

HIGH LANE U3A NEWSLETTER



www.highlaneu3a.org.uk

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July 2012

We were all sorry to learn of the death of John Speakman who died peacefully at home last month (which was what he wanted). Jean Speakman wishes to thank all members of the U3A for the cards and sincere condolences sent at that time. The service at the church went well and £363 was donated to the Macmillan nurses; the family thanks all who made a contribution.

History Group



The History Group meeting on the 2nd May was given a very interesting presentation by Michael Sparrow on John Ruskin, an unusual and very influential person of the Victorian era. His interests ranged through all the arts, to architecture, education and social theories. Ruskin was a prolific non-fiction writer, including his multi-volume work entitled 'Modern Artists'. He was a great advocate of Victorian Gothic in preference to classical architecture. His ideas had international approval and drew praise from such renowned figures as Tolstoy, Proust and Ghandi.

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GERMAN GROUP



After a few disrupted weeks because of holidays and family commitments, we are now settling back into our normal weekly routine. Recent topics covered have included, Salvador Dali, the history of Meissen porcelain and the state of Prince Philip's bladder. In recent weeks we have enjoyed some German specialities, including Luebeck marzipan (delicious!) and Schwarzer Peter (Black Peter) from Dresden (not so good!)
Marlene Brookes

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP



We are proposing to start a photography group in September. It will be led by Brian Beardwood who is a very recent member of our U3A and has considerable photographic experience.

The format is still to be decided but will probably start with deciding a suitable subject each month, each member then taking their own photographs of the subject, and then getting together to compare and discuss. Later on, applications for photographs such as calendars will be covered.

Once things are underway Brian is very much hoping that members will assist in the running of the group.

We have already started a list of members who are interested, in the first instance please let Pat Christopher know if you would like to be included.

ooOoo

CRAFT AND NEEDLEWORK



Our group had a very successful day at the Jubilee Fun Day in the Village Hall. We displayed a variety of items, including knitted toys and cushions made by Lottie Minchin, patchwork bags and cottage tissue holders from June Gibbs, scarves made by Sonia Ellis, spectacle cases and bookmarks from Amy Summers and cards made by Bertha Dargue, Lesley Edwards and Margaret McDermott and myself. We managed to sell most of our stock and also raised £50 from the sale of raffle tickets in aid of Children with Leukaemia. First Prize was a patriotic Jubilee bear made by June Gibbs. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, 12th July.

Marlene Brookes

Churches and Pubs



St. Giles, Great Longstone, Derbyshire – 6th June 2012

What a beautiful day for a ride into Derbyshire, and the very attractive village of Great Longstone, bedecked with flags and bunting for the Jubilee weekend.

The incumbent, Father Christopher Benson, was waiting to greet us at St. Giles, patron saint of beggars, (although there isn't much sign of poverty in Great Longstone) to whom the church is dedicated.

The church was originally fourteenth century, then restored in 1872. Norman Shaw, Victorian architect, was responsible for adding and replacing most of the windows, especially the original perpendicular east window which is now wider and, his own design.

The beautiful oak roof is one of the highlights of the church, with its' finely carved bosses (and we found the milkmaid the vicar mentioned in his talk!) The vicar also felt the marble pulpit a little out of place in this church.

Five fine hatchments adorn the walls of St. Giles, commemorating two well known families of the village, the Wright and Eyre family. Six bells hang in the tower.

The Lady Chapel was originally the family pew of the Eyre family of Hassop. It was also good to hear that the church is left open daily, quite a rarity these days.

We had time to stroll around the village, taking in the lovely cottage gardens, and the exhibits for the Jubilee contest, before adjourning to the "Crispin" for lunch. This is a very cosy, comfortable village pub, with obliging and cheerful staff, serving excellent food.

On the vicar's recommendation, we stopped at Wardlow on the way home, at the small Victorian church, to view their flower festival, and sample the tea and cakes! Lovely end to another good day, and the rain held off.

Pam Andrew

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Strollers Group



The walk on 25th June was again attended by 7 members, all ladies this time! Where are the men of High Lane U3A? We walked at a leisurely pace along the canal in the direction of Marple. We came off at Windlehurst Hall and headed towards Bateson's and from there we circled back along the canal to High Lane. The ground was a bit muddy after all the rain but the company was great. A few members then enjoyed a well earned coffee break at Blueberries.

The next walk will be held on Monday 30th July meeting as usual at the Village Hall in High Lane at 9.45am. Come on you gentlemen of High Lane U3A don't let the side down let's see you on the next stroll! We will decide where we are going nearer the time as much depends on the weather.

June Gibbs

WALK REPORT – WEDNESDAY 30 MAY 2012



Merlyn and Joyce Young led a group of 20 from Wildboarclough to Three Shires Head, a favourite place for many, and steeped in folklore. The gentler sun and a somewhat cooler day was a godsend, as we ascended 700 foot or so by Cumberland Brook to Danebower Hollow, all part of Lord Derby's lands. Then we were higher than Shutlings Loe! There were widespread views, but a thick haze was hiding the distant places. A gently descending track led to the Leek – Buxton road, over an awkwardly placed safety barrier, and down to the infant River Dane, whose stream valley displayed many relics of a quarrying and coalmining past.

A winding path followed the growing stream down to Three Shires Head. As we walked along, grouse, skylarks, buzzards, lapwings and cuckoos were enlivening and serenading our progress. After lunch, we reluctantly left the picturesque pools and waterfalls, on a stony path climbing and rounding Cut-thorn Hill. Then it was a relief to have a downhill path across grassy fields, and to go down a minor road past Crag Hall, with its multi-horsetroughs, back to our cars at Clough House.

Thanks to Merlyn and Joyce for a toughish but lovely 5½ mile walk.

WALK REPORT – TUESDAY 12th JUNE



With the agreement of the 5 walkers, Roger Drinkwater proposed a longer 7 mile walk from Tegg's Nose. This enabled a lovely circuit from the quarry faces, down Ward's Knob, past Teggsnose and Bottoms Reservoirs, and on woodland paths by Greenbank and Trentabank up to the Forest Chapel for a well earned lunch.

After a look at the church, we followed Charity Lane, before veering left onto a forest path descending slowly towards Hacked Way Lane, then field paths to Clough House Farm. No right of way through the farm, so a short detour was needed on rough hillside, down to stepping stones, which led to the steep Saddlers Way back to Tegg's Nose.

A good thousand foot of climbing had tested our stamina, and the low clouds had spoilt some of the distant views, but it had been a lovely walk on good paths, through lush vegetation and woodland. Lots to see - jays, buzzard and swallows, the small butterfly-like Chimney Sweeper moth (black with white wing tips), a fragrant orchid and masses of yellow rattle. But for me, the highlight was a field full of yellow mountain pansies. Normally so rare, and not seen for years and years, but near Ward's Knob, and encouraged by sheep-free, minimum cow grazing, and perhaps other tricks, countryside management had produced a lovely vista of charming miniature faces.

So, lots of thanks to Roger for his walk.

Walter Mason

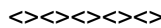
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READING GROUP



Our book for June was Hannah's Dream by Diane Hammond, a 'heart-warming' tale of an elephant, kept in isolated captivity for over 40 years and her keepers' and friends' efforts to have her transferred to a pachyderm sanctuary where she can live out her final years with other elephants. It was an inoffensive read, but it was difficult not to feel that the author was hoping that the Walt Disney studios would snap it up as a film script for an elephantine "Free Willy." Some of the 'adorable' characters were quite well fleshed out - Sam, the keeper and the founder of the zoo, Max (Maxine) Biedelman but on the whole "the story is a bit overly nice as are the characters" - and that from someone who loved and recommended the book!

About half the group didn't bother to read "Hannah's Dream" and I can't say I blame them. Even to an animal lover, it was overly sentimental. The one serious point that was made, however, is how unpleasant life is for larger animals in zoos and whether keeping them, (other than to breed endangered species) can be justified in this day and age.
Marlene Brookes

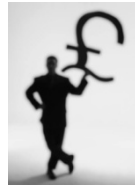


Discussion Group



On the 30th May the group discussed "The Olympic Games-what are they for?" There are currently five Games organised by the IOC every four year period (an Olympiad). The five Games are the Summer Games, the Winter Games, the Para-Olympic Games, the Youth Summer Olympics and the Youth Winter Games. The Youth Games are an innovation. It is reported that the only recent Games to show a profit were the L.A. Games in 1984. The Games are funded by the host city and the Government of the country. The 2012 Games are reported to be costing 9.2 billion pounds and so far there is no indication that this sum will be recovered. However, it does represent a golden opportunity for some commercial interests to get continuous worldwide advertising and the question has to be asked "What does Britain get out of it?" Are the Games just a vehicle for the international commercial interests? The individual athletes can certainly profit by winning in their individual sports; they are usually selected for sponsorships and often their nation rewards them with a National honour. T.V, radio and other forms of Media profit by it, the I.O.C. profits greatly by owning the rights to the use of the terms Olympic, Olympic Games and the use of the 5 Olympic rings. In fact the I.O.C. is in profit to the tune of many

billions of dollars. What happens to it? When the members of the I.O.C. go around the world inspecting would-be host countries for suitability they pay for nothing and are treated like Royalty. Our discussion group could not reach any conclusions about the purpose of the Games so perhaps the best thing to do is to sit back, enjoy it, forget all about the term "amateurism" and let the real winners get on with it.



On the 27th June the topic for discussion, introduced by Margaret Mc Dermott was "What does it mean to be British?" In the past few weeks we have had the euphoria and flag waving of the Jubilee, the Euro 2012 Football competition, the Olympic Torch relay last Sunday and the Olympic Games to come with Danny Boyle's ideas for the opening ceremony showing Britain as pastoral and rural.

The origins of Britishness come from the formation of the Kingdom of Great Britain in 1707 and citizens of Great Britain began to think of themselves as British and also English, Scottish and Welsh. What characterises us as British and binds the people together while distinguishing us from the rest of the World? What are the values that best describes us and make us proud to be British? Britishness is about valuing freedom, fair play, tolerance, inventiveness. self deprecating humour and irony. Our ideas of freedom and tolerance have developed over the centuries from Magna Carta, the 1689 Bill of Rights, Wilberforce's abolition of the Slave Trade, the Reform Act and the Suffragettes. The belief in the equality of every citizen perhaps best describes the British character. It is what led to the creation of the N.H.S., which distinguishes us from the rest of the World.

The B.B.C. and the N.H.S. shape Britishness because they are powerful voices in the history of our Islands and possess a quality which is a key to our identity. Other nations don't have them. They also don't have Belisha Beacons, Yorkshire Pudding, the Greenwich pips, the chimes of Big Ben etc., etc. Is Britishness the tireless enthusiasm for poking fun at others whilst always laughing at ourselves? We seem to now prefer coffee instead of tea, lager and wine are becoming more popular than pints of beer and chicken Tikka Marsala is replacing fish and chips as a national dish. Our football teams are rubbish and the only chance of winning an Olympic medal is in the sitting down sports of cycling, rowing and sailing. We invented most of the world's games but rarely succeed in any of them. We have a worldwide reputation for being consistently good losers. The British are very proud of the Royal Family and pageantry which is unique in the world. They are very lenient and accepting of other cultures and religions. They respect other people - look at the way they queue; where else in the world are people prepared to stand in line so patiently? An American psychologist thinks that a stiff upper lip, keeping calm and carrying on is a very strong component of Britishness, ex-pats living in the U.A.E. give the impression that being British revolves around wearing a red, white and blue hat, eating

coronation chicken, scones with cream and jam and drinking copious quantities of tea. However some ex-pats give the impression that the British are a skimpily dressed race, frequently drunk and of loose morals. Others who you sometimes see bullying security guards, car park attendants and taxi drivers might lead one to believe that the British are arrogant and bombastic. The main traits communicated to friends in the U.A.E. are standing up for that which is right, championing the underdog, playing fair, honesty, a well developed sense of justice, the art of queuing, an understanding of roundabouts and the ability to make a nice cup of tea.

Jim McDermott

HOLIDAYS GROUP

Impressions and Highlights of Tuscany May 3rd - 10th



Mediaeval architecture, numerous important (?) artists, piazzas, frescoes, 30+ flavours of ice-cream, noisy celebration of Juventus becoming league champions, graffiti, trains frequently late, large groups of teenagers roaming the streets (noisy but well-behaved and moderately dressed), pizza, pasta and Zuppa.

Hotel Ercolini built in the 19th century; excellent food and service.

Montecatini Alto reached by 1898 funicular railway, the world's oldest in continuous operation; fantastic views; 12th century church with artefacts celebrating St. Barbara, patron saint of the Italian Navy, artillery men, military engineers, miners and oilworkers etc. - a very busy lady! Dominated by Brunelleschi's dome the cathedral of Florence has a wonderful decorative facade but very plain interior. Piazza della Signoria surrounded by huge statues - David, Hercules, Rape of the Sabine etc.

The walled mediaeval town of Lucca; Puccini's house and museum with background music from La Boheme; the glass coffin with the body of St. Zita, patron saint of domestic servants, in San Frediano church.

The picturesque town of San Gimignano with its skyline of fourteen tower-houses and crowded 12th century streets.

The Miracle Square in Pisa; the Leaning Tower; one of the most beautiful cathedrals in the world with a superb gilded ceiling and huge pulpit; the echo effect of the Baptistry; the cemetery including innumerable tombs and wonderful frescoes with explanations in English. The final Gala dinner: Cornmeal Porridge, Tuscan Soup, Fusilli Pasta, Turkey with Plum Sauce, Tiramisu and Almond Biscuits to dip in dessert wine.



OCTOBER 16th 2012 - Kendal. The Quaker Tapestry Museum and Blackwell House.

£25 per person Deposit £10. Balance to be paid at August meeting.



AUGUST 22nd 2012 BBC TOUR to Media City Salford - One place left. £6.75

PERSONAL IMAGE COURSE

To all members who have booked for the personal image course; please note that because of a problem with the floor the Village Hall will be closed for the week beginning July 30th. This course will now start on August 7th.

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Experience enables you to recognize a mistake every time you repeat it.

You can't make anything idiot proof because idiots are so ingenious. ~ Ron Burns

Never argue with a fool - people may not notice the difference

Items for the September newsletter to be sent to the Editor by Friday 31st August 2012. Thank you.