

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the fifteenth edition of the new style High Lane U3A newsletter. Hopefully many of us have been able to get out to meet friends and family and to visit pubs and restaurants. It's good to see that the pubs and restaurants are busy and the nice weather will no doubt help. The widespread availability of lateral flow test kits is helping us to feel more relaxed about meeting people. It is, however, sad to see that so many leisure establishments, as well as shops, have not reopened after the lockdown.

Guidance from National Office re group meetings is, as yet, unchanged from that reported in the previous edition. We can meet outdoors but indoor meetings are limited by venue capacity rules and have to be in socially distanced groups of up to six people. We wait to see what will happen later this month; there are worrying predictions of a third wave and the advice seems to be that there should be some weeks delay to the proposed date for the end of lockdown.

u3a Day is this Wednesday, 2 June; we may see some material in the press or on radio/TV. Please let the editor know if you come across anything interesting. As mentioned in the last edition, we are not planning anything for u3a day but hope to be part of the High Lane party in the autumn when we will be able to showcase some of the things we do and hopefully attract new members to our u3a. We don't have any more information at this stage but if you are interested in helping with this please contact Linda Dale.

This edition contains some reports from our local groups, a report and lots of photos from Walter on his visit to the newly opened RHS Bridgewater Garden, some news from National Office, plus we have a new poetry corner and some light hearted items.

This month's newsletter is accompanied by the May Newsletter Express from National Office. I have given a link to the full National Office newsletter is <https://us9.campaign-archive.com/?u=656ad5962b370cc9e2731d1ed&id=9bcf35a68e>

The next issue will be July 2021 so please send your contributions to me before the end of June via newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

EGM MONDAY 10.30AM 7 JUNE

You will all have received information about the proposed changes to the Constitution needed so we can have an online AGM. There are just two items on the Agenda: the proposed changes to the Constitution and Any Other Business. You are free to raise relevant issues you may wish to discuss under AOB. It would be helpful if you have an item you wish to raise if you could inform the Secretary, Lynn Arnold, before the meeting.

Please note that only members who have renewed their membership for 2021 are entitled to vote. Membership renewal was due in February. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please do so without delay so you are sure of continued access to our activities and newsletters. A renewal form is on the website or please contact Margaret McDermott, the Membership Secretary.

The EGM will be a Zoom meeting and we can accommodate up to 100 attendees. The link you need to access the meeting is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86191293675?pwd=ZVVJQitYWwXFWakZUYmp6YjdjR2hCZz09>. You do not need to have Zoom installed on your device. Zoom will allow you to use the camera and microphone and will work on tablets, laptops and PCs. (note your PC may not have camera and microphone; you would need an external microphone and/or webcam, but you can still login and see and hear). Your responses have now been received and will be presented at the meeting. Once this is agreed, the Committee will set a date for the AGM and will be asking for members to join the Committee to help run your u3a as it gets going again after lockdown.

FROM U3A NATIONAL OFFICE

Events

There is a good range of events offered on diverse topics including maths, geology, art, wellbeing and history. Note that, from past experience, some may well be already booked. You can find them here <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events>

Don't forget – if you attend one of these events, I'd love a short review for the newsletter (Ed).

Grow your own

There is something so satisfying about growing your own vegetables in Springtime! If you have a garden, patio, window box or even a sunny place indoors why not give it a go! We are sure it will bring out the 'green-fingers' in you! There is so much choice to plant vegetables or fruit during Springtime. Cucumbers, beetroot, tomatoes, carrots, strawberries, raspberries and blueberries to name a few.

Get planting! Please send in your photographs showing the journey your produce has made. We will publish some of the photographs on this page. <https://u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/grow-your-own>

Any information about your planting tips would be a lovely addition too!

Learning programmes

Details of all of these learning programmes are on the National u3a website at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>

PHOTOGRAPHY

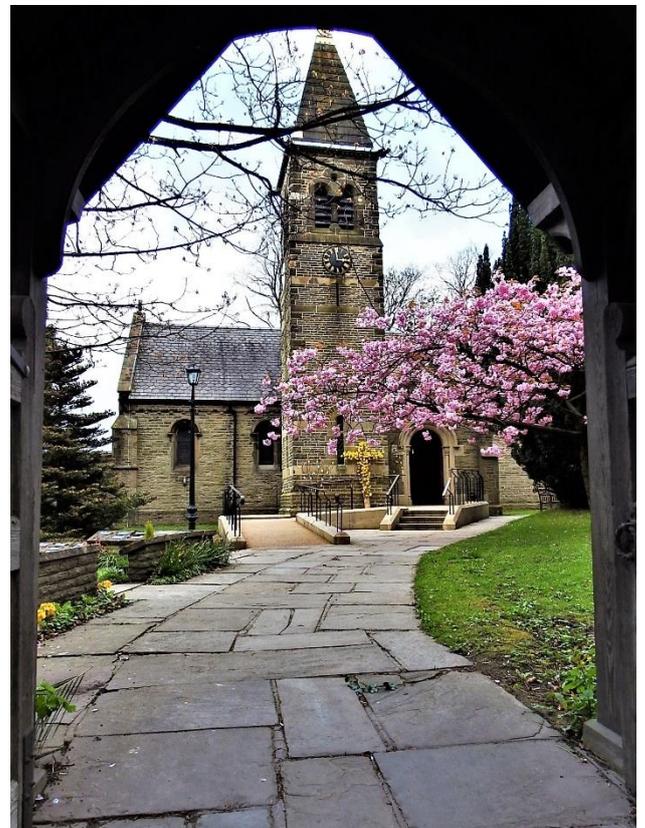
Over the past 14 months we have managed to keep the club going by monthly competitions. Walter was the instigator of this idea and I took over in January. Each month saw a new topic to test our skills. All the members took three photographs and submitted them online. Each one of us then voted for which we thought the best.

Some topics have proved more challenging than others, but overall, it has worked very well. This month's competition subject was 'Through a window or gate'. Voting was very close but the winning three photos were

1st: Diane's photo entitled How does your garden grow

2nd: Jeff's picture of High Lane Church

3rd: Walter's photo entitled Castle in Prague.



The subject for next month's project is 'Lights' so we may be seen wandering the streets after dark!

I think we are all looking forward to getting back to our usual monthly meetings as soon as it is safe to do so.

Jeff Robinson



BRIDGE

We are continuing to enjoy our Monday afternoon sessions on BridgeBase online. It looks like these will still be needed for some months yet; earliest dates being proposed for the return of face to face bridge seem to be mid-July. During one of our sessions we were chatting about what we could see out of our windows and this great shot of a goldfinch standing proud in the garden was captured by Ben Alexander.



Online Bridge made the papers this weekend – the Sunday Times reports that suspensions of players for breaking the rules have multiplied twenty-fold due to playing online.

We can accommodate more players. Do get in touch if you are missing your bridge and would like to join us.

Diane Saxon

QUIZ

We continue to enjoy our monthly quizzes via email but, Government rules permitting, hope to get together for at least one of our summer meetings.

Please contact me if you are interested in joining us.

This is from the Times, 22 May 2021.

Can you name the world capital cities (official capitals of sovereign states) that meet the criteria below? Answers are on the last page.

- 1 Which four begin with a W?
- 2 Which one contains three S's?
- 3 Which two contain none of the letters in CAPITAL?

Diane Saxon

GARDENING

This month's pictures from the gardening group.



Walter Mason

RHS BRIDGEWATER

The new RHS Bridgewater Garden in Salford is now open and has featured in several TV programmes over the last year or two. A visit costs £11 for all except RHS members.

Some photos from my visit show that there is plenty of interest for gardeners and non-gardeners alike. It is still very new, and early in the year, so many areas are very green, and plants are not yet established, especially in the Chinese Streamside Garden. The geometric beds are not really to my taste, but the best-established parts of the Paradise Garden are already very colourful and attractive, and trees and hedges give the appearance of many years' growth. There were plenty of interesting plants I couldn't identify, and good colour combinations, so a visit will not disappoint - especially later in the summer when the herbaceous plants come into their own.

One interesting touch can you spot the nesting duck half hidden amongst a large clump of flowers, spotted by my eagle-eyed companion David Burke!"







Walter Mason

POETRY CORNER

Thanks to Stewart Clay for this poem.

The Problems Posed by Poetry and Prose

*When I first made the decision - to attempt some clever Poetry and Prose
The words didn't come very easily to me - in fact an major problem arose
Hard though I tried my best efforts - lacked that definitive classical style
So becoming the next Yeats or Shelley - would probably take quite a while*

*I dressed the part in open toe sandals - cravat and brocade smoking jacket
But that didn't have the desired effect - I quite simply just couldn't hack it
My frequent googled searches - for the right words and clever quotations
Only served to reveal and highlight - my shortcomings and sad limitations*

*After a good deal of serious thought - and much profound soul searching
I enrolled on a Prose and Poetry course - at the local college of learning
I believed that to be a sensible course - for me to embark on at that time
But attempts at my chosen subject just worsened - line after line after line*

*I studied Robert Browning's works - which I thought would surely inspire
But my poem Home Thoughts From A-Sofa - was dismissed by all as dire
I tried hard to fit in with my peers - to be **in** with their precious **in** crowd
But my serious efforts brought only jeers - then laughter cruel and loud*

*I decided that my fellow students - were supercilious Poetic Prose bores
Though my carefully assembled ensemble - seemed not to help my cause
So my poetry and clothing drew only - my peers deep scorn and derision
So aborting the Prose and Poetry course - became quite an easy decision*

*I accepted my classical Poetry - was most unlikely to threaten the Bard
But then came my eureka moment - simple rhyming verse wasn't so hard
After only a couple of small glasses - of my favourite tippie - Red Wine
I was creating poetic gems by the score - in rhyming double quick time*

*Who needs an expensive college course - and a learned Poetry Professor
And why should I suffer disdain - from smart folk who don't really matter
So first rack your brains for the words - then ransack your imagination
But if all else should fail - you too could still try - Red Wine stimulation*

*For me Pinot Noir brings swift inspiration - so you really mustn't despair
After just one or two small glasses - I pluck words straight out of thin air
I can now conduct whole conversations - in fine Red Wine inspired rhyme
So tell Pam Ayres to move over - make room - today could yet be my time*

Stewart Clay

MORE SCAMS

National Insurance number scam – If you've received a pre-recorded message or phone call claiming your National Insurance number has been compromised, you can safely ignore it. It's a scam. As usual they are just after your details.

Which reports that calls from investment firms such as ING Bank and Interactive Investor are being received. The victim is directed to a fake site to open an account and asked to enter information which is then used to steal their identify or clear out their bank account. Read more: <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2021/05/fraudsters-peddling-fake-interactive-investor-and-ing-bank-investments-warns-which/>

Fake websites look like the real thing but will lack functionality or essential details like support and contacts. Explore the site and check that it is all working before giving any information. There is good advice from Money Saving Expert <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/shopping/stop-scams/>

The usual advice applies.

- Don't click on links in unsolicited texts or emails
 - Do not press 1 or follow any other instructions given in an automated message
 - Don't give any personal or account information to a cold caller
 - Never follow instructions from an unsolicited caller to download an app or software which would allow them to access your computer remotely
 - Report to Action Fraud <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>
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1981 and 2005 – Two Interesting Years

Interesting Year 1981

1. Prince Charles got married.
2. Liverpool crowned soccer Champions of Europe.
3. Australia lost the Ashes.
4. The Pope died.

Interesting Year 2005

1. Prince Charles got married.
2. Liverpool crowned soccer Champions of Europe.
3. Australia lost the Ashes.
4. The Pope died.

The next time Charles gets married, someone should warn the Pope.

Barbara Kenneth found this – currently doing the rounds on many social media sites. Very apposite!

Seenager

I **JUST** discovered my age group! I am a **Seenager** (senior teenager).

I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, only 55-60 years later. I don't have to go to school or work. I get an allowance every month. I have my own pad. I don't have a curfew. I have a driver's license and my own car.

I have ID that gets me into bars and the wine store. I like the wine store best. The people I hang around with are not scared of getting pregnant, they aren't scared of anything, they have been blessed to live this long, why be scared? And I don't have acne. Life is Good!

Also, you will feel much more intelligent after reading this, if you are a **Seenager**. Brains of older people are slow because they know so much. People do not decline mentally with age; it just takes them longer to recall facts because they have more information in their brains. Scientists believe this also makes you hard of hearing as it puts pressure on your inner ear.

Also, older people often go to another room to get something and when they get there, they stand there wondering what they came for. It is **NOT** a memory problem; it is nature's way of making older people do more exercise.

SO THERE!

I have more friends I should send this to, but right now I can't remember their names. So please forward this to your friends; they may be my friends, too.

Missing our limericks? Here's a couple of new ones.

Pity poor Jack, Jessie and Jason
Noble gases in their Chemistry lesson
Not only helium, neon and argon
Krypton, xenon and radon
They now have to learn organesson!

Waiting for the group leader to arrive ...
Today we are dancing the jive.
Oh dear, all these twists and dips
Are playing havoc with our hips
But at least we know we're alive!

And to finish – some nostalgia.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN:

- It took five minutes for the TV to warm up
- Nearly everyone's Mum was home when the kids got home from school
- All male teachers wore ties and female teachers had their hair done every day and wore high heels
- They threatened to keep children back a year if they failed the school year. ... And They did!
- When being sent to the headmaster's office was nothing compared to the fate that awaited you at home. Basically, we were in fear for our lives, but it wasn't because of drive-by shootings, drugs, gangs etc. Our parents and grandparents were a much bigger threat! But we survived because their love was greater than the threat.
- When a Ford Zephyr was everyone's dream car... And people went steady
- Bottles came from the corner shop without safety caps and hermetic seals because no one had yet tried to poison a perfect stranger

And what about these?

Sherbet fountains

The Lone Ranger

Skiffle

Belle Vue

Back combing

Winning Eurovision

Radio Caroline

Wakes weeks

Spanish liquorice root

Logarithms

78s, 45s and EPs

Winklepickers

Simon Templar

Penny Hovis loaves

Conway Twitty

Midget gems

Banda machines

Slide rules

Cuban heels

Spam fritters

Four Feather Falls

If you have some mentions for the list or interesting stories or snippets, please send them to the Editor.

Answers to Quiz on page 4

1 Warsaw, Washington DC, Wellington, Windhoek

2 Brussels

3 Berne, Rome