

HIGH LANE U3A 15th ANNIVERSARY 2016

Our Anniversary Lunch on 7 March was a great success. You can read the report on page 2.



Also on page 2 in this our 15th anniversary year Amy Summers takes a look back at the early days when the Heritage group was formed.

2016 SOCIAL EVENTS

Back to the present - this year the Committee has come up with two new events which we hope will prove popular.

SUMMER SOCIAL EVENING Friday 8 July



Come and join your friends for a social evening. We will enjoy a finger buffet and quiz with entertainment from members of our Shakespeare Group; most appropriate in this Year of the Bard. Tickets cost £8 and will be on sale at the May and June monthly meetings. Numbers are limited so don't delay in getting yours.

High Lane U3A Members only please.

Doors open at 7:30 pm. Please bring your own drinks and glasses.



WINE AND CHEESE EVENING

Advance notice - this event is in September

At this event members and friends will present a series of six different wines for you to taste. There will be three whites and three reds of varying styles to suit all tastes plus a selection of cheeses with bread and assorted savoury biscuits. The cost is expected to be £5. There will be more details about this event in the next edition of the newsletter.

These are both new ventures and we hope you will support these events. We are always happy to receive new ideas - and offers of help. Please let any member of the Committee know if you have an idea for a social evening.



The Torrs on a (rare) beautiful Spring day this April.

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WHEN ATTENDING YOUR GROUP MEETING

Please let your Group Leader know whether or not you will be attending the meeting. Some members are not doing this and it can cause problems for Group Leaders when arranging accommodation and equipment.

FROM THE EDITOR

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

The next edition of the newsletter will be the July 2016 edition. Please can you get your contributions to me by 30 June?

MONTHLY MEETINGS

MARCH MEETING



Former BBC Gardener of the Year Sue Beesley entertained us with her story of transforming her garden at Bluebell Cottage in Dutton, Cheshire.

The Garden and Nursery is now open Wednesday to Sunday with special events from time to time. More information at <http://www.bluebellcottage.co.uk/>

APRIL MEETING

BBC Manchester journalist and reporter Kevin Fitzpatrick regaled us with amusing tales from his life as a local reporter. One recent story he covered was the furore over Stockport Council's plans for the market hall.



Kevin has written and published a book 'the Joy of Kev' and did well in sales to our members!

ANNUAL LUNCH



Some 85 members gathered at Hazel Grove golf club for the anniversary lunch. We were pleased that National U3A Chair Pam Jones was able to join us. The food and ambience were excellent and the quiz as challenging as ever.



After the meal Pam Jones presented us with a card from National Office and talked to us about her hectic life as U3A Chair. Pam and Margaret then cut our cake and we all were able to enjoy a choice of sponge cake or fruit cake with our coffee. Flowers were presented to Margaret and Sue with good wishes for their recovery from recent operations.

We gathered together as many founder members as we could find for this photograph.



There are more photographs of the lunch on our website. Click on the link from the News page.

THE START OF THE HERITAGE GROUP

15 years ago when our U3A began and our first committee was chosen, we started to look at groups. Several of us fancied going out on visits. Alec Blair agreed to organise something. He asked Jim Summers to help as he was due to go in hospital, and so what became The Heritage Group began.

The idea was to visit places of interest, stately homes, buildings etc. Alec chose Stalybridge Canal Basin which had just been restored. He arranged a coach, collected the money in a bag and off they went. It was a great success. I cannot remember where the 2nd visit was, but sadly Alec died. We went on to form a committee of six and Jim took over. We all met and planned our visits, costing everything carefully for many years.

Visits were arranged on the 3rd Wednesday in every month (except Dec). We all got to know each other so well.

Many will remember Leighton Hall with its lovely Gillows furniture (and the coach driver who took a wrong lane and having to try to back a 48 seat coach all the way back).

Levens Hall where it decided to pour with rain and flooded the gardens; we were all soaked. Happy days!

We went to places like the Bridgewater Hall, Rylands, Midland Hotel, Wedgewood, Port Sunlight (on the hottest day of the year), Haworth, Liverpool, Pilkington Glass, Stoneyhurst College, Chatsworth, Haddon Hall and many more. We also went to watch a recording of Countdown in Leeds.

We began to be asked if we could go somewhere for longer (Fri,Sat Sun). Our first nervous attempt was a trip to Peterborough, Cambridge and Southall Minster. It was great, so the next year we went to Edinburgh, followed by Bath and London.

When Jim and I stood down after six and a half years the committee carried on and grew to become the excellent Travel group we have today.

Amy Summers

The Heritage group is now the Travel Group - and is still going strong. Reports of three recent visits are on page 10.

The event was recorded and we look forward to it being available on the Royal Institution online Channel sometime in the not too distant future.

The Ri Channel has a huge range of recorded talks on scientific topics. This could form the basis of a local event for our members.

Please let the editor know if you would be interested in this.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING ITALIAN?



This is just one of the totally free courses starting during May. Your editor has signed up for this one but there are many more - the list below is just a few of those starting in May.

- Italian
- Dutch
- Obesity
- Why do we age
- Ultrasound imaging
- WW1 heroism
- Dementia
- Gravity
- Maths puzzles
- Anxiety
- Mindfulness

You will need to register for the course(s) by clicking the Join link on the relevant web page.
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>

Courses such as these could form the basis for a group where members studied together and used what they had learnt as the basis for discussions and further activities. If you have an idea please contact Meg Humphries, our Groups co-ordinator.



The Royal Institution
Science Lives Here

U3A AT THE RI: PARANORMAL BELIEFS AND ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

The latest in the series of Royal Institution lectures for U3A audiences took place in London on 17 March. A number of members of our erstwhile Science group went down to London for the event.

Chaired by Pam Jones, members were treated to three lectures; Chris French – Weird Science: an introduction to anomalistic psychology; Ian Chapman – How to put the Sun in a magnetic bottle and Jenny Rohn – Revenge of the microbes.

HUMOUR CORNER - Just space for a few one-liners

- Where there's a will, I want to be in it
- Statistically, 6 out of 7 dwarfs are not Happy.
- 19 people go to the cinema. The ticket lady asks "Why so many of you?" One replies, "The film said 18 or over."
- Money isn't everything but it sure keeps you in touch with your children

FORTHCOMING HOLIDAYS AND VISITS

Contact: Margaret McDermott or Ruth Smith

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 12-17 May | Suffolk. Holiday Inn Ipswich Fully booked |
| 12-17 June | Edinburgh. Best Western Kings Manor Hotel £540 sharing Single Supplement £125 By coach. Visits to Scottish Parliament, Holyrood, Edinburgh Castle, Rosslyn Chapel, Falkirk Wheel, Stirling Castle, Bannockburn There are a few places available. Meeting June to finalise arrangements. Contact Sue Harlin |
| 12 July | Countdown at Media City 26 members have booked tickets for this visit (12:45-16:00) Information at June meeting |
| 17 August | Ordsall Hall and Imperial War Museum. By coach. Approx. £18 |
| 30 Aug-3 Sept | IRELAND. Flight from Manchester to Belfast. 4 nights HB at Jackson's Hotel Ballybofey. Includes Glenveagh Nat. Park, Donegal, Malin Head, Derry, Bushmills Whisky Distillery, Giant's Causeway, etc Balance at June meeting. Note There will be slightly more to pay than the amount shown on the ATOL Certificate from Greatdays as this does not include entrance fees |
| 2 Dec | Advance notice. Christmas visit to Tatton Hall |

IMPORTANT - DEPOSITS

When you book a holiday and pay the deposit it is **NOT REFUNDABLE**.

Holidays require making a lot of arrangements which we do only when we have sufficient numbers to make them viable.

On several occasions this year members have cancelled deposit cheques. When this happens we may have to cancel the holiday or ask the remaining members to pay more. This always happens whenever we have to hire a coach.

OUR U3A ACTIVITIES

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 11 May | Open meeting. Talks, choir. |
| 8 June | The Mellor Dig. Talk by Ann Hearle |
| 8 July | Summer Social |
| 13 July | The Lady Policeman. Talk by Karen Corcoran |
| 10 August | Life in the House of Commons. Talk by William Wragg MP. Exhibitions by Art and Photography groups. |

NATIONAL U3A EVENTS

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 8 June | NW Region AGM and Conference. Liverpool http://u3asites.org.uk/files/n/north-west/docs/agmflyer20162.pdf |
| 14 July | Swan Lake London Coliseum. U3A exclusive talk with principal dancers. Discounted tickets £45. Book 020 7845 9300 and quote 'U3A offer or book online at www.eno.org and enter promo code 'u3a'. |
| 8 - 11 Aug | Annual Science seminar. Harper Adams Uni, Telford. |
| 30 Aug - 2 Sep | NW Regional Summer School. Newton Rigg Agricultural College near Penrith. Details and booking arrangements - The NW Regional website: www.u3asites.org.uk/north-west . Any queries contact David Joseph 07831473157 |

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

| | |
|------------|---|
| 12 May | NTLive. A view from the bridge. |
| 29 May | Check dates and venues |
| 17-21 May | An inspector calls. Lowry |
| 23-25 May | Iolanthe. Lowry |
| 23 May | Stockport Plaza tour 11am |
| 9 June | NTLive. The Audience. |
| 13-18 June | The Ring cycle. Opera North. Lowry. |
| 17 June | The Dressmaker. Plaza |
| 18 June | A night in Venice. Classics by Candlelight. Plaza |
| 21 June | Glyndebourne live screening: Il Barbiere di Siviglia. Plaza |

GROUP REPORTS

ART

The Art group will be having a display of some of their work at the August meeting. A range of members' skills will be on display.

Please come and have a look.

Brian Chadwick

BACKGAMMON

After the April recess, for anyone who might fancy a game, backgammon will be starting up again beginning Wednesday 4 May. The venue as usual is the Royal Oak, High Lane and the start time is 14:00 hours. All are welcome.

Ron Barrow

BALLET APPRECIATION GROUPS 3 AND 4

The theme for the last two months has been Ballet in Cuba.

23rd March / 7th April: We saw a short feature film on the founder of the Cuban National Ballet, Alicia Alonso. This was followed by some spectacular dancing in the Cuban Ballet's production of Don Quixote.

27th April / 5th May: Staying with the Cuban theme, we watched a documentary on the Cuban National Ballet School, which featured 11 year-old identical triplets. (Still at the school and now aged 16).

This was followed by a series of short extracts, featuring two recently retired Cuban ballet stars: Jose Manuel Carreno and Carlos Acosta. We also saw a piece danced by Yonah Acosta – nephew of Carlos and now a principal dancer with the English National Ballet.

At the next meeting we will see the Paris Opera Ballet in Roland Petit's Notre Dame de Paris.

Meg Humphries

CARDMAKING

Art Deco has been a theme for a couple of the cards we have made in the last two months. One card featured a deco image of champagne glasses and roses, and we learnt how to make our own "card candi" to give a 3d effect on the flowers. Another card was made in a typical art deco fan shape and featured papers and layers that reflected the same fan shape, finished off with an image of a stylish stamped ladies head, all in green, silver, and black.

A sophisticated die cut card also featured during one of our meetings - these cards are absolutely stunning, yet amazingly simple to make. The final card showcased an interesting and versatile "triple stamping" technique which enabled everyone to create their own personalised stamped image of flowers in their own

favourite colours. Unfortunately, as usual, my photographic skills don't do the cards justice - they are so much prettier in reality.



I'd like to thank Pauline and Gill from Crafty Ladies in Marple, and Glynis from CJ Cardcraft in Edgeley, for their inspiration and support in the design of the cards we've made over the last couple of months.

So what have we got coming up at future meetings? In May, we'll be doing some more heat embossing, but this time on vellum, to enhance an already stunning golden flower spray, and in June some more die-cutting, but this time instead of preparing the die cuts in advance, we hope to have a machine available for the group to use, so we can cut our own pretty card shapes. Finally, I am preparing a very special "book" card for the group to make, probably in July or August - get your muscles built up ladies, as there will be a lot of die cutting involved!

The group continues to meet on the first Thursday of every month at 1.30 at St Thomas' church hall, High Lane, and new members are always welcome. No experience is necessary, as we are all learning together, and no special equipment is needed, although I should perhaps caution that many people find it a very addictive craft! If you want to join us at a meeting, or would like to have a "taster" session, please contact me or Dot. We hope to see you at a meeting soon.

Christine Fox
 Dot Green

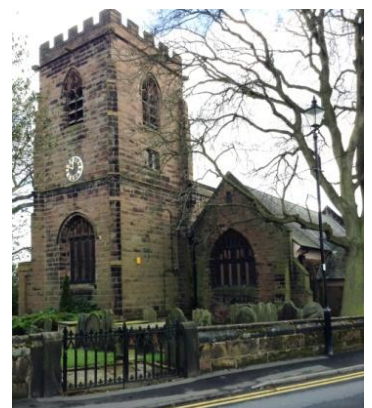
CHURCHES AND PUBS

All Saints' Church Daresbury

The first trip of 2016 took us to All Saints' Church at Daresbury in Cheshire. Daresbury has been a Christian worship place since 1153 and is the birth place of Lewis Carroll. We were greeted with a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits.

A church has stood on this site since the 12th century. The church at Daresbury originally belong to Norton Priory during the Middle Ages. The present church was built in the 1870's. The tower is the only part of the 16th century building which was restored and retained when the present Church was built.

All Saints' is associated with Lewis Carroll and many people come to Daresbury because of this. The Daniell Chapel contains one of the best known features of All Saints'. In it is the Lewis Carroll memorial window. Lewis (real name Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) was born in Newton-By-Daresbury on 27/1/1832. He lived there until 1843 when his father moved to be a Rector in Yorkshire.



The chancel originally was very high concealing the choir and altar from the congregation but when the church was rebuilt in 1870 it was lowered to form a low partition between the nave and chancel at the entrance to the choir. Worked into the walls and floor are memorials to various incumbents of All Saints'. As you walk to the rear of the church there are memorial tablets and stained glass windows. They include memorials to the Heron family from Moore Hill and the Milner family of Moore. Both families were generous to the church.

The ancient 16th century stone font is to be found outside in the grounds. The late 19th century font in the church has an elaborate cover, the type of which is usually only seen in cathedrals and great civic churches.

After an enjoyable tour of the church we made for The Stag pub, just down the road, where everyone enjoyed an excellent lunch.

Paul Kenneth

CINEMA

The film in March was "Dads Army". It was shown in the matinee slot at 5.30 in the evening, which was a "first" for us and proved very popular. Afterwards we crossed the road to "Dolce Vita" for a most welcome meal. It's to be hoped there will be more screenings in the future at this time.

The choice for April was "Eddie The Eagle" which was another light comedy but it had a touch of pathos about it and went down well.

The club is popular and has over 40 members. There is no waiting list and it doesn't matter whether you come often or just now and then. You'll be assured of a warm welcome and (hopefully) a good night out.

If you would like to join please contact me.

Sheila Harrop

CRAFT AND NEEDLEWORK

Our members have been very busy these last few months, making items that we hope will be of use to several organisations. These include twiddle muffs, a very fine example of which is shown here, which will help dementia patients; drainage bags which are useful for carrying drips in the Jasmine Ward of Stepping Hill; and knitted items which we have sent off to Knit for Peace.



The U3A member who kindly donated seven 25gm balls of mauve yarn can see here that it went a very long way, making two children's sweaters and a hat.

Each member of the group has different skills which are now being put to very good use.

Marlene Brookes

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Seven of the group met after a break for illness and had a lively chat on a variety of subjects.

1. R.H. or L.H. driving to match the rest of Europe. We agreed No due to inconvenience, cost and safety.
2. The demand and overload on A & E depts. We decided the whole system requires a serious review and is much abused.
3. Doctors strikes. Generally not in favour as innocent people are the most likely to suffer, either on the day or later due to waiting for delayed appointments. Talking is the answer.
4. It is reported teachers are leaving in large numbers due to out of hours paperwork and stress. This is happening in primary and senior schools especially with regard to discipline. We discussed many things including should parents do more.
5. The subject of the EU vote came up with a variety of comments. It was agreed a lot more information should be made available.

We finished with a cup of tea and a general talk on who we would most like to meet if we could. You will have to imagine the answers!

Amy Summers

DINING

April's outing for the Dining Group was at the Beehive in the picturesque village of Combs. Although the sun was shining it was a cold day and while we were dining we had a flurry of snow and sleet. Inside we had a cosy room with a roaring log fire in the original local stone fireplace.

The Beehive serves fresh home cooked food which we all enjoyed. We opted for two courses and found it sufficient. On leaving we all agreed we had enjoyed ourselves.

In June we plan to go back to Perugia on the Glossop road for an evening meal; as usual we will be taking names at the May meeting.

Jeanette Bell
Dorothy Neillands

FAMILY HISTORY

WE HAVE CHANGED THE DAY AND TIME OF OUR MEETINGS

Our original meetings were dependent on the availability of the computer room at Brookside School but did not suit everyone. We now have house meetings so have decided to change our meetings which will now be held monthly on a Monday afternoon 2pm – 4pm at Sue Harlin's house.

We are actively seeking new members at any stage of their research from absolute beginners onwards. We will help those with no knowledge of the subject to make a start, gather information and access relevant web sites. Between us in the group we have wide ranging knowledge which we will happily pass on.

Last month we looked at access to Trade and Street Directories on line. At our next meeting we will be looking at old maps and tithe maps and giving help with internet access to those who need it.

Our next meeting dates will be:
23rd May, 20th June and 18th July

Please contact me or Sue Harlin if you would like more information.

Pat Christopher

GARDENING

Gardening restarted in March with a pleasant morning at Beryl's house for seven of the group, who liked the warm lower garden with its sprinkling of daffodills, hellebores, and crocus. Some shrubs had become slightly large and were now difficult for Beryl to prune – a common problem as we all get older!

For our April meeting, nine visited Dunham Massey on a gorgeous day, and saw the early colourful signs of Spring. The gardens did not disappoint, and as well as masses of daffodils, erythroniums and anemones particularly caught the eye. The early blossoming trees and fresh green leaves sparkled in the sunshine, and the new rose garden was becoming a sun trap – even before the roses were out! It is a boon that Dunham is so flat and easy to get around, with judiciously placed benches, and now a choice of two eating places! Definitely a worthwhile trip.



Walter Mason

GERMAN



After a break for Easter when many of us were away, we started up again on 15th April. We had so many different experiences to share that we never stopped talking in the two hours of our session, so never got round to reading the prepared text.

Particularly interesting was one member's experience of a typical German spa with its various beneficial cures. Our own family holiday in Pembrokeshire provided some new vocabulary including Papageitaucher (parrot diver i.e. puffin), Seehund (sea dog i.e. seal) and Natter (adder.) The original English word was Nadder and over the years "a nadder" became "an adder".

Marlene Brookes

HISTORY

For our March meeting we followed Terry Browne's presentation on Ernest Shackleton last month, which proved very interesting, with Terry's video of his trip to Antarctica in October 2015. This was an official video of his visit and was beautifully photographed, showing the amazing scenery and wildlife of the Antarctic.

At the April meeting Dorothy Neillands presented the life of Emma Hamilton. Emma Hamilton had a life style very much along the lines what we would now call 'celebrity'. Born in 1765 into great poverty, she worked as a servant from a very young age. She was a beautiful young woman and at the age of 13 moved to London from the Wirral in search of fame and fortune, where she became the muse of the painter George Romney

and was also painted many times by Joshua Reynolds: it was said that at one time she was the most painted woman in Europe, she was also a great trendsetter for the fashions of the day.

However, it is probably as Nelson's mistress that she is most renowned, but as time passed, after the death of her husband and Nelson, living a life beyond her means, her financial situation became very precarious. She took to drink and laudanum and eventually died in poverty at the age of 49 in Calais in January 1815.

The next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 25 May and the topic is The Causes and Consequences of the Boer War.

Pam Curley

OPERA APPRECIATION

8th / 22nd March: We saw the Royal Opera in an excellent production from 2010 of Gounoud's Faust. Sung in French, an excellent cast included Bryn Terfel as Mephistopheles – a rather alarming sight when he appeared at the Walpurgisnacht Ball in a sparkly black evening dress with tiara.

12th / 26th April: We returned to Italian opera with a double bill : Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci. These short operas are in the verismo style (true to life), which was popular in the early 20th century. Both performances were from the New York Metropolitan Opera. Cavalleria Rusticana starred a young(ish) Placido Domingo in a performance from 1978, which I prefer to more recent versions. The performance of Pagliacci, from 1994, featured Luciano Pavarotti.

At our May meetings, I intend to show The Merry Widow, sung in German.

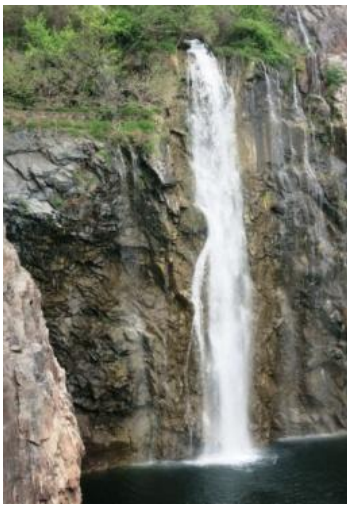
Meg Humphries

PHOTOGRAPHY

Our March competition on "Art" was won by "new boy" Jeff, who had 1st (Green Man sculpture at Buckshawe village) and 2nd (Carved Owl in Hartley Wood, High Lane). Diane was 3rd with Bronze Figures in Beijing.



Our April competition was "Waterfalls". Diane had 1st place with a spectacular waterfall in Shanghai Botanical Gardens; Fred had 2nd place with Rhaidr Falls, Builth Wells and Diane had two 3rd equals (another from the Botanical Gardens and one taken on a recent Spring day in the Torrs (on page 1).



The Photography group will be exhibiting some of its work at the August meeting.

Walter Mason

QUIZ GROUP

The Quiz group is proving popular. We meet in members' homes on the 4th Thursday of the month so this limits the number of participants and we are now full.

This month Dorothy created the quiz and questions ranged from Jeremy Hunt to Mrs Beeton. Along the way we learnt some new words including tundish which is a Shakespearian word for a wooden funnel. Tundishes were used to pour liquids into tuns (barrels). Another question was what is a bumbershoot - this turned out to be a facetious word for umbrella in the USA.

Please contact me for details and to be put on the waiting list.

Diane Saxon

SINGING

On 11th of this month, at the MAY U3A Meeting your U3A choir will be singing for your entertainment. Please come along and listen to the results of a lot of hard work. We will endeavour to make it as enjoyable as we possibly can. As last year, we are working on a varied Programme of music, ranging from - traditional to modern to classical and hopefully, for your pleasure, a selection from some well - known Musicals. Here, you will be able to test your skills and decide which tune is from which Musical.

If you enjoy what you hear and you feel you would like to join us, then please come along to our practices each Friday, from 10.00am until 12.00 at High Lane Village Hall; you will certainly get a warm welcome.

We are a group of 34 at the moment but we have plenty of room for more members, particularly Sopranos and Tenors but all will be welcome. Many current members had no previous experience of

singing with a choir; the one thing they all have in common, is that they love to sing. Our next rehearsal will be on Friday 27th May. See you then!

Margaret Glynn

TRAVEL GROUP

St.Asaph and Tweedmill.

Wednesday 15th March

Following a short delay (caused by traffic congestion on the A6) we set off in brilliant sunshine for St Asaph Cathedral. After a brief stop for a welcome coffee we arrived at the village. The cathedral is small by any standards; indeed it is claimed to be the smallest Anglican cathedral in Great Britain. Legend has it that a monk, Kentigern, exiled from Scotland, built a monastery on or near the present site in the 6th century. On his return to Scotland he left the monastery in the hands of Asaph, a pupil. The first cathedral was built around 1239.

Our guide imparted, in hushed tones, many interesting facts relating to its rather turbulent history. The cathedral suffered attacks from both English and Welsh armies which resulted in it being burnt down twice. Restoration has been an ongoing feature of the cathedral's life and is reflected in the different stone used for the exterior.

The interior of the cathedral whilst plain affords a sense of calm and boasts two magnificent stained glass windows in the nave and the north aisle. The famous and treasured William Morgan bible (published in 1588) is on display and was translated into Welsh to allow services to be carried out in the language.



Following the tour we departed for Tweedmill and lunch. Two floors packed with every item imaginable allowed us to purchase anything from a fish slice to a wedding outfit!

An interesting first outing for me with U3A; my thanks to Pat Gorie for organising the visit.

Lynn Arnold

Elizabeth Gaskell House

On 5th April a group of us visited Elizabeth Gaskell House which was built between 1835-1841 and is now a grade II listed building. The restoration was largely funded by Heritage Lottery Funding.



Elizabeth Gaskell was a prolific writer and had friends such as Charles Dickens, Charlotte Bronte and Charles Halle to mention a few. She was born in London in 1810. After the death of her mother she went to live with her aunt in Knutsford, where in 1832 she married William Gaskell a Unitarian Minister. They moved into the Plymouth Grove house in 1850 and lived there with their four daughters, Elizabeth died unexpectedly at the age of 55 but the family continued to live there until 1913.

What was formerly the kitchen of this Victorian villa is now a very nice tea room and shop.

The carpets in all the rooms that have been restored were made to an old Victorian design in 27" strips and sewn together and the special way the carpets are woven make it very hard wearing. There is only one firm in the country using this method now which makes it very expensive. The interior pieces of furniture are mostly replicas in the style of the time so we were able to sit on the chairs and touch various items. There are also personal items such as a shawl and passport belonging to Elizabeth arranged in glass cases which belong to the family.

It was a lovely experience to wander through the house lingering in the drawing room or looking at the books in William's study, or sit where Elizabeth sat overlooking the garden whilst she did her writing. The garden has been restored to how it looked in 1849 and planted with flowers that Elizabeth Gaskell was familiar with, although on a much smaller scale as some of the land was sold for redevelopment. The bedrooms have yet to be restored and so are not on public view.

The house can be hired for private functions and what a wonderful venue it would be for a wedding.

Altogether a very pleasant and interesting visit. Many thanks to Margaret Meekly for arranging it and also thanks to our guides for giving us an insight to this beautiful Victorian house and what it was like to live there in Victorian times.

June Gibbs

WALKING

Tuesday 30th March

Ruth and Dave took 16 to Monyash and the delights of Lathkill Dale for the first time.

The cool cloud brightened nicely during the varied and eventful walk. We passed Fere Mere, the only mere of 5 still to survive, and entered a muddy lane leading to a fieldpath in pleasant limestone walled fields, with evidence of lead mining by Fern Dale. A farmhand was bringing sheep and lamb families out to grass, one by one, from One Ash Grange Farm, which had several items of historic interest, before we trod carefully down the steep rocky staircase to Cales Dale, well-wooded and enlivened with birdsong.

Soon we were down the dale and crossed the bridge into Lathkill Dale, quite busy for an early year walk, but always a delight with its many limestone rock features and clear stream. At times we had to tread carefully between the large stones, especially as the dale narrowed into a mini-gorge. There was a herd of unusual cattle grazing on the upper slopes, while a Little Owl was spotted near the Lathkill Head Cave.

Then it was easy walking on damp grass and a stroll along the village street to the substantial meals we enjoyed at the Bulls Head, thanking Dave and Ruth for our walk.



April Tuesday walk



Walter took nine to Tintwistle for a 4½ mile walk which took in the Arnside and Bottoms reservoirs.

Promised views were mist shrouded, and firm paths had been badly softened by overnight rain, so care was needed. But in the atmospheric nature reserve air, Carol soon identified birdsong of Willow Warbler, Chiff Chaff, and Great Tit, distant Curlew, and low flying Swallows (near Swallow Wood!).

The meadows were alive with new born lambs, while later on a few daffodils and lots of flowering gorse relieved the grey day. The old centre of Tintwistle surprised several by its attractiveness, with Toll Cottage, Stocks Brow, and 17C Bulls Head guarding the war memorial patio. Lunch was taken under the larch trees by Bottoms reservoir, and the forecast rain held off till we were almost back to our cars.

It had been an enjoyable walk in a newish area, and a few made for the Peel Arms of Padfield to test the beers, or to have a second lunch.



April Wednesday walk



Due to a family funeral for the Allertons, Walter took this walk, and visited Tintwistle again but on a alternative 5 mile route.

Thirteen members joined Walter; this time mist did not shroud the views or the hills, but we did have typical April weather and even saw lying snow, remnants from an overnight fall. The walk hadn't been fully recc'd, so there was some exciting route finding to do near the end of the walk.

Although the area had been covered only a fortnight earlier, the different directions and the different weather, made this walk seem unlike the previous one.

Walter Mason

