

u3a High Lane

Newsletter

April 2023



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FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the April 2023 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. Thanks to all the contributors for their interesting and informative contributions. The cover photo this time displays the cast taking a bow at the recent very successful Murder Mystery play. More about this later in the newsletter but I hope you managed to attend.

We recently hosted a coffee morning for our new members. This was well attended, and it was great to meet many of you. We hope you found it useful to meet each other and some of the group leaders and committee members. We welcome you to our u3a and look forward to meeting you at our meetings and interest groups. Your contributions to the newsletter will be very welcome.

Also in this edition, we have reports of the March monthly meeting and the murder mystery play plus a number of reports of group activities. We also have information about other events your Committee is organising for this year.

This is your newsletter. Please feel free to share some of your news, your interests, or items you have found that you think would be of interest to other members. This could be places you have visited, books you have read, films you have seen; your stories, anecdotes, photographs, recipes, poems, limericks, jokes; the list is endless.

This edition of the newsletter is accompanied by the updated Groups contact list. There are a few changes from the version that was sent out last month. This contains contact details for the Committee and interest group leaders plus the programme of monthly meetings.

Also attached to the email is the National Office bitesize newsletter for March. You can read the full newsletter [here](#). This has reports of many varied activities taking place in u3as across the country.

The next issue of our newsletter will be May 2023 so please send your contributions to me by 30th April 2023 at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

FROM THE CHAIR

Murder mystery evening

A big thank you to all involved with the evening. Diane who organised the play, Barbara for organising the catering, Andre and Pam for selling the tickets, all the actors, and Reflections for supplying the food. The evening was very well attended and from what I could gather the evening was enjoyed by everyone. When is the next one Diane?

We have been asked if we can perform it again for a wider audience under the auspices of the Village Hall. Watch this space.

Cheese and Wine evening. Friday May 26th.

To be held at the Village Hall. Presented by an excellent wine presenter from Waitrose who really knows her wine.

An evening not to be missed if you enjoy your wine. You will be greeted with a glass of fizz, followed by a tasting of three white wines and three red wines and plenty of cheese and biscuits.

Price £15.

Tickets on sale at the April meeting.

Annual lunch

Friday July 7th at Hazel Grove Golf Cub.

Three course meal with guest speaker Jill Trumble from Stockport Heritage Trust. Includes tea or coffee and gratuities.

Price £30.

Tickets on sale at the May meeting.

Paul Kenneth
Chair

NEW MEMBERS' COFFEE MORNING

Last Friday we invited new members this year to join Group Leaders and Committee members for coffee and cake, and to chat with them about our u3a and interest groups. Attendance was good, there was much conversation, and we look forward to seeing you at meetings soon.



MONTHLY MEETING

The speaker, James Ellson talked about Sustainability.

James and his wife, Sarah run a market garden in Hayfield and are self-sufficient in fruit and vegetables. In the introduction he talked about the problem of Global Warming and the need for us all to be aware of reducing our carbon footprint.

He talked about reducing waste, cutting down on plastic packaging careful recycling and preserving and processing food stuffs. There were interesting slides showing good practice. He was an engaging and fluent speaker whose talk was well-constructed and illustrated. Although passionate about his topic, he was really down to earth when it came to answering the many questions.

The large audience listened attentively and went home with plenty to think about. We can all make a contribution. I will try to only buy produce grown in season and in the U K.

Our speaker at the next meeting on Weds April 12th is Barry Daykin.

A retired professional musician his talk, entitled "From food rationing to Les Mis" takes us through his career from military bands to ceremonial occasions to the West End Theatre. I understand that he will bring his trombone with him.

Sheila Harrop

PUBLIC SPEAKING – STOCKPORT BOWL TROPHY

The Stockport Bowl Trophy for Public Speaking has been competed for annually since 1981. Attracting best speakers from clubs in the northwest area, only four people have won it more than once. But on March 15th, Walter Mason surprised himself by winning it for a record fourth time, impressing the judges with a 5-minute speech to the title "Little and Large". Congratulations Walter.

Walter and David Burke are both members of Stockport Speakers Club, which hosts the contest.



MURDER MYSTERY EVENING

We were very pleased that the threatened snowfall didn't arrive in High Lane, so we were able to present the play. Another postponement would have been too much, I fear! However, there was quite a lot of snow in the surrounding areas, and we know some members were unfortunately unable to get to the event.



As Paul has said in his message, we were pleased that members enjoyed the event; there was certainly a lot of discussion to find out who did it during our break for supper. Just one team came up with a completely correct solution and the correct motives although several other teams were very close.



Rehearsals were good fun, the cast performed their roles excellently, and we thank Mike Morton for his support with the sound and lighting. We were also pleased that Chris's bridge group was able to be flexible so that the cast members in the group could join the rehearsals.



Here we have a selection of photos from the evening. There will be more on the website.

Diane Saxon

GROUP NEWS

CANASTA

The canasta group continues to be popular with varying attendance between 4 and 14 people on any one evening. We have a total of 21 members at the moment, but newcomers are always welcome at the Royal Oak pub on a Tuesday evening from 7 till 9pm

Pauline Wright

CHURCHES AND PUBS

Paul and Barbara are still spending a lot of time trying to keep Churches and Pubs, one of the most popular groups, running and so far, are succeeding.

We have a trip in June and on August 2nd Sandie and Dorothy will be visiting St. Thomas church in Mellor and afterwards down the road to the Devonshire Arms for lunch to which we invite you to join us.

More details of this visit will be available at the June meeting.

Sandie McLean
Dorothy Neillands

GERMAN

We're back in full swing now after a break for home improvements and illness. We were happy to welcome a new member to the group – another Barry, which must be a record for a U3A group – we now have three. As usual we have lively discussions and a continued reading of our book. My elder daughter was here a fortnight ago and was impressed that everyone started talking German as soon as they entered the house.

Marlene Brookes

HISTORY

We had two topics at our meeting in March. The first was about the history of Whaley Bridge.

The first record of a settlement was in the 13th Century but standing stones have been found which indicate an earlier history. The area was owned by the Jodrell family and consisted of several small hamlets which were later amalgamated. It was during the time of the Industrial Revolution that the area expanded with the construction of first the Peak Forest canal and later the Buxworth tramway to carry lime and coal and other goods to the waiting barges. Eventually the rail connection between Manchester and Buxton was built. The village/ town of Whaley Bridge is popular with walkers and transport enthusiasts and achieved unwanted notoriety in 2019 with the threatened flooding of the Toddbrook reservoir.

Our second presentation was about the temperance movement. Through the ages the problem of excessive drinking had worried governments. The gin mania as illustrated by Hogarth was known to be the bane of the lower classes. To counteract that, the brewing of cheap beer was promoted which did nothing to cure the problem. Public houses proliferated during the Industrial Revolution and offered food, rooms and "personal services". It was in the 1830's that wealthy benefactors like the Rowntree family started building temperance halls for workers with libraries and social areas as an alternative to the pub. Leading the movement were John Edgar and John Livesey. By 1850 most settlements in England had a temperance hall. The Band of Hope took up the cause as did other religious groups. The movement died out after the 2nd World War.

For our meeting in April, two members will give talks about Edinburgh and the Quakers.

Sheila Harrop

MEMOIRS

The theme for our March meeting was precious artefacts from our early years. There was a wonderful selection including autograph books, football programmes, jewellery, story books and childhood toys, to name but a few. Each exhibit had a story to tell and was enthusiastically received. Of course, we didn't give any prizes, but the star of the afternoon had to be Lynda's much-loved teddy bear. Next month we will continue to look at presenting our memories with special attention to computer skills.

Sheila Harrop

CRIME FICTION READING

Our book for March was I'll Keep You Safe by Peter May, our second choice by this author. It is set against the culture and beautiful background of the Hebrides. Niamh and Ruairidh McFarlane own a textile company, Ranish Tweed, and are on a business trip to Paris to promote it when he appears to have been murdered by a car bomb. At first Niamh is the prime suspect but after investigation she is eventually released by the French police to return alone to Scotland while they try to solve the crime. Niamh tries to think who might possibly have held a grudge against her husband. The ending was hardly a surprise and Ruairidh eventually reappears.

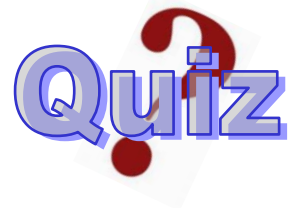
Most of the group enjoyed the book, apart from the difficulty of so many Gaelic names, and gave it a quite a high rating.

We next meet on April 7th when we will be discussing The Nine Tailors by Dorothy L. Sayers.

Margaret McDermott

QUIZZING

Our quiz for March was set by Val. We started with a round of questions on famous Stockport women; some of these were new to us. Have you heard of Dame Felicity Peake?



We then explored various topics including Wales and Ireland in honour of the Saint's days in March, fictional detectives, food and drink, and finished with some general knowledge. Did you know there is a word for the fear of flowers? We didn't!

We have welcomed some new members over the last few months but have room for a couple more. We normally meet on the fourth Thursday of the month. Please get in touch if you would like to join this group.

Diane Saxon

PHOTOGRAPHY

This month's competition was Insects.

- 1st. Papilio ascalaphus – Diane 8 votes
- Joint 2nd Weaver spider – Derek 6 votes
- Bee on poached egg plant – Diane 6 votes



Thanks everybody. A difficult subject for this time of year. Excellent effort.

The topic for this month is a Child's toy. Why not have a go?

Please get in touch if you would like more details of this group.

Jeff Robinson

READING

Our meeting this month was devoted to discussing and recommending biographies and autobiographies that we had read. It was a lively discussion that filled the two hours and we were introduced to a wide range of authors including Roald Dahl, Miriam Margolyes, Maggie O'Farrell, the Kanneh Mason family, Edmund de Waal, Ida Lupino and even Ann Widdecombe. Our appetites were whetted and many books were exchanged.

We next meet on Monday 3rd April at 2 o'clock when we will be discussing Salman Rushdie's HAROUN AND THE SEA OF STORIES.

Marlene Brookes

TRAVEL

HOLIDAYS

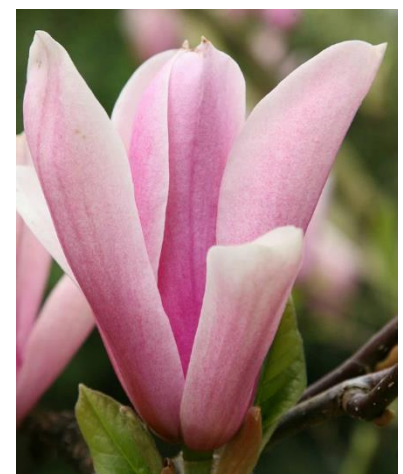
CARLISLE 23-26th June. County Hotel. Balance due at the April meeting.

DAY TRIPS

17th June. PORT SUNLIGHT & LADY LEVER ART GALLERY £28.

28th July. Sudley House and Liverpool

Information at Wednesday meetings. Contact Margaret McDermott or Ruth Smith.



WALKING

Marple, Brabyns Park, Marple Bridge, The Garden House, Roman Lakes, Peak Forest Canal. 29/03/2023

On a grey mild end of March day, 23 people covered 5.5 miles on a circular walk along the River Goyt and Peak Forest Canal. The mighty Goyt was clearly visible, without green vegetation to hide its secrets.

We had a lunch stop on the old site of Mellor Mill, now only the ground level remains, which is a very interesting industrial revolution site, which, thanks to recent endeavours by a local history group, now defines and illustrates the life story of Mellor Mill and its remarkable original owner, Samuel Oldknow.



Mellor Mill was built in 1790 and was, at the time, the largest cotton spinning mill in the world! At its peak in 1804, 550 people were employed. For 60 years the mill was water driven, the first prime mover was the "Wellington Wheel", 22 ft. in diameter X 17 ft. wide. The wheel pit has been exposed and viewing platforms provide easy access. In 1815 the "Waterloo Wheel" was added to provide more power. The whole Mellor Mill and Mellor Lodge (home of Samuel Oldknow) area provides a fascinating insight into the industrial revolution and the part played by the mighty River Goyt. A visit is recommended.



Our onward route, passing the mill water reservoirs (Roman Lakes) fed from the Goyt, led to a pack-horse bridge over the river and our only serious ascent on the walk, up to the Peak Forest Canal and our easy route back to Marple.



A fascinating local walk, our warm enthusiasm only mildly tempered by a light short shower on the home leg.

David Burke

Classic April Fool's pranks – The Jovian–Plutonian effect

From [Sky History](#)

Renowned astronomer and beloved presenter of *The Sky at Night*, Patrick Moore, had the credibility and stern air of authority which allowed him to pull off a prank that was out of this world. In 1976, Moore told radio listeners that, due to a rare planetary alignment of Pluto and Jupiter, the Earth would experience a shift in its gravitational forces that morning, allowing them to float into the air.

At precisely 9:47am, Moore instructed the listeners to '*Jump now!*'. Within minutes, calls were coming in reporting that they had felt the impact of the Jovian–Plutonian effect. One caller claimed that she and her eleven friends had '*orbited gently around the room!*'. Another complained that he had risen so high that he hit his head on the ceiling and demanded compensation.

NATIONAL OFFICE LEARNING EVENTS FOR APRIL

Some talks you might want to book. Remember they can fill up quickly. There are many other events. All are free via Zoom. Click here for details and to book a place. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

3 April	A day in the life of your spinal cord
4 April	Future proofing our homes
6 April	Geology –oil and gas
18 April	Let's talk about autism
19 April	Family History: using census data
20 April	Toulouse Lautrec and the cabarets of Paris

SCIENCE NETWORK MEETING

18 April 10.30 start

This wide ranging event will include the following three talks and will be a great introduction all things science related. Click [here](#) for information and booking

Anti-Oxidants – The Good, The Bad and The Fraudulent. By Paul England (St Albans u3a).

"You've heard it a million times: The best way to stay healthy is to eat a wide variety of vitamin-rich Super Foods. They're packed with vitamins, minerals, and Antioxidants, which minimize the cell damage that may lead to Heart Disease, Cancer, Alzheimer's, and other diseases." The talk will explain what Anti-Oxidants are, their importance in human health, and why some of the claims of beneficial effects are just wrong.

Earthquakes: why they happen, how they're measured. Pete Webb, New Mills U3A.

Heat from the Earth's core keeps much of the Earth in a state of slow turmoil as convection cells turn slowly over and over. These movements cause the brittle outside skin of our planet to slide around, splitting apart in some areas, crunching together in others. This continual jostling of the tectonic plates, as the slabs are known, is jerky, not smooth, resulting in intermittent small to large earthquakes as the stresses build up and are then released.

Get Rid of that stink! – Joseph Bazalgette and development of London Sewer System. Mike Trevethick, Thanet u3a.

In 19th Century London people dumped all waste and sewage into the river Thames. As a result, diseases such as cholera were widespread, and the river stank. Eventually parliament had enough and wanted the river cleaned up. They appointed Bazalgette to develop a sewer system. The system designed and built did the job and was very impressive, but did it really 'cure' the problem?

u3a SPRING CHARITY BRIDGE FESTIVAL

22-26th May 2023, inclusive.

Message from u3a Bridge subject specialist

Hello u3a Bridge Players. The u3a Spring Charity Bridge Festival will soon be here. This second Newsheet is to bring you up to date, invite you to talk to your groups and start registering to play; there's something for everyone. Some players have already registered, which is good news! Registration is open until 14th May at Register for the Festival

At your regular meeting venue, you can play any number of boards to suit your meeting time (recommended minimum is 18 boards).

Results and commentaries will be available on the following day.

The recommended minimum charity donation is £3 per session, but contributions above this would be greatly appreciated. This covers the administrative costs of the event (50p plus VAT); the balance to be divided equally between this year's charities Alzheimer's Research and AgeUK.

If you haven't tried playing online and would like to, you can get a free 14-day trial on Bridge Club Live. Contact prayment7@gmail.com - one of our Regional Bridge Co-ordinators.

This Logic puzzle is from the National Office Logic puzzles page.

To open this safe you must press all the buttons in the correct order. The number on each button tells you how many squares you move and the letters tell you the direction (U = up, D = down, L = left and R = right).

Which is the first button you must press to open this safe?

3R	3D	2D	1D	3L
1U	1D	2R	3D	1D
1U	2R	OPEN	1D	4L
1D	1R	1D	1R	4L
4R	3U	4U	2L	4U

POETRY CORNER

Thanks to Stewart Clay for this poem. I guess many of us remember those days?

Imperial Misery

*Before the Seventies a Pound didn't have one hundred Pence
Oh no! Two hundred and forty our Pound had
It had two Ten Bobs, eight Half-Crowns, ten Florins
and twenty Shillings to drive us all mad
There were twenty four Pennies to a Florin so Florins
in a Pound came to ten
There were thirty Pennies in Half a crown so in a Pound
there were eight of them*

*Weight was very puzzling, as we had a Pound weight
as well as the currency sort
And the Pound weight had more bits than a Quid
and was written as lbs for short
Libra Pondo in Latin it transpires, but the mystery
of where the P in lbs went still remains
Sixteen Drams to an Ounce, and sixteen Ozs to a lb
or if you prefer, seven thousand Grains*

*Millimetres, Centimetres, Metres and Kilometres were for us
still way in the future
We suffered Inches, Feet, Yards, Chains, Furlongs, Miles
and even Leagues torture
I only came across the latter once whilst reading the book
Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea
But as Earth's diameter is just two thousand three hundred Leagues
Jules Verne made no sense at all to me*

*Liquid measure was even more confusing for us, so stop talking,
and please pay attention at the back
We had to cope with Fluid Ounces, Pints, Quarts and Gallons ,
and for component parts they didn't lack
5 Ounces a Gill, 4 Gills a Pint, 2 Pints a Quart, 4 Quarts a Gallon,
2 Gallons a Peck and 4.5 Gallons a Pin, so I hear
2 Pins a Firkin, 4 Pecks a Bushel, 8 Bushels a Quarter, but a quarter
of what, I have absolutely no Firkin idea!*

North West Region of U3As



Registered Charity No: 1159091

invite applications for the 2023 Summer School

**Residential Summer School Tues 15th August – Friday 18th August
At University of Cumbria, Fusehill St Campus, Carlisle, CA1 2HH**

An opportunity to learn in the inspiring setting of historical Carlisle



The Fusehill St campus is located in the centre of Carlisle and less than 15 minutes' walk from Carlisle Railway Station. The campus has modern facilities, student en-suite rooms with Wi-Fi access. A large room is available for meeting and socialising. There will be a quiz on the first evening and a "Gala Dinner" on the third and final evening.

Full Board Residential Delegate; £355. (+£10 car parking charge if applicable; +£15 field trip surcharge for archaeology, and female artists courses) We include full board for 3 nights, including dinner on 15th August, breakfast, lunch and dinner on 16th August, breakfast, lunch and gala dinner on 17th August, and breakfast on 18th August. Also, tea and coffee refreshments on each day.

Non-Residential Day Delegate: £190 (+parking and field trip surcharge if applicable) includes lunches, teas and coffees, excludes breakfast daily and dinner on Tuesday and Wednesday but does include the gala dinner on 17th August. Accommodation is available nearby in the Carlisle city centre.

An Application form must be completed by post or email, Payment can be either by bank transfer (North West Region of U3A's, Lloyds Bank sort code 30-90-16, account 00197002 quoting name and post code) or by cheque (payable to North West Region of U3A's)

DO NOT SEND PAYMENT UNTIL YOUR APPLICATION IS CONFIRMED (SEE BOOKING NOTE 8)

queries should be directed to Alan Hough on 07544 359125 or

alanhough1949@gmail.com

Post to 8 Salwick Close, Wigan, Gtr Manchester. WN3 6RE

The 7 courses on offer are:-

Archaeology: "Landscapes and archaeology -unpicking the layers of the past"; Art Challenges: "The changing seasons"; Literature: "What the 20th century did to the novel"; Art: "Female artists"; Architecture: "From Shelter to the Shard, 2000 years of British architecture"; Knitting: "Cables and lace" and "Japanese Encounter"