

Editor
Jean Drinkwater
e mail: newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Stockport College Summer School courses are set out below, should you be interested please fill in an application form (available at the U3A meeting), and send, in freepost envelope supplied, by Friday 6th June 2008 to Stockport College.

Stockport College Summer School 2008
14th – 18th July

Session	Venue	Day/Date	Time	Duration	Cost
Impact of China's Development on the Western World	TCC	14 th July 08	10-4 pm	1 Day	£14
Blooms & Balloons	HMC	14 th July 08	10-4 pm	1 Day	£14 plus £5 for resources
Introduction to Computing	TCC	15 th & 16 th July 08	10-4 pm	1 Day	£14
Progression in Computing	TCC	15 th & 16 th July 08	10-4 pm	2 Days	£21
Introduction to Home Interiors	TCC	17 th & 18 th July 08	10-4 pm	2 Days	£21 Plus £2 for resources
Power Point Presentations	TCC	17 th & 18 th July	10-4 pm	2 Days	£21
Healthy Living/ Complementary Therapies	TCC	18 th July	10-4 pm	1 Day	£14

- TCC – Town Centre Campus
- HMC – Heaton Moor Campus

TABLE TENNIS GROUP

It is now over three months since we started the Table Tennis Group and we are having a regular attendance of more than ten players. Although we are of mixed ability, our mornings at the Woodside Tennis Club are great fun and are enjoyed by all. There is still room for new players who would be most welcome. To minimise waiting time between games of singles, we have adopted the International Rules of 11 up games. This works well but we are seeking another table (second hand) to give a continuous knock-about facility. If anyone knows where one maybe available, please contact Mike Snape.

INAUGURAL OUTING OF THE U3A CHURCHES AND PUBS GROUP

5th MARCH 2008 – Report provided by Fred Sleigh

Some thirty U3A members set out on the first visit of this new group, travelling to the Church of St. Giles at Cheadle, Staffordshire and later to the Yew Tree Inn at Cauldon near Waterhouses, also in Staffordshire.

St. Giles' was built to the designs of the architect Augustus Welby Pugin in the early 1840s and consecrated on August 31st 1846. The cost was borne by the Earl of Shrewsbury, who lived at Alton Towers nearby, apparently with no expense spared and a free hand for the up-and-coming 24-year-old Pugin. The only limitation was that local building materials and local craftsmen should be employed wherever possible. The result was a church interior recalling the cheerful decorative style of the old medieval churches, except that cheerfulness became exuberance under Pugin's direction and coloured motifs covered almost every available space on the walls. It must have made a sensational impact on the people of the mid nineteenth century and it continues to impress today.

St. Giles' is, without doubt, a unique church and would repay a visit by anyone interested in church design and architecture. Our guide for the visit was Mr. Peter Cartledge (assisted by his wife Doreen) who has been associated with the church all his life, having begun serving as an altar boy at the age of eight. He gave us a detailed description of the church and its history plus some wry comments about people who had been involved in the life of the church.

The Yew Tree Inn , Cauldon, is an unremarkable building, idyllically situated between a quarry and a cement works. On entering, the first impression is of a cross between a museum and a junk shop and this impression remains up to the time of leaving. Nevertheless, this public house has received several accolades from consumer organisations as being a place which people like to visit without much regard for the usual standards of acceptability. Among the identifiable artefacts on display are farm implements, animal traps, numerous ancient guns and a few spears. The second-hand seating has obviously seen better days in much grander establishments. At least eight 'Polyphons' – clockwork musical boxes - using large perforated metal discs – are hung on the walls and will still play a tune on insertion of a 2p coin. There is also a collection of old valve-operated radio receivers. This is undeniably a pub with "character" – of a sort. However, the hospitality of the house was excellent. An attractive buffet meal had been laid out for us on our arrival and we were further delighted to find that the price of drinks at the bar was surprisingly low. Our lunch provided a satisfying and convivial end to an enjoyable, informative and undoubtedly successful first excursion with the Churches and Pubs Group, for which we can be grateful to Steve, who sent us on our homeward way with his virtuoso performance on the pub's pianola ringing in our ears.

This project holds a lot of promise. Watch this space.

CHURCHES & PUBS PROGRAMME



Wednesday 4 June

Church St Mary & All Saints, Chesterfield. Decorated/Victorian. Optional climb up crooked spire.

Pub Old Pump @ Barlow. Long bar with real ale.

Meet 9am Village Hall Car Park

Wednesday 2 July

Church St Oswald, Malpas. Perpendicular with 2 super chapels dedicated to the Cholmondeley & Brereton families

Pub Cholmondeley Arms, Bickley Moss. Old school house, good food.

Please inform Steve Reynolds beforehand if you wish to come on any visit. We need to provide both church & pub with an indication of numbers.

READING GROUP

Hi, it's me again, the Reading Group have just read "Mr. Pip" written by Lloyd Jones.

As war encroaches on a tropical island in the South Pacific, the island's only white man reopens the school and reads "Great Expectations" to the school children. But the worst possible nightmare is looming!

It is cleverly written, and appears to be narrated through the eyes of Matilda, one of the schoolchildren. An easy read, thought provoking and enjoyable.

As we meet at a house The Reading Group can only contain a limited number and is full at the moment. Please contact Sue Dintinger if you are interested and put your name on the waiting list.

June Gibbs

HERITAGE GROUP

The last Day Outing by coach for this year is to Harewood House on July 16th. Please try to pay for this at the May meeting so that we can confirm the coach.

IRELAND

The final payment is due at the General Meeting on June 11th. The hotel needs confirmation by July 1st. If you cannot attend the meeting please send a cheque in advance to Margaret McDermott.

DISCUSSION GROUP

On Jan 30th the discussion group topic introduced by Amy Summers was "Advertising and its effects". It was accepted that whilst advertising had its positive side in promoting sales and bringing the attention of potential customers to the existence of goods and services, it was felt that it could and did have a detrimental and pernicious effect on children and those unable to evaluate the claims of the advertisers. An especially annoying part of T.V. adverts is the sudden increase in volume when the adverts are shown. We are now informed that T.V. adverts are to be shown at more frequent intervals. Surely a case can be made for stricter control of the content and timing of particular advertising.

On Feb 27th the topic offered by Irene Bentley was a critique of media news reporting, especially newspapers. Their objectivity was held up to scrutiny, as well as their accuracy. On matters of national and international news and events it was felt that the interests and prejudices of the individual proprietors took preference over accuracy and truthfulness. The manipulation of news can also take the form of not reporting it! Numeracy and grammar? Forget it! Journalese and guestimates take over. Sensation, celebrities, scandal and gossip are what the reading public want, isn't it?

March 26th the subject for discussion presented by Jim McDermott centred around the clamour in the media for a Referendum on the Lisbon Treaty. As usual the media has offered no accurate summary of the Treaty, no explanation, just a lot of obfuscation and disinformation. When we had cleared away the deliberately introduced fog, we realised that without a translation from legal jargon to plain English, which will probably not be forthcoming, it is the usual story of smoke and mirrors, coupled with the blame game by the media. To put it simply, a Treaty is an agreement which can be abrogated in part or whole. We have had four Treaties previously without any demand for a Referendum. So what's the fuss about?
Jim Mc Dermott.

FUTURE DATES FOR THE THEATRE GROUP



Thursday June 19th 2008 at 3pm at the Library Theatre "If I were You" a play by Alan Ayckbourn tickets cost £9. On this occasion there will be no coach. Last date for booking 14th May 2008.

Wednesday July 30th at 2pm in Keswick at the Theatre by the Lake a play by Alan Bennett "The Lady in the Van". Tickets cost £12 and the coach £8, this is a full day out and ample time will be given for you to have lunch in Keswick.
June Gibbs.



REPORT FROM WALKING GROUP – FEBRUARY 2008

Once again we were very fortunate with the weather, and 24 turned up for the February walk. Starting from Twinnies Bridge, between Wilmslow and Styal we meandered along the "apprentice" path to Greg's Mill and a coffee stop. The walk continued down river, but not all downhill, as there were a couple of areas where the river bank has to be negotiated up and down lengths of steps. The River Bollin had to be crossed and recrossed several times, and after the last bridge there was a suitable picnic spot, with lots of fallen logs to sit upon. The sun came out and it was very pleasant. On leaving the river, we negotiated a number of field paths, wooded glens and boardwalks, bringing the group to the final river crossing and the car park. Most people enjoyed the walk, although one or two might have found it a little long. - Thanks to David Lloyd for leading the walk, and for providing a report.

AND WALK REPORT - MARCH 2008

In March, 22 of us joined John McCartney. We walked past the millpond and distinctive dovecote of the former printworks, past Strines Hall, and up the long muddy incline to Brookbottom hamlet. Rumour does tell of folk group dancing at the Fox Inn, but not on this drizzly day. A gentle contour with sweeping views over the valley of the river Goyt led us to Mellor golf course, where we turned down Linnet Clough past wide swathes of ramsons (often incorrectly called wild garlic). The chopped and cooked leaves of ramsons (*allium ursinum*) have been used to flavour dishes and sauces, but are rated inferior to cultivated garlic (*allium sativum*). Bottoms Hall, Roman Lakes and the Roman Bridge took us quickly back to the Sportsman for enjoyable and substantial meals. Thanks to John for his very pleasant walk.

Future Walks

21ST May (NB a week early to avoid Bank Holiday) Meet 9.30 a.m. at High Lane Village Hall. Pub lunch. Walk from Mottram Cross, Mottram St. Andrew, fairly easy with some slopes. If travelling direct pub is Bull's Head, Mottram St. Andrew (now Osteria Mauro Restaurant).
Map Ref: SJ 881784 – Richard & Susan Clark

25th June – Brian & Alison Allerton

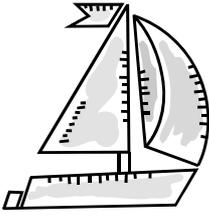
GERMAN GROUP

The German group continues to meet on most Fridays but we are having a two week break while some of us are in Munich (23-29 April). There will be a full report in the July issue. The group has now reached 12 in number so, reluctantly, I will have to restrict membership, at least until the autumn. (The conservatory is rather full at the moment!)

NEEDLEWORK GROUP

We will be having a sale of greetings cards and small gifts during the May general meeting. These will include coasters, small pictures, key rings, bracelets and even a cushion (cover donated, and made up by Sonia). Our last meeting was on 17th April at Mary Leigh's house where we celebrated her 70th birthday.

TRAVEL GROUP



We have a group of 19 members going to Prague in December 08. Provisional plans for 2009 are for a Mediterranean cruise and a hotel holiday either in Sicily or Italy, one in April/May and one in September/October. Deposits will be required as soon as we have confirmation,

Cruise area: Northern Europe, Mediterranean or Canaries?

Hotel based holiday in Europe: Italy, Croatia, France, other?

TRAVEL INSURANCE.

Several people have asked about travel insurance. The following companies will insure people over 75 years of age. Some offer annual insurance and all have a web site.

AA_____0845 092 0606

All clear to go_____0871 208 8579

Insurefor.com_____0844 482 0662

Egg_____0845 122 2888

Swinton_____0800 781 7400

Flexicover_____0845 223 4500

CIS_____0845 746 4646

Insurefor travel.com_____0844 980 0271

Margaret McDermott; June Gibbs; Marlene Brookes

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The Heritage Group Visit to

Anderton Boat Lift and Northwich Salt Museum

Report by Gordon Ashworth

Full report on the web site



We were collected by the coach from the High Lane village hall car park after a short delay, and then made a rapid journey through Stockport to the motorway. However imagine our surprise when we pulled into the passenger unloading bay at Manchester Airport. I know I am due to fly from there on Monday but why go today? It all turned out to have a logical explanation. The starter battery on the coach was faulty

and had been the cause of the late start from High Lane. After a very efficient replacement we were off on our merry way to Northwich. Upon reaching our destination we entered the modern attractive Operations Centre which houses a fascinating interactive exhibition explaining the history of the lift and its unique place in waterway history. We could see the lift operators at work as they controlled the Victorian mechanism from a bank of high tech computers. Films and displays explained that the need for a 'boat lift' had manifested itself when the Staffordshire pottery industry started bringing in raw materials from the south-west in the 1700's. In 1765 a local campaign was launched to improve transport links to the potteries and, within twelve years, a canal was completed from the River Trent to the River Mersey. Anderton was identified as an ideal location to link the two waterways, as they were running roughly parallel at this point. During the first half of the 19th century a boat lift was constructed, by 1875 the lift was open and operational. The basic principle behind the operation of the lift was simple but successful. Two large counter-balanced and water filled containers, driven by huge hydraulic rams, were inserted side by side within a gantry, one container (Caisson) was at canal level the other at river level. By increasing the volume of water in the top Caisson the extra weight would cause it to descend, thus raising the opposite Caisson from the river. Problems caused by corrosion of the hydraulic components started to occur in the 1890s, in 1904 a comprehensive report recommended the conversion of the Anderton Boat Lift from hydraulics and steam to electrical power. The newly refurbished lift opened on 29th July 1908, however the advent of the Second World War marked the decline of Britain's waterways commercially, so the boat lift became used largely by leisure traffic resulting in much reduced revenue, in 1983, the Anderton Boat Lift was closed. A decade later British Waterways reconsidered proposals to restore the lift. With the new millennium approaching, it was decided that the lift would be completely restored to the appearance of the 1908 electrical structure, but with the operation reverting back to the original hydraulic concept of 1875. This magnificent structure was re-opened in March 2002. We experienced the Anderton Boat Lift in the same way boaters did in bygone times. The Edwin Clarke glass top boat took about 40 minutes to descend as the lift towered above us. The boatmaster recounted its history as the boat descended to the river. The Edwin Clark seats up to 56 visitors but we had a problem because the boatmaster counted 58! To solve this two children sat on the parents' knees. Once at river level we enjoyed a relaxing 30 minute cruise along the River Weaver to Northwich Town Swing Bridge and back.

Boarding the coach again we drove through Northwich, over the swing bridge we had seen from the river, and to the towns' salt museum. Originally a workhouse built in 1839, then becoming an old persons home until 1964, many of the workhouse buildings were demolished in the 1960s leaving the Grade II listed building which we still see today. Cheshire County Council acquired Weaver Hall in the 1970s and the museum moved into its current premises. Weaver Hall opened as the new Salt Museum in June 1981 after major renovation work. We had coffee and a short break and then were shown the magnificent board room where the Guardians of the workhouse used to meet. This room is used by school groups during the week and was in use when we went in. We were shown many models and films of the salt extraction processes, and the conditions the workers had to endure. The guide gave very interesting, detailed descriptions of many of the workings. Finally at approximately 4-00pm we started for home and arrived at High Lane after a very interesting and informative day.

Our thanks must go to Margaret Snape for organising this very enjoyable trip.

Churches and Pubs – Visit to Melbourne 16th April 2008
Report by Betty Upham

Our arrival in the 'courtyard' of Melbourne Parish Church was a surprise. We seemed to have stepped back into another century. This grand, tall church stands proudly in the midst of old houses and alongside Melbourne Hall (Lord Melbourne, Queen Victoria's first Prime Minister, gave his name in 1837 to a small Australian Settlement which is now a great city). A stroll around the exterior revealed huge doors beautifully preserved. On entering the church I instantly became aware of spaciousness, height and light. There is limited stained glass but what there is is stunning. Light, clean stone and vast solid pillars lead your eyes to the row of windows in the clerestory. The vicar, the Rev. Dr. John Davies, greeted us and gave a fascinating insight into the history of this lovely church made of local stone around 1120/30 in Norman times. The Normans brought their own style of architecture and religion. The church has stood the test of time and because there has never been a family connection has remained as it was and retained its Norman character (in the Vicar's words "it escaped being Victorianised".) There are so many interesting features, minor altars and chapels and a unique King's Gallery. A peel of 12 bells (the heaviest 15.5 cwt.) in front of the altar – definitely worth another visit (the church is open every day). Sadly no time to explore the village. However we retired to the Blue Bell Inn where the staff 'fed and watered' us well. Thanks Steve for another successful visit.

YOUR AGE BY EATING OUT (sent in by Amy Summers)

Don't tell me your age; you probably would tell a falsehood anyway-but your waiter may know!

YOUR AGE BY DINER & RESTAURANT MATHS

It takes less than a minute. Work this out as you read .
Be sure you don't read the bottom until you've worked it out!
This is not one of those waste of time things, it's fun.

1. First of all, pick the number of times a week that you would like to go out to eat.
(more than once but less than 10)
2. Multiply this number by 2 (just to be bold)
3. Add 5
4. Multiply it by 50
5. If you have already had your birthday this year add 1758.
If you haven't, add 1757.
6. Now subtract the four digit year that you were born.

You should have a three digit number
The first digit of this was your original number. (I.e., How many times
you want to go out to restaurants in a week.)
The next two numbers are

YOUR AGE ! ----- (Oh YES, it is!)

THIS IS THE ONLY YEAR (2008) IT WILL EVER WORK, SO SPREAD IT AROUND WHILE IT LASTS

Bowling Group



We continue to meet at Torkington Park on Thursday mornings, 10.00 till noon. Coaching is available for those who require it.

Our outing this year is a repeat visit to Christleton on the 26th June, if you wish to go please contact me and let me have a deposit of £10. The approximate cost will be £32

Ken Bentley

Visit to Ri Lectures

The lectures were held in The Friends Meeting House London and six of our number went along to enjoy the day out.

The Friends Meeting House was once again the venue since the refurbishment of the Ri building has not yet been completed, however, the completion is imminent.

The Lectures were to the usual high standard, with three lectures that gave us plenty to think about. The first by Dr Denny Levett, who is the Medical Officer for the Caudwell Xtreme Everest project, gave an insight into the medical research being done at altitude for the benefit of assisting recovery for patients at normal levels. There is an Xtreme Everest web site also if you wish to learn more, a visit there will be most enlightening.

The second, Professor Frances Balkwill from the Oncologist Institute of Cancer at Queen Mary University of London gave an interesting talk about the isolation of cancer cells and the use of the bodies natural defence anti-bodies and anti-biotics in the treatment of some cancers. She illustrated the way that cancer cells grow and multiply and the way they can be isolated and in some cases eradicated.

Professor Jocelyn Bell Brunell, a famous name in the field of astronomy gave a lecture entitled "Careering through Space, this included the identification of the first Pulsar and how all alternatives were discounted before the final conclusion that it was actually a Pulsar. The talk covered her life in Science and the battle of women in science during her career.

Next year the lectures will return to the Royal Institution in Albermarle Street London and I, for one, am looking forward to visiting the newly refurbished highly modern building with a wonderful lecture theatre. These lectures must be one of the highlights of the U3A year.

Ken Bentley

Music Appreciation Group



At present are listening to the works of Beethoven which will take 3 meetings, and will also be studying other composers in between this. The group are consulted about any composer that they would like to study. New members are always welcome.

Winter Fuel Payments

The winter fuel payment will grow this year to £250, an increase of £50, for people aged at least 60 and £400, up £100, for those aged 80 or more. The qualifying date is September 21, 2008. The payment is per household, based on the oldest resident. It is tax-free and not means-tested. Many men aged 60 to 64 do not get it because the Department for Work and Pensions does not know about them. So claim if you're 60 on or before September 21st. Although the higher payment is just for this year, an imminent General Election will make it hard to take away in 2009.

Details: www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/winterfuel/home.asp or call 08459 151515

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better
To paint a picture or write a letter.
Bake a cake or plant a seed,
Ponder the difference between want and need?

Dust if you must, but there's not much time,
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb,
Music to hear, and books to read,
Friends to cherish, and life to lead.

Dust if you must. But the world's out there
With the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair,
A flutter of snow, a shower of rain,
This day will not come around again.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind,
Old age will come, and it's sometimes not kind.
And when you go, and go you must,
You, yourself, will make more dust.

Copy for the next newsletter to Jean by Friday 27th June, please note this is a little early due to holidays.