

Newsletter

November 2022



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FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the November 2022 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. We have another bumper edition this month swelled by reports and photographs of recent u3a group activities and holidays. Thanks to all the contributors for their interesting and informative contributions. The cover photo this time highlights some of the impressive work being done in the Art group.

The chaos of the last month seems to have abated for the time being. Flu jabs and Covid boosters are readily available and we can look forward to spending our pensioner's 'cost of living payments'! Although the weather has been unseasonably warm, it feels like summer is long gone. The clocks have gone back, and we are into long dark evenings. However, the choir will be treating us to some songs at the November meeting and December brings the Christmas party with some seasonal entertainment and afternoon tea. Tickets are now on sale and details can be found in Paul's message from the Chair. The Dining group has information about the upcoming Christmas lunch and several of our groups are also planning Christmas lunches.

We are also pleased to announce the programme of speakers for next year. Once again, Sheila has produced an eye-catching array of interesting talks for us for 2023.

This is your newsletter. Please feel free to share some of your news, your interests, or items you have found that you think would be of interest to other members. This could be places you have visited, books you have read, films you have seen; your stories, anecdotes, photographs, recipes, limericks, jokes; the list is endless. Our recent Open day attracted several new members. 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.

This edition of the newsletter is accompanied by the National Office bitesize newsletter for October. The next issue will be December 2022 so please send your contributions to me by 28 November at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

MURDER MYSTERY PLAY

We were disappointed that we had to postpone the planned Murder Mystery evening. It subsequently proved impossible to find a date in this month and December is always busy, so we are planning to hold the event in the new year. The date is 10 March 2023 – this will give us time to have some more rehearsals! We hope you will be able to join us. The arrangements for tickets will be confirmed nearer the time. Refunds will be available for

those who bought tickets for the original date but are not able to attend on 10 March.

FROM THE CHAIR

Hope everyone is keeping well, and you have all had your booster covid and flu jabs. The monthly meetings continue to be well attended.

Your committee has been busy organising the Xmas party for the December meeting which will include refreshments and a musical entertainer, the same one as last year who everyone enjoyed. A raffle will also be held, and it would be gratefully appreciated if anyone could donate a prize. The more we have the more chance you have of winning. The date is 14 December and tickets will be on sale at November's meeting, priced at £10

If you cannot get to the November meeting just ask one of the Committee to arrange a ticket for you. Admission will be by ticket only and tickets are limited so as not to overfill the hall.

Paul Kenneth
Chairman

FROM THE TREASURER

Hi all. As you may remember due to Covid we decided for 2022 that the basic subscription would be free as we had not been able to offer much the year before due to the many restrictions. Since then, the country seems to be in turmoil with more Prime Ministers and Chancellors than I've had hot dinners, 10% inflation, and heating bills that are beyond belief.

So with all this, it is not surprising that we have to increase our own subscriptions this next year. However it is only by £2 per annum which you can easily make up by switching off your heating when you attend the meetings.

2023 subscriptions will be as follows:

Subscription £8

Subscription with the u3a Magazine £11.50

To ease the pressure at the February meeting subscriptions can be paid from 1st January either direct to me or at the meeting in Jan and Feb. Please ensure you have an up-to-date membership form accompanying your subscription. If you wish to send by post, please address to High Lane U3A, c/o 15 Langdale Close, High Lane, Stockport SK6 8JG

Les Birks

MONTHLY MEETINGS

The speaker at the October meeting was Allan Shalks who entertained us with his talk entitled My Very Interesting Life in Theatre, Television and Radio. His first experience with the media was a paper round when he was 14. He was quite an entrepreneur and sold the Empire News on a Saturday night outside the cinema and theatre in Leeds before it came out on Sunday morning. This was for the grand wage of £1 17s 6p. His next venture was as a stooge for his cousin who was a magician in The Sooty Show. This got him into trouble at school as he was missing lessons. During the following years he trained as a hairdresser and eventually had his own salon. With his wife he ran a market stall and eventually a very successful business in Glossop. After a complete change of career driving cars around the country he turned his hand to being an extra in various TV shows including Cold Feet, Emmerdale and Coronation Street. At one stage he was a body double for Tom Conti and he appeared in several films including Mrs Biggs, The Iron Lady and Children of Chernobyl which was filmed in Marple. He was often required to rehearse a bedroom scene over and over again until the producer was happy with the set. When everything was perfect then the stars would take over. He was in several adverts and upset his young granddaughter once when she saw him kissing someone who wasn't her grandma! Allan still works in local radio and is the theatre critic for Salford FM.

The next monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday 9th November and the entertainment is the High Lane U3A choir.

Kath Wareham

NOTICES

- u3a 2023 diaries can be purchased from Pam Curley for £4 each.
- Trivial Pursuit – the group meets every six weeks and there are vacancies.
- The Travel group would like your suggestions for holidays and trips.
- Members interested in the Solos group, please meet at the end of the next monthly meeting in November to share ideas for group activities.
- Village Hall coffee morning – every Monday morning between 10.30am and 12 noon.
- Advance notice – members booked on the visit to Samlesbury Hall on 9 December. Please meet in the Village Hall car park at 9.30am.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2023

11 th January	Jerome Caminada: The Real Sherlock Holmes	Joe O'Neill
8 th February	AGM	
8 th March	Living Sustainably: Is It Really Possible?	James Ellson
12 th April	From Food Rationing to Les Mis	Barry Daykin
10 th May	Suffragettes and Scones	Sue Holden
14 th June	Down Memory Lane	Memoirs Group
12 th July	Scottish Adventures	Sally Hodgson
9 th August	An Insight into the Song Writing Process	Lesley Davies
13 th September	When the Lines go dead: Preparing for the PSTN switch off	Nigel Linge
11 th October	Have you got the right Will, or Do you have a Will at all?	Dean Mottershead
8 th November	Hearing dogs for Deaf People	
13 th December	Christmas Party with a Musical Entertainer	Tony Johnston

KEEPING SAFE ONLINE – ENERGY SCAMS

In the first half of 2022, criminals stole a total of £609.8 million through scams, according to UK Finance data. 56% of these were online shopping scams where criminals pose as trusted online retailers or legitimate sellers on auctions sites such as eBay. They typically lure in customers with extreme deals and discounts to sell counterfeit or non-existent products. Over 40 million people have been targeted by scammers amidst the cost-of-living crisis. Out of this, 12% of scams are related to energy. Scammers are using the £400 government energy bill rebate scheme to trick people into handing over their details. The texts claim to be from the government and tell people they are owed money or are eligible for the scheme. People do not need to apply for the energy support scheme or provide any bank details. Other tactics have included promises of sums of money to people of pension age or with disabilities.

Be suspicious – things to watch out for

- If an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Communications don't appear genuine. It's common for scammers to impersonate legitimate organisations such as energy companies or government bodies
- You are being pressured to act quickly. If you are being asked to transfer money or provide personal details urgently, you may be the target of a scam.
- You are being asked to use an unusual payment method or a different way from how you usually interact with the organisation.
- You have been asked for personal information. If you receive an email or text message asking you for information such as a PIN or password, do not provide your details. Genuine companies will not ask you to send these details over text or email.

GROUP NEWS

ART

After the death of Queen Elizabeth II, we were invited to paint Balmoral Castle. Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle are very familiar buildings, but Balmoral Castle is hidden away in the Scottish countryside. It was taken from a photograph taken by the Balmoral staff after the Queen's passing might seem rather poignant – the time on the clock was 7.15! I think we all felt a loss that day; someone who had been there all our lives! The photo showed only the top half of the castle, including the Chapel and the Keep. Balmoral looks so peaceful. No wonder the Queen loved the time she spent there.

We have just a selection of the great pictures here.



Val Docherty



Joan Rose



Pam Cooke



Madeleine Hennessey



Lynn Smallwood

BRIDGE

The 40th Anniversary Bridge Festival was a success. Over 500 players took part in the 5-day event from as far north as Inverness, Kingsbury Estuary in the south, Upper Bann in the west and Stour Valley in the east. During the week-long Festival the festival raised over £1,000 to be distributed among the following charities: Alzheimer's Research, Help the Aged and Cancer Research UK plus two local charities.

The winners over the 5 playing days were:

Eileen Williams & Linda Mcmillan - u3a Bridge Group

Mary Marshall & David Marshall - Ashbourne u3a

Don Pilbeam & Jane Pilbeam - Witney u3a

Babs Bensley & Marilyn Pascoe - u3a Bridge Group

John Carroll & Vivienne Carroll - High Lane u3a

Congratulations to John and Viv. As the response from those who played was so positive, the u3a Bridge subject organiser is planning to hold another tournament in Spring 2023. In order not to miss out on this event and to keep up to date with all that is happening in the world of u3a Bridge please sign-up now to our email list via the link on the Club webpage <https://www.bridgewebs.com/u3abridgegroup/>

As well as this, the u3a Bridge club is continuing. This runs on BridgeClubLive. There will be several sessions each week. You can find out about this on the Club website

Diane Saxon

DINING

Thank you for the great response we had to our Christmas Lunch invitation at The Hanging Gate on December 16th. As a result of the number, we were offered some entertainment, a pianist playing Christmas music. However, this comes at a price and the three-course meal with coffee, entertainment and gratuity is £20.50 not £19.50. If members who have already paid are happy with the new arrangements will they please pay another £1 at the November meeting.

The meal is booked for 1pm and we have been asked to be prompt and ready to eat at 1pm. The 199 Buxton bus stops outside the Hanging Gate and a bus is due at 11.59am outside the HorseShoe Inn which arrives at our destination at 12.27pm. PERFECT.

Dorothy Gerrard
Dorothy Neillands

CANASTA

Apologies to my group as I have been absent for a few weeks now. Thanks to those who have kept it running and hopefully I will be back in the next week or two.

Les Birks

CURRENT AFFAIRS

The Current Affairs group meets once a month when we bring along topical questions/items for discussion. Questions cover a wide range and nothing, well practically nothing, is 'off limits'. The meeting is chaired by our group leader who at the end of the proceedings provides us all with cups of tea or coffee and the most delicious cakes you could imagine. The discussions are always amicable and friendly, and we all go home with smiles on our faces.

Here are the items we discussed this month with the conclusions the group came to:-

1. What is your opinion of MPs on holiday when parliament is sitting? – 'No' MPs are paid to take part in decisions taken by parliament. Holidays to be when parliament is in recess.
2. With hindsight would the UK be better inside the EU? – Split decision within the group but general feeling was yes we would.
3. Why does Westminster resist Scottish independence? General feeling was they see this as the start of the break-up of the UK and should be avoided.
4. Can Rishi Sunak bring anything different as PM or will it just be more of the same? – Time will tell.
5. Is global warming the real threat to the future of our planet? – 'Yes' but things need to get worse before anything is done about it.

Trevor Kinvig

CRIME FICTION READING



Our last book was *The Hard Way* by Lee Childs. This features Jack Reacher sorting things out in his own usual way. It starts with him having a coffee at an outside table on a New York Street and being interrogated by a stranger about what happened the previous night. Was a wife kidnapped, disappeared or been killed? Reacher is asked to find out and eventually ends up in Norfolk, England. There is a lot of violence in parts and some parts are farfetched. Overall, a good read; 5 members were in favour and 4 against. A thriller rather than a crime committed and solved.

Our book for this month is *Rubbernecker* by Belinda Braun which was Crime Novel of the Year in 2019 and longlisted for the Booker prize. She is a new author to most of us and we are looking forward to getting to know her.

Tricia Yeomans

QUIZZING

This month, we welcomed a new member, Valerie, to the group. The brain challenge for this meeting was set by Betty. We had a wide variety of questions in different categories and of different difficulty levels. Quite often we know we know the answer to a question but cannot dredge it out of our brains quickly enough.

We finished with some nursery rhyme brain teasers. These are here for you to try. These are the first letters of the words of well-known nursery rhymes; a topic that has appeared in several quizzes to date.

Can you work out which nursery rhymes these are? Not as easy as you think as you think as the letters have been anagrammed. Answers are on the last page of the newsletter.

B S B B
W T D G F
H A M O F
B S M O T
H A M L L

Fancy challenging yourself with us? New quizzers are very welcome. Please get in touch.

Diane Saxon

HISTORY

We met up again after the summer break, on September 22nd. Three members gave a short talk on topics of their own choice.

The life of Bess of Hardwick is quite well-known, especially in our area. From humble beginnings she rose to become an influential member of Tudor Society and was a friend of Elizabeth 1st. With her third husband, George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury she was joint custodian of Mary, Queen of Scots for 15 years. At a time when women had few rights, she prospered and managed her own affairs. She was able to indulge her passion for building and left a legacy of stately homes for us to enjoy to this day.

By contrast the next topic was a cartoon character, John Bull. He first appeared in 1712, in a series of political satires by his creator, John Arbuthnot. Political pamphlets were a popular form of propaganda at the time. He later became the hero of a saga called "The History of John Bull" in which he represented the national interest in a lawsuit against a Frenchman and a Dutchman. His character continued to be adapted over time but always reflected the English determination to fight for King and Country, come what may. He was finally pensioned off in the 1950's.

The last subject was Lord Shaftesbury, the British politician, philanthropist, and social reformer who lived from 1801 to 1886. His work with child labour, particularly chimney sweeps is well-known. He also achieved improvements in the running of lunatic asylums and factory reform. Another target was the suppression of the opium trade. He campaigned for better education for working children and was president of the Ragged Schools Union. The road to reform was not easy and on many occasions he had to endure disappointment and frustration. Throughout it all he was fortified by a strong Christian faith and a fighting spirit which would have done John Bull proud.

Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of the month.
See the website for more details

Sheila Harrop

LINE DANCING

The Line Dance group is bouncing along happily. We are a mixed bunch; a few are very good and the rest of us try to be near them so that we have someone to follow. No doubt from the photos you will notice the concentration on our faces.



Please let me know if you signed up for this group and have since changed your mind. Places are limited and there is a waiting list.

Dorothy Neillands

READING

"Teacher's Dead" by Benjamin Zephaniah was the choice of the Book Club for September. It proved a popular choice and was enjoyed by all. Deceptively simple, it is not so much a "Who Done It" as a "Why Done It". The murder takes place at the very beginning of the story and the perpetrators are apprehended immediately. But one of the many witnesses to the atrocity, a somewhat nerdy 15-year-old takes it on himself to try and fathom out what could possess two pretty ordinary school mates to do such a dreadful thing. He doggedly pursues his mission, uncovering bullying and coercion on a sinister, massive scale.

The narrative is told simply and with gentle humour. It feels like a true depiction of the many problems of education, inner-city deprivation and under-funded social services. The characters felt true to life and in many cases, likeable.

One of our members has lent her copy to her teenage granddaughter. We look forward to hearing what Isobel thinks of the book.

Sheila Harrop

GARDENING

Early in October the gardening group paid a visit to Ian and Jill's garden. Tucked away below the canal it was sheltered and secluded. Varied shrubs made a superb backcloth, with plenty of interest around and made for a very pleasant visit.

In late October, the surviving perennials include blue Michaelmas daisies and autumn crocuses, with nerines and winter pansies for contrast. So for now gardening and the gardening group will go into hibernation – except for a planned festive lunch!



Walter Mason

PHOTOGRAPHY

This month's competition was Sports.
Well done everybody for all your entries. Excellent photographs.

Winning photos were:

- 1st - Cycle race - Ken
- 2nd - Climbing in Torrs - June
- 3rd - Sand games - Walter



The topic for next month is 'Tools'.

Jeff Robinson

TRAVEL REPORTS

Lincoln Weekend

22 people boarded a coach on Friday 14 October. Our first stop was at Cresswell Crag, one of Britain's most important archaeological sites. A walk round the lake under the Crag on a sunny day was delightful. Back on the coach and onward to

HECKINGTON WINDMILL

Our second visit of the day was to Heckington Windmill built in 1830 with five sails. Following storm damage in 1890, it was repaired with eight sails from another mill in Boston, it became the only one of its kind in the UK.

An excellent guide gave us a tour of the mill and took us through five floors connected by steep ladders, the top one being 90 feet above ground. Several of us climbed to the top, no mean feat, to observe the driving mechanism and walking round the narrow outside balcony gave us a panoramic view of the Lincolnshire countryside.

Following further storm damage the mill requires restoring as it can no longer power the mechanisms to rotate the stones that grind the flour but we were assured that this unique windmill would be repaired with its eight working sails but at a very considerable cost.

While enjoying very welcome drinks and lovely homemade cakes at the tearoom we contemplated all the sayings that we hadn't realised were derived from milling that we still use in our language of today for example:

Shut your trap

Put through the mill -Run of the mill

As still as a mill pond

Just a cog in a wheel

Keep your nose to the grindstone

Are you worth your mettle?

Sort the wheat from the chaff

I am sure there are many more that we still say which came from our history of milling. A very enjoyable visit – thank you Ruth and David for organising and providing us with such a lovely entertaining and educational experience.

Ron Holt



Saturday was a visit to Lincoln Cathedral where the group was introduced to Dorothy, our guide, who took us into the cloister built on the north side of the cathedral – 1296. It has a wooden, rather than a stone vault. Venturing on into the unlit Chapter House, built 13th century, where the college of canons meet today; then sunlight streamed through the stained glass windows, delightful. Dorothy, with her torch, showed us the bishop’s throne (a church into which a bishop’s official cathedra is installed is called a cathedral). St Hugh’s choir is one of the oldest parts of the building, a church within a church. Then spotlighted with her torch Dorothy showed us the Lincoln Imp at the top of the pillar closest to the head shrine of St Hugh. Legend has it that the imp caused so much havoc that one of the angels turned him into stone. The bells of cathedral ring 45 minutes for each service, one is called Great Tom.



Next across the square to visit the castle with walls intact and walkable. Inside the castle was an original piece of Magna Carta manuscript. To write so neatly and in a straight line the scribes used to faintly make a line of tiny holes. Visiting the Victorian prison, a huge part of the building with whitewashed walls – austere even with the sun shining through the windows. Everyone was able to leave without serving time.

Ruth Smith

Our visit to the Grimsby Fishing Museum on a lovely sunny Sunday morning really came alive when Bob, a retired skipper, explained the long and difficult training needed to become a skipper. Also what life was like aboard a fishing boat which worked a three week on and three week off regime.



He took us through mock-ups of a fishing boat and how the men lived and worked pulling in the extremely heavy nets, sometimes losing a finger. Filling the fish in big boxes packed with ice ready for sale in the fish market when they returned to dock.

The skipper is number one on the boat and the cook is number two because he is responsible for feeding the crew (15 or more men on board depending on the size of the vessel) with three good quality, nutritious meals every day to cope with what were always difficult and sometimes treacherous conditions.

A fishing vessel called Ross Tiger moored outside the museum is currently undergoing some renovation but it is hoped to be open for viewing before the end of the year.

Janet Vocking

The final visit of our trip was to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF), based at RAF Coningsby home to a squadron of Typhoon jet fighter planes. The BBMF fleet of World War Two aircraft is preserved in flying condition as a living tribute to all those who lost their lives in service with the RAF.

David our guide escorted us to the hanger where the aircraft are kept, and gave us a very interesting talk covering both the technical details and wartime histories of the aircraft plus personal stories of some who flew in them.



The BBMF currently operates 12 airworthy historic aircraft: an Avro Lancaster, a Douglas C-47 Dakota, six Supermarine Spitfires, two Hawker Hurricanes and two de Havilland Chipmunks.

Roger Drinkwater

Bolsover Castle Visit August 27th

I had never been to Bolsover Castle and was delighted when the Travel Group arranged a day trip there. The journey only took an hour and a half, and the weather was ideal. Hot but not heatwave conditions. The Peak District was looking at its finest and we noted the twisted spire of the Church in Chesterfield as we progressed towards the edge of Derbyshire and the end of our ride. At a distance the castle looked most impressive, part ruin, part imposing castle. I had a few qualms as we left the coach, as there were hordes of people queuing to get in. Once inside there was plenty of room, as the grounds were very extensive and beautifully maintained.

My first impression was of the fantastic panoramic views to be had from the restored wall walk which was easily accessible. It was easy to understand why the Normans had built their Motte and Bailey castle on the site, all those years ago. It was memorable. Sorry for the cliché, but you could see for miles. The castle which stands today was built by William Cavendish between 1612 and 1617 as a pleasure palace to impress his aristocratic friends and to entertain Royalty. He was an enthusiastic horseman and incorporated an internal riding school where his prized horses could be exercised in inclement weather. This fine building also had a beautiful vaulted roof.

Our visit coincided with the medieval day which was well managed by re-enactment groups in period dress. You could watch how armour was slotted together, look at cookery and make-up. I learned a lot, including that medieval people wore linen close to the skin for comfort and when it got dirty (which was most likely frequently) they would rip the offending piece off. Hence the phrase "to tear someone off a strip."



The high point of the day was a display of martial arts, culminating in the jousting itself where the fine horses and riders provided wonderful entertainment. The earth didn't just move, it trembled under the galloping hooves.

Grateful thanks, from all of us who were on the trip, to the Travel group who made all the arrangements.

Sheila Harrop

What's happening with u3a Nationally

The short answer is lots! You can find details of these – and more at www.u3a.org

u3a 40th Anniversary Blog

Stories are still being added to the blog. See how some u3as celebrated our 40th anniversary. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/40th-anniversary>

u3a CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION

The overall winner was Harriet Hall from Gilwern u3a in Wales with her story 'Cinderella – What Happened Next'. Second place went to Ian Ledward of Cupar u3a with 'A Cold Comfort Affair' and third place to Jane Telford of Lancaster u3a with 'An Opening into Darkness'. The stories from all of the finalists are available to read below, apart from the winning story which will be published in November's edition of our magazine, Third Age Matters.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/creative-writing-competition-2022-winners>

u3a Radio – the October u3a radio podcast features an interview with space engineer Siân Cleaver. She discusses how she sees space exploration developing, her experience being a woman in a male dominated industry and whether she thinks we'll be off to the moon anytime soon.... Listen now on the u3a YouTube channel or on podcasting platforms, including Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

All Our Yesterdays

At this crucial time in our nation's history, the Learning team, working with Trust Volunteer Carole Chapman, are planning a new initiative to collect memories from members for a series of stories to share online. Following successful programmes such as Battle of Britain & the Blitz and Kindertransport we would now like to gather stories of the 1950s and 60s that stand out in your memory. This was an eventful time in history with far reaching events such as the building of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the assassination of President Kennedy and the birth of pop culture.

Of course, these are the well-known events we have all heard of, but you may have more personal recollections that didn't make the headlines. We hope that u3a members from across the UK will be inspired to contribute experiences to this collection of material.

Do you have memories from the 1950s and 60s? Is there a family history that has been preserved, perhaps in documents or photographs? If so, and you would like to share this, please either fill out our online form or contact Trust Volunteer Carole Chapman. We will publish a selection of the stories and experiences [here](#). The page will be updated on an ongoing basis as we receive members' stories.

Learning Events

We have lockdown to thank for this rich resource. Every month there are several talks covering a very diverse range of topics and interests. This is a selection from the November list.

- 3 Nov The geology of oil and gas
- 3 Nov The British Royal Collection – and Japanese Art
- 15 Nov Climate change
- 17 Nov Interactive Maths problem solving with NRICH
- 17 Nov Creative thinking
- 6 Dec The maths of bell ringing

There are many other events such as mindfulness, creative thinking, cooking demos, yoga et al. All are free via Zoom. Click here for details

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Recent learning events

The Arrow of Time by Jim Al-Khalili CBE FRS

This learning event took place on 27 October. Jim contrasted Space where we can move in any direction with Time which runs in one direction. He likened this to the increase in entropy as in the second law of thermodynamics. He discussed how this causes problems for physicists as the underlying laws of Newtonian physics are symmetric in time. It should not therefore be possible to derive the second law of thermodynamics from first principles, a paradox named Loschmidt's paradox. He suggested that one explanation is that entropy increases because it was zero or low at the big bang and therefore must continue to increase. This would mean that it is not possible to travel backward in time but Einstein's theory doesn't rule out time travel into the future. After a look at Hawking's view, Einstein's theory and ideas on quantum biology, he finished by giving the audience an overview of his thinking around these topics in relation to a major new research project.



You can imagine there were many questions and Jim was generous with his time and expertise. In response to a question, he recommended the movie *Interstellar* as the most accurate depiction of time travel.

I also managed to catch a talk entitled **Secrets of the Human brain** presented by Dr Bob Pullen of Prudhoe u3a. This learning event took place on 31 October and was really well attended with some 250 participants.

Dr Bob opened with some amazing facts about the neurons and pathways in the brain; apparently there are 25 zillion possible neural pathways. He then went on to explore the regions of the brain and what they do, specifically looking at how the brain manages language and vision. We learnt that learning a new language involves new areas of the brain and that when looking at something, the eyes are continuously in motion. These movements are called saccades; rapid, conjugate, eye movements that move the gaze from one part of the visual field to another so the brain can build up a picture of what we are looking at. Another very interesting talk.

Diane Saxon

Interest Groups Online

This initiative started during lockdown when we could not meet face to face and now has over 80 different groups meeting regularly online with over 800 members learning together as part of this online u3a community. The image shows a small section of the groups currently running.

Read what current Interest Group Online (IGO) members have been saying about their experiences in this [learning news article](#).

You can find out more about the u3a groups that meet online and how to join on [the Interest Groups Online website](#).

*An introduction to birds ...	*Climate Crisis and Solutions
*Get more from MS Excel	*Get more from MS Word
Ad Hoc Art	Ancient Rome & the Roman Wc
Art Appreciation (Shared)	Arts and Crafts
Book Club	Bridge: ThirdAgeBridge
Cercle français	Chiacchierata (Italian chat)
Cracking Cryptic Crosswords	Crime Corner
Dance Exercise	Deutsche Klasse
Eco Group	Eco Matters
Feminist Social and Discussion	Finding Joy and Fun in Poetry
In your neck of the woods...	Italian Beginners Plus
Latin II, Beginners	Latin, Intermediate
Modern Conversational Greek (Beginners)	More Fun with Maths
Poetry Patch	Popup Poetry
QuizZoomers	Read, Write, Discuss; variety
Retired Registered Managers	Science in the News
Short Story Reading Group	Slow French conversation
Spanish Group 1B	Spanish Group 2 - Developing
Welsh conversation practice	What are you reading?
Words, Rhythm and Rhyme	Write compelling nonfiction
Writing for Pleasure	

AND FINALLY

Some Autumn quotes

“It’s the first day of autumn! A time of hot chocolatey mornings, and toasty marshmallow evenings, and, best of all, leaping into leaves!” – Winnie The Pooh

“Autumn is the second spring when every leaf is a flower.” – Albert Camus

“Autumn seemed to arrive suddenly that year. The morning of the first September was crisp and golden as an apple.” – J.K. Rowling

Quiz answers

Baa Baa Black Sheep
 Doctor Foster Went To Gloucester
 Old McDonald Had A Farm
 One, Two, Buckle My Shoe
 Mary Had A Little Lamb