

**u3a** High Lane

# Newsletter

**March 2025**



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## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the March 2025 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. This month we have a report of the AGM as well as our group activities. Remember that if you did not get to the AGM, you will need to renew your membership for this year. The membership fee is £8 or £12 if you would like the u3a matters magazine; five copies delivered to your door.

The cover this month is a selection of photos from last Saturday's successful and well-attended Art group exhibition. Interesting to note that the coffee and cake were very popular!

Most of our members have already renewed their membership and we look forward to seeing you at our social events and group activities over the year. 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.

The newsletter is accompanied by the National Office bitesize Friends newsletter for February.

**There will not be an edition of the newsletter next month so the next issue will be May 2025.** Please keep any contributions for next month and send them to me by 28<sup>th</sup> April at [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

Diane Saxon

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## NEW u3a REPORT

Learn to live: a blueprint for better health and well-being has recently been published by u3a. It recognises the advances in healthcare over the last 50 years but addresses the need for a more fundamental approach from government and policy makers for increased life expectancy and quality of living. The report identifies the u3a model of non-formal learning as key to this with benefits to individuals and to the wider society.



## FROM THE CHAIR

We had an excellent turnout for the AGM. Thanks to everyone for coming. The most entertaining report, as usual, was from our treasurer. This time he sang his report to Queens hit, Bohemian Rhapsody. A very entertaining afternoon.

A big thanks to Madeline, who runs the art group, for organising the annual Art exhibition. It was a great success. Thanks Madeline.

A musical evening has been organised for the end of September. The artist is Nancy Ann Lee and she is performing a show from the sixties. It was an excellent evening last time she came and hopefully it will be the same this time.

We are having an open day on the 19th of March at the village hall for Members and potential new members. If you have any friends that would be interested in joining or learning about the u3a please tell them about the meeting. There will be light refreshments. The time is 2pm to 4pm, March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks  
Paul (Chair)

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## BOOK STALL

If anyone has any books that they would like to donate to the book stall, could they please bring them in at the March meeting.

The money raised is donated to local charities plus the air ambulance and many other charities. The money doesn't go to the u3a.

Paul

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## REDEFINING LATER LIVING

In a recent interview, u3a CEO, Iain Cassidy talks about the importance of activities and socialising in later life. Stereotypes and stigma around old age are increasingly becoming out of date – and the programme helps to reinforce positivity around ageing well and embracing later life. The programme showcases themes such as medical advancements as well as lifestyle changes, innovations and tech, along with the benefits of life-long learning. You can watch this here [u3a – Push Back Ageism](#)

## AGM

The AGM was held on Tuesday February 12th.

The chairman Paul Kenneth welcomed everyone and commented on the good attendance. In his report he reminded everyone of the successful events which had taken place in 2024. He thanked the committee, Diane Saxon for her excellent newsletters and the tea ladies for providing refreshments.

The Treasurer gave us his usual inspired and very amusing report. Our branch of the U3A continues to be financially healthy.

There were no new nominations for the committee, so it stays the same for another year.

All the group leaders gave a report either in person or by proxy.

The AGM finished at 15.15.

Kath Wareham

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## u3amatters magazine

This is the latest edition. Here you can

- Sign up for the u3a Friends newsletter
- Find out about this year's Summer schools
- Win a prize of travel books
- Find out about holiday discounts
- Discover travel insurers catering for older people
- Reflect on an article about streamlining admin tasks
- Health notes and advice
- An article by the Shakespeare subject advisor
- A mention of Lyme Park – albeit Colin Firth emerging from the lake!
- Puzzles and challenges
- Bridge advice
- And much more

Just £4 for the next five issues sent direct to your door.

The next issue will be April. Contact Margaret, our Membership secretary, if you wish to subscribe.

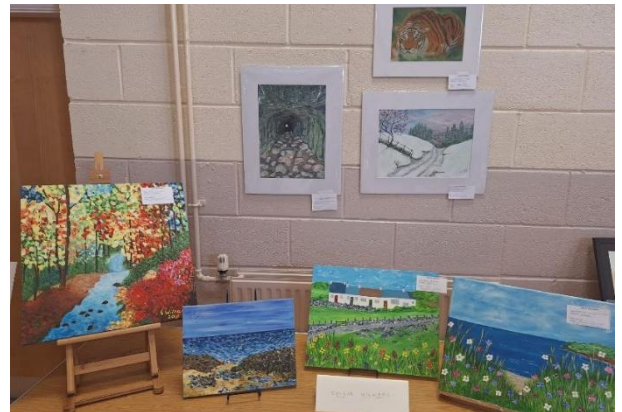


# GROUP NEWS

## ART

The Art group held our 4th exhibition on Saturday 22nd February. I think it was the best ever! It was the highest number of exhibitors, and we only just squeezed everyone in!

There was also a great turnout, and it was lovely to see so many u3a members supporting us and also enjoying a cake and a chat.



Thanks to everyone who came. We're all very grateful.

Madeleine Hennessy



## BACKGAMMON

The backgammon group continues to keep going with our fortnightly meetings in the Bull's Head. Two potential newcomers for the next session. Everyone welcome, we can teach you the game from scratch.

Ken Jackson

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## BALLROOM DANCING

Ballroom dancing continues happily every second Friday, with its mixture of ballroom, sequence and occasional line dance, although we'll always welcome any interested couple. from High Lane or a neighbouring u3a.

Walter Mason

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## CANASTA

The Canasta group continues to be popular on a Tuesday night and with lighter nights on the way we are hoping for more to join us. If you fancy trying this card game, just turn up at the Royal Oak at 7pm any Tuesday and we will show you how to play.

Pauline Wright

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## CHURCHES AND PUBS

The dates for this year's visits are:

June 4th. Roger and Jean.  
August 6th. Dorothy Neillands.  
October 1st. Dave and Jill.  
December 3rd Pam and Ron.

Churches are still to be finalised. They will be confirmed in the Newsletter and at the Monthly meetings.

Paul Kenneth

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### 1. Donald Trump's tariffs

Is he using these tariffs as a bargaining tool with Mexico and Canada to get more of their soldiers to man the border crossings to stop people and drugs getting into the U.S.A.

### 2. Kind Gesture

A landlady in Nottingham offered her customers a free pint if their football club Nottingham Forest scored one goal in their match against Brighton but at the final whistle the score was seven goals to Nottingham Forest.

### 3. Government proposals to get the economy going

Rachel Reeves announced in her speech that they would build a third Runway at Heathrow, rail link between Oxford and Cambridge, improvement to Old Trafford and other projects in parts of the country which will take a long time to build or the does the general public want something quick to help them with the cost of living. How do they do things to help people who are finding it very hard to manage with everyday costs.

### 4. BBC Licence

The BBC is to increase its licence fee by £5.00 to £174.50. Their charter lasts until 2027 Should the licence be scrapped after that and what would replace it. We thought maybe a tax on broadband connection would be one way. We were all agreed that we didn't want it to resort with advertising.

### 5. Water bills

Water Bills are to increase again this year. Should they be nationalised again. You can't shop around for better deals like other utilities so have no choice but to accept what they bill you.

### 6. Knife crime

This problem is increasing so much and what can be done about it. We need more police especially community policing. In past years there were quite a lot of things for youngsters to go to, but so many of these places are gone like youth clubs, sports clubs etc.

### 7. Gaza

Donald Trump would like to make Gaza the riviera of the Middle East and is quite happy to let the people of Gaza to leave their country and go and live somewhere else. Why should the Palestinians relinquish their land, rights and sacred rights. Surely Trump's idea undermines Justice and International Law.

### 8. Economic growth or Green growth?

What did we think was more important economic growth or growth. We thought it should be a balance of the two.

### 9. Driving Test for over 80's

Did we think there should be a driving test for the over 80's. We couldn't really decide on this question. Hopefully we will know ourselves when it is time to give up driving.

Angela Knight

## CRIME FICTION READING

Our book for January was *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett, published in 1930 and introducing PI Sam Spade. The action centres around Sam tracking down a jewel encrusted falcon.

The novel was, as so often, loved by some and disliked by others who prefer more modern crime fiction. It is written, in the style of a screenplay, though actually written 10 years before the famous film, with main content being the dialogue of the characters with much less descriptive writing, which may affect people's enjoyment.

Comments were made, about the number of cigarettes smoked throughout which led us into discussion of our past work environments and how glad we are for the changes in modern times. Our next novel seems, when picked, a popular choice of *Death Comes to Pemberley* by P D James.

Sue Rowarth

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## DINING

2025 started with a visit to The Bulls Head in Hazel Grove which was easily accessible if the weather should be bad. We were only 17 in number which was probably due to the fact we had no meeting in January due to the icy weather, and at the February meeting we were all more interested in getting our membership dues paid.

The Bulls head offers a very nice senior citizens three course lunch at a very reasonable price. The dining area is nicely separate from the main part of the pub, and we appeared to be the only people dining. We had two tables and everyone mingled nicely.

Everything was going well and then the bill arrived. The price had changed the week before and no one had informed me. I did speak to the lady in charge but there was nothing she could do. Sadly, for the lady who looked after us there was no tip as we had to use that to supplement the new price. I have written to Green King, and I await a reply. However, it must be said that the meal is still a good price.

Dorothy Neillands  
Dorothy Gerrard



## GARDENING

The gardening group getting ready to present its 2025 programme. Probably a very good time for anybody interested to join the group. Even locally, signs of Spring are everywhere. A little patch of snowdrops in Woodbank park, Friends of Chadkirk busily working in the walled garden and approach, and a Marple garden already looking good in February.



Walter Mason

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## HISTORY

The History group met as usual on the fourth Wednesday of the month. The talk this month was the story of the census. The history of the census was traced from its first mention in the book of Exodus, through the first national census in 1801 to the most recent one in 2021.

A good discussion resulted as members recalled various occasions when they have consulted the census records.

If anyone is keen to join us, please contact the group leader. We would love to have some new members.

Kath Wareham

## MEMOIRS

The Memoirs group met as usual on the first Tuesday of the month which was February 4th, our first meeting of the year as January was cancelled due to the snow. It was well attended, and we welcomed a new member.

There were several readings.

We were reminded that it was the 25th anniversary of the opening of the new village hall. The previous one had been destroyed by fire. This lady and her husband were active members of the Phoenix Fund which was set up to raise money for the new building. There were lots of enterprising fundraising events and with the help of a lottery grant the money was raised. Lots of leaflets were printed and distributed to advertise the events and we were shown a file that she had compiled containing all of the leaflets which was very interesting.

There was an account about some eventful flights to the USA when one lady and her children went to join her husband who was working there. On one occasion the flight went without them due to a clerical error. On another flight she wondered why the pilot was looking under the carpet in the aisle and only later she discovered that the transmission had fails Mid Atlantic and he was checking that the landing gear was still working. Luckily things were OK.

One lady recalled the life of her brother. From a difficult birth and losing his brother to meningitis he eventually became Deputy Chairman of British Steel and was awarded the CBE. In his seventies he suffered a stroke which affected his speech and communication skills. His health eventually failed and while he was in hospital he contracted Covid and died. He had a restricted funeral but she was there and was proud of his achievements.

There was a poem about teenage heartbreak which was very amusing. When writing his Memoirs this man wrote a parallel account about what was happening in the wider world. He mentioned some of the things which happened when he was at secondary school between 1958 and 1963. They included the death of Buddy Holly, the first episode of Coronation Street, the building of the Aswan Dam and the publication of To Kill a Mockingbird. He often writes his memoirs in verse.

One lady recalled the time when she had a kitchen extension. She was pleased with the final result but there were quite a lot of hiccups on the way. Workmen who couldn't measure correctly and a plumber who put his foot through the ceiling.

Another lady told us about her uncles. They did not figure as much in her life as her aunts as they were out at work all day. She recalled counting the loose change her uncle tipped out of his pockets. She sorted them into piles and then into blue money bags. He was very generous and gave her £50 to help fund a trip to Munich. She told us about a drowning tragedy and a family feud that never resolved itself.

There was an account read from a diary written during a holiday to Australia. He and his wife visited lots of interesting places including Ayers Rock, the Barrier Reef and several wineries. They saw flying foxes and fairy penguins. He made everyone laugh with the choice of food for their evening meals, mainly fish and chips and pizzas. Not very adventurous.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 4th March at 2.0pm in the small hall. If anyone would like to join this group we do have a few spaces.

### **QUOTE FOR THE MONTH**

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. Aesop.

Barbara Kenneth

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### **READING**

Our book for February was GUERNICA by Dave Boling which told the story of a family in the Basque country town of Guernica, and how the population was affected by the Spanish Civil War and the notorious bombing raid by the Condor division of the Luftwaffe in the 1930s.

We were made aware of the pride, independence and resilience of the Basque people amidst the devastation caused by the raid through the experiences of one particular family. Picasso makes an appearance in the book. He was inspired to create probably his most well-known painting GUERNICA, depicting the bravery and suffering of the Basque people.

Our next meeting is on Monday, 3rd March when we will be discussing SLOW HORSES by Mick Herron.

Marlene Brookes

## PHOTOGRAPHY

We are happily rolling along with our monthly online competition. February's theme was CLOCKS. The results were

- 1<sup>st</sup>, Astronomical clock Messina with 11 points ... Mark
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, three joint places with 5 points each
  - Dandelion clock ... Barbara
  - Astronomical clock Strasbourg ... Diane
  - Jewish clock ... Jeff
- 3<sup>rd</sup>, Big Ben ... 4 points Ken



If anyone would like to be included in the March competition, the theme is **SPRING FLOWERS**. Entries to me by March 27 please.

Ken Jackson

**QUIZZING**



The quiz group is currently quite small. We all have different interests and strengths, so we get a wide variety of topics each month. This month it was my turn to create a quiz. It's great fun thinking up and finding questions and trying to mix the difficulty so that everyone can answer a good chunk of the questions. A useful guideline is that everyone should be able to answer at least 50% of the questions – the problem is that when you know an answer, you think everyone else will as well! But that is part of the fun.

This month we had animals, science, black and white, UK geography, connections, answers beginning and ending with the same letter, lots of potluck questions and we finished with my usual 'in the news' round. Here are a few for you to try:

1. Whose secretary is Miss Money Penny?
2. Which country does Madeira belong to?
3. What is the most popular paid tourist attraction in the United Kingdom
4. Who was the first archbishop of canterbury?
5. Which is the only US state capital that has 3 words?
6. Who is on the current £5 note?

Know the answers? Fancy challenging yourself with us? New quizzers are very welcome. We meet on the fourth Thursday of the month. Meetings always have a relaxed and sociable environment. You can be assured of a friendly welcome. Please contact me if you would like to join this group or would like more information.

Diane Saxon

**TRAVEL**



NE England/ Durham	July 6th-11th Blackwell Grange Hotel Darlington DEPOSIT AT MARCH MEETING
Ireland	September 1st-5th. Springfort Hall Hotel, Mallow. Flight to Cork DEPOSIT AT MARCH MEETING

Margaret McDermott

## SHORT WALKS

15 February 2025

Meeting at Jackson's Brickworks a group of nine hardy walkers set out on a cold, miserable, but dry morning. A 'stone's throw' from Middlewood Way with easy access took us to Prince's incline and Higher Poynton. Turning left onto unmade road brought the group to an estate road where a track took us by the golf club to the Anson Museum. (the gentlemen of the group were in discussion about the outside exhibit).



At the entrance to the Museum a left turn and a walk along pavement to Boars Head and Nelsons Pit Car Park where the group stepped inside the exhibition room to have their coffee break.



Alongside the marina, off the canal at the next bridge, down the road leading to a private house where a hidden easy stile was climbed onto a path between fields. Reaching a track that leads to Platt Wood farm, turning left down the track to bridge 13 over and onto another track and field path took us to Jackson Brickworks Car Park. Then the rain came ...

Ruth Smith

**WALKING**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Twelve of us met at the Holehouse Lane car park, near Whitely Green, in anticipation of a six-mile, mud free, incline free and stile free walk. It had been raining overnight, but the sun was breaking through, and apart from a very light shower, the weather remained kind to us. We took the northerly direction along the Macclesfield canal tow path until we reached a kissing gate on the left which took us across a damp field to a gate which allowed us to cross a road and join Middlewood Way. We found a picnic area with seating where we stopped for our 11 o'clock coffee break.

We continued along Middlewood Way for just over a mile until we reached Poynton Coppice. Here we joined a road for a short stretch and then joined the Macclesfield canal tow path again, taking the southerly direction. We continued along the tow path for a further two miles, to rejoin the Middlewood Way again, which took us back the car park.

Six of us then enjoyed a pub lunch at the Windmill Inn with three more joining us for a drink. Overall, it was a very enjoyable day.

Jeff Mortimer



## National Office Learning Events for March

A selection of this month's events you might want to book. Quite a few science and technology ones this time.

- 3 Mar The Lifecycle of a Laser: From Prototype to Making Stars on Earth
- 4 Mar Apps to help seniors being out and about: A travel focus journey
- 11 Mar Dorothy Levitt: The Fast Lady
- 12 Mar The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare
- 18 Mar Making your smartphone easier to use as you get older
- 25 Mar Lung Disease in advancing age: identifying new treatments
- 27 Mar Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Three – Sleep and Dreams

There are many other events. All are free via Zoom. Remember they can fill up quickly. Click here for details and to book a place. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

If you attend one of these events, I'm sure others would be interested so please write a brief piece for the next edition of the newsletter.

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## AND FINALLY

Don't forget the pancakes this week.

Pancake day, or Shrove Tuesday, this year is on 4 March, quite a bit later than usual. This day has its roots in Anglo Saxon history as a period of fasting based on the 40 days fast in the wilderness. Shrove Tuesday was the last day to use up the rich foods such as eggs, fats before the fast started so that Christians would be shaven of their sins. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, the day after Shrove Tuesday. On this day, the faithful have their foreheads marked with ashes in the shape of a cross as a sign of repentance and mortality. The tradition of placing ashes on worshippers' foreheads dates back to the eighth and ninth centuries.

### Lent one-liners – thanks to various web jokes sites

Lent is the best time of the year to run a marathon. Because that's when you fast.  
I was going to give up meat for Lent... But I just couldn't quit cold turkey.  
I'm giving up negativity for Lent. We'll see how long that lasts.  
I'm giving up abstinence for Lent.  
I'm giving up spreadsheets for Lent. It's going to be Excel lent