

Editor

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May 2010

### Chairman's Letter

As we enter our 10<sup>th</sup> year I thought it might be appropriate to look back over what has been achieved and also to look forward to our hopes and aspirations for the next decade. Not least for those of us who will still be around in 2020!

A good place to start is to look at the Aims of our National Body, the Third Age Trust and to see how closely High Lane comes to matching those aims.

#### *Aims of the Third Age Trust (taken from their mission statement)*

**1 To encourage and enable older people no longer in full time paid employment to help each other to share their knowledge, skills, interests and experience.**

**2 To demonstrate the benefits and enjoyment to be gained and the new horizons to be discovered in learning throughout life.**

**3 To celebrate the capabilities and potential of older people and their value to society.**

**4 To make the U3A accessible to all older people.**

**5 To encourage the development of new U3A'S where conditions are suitable and to support and collaborate with them.**

There is no doubt that High Lane U3A has been a success story since our inception in 2001. From small beginnings we have now grown to a membership of over 330 and your committee works very hard in promoting our U3A and the recruitment and welcoming of new members. We have 24 active groups led by energetic and capable leaders and whilst it could be argued that some have more of a "learning" emphasis than others, the interest groups are very much the heart and the driving force of our U3A.

We must not, however, rest on our laurels. Inevitably, some groups have a limited shelf life and it is so important that new groups are created. We have barely scratched the surface of subjects to be studied and there must be many of you who has a particular interest or hobby which could form the basis of a new group. You will receive strong support from the Committee and there are ample resources at the Third Age Trust covering an amazing range of subjects.

Where I do think that we have sometimes fallen short of the Aims is in the support of U3A activities outside High Lane. Pennine Link, the umbrella organisation for 7 local U3A's, was formed a few years ago for the exchange of ideas and information. This works quite well, but is less successful when putting on events where support from members is patchy to say the least. This is disappointing because a lot of work goes into the organisation of such events. I must stress that the other local U3A's are equally lukewarm in their support, it is not just High Lane.

The new North West Region is proving very active in organising events for all U3A's (and there are more than 50 of them) in the north west. We advertise these by announcement at our monthly meetings and in the newsletter and on the website. Admittedly, some of these events are some distance away, but not all, for instance the AGM with an interesting guest speaker, will be held in Manchester on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

On the whole however, I think we can be very proud of what has been achieved to date but there is much more to be done. U3A is unique, very different to those organisations which exist mainly to provide social and welfare support for older people. Provided we stick within the Aims I am sure we will grow and develop just as much in the next 10 years as in the first ten. Your committee intends to organise a suitable celebration of our 10<sup>th</sup> birthday and then to go on and grow High Lane U3A. A committee can only do so much however and we need your interest and enthusiasm to support our programme. And by the way let's all have some fun and enjoyment on the journey.

Steve Reynolds

## ***10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations***

Next year is the 10th Anniversary of the formation of the High Lane U3A. If you have any memories of the U3A which we could use for a potted history of the last 10 years, please email them to Derek

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<b>SUMMER SCHOOL - 12<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>				
<b>Session</b>	<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Afghanistan	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> July	10-4pm Lunch 12-1pm	1 Day	£15
Creative Writing	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> July	10-4pm Lunch 12-1pm	1 Day	£15
Energy from Waste/Recycling	Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	10-4pm Lunch 12-1pm	1 Day	£15
Islam and Muslim Awareness Workshop	Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> July	10-4pm Lunch 12-1pm	1 Day	£15

**GROUP LEADERS PLEASE NOTE** – Details of risk assessment can be found on the Group Leaders page of the High Lane U3A web site.

### **Discussion Group**



#### **Costs of Care for retired people**

On the 24th March Irene Bentley introduced the subject of the future costs of retirement in a Care Home, if such care should be needed. Currently the costs of care in a retirement home can be met by the forced selling of assets such as a house or other property. An individual's bank balance will also be taken into account. We discussed the proposals of the two major political parties to fund, either in part or in total, the costs of retirement for the citizens of Britain.

The Conservative party has said that if they are returned to power they will ask each of the general working population to make a contribution of £ 8000 upon reaching the age of 60 years. They have also said that the retirement age will be increased.

The Labour Party's proposals are that each individual will make a contribution of £20000 towards the cost of being in a care home, to be recovered when the individual dies, from his or her estate. They too say that the retirement age will have to be increased.

Obviously if a person has no assets the costs associated with being taken into care will be met by the local council. So one point of view is that legislation can favour poor people who have had no opportunity to accumulate any assets. Another point of view is that the same legislation will enable profligate persons to take advantage. Will either of these schemes work or are there other plans waiting in the wings?

#### **Stem Cell Research.**

On the 28th April the subject of Stem Cell research was introduced by Jim McDermott. This research has been severely restricted by the objections of the three major Religions, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The objections are based on moral and ethical grounds. Ethically it is seen as wrong to take a cell which has the *potential to develop* into a living being and use it for research. This is interpreted as killing a human being, even though it is only a cluster of cells. But this should be balanced against the benefits brought to the many.

Scientists believe that stem cells hold the key to curing many illnesses which affect major organs of the body such as the heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, spine, pancreas, brain etc. Unfortunately the "ethical and moral" minority seem to have won the argument for the time being in much the same way as the objectors to heart transplants did many years ago. It does seem grossly unfair that a small group of very influential religious people should dictate to the majority. It's not known if we in the West would be allowed to accept medical advances from say, China, where they are not shackled by any of the above religious ethics and are researching Stem Cells enthusiastically.

Jim McDermott.

## Family History Group



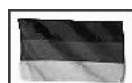
The Family History Group meets on the first and third Thursdays of the month during the Autumn and Spring terms in the computer room at Brookside Primary School, High Lane. We have the use of 18 computers with internet access, an essential tool for the genealogist. A fiche reader is available and we are building up a resource folder of additional information.

Our meetings are part general discussion and part computer based. While a basic knowledge of computers is useful it is not essential. Assistance will be provided on an individual basis, if required. Topics are varied and include Civil Registration, interpreting census information and Parish records. We are happy to add extra topics of general interest on request. You will also be shown how to access and search useful genealogy web sites. Tracing your family history can be a slow process, with a number of brick walls on the way. Perseverance often pays great dividends. After many hours of fruitless searching the moment you find your ancestor in the wrong place, or under a corruption of the surname, gives an enormous sense of satisfaction. Apart from the usual dodgy marriages (and non marriages!) and families where the youngest child is actually a grandchild, members have explored sources of WW1 military service and army medical records, including medals awarded, one found a cousin who died in a prisoner of war camp. Another member started with a photograph of a gravestone and a picture of herself and now has several files of information, tracing one family line back into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A further member's great grandfather married, had 7 children, his wife died, he then married her younger sister and had 3 more children! – How would you record that on a family tree? Come along and we will help you with this or any other problems.

We are hoping to start a new course in September. It will be aimed at new members but genealogists who wish to gain more experience will be more than welcome. We will publish our programme and dates nearer the time. The U3A requires us to cover our costs which include room hire. We do get this at a preferential rate but, to ensure we meet our commitments, we prefer members to pre-book and pay for a term in advance. If you have any questions about the group or would like more information please contact:

Pat Christopher, Sue Harlin, Jean Drinkwater

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## **German Group**

We continue to meet on most Friday mornings but, because of the participation of 4 members of the group in the trip to the Rhineland and various other holiday commitments, there will be gaps in our summer programme. I will keep members informed by email and phone calls of any changes to our normal pattern of meetings, Because one of our members has moved away, there is now a vacancy in the group for a new member who does need to have some knowledge of German *Marlene Brookes*

## HOLIDAYS AND VISITS GROUP.



- Tues May 25th. **Day trip to the Black Country Museum near Dudley. £23**  
Depart Village Hall at 0900 hrs.  
There are a few seats left on the coach if anyone else would like to join us.
- Thurs Sept 9th. **4 nights Coach tour to Norfolk. £293**  
This holiday is now fully booked. We have a waiting list.  
**FINAL PAYMENT AT THE JULY MEETING**
- Sat Oct 16th. **17 nights cruise in the Adriatic on P & O Arcadia.**  
16 people have already booked and there is still some availability on this cruise.

### 2011

We are already planning our Cruise for next year!!

- Thurs July 7th **14 nights-- Baltic Capitals cruise on P & O Arcadia.**  
You need to book early for the best discounts which are available only until June 30th.

If you are interested contact Margaret McDermott or Ruth Smith.

We hope to have more information on Holidays and Visits at the June meeting.

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### MARPLE U3A

There are a few places left on the holiday to the Azores from Sept 11th -- 25th.  
Contact Hazel Jones

Margaret Mc Dermott.

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#### **Needlework group – Marlene Brookes**

On 2nd May some of the group plan to visit the Wye embroidery shop in Bakewell to pick up some tips and materials. Future meetings will be announced at the monthly general meeting.

## Philosophy



The Philosophy group met on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March and the topic was “the meaning of life,” Where do we come from? What is the meaning of it all? Where are we going? How will we know we are there? What is the meaning of my life? After discussing the Christian, Judaism, and the Islamic views we agreed that they all come under the umbrella of 'The God-Centred Views.' This is that God has a plan for the universe and one's life is meaningful if one helps God to realise his plan. But do we know what that plan is? Next we looked at the Existentialist's who argue that one's life is not determined but is decided by the choices that one makes as one proceeds through life. As such one's ethical prime directives are FREEDOM-DECISION-ACTION. To round off the discussion we examined the philosophy of Albert Camus. Camus maintains that humans desires order, meaning and purpose in life but the universe is indifferent to humans' needs and the Absurd arises out of this conflict. Camus proposes three ways to resolve this dilemma:

- 1) Suicide, the final solution. He does not favour this method.
  - 2) Religious belief. He calls THIS solution 'philosophical' suicide
  - 3) Accept the Absurd. It is to accept and even embrace the Absurdity.
- Of all the 'isms' the group favoured Camus' third approach.

### Philosophy Report – April

The group met on 12 April and the subject was Multiculturalism. This comes under the Ethics of philosophy as it addresses the values that one lives by. In short multiculturalism is the acceptance of different cultures and all that they embrace. No one cultural is to be more favoured more than the other. This approach raises conflict as the host culture often feels that they are being disadvantaged. For example, in the UK when filling in official forms the Irish, the Scots and the Welsh record their separate nationalities whilst the English record themselves as British. Another area of concern is in a time of national conflict will the newer cultures support their adopted country. Multiculturalism also assumes that a culture can be transplanted and that the immigrants want to maintain their old culture. We looked at the criticisms of the Canadian policy enacted in 1971. Each year the 'cultures' meet at festivals which some see as folkloric Disneyland. People come away from the festivals seeing all Greeks as Zorbas, and all the Ukrainians as Cossacks. Christmas has been replaced by 'Winterfests.' In 1994 the anti-racists Writers Union of Canada sanctioned a conference which excluded whites. When Ben Johnson won a gold medal at the Seoul Olympics, he was hailed as the great Canadian star. Days later when the medal was rescinded because of a failed drug test, he became the Jamaican immigrant. He quickly went from being one of *us* to being one of *them*. Because of the growing unpopularity of multiculturalism its official status has been downgraded from a ministry, to directorate, to a department. Maybe the USA approach which puts all immigrants into the melting pot and then they emerge as US citizens is the more successful method to deal with immigrants.

## Reading Group



The Reading Group read the following two books recently:-

**Burnt Shadows** by Kamila Samshie, 2009

'Unfolding in four sections, the novel traces the shared histories of two families, from the final days of the second world war in Japan, and India on the brink of partition in 1947, to Pakistan in the early 1980s, New York in the aftermath of 11 September and Afghanistan in the wake of the ensuing US bombing campaign.'

During the discussion group members suggested that the book dealt with the following themes; political background to major historical events, colonialism, prejudice, human communications and the effects history can have on our lives. There were eleven group members contributing to the discussion and all said that they had enjoyed the book very much and that they would recommend it to a friend.

Hoping that anyone deciding to read this book will find it just as enjoyable as we did.

Pam Curley

### **Remains of the Day** by Kazuo Ishiguro

This was a very thought provoking read, enjoyed by twelve out of the thirteen members of the group.(After our discussion the odd one out thought maybe she had dismissed it too hastily)

It is the third novel by Japanese-British author Kazuo Ishiguro and appears on the Times" Best 100 Novels" and is one of the most highly regarded post-war British novels.

Several themes are tackled – Dignity; Social constraints; Loyalty and politics; Love and relationship;. Memory and perspective

The title refers to evening when a person can reflect on a day's work, it also refers to the last vestiges of Great Britain's grand houses and of overseas empire.

The novel tells the story of Stevens, an English butler who dedicates his life to the loyal service of Lord Darlington. Through the novel he reflects on his unswerving loyalty to his employer whose connections with Nazi Germany he never dreams of questioning, his relationship with his Father and the unfulfilled mutual love between himself and the Housekeeper Miss Kenton

Would we recommend it? The feeling was mixed so decide for yourselves...

Louanne Collins

### **WALK REPORT - MARCH 2010**

Steve Reynolds had a group of ten for his walk, who made a democratic decision to forgo the long drive to the pleasures of Dovedale, because of the possible snow forecast on the Peak District roads. Instead we gathered at Roman Lakes, and set off by the River Goyt. Strawberry Hill was ablaze, not with strawberries, but with daffodills, as we dodged the puddles on the track to Greenclough Farm. There we headed upwards by bridleways, quiet roads, and steep paths to the plain wooden cross on Cobden Edge, a beacon point of 327metres, or 1009 feet. Hardy church people of Marple might have been making pilgrimage to the cross for early service on Good Friday morning, two days after us.

We were not so hardy, so lingered only briefly to scan the extensive, but misty view towards Cheshire and Manchester, before moving on to Cobden Edge Farm and Whetmorhirst. There the footpath went elusively through a picturesque house garden, before following the stream bank down to Gibb Lane and Tarden. Then it was an easy descent from the Golf Club House and Linnet Clough Scout Camp, past banks of Ransom (wild garlic) and Bottom's Hall to an early sandwich lunch by the lakeside.

The rain had been minimal, but the air was unseasonably cold, so we were pleased that Steve had kept an alternative up his sleeve, as we thanked him for his very pleasant 4 mile walk.

### **WALK REPORT – APRIL 2010**



A group of 14 walkers tackled the 1659 feet (506 metres) of Shutlings Loe, “The Cheshire Matterhorn”, in ideal conditions. It was dry underfoot, with a milky sun and balmy breeze, and the steady climb from Wildboardclough with its steep last section was worth it with the extensive views from the summit trig. point.

After carefully descending a short rough section, we picked up a grassy sheep track, which easily led down to the alternative footpath, and a retreat towards the valley and Bank Top Farm. A very pleasant track led northwards to the valley road, where a stroll on the road was followed by another track past attractive cottages to St. Saviour's Church. This was open, so we had a brief visit to view the surprisingly large interior until hunger pangs caused a return to the Crag Inn. Food was slow to come, but eventually welcome.

All seemed to enjoy the 3 - 4 mile route, and we appreciated the occasional sounds of lark, curlew, and pheasant, and glimpses of an unidentified bird of prey and an unperturbed heron in this quietly beautiful part of Cheshire.

*Walter Mason*



**The Walking Group's walk on 26th May is five miles between Old Glossop and the Longdendale valley. Various terrain includes gentle and moderate gradients and some rough moorland. Excellent views if the weather is kind. Meet at 9.30am. Pub lunch.**

#### **Holidays and Visits Group trip to Victoria Baths, Manchester on March 17**



Once upon a time, a clean-living Manchester man raised his head, sniffed the air and decided he didn't like the smell. So he invented baths for everyone.

As the town hall architect, supported by city fathers who shared his dream, Henry Price was able to administer a good scrubbing to the great unwashed by persuading them to take off their clothes in public. He did this by designing a colossal water palace where his fellow citizens could wallow in a fragrant tub, go for a swim or sweat out the grime of honest toil in a Turkish bath.

Well before the Queen Empress finally encountered someone more important than herself (ie God) Henry, like Manchester's great and good, had feared a cholera or typhus epidemic even more than scenting a drain cleaner on his way home from work. But it was not until after a change of monarch that the magnificent Victoria Baths in Hathersage Road was born in 1906, costing a whopping £58,000, more than double the usual. In keeping with the self-importance of Britain's industrial powerhouse, a mere single pool was not enough – it had to have three, each with its own separate entrance and facilities. This was Edwardian Britain flaunting its sense of superiority, a terracotta and red brick temple of self-belief, housing great sweeps of artistic glass and tiling with top quality fittings that would grace a stately home. As well as the swimming pools and the Turkish baths, private tubs with lashings of hot water and a laundry were available at this jewel among the city's 40 baths and wash-houses. And despite the rust and the rot around the edges, it's still there for us to marvel at.

Under the gaze of the Angel of Purity in her magnificent stained glass window, 31 members of the Holidays and Visits group joined the Wednesday afternoon guided tour around what is, in part, a building site as conservation work continues.

Since the baths closed in 1993, local people have raised £4.7million, most of it lottery money, but up to £20million may be needed to bring one pool and the Turkish baths back into public use and fully restore the grade 2\* listed building.

Visionary though the city's good burgesses were, they couldn't have calculated the sheer enjoyment that the baths, latterly called High Street Baths, would offer succeeding generations. You swept in under magnificent tiled arches to reach the men's first class pool and swam under chandeliers (with good old gas on tap in case the new-fangled electric lights failed). Facilities were less grand for the men's second class pool and even less so for the women's but at least the strict segregation of the sexes was relaxed on Sunday mornings from 1914.

A swim cost 6d in old money when the water was fresh on 'clean' days but as it got murkier, the price went down to 4d on 'dirty' days. It reverted to full price after it was filtered and changed, every fourth day. The appearance of Captain Chlorine in 1929 changed all that.

The baths' most famous swimmer, Sunny Lowry trained here to become, in 1933, only the fifth English woman to swim the Channel.

In later years, when the weather became a bit parky, they boarded over the gala pool and Phil Moss or Percy Pease and their orchestras – and sometimes the great Ted Heath band – played for dancing. If you were lucky, Frankie Vaughan would serenade the soft shoe shufflers and many a courting couple's love lives flourished here, especially when they turned out the lights for 10 priceless minutes for 'Dancing in the Dark!'

Today, the complex earns its keep hosting fairs, exhibitions and group visits, backed up by 800 Friends of Victoria Baths. And it has a nice little earner as a backdrop for TV dramas such as Life on Mars. We were able to watch Barry Gibb back in his home city in a fantasy film in which he disappeared inside the baths' fearsome Aeratone Jacuzzi. And the Friends are still trying to track down footage of the late Anthony Wilson and his floating stage. All jolly good fun. But worryingly, despite 17 years of piecemeal restoration, the future of this star of the BBC's Restoration series is still uncertain. The current recession kyboshed a plan to create a hotel and any developer faces a daunting challenge in creating a modern business where major structural changes are ruled out.

Meanwhile, the trustees are in it for the long term, working to win a place in people's hearts for this faded Edwardian beauty. Let's hope they succeed.

Tony Holt

For your information, due to unfortunate circumstances two talks have been rearranged. The speaker on 14<sup>th</sup> April was Barry Jackson (Vexillology - Flags of the World) – who was formerly the June speaker, has exchanged with Malcolm MacFarlane (Golden Oldies), who will now give the June presentation.

U3A Mellor and Marple Bridge Open Garden Group  
**Proposed Programme - November 2009 - October 2010**  
*up dated 11/11/09*

**November 11<sup>th</sup>**

Kate Lomax - 075314 53787 - Autumn Hanging Baskets.£40 fee. Confirmed **December 9<sup>th</sup>**

Mary Hoult - 427 7255 - an illustrated talk on her award winning Money and Thyme show garden at RHS Tatton Flower Show 2009. Donations to Cancer Research. Confirmed

**January 13<sup>th</sup> 2010**

Garden Quiz

**February 10<sup>th</sup>**

Growing Vegetables/fruit in containers, a presentation by David Hampsey 0161 442 7190 £30.

**March 10<sup>th</sup>**

*Talk, Mary Hoult - Mellor Open Gardens- How the idea developed. To be confirmed*

**April 14<sup>th</sup>**

Wildlife in Stockport and in our Gardens, a presentation by Emma Wilson, SMBC Nature Development Team, 474 4560/4552

**May 12<sup>th</sup>**

Visit to Adlington Hall - 01625 827595 - Head Gardener Anthony O'Grady - £5 per person for guided bluebell walk at 11.00am. £25 deposit paid, tea room booked, menu available, advance orders required.

**June 9<sup>th</sup>**

Hanging Basket Workshop by Kate Lomax 075314 53787. Wicker baskets £15- £16, moss baskets £25

**July 14<sup>th</sup>**

Visit to One House Nursery, Macclesfield - Dave Tipper 427 4665 -confirmed ?leave Marple 9.45 arrive One House Nursery 10.30; visit gardens tea and cakes, cost £5 pp please note - terrain up and down.

**August 11<sup>th</sup>**

U3A Flower and Produce Show. confirmed

**September 8<sup>th</sup>**

An illustrated presentation by Anne Gunning, Garden design through time and principles of design - confirmed

**October 13<sup>th</sup>**

Dunham Massey' s New Winter Garden; Talk by Damian Harris, The Head Gardener, 0161 941 1025

TBA

Other suggestions to Judy Rhodes, or Margaret Hogg--- *Italics not yet confirmed/in bold confirmed*

**U3A Mellor and Marple Bridge Open Gardening Group.**

**Show Schedule**

**The Show is to be held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> August 10.**

**Classes.**

- 1. Sweet Peas.**
- 2. Potatoes.**
- 3. Beans, any variety.**
- 4. Tomatoes.**
- 5. Courgettes.**
- 6. Posy.**
- 7. Single Flower.**
- 8. Hydrangea Heads.**
- 9. Indoor Plant.**
- 10. Unusual Shaped Vegetable.**
- 11. Fruit and / or Conserves.**
- 12. Worst Failure.**

**You may enter as many classes as you wish. You may also enter as many times as you wish in each category.**

**GOOD LUCK !!**

**DI N I N G G R O U P**



51 members of the Dining Group (52 booked but one was unable to attend due to ‘volcanic ash’) had a very enjoyable three course lunch at The Dome in Buxton during April. An extremely pleasant venue and the meal ably prepared and served by students on the catering course at the University of Derby. The building, once a magnificent 18<sup>th</sup> Century stable block built to house the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire’s horses and servants is now part of the University of Derby in Buxton.

Our next venue is to be The Servant’s Hall at Lyme Park in June on a, hopefully, beautiful evening. There are already 35 people booked (the maximum we are allowed) and a waiting list.

## "PO TATERS"

Some people never seem motivated to participate, but are just content to watch while others do the work. They are called "Spec Taters".

Some people never do anything to help, but are gifted at finding fault with the way others do the work. They are called "Comment Taters"

Some people are very bossy and like to tell others what to do, but don't want to soil their own hands. They are called "Dick Taters".

Some people are always looking to cause problems by asking others to agree with them. It is too hot or too cold, too sour or too sweet. They are called "Agie Taters".

There are those who say they will help, but somehow just never get around to actually doing the promised help. They are called "Hezzie Taters".

Some people can put up a front and pretend to be someone they are not. They are called "Immy Taters".

Then there are those who love others and do what they say they will. They are always prepared to stop whatever they are doing and lend a helping hand. They bring real sunshine into the lives of others. They are called "Sweet Po Taters".

**Items for the next newsletter to be with the editor by**

30<sup>th</sup> June 2010