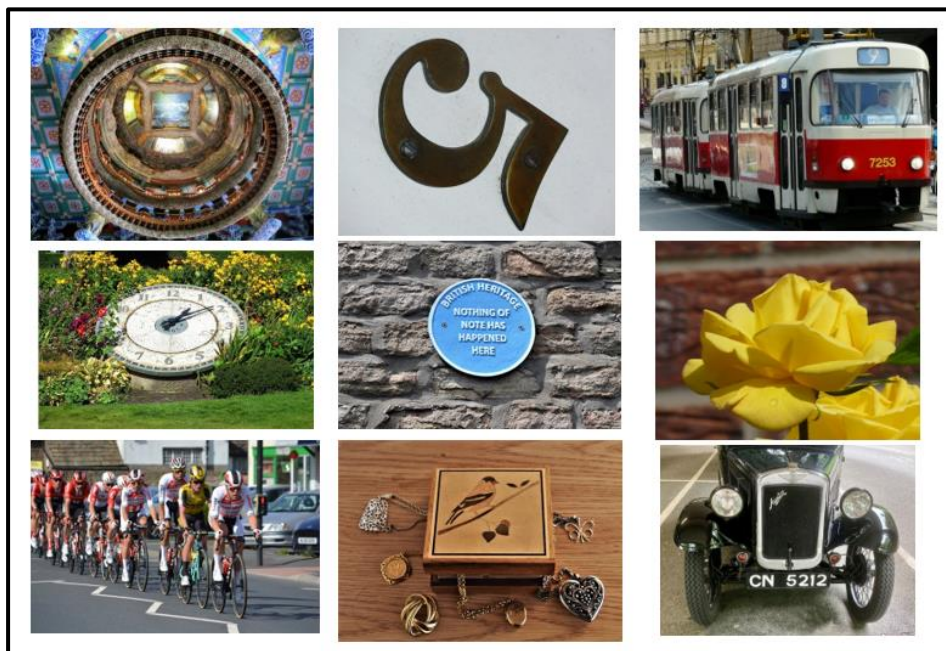


Newsletter

January 2023



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FROM THE EDITOR

Happy New Year



Welcome to the January 2023 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. Thanks to all the contributors for their interesting and informative contributions. The cover photo this time highlights some of the winning photos in the Photography group's monthly competitions.

In this edition, the Chair's message highlights an issue that was raised in the recent edition of the Third Age Trust magazine; that of building our pool of organisers and helpers to run our u3a. It is important to appreciate that the ethos of u3a is that members should play an active part in running the u3a movement. A summary of the key points of the article are on page 4.

Also in this edition you will find a report of the recent Christmas party plus our annual Quiz of the Year where you can look back at the events of 2022 and delve into your memories. The Travel group has some ideas for this year's events, and we have another impressive selection of photographs of the work being done in the Art group.

Looking ahead to next year, we have what looks like a very interesting talk at the January meeting and there is some information about our AGM. At its next meeting, your committee will be planning the social events for the year. We have the Murder mystery evening planned for 10th March and would welcome suggestions from members for other 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. We are pleased to have several new members 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 December, the Christmas newsheet and a New Year message from Sam Maugher, our National Office CEO. Lots for you to read!

The next issue will be February 2023 so please send your contributions to me by 29th January 2023 at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

FROM THE CHAIR

Happy New Year to everyone.

I hope you all had a good Christmas and let's hope we all have a good new year. Another year gone. The older you get the quicker the time goes by.

A lot has happened this last year, good and bad but I not going to dwell on the bad. Our u3a continues to grow and the membership is much the same as it was before Covid. We do need a bit more help on the Committee. Some committee members have been on board for a long time and soon they could be stepping down. It would be nice to have positions covered for when this happens.

Quite a few of the groups would also appreciate a little help. We have said before about suggestions for new groups. There are always some good ideas but nobody seems to want to help get the group started. You can have one or two or even three people running a group. It's not hard and there is always plenty of help available.

There have been trips well organised by our group leaders and I know they are looking for ideas for 2023. If you have any ideas please let them know. Unfortunately the murder mystery evening had to be postponed but has been rearranged for 10th March.

At the last committee meeting a few good ideas for events in 2023 were suggested, so watch this space.

All the best

Paul Kenneth (Chair)

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership is now due for renewal. Renewals will be accepted at the January meeting and at the February AGM. If you are unable to get to one of those meetings, the renewal form is available on the website.

As stated in the Treasurer's message in the previous newsletter, the membership fee for 2023 is £8, or £11.50 if you also wish to order the Third Age Magazine which is posted to you. This is still very low in comparison with other U3As.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The annual Christmas party was held on Wednesday 14th December. Despite the cold weather and the slippery conditions, it was very well attended. The proceedings began with the entertainment with a wide selection of songs performed by the versatile Stephen Hallworth. He accompanied himself on his trumpet and encouraged everyone to join in.

After the food and a generous raffle (thanks to all those who donated a prize) he concluded with a rousing version of The Twelve Days of Christmas. Thanks to the committee for organising a very happy and successful event.

Kath Wareham

The next meeting is 11 January when Joe O'Neill will present a talk entitled Jerome Caminada: The Real Sherlock Holmes. Caminada was an 18th century Manchester policeman known as the 'Manchester Sherlock Holmes'. Sounds interesting.

The full programme of meetings was published in the previous two editions and will be available on the new Groups list after the AGM in March.

AGM

The AGM will take place in February. We will need nominations for members wishing to serve on the Committee. A nomination form was included in the December newsletter, or one can be obtained from the Secretary, Lynn Arnold. Offers of help are always very welcome. If you know of any member who would be interested in helping to run our u3a please suggest they get in touch with a committee member who can tell them more about what is involved.

If you wish to be nominated, please complete the form, get it signed, and return it to the Secretary, Lynn Arnold, by the end of January.

GROUP LEADERS

Please would group leaders prepare a report on last year's activities for the AGM. If you cannot attend, please ask someone in your group to read the report or send a copy to Lynn Arnold.

THIRD AGE MATTERS ARTICLE: Volunteers must step up for u3a to survive
Winter 2022

In this article, Barry Gunter of Epping Forest u3a discusses the resurgence of u3a following the Covid pandemic. He reports that many u3as have struggled to reach their pre-pandemic membership levels and many are finding it difficult to find people willing to help run the u3a and its activities. He suggests that some members don't realise that the u3a volunteering ethos means that they are expected to play an active part and may regard u3a as a provider of established activities which they have paid to join. Are we making new and prospective members aware of this? Is this part of our publicity? He also highlights an issue that we are finding in our u3a, that when a group leader steps down, often after many years, it is difficult or sometimes impossible to find people willing to take on the group. We have lost several groups over the last few years as a result of this. The same issue is true in regard to the Officers and Committee membership. u3as are often run by a small cohort of members who have been doing it for some time.

The article suggests a way forward might be to put more emphasis on the volunteering ethos that underpins the u3a movement, presenting the u3a as a mutual help organisation rather than an organisation that offers activities and classes.

The Committee welcomes your thoughts on what is presented here. Please send these to the editor.

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE MEMBER?

This poem reflects the sentiments of the article. You may remember it from a newsletter some years ago. The origin of the poem is not easy to discover. It appears in a collection of war poems and is used with appropriate modifications as a motivational poem by organizations as different as woodcarvers, masons, scouts and the WI – and the u3a! In some cases it is attributed to Joseph Servocky.

*Are you an active member?
The kind that would be missed,
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list?
Do you attend the meetings?
And mingle with the flock?*

*Do you take an active part?
To help the work along,*

*Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about the clique?*

*There's quite a program scheduled
That i'm sure you've heard about,
And we'll appreciate it if you, too
Will come and help us out.
Are you an active member?
Or do you just belong?*

GROUP NEWS

ART

The art group this month was challenged to paint a beautiful sunset photo taken over High Lane. A selection of our pictures is below.

We meet every Thursday at 1.30 till 4 pm at the memorial hall in high lane and we would welcome any newcomers.

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



Val Brown

BALLROOM DANCING

The Ballroom Dancing Group rounded off a successful year in December, first with a very enjoyable Christmas Party, with music and dances hosted by Kate and Ian. A week later, Walter provided the Christmassy tunes for our last dance of the year, when we started a three week break before dances recommence in 2023.

Thanks to Sam for a splendid group photo!



Walter Mason

GERMAN

We finished off the year with a meeting on December 16th with some festive food and good conversation as usual. Our next meeting will be on Friday 13th January.

Marlene Brookes



CHURCHES AND PUBS

After running Churches and Pubs for the last twelve years we have decided to take a break. The group has been running for fifteen years. In this time over eighty different Churches and nearly as many different pubs have been visited. Three or four of the pubs have been visited twice. Every Church was different and we always tried to find a Church that had plenty of Stained glass. When we arrived at the Church we were always greeted with a tea or coffee along with a biscuit or piece of cake. We covered a few different counties Cheshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and North Wales.

After refreshments we were given a talk given to us by the vicar, church warden or historian on the history of the church. All the talks were excellent.

After the talk we then called at a local pub for a pre-arranged lunch. They were all pubs picked at random and marked good, very good, excellent and brilliant by us. I think there was only one marked less than good and that was a buffet which the landlord talked me into. Never again.

We would like to thank everyone who came on the trips and everyone who made the group popular and also the people who offered lifts to those who didn't have transport.

It would be nice to see the group carrying on and if anyone fancies taking over, we are willing to help. It could be done by one, two or three different people. You could actually do a couple each. Three of you doing two each. Six in a year or one each, every two or three months. It would keep the group going. We have a list of all the Church's that have been visited.

Thanks again to you all for supporting the group over the last fifteen years

Regards,
Paul and Barbara

GARDENING

The Gardening Group had a full programme of events during 2022, with a mixture of visits to members gardens interspersed with private visits to yellow scheme and public gardens.



The year concluded with a pleasant Christmas lunch at the Beehive, where Walter announced that after 11 enjoyable years, he was stepping down as group leader. Hopefully this would give time for others in the group to reorganise before garden events restart in the Spring. Some moves have since begun to discuss how this might be done.

Walter Mason



CHRISTMAS DAY FLOWERS

In the last newsletter, Chris Fontaine encouraged everyone to count species in bloom on Christmas Day and send photos and numbers to the gardening group leader. On the big day, while waiting for the flood of entries, and letting the turkey cook itself, I scoured our garden for flowers. My tally was 11, just about. Some flowers were miniscule or were hiding in sheltered spots almost out of sight, and a few were stressed by recent frosts. The brightest were yellow violas sheltered by our house eaves. The smallest were the first blooms of sweet box (*Sarcococca confusa*) – there is a large clump of *sarcococca* just inside Torkington Park's Secret Garden – at times its scent can be over-powering. The most blooms were on flowering shrubs, several also scented; but difficult to photograph on the drizzly grey day. I will attach the photos of most. The *sarcococca* and an azalea were too awkward to get my camera to.

The full list was viola/pansy; zebra grass; viburnums; lonicera; hellebores; winter jasmine; perennial wallflower; yucca; sarcococca; winter heathers; azalea.

Obviously, the freezing days since Chris's challenge took severe toll on other, more summery species, but I would expect that some local gardens might have primula, mahonia, daphne in bloom, for instance. Sheltered places like Chadkirk walled garden and the terraced cottages at Etherow often have early flowers, even daffodils at Chadkirk.

Really, winter flowers never put on a good show. Better to have small shrubs with varied leaf colours, if you want a winter garden. Or go outside when the snow or ice can transform the humblest garden – get out quickly before the frost starts to thaw.

So. No flood of entries arrived. But many thanks to Chris Fontaine for her suggestion. Perhaps next Christmas might be kinder for flower spotting. Meanwhile for all of you; keep gardening, or even join the gardening group, and have a flowerful 2023.



Walter Mason

HANDBELL RINGING



Thanks to Ruth Smith for sending this photo, taken by Peter Greenwood. Ruth says “Dave and I had a great Sunday afternoon in late November listening to the bell ringers quite magical at Chadkirk Chapel, with a mixture of Christmas music. Tea and cake was available. Our Christmas celebrations started then.”

READING

On the 5th December we enjoyed a festive lunch at the home of one of our members, followed by a reading of our favourite poems. Thank you, Ingrid, for a lovely afternoon.

Our next meeting is on Monday, 7th January when we shall be discussing THE MERCIES by Kiran Millwood Hargrave.

Marlene Brookes

CRIME FICTION READING



This group started in the summer. For the first meeting, each member of the group brought three suggestions of books we might read. From these, we have randomly selected one book each month. So far, we have managed to read seven books – there are plenty left. This approach has opened our eyes to the wide variety of writing within the crime fiction genre. As you would expect, we don't all like the same type of books and some of the books we have found quite challenging. We have individually rated each book. The two books which scored highest are *The Hard Way* by Lee Child, his only book where some of the action takes place in England, and *Burial of Ghosts*, by Ann Cleeves, author of *Vera* and *Shetland* books but this was one of her stand-alone novels.

Please contact me if you would like more details of this group.

Diane Saxon

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Photography group was first formed in 2012 but struggled to gain members as a lot of people thought it was a little too technical and aimed more at experts – membership dwindled. Walter agreed to take on the role as leader and refocused the group as more low key and less technical. Members much preferred this approach as most were using much simpler cameras. Friendly competitions were held on a regular basis meeting at people's houses and judging photographs of a different topic each time from A4 prints. I joined the group in 2017 and attended the meetings. My interest in photography started with a simple point and click camera to keep a record for my other hobby, hill walking. As I improved my skills, I updated my camera to get better photographs.

In 2019 Covid brought an end to holding monthly meetings due to social distancing. Walter came up with the idea of having monthly competitions online using digital photographs via e-mail. This idea was a great success and has continued to date. Walter decided to pass group leadership over to me in 2021 (he was a hard act to follow) and I am grateful for all the help and encouragement he gave me.

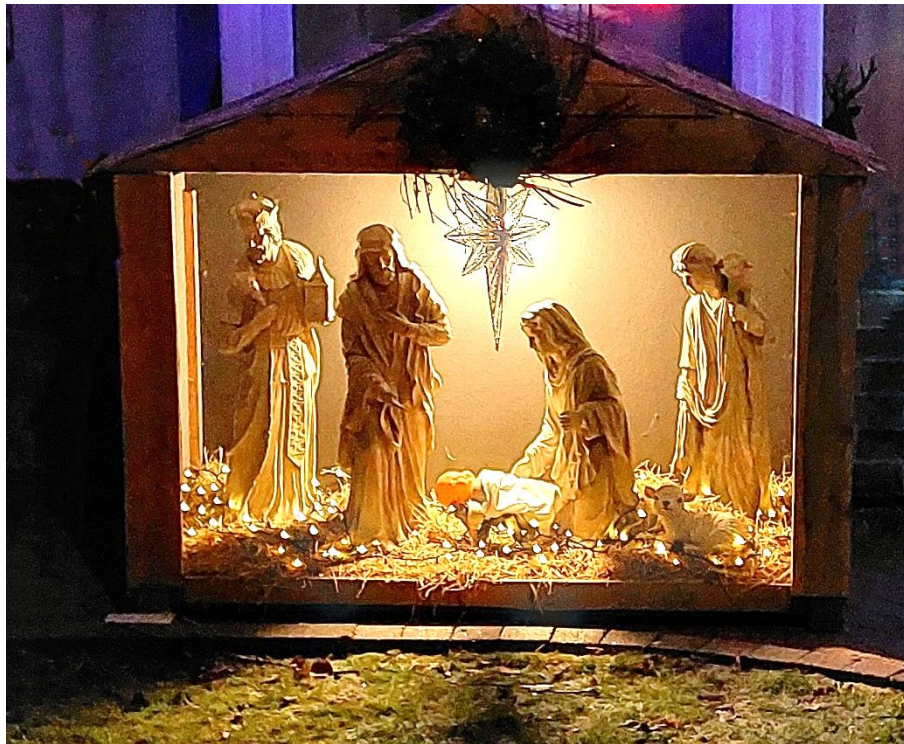
We continue to have competitions each month. This works well with many of our members now using iPads and mobile phones to take excellent photographs, in many cases equally as good as expensive cameras.

2022 was a good year for us, and our membership has grown to 10 members.

I am currently setting out our programme for 2023 and we encourage people to join us and have a go.

This month's competition was Christmas themes.

- 1st Nativity – Diane
- 2nd Posing for Christmas card – Jeff
- Joint 3rd. Tree of light – Ken



Jeff Robinson



QUIZZING



Quiz of the Year

How well do you remember 2022?

Answers are on the last page of the newsletter.

January	Who became the youngest female pilot after her flight round the world ended this month.
February	Which country won the most gold medals (16) in the 2022 Winter Olympics held in China
March	Which film won the best film Oscar
April	Which Tory MP was forced to resign after being discovered looking at online porn in parliament?
May	Which former Spice girl was awarded an MBE?
June	The French Open was won by Nadal. How many French Open titles has he now won?
July	The 2022 Commonwealth games opened this month. In which British city?
August	The Hinkley B nuclear power station ceased operations this month. Where is it?
September	Explosions in the gas pipeline from Russia caused leaks near this Danish owned island.
October	Liz Truss resigned as PM. How many days had she held the post?
November	Where was COP27 held?
December	A clip from which movie was shown in the Asda 2022 Christmas advert?

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

TRAVEL

We have started planning holidays and day trips for 2023. Suggestions are:

April 10th-14th	Warners Hotel near Knaresborough
June 23rd -26th	Carlisle
Aug/September	Ireland



We need to have sufficient people interested before obtaining quotes from travel agents. The cost of hiring a coach is becoming very expensive so approx.30 people are needed to make it viable.

More information at the Wednesday meeting on January 11th or contact Margaret McDermott.

WALKING

Whaley Bridge, Taxal and Kettlethulme 30/11/2022

After negotiating the initial confusion caused by road closures in the Whaley Bridge area. Nineteen walkers met at Slatersbank Farm, Start lane, Whaley Bridge, on a chilly, overcast but fine day with light breeze.



We started off on a path through picturesque Slatersbank Wood down to Reservoir Road, which then provided a good view of the repair work on the ill-fated dam, which is now said to be work-in-progress.

Our onward route through Memorial Park and its well-maintained pathways, allowed us to inspect the impressive War Memorial, before climbing up to join a path through a new house building site, and onward to Taxal and the ancient Church of St James.

We then encountered our first serious hill climb to Taxal Edge. Nearing the top, we stopped in pretty woodland with commanding views, for a rewarding coffee break.



At the top of the climb, we left the Goyt valley and started our descent to Todd Brook via Gap House and an ancient packhorse route whilst enjoying spectacular views across the valley.

Several footbridges and stiles on our route were negotiated with care, and a lunch stop was taken adjacent to Todd Brook.

After a short climb we reached Cornfield, a home for several Alpacas, before proceeding along a pleasant grassy path towards the former Moorside Hotel. A right turn along a track started the homerun down the valley via Foxhills onto Start Lane, leading to our parking spot at Slatersbank Farm.

Our walk distance proved to be longer than expected at around 6.5 miles. It just didn't feel that far, with the variety in terrain, constantly changing landscape with distant views, plus lots of interest and surprises in an area that's awkward to access.

A very good last day in November outing for our group, with no rain!

Christmas Walk Wednesday 14/12/2022: Hurdlow, Pennine Bridleway, Parsley Hay

On this bright frosty sunny day in December, twenty-one group members met at the Royal Oak, Hurdslow, Derbyshire, for a four-mile easy walk... no stiles or hills to contend with. The alpine conditions were idea for our Christmas walk, a clear blue sky, a crisp dusting of snow and the feel-good factor that comes with classic sunny winter landscape.



We stopped for coffee and chocolate cherry liquors at Parsley Hey before making our way back to the Royal Oak for Christmas lunch. The staff were keen to please and welcomed us to our private dining room which had an open fire.

An excellent quality lunch was enjoyed by everyone, many saying they will return to the Royal Oak.



A super walking day in pristine, sunny, very light breeze conditions...let's hope for many happy returns in the New Year walking season.

David Burke

POETRY CORNER

"U4A"

It's no fun growing old when you're touching on eighty.
Little bags you tossed around, now feel really weighty.
You wobble when walking, even have to use sticks.
Once you conquered Crib Goch – now your legs feel like bricks!

Household jobs were a breeze, but really now a chore.
You reach for low shelves – can't reach them no more!
Muscle niggles were rare; now it's pain all day long.
For ibuprofen's too weak, and codeine's too strong.

Make the most of how it is, it can only get worse.
Thank goodness for carers, and doctor, and nurse.
Can't write any more; my brain's on the blink.
Forgetfulness looms, and I won't sleep a wink.

I wish

People can be lucky enough to stay fit into old age, continuing happily in their u3a activities. But others are not so fortunate, and health problems mean that activities can be curtailed or become impossible. My little poem implies that for some, there is a fourth, less pleasant age. Is this true?

"I wish" allows the poem to be continued, perhaps in a different vein, which could be a challenge to newsletter readers. With the efforts printed in next month's newsletter.

How about it, High Lane u3a members.

Walter Mason

u3a Poetry Competition

For the poets among you, the national poetry competition is still open. The deadline is Friday 27 January 2023 and poems should be fewer than 16 lines and can be on any topic. The three winning poems will be published in Third Age Matters and on the u3a website – and our plaudits would appear in a future newsletter.

A Christmas tale

My friend Mike
To avoid the train strike
Went home by plane
But never again
His luggage is still on a hike!

At the desk, he pleads
I've only travelled from Leeds
What can be done
My presents are gone
Poor Mike. Hope he succeeds!

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

National Office Learning Events for the New Year

Some highlights you might want to book. Remember they can fill up quickly.

- 11 Jan Starting Family history
- 13 Jan Exploring social media
- 18 Jan Relativity
- 19 Jan Climate change
- 20 Jan WhatsApp
- 6 Feb Mindfulness – the first of a six-week course

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>

AND FINALLY

My New Year's resolution is to stop hanging out with people who ask me about my New Year's resolutions

I remember 2022 like it was yesterday

2022 was such a blur, I think my resolution was too low.

Why do birds fly south for New Year's Eve? It's too far to walk.

To kick start my New Year: I took an IQ test and the results were negative.

Happy New Year. May all your troubles last as long as your New Year's resolutions.



Quiz of the year answers:

- Jan: Zara Rutherford
- Feb: Norway
- Mar: Coda
- Apr: Neil Parrish
- May: Melanie Brown, aka Scary Spice
- Jun: 14
- Jul: Birmingham
- Aug: On Bristol Channel, near Bridgwater, Somerset.
- Sep: Bornholm
- Oct: 50
- Nov: Sharm El Sheik
- Dec: Elf