	Annual Science seminar. Harper Adams Uni, Telford.
10-13 Aug	Festival of Quilts. NEC. Special rates for U3A groups of 10 or more.
29 Aug - 1 Sep	NW Regional Summer School. Newton Rigg Agricultural College near Penrith. 10 courses offered. Details and booking arrangements - The NW Regional website: www.u3sites.org.uk/north-west . Queries contact Neil Stevenson 01744 895723 or ndstevenson@hotmail.com
16 Sept	Family History conference. Buxton. Cost £22
16 Oct	U3A at the RI. Royal Institution, London. Cost £21
26 Oct	Health and Well-being conference. Lancaster.
14 Nov	National Gallery Study day. London.

**LATER LIFE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM
AGE UK JULY 2017**

Some of the up to date figures.

- 3.64 million people in the UK aged 65+ live alone. This is 32% of all people aged 65+ in the UK. Nearly 70% of these are women.
- 2 million people over 75 live alone; 1.5 million of these are women.
- 61% of widows (male and female) in England and Wales are aged 75 and over
- Black and minority ethnic (BME) groups make up just under 20% of the population of England and Wales, but 8% of people in England and Wales aged 60 and over
- The LGBT rights charity Stonewall estimates there are 1 million lesbian, gay and bisexual people aged over 55 in Britain
- It is estimated that there are 14 million grandparents in the UK, 1.5 million of whom are under 50
- An estimated 80 per cent of people aged 65 and over in England and Wales give their religious affiliation as Christian, and 9% 'No religion'

GROUP REPORTS

ART

We are still having good numbers attending our sessions; having a lot fun and painting, of course. Why don't you come and join us?

We meet on Thursday afternoon from 1.30 to 4pm. Even if you haven't painted or drawn since school days the group members really enjoy the afternoon. I have all the equipment so you don't need to bring anything and we even serve tea and nice biscuits. We are a very friendly group and you can bring a pal with you.

We have a break over the summer. Our last meeting is on 27 July and we start again on 7 September.

Please call me for more information.

Brian Chadwick

BACKGAMMON

The backgammon group continues. We are a small (but select) band though we would welcome new members. Don't worry if you have never played before; it is a simple game to get a handle on and full instruction will be given. Backgammon is played worldwide and is well represented on the internet.

We meet at the Royal Oak pub in High Lane at 2pm on the first and third Wednesday of every month.

Ron Barrow

BALLET APPRECIATION GROUPS 3 AND 4

24th May / 1st June:

We watched the Paris National Opera Ballet in La Petite Danseuse de Degas. This is a new ballet telling the story of the fourteen-year-old Marie von Goethem, who was the model for Degas' famous sculpture. With costumes and dance style of the period, it had the effect of bringing Degas' paintings to life.

28th June:

Due to cancellations, the two groups were merged for this session. We saw the Royal Ballet's 2015 performance of La Fille Mal Gardée. This was a superbly danced production of Frederick Ashton's choreography. The chickens and rooster were particularly popular.

Next on the agenda is a documentary on Sergei Polunin – now aged 27 and known as the bad boy of ballet. This will be followed by Polunin dancing in Marguerite and Armand.

Meg Humphries

I MUST GO DOWN TO THE SEA AGAIN BY SPIKE MILLIGAN

I must go down to the sea again, to the lonely sea and the sky;
I left my shoes and socks there - I wonder if they're dry?

CARD MAKING



The card making group continues to meet at St Thomas' Church Hall on the first Thursday of every month at 1.30pm. There are around seven regular members and we are a friendly group each with a different level of experience, artistic ability, creativity, and confidence.

We usually make two cards at each meeting, using a variety of different techniques, colourways and equipment. Individual members are welcome to bring a card for the group to make, but this is by no means essential. Most members are quite happy to make whatever their fellow group members bring for them.

In July, card makers' minds turn to ... Christmas! So we are already beginning to think about making a start on our Christmas cards.

New members are always welcome, and we offer a free taster session for anyone who thinks they might like to join us.

Do you want to learn how to make cards?

We are also thinking about running a couple of short courses. The first would take place in October or November and be a couple of sessions where you'd learn to make your own Christmas cards. Techniques would be adapted to the experience of the group so would be suitable for all levels from beginners to those with more experience.

The second would probably take place early next year and would be 4-6 sessions for new card makers, covering some of the basic but essential techniques.

No decisions have been made yet on location, day, time, price, etc. It would be great if anyone interested in either/both courses would contact me to let me know their availability and card making or crafting experience.

HEALTH WARNING - Card making is addictive - you may never have another "spare minute"!

Christine Fox
Dot Green

CHURCHES AND PUBS

June - St. Chads church Longford Derbyshire



We were welcomed to St. Chads church by the Reverend Michael Bishop who looks after eight churches in the area. He retires in September this year and he will be a hard act to follow. St. Chads church is in the beautiful village of Longford, Derbyshire, which is just beyond Ashbourne. The church is in parkland alongside Longford Hall. The church's origins can be seen in some of the arcading and pillars. It also has a Norman font.

The church dates from the 12th century with other work from the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. The tower is 15th

century with almost full height buttresses to each corner. Several of the group got the opportunity to climb the tower and ring the bells. The church is also a grade 1 listed building. This Anglican parish church was dedicated to St. Chad. The outer walls of the church were rebuilt at the beginning of the 14th century.

After an enjoyable morning at the church we made our way back towards Ashbourne and had an excellent lunch at Fairways garden centre where we were very well looked after.

Paul Kenneth

July - St Nicholas Parish Church Burton

Our July Churches and Pubs took us to St Nicholas Parish Church in the village of Burton in the Wirral. Thirty nine members attended and were greeted with a warm welcome by Rev Cathy Helm and offered tea, coffee and cakes.

The church stands in an elevated position above the houses of the village and is approached through Georgian gate posts. Relics of the earlier church dates back to the 12th century. The present church was built in 1721 and is built in red sandstone with a grey slated roof and is a grade 2 listed building.



After a very interesting talk of the history and key features of the church we enjoyed looking around the church and church grounds.

The day concluded with an excellent lunch at the White Lion, Childer Thornton.

George Jones

CRAFT AND NEEDLEWORK

At our last meeting we had a demonstration of how to crochet. Several members had expressed an interest in crocheting and Sonia Ellis kindly supplied us all with hooks, yarn and detailed instructions and showed us some of her work which gives us something to aspire to. Our next meeting is on the 13th July.

Marlene Brookes

CINEMA

We have had two trips to the Regent Cinema, Marple in the last couple of months.

"My Cousin Rachel" was quite enjoyable, but for those of us of a "certain age" not a patch on the previous film which starred Olivia de Havilland and Richard Burton.

"Hampstead" was a frothy feel-good film which sent us home with a smile on our faces.

Cinema Club has no waiting list; we are always pleased to see new members and at £5 a ticket, is excellent value for money. Come along and give it a try.

Sheila Harrop

CROWN GREEN BOWLING

We have enjoyed our bowling, although numbers are a bit lower when wet weather is expected. During April, 23 of us had a very pleasant meal at the Wycliffe hotel, Edgeley. Members are most welcome to join us on a Tuesday or Thursday morning. We play from 10am-12pm at Torkington Park, Hazel Grove.

The Bowling Group page on the High Lane U3A website gives more information, or you can contact me by e-mail bowlleader@highlaneu3a.org.uk or see me at our monthly meetings or just come along to the park.

Andre Lister

CURRENT AFFAIRS

The meeting in May was the day after we heard of the bomb attack at the Manchester arena. The first question we considered was whether we would be prepared to take our grandchildren to a large event such as a music festival or football match in the light of what had happened. Most of us felt that there were dangers in many activities today e.g. crossing the road or driving on the motorway and we should not change our way of life as that would mean the terrorists had won.

Regarding the then forthcoming election we discussed what determined how we vote for certain parties. For some it was the influence of parents, for others life experiences or a philosophy of life, or possibly the size of our bank balance. It is disturbing how many young people do not register to vote and the majority felt that voting should be made compulsory, even if only to register a no-vote. Another topic on the election was the trend for Prime Ministers to lead an almost presidential campaign with the focus on one politician.

A subject worrying many of our generation is the funding of social care and recent proposals for selling the family home to finance care. This must be worrying for those children who live at home with their parents because they cannot afford to buy for themselves. Could we not adopt the policies of Germany and Japan where from the age of 40, a ring-fenced tax is imposed to pay for social care in old age?

Marlene Brookes

This is a selection of the topics discussed at the June meeting.

DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY'S AGREEMENT WITH THE TORY GOVERNMENT: The group thought that the agreement was political bribery and was a disgrace, but could it be that it was the lesser of the two evils. There was concern from the group that this could open the door for more blackmail in the future.

GRENFELL TOWER - WHAT ARE THE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT?: Questions were raised as to how this cladding, manufactured by an American company, was allowed to be used in Britain but could not be used in the USA. Apart from tower blocks, could there also be a concern for many other public buildings, such as schools and hospitals. From the reports so far, this tragedy would seem to be the result of cost cutting and poor fire regulations. There is cause for reflection when you consider the recently announced cost of refurbishing Buckingham Palace at £369million and yet the local authority could not spend another £5,000 on better cladding: it was felt that the Buckingham Palace scheme should be postponed although one member believed that we have enough money to re-house the residents of Grenfell Tower and refurbish Buckingham Palace.

THE QUEEN'S HAT: Because the colours used on the Queen's hat made it look rather like the EU Flag, the question was whether this was deliberate. Most of the group thought that it was just coincidental although one member thought that it probably implied the Queen's support for the EU.

IS THE DECADE OF AUSTERITY DEAD? The present state of all our public services is becoming increasingly more fraught. Will the Government eventually make the decision to raise taxes, even though they are so reluctant to do so. Most other European countries pay higher taxes so what is it that prevents our Government from doing the obvious, is it simply their desire to hang on to power at all cost, even though the opinion polls have shown that most people are willing to pay more.

DOES BREXIT MEAN THAT BRITAIN WILL BE POORER?: The general feeling was that certainly in the short term this would be the case but there was a lot of optimism that in the longer term the economy would recover.

Pam Curley

GARDENING



In May a small group visited Rode Hall (better known for its snowdrop walks), but on this visit there was a mass of bluebells in myriad shades of blue. Timing has to be right for the bluebell visit, which is only available over a 10-day period around the beginning of May – but was well worth the trip.

Our June trip was to Abbeywood in Delamere where our members were impressed with the quality of the garden, especially the tropical section – with an imposing echium as centrepiece.

Walter Mason

GERMAN

After an extended break in May we have met regularly throughout June. At our last meeting we were visited by two visitors from Forchheim, Rosemarie Schmidt and her sister, Monika Schlemmer.



Rosemarie is a familiar figure to those members who took part in several exchange visits some years ago when she organised several memorable excursions, including a cruise down the Danube Gorge and a monastery visit with a most amazing meal produced by the monks.

We had recently been reading an interesting article on inheritance and Rosemarie was able to explain in detail the intricacies of inheritance laws. You are not allowed by law to disinherit your children in Germany! They can even demand a portion of their inheritance while one parent is still alive.

Our next meeting is on Friday, 7th July.

Marlene Brookes

HISTORY

June meeting – we had three topics

Barbara Farmer - the 'History of Ladies Golf'

The game of golf seems to have originated in Holland in the 14th century and was called 'colf'. Due to trading activities it transferred to Scotland where it was taken up vigorously. It seemed that Henry VIII's first wife, Katherine of Aragon, played golf as did Mary Stewart. However, one of the most famous women to promote ladies golf was Issette Pearson in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Her greatest claim to fame was the development of the 'handicap system', something which the British male golfers found very amusing. However, they were soon to laugh on the other sides of their faces when male golfers in the USA decided that this was a very good system and adopted it, with one or two slight amendments, which soon led to it being adopted in Britain.

Michael Sparrow - the 'Character of Saul of Tarsus'

In a fairly recent international poll as to who was the most influential person in the world, Saul of Tarsus, otherwise known as St Paul, was nominated as number one. There is no doubt that his missionary zeal to spread Christianity was boundless. This had made Michael think more about the character of the man rather than what he did and he tried to summarise it in several ways.

St Paul perceived Jesus as the natural progression of Judaism. He had great determination and bravery, very often prepared to go outside his comfort zone and being gaoled for doing so. He had a great conviction that God wanted him to do this and he had a vast knowledge of the world and an understanding of the wider culture and believed that the tenets of Christian faith could be lived in many different cultures and places. Although the exact details of the end of his life are not known, it is thought that he would probably have been in his fifties when he was imprisoned in Rome where he died.

Pam Curley - 'Robert Erskine Childers'

Erskine Childers was born in London in 1870 into a fairly wealthy Anglo-Irish family. He was educated in England, going to Cambridge where he obtained a law degree. At this time he was against home rule for Ireland, but over the following years began to change his mind. One influencing factor had been his experience in the Boer War, which he believed could have been avoided by negotiation, but Britain did not seem to want to do this.

After a sailing trip around the Fresian Islands off the North Sea coast of Germany, he wrote a book called 'The Riddle of the Sands', published in 1904, which drew attention to the lack of defences of the British coast in the North East in the event of a naval attack by Germany. Winston Churchill admitted that this had influenced him to have naval bases developed in Scotland including Scapa Flow. Childers was becoming more and more supportive of Irish Home Rule and against British Imperialism and even did some gun running during WW1 for the Irish, but during the war he held positions in the British navy due to his sailing skills.

After the war he moved his family to live in Dublin where he met Michael Collins and Eamon de Valera. He was very much against the Anglo-Irish Treaty, but he must have upset someone, because he was arrested for carrying a firearm by the anti-treaty supporters, for which he was executed in November 1922. His son, Erskine, became the President of Ireland from June 1973 until his death in November 1974.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 26 July when the topic will be 'Handel and the Foundling Hospital'.

Pam Curley

OPERA APPRECIATION

9th / 23rd May.

We saw The New York Metropolitan Opera’s production of The Pearl Fishers. With music by Bizet, this was a very colourful and beautifully sung performance.

13th / 27th June.

We stayed with the New York Metropolitan Opera for a performance of Don Pasquale.

This is a comic opera by Donizetti, based on the Ben Jonson play Epicine or The Silent Woman.

Anna Netrebko, who usually sings dramatic roles, demonstrated her versatility and fine sense of comic timing.

For the next meeting, I intend to continue our Metropolitan Opera season, with a performance of Madame Butterfly.

Meg Humphries

PHOTOGRAPHY

In the May Easter competition, Jeff had first place (St Thomas, High Lane decorated for Easter) and second (hanging egg). Derek and Walter were third equals.



The group spent most of the May meeting selecting a set of pictures for the proposed 2018 calendar – not an easy task! A provisional set of calendar pictures was displayed for the group leaders meeting. The quality of printing was noted as an important factor, but the proposed price seemed attractive. Meanwhile, group members are taking more photos before our final choice is made in July.

The topic for our July meeting competition is Churches.

Walter Mason

QUIZ GROUP

The Quiz group continues to torment our brains monthly on the fourth Thursday of the month. The June quiz had questions on geography, science, ‘in the news’ and some popular culture questions. Our refreshment break quiz was identifying people called Neil, Noel, Niall or Nell and some, what should be familiar but often weren’t, company logos. Here are some for you to identify. Answers are on the next page.



As a member U3A of the Greater Manchester Network of U3As, we are taking part in the Network quiz event in November. This will take place at Friend’s Meeting House in Manchester. We hope to do well!

Diane Saxon

There was a young woman named Bright
Whose speed was much faster than light.
She set out one day
In a relative way,
And returned on the previous night.
Arthur Henry Reginald Buller

TRAVEL

CORNWALL



We left a rainy Manchester to travel to St Agnes for a sunny start to an enlightening, fun and interesting tour of Cornwall. The Rosemundy House Hotel was comfortable, in a convenient and peaceful location, with very good food and service.

The well-planned and very full itinerary took us on the first day to the Lost Gardens of Heligan where our guide told us about its history and characters. The gardens were neglected after WW1 and clearance and restoration began in the 1990s and is still ongoing. Our guided tour included the vegetable garden, pineapple planting, a 150year old rhododendron and a war

memorial dedicated to the Heligan gardeners who fought in WW1.

The afternoon was spent back in St Agnes, on the north Cornish coast. Some of the group walked about a mile to Trevaunance cove, a beautiful surfing beach sheltered by dramatic cliffs. In the evening we were entertained by members of the Trelawny Male Choir.

The next day after free time in Falmouth we boarded a boat for a cruise on the river Fal to Truro. It was an interesting trip, passing the fishing village of St. Mawes, Mylor harbour and Trelissick garden. The Cathedral town of Truro has some attractive architectural gems, not least of which is the Anglican Cathedral itself, unusual in that it has 3 spires. The majority of the group joined an informative guided tour.

The Eden Project was our venue on the 3rd day. This was the 'dreamchild' of Tim Smit, who also worked on the restoration of Heligan. It took 2½ years to complete and opened to the public in 2001. One of the massive world-famous biomes, built in a disused China clay pit, houses a large simulated rainforest containing gigantic plants. We avoided the showers outside to experience the heat and humidity inside, an interesting experience although rather uncomfortable for some. The second biome simulates a Mediterranean environment, with aromatic herbs and colourful flowers. It also houses a 'hillside' full of South African protea plants.

In the afternoon we crossed the Cornish peninsular to Padstow. Celebrity chef, Rick Stein, has certainly left his mark on this pretty fishing village, with his large seafood restaurant, shop and cafe. It was very pleasant strolling around the harbour.....but beware of the seagulls! During our visit they stole a sandwich, ice cream cones from two of our party and a full Cornish pasty from another passer-by.

Our final day in Cornwall was spent in St Ives, with beautiful blue skies and sunshine. With a free morning in this picturesque part of the north Cornish coast, many of us just absorbed the atmosphere by strolling the cobbled streets or watching the seagulls and holidaymakers on the white sandy beaches and the boats in the harbour. Two members even braved the cold sea water to paddle on Porthminster beach!

After lunch our driver took us via the scenic route to Porthcurno and the wonderful Minack open-air theatre. It is a unique place, built into the cliffs high above the ocean. We were lucky enough to watch the cast rehearsing Dylan Thomas's 'Under Milk Wood'. One of our party watched the performance for quite a while, he said although he could hear every word he couldn't understand any of it! The Rowena Cade Museum told the story of the remarkable woman who created the theatre in the 1930s with the help of her gardener.

Logos are WWF, Starbucks, English Heritage, Cancer Research, Android

The visit to the Minack theatre was a fitting finale to what had been a fascinating and very well-organized tour. Thanks must go to Sue for this, and to Margaret and the travel team for their support and of course, to Malcolm our excellent coach driver. On the journey home he even went to the trouble of avoiding the usual motorway service stop and took us into Tewksbury for a visit to the Abbey and lunch by the river.

The general consensus was that this was the U3A's very best holiday to date.

Mavis Dean

CLAYTON HALL Tuesday 20th June 2017

A delightful day wonderfully organised by Pat Gorie. The sun shone all day. We travelled by train and tram to be warmly welcomed with coffee or a cold drink. After an instructive and informative talk on the history of the hall we were free to explore.

The Hall comprises two parts, a Victorian part and a Tudor part. The rooms were well furnished in the style of their times and each room had an enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteer who was only too happy to answer any questions we had. The Victorian part of the Hall evoked many memories for our members of our parents' and grandparents' homes when we were children.



The Tudor part of the Hall contained details of the fascinating history of the Hall which was prominent in the Civil War and also several documents relating to the history of the area. The Hall was a family home until three years ago and we could well imagine it would make a comfortable home.

I would highly recommend a visit, and with our wonderful bus passes, it is so easy to get to. Thank you to Pat for arranging this visit.

Jean Barrow

WALKING

TUESDAY WALK 9 MAY

12 members joined Walter's 4 ½ mile walk from Dane Bridge. This was a rare foray into Staffordshire and the walk climbed through bluebell woods, passing below Hanging Stone, before ascending the lower section of the long undulating Roaches ridge with views all around and punctuated by occasional sounds of a cuckoo.

After a coffee stop above one of the rocky outcrops, we descended through Back Forest, ignoring the Lud's Church path, and joined the wooded path from Roach End leading to Castle Cliff Rocks and an idyllic lunch stop as the sun warmed us. With wimberries/bilberries all around (but no wallabies any longer!) we gradually continued to the Hanging Stone, then skirted round Swythamley Hall, interesting wild flowers around, until turning sharply at Snipe Farm and going down towards the Wincle Microbrewery and Trout Farm.



All seemed to enjoy the route, especially as few had been on the paths and tracks before!

Walter Mason

WEDNESDAY U3A WALK 31 MAY

Leaders Joyce and Merlyn Young



14 walkers met at the Timbersbrook picnic car park for a seven mile walk up and around "Bosley Cloud".

Merlyn gave the history of the water powered silk mill on this site from 1777 and the later Silver Springs Bleaching and Dyeing Company powered by steam and employing 200 people. Following the war years the business declined and closed in 1961. Congleton Council cleared the site and opened the picnic area in 1980.

Joyce started the walk up the "Cloud" along lanes, bridle paths, through woodland and stony heathland to reach the trig point. Tree cover provided welcome shade as we ascended enjoying the rich flora of the hedgerows with scattering of wild flowers and bird calls. A buzzard was seen as we approached the higher tree line.

Trig point reached at 343m above sea level with 174m relative height gained. Congratulations to all on the hill bagging a "Marilyn". We enjoyed a refreshment stop and admired the 360 degree panoramic views of Peak District landmarks and the Cheshire plain. Refreshed, we descended along the cloud edge and steps to the road below, then across fields and minor road making our way to the river Dane. A short bridle path led us towards the canal and the only section of mud to cross. Not too difficult, boots mostly clean and one past leader successfully takes a high-level route.

Lunch stop was taken on the walkway adjacent to the canal overflow spillway with good seats for all. Still hot and sunny with hills and canal views, we watched a canal trust member carrying out weed clearance on the spillway. A few members went to admire the canal aqueduct over the river Dane and marvelled at its construction using gritstone blocks from the "Cloud Quarries."

An easy flat walk next along the canal towpath we admiring the rich bank side vegetation and the multi-coloured plastic cow at Crossley Hall Farm.

Leaving the canal on a short section of tarmac we then made our way back across a few fields with Merlyn kindly pruning the vegetation around the stiles. On the last stretch we passed through an animal sanctuary before following the country lane back to the carpark.

Group Leader David gave his thanks to Joyce and Merlyn for an interesting walk with something for everyone to enjoy.

Merlyn Young



TUESDAY WALK 13 JUNE

David Burke led a group of six plus one young Black Labrador on a 5.5 mile walk from the Hamlet of Ford near Chapel-en-le-Frith. Ford is believed to be the oldest part of Chapel. It was on the Salt Way from Cheshire to Yorkshire. Ford Hall dates back to at least the reign of Henry III (1216-1272)

It was a grey morning with a pleasant south westerly breeze, excellent visibility which later improved further with the arrival of sunny intervals. We parked in the grounds of Ford House and walked along a single track lane to Malcoff, where David drew attention to a 1702 cottage with a historic religious connection. We left

the lane and took to a grassy path which led to a sturdy stone bridge over the mainline Manchester to Sheffield railway, with an excellent view of the entrance to the 2.1 miles long Cowburn Tunnel, built in 1891.

A steep climb towards Shireoaks Farm silenced the enthusiastic chatter amongst the group until higher ground rewarded us with a spot to rest and an excellent panorama in crystal clear conditions. We followed the old bridleway towards Hayfield until we reached the Eastern flank of South Head. An excellent place to stop for coffee, survey the fabulous views around Chapel and take our group photograph. Several Curlews were busy in the area, we witnessed a flying display with bird song accompaniment.

Our onward route proceeded southward along Sheepfold to Beet Farm. At Upper Fold we left the lane and headed due South over little used paths, with knee length grass, which led to Breckhead, where we had our picnic lunch. Here the young Labrador was allowed to explore off the leash to her delight. Our walk then went through the hamlet of Wash and joined one of the writer's favourite local paths along the valley bottom, following the river, a tributary of Black Brook, towards Cornheys Farm and beyond to join the single track lane back to Malcoff and Ford. The hamlet of Ford still thrives after eight centuries, it certainly has a timeless feel about it!



On the way home some of the group stopped at a local hostelry and enjoyed a beer, whilst sitting in the sun.

David Burke

WEDNESDAY 21ST JUNE

Ten of us met in the small village of Chelmorton for a 6-mile triangular walk via Taddington and Flagg.



Passing the 13th century church dedicated to St. John the Baptist, we noted the unusual weather vane in the form of a locust. We then passed the spring which, until recently provided water for the village. The spring was apparently known by locals as "Illy Willy Water".

Proceeding cross country, we made a short diversion to the Five Wells Chambered Cairn, which was once a substantial 70 ft. diameter Neolithic tomb. Now only the remains of two burial chambers remain, as most of the stones were removed for buildings 200 years ago.

Apparently when it was excavated in the 19th century, the remains of 12 skeletons were found.

We then retraced our steps and continued towards Taddington, negotiating numerous stone stiles on the way. After skirting Taddington, we climbed via a country lane until we picked up a path through very pleasant meadow. We then met a lady whose dog who had obviously been in some water. The lady directed us to a small pool, which was not on the map. This pool was clearly well maintained as it was surrounded by a fence and had a garden seat which was welcomed by some. We took the opportunity to eat our packed lunch there, whilst admiring the numerous blue damsel flies which were darting and hovering around.

We then continued towards Flagg, a village noted for its point-to-point steeplechase races held each Easter. After proceeding along the only street in Flagg, we crossed a delightful meadow, rich in buttercups and other wild flowers, until we reached a farm where we picked up another path over fields which returned us to Chelmorton.

On arrival at our starting point, we were very grateful to note that we had parked near the Church Inn, where we all enjoyed some cool refreshments before returning home.

Jeff Mortimer



WALKING HOLIDAY REPORT 25 – 27 JUNE



For this year’s Walking Away Holiday the Walking Group stayed at the Rendezvous Hotel, Skipton, situated alongside the Leeds & Liverpool canal towpath about one mile from Skipton town centre. The service, rooms and food including packed lunches, provided by the hotel were considered very good by our group.

On the Sunday morning we travelled up to Hebden Bridge through thick mist at times to meet at the NT carpark at Midgehole (aptly named as midges were out

in force and biting). Merlyn and Joyce then led 24 of us on a three mile circular riverbank walk alongside Hebden Beck and up to Gibson Mill (NT) for our lunch time destination, by which time the rain had stopped. Merlyn had organised a guide to take a party round this old cotton mill while a second smaller party went on to climb up to Hardcastle Crag.

After-dinner entertainment at the hotel on Sunday evening was provided by Walter Mason who revisited some of our walking groups most memorable walks and personalities with a humorous talk based on his last 11 years as leader of the group.

The main walk on Monday led by Sam and Irene with assistance from Merlyn and Joyce, attracted 23 members of the group on a lovely sunny day for a 6.5 mile walk from the village of Gargrave. The scenic and varied route took us along the towpath of the Leeds & Liverpool canal, across fields, down quiet lanes and through woods, passing on the way, three great houses; Eshton House, Flasby Hall and Friars Head.



Our lunch stop for the walk was next to a group of 'Giants Graves' or 'Pillow Mounds' as they are shown on the map.

Back in Gargrave the beer garden at the Old Swan Inn was a most agreeable venue for cold beers all round.

Tuesday morning began with heavy rain but this eased sufficiently for 14 walkers to complete a 4.25 mile walk from the hotel along the canal towpath into Skipton Town and on to complete a circular walk in historic Skipton Woods.

Sam and Irene Chappell
Merlyn and Joyce Young

A flea and a fly in a flue
Were imprisoned, so what could they do?
Said the fly, "let us flee!"
"Let us fly!" said the flea.
So they flew through a flaw in the flue.

Ogden Nash