

**u3a** High Lane

# Newsletter

**May 2025**



## **Inside this month**

From the Editor

From the Chair

Pickleball

Monthly meeting

Wednesday Bridge group

Third Age essay competition Annual lunch and events

High Lane Anecdotes and memories

Group activities

u3a National events

And finally:

## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the May 2025 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. Another bumper edition with group reports for the last couple of months plus a report from the recent Travel group holidays in Norfolk. We have lots of photos this month, so I selected one from the archive for the cover. This is the walking group from May 10 years ago.

We welcome some new members to our u3a this month and look forward to meeting you at our meetings and interest groups. Your contributions to the newsletter will be very welcome. Please feel free to share some of your news, your interests, stories, poems or items you have found that you think would be of interest to other members.

Attached to the email is the National Office bitesize Friends newsletters for March and April. I have also attached an updated copy of the Group contacts list.

The next issue of our newsletter will be June 2025 so please send your contributions to me by 28<sup>th</sup> May at [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

Diane Saxon

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## FROM THE CHAIR

We had an Open Day in March which was very well attended. I would like to thank all the committee members and group leaders who made the afternoon very successful. We gained sixteen new members from the afternoon which was very pleasing and thanks to all our members who have renewed for another year. We now have over 350 members.

Our next monthly meeting 's speaker is Eric Newton who plays with Manchester Jazz. He will be speaking on his life as a busker and he will also be playing his clarinet as well as telling amusing stories. Barbara and I go to the Conservative club on the first Monday of the month which starts at 7.30pm until 10 pm. Manchester Jazz are excellent. If you enjoy music, you will enjoy the evening.

We have been asked about starting a new group. Pickleball. We always welcome ideas for new groups but if new groups are to start, we need people to volunteer to help run them. I think at the moment people who are running groups are running one or two different groups. Some even three groups. Starting a new group is quite easy and there is always plenty of help from the committee. Please think about it.

Thanks

Paul (Chair)

## PICKLEBALL

Pickleball came from a children's game in Washington state in 1965 and is the fastest growing sport across the USA where there are over 10,000 Pickleball courts.

Pickleball courts are smaller than tennis courts, bats are solid like table tennis bats and balls are perforated.

Players serve underhand. It seems to be becoming very popular with u3as. Some even have multiple groups.



As Paul says, we would need sufficient members interesting in getting this going and some members willing to organise the group. As a starting point we need to find somewhere local that has Pickleball courts available suitable for groups such as ours, probably daytime. If anyone has knowledge of the sport, please contact a committee member.

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## APRIL MONTHLY MEETING

The speaker at the April monthly meeting was Philip Caine whose talk was entitled From Barrow to Baghdad and back again.

Going by the title everyone was probably expecting a travelogue. However, this was not the case. Philip gave us a very interesting and lively description of all the places in the world his work had taken him.

He worked as a chef in Barrow and on the oil rigs in the North Sea where he eventually became chef manager. He became a project manager building accommodation for expats in Nigeria and then a similar project in Khuzestan. He got involved running a nightclub and eventually a hotel which he owned. This was not a success and to recoup his money he took on a job in Baghdad project managing the building of accommodation bases for American troops. He set up charter flights from Baghdad to Bahrain. His wife Sandra was encouraging and supportive throughout his career and he told us about her with great humour.

After several other enterprises he returned to Barrow where he enrolled in a writing group, and he is now a successful crime novelist. He had given talks to over 70 u3a groups! His talk was well received by everyone.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 14th May when Eric Newton will be presenting a talk entitled The Life and Times of a Busker.

Kath Wareham

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Annual lunch

The annual lunch this year is on July 18th at Hazel Grove Golf Club. We are pleased to welcome Simon Michael to speak to us. Simon has written a series of books in the Charles Holborne legal thriller series, set in 1960s London, a city of bomb sites, gangsters, police corruption and prejudice. The violent streets where Charles Holborne, former boxer and criminal and now misfit Barrister at Law, fights the good fight.

The talk is entitled "A Life in Crime".

The menu this year is

*Home-made Tomato and Basil Soup*  
*Ham Hock Terrine with a Red Onion Marmalade*  
*Smoked salmon salad*

*Chicken Breast with a Red Wine Sauce*  
*Pan Roasted Salmon with Lemon Dill Sauce (£2.50 supplement)*  
*Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding*  
*All served with fresh seasonal vegetables and potatoes*

*Sticky Toffee Pudding with Custard*  
*Lemon Tart*  
*Cheese and biscuits*

Tickets will be available at the May meeting. Cost is £35 for 3 courses and coffee/tea and includes a gratuity.

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## Later this year

### Pub Quiz night

Hosted by the Quiz group. The date is Friday, 9 August, 7pm start. Teams of up to six people. We will have a number of different rounds with a break for a snack. Tickets are just £8 for the evening's entertainment and will be on sale at the June meeting.

### Music evening

The date is Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October. Nancy Ann Lee is the entertainer, and a meal will be included. More details later.

## **WEDNESDAY BRIDGE GROUP CLOSURE**

Sadly, on March 19 the Wednesday Bridge Group had to put the cards away for the last time. This group had been meeting for many, many years (so many no one can remember) under the leadership of Jean Day and then Joan Waters with a membership of over 30 people until 2020 when Covid happened. Like so many other groups we had lock the doors and walk away. When we were allowed to meet again our numbers were sadly depleted. Those of us who turned up carried on but as the months went by, we lost more players through sickness, old age or simply no longer driving. Then Joan had an accident and was unable to join us. We valiantly tried to attract new members but no luck.

With just two tables we managed through January and February, but it became obvious we would have to close. So sadly, on March 19 we played our last game and then had a celebration to which Joan was able to attend accompanied by her sister. Milly made a speech thanking Joan for everything she had done for the group, and we presented her with a voucher for her favourite shop.

Dorothy Neillands

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## **The Third Age Trust Essay Competition 2025**

All u3a members can enter the competition. You must be a member by 1 March 2025 and stay a member until winners are announced in June 2025. Entry is free. You can submit one essay per person.

Your essay must be on the topic: 'Make the case for a person, policy, invention or idea having a positive impact on society'. It must be no longer than 1000 words, not including the title or references, and must not include your name or the name of your u3a in the body of the essay. The judging will be blind.

The deadline for submissions is 12 noon, Friday 9 May 2025.

The first prize is £100 Lifestyle shopping voucher donated by the creators of Friends Extra. Two runners-up will receive prize books donated by Bloomsbury.

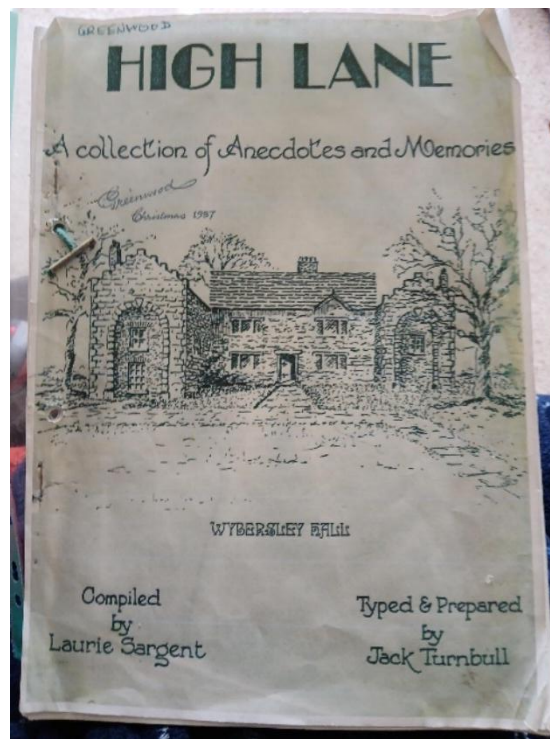
[Click here for the entry form](#)

## HIGH LANE: A COLLECTION OF ANECDOTES AND MEMORIES".

Many months ago, I came across an old document about High Lane entitled "A collection of Anecdotes and Memories".

To those of you who were born in High Lane, you may remember it, but for us interlopers who travelled from as far as Chapel en le Frith to get here and have only lived here for 46 years it was an interesting read.

The only problem of course is its lack of photos and in my capacity as auditor (or Independent Account Checker to give it its full title) for Marple Local History Society I asked if they had a copy. During my discussion they did mention they would be interested in any old photos of High Lane for their archives and if they connected up with the said document all the better.



So today I am asking for you to scout through your old photos and if you think they are interesting views of past High Lane contact me on [HighLaneU3A@gmail.com](mailto:HighLaneU3A@gmail.com).

During my discussion they did mention they do have a High Lane archive with some photos in but would like to expand this. They did also mention times like the 50s, 60s and 70s are not well documented as they are often just languishing in our photos in the attic. You may even wish to join them.

If you wish a digitised copy of the document in pdf format, then this can also be arranged.

Interesting sites:

[www.visitmarple.co.uk](http://www.visitmarple.co.uk)

[www.marplelocalhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.marplelocalhistorysociety.org.uk)

Les Birks  
Treasurer

# GROUP NEWS

## BACKGAMMON

The group still meets fortnightly Wednesday afternoons in the Bulls Head, High Lane. The next meeting is the 7<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm. Newcomers are always welcome. Tuition can be given to non-players'.

Ken Jackson

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## BALLROOM DANCING

The ballroom dancing group has had good attendances in 2025, with a highlight being a celebration for Ian, our alternate DJ, on a special birthday. In a months' time we will have a break during the summer months, although rumour has it that there might be another celebration yet. Watch this space!

Walter Mason

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## CANASTA

Following our open day, we welcomed two new members to our Tuesday evening group. If you fancy a try, just turn up at 7pm at the Royal Oak and we will introduce you to the game.

Pauline Wright

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## GERMAN

We continue to meet every Friday morning but this coming Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, there will be no meeting as I am away. We recently welcomed a new member with only a very limited knowledge of German, and she is fitting in well with existing members, so if anyone else would like to join us, they would be very welcome.

Marlene Brookes

## CHURCHES AND PUBS

The dates for this year's visits are:

The next meeting of the Churches and Pubs group will be Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June. We shall be visiting St. Matthew's church in Meerbrook, Staffordshire. Following that visit we shall be dining at The Lazy Trout in the same village.

Please sign up at the May meeting with Jean and Roger.

August 6 <sup>th</sup>	Dorothy Neillands.
September 3 <sup>rd</sup>	St. Lawrence's church attached to Peover Hall. Mark Saxon.
Oct 1 <sup>st</sup>	Hayfield Methodist Church. Gill and Dave.
December 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Pam Cooke

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

Paul Kenneth

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## CURRENT AFFAIRS

The Current Affairs Group meets each month to discuss affairs – local, national or international. There were ten of us at this month's meeting – these are just some of the issues discussed this month.

1. Fourteen people, most were politicians, were charged by The Gambling Commission for betting on the result of last July's General Election. Does this add to the further distrust of our politicians?
2. British Steel is owned by China, the British government has now taken control of BSC Scunthorpe to ensure the last British steel manufacturer is not shut down, and that steel production in UK is preserved.
3. Shops and stores, cafes and restaurants in UK are moving to digital payment – payment by card not cash. What are our comments? There are problems understanding a cashless society – however the moves towards a cashless society cannot be avoided and in time this will become accepted by us all.
4. Are owners of second homes to blame for the housing problem. They may add to this problem but are not to blame for it. To solve the problem, we need government decisions to build more affordable properties. 'Council Houses' – that is the answer.
5. Over the past few months, the government has increased spending on defence and cut spending on welfare and the civil service – all in the name of efficiency saving. What are our comments on this.

Trevor Kinvig



## CRIME FICTION READING

Our March read was *Death comes to Pemberley* by P. D. James, written in 2011 so one of her later books. The book is a sequel to the story of Jane Austen's 1813 novel *Pride and Prejudice*. Elizabeth Bennett and Fitzwilliam Darcy are married with children and living at Pemberley. Many of the characters were also in *Pride and Pred*. The crime is the murder of Captain Denny, a minor character from *Pride and Prejudice*, who is murdered in the grounds of Pemberley. George Wickham is accused of his murder. The novel is written in the style of Jane Austen. James, in her author's note at the start, is quite apologetic about this and she wonders what Jane Austen would think of her book.

As ever, the group members were divided in their opinions. It was generally agreed that we got a good feel of the lives of the main characters managing the estate from James's description and the quality of her writing was appreciated. Some, perhaps the fans of the original, liked the references to the other familiar characters from *Pride and Pred*. Some felt the ending was too drawn out and it got a bit boring.

The book was made into a television drama, by the BBC in 2013, starring Matthew Rhys and Anna Maxwell Martin and many other famous names. Well worth a watch.

Diane Saxon

The crime fiction book group's April read was *Devil's Wolf* by Paul Doherty. The story is set in 1311 during the reign of Edward II. Our hero, Sir Hugh Corbett, is sent by the king to Berwick to solve a murder in the hope of ending the violent war between England and Scotland begun in the 1290s by Edward I. Further murders ensue but Corbett successfully unravels a complex web of plots to expose the murderer.

It was interesting to enter into a turbulent time of English and Scottish history, and we quite liked the characters. But the 'blood and guts' was too much for our group; our feeling about the book was summed up by one group member who remarked that the author "could have written about all the history without being so nasty about it".

Our next meeting will be on 16 May when we will be discussing *An Honest Man* by Simon Michael.

Betty Mackman

[We have booked Simon for our annual lunch in July. He has written a series of books in the Charles Holborne legal thriller series, set in 1960s London, a city of bomb sites, gangsters, police corruption and prejudice. The violent streets where Charles Holborne, former boxer and criminal and now misfit Barrister at Law, fights the good fight. An Honest man is the book he recommended for us to read.](#)

## DINING

Have you been to The Aviator? It is a warm welcoming modern pub in the heart of Woodford Garden Village. That is where 24 members of the dining Group went in April. We were seated in the function room and were looked after by Matt, a pleasant young man who assured us he was there to make sure everything we wanted was there.

Lunch was a set menu of 2 or 3 courses, we went for the 3. The most popular choices were Prawn Cocktail, Sea Bass and Crumble. Very traditional food but presented in a very modern style. It was a pleasant day and once again everyone said they enjoyed it.

Dorothy Neillands  
Dorothy Gerrard

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## HISTORY

The History group met as usual on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Gordon gave a very interesting talk on hieroglyphics, their history and their meaning. It was the formal writing system used in Egypt and consisted of pictures or symbols that represented words or sounds. There were no vowels or plural.

One of the most well-known hieroglyphic is the Ankh which represented eternal life. They can mostly be found on the tombs of the pharaoh. The talk was illustrated with lots of informative slides.

The next meeting is on Wednesday April 23rd when Ben Alexander is talking about the history of oil.

Kath Wareham



Detail from the side of the Sarcophagus of Ankhnesneferibre from the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, about 530 BC, Thebes, at the British Museum. Wikimedia Commons.

## GARDENING

The first visit of the year was to Great Budworth, a charming village, where a lovely Spring garden was hidden away behind an austere frontage. Two natural ponds connected by a realistic stream, led to bulb filled borders with chinodoxia to the fore, then past camellia, perennial beds, a box hedge feature, and down to the vegetable areas with views to Budworth Mere and Jodrell Bank. Plenty of early flowers and warm sunshine made for a very pleasant visit.



The second visit was to Walter's garden, where a bitter wind tended to curtail garden inspection, before we retreated to the warm living room and conservatory, notwithstanding there many appreciative comments on the colourful garden. Although yours truly has to admit to a little help from a gardener this last month or two!



Walter Mason

## MEMOIRS

April 2025 meeting

One lady remembered growing up in Stalybridge before the appearance of supermarkets. Everything was purchased from the corner shop which was often the front room of a house. Each shop often specialised in one kind of produce. The sweet shop sold liquorice roots, homemade lollies in old teacups with the handles broken off. She remembers nibbling the corners off freshly baked loaves with her friend and having their heads banged together!

Another lady remembered the year 1956. She sang in two choirs and in this year, she sang in The Champness Hall in Rochdale. The concert was organised by UNICEF and a young Danny Kaye conducted their choir and sang his hit song The Ugly Duckling in a Lancashire accent! In the same year Rochdale celebrated 100 years of receiving its charter. Once again, she was in a choir which sang with Harry Corbett and Sooty and Sweep. Also, with the legendary Gracie Fields who talked to them afterwards.

A story of a lady who lived with her grandparents in Newbridge Lane Stockport. Her Grandfather had a barber's shop, and she remembers the leather strop for sharpening the cutthroat razors and the smell of the pomander gel. The shop was used for betting and several members of her family became addicted to gambling. In those days it wasn't recognised as a problem.

A account of growing up in Sheffield and being an NHS baby. One of her Christian names is Hillary which she hates. Her father heard it on the bus on his way to the registrar office and decided to add it to her name! He was a policeman, and the family moved house several times. This also meant she changed schools many times (7 in all) and made it difficult to keep friends. She remembers having to look after her brother who cried a lot.

One lady remembered the doctors of her childhood. One in particular ruled her surgery with a rod of iron. Everyone was frightened of her including the hospital doctors. This ensured they jumped to her attendance and assured her patients got the best treatment. Although her manner was very brusque, she was very conscientious and thorough. Her first priority was always for her patients. Many people in the group remembered this doctor and there followed many stories about her.

Memories of teaching in the 1980's. In one school she had a remedial class which was quite a challenge. One student could be particularly threatening. Eventually they came to understand each other, and she loved the class. She took them on many visits around Manchester and was complemented on their behaviour during a trip to the costume museum.

A story about a return visit to Prague in 2002 with her husband. They were lucky to find accommodation in a flat in the top of an Art Deco building for a good price. A young tourist tagged on to them wherever they went and even found a room in the same flat. The highlights were a visit to a world heritage site in Bohemia and meeting up with an old friend who had been a child on the kinder transport to England.

And finally, a brilliant poem about growing old from one of the group. I think we can all relate to this.

You are old Grandma Kath the young boy said,  
Your skin is not smooth, there are wrinkles instead.

I look in the mirror, who do I see?  
It's my mother in there staring back at me!  
Where have I gone, when did I go?  
When did I get old, does anyone know?

Inside me I feel quite fit and strong  
But it's when I move things start to wrong!  
It's hard to bend down to pick things off the floor  
And getting back up again can be quite a chore.

Seeing and hearing are not quite as clear,  
And I hate it when anyone calls me " my dear".  
I walk into a room and wonder why I came,  
I recognise your face but can't quite get your name!

I can remember things in the past and love to reminisce,  
But what I did last week and yesterday can sometimes go amiss.  
Old age is here for sure and it can be quite a curse  
But I am convinced the alternative is probably worse!

It was a very entertaining meeting and we welcomed a new member. The next meeting is on Tuesday 6th May at 2.0pm in the small hall.

Quote for the month by Morris West  
If you spend your whole life waiting for the storm, you'll never enjoy the sunshine.

Barbara Kenneth

## READING

At our March meeting we discussed SLOW HORSES by Mike Herron which has recently been dramatised and shown on TV. It deals with a group of demoted MI5 agents who are exiled to Slough House and the cases to which they are assigned. After an exciting first chapter, the pace slowed down and the plot was quite confusing, so it was very easy to lose interest in what was going on. Some members really enjoyed the book, but others were less enthusiastic.

In April we read OLD GOD'S TIME by Sebastian Barry in which the main character is a retired ex policeman, confronted by memories of past tragedies in his family which are being investigated by his former colleagues. The novel deals with abuses carried out by priests in the Irish church from which the victims can never really escape and which have repercussions in their adult lives. It is an extremely moving story with a sad, but satisfying, ending.

Our next meeting is on Monday, 12th May when we will be discussing THE LITTLE RED CHAIRS by Edna O'Brien.

Marlene Brookes

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## QUIZZING



The last two months we have had quizzes devised by Margaret and Angela. Questions covered a wide range of topics and interests. We've had science, history, houses, geography, animals, double barrelled names, airports to name but a few. Here are a few for you to try:

1. Of which country is Port Louis the capital?
2. Which is the home of the Archbishop of Canterbury?
3. Who is the airport of Lisbon named after?
4. Which is the largest organ of the body?
5. Where is Fort Knox?
6. What do mycologists study?

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

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

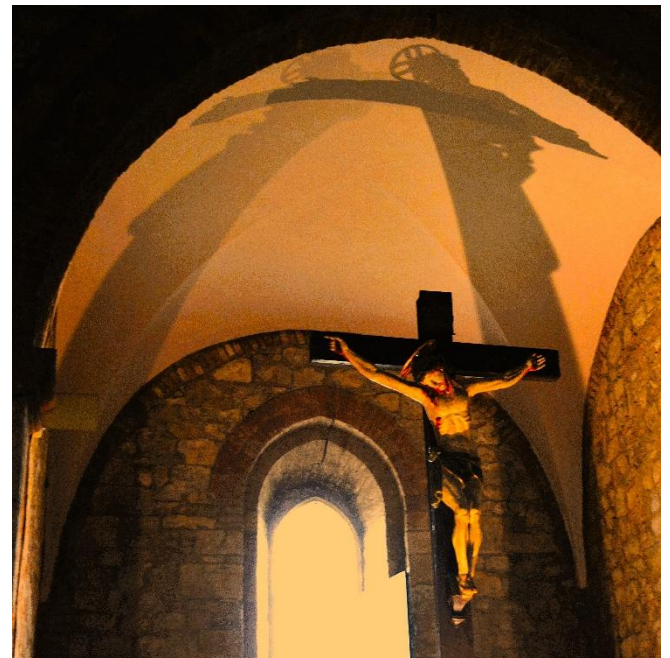
The group continues with its monthly online competition. Our March competition was "SPRING FLOWERS".

- 1st... Carpet in bloom ... 7 points ... Ken
- 2nd... Tulip Fosteria ..... 5 points ... Diane
- 3rd... Jointly placed ... Hellebore single ... Veronica, and White primrose... Veronica with 4 points each.



April's theme was "Easter".

- 1<sup>st</sup> The Cross, with 13 points, Ken.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Is this what Easter is about, 10 points, Mark.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Easter army, 8 points. Diane.



May's comp is themed " Pond or Pool" Entries by May the 29th. If anyone would like to join in, contact me via the website.

Ken Jackson



**TRAVEL**



NE England/ Durham	July 6 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> Blackwell Grange Hotel Darlington £593.50 £693.50 single room Includes entrance fees and two course meal on return journey. BALANCE REQUIRED AT MAY MEETING
Ireland	September 1 <sup>st</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> BALANCE AT JUNE MEETING
RIVER CRUISE	October 31 <sup>st</sup> –November 7 <sup>th</sup> Balance in July. Payment to be made individually to Riviera.

Margaret McDermott

**TRAVEL GROUP VISIT TO KINGS LYNN, NORFOLK APRIL 2025**

All aboard the coach, the group set off to Cliff Richard’s song ‘we’re all going on a summer holiday’, much to everyone’s amusement. Our driver explained – Cliff (his name) would be easy to remember, if not call him Richard.

Our first break was at Matlock Bath where most of the group sat in glorious sunshine with drinks or ice cream. Lunch stop at Stamford, where conveniently close to the bus station, were many cafes. A few had a packed lunch and sat by the river in the warm sunshine. Approximately an hour and a half later the group arrived at the Dukes Head Hotel in the main square in Kings Lynn, a Georgian pale blue building. Behind this facade was a modern build where the bedrooms were situated. After an evening meal most of the group settled down to a Beetle Drive.





### Visit to the Wisbech & Fenlands Museum, 12 April 2025

This museum tends to hide its light under a bushel as, once we had alighted from our coach, it took several minutes to find. However, once inside, we were made very welcome by our guide for the morning, Robert Bell, although he had to raise his voice on occasion, to combat the rather noisy lift which seemed to be well used!

The museum, known as "The Jewel of the Fens" had a benefactor with the grand name of Reverend Chauncey Hare Townshend who donated many pieces, not only from the Fens but from around the world to the museum. These included collections of ethnography, natural history, geology, archaeology and paintings (we were watched over by Napoleon staring down from a giant portrait).

There were also impressive displays of ceramics and Fred Clarke's unique models of classic vehicles made of scrap wood and brass. What promised to be one of the highlights however, the Original Manuscript of Dickens's Great Expectations, was a bit underwhelming as it was almost completely indecipherable.

On a slightly gruesome note, there was a mummified collection including a hand displayed on a velvet cushion and a cat! There were lots of other items to interest all tastes but sadly time eventually ran out on a very informative and interesting experience.

Steve Reynolds



### MID- NORFOLK RAILWAY

We enjoyed a very pleasant morning on the Mid-Norfolk Railway. We travelled from Dereham to Wymondham Abbey, a distance of 11 miles where the engine turned round, watched by many of our group, for the return journey.

The train of beautifully restored carriages should have been hauled by a steam engine, but it needed a boiler insurance test, and the owner had been unable to borrow a replacement from another railway.

Ron Holt



## OCTAVIA HILL'S BIRTHPLACE

We arrived at a very attractive 1740 Georgian house in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire which had been the home of the social reformer Octavia Hill. We were greeted by very welcoming enthusiastic voluntary staff who explained that Octavia had been a co-founder of the National Trust, a champion of open spaces and arts for all and there was much evidence in the house of the fact that she had been a pioneer of the modern Army Cadet Force in 1889 which is reflected in the newly created National Army Cadet Force Museum.



After a trip down to the basement slum, very cold and conveying what the poor endured I climbed the steep stairs out to what Octavia believed in the "life enhancing virtues of pure earth, clean air and blue skies" to enjoy the John Ruskin inspired gardens in the warm April sunshine and a welcome tea and biscuits.

Pam Cooke

Monday 14 April 2025 – Sandringham

The Sandringham Estate includes 600 acres of country park in an area of outstanding natural beauty in North Norfolk. On arrival, a guide met the coach who gave us directions and information to get to the house. Some chose the buggy, others, more energetic, walked the long path to the house, observing magnolia, Rhododendron and other unknown species of flowering shrubs.

Arriving at the front entrance, in the sunshine, the group were invited into the Royal residence, where a large painting was observed from a lesser-known Italian artist, it looked three dimensional. The room had a cosy feel with comfortable chairs and a piano and a half-finished wooden jigsaw puzzle. Onward into the White room looking out onto the topiary garden. This room contained many unusual gifts from visiting monarchs, presidents etc. as well as souvenir given by the family. A table immaculately set for eight people but could accommodate approximately thirty people in the next room visited. From there a corridor 'room' with many game hunting guns which were loaned out to visitors, also bronzes of horses. The last room was the Ballroom with a wonderful display of signature pictures, beautifully painted favourite flowers of the person's signature. A walk round the gardens finished off our visit and some ate lunch sitting in the sunshine. The group said goodbye to Sandringham and North Norfolk for our journey back home.

**SHORT WALKS**

**March Walk led by Mike Bradbury**

Setting off from the Shiloh Road/Pole Lane the walk took the group onto Mellor Moor and our first information from Mike. At last found, as he informed us of the boundary stone ... some managed to see it!

Above Mellor Cross we walked to the trig point seeing 360° views and then down 'a tricky path' to the cross.



**April 'Flower walk'**

Meeting in Jackson's Brickworks Car Park, 13 folk ventured out on a local walk. Across a field and pathway onto the Macclesfield canal. Bearing left along the canal and left again into Middlewood where Bluebells were blooming, also Wood Anemones. Finding our way onto Middlewood Way, turning right under the A6 and stopped for a coffee break at High Lane Station. Proceeding further along Middlewood Way turning right passing through stables. Finding the hidden gate



at the side of a cottage a path led us eventually, over an unexpected stile, to the Royal Oak Pub on the A6. After crossing the A6 continued down Middlewood Road to Middlewood Station, along Middlewood Way into the Conservation Area, where an abundance of cowslips was clearly visible. A dry walk both weatherwise and underfoot.



Ruth Smith

**WALKING**

Walk report 26/03/2025.... "Following in Mallory's footsteps"



Our walk commenced with a visit to the church of St. Wilfrid in Mobberley specifically to view the stained-glass window which serves as a memorial to the famous mountaineer George Leigh-Mallory, who sadly died on mount Everest just over 100 years ago in May 1924.

From there, our group of 18 intrepid walkers followed a path which may well have been trodden by Mallory himself in his youth as he went to the church with his father (who was the Rector at the time). We stopped for a moment to view Mallory's birthplace at Newton Hall.

Further on we came to a small aviary containing several peacocks with beautiful plumage, but sadly they did not seem particularly interested in properly displaying for us!

Throughout the walk the rural peace had periodically been interrupted by the noise of aircraft as they flew overhead, and as we neared the airport this became ever more intrusive. On a bank overlooking the airport adjacent to runway 2 we stopped to have lunch and watch the planes, and some workers renewing the white lines on the runway.



Our route now took us via a very impressive river tunnel under runway 2, up to another viewing point close to the threshold for runway 1. From here we enjoyed a very good view of aircraft taking off, and as we passed across just beyond the end of the runway directly under the flight path, we were impressed by the sight of planes passing at close quarters, immediately overhead. A little further on, we passed by the field in which the landing lights and instrument approach radio equipment is situated. At this point the enormous Emirates Boeing 787 Dreamliner was taking off and flew almost directly over our heads... most impressive!



As neared Mobberley once more, we passed by Hobcroft House. This was where the Mallory family moved to when George was aged 7, and it was here and at St Wilfrid's that he was often to be found climbing the drainpipes and steeples to get on to the roof! Clearly a born athlete and mountaineer from a very early age!

Rick Hedley

**Walk Report 30th April**



On a perfect spring morning 18 walkers joined Merlyn and Joyce for a 6 mile walk to discover the charming countryside around Rudyard Lake on the border of Cheshire and Staffordshire. With a forecast temperature of 25c we left our waterproofs and winter coats behind, applied

sun cream ready to start the walk from Rushton Spencer Old Railway car park. The journey to Rushton Spencer was problematic. Many roads and side roads around the A523 were closed due to road repairs, leaving the motorist to discover alternative routes via Congleton, Sutton, Langley, Cloudside, and farm tracks!

11am walking started on the disused Churnet Valley railway line to the northern end of Rudyard Lake. We welcomed the shade of the tree cover and marvelled at different shades of green leaves and countryside. We took a path to the west of the lake ascending a gentle hill to Cliffe Park hall. We stopped to take in the view, the deteriorating Hall, panorama of the lake, woods, hills and what was a former golf course.



Merlyn gave an overview of the Cliffe Park Estate, Hall, over its 200 year history. A coffee stop was taken under tree cover with extensive lakeside views.

Onwards through the woodland above the lake we next arrived at Cliffe park lodge and the yachting club where radio-controlled model yachts were competing on the lake. We followed the quiet road towards the dam passing the many boat houses along the lake, extensively modified into holiday and permanent homes.

Lunch stop was taken near the reservoir dam on the picnic benches looking at the views down the entire lake and enjoying the activities of this prime tourist attraction. Some history was given on the lake/ dam construction and the boom period of this tourist leisure area in its heyday.



Refreshed, we made our way back along the path adjacent to the east side of the lake again under tree cover. Some walkers would have liked to take the miniature train but alas it wasn't running. Arriving back David thanked Merlyn and Joyce for the super walk.

Merlyn & Joyce Young

**NATIONAL OFFICE LEARNING EVENTS FOR MAY**

A selection of this month’s events you might want to book. There are many more including Mindfulness and Yoga.

- 7 May Setting up a New Windows 11 PC or Laptop
- 8 May Turner and Impressionism
- 8 May A life living and exploring with the most exciting wildlife on Galapagos
- 12 May How Generative AI Works
- 22 May Mass Extinctions: Causes and Consequences
- 29 May Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Five – Hearing

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.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Today, 1 May is World Password Day. Created by Intel in 2013, this encourages us to evaluate our passwords and make them secure.

Looks like we need 10 characters, with a mix of lower and upper case letters, numbers and symbols.

Good passwords are random phrases joined together than have meaning for you.

### How Safe Is Your Password?

Time it would take a computer to crack a password with the following parameters

	Lowercase letters only	At least one uppercase letter	At least one uppercase letter +number	At least one uppercase letter +number+symbol
1	Instantly	Instantly	-	-
2	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	-
3	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
4	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
5	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
6	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
7	Instantly	Instantly	1 min	6 min
8	Instantly	22 min	1 hrs	8 hrs
9	2 min	19 hrs	3 days	3 wks
10	1 hrs	1 mths	7 mths	5 yrs
11	1 day	5 yrs	41 yrs	400 yrs
12	3 wks	300 yrs	2,000 yrs	34,000 yrs

Source: Security.org