

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the February 2022 edition of the High Lane U3A newsletter. And welcome to a country with no restrictions; never mind that case numbers are still high. It is good to see that members and groups are beginning to feel more confident about face to face meetings again. Let's hope this will continue to be the case. New members are joining us, admittedly in small numbers, but regularly. We now have around 350 members, so are still well short of pre pandemic numbers but a good improvement over the figures during lockdown. A special welcome to those who have recently joined our u3a. We hope you find our activities and our groups interesting and we look forward to meeting you.

The Committee met this week and among the things we discussed was a celebration lunch. This year is the 21st anniversary of High Lane u3a and the 40th anniversary of u3a. The proposed date is 7 July at the Deanwater. This may have to change but please put the date in your diaries. Details of menu choices and cost will come later. Additionally, we are planning an Open Day sometime in the summer to showcase what we do and hopefully attract new members. We also would like to organise a social evening in the Autumn. Various ideas were discussed. Possibly another murder mystery play – do you remember the Titanic one we staged in 2019? This was very successful. We are open to suggestions so if you have ideas or suggestions for events or would like to be involved, please get in touch with Paul Kenneth, Vice Chair.

Notable items in this edition include another impressive selection of photographs of the work being done in the Art group. This group is clearly having a good time. We have reports from the walking group of their recent walks and the photography group is still going strong. Hot off the Press, the travel group met this morning and have some great trips planned. See page 10 for details.

As with the previous editions, this newsletter will be available only by email and on the web. This edition is accompanied by the National Office New Year bitesize newsletter and the Winter North West u3a newsletter.

Please feel free to share some of your news, your interests, items you have found that you think would be of interest to other members, places you have visited, books you have read, films you have seen; your recipes, limericks; the list is endless. We'd love to hear from some of our new members.

The next main issue will be March 2022 so please send your contributions to me by 27 February at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

AGM

The AGM this year is on 9 February 2022. There will be short reports from the Officers and we need to elect the Officers and Committee for 2022.

The Officer posts for re-election this year are Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. Lynn has reached the end of her first 2 year stint and needs to be re-elected. Officers and Committee members who have been nominated will be elected to posts. After this, there will be an opportunity for Group Leaders to say a few words about their group and the plans they have for the coming year.

u3a Day/week

In 2022, our 40th anniversary, the recommended day for u3a day is 21 September or on a day between 18 and 26 September. Individual u3as can decide on the most appropriate day for them to celebrate. We are planning an open day for 2022 and this may be our u3a day. This may need to take place a little earlier as the Village Hall is booked in September. Details to follow

u3a is 40 years old in 2022 and a packed programme of events running all year is promised. There is no update as yet on what was published in the January edition. I have repeated it here.

40th Anniversary Events Programme

Picnic in the Park. June 2022

Over the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend, u3as are encouraged to hold picnics to celebrate not just the Queen's Jubilee but also our 40th Anniversary.

U3a Science Network webinar. July 2022

The u3a Science Network will host an anniversary meeting, Futures, Foresight and Horizon scanning

One Foot in the Future – September/October 2022

The aim of this project is to engage older people from across the UK in telling real or imagined stories about taking positive steps to make a better future for themselves and others.

Conference on Research and Shared Learning. July/August 2022

Celebrating local and national achievements with guest speaker(s).

EVENTS 2022

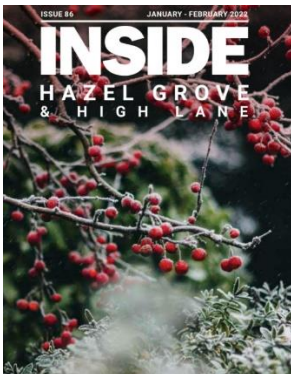
These are somewhat tentative at the moment but this is our thinking.

Anniversary lunch July
Open day/u3a day August/September
Social evening October

Your ideas and thoughts are welcome. If we do decide to stage a murder mystery play we will need people willing to take on the parts. Please contact Diane if you would be willing to help – in any capacity.

PUBLICITY

We had an item in the Jan – Feb issue of Inside Hazel Grove and High Lane.



HIGH LANE U3A

Following our long absence, we are happy to announce that we are up and running once more. U3A is a charity which supports people of the third age with social, educational and leisure activities. We hold meetings once a month in High Lane Village Hall on the second Wednesday of the month at 2pm. We also have many groups to cater for all tastes and interests.

The speaker for our first meeting in 2022, on 12 January is Jim Wallace whose talk is entitled Overpaid and Over Here. It's about the G I's who were here locally in WW2. It sounds very interesting, do come and join us.

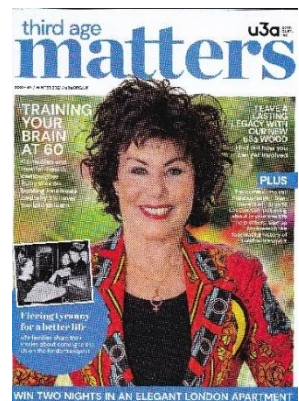
It was unfortunate that this meeting was subsequently cancelled but new members are joining us quite regularly at the moment. We now have around 350 members; still well below our pre pandemic numbers but this is encouraging.

Thanks to Sheila for doing this.

u3a Magazine Third Age Matters

The Third Age Matters magazine always has lots of information about what u3a groups are doing. The winter edition has a feature on Ruby Wax and her strategy for beating loneliness and why it's never too late to learn new things.

The magazine is published five times each year and is sent directly to your home. It is excellent value at £3.50. We are currently taking orders so please get in touch with Les or Margaret if you wish to order your copies.



GROUP NEWS

ART

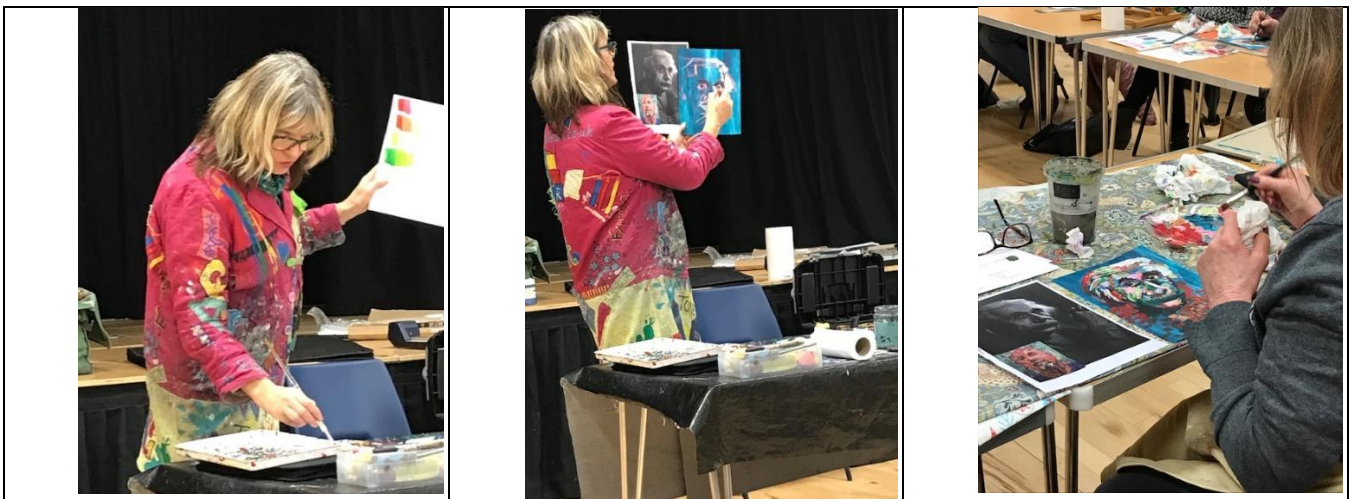
We all met together on the 20th of Jan and again on the 27th Jan at the village hall. 26 of us would you believe. We were entertained by Ally Hargreaves a local well-known artist. who showed us how to draw and paint a portrait of a chap called Einstein over the two week programme. She was brilliant. The fear of painting portraits and using acrylic paints, which a lot of us had not used before, was taken away by her skill in talking to us all .

It was a very jolly afternoon and of course we had our posh biscuits at brew time. And lots of discussion about our performance of the day. Madeline needs to be thanked for organising Ally to come to us and for supplying all the paints, brushes and paper which made for a stress free afternoon. Brilliant thanks Mads.

There is space to join us if you fancy having a go at drawing and painting even if it was a long time ago. We have the kit you don't need to bring anything. I think there are some photos of our performance somewhere.

Brian Chadwick

Indeed there are! A great selection of photographs. Thanks to all the artists and to Mavis, for the photographs.





And the results!



CURRENT AFFAIRS

There were just five of us this month, but a very lively discussion occurred. The topics were wide and varied, from the COVID pandemic, "Partygate", illegal immigrants crossing the Channel to the proposed congestion charge for Greater Manchester, and the BBC license fee. We've all been affected by COVID, in that some don't do as many activities as they used to (or is that just an 'age' thing?). Some lack confidence, and feel mild depression, or are fed up with the same depressing news. No one in the group has had COVID, but all had relatives or knew someone who had. We all felt 'face-to-face' meetings are important. Antivaxxers were discussed, too, and comments were made that Singapore charges them for hospital treatment, and Canada is thinking of doing the same. France has banned them from public areas (is this going against "freedom of choice"?) We all agreed there should be some sort of ban/penalty, but what?

Boris and "party gate"? This brought many comments, many in agreement that he doesn't tell the truth. One member said, "you can tell Boris is lying because his lips move!". We all have different political views and try to stick to the U3A recommendations that it is non-political, but this topic fills most of the news programmes at the moment. We remembered examples of "misdoings" such as proroguing Parliament, the Dominic Cummings affairs, Owen Patterson, Downing St flat decoration, and we were all derisive about his methods of governing. The outcome? We shall just have to wait and see!

Regarding illegal immigrants we all agreed they must be desperate to risk their lives but couldn't agree on a solution - if there is one. The proposed Congestion charge dismayed some, angered others, but we didn't really know enough about it, and concluded there is little we could do about it anyway.

After all our friendly but animated discussions, we decided that the u3a Current Affairs group should be running this Country!

Mavis Dean

GARDENING

Our annual meal was put back to February, when hopefully a 2022 programme will be agreed. In the calmer weather of the last week or two, snowdrops especially are starting to show up, and several flowering shrubs look well - viburnum, lonicera and witch hazel. Camellias, on the other hand, seem somewhat backward. But it is early days.

Walter Mason

CINEMA

Belfast

Kenneth Branagh has written and produced this film which follows a family in his home city at the time of the troubles. The film is highly evocative of the period with a brilliant cast. Scenes of violence are few but the threat is always there. There is humour and pathos aplenty particularly as events are viewed from the point of view of a young child.

Do try and see the film. It is currently screening at the Regent, Marple and The Light in Stockport.

Sheila Harrop

GERMAN and READING GROUPS

Both of these groups last met at the beginning of December and because of the high numbers of covid cases, we have not met since, but now, as cases are coming down rapidly, the German Group will meet next on Friday, 28th January and the Reading Group on Monday 7th February.

Marlene Brookes

I'm sure we have not been missing out on our reading over the last few months. I've recently read Richard Osman's follow up book 'The man who died twice'. His two books have dominated the best seller lists for (too many) months. Having not been very enamoured of the first book, I had fairly low expectations but was pleasantly surprised. The second book has a much better plot and better characterisation – and the members of the Thursday Murder Club are portrayed as intelligent and interesting characters.

I also came across a book set in Stockport during WWII. The Nightingales sang in Mersey Square by Lilly Robbins. An interesting picture of life in Stockport in 1940 with mentions of local munitions and parachute factories. The main characters worked at St Timothy's hospital (presumably fictional?) and met a new friend, who lived in a posh house in a tree lined road in Davenport, at the Plaza. The story tells of how Stockport welcomed the evacuated mothers and children from Guernsey with the Town Hall and Masonic Hall being used to feed them and classes run for the children in various places in the area.

Diane Saxon

QUIZZING

Quiz group members met on their usual date of the fourth Thursday in January for their usual brain torture. This quiz was no exception with lots of desperately trying to remember things long forgotten. Cake and shortbread provided a brief interlude but even those were accompanied by logos to identify and connections to unravel.

Here are a few of the Connections for you to sort out.

1. Hubbard, Hen, Board
2. Chorley, Eccles, Pontefract
3. Victoria, Jubilee, Northern
4. Bucket, Cloche, Beanie
5. Pugh, Dibble, Grub
6. Barra, Christophe, Bella

Please contact me if you would like to join us.

Diane Saxon

Two simple posers for you –

1. The first week there are 1000 covid cases; the next week the number of cases goes up by 100%; the following week the number of cases comes down by 100%. How many cases are there then?
2. The first week there were 500 covid cases, and the second week the cases go up by 100%. The third week they go down by 50%. The next week up again by 100%, and the final week down again by 50%. How many cases then?

Walter Mason

Answers are on page 14.

BALLROOM DANCING

The Ballroom Dancing Group continues smoothly in Hawk Green Reading Rooms, fortnightly and with reasonable attendances. Music is provided alternately by Walter Mason and Ian Hope. We're starting to re-remember most of our pre-pandemic moves, but definitely not yet up to "Strictly" standards!

Walter Mason

PHOTOGRAPHY

This month's competition was **Odd Shapes**.

1st with 5 votes Odd number (5) – Walter

Joint 2nd with 4 votes each. Set in stone – Derek and Footwear at odds – Walter



Thanks for all your entries, I think people had difficulty with this month's subject.

The topic for next month is Transport

Jeff Robinson

TRAVEL

Proposed holidays and visits for this year.

KENT June 12th – 17th

Great Danes Mercure Hotel

Approx. £550 sharing Single supplement £150. Half Board

Possible visits to Hever Castle, Canterbury, Battle of Britain Museum, Sissinghurst.

RIVER CRUISE August 9th – 16th

Rhine Cruise to Switzerland

Flight from Manchester to Basel

Travel insurance details required. Check passport is in date.

IRELAND September. Killarney. No details yet

LINCOLN October 14th – 17th

Holiday Inn Lincoln

Approx. £295 sharing Single supp. £90 Half Board

Entrance fees not included.

Day Trip **CHESTER** February 24th

Threads of Creation Exhibition at Chester Cathedral

Eight million stitches to create the world!

Payment £15 required at Feb. 9th meeting.

A display of twelve silk panels 2.5m high and as wide as 3.5m, retelling the story of creation. Created by artist Jacqui Parkinson using a variety of materials including silks, metallic leathers, gold leaf – with miles of thread and eight million stitches.



WALKING

Walking Group report for Wednesday 15th December 2021

David Burke led a party of 27 on our final walk in 2021. We started from the Torkington Park car park at Hazel Grove on a dry crisp sunny day, leaving the park via Sandown Road and followed a footpath through woodland to Hazel Grove Golf Club. We followed the path across the course to the A6 road and onwards to Norbury Hollow.



Our route then involved a tricky climb up a steep wet slope leading to better conditions on field paths towards Higher Poynton, where a welcome coffee-stop and seasonal chocolate cherry liquors were enjoyed under bright skies. We then followed an old coal-pit incline and circled back towards Hazel Grove via Towers Farm and the footbridge across the A555 to Mill Lane and Simpson's corner on the old A6, leading back to Torkington Park. A distance of about 4.5 miles in total.



David Burke

U3A Walking Group Report for 26th January 2022

On our first walk of 2022, 26 people and a dog met in the car park of All Saints' Church in Marple. Following the path that Samuel Oldknow's apprentices took when they attended church, we descended steeply over the river Goyt to Bottoms Hall, behind which used to be the Apprentice House where the workers lived.



Climbing up the rocky path we reached Mellor Golf Course and enjoyed a welcome coffee break. Ascending further on to the golf course, distant misty views of Manchester and the local landmark of the cross on Cobden Edge came into view. A path then took us round Cobden Edge into the hamlet of Brookbottom where we had an early lunch break even though The Fox was not open.

Descending the rocky path from The Fox we reached the Goyt Way and followed the River Goyt to the packhorse bridge, known locally as the Roman bridge. Another steep climb took us up on to the Peak Forest Canal which we then followed back to the apprentice path and into the churchyard.

24 of us returned (we didn't lose the two!) after an enjoyable walk of around 6.5 to 7 miles in dry weather.



Shelagh Stokes

POETRY CORNER

Stewart Clay has sent another poem for us to enjoy.

Words

*Where would we be with no words to read - lyrics to sing or poetry to be spoken
Would we have to rely solely on mime - to express our feelings and any emotion
We'd need a completely new skill set - if requests came by just gestures or signs
How could there be as much joy in the world - without written or spoken line*

*How could we calm and comfort our loved ones - without the use of gentle words
How lacking all our lives would be - if only sounds but never words were heard
Life without the works of the authors and playwrights - those who many hold dear
No Dickens or Jane Austin and to not have a clue - who was Will Shakespeare*

*An Orchestra alone can be a delight - but far more uplifting with a choir singing
Oh what a life with no stories to tell or to hear - and be denied the joy of reading
No Musicals by Hammerstein or Lloyd Webber - no Operas by Verdi or Wagner
And none of the poetry of Shelley or Keats - nor the wisdom of Cicero or Sartre*

*The sixties wouldn't have been swinging - without The Beatles and Rolling Stones
We would never have heard the likes of Dylan or Bowie - nor Elvis or Tom Jones
Television would simply be pictures - and Radio need never have been invented
A plus is there'd be no Reality TV - to irritate, infuriate and to daily be resented*

*There would be no need for Computers - or iPads, Tablets or Smartphones
No W. H. Smiths or Waterstones - whilst our libraries would be no go Zones
But a world totally devoid of words is - the daftest notion I have ever heard
And on reflection the picture I have painted - has to be in a word – absurd*

THE MUSEUM AT THE END OF THE WORLD

I noticed this in a news article and thought it would be interesting reading for the newsletter.

Grytviken, South Georgia

The museum at the end of the world reopens for business.

On the icy southern edge of the Atlantic Ocean, just above the Antarctic Circle, is a British Island with a ghost town and a museum. The nearest airport is a four-day boat ride away. Grytviken is a very tough place to work and live. Fresh food is very rare. The internet is poor to non-existent and at times the wind is so strong it can tip helicopters over. On South Georgia there are no permanent residents, just 20 or so workers from scientists to maintenance staff.



The museum has just reopened to visitors despite the remoteness and pandemic. The museum originally opened in 1992 as a specialist whaling museum but has expanded into many interesting different things as can be seen on the internet.

It has become a popular place to visit with tourists from cruise ships. Until the pandemic struck about 10,000 tourists a year visited Grytviken and the museum. The museum, reopened in December 2021, is now managed by The South Georgia Heritage Trust which is actually based in Scotland.

If you Google Grytviken Museum, it takes you on a tour of all the rooms in the museum. There is also an excellent video taking you around the town. It also visits the old wooden church. In the cemetery at the church is buried the body of Ernest Shackleton.

I hope you find the article and video as interesting as I did.

Paul Kenneth

Quiz answers

Connections

*Mother, Cakes, Underground lines, Hats, Trumpton firemen,
Names given to storms*

And to Walter's posers – these may surprise you

1. 0 2. 500.

u3a High Street project

This project has been going on throughout lockdown. Members have been capturing changes in their high street that may have been caused by the pandemic. Images are now being collected on a massive database as a research tool for whoever would find it useful. There doesn't appear to be anything related to our area of the country. Maybe some members would like to take part in this project? Please visit the High Street Project website to find out more and how you can take part.

<https://u3ahsp.ibase.media/home?WINID=1643714857980>

Groups or individuals can engage in a range of activities:

- surveying their local high street
- taking photographs
- making local guides or walking trails 'explaining' the area, in all formats including mobile
- local focus studies such as street histories, area change, key turning points.

Showcasing our u3a

Sort of related to this project, we've been thinking about a video to showcase our u3a and our area which could be placed on our website for prospective members to view. This would include a scenes from High Lane and Hazel Grove that show the variety of the area and what it has to offer.

We welcome members to contribute to this in conjunction with the photography group. If you already have photographs you think would fit the bill please send them to me with a note as to the subject in case I don't recognise it! Alternatively, please go out with your camera or phone and take some pictures that you think are attractive or representative of our area. I'm looking to have something ready to turn into video by the end of March. We can of course add to it as we see fit; perhaps when we see the sun a little more often.

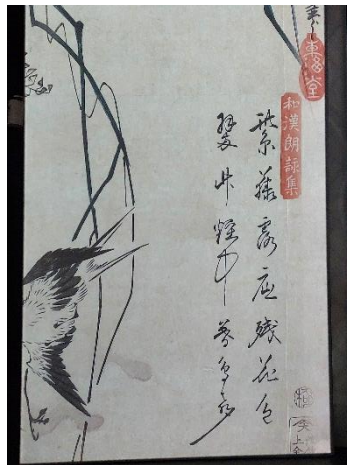
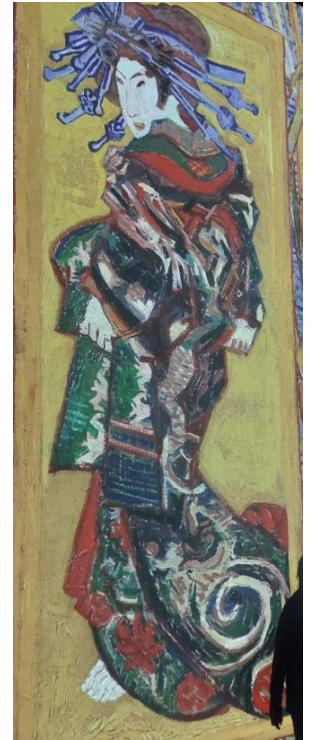
Diane Saxon

There was an old cove in High Lane
So smooth, but ever so vain.
There is no doubt
That when he went out
He never forgot his hat and cane.

And down in Hazel Grove
There was another old cove
Whatever the day
He went on his way
Dressed entirely in mauve!

Van Gogh at Media City

The Van Gogh experience at Media City has been so popular it has been extended until 27 February so if you haven't yet caught this experience, I would highly recommend it. There are two large rooms where Van Gogh pictures are projected on the walls in an ever-changing display accompanied by stirring music.



It takes over an hour to cover all the different pictures and music tracks. After the show you can visit the Lowry art gallery, shop at the Outlet, get a meal at one of the many eateries or even watch a film at the cinema.

Diane Saxon

AND FINALLY Some one-liners

There is no 'I' in denial

Working in a mirror factory is something I can see myself doing.

I, for one, like roman numerals

I broke my finger last week. On the other hand, I'm OK.

You are not completely useless. You can always serve as a bad example.

I let my mind wander and it didn't come back

I intend to live forever. So far, so good.