

**u3a** High Lane

# Newsletter

**December 2022**



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## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the December 2022 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. This month, we have an important message from the Treasurer and a horticultural competition for you to take part in. Not forgetting the usual report of group activities. Thanks to all the contributors for their interesting and informative contributions. The cover photo this time highlights the choir performance at the November meeting.

This month brings the Christmas party with some seasonal entertainment and afternoon tea plus the Dining group's annual Christmas lunch.

The Committee would like to say a big thank you to the tea ladies who, as usual, have looked after us so well at the Monthly meetings.

From National and regional u3as we have a Christmas event, the poetry competition and a selection of learning events and talks. If you wish to take part, book a place as soon as you can as they get booked up very quickly.

Looking ahead to next year, the programme of speakers for the monthly meetings is on page 2. In February, we have our AGM, and we need to re-elect the Committee. A nomination form is included on the final page of the newsletter. If you would like to join the Committee, you will need to be nominated and seconded and return the form to the Secretary. Your committee will also be planning the social events for the year. We have the Murder mystery evening on 10 March and would welcome suggestions from members for events you would like us to offer. Please discuss any ideas you may have with one of the Committee.

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, limericks, jokes; the list is endless. Several new members joined us this month. 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.

This edition of the newsletter is accompanied by the National Office bitesize newsletter for November. The next issue will be January 2023 so please send your contributions to me by 30 December at [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

Diane Saxon

*The Officers and Committee would like to wish all members a happy Christmas and a healthy and interesting New Year.*



**TREASURER'S MESSAGE**

As we come to the end of the year and the Christmas party, I would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

As you may remember 2022, due to Coronavirus, was operated free of charge for 2021 members so from a Treasurers point of view it has not been easy. As I am sure you are aware costs all round have started to increase dramatically which affects everyone including ourselves. For these reasons we are also having to increase our own subscription

Membership 2023 £8 With the Third Age Trust Magazine £11.50

The good thing is you can get the extra £2 back by switching the central heating down when you go to the village hall for the meetings.

The 2023 membership application form is on the website. Please take care when filling in the form ensuring all sections are filled in and legible, especially the email address if you have one.

See you in 2023 and many thanks for your continued support

Les Birks

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**PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2023**

11 <sup>th</sup> January	Jerome Caminada: The Real Sherlock Holmes	Joe O'Neill
8 <sup>th</sup> February	AGM	
8 <sup>th</sup> March	Living Sustainably: Is It Really Possible?	James Ellson
12 <sup>th</sup> April	From Food Rationing to Les Mis	Barry Daykin
10 <sup>th</sup> May	Suffragettes and Scones	Sue Holden
14 <sup>th</sup> June	Down Memory Lane	Memoirs Group
12 <sup>th</sup> July	Scottish Adventures	Sally Hodgson
9 <sup>th</sup> August	An Insight into the Song Writing Process	Lesley Davies
13 <sup>th</sup> September	When the Lines go dead: Preparing for the PSTN switch off	Nigel Linge
11 <sup>th</sup> October	Have you got the right Will, or Do you have a Will at all?	Dean Mottershead
8 <sup>th</sup> November	Hearing dogs for Deaf People	
13 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Party with a Musical Entertainer	Tony Johnston

## Our gardens – Colourful Competition

Did you know there is an up-side to climate change? Our gardens are blooming for much longer. These three photos were all taken on Remembrance Sunday, and there were 20 different species in bloom on the same day, all in an average-sized garden in High Lane.

So the competition is this – how many different species do you have in flower in your garden on Christmas Day? The record to date is 32 for a lady in Kent.



No prizes, just a resounding cheer from everyone else!

Photos of the best plants welcome, results including the overall winner in the next newsletter.

Please send your totals and photos to [gardeninggroupleader@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:gardeninggroupleader@highlaneu3a.org.uk) by 30<sup>th</sup> December.

Chris Fontaine

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## u3a Poetry Competition – Open Now

The national poetry competition is open now. The deadline is Friday 27 January 2023 and we're looking for poems of fewer than 16 lines on any topic. The three winning poems will be published in Third Age Matters and on the u3a website.

Find the competition rules and submit your poem on the Poetry Competition webpage. [u3a - Poetry Competition 2022](#)

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What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas tree? A pineapple!  
What do you call a letter sent up the chimney on Christmas Eve? Black mail!  
What did Adam say on the day before Christmas? It's Christmas, Eve



## MONTHLY MEETINGS

The entertainment at the November monthly meeting was the High Lane U3A choir. This SATB choir of 24 members is led by Julie Sutton and accompanied by Margaret Glynn on the piano. Both are accomplished musicians, and this was reflected in the quality of the singing. The programme was varied and included a wide repertoire including pop, folk, film and spiritual music. Everyone joined in with Jerusalem to finish the performance.



Julie welcomed anyone interested in joining the choir. They meet every Friday morning in the Village Hall between 10am and 12am.

The meeting was very well attended, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the singing and showed it with enthusiastic applause.

Kath Wareham

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## December meeting

The Christmas party this year is on 14 December.

There will be an entertainer, a quiz, raffle and some light refreshments. Admission by ticket only.



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## From North-West u3a

If you are not attending our Christmas party at the Village Hall, you might like to join this event. North-West u3a offers an invitation to an afternoon of 'Festive Moments' on Zoom on Wednesday December 14th at 4pm. Please try to circulate this to your groups. There will be an opportunity to sing some seasonal songs, hear some light-hearted readings and take part in a quiz.

Click here for more details and the registration form  
<https://forms.gle/UxdxorbUgk7NGCoh6>.

## ANGELS

Over the last three months a small group of ladies have been busy clickety clicking ready for the Christmas season. We met in the social room at St Thomas church on a Saturday afternoon and while we were sustained with tea, coffee and the most delicious homemade cakes we produced over three hundred and fifty angels in a rainbow of colours.

The first appearance of our Angels will be on December 4 where Hannah our vicar will bless them, a service to which you are all welcome. After this our Angels are going out into the community, they will hang on the church hedge and are there for anyone to take home. The message attached to them expresses what they represent. Alison, whose idea this was, and her knitters, wish you a Happy Christmas and hope you will take an Angel home

I am your Christmas Angel  
Please take me home!  
I bring the Advent message of  
Hope, peace, love and joy.

Dorothy Neillands

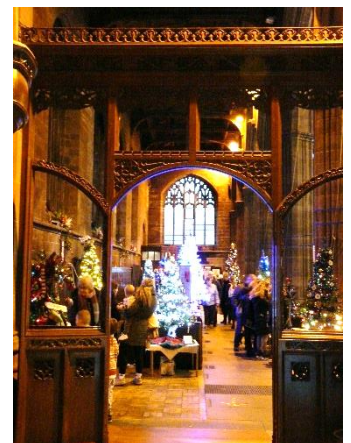


One such angel was left on my doorstep this week? Ed.

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## St George's Christmas Tree Festival

Still November, but already the Christmas season is on the way at St George's, Stockport, with its Christmas Tree Festival making a welcome reappearance. There was plenty to see and marvel at. A selection of the many photos from the Church.



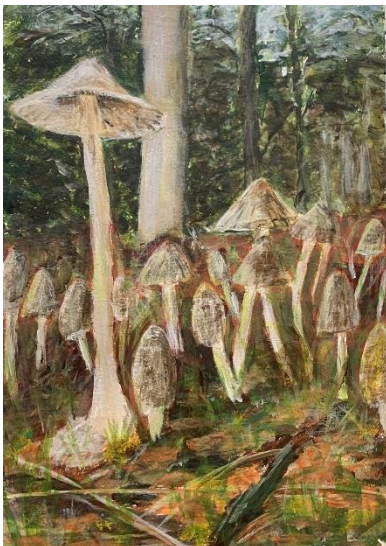
Walter Mason

# GROUP NEWS

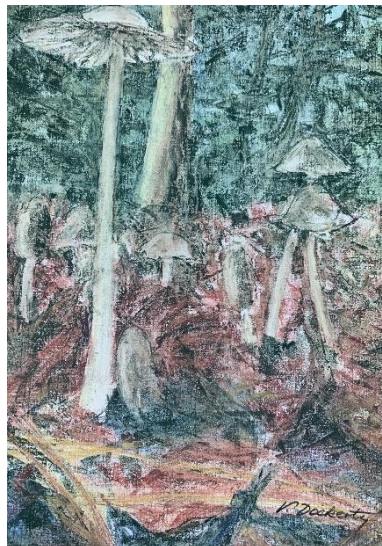
## ART

The art group has been painting fungi in their next group challenge. The idea is that we all do the same subject but in our own medium – be it oil, pastels , acrylics watercolours or mixed media. Everyone has done their own interpretation. We have a selection of the pictures here.

We will be holding an art exhibition which is planned for Saturday 25th February. The exhibition will be open from 10 am until 4 pm. There will be teas, coffees, and cakes. There will also be a prize raffle on the day.



Roy Tomlinson using acrylics



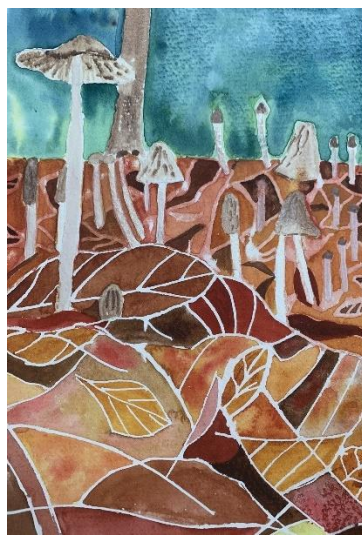
Val Docherty using pastels



Pam Cooke using watercolours



Lynn Chorlton using pastels



Madeleine Hennessy using watercolours



Joan Rose using acrylics

Val Brown

## CHURCHES AND PUBS

### St James's Church, Sutton

It is easy to forget at times that we have some lovely areas just on our doorstep and on Wednesday 2nd November we were able to enjoy the beautiful countryside surrounding St James's Church in Sutton. It is set high on a hill commanding wonderful views. We assembled in the village hall and after coffee and biscuits were given a most interesting talk from Alan Dinnis, who has, over the years thoroughly researched the archives of the church discovering fascinating facts from its origins to the present day.



The church came about as a result of an upsurge in the population around Macclesfield due to the silk industry. As people moved out of the town there were complaints that it was too far to walk to the nearest church. In 1838 a committee was set up dedicated to building a new church. One of its members, William Stonehewer Newbold was articulate and most ambitious for the community and through him land (some from his mother) was obtained and free stone from the local quarry. Local farmers conveyed the necessary building materials to the site. The church opened in October 1840 and was consecrated to become a parish church in 1859. The emblem of the scallop shells associated with St James appears on the family crest of the Stonehewer family who donated some of the land.

The church itself is quite beautiful, the simple aisle and pews lead to an ornate rood screen which in turn leads to the chancel that has some wonderful altar frontals. The many stained-glass windows are stunning one of which was erected by the William Morris Company. The gallery, once pulled down by an irate vicar who claimed that amongst other things children were unruly and played games there during his services, was replaced in 1903.



The church also holds commemorative war graves and a Roll of Honour. There is also the grave of a local woman, Florence Wallace Watson who drowned when the liner the Lusitania was torpedoed in 1915. Her grave can be found in the church yard.

A super visit to end our year of Churches and Pubs.

We adjourned to the cosy Poachers Inn at Bollington for a delicious three course lunch.



As well as the last visit this year it is also the end of a very successful era. Paul and Barbara have been running the Churches and Pubs groups for 12 years and have now decided that it is time to 'retire'! Group members past and present owe them a huge vote of thanks for their hard work and dedication in researching and organising such interesting church visits and also the lunch; what a wonderful idea to combine the two things.

If there is anyone out there who would like to take over the running of this group Paul will be only too glad to give a helping hand to get them started.

Thank you, Paul and Barbara.

Lynn Arnold

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## CRIME FICTION READING



Our book for this month was Rubbernecker by Belinda Braun which was Crime Novel of the Year in 2019 and longlisted for the Booker prize. She was a new author to most of us and we all found the book took us into some unusual and sometimes challenging areas. Much of the first half of the book features students in a dissection lab. The central character, Patrick, is a young medical student with Asperger's syndrome. He becomes determined to discover the cause of death of the body he is examining in anatomy class. He discovers that the man had been murdered; the later part of the book takes us through the struggles he has to get others to accept that a crime has been committed.

The group was split between those who liked it and some who didn't like it, with some not able to persevere to the end.

After this we had a wide-ranging discussion of books we were currently reading and our first introduction to the genre. For many, it was Enid Blyton mystery books, but Agatha Christie, Sherlock Holmes, Jennings Just William and Josephine Tey made an appearance.

The next meeting will be in January 2023 when we will be discussing the Risk of Darkness by Susan Hill.

Diane Saxon

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

At the November meeting, we had a wide variety of topics to discuss, mostly in the news, submitted by a small group of members.

It was decided, with one exception, that a teacher shouldn't have been sacked for going against school policy on transgender issues.

Other questions related to activities of Ministers in government – should they have to toe the party line? Should they be allowed to use mobile phones when the House is in session? Why are some MPs on holiday when Parliament is sitting? (lots of reference here to Matt Hancock's activities!), and in a lighter vein, why are there so many millionaires in Parliament, and should they be funded by the taxpayer for Christmas parties in their constituencies as has been proposed? There were mixed views, some humour, and a general consensus that a lot of MPs have no idea how the poorer people live.

These topics were followed by the horrendous Rochdale case in the news, which we all agreed was a shocking thing to happen in our country.

Shamima Begum's application for reinstatement of her British citizenship was discussed, and we agreed that we didn't know enough about the case to form a conclusion. Other topics covered were the testing of children's academic achievements around the world and the fact the Britain isn't high up on the scale! .....is Britain doing enough to stop illegal immigrants and what is the attraction in this country, why don't we allow them to work when they arrive?.....does the BBC highlight bad news, as do the newspapers ? ( but maybe the general public like to listen to bad news!).....

and, finally we talked about "What are your feelings at this time of year?" We all said we hated it, (particularly driving at night), but there were some positive comments e.g. that it is nice to have an extra 'lie-in' and get jobs done indoors when the weather and light don't induce us to go outside!

So all in all, some serious moments, some more light-hearted. Thanks to Margaret, again, for providing us with a venue, and refreshments. Do come and join us if you like a good discussion.

Mavis Dean

## GERMAN

We continue to meet on most Fridays. Our numbers have varied in recent weeks, owing to illness and hospital stays but we had a good turn-out at our last meeting where we continued to have a lively discussion on current affairs and members' recent activities.

Marlene Brookes

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## QUIZZING

The quiz this time was set by Diane. We started with a group of questions which all had a 2-letter answer, did some 'How many' questions, then some 3-letter answers and finished with a news quiz. There were quite a few of the usual 'I know this but it won't come to me' expressions.

Here is a selection of this month's quiz for you to try.

The four gospels?	Which?	How many?
Teletubbies?	Tube stations have just 4 letters	Times Man City has won FA cup
Bronte siblings?	US states have just 4 letters	Books in Chronicles of Narnia
Four tenors?	Moon of Jupiter has just 2 letters	Points for the black in snooker

Fancy challenging yourself with us? New quizzers are very welcome. More members would be useful to help us build our teams. We meet on the fourth Thursday of the month. Please contact me if you would like to join this group.

Diane Saxon

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## READING

We have acquired two new members in recent weeks. At our latest meeting we discussed PARADISE by Toni Morrison which met with mixed reviews. It tells the story of a black community founded in Oklahoma and its relationship with the inmates of a former convent in the neighbourhood. Some of us found the plot and characters somewhat confusing and not altogether satisfactory, considering the author has won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

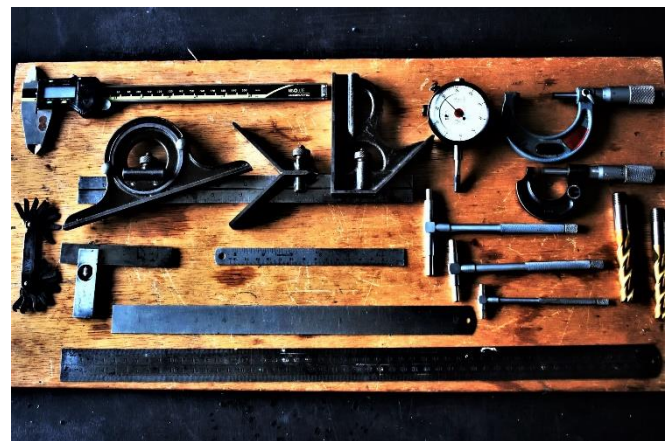
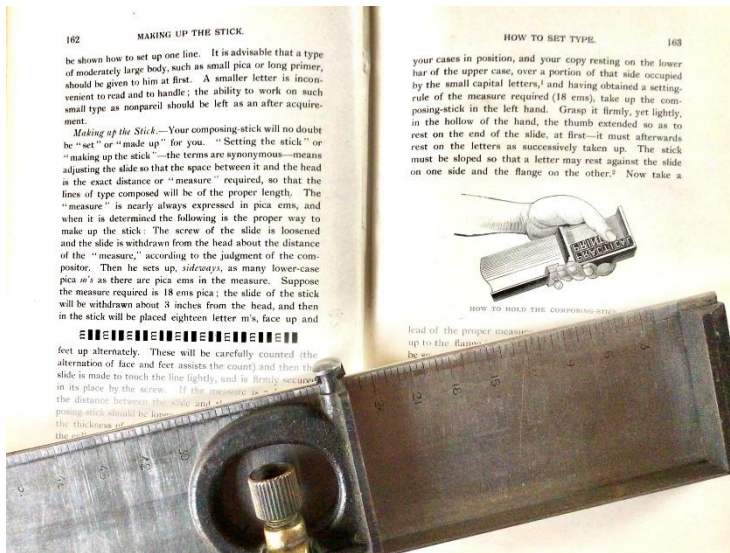
Our next meeting is on December 5th when we will enjoy Ingrid's hospitality and bring along some of our favourite poems.

Marlene Brookes

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

This month's competition was Tools.

- 1st                    Moles – Diane
- 2nd                    A hard Life – Diane
- Joint 3rd.        Model engineers' tools – Jeff and Read and learn – Derek.



Thanks everybody for taking part and for the quality of the photographs. It was difficult to choose the best. We had some difficult subjects this year but I think the overall quality of the photographs has improved. Thanks again and congratulations to the winners.

The topic for next month is 'Christmas'.

Jeff Robinson

## WALKING

**Rowarth, Matley Moor and Cown Edge. 26/10/2022**



This 5.5-mile walk led by Ian Hope was well attended, 25 members enjoyed a circular walk around the Rowarth area. Merlyn Young provided background information about Rowarth and the fascinating early industrial history of the area. Looking at the village today, who would have thought it once supported six mills and a die works, all harnessing power from the small stream that flows down the valley.



The walk route, accompanied by bright and breezy conditions, followed a steady climb from Rowarth to Matley Moor, where a welcome rest and coffee was taken. The extensive 360-degree panorama presenting the region in all its glory, far reaching views, wild moorland and rolling countryside. The onward path to Cown Edge provided a couple of challenging stiles, which were conquered...eventually!

The Edge itself allowed us to see the ever-changing high-rise of the Manchester skyline. Our route along Cown Edge quickly changed from what should have been a pleasant descent back into Rowarth, suddenly became a mercilessly wet and windy downpour. Thankfully, the raging torrent rapidly passed, and the warm southerly strong breeze quickly dried us off.

This walk had the usual blend of mystery, suspense and adventure.

David Burke

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## **National Office Learning Events for December**

We have lockdown to thank for this rich resource. Every month there are several talks covering a very diverse range of topics and interests. This is a selection from the December list.

- 6 Dec The maths of bell ringing (I'm looking forward to this one. Ed)
- 6 Dec Understanding DNA testing
- 13 Dec Writing poetry for publication and performance
- 13 Dec Learning is the elixir of healthy life
- 16 Dec Taking photos with your smartphone
- 19 Dec Cryptic crosswords explained

There are many other events such as mindfulness, creative thinking, cooking demos, yoga et al. All are free via Zoom. Click here for details

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

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## **u3a in 2023: Strategic Aims for the u3a Movement**

This [link is to a presentation](#) given by Allan Walmsley, Trustee for the West Midlands and new Vice-Chair of the Third Age Trust, at the Third Age Trust October AGM 2022. He presents the strategy for the u3a movement based on consultation with members in late autumn. There is an interesting section in the impact of Covid on u3as and the progress with the recovery that is taking place.

## u3a Click and save

I think we have mentioned this in previous newsletters. You will need to register before you can use the site. If anyone has experiences of using these discounts, please send your thoughts to the Editor.



Members can save £100s on the brands they love

Wide selection of discounted Gift Cards and eGifts

Physical, digital and reloadable cards on offer

## Save on your grocery shopping

Sign in or register above to view participating retailers and discounts



## Save on products for your home and entertainment

Sign in or register above to view participating retailers and discounts



AND FINALLY ....

# Happy Christmas!



**HIGH LANE u3a**

**COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS FOR 2023**

The Committee for 2023 is to be elected at the AGM on 8 February 2023.

The only posts to be filled this year are Committee members. If you wish to nominate any member for the Committee, please complete the form and return it to the Secretary, Lynn Arnold, by the date of the monthly meeting on 11 January 2023.

Please ensure you have the permission and signature of the person you are nominating.

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	NOMINEE	SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE	NOMINATED BY	SECONDED BY
Committee Member				

Note: people nominating and seconding must be members of High Lane u3a and not currently an Officer or Committee member