

## FROM THE CHAIR

Although 380 members have renewed their membership for 2015 it is disappointing that 75 have not yet done so. I hope we will hear from most of them soon. The numbers attending the AGM (168) were many more than expected. As a consequence there were insufficient membership cards available. If you did not receive one please ask at the March meeting.

Derek Hill, our treasurer for the last five years, has now retired from the committee. We thank him for looking after our finances so well. We welcome our new treasurer, Les Birks, and a new committee member, Pamela Andrew. Walter Mason has retired from the Committee but not from running his many groups. Our thanks to Walter for all his work notably in arranging speakers and organising the Christmas party. Meg Humphries has taken on the role of Groups Organiser.

Margaret McDermott

## OFFICERS FOR 2015

At the AGM in February, the following officers were elected

Chair Margaret McDermott  
Vice Chair Sue Harlin  
Secretary Pam Curley  
Treasurer Les Birks

## ANNUAL LUNCH

Thus year's annual lunch, our 15<sup>th</sup>, took place on 3 March at Disley Golf Club. It was attended by nearly 80 members who enjoyed a three course lunch, a numbers quiz, prizes and good company among friends.



## Spring is round the corner



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## FROM THE EDITOR

This is your newsletter so please help me to make it interesting to read. Items for the newsletter from members are always welcome so if you have any suggestions for content or articles of interest to U3A members please contact me at [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

The next edition of the newsletter will be the May edition. Please can you get your contributions to me by Tuesday 29 April?

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

### JANUARY MEETING

THE EDDIE STOBART STORY presented by Sheila Dale



Sheila gave us a detailed and comprehensive history of the Eddie Stobart story and how the company progressed from humble beginnings to the mammoth operation that

it is today. We heard about the people and the lorries and the new ventures into railways and airports.

Sheila is a member of the Stobart fan club and brought along some of her vast collection of memorabilia.



## VILLAGE HALL NEWS

In February, the Village Hall hosted a Frozen Singalong for the Toddler group. Toddler Group Treasurer, Yvonne Morton, whose daughter Lola is a fan, arranged for the recent popular film "Frozen" to be shown at the Village Hall. It was the "Singalong" version which generated some enthusiastic participation from the 100+ children and adults who attended.

Group Leaders and their families made and served refreshments, including sweets and popcorn. There was also a bumper raffle. Their efforts were rewarded by a profit of £254.10 which has been kindly donated to Village Hall funds.

### TABLE TOP SALE

There is another Table Top Sale on Sunday 29th March from 11.30am to 1.30pm. Tables cost £8 or £10 on the day

Contact Dorothy Graham

## BEGINNERS' BRIDGE CLASS

Jean Day will be starting a new absolute beginners bridge group running under Marple Bridge and Mellor U3A, starting on Tuesday the 10th of March. The class will meet from 2-4 p.m. at her house, 16 Bradshaw Road, Marple. The class will be free, but there will be a charge of 50p each week to cover the cost of coffee/tea and the lesson handouts. High Lane U3A members are welcome to join the class.

Contact Jean for details or to book your place.

## FAMILY HISTORY DISPLAY

Advance notice - The family history group has been working on their display about relatives who were involved in WW1. You will be able to see our results at the April meeting.

PLEASE make time to study our stories which have not just come from members of our group but from other U3A members as well.

## INVITATION FROM STOCKPORT U3A MUSIC MAKING GROUP

Can you read music?

Do you play a musical instrument?

Have you played an instrument in the past that is now gathering dust?

Would you like to join a small ensemble playing simple music just for fun?

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday afternoons of each month in Hazel Grove, and are now opening our group to members of other local U3As.



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### OUR U3A ACTIVITIES

11 March	Monthly meeting. Herbaceous perennials.
27 March	Crown Green Bowling group Spring Lunch. Alma Lodge 12.30 for 1.00p.m. Please contact Barbara or Roy Tomlinson (01663 766372) for further details .
8 April	Tony and Margaret Glynn THE HIGH LANE U3A SINGING GROUP + U3A SPEAKERS

### FORTHCOMING HOLIDAYS AND VISITS

Contact: Margaret McDermott or Ruth Smith

31 May – 5 June	PERTSHIRE By Coach. Approx £400. Possible visits to Scone Palace, Discovery Point, Glamis Castle, Dundee Botanical Gardens, Angus Folk Museum, Blair Castle. Balance due at the April meeting
16-20 Aug	STRATFORD By coach. £350. Warwick Castle, Shakespeare Experience, Cotswolds, Althorp House, Coventry Cathedral. Balance at May meeting. <b>There is still availability on this holiday. Please contact Sue Harlin.</b>
6-10 Sept	IRELAND Flight from Manchester to Cork. Approx £460. Cobh Heritage Centre, Bantry House, Ring of Beara, Mizen Head, Garinish Island, Cork Gaol. Balance at June meeting.

### U3A NORTH WEST REGION ACTIVITIES

4 June	AGM – Crewe Arms Hotel
1-4 Sept	U3A NORTH WEST REGION SUMMER SCHOOL. Newton Rigg College, Penrith. Cost Full Board Residential Delegate £300. Day delegate £150 Details from David Joseph at <a href="mailto:davidbjoseph@btopenworld.com">davidbjoseph@btopenworld.com</a>

## U3A NATIONAL EVENTS

23 March	Royal Institution Lecture. Cost £20
13-16 July	Summer School. Harper Adams University, Shropshire. Subjects include Art appreciation, cinema history, France, maths, philosophy, theatre, writing fiction.

## LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Now-11 Nov	Recreation of Stamford Hospital in Dunham Massey Hall.
8 March	Romeo and Juliet. Bolshoi Ballet. Various venues
11 March	La Traviata. ENO. Various venues
12 March	Behind the beautiful forevers. NT Live. Various venues
16-21 March	The Producers. Palace Theatre
17 March	Swan Lake. Royal Ballet. Various venues
19 March	Aled Jones. Buxton Opera House
19 March – 2 May	Anna Karenina. Royal Exchange Theatre
21 March	Jeremy Hardy. Buxton Arts Centre
23-28 March	12 angry men. Lowry theatre
25 March	John Sergeant. Buxton Opera House
28 March	Russell Watson. Buxton Opera House
29 March	Table top sale Village Hall
30 March	A view from the bridge. NT Live. Various venues
31 March	ENO La Traviata. Stockport Plaza
7 April	Globe Theatre Titus Andronicus. Stockport Plaza
12 April	Robert Powell. Buxton Opera House
16 April	The hard problem. NT Live. Various venues
1 May - 27 Sept	Picturing Venice. Lady Lever gallery.
5 May	Globe Theatre Julius Caesar. Stockport Plaza
14 May	Man and superman. NT Live. Various venues

## AVOIDING FRAUD AND SCAMS

### The little book of Big Scams

This useful guide published by the Metropolitan Police is now in its second edition and will increase your awareness of new scams being used to con people out of their money. It highlights scams that are becoming increasingly popular such as courier fraud and insurance fraud and will teach you some easy steps to protect yourself.



You can find this at

[http://www.met.police.uk/docs/little\\_book\\_scam.pdf](http://www.met.police.uk/docs/little_book_scam.pdf)

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## AGE UK REPORT

### Life in Britain has got worse, say third of over-65s

More than a third of people aged 65 years and over believe Britain has become a worse place to live over the past 12 months, according to new research for Age UK.

The findings are released in a new Age UK report 'A great place to grow older - ambitions for the next parliament 2015-2020' published on 18 February 2015. Inspired and informed by the views of older people from across the country, the report presents Age UK's priorities and calls for government action to transform Britain into a great place to grow older for everyone by the end of the next Parliament in 2020.

You can read the [report here on the AgeUK website](#)

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## SEMMMS

### Start of works exhibitions

The Start of Works exhibitions will provide further information about the construction works and how they may affect the local area.

2 pm - 7.30 pm Tuesday, 10 March  
Hazel Grove Civic Centre.

2 pm - 7.30 pm Wednesday, 11 March  
Poynton Civic Centre.

## OUR BRAINS ARE FULL?

Recent research by German cognitive scientists published in the Journal of Topics in Cognitive Science has found evidence for many of us have been using as our excuse for some time! The research suggests that older people do not decline mentally with age; it just takes them longer to recall facts because they have more information in their brains. Much like a computer struggles as the hard drive gets full up, so to do humans take longer to access information, it has been suggested.

Researchers say this slowing down is not the same as cognitive decline. "The human brain works slower in old age," said Dr. Michael Ramscar, "but only because we have stored more information over time".

You can read more information at

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/science-news/10584927/Brains-of-elderly-slow-because-they-know-so-much.html>

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## SENIOR MOMENTS (AGAIN!)

Maybe these don't support the above research too well!

- Age is strictly a case of mind over matter. If you don't mind it doesn't matter.
- I have an impressive bank of knowledge and experience. Unfortunately, I've lost the combination to this bank
- I've forgotten more than I've ever learned.
- Trust me. At my age I'm an expert on everything.
- The more you complain the longer God makes you live.
- The older I get the better I was.
- Age is a high price to pay for maturity.
- A poor memory's not the same as a clear conscience.
- The reason I'm smiling is because I can't hear a word you are saying.



## GROUP REPORTS

### BACKGAMMON

The backgammon group is alive and kicking and would welcome new members. Backgammon is a great game, faster and less intense than chess, but much more involved than Ludo!



We meet on the first and third Wednesday of every month, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, at the Royal Oak pub in High Lane. Our next meeting is on 4 March. If anyone is interested, please contact me.

Ron Barrow

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### BALLET APPRECIATION GROUPS 1 AND 2

#### January Meeting

Our January meeting comprised a ballet based on a well known operetta and a documentary showing how ballet has evolved over a period of time.

Prog 1: "La Chauve-Souris" (The Bat):- Choreography - Roland Petit, Music - Johann Strauss and principle dancers - Massimo Murru and Alessandra Ferri. La Chauve-Souris is based on the operetta Die Fledermaus and was first performed in 1979 at La Scala, Milan. The performance for our showing was from 2003 performed by the Ballet and Orchestra of the Teatro alla Scala.

The main characters of the plot are Johann, Bella and Ulrich. Johann and Bella are a middle class couple and Johann is bored with his beautiful wife Bella. Bella solicits her husband's attention to no avail; he prefers even the newspaper to her company. Ulrich is the tutor to the couple's children and also a ladies' man who admires Bella and hopes to seduce her. Johann plans a night on the town and slips out to a night club "Maxim's" to dance, flirt and even seduce. Bella on the advice of Ulrich follows in disguise and unrecognised by her husband joins in the revelry.

The plot unfurls with Johann flirting with his wife and concludes as it started with Johann back at home with his wings clipped and reading the newspaper.

Prog 2: Documentary "Ballet Evolved" - 1760 to 2004 - Performed at the Royal Opera House with soloists of the Royal Ballet under the guidance of Ballet Mistress Ursula Hageli.

The documentary follows an "Insights Event" conducted by the former ballet mistress Ursula Hageli, as she explores the evolution of ballet steps from the Baroque period to the present day. All carried out with a little help from Royal Ballet dancers Melissa Hamilton, Yasmine Naghdi, Romany Paidak and Clare Calvert.

#### February Meeting

Our February meeting included a ballet based on a Chekhov play and a documentary showing the training and progression of dancers from junior to senior status.

Prog 1:

"Winter Dream" - Performed by the Royal Ballet – Featuring Darcy Bussell and Irek Murkhamdov. The ballet is based on the Chekhov play "Three Sisters".

The play follows the story of the sisters Olga, Masha and Irina as they live their wearisome lives miles from Moscow, the city in which they used to live and to which they long to return. The town where they live has a garrison and the soldiers there are one of the few diversions, for good and ill, that exist to distract the sisters.

Prog 2:

"Bolshoi Class Concert 2011" - Featuring Junior and Senior members of the Bolshoi.

This is a plotless ballet produced to demonstrate the very exact style and strict training regime carried out at the Bolshoi School of classical ballet. It shows the links between the very first exercises to the virtuoso feats of the leading dancers. Students, company members and soloists all participate.

Sheila Hall

### BALLET APPRECIATION GROUPS 3 AND 4

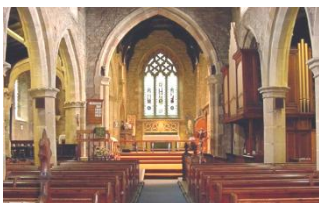
28th January / 5th February: The theme was Ballet in Russia. We saw the Kirov Ballet (Mariinsky) performing a varied programme which included: Chopiniana, known in the West as Les Sylphides. Barber's Adagio – a stunning pas de deux. Sheherezade, danced to Rimsky-Korsakov's beautiful music. These pieces, with two other short pieces, were all danced to the Kirov's usual high standard.

25th February/5th March: Continuing the Russian theme, we watched the Bolshoi Ballet performing The Pharaoh's Daughter. This ballet was lost during Soviet times. It has been researched and resurrected by Pierre Lacotte. It has a silly story (what ballet hasn't?), but some very pleasant music and dancing.

The next ballet planned is Kenneth Macmillan's Romeo and Juliet.

Meg Humphries

### CHURCHES AND PUB



What a perfect day we had for our visit to the church of Saint Michael's and All Angels in Hathersage on December 3. The day

was cold and frosty, hardly above freezing all day, but the sun shone and the journeys there and back were a delight. We were met by the Sacristan who invited us into the Bell Room which was once the outhouse of the Bell Inn but is now used as the Parish meeting room. He explained some of the history of the church and of Hathersage; once a thriving town making needles, pins and hackles. Stone was quarried here and used to build many fine buildings including Saint George's hall in Liverpool, the Derwent dams and many roads.

The church is a handsome stone building with a tower and an elegant crocketed spire. It was built around the mid 14th century although there had been a church on the same site around 1130. It was embellished with stone water spouts and gargoyles. The porch was a later addition built about 1500 probably by Robert Eyre to hold meetings out of the

wind and rain. By the mid 18th century the church was in a sad state of repair and used to shelter cattle. Fortunately in the mid 19th century the Victorians restored it; raising the roof, levelling the floors and restoring the windows. Little has changed during the last 100 years.

Entering the church to the porch, on the right is a hexagonal font with four shields; one of the Eyre family. A little further on and to the left in front of the bell tower stood a large wooden chest with three large locks. The chest used to hold parish records and had to be opened by the parson and the churchwardens at the same time. Ahead is a memorial to the First World War with an added plaque with the names of those who gave their lives in the Second World War. Flanking this are two wooden crosses which once marked graves in France. A third wooden cross was sited near the Chantry chapel built by Robert Eyre about 1463 for his parents and later Eyre family members. In 1943 the Chantry chapel was converted to the Lady chapel. The windows, the pitch pine pews and the Kempe glass were rescued from Derwent Chapel which is now submerged beneath the Derwent reservoir. The organ came from a Methodist chapel and replaced the original church organ in the 1980s. The beautiful kneelers, the angel choir high up in the roof, the six bells, the finely carved Austrian chairs used by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at the opening of Saint George's hall and many other features made for a fascinating visit.

The churchyard with its fine headstones, clipped yews, lime trees and the association with Charlotte Bronte and her book Jane Eyre made this a memorable visit.

Lunch at the Millstone was excellent and made a fitting end to a memorable visit and to a very successful Churches and Pubs year.

Thank you to Paul for all the hard work and patience in organizing the trips. Thanks too to everyone who goes on these visits for their friendship and fellowship which make these visits so enjoyable.

Janet Vockings

The first visit of 2015 is April 1st to St. Wilfred's at Standish near Wigan. There is no trip in May.

## CINEMA CLUB

Cinema Club has been going for a year now. We have seen about a dozen films, meeting roughly once a month. The first film was "Grand Budapest Hotel" which ran away with several Oscars

Very recently, we saw "The Theory Of Everything", for which Eddie Redmayne won best actor.



Who knows what treats are in store for this coming year!! If you would like to join us please contact me. I can promise a good night out in pleasant company at Marple's own Regent Cinema.

Sheila Harrop

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## CRAFT AND NEEDLEWORK GROUP

We last met on February 19th and were pleased to welcome two new members who showed us their beautifully handcrafted cards, superior to any we had seen before. We hope that sometime in the future we can have a demonstration on making them.

We decided on a date and venue for our post-Christmas lunch - March 12th at Brookside Garden Centre.

Marlene Brooks

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## DINING

On February 17 road works on the A6 meant some of us were rather late at the last outing of the lunch club. Our destination was the Crown at Hawk Green, where with the sun streaming in the windows 28 of us spent a very enjoyable few hours over a leisurely lunch. We had a choice of menu; the most popular being the chicken in a white wine sauce and apple pie.

Our next outing will be in April and names will be taken at the march meeting.

Dorothy Neillands  
Jeanette Bell

## FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

The family history group has been working hard on their display about relatives who were involved in WW1. You will be able to see our results at the April meeting.



Please make time to study our stories which have not just come from members of our group but from other U3A members as well. Perhaps you have something to add? We would be more than happy to help you with your research. If we have enough extra material we can repeat the display at a later date. (the war did last for years!!)

We are always happy to see new members and would willingly run an introductory course if there was a need. Alternatively we can provide one-to-one help.

Pat Christopher

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## GARDENING



Seven members travelled to Hopton Hall, near Carsington, one of the few large snowdrop gardens within reach.

The weather stayed fine, although with a cool breeze, as we followed the paths into swathes of snowdrops with patches of orange aconites. We walked through the formal gardens not yet sprung into spring colour, round the recently created attractive pond area, by the laburnum arch, dovecotes and eagle sculpture and returned through more snowdrop woodland. Snowdrops were in abundance and the soup, scones and sandwiches had been very welcome in the tea rooms; so the visit made spring seem well on the way.

The next meeting is 18 March at Janet's house, when we will try to suggest how Janet can make her north-facing and sloping garden easier to arrange and manage.

Walter Mason

## MARPLE BRIDGE AND MELLOR U3A OPEN GARDEN GROUP

Two excellent speakers have kicked off the 2015 garden group meetings. In January John Steedman shared knowledge gained when he was head gardener at Fletcher Moss gardens, illustrating his humorous talk with slides of wildlife to be found in the humblest of habitats in our own gardens. From the top of drainpipes to upturned and forgotten plant pots in some tiny overgrown area birds, bees, butterflies, hedgehogs, beetles and lots more creepy crawlies will turn it into their des.res., so don't be too tidy in the garden and you will have an extra dimension to enjoy watching all these creatures coming and going.

The February meeting was just the ticket on a cold day for the packed audience of gardeners to be reminded that spring was just around the corner and if they were itching to get planting then speaker for the day Jacqueline Iddon had ideas aplenty as to what plant to put where. Jacqueline has won awards for her planting style at major flower shows, and the photographs of her own fabulous garden showed that she certainly knows her subject.

Our meeting on March 11th will be a talk "a - z of garden gems" by garden designer Maureen Sawyer.

Please note that in April we are having a coach trip for group members, therefore there will be no meeting.

Jean Parrish

## GERMAN GROUP

Our timetable this year has been somewhat curtailed because of illness and snow during January. Texts read this term have included the dangers of using a mobile phone while at the wheel and a skateboarding Fred Astaire at 87. Can anyone beat that? Last week we had so many interesting topics to discuss that we never got round to reading a text. We meet most Fridays at 10 a.m. But it is only suitable if you have some knowledge of German.

Marlene Brooks

## HISTORY GROUP

At the February meeting the subject was Poland presented by Marlene Brookes.

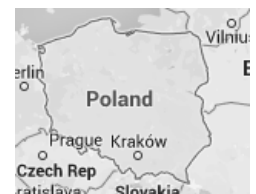
Poland was a broad topic for presentation and we covered a period from 966AD to the 1980s.

The ruler of Poland converted to Christianity to prevent being attacked by Otto, the Holy Roman Emperor. It was one of the only countries in Europe not to have a feudal system and five years after our Magna Carta had a constitution which decreed that the king was subject to parliament.

Settlements of Benedictines and Cistercians and later in the 16th century, strengthened the role of the Catholic Church but it was a very tolerant state and many Protestants, Jews and even Moslems from the Mongol invasions sought sanctuary there.

Poland was at the height of its powers in the 16th and 17th centuries when it joined with the Duchy of Lithuania to form the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, extending its power base to Ukraine and even threatening Moscow. For over 120 years it was annexed and occupied by Russia, Prussia and the Austrian-Hungarian Empire before being reinstated as an independent nation in 1918.

Because of its position in the centre of Europe, it has always been subject to invasions by its powerful neighbours, Germany and Russia, and, more than any nation, it suffered the greatest losses in WW2 losing a fifth of its population (5 million dead) and many millions more displaced and in camps in Russia and Germany.



The next meeting is on the 18th March, 7.30 at Irene Bentley's when Michael Sparrow will be presenting the topic of John Wesley.

Pam Curley



### MAH-JONG GROUP

The two groups combined for a Christmas buffet and competition which was won by Meg Humphries.



The Tuesday group has a new venue and now meets in the Senior Citizens Hall in Marple Memorial Park.

Lisa Czyniewska

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### MUSIC APPRECIATION GROUP

This group has resumed after a short break. We meet the third Monday morning from ten to twelve in the church hall.

So far we have heard English music before, through and after WW1, choral music development from earliest times to 17th century, Christmas music round Europe and, lastly, French music of Debussy and Ravel.

Contact Sue Dintinger for details.

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### OPERA APPRECIATION GROUP

At our January meeting we watched a production of Verdi's Nabucco from the Arena di Verona. This gave a very good impression of the size of the arena and the huge audience, and featured some outstanding performances from the three leading singers.



This was a popular choice and everyone recognised the Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves, though joining in or humming along were strictly forbidden!

At the February meeting we saw a French opera – Romeo and Juliet from the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Shakespeare's story of the two ill-fated lovers is set to beautiful music by Gounoud and the two lead singers gave a very moving performance.

The next meeting will feature a performance of Lucia di Lammermoor from the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Meg Humphries

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### PHILOSOPHY GROUP

At our meeting on 12th January, John Ashton talked about 'Justice'. We addressed some of the related issues and spent a long time covering several aspects of the topic. As this is such a big subject, we will be returning to it in the near future so we can hopefully do it justice!!

At our February meeting, we welcomed a guest speaker for the first time. Richard Jones talked to us about Buddhism as a philosophy for life. He talked about the life of the Buddha and the spread of Buddhism throughout the rest of the world, including the UK. He touched on Dukkha, Dhamma and Sangha, before going on to mention The 4 Noble Truths, The 8-fold Path and the importance of 'mindfulness'. Richard then took questions from the group before leading a short Samatha Meditation practice by way of demonstration in which most of the group joined.

The talk was very well attended and generated a great deal of interest as many people had not previously encountered the principles of Buddhist teachings.

The next meeting will be on 2nd March, and the subsequent one on 13th April (delayed due to Easter).

Lisa Czyniewska

## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The topic of our January meetings was Everyday objects from unusual angles.

Two photographs by Brian Beck were deemed the best followed by one from Chris Gibson and one from Walter Mason.



The topic of our February meeting was "Art Deco"; much more of a challenge than previous topics. Members searched family possessions and used Google to look for things to photograph, then produced a range of photographs including local buildings, furniture and china. The winner of the competition was Fred Goodier, for his photograph of a Royal Doulton milk jug made in the 1930s.



Second and third were Diane's photos of the Compton organ in Stockport Plaza and of the art deco building on Quay Street Manchester, which started life as a bus station in the 1930s.



Our photographs led to a wide-ranging discussion (with help from the internet) to find information about Fred's Royal Doulton jug and to explore Art Deco buildings in Manchester. Several of these were in the Swan Street/Oldham Road area and appeared

rundown and in need of TLC. We thought that perhaps listed status makes modernisation difficult or expensive.

We also discovered that there were many art deco cinemas scattered around Greater Manchester but few of these remain. Later, our discussion widened to art deco in Underground stations in London, Paris and Moscow, the landmark Midland Hotel in Morecambe and theatre organs.

Our next meeting is 19 March, when the subject of the competition is "Crowds".

Diane Saxon /Walter Mason

## READING GROUP

We meet at Cromley Road each second Wednesday in the month, from ten until twelve, to discuss that month's book.



We have read a varied selection of books and authors. Recent memorable books include *The Luminaries* and *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

This month's book is *The Great Gatsby* by Scott Fitzgerald.

Sue Dintinger

## SINGING GROUP

The Singing Group is practising hard in order to perform a concert for members during the U3A meeting on 8th April.

We are preparing a varied programme including some Simon & Garfunkel and Abba. There will also be songs from our book of music for special events as well as some old favourites such as Jerusalem & Waly Waly.

As Tony and Margaret have said before, the group welcomes new singers who can hold a tune. After Easter we will be planning for future concerts. We hope to see you on 8th April.

Pam Wood

## WALKING GROUP

### EARLY JANUARY WALK

Eight members joined Jeff Mortimer for the first walk in 2015. It was a pleasant morning, and the Peak Forest canal was an oasis of calm, unaffected by countrywide yellow and amber snow alerts. At Bury-Me-Wick a woodpecker heralded our passage, and sheep grazed precariously on brambles by the waterline.



The route was flat as promised, but quite sticky in places - a legacy of recent rains. This had warned Jeff away from the original plan via Cherry Tree and the steep fields down to the Watermeetings farms - and proved a wise decision since the towpath and aqueduct were surrounded by barriers and workmen on major renovation work and that way would have been impossible.

Our pace was relatively leisurely as we returned through Kirk Wood down to Chadkirk, to be surprised by early daffodils in the walled garden. We also had to dodge tree-fellers on a return via the canal to the Spread eagle. There we thanked Jeff for a very pleasant start to the year.

### LATE JANUARY WALK

12 walkers, all well wrapped up against forecast heavy wintry showers (which never materialised), joined Merlyn and Joyce at the Poachers Inn, Sowcar, Bollington.



The flat and easy four mile walk undulated somewhat and had several muddy sections as we followed Oakenbank Lane to Rainow, and returned through Ingersley Dale, by the river Dean.

As we passed Savio House, the gloomy sky dimmed the extensive views of the surrounding hills, and the gusty wind kept us quiet. By Rainow, having negotiated the lane – the former main route from Bollington to Rainow – the winds had eased and the skies were partially blue, as we “coffee stopped” at a public garden within sight of the church.

Returning in the dale, the shades of green belied the former industrial heritage of drift coalmines and a clutch of water-driven mills producing a variety of goods. Would that it were to remain green, but developers covet such sites, and house-flats or Archimedes screws may soon return bricks and mortar into the Dale.

Merlyn presented plenty of information on past heritage as we progressed round the route, and made our walk more interesting. Then, interesting guest beers and reasonably priced meals at the Poachers completed our enjoyment, so many thanks to Merlyn and Joyce.

PS. One day later the snows came with a vengeance, and would have put paid to our walk – we were lucky!

### FEBRUARY WALK



Twenty one walkers took the train to Piccadilly Station, to join Alison and Brian’s walk to Salford Quays and the Lowry. The route via the Rochdale, Bridgewater and Manchester Ship Canals wound unobtrusively through the heart of the cities. First the Rochdale canal gave ever-changing glimpses of past trades and industries and led to a complex junction under the mighty pillars and girders, formerly supporting the main rail routes into Central Station and now used by Metro lines on their way past G-Mex.





A slightly less interesting stretch of Bridgwater canal was followed by a long straight length of ship canal, enlivened by extensive views, a short stretch of colourful graffiti and an increasing number of modern buildings as we approached Salford City and the confusing array of quays and waterside.



The weather was kind, the walking was flat and mud-free, our photographers found myriad photo-opportunities and Alison was a mine of information about the canals and neighbouring buildings. So we went our various ways at the Lowry well satisfied with Alison and Brian's walk.

Our next walk is 25 March, when Sam and Irene Chappell will take us somewhere in the Edale/Hope/Castleton Peak Forest area.

Walter Mason

Please don't forget to send all contributions for the next newsletter to me at [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk) by Tuesday 29 April 2015. Thank you

Diane Saxon