

## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the October edition, the nineteenth, of the monthly High Lane U3A newsletter. Within u3a, there is much good news to report. Several groups are meeting again, albeit with reduced number so far, and members are re-joining. Thanks to all the group leaders who have updated their details so we have an up to date group list. This is being sent out with this edition of the newsletter. Unfortunately, some groups are not continuing and some are needing new members. It would be good to have some new groups to offer members. If you have any ideas for groups you would like to join or help get going please contact a Committee member.

This edition has an extended Group report section, containing reports from our interest groups. We are pleased to receive the first report for a while from the walking group. We have a theatre review from Chris Edmunds and a poem from Stewart Clay, to whom I must apologise for misattributing his poem in the September edition. We have news of a new chess network and u3a branded merchandise items! We end with the usual sprinkling of light-hearted items.

The newsletter is being sent out by email and will also be on the website. The next issue will be November 2021 so please send your contributions to me before the end of October via [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

Diane Saxon

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### **Covid advice for group meetings**

We will expect all those who attend face to face meetings to be double vaccinated or to have a recent negative Covid test. We ask you to follow all relevant public health advice, eg wearing of face masks in enclosed indoor spaces.

As has been the case for some time, any member who is feeling ill, displaying Covid symptoms, has received a positive test result in the past 10 days or has been instructed to isolate must not participate in u3a meetings, trips and events. Any member who subsequently tests positive (within 7 days of attending) is asked to advise their group convenor(s) or meeting organisers so that all other attendees may be informed.

There is detailed advice for members and group leaders at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/running-your-u3a-covid-and-beyond/england-activities-advice>

## AGM

The much delayed AGM took place on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021 in the Village Hall. Around 40 members were in attendance.

The Officers and Committee for 2021-22 are:

Vice Chair: Paul Kenneth

Secretary: Lynn Arnold

Treasurer: Les Birks

Membership Secretary: Margaret McDermott

Committee:

Pam Curley

Linda Dale

Sue Harlin                      Almoner

Barbara Kenneth

Trevor Kinvig

André Lister

Diane Saxon                  Newsletter editor

Kath Wareham

We do not currently have a Chair.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

The programme for monthly meetings is

13 Oct            **Carol Redfern "Blood Bikes"**

The Blood Bikes Manchester charity has a team of volunteers who deliver blood and other urgently required medical items to hospitals and healthcare sites.

10 Nov           **Canon Michael Burgess "For Better or Worse"**

Rector: Parish church of St Peter, Lymm

8 Dec            **Christmas Party**

**Your ideas needed please**

This event is not yet finalised. Due to lockdowns, a speaker was not booked this year so we need to decide what we can do instead or whether we should cancel the meeting. Perhaps some members would be happy to give a short talk, a reminiscence perhaps or a poem? If you would like to do this or have some ideas, please let the editor or a Committee member know so we can take these to the next Committee meeting. For this year, we think that afternoon tea as we usually do is perhaps not the best idea and a mince pie and a small libation might be better.

**HIGH LANE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM**

Just to let you know, if you don't already, the result of the referendum is as follows

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Electorate (High Lane Village Neighbourhood Area):	3,815	
Ballot Papers issued (turnout):	1,140	29.9%
Number cast in favour of a 'yes'	1,050	92.35%
Number cast in favour of a 'no'	87	7.65%
Rejections:	3	

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The plan will now be adopted.

This means that the High Lane Village Neighbourhood Plan is, for practical purposes, now part of Stockport's development plan. The village now has a very important legal document to influence all future development in High Lane.

Thanks should go to the Forum team for their hard work over the last four years and those residents who have contributed/supported them. This includes High Lane u3a which is a partner in the Neighbourhood Forum.

Sheila Harrop

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**NEW U3A CHESS NETWORK**



Did you watch Netflix drama The Queen's Gambit? This very popular programme has led to a resurgence of interest in playing chess. U3a has a Subject Advisor for chess, David Castle (Ed. an appropriate name!). The objective of the new chess network is to encourage new chess groups and to encourage online chess groups and leagues. Details at <https://u3achessnetwork.org.uk/>

Anyone interested in a chess group for High Lane u3a? Please talk to a Committee member.

**THIRD AGE MATTERS**

The Autumn edition of Third Age Matters has now been sent out to subscribers. Inside there is news about what is being planned for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of u3a. This includes a quilt competition with members invited to submit block for an anniversary quilt on the subject of positive aging. A debate is also planned. There is a news item about a u3a which gained over 100 new members during lockdown. They did this by placing good news stories in local press, updating the website and encouraging group leaders to keep their groups going via Zoom. There is a statement from the new Chair, Liz Thackray and the usual varied range of articles. The magazine is also useful for its advertisements.



Third Age Matters is currently sent out to a quarter of a million members, making it one of the largest circulation magazines in the country. At £3 for five editions it's good value. Contact the Membership secretary if you would like to receive the magazine.

**u3a shop**

As well as diaries which we been available for a while, there is now a much expanded range of merchandise. These items are available via the Brand centre <https://u3abrand.org.uk/catalogue/category/merchandise/branded-items?page=1>

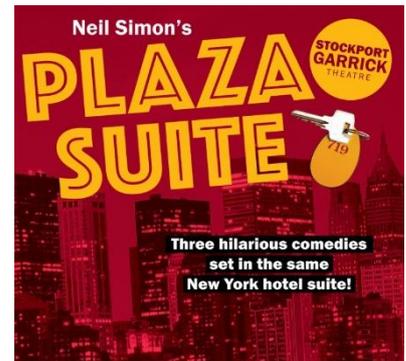
Note: we are not organising diaries this year but you can buy one from the above site.

If you buy any of these clothing items, we would love to see a photo of you wearing it/them for a future edition! Please send to the newsletter Editor



**THEATRE: PLAZA SUITE**

The latest production from The Garrick theatre in Stockport is Neil Simon's Plaza Suite As usual it was worth the visit. I'm probably not the best theatre critic though as I enjoy most of the productions I go to see and I'm definitely not the most critical person. I just appreciate the effort of local theatre companies and the various cast and backstage members for giving their time and expertise.



It's not a play I know but I am a fan of Neil Simon's and this one didn't disappoint. Three separate sets of occupants of one suite in the hotel telling three different stories. First one featured a married couple trying to recreate their honeymoon after 25 years in an attempt to save their marriage, (I should say the wife was trying to save their marriage. The husband didn't think there was a problem with it!) The second act was a Hollywood TV producer attempting to seduce his naive teenage sweetheart. The final and funniest story was that of a couple attempting to persuade their daughter out of the bathroom she'd locked herself into so she could marry her fiancé.

It was very entertaining and laugh out loud funny at times. The cast managed the American accents admirably and maintained them throughout so hats off to them! It must be very hard to replicate a luxury hotel suite in a small suburban theatre but they did their best. (Not sure I'd pay \$3000 a night to stay there though which apparently is the going rate) 😊

I particularly enjoyed the final story which featured a more slapstick kind of acting. Well done to the actor playing the reluctant bride's father (Morgan Edwards). It left the audience with a lighter heart than we'd gone in with. So, congratulations to the Garrick on another fine production.

Thank you to this and other local theatres for having one performance of each production still socially distanced offering the more nervous theatre goers the chance to attend and still feel safe. I feel it's part of live theatre to share the experience with others. Online screenings have been very welcome during lockdown but it's so good to be able to turn to a stranger sitting near you and share thoughts and impressions of the play you've watched together.

Chris Edmonds



The Garrick's next play is Educating Rita.

## POETRY CORNER

Thanks to Stewart Clay for a new poem.

### *When*

*When you realise you're not hidden from view – by keeping eyes shut tight  
When you finally see over the sweetshop counter – on tiptoes at full height  
When you're called a big cry baby – for shedding tears for a dead goldfish  
When blowing out the cake's candles – no longer guarantees you your wish*

*When Dad has neither the time nor inclination – to read you a story in bed  
When you ask for a bike for Christmas – but you get a baby brother instead  
When your friend doesn't stand up for you – when you're in an unfair fight  
When caught pinching apples by P.C. Plod – you wet yourself in sheer fright*

*When you don't have any first teeth left – to leave for the good tooth fairy  
When a brother's ghost stories told under the sheets – are no longer scary  
When Dad says you're far too old now – to leave on the big landing light  
When Secret Seven, Famous Five and Just William – can no longer excite*

*When you discover school's not so bad – and no one gets everything right  
When you are rapped on the knuckles – for using the wrong hand to write  
When everyone expects you to pass the exam – but then you go and blow it  
When you're afraid of going to big school – but are not allowed to show it*

*When you reach big school at last – it's the end of your childhood innocence  
When the bully threatens and there's no big brother – to leap to your defence  
When full realisation finally dawns – that it's for yourself you must now fend  
When things like these have come to pass – you're a big boy at last my friend*

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## DID YOU KNOW

Today is United Nations International Day of Older Persons. The theme for 2021 is Digital Equity for All Ages. This affirms the need for access and meaningful participation in the digital world by older persons. Recent reports by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) indicate that women and older persons experience digital inequity to a greater extent than other groups in society; they either lack access to technologies, or are often not benefitting fully from the opportunities provided by technological progress. They also report a survey of 83,034 people in 57 countries which found one in every two people held moderately or highly ageist attitudes (i.e. stereotypes and prejudice).

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/older-persons-day>

## GROUP REPORTS

### BALLROOM DANCING



The first September dance had a relatively low but enthusiastic attendance; but this all changed at the second dance with almost all the group attending. Perhaps it was the promise of prosecco and cake for Walter and Freda's diamond occasion! But, no matter, it was good to see everybody enjoying themselves, even if injuries were still curtailing some people's dancing.

Will it be back to low attendance next time - we shall see!

Walter Mason

**GARDENING**

September Report

The gardening group had a quiet month, with no visits to each other's gardens. The group leader's attention was diverted by Freda and his big occasion (see Ballroom dancing). But members did continue to visit public gardens under their own steam, as far away as Powis, Wisley, and Sissinghurst, and some pictures from Chris and Jackie are included. Next month a plant swap day is planned, and hopefully later, a group meal and discussion of future plans.



## GERMAN

We have been meeting regularly since the end of August with much depleted numbers, either in the garden or, more recently in our conservatory to ensure good ventilation with an open door. Because of increasing difficulty in photocopying newspaper articles (Most require payment of a subscription) we have started reading a German novel: "Damals war es Friedrich," copies of which I obtained very cheaply on eBay, which seems to be going down very well.

Marlene Brookes

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## PHILOSOPHY

The group held its first face-to-face session on September 13<sup>th</sup>, when the subject was "Wisdom." We looked briefly at quotes from some of the philosophers we had studied in the past and then progressed to a general discussion.

As usual we had more questions than answers i.e.

"Is wisdom innate or is it acquired?"

"Is wisdom more linked to common sense than intelligence?"

"If we gain wisdom through life experience, how come all old people are not wise?"

When the subject of AI (Artificial Intelligence) was raised, genuine concern was shared about the dominance robots will have in the future, and if they will be programmed wisely.

The next session in October is on the subject of "Evil"

Sheila Harrop

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

This month's subject was 'Animals. You'll probably not be surprised to hear that this produced a sizeable proportion of dog pictures! Must have split the votes.

Winning photographs were:

- 1st. Highland cattle – Jeff 11 votes
- 2nd. My trunks bigger than yours – Walter 7 votes
- 3rd. Herdwick sheep – Jeff 6 votes

The subject for next month's project is 'Tree trunks' so we will be out and about with our cameras again.



Jeff Robinson

## READING

The Reading Group met for the first time face to face indoors on Monday September 6<sup>th</sup>. It was lovely to see everyone again. Thanks to Marlene for keeping us all in touch during lock down and beyond.

We discussed *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens which was especially appropriate as one of its themes is isolation. How much loneliness can an individual endure and to what ends one will go to have human contact. Everyone really liked the book and agreed it was a good read. It contained all the essentials: a strong sense of place, believable characters, interesting themes, a who-dunnit, a court case and a twist in the tail. If you have not read this book we would advise you to give it a go.

Our next meeting is on Monday October 4<sup>th</sup> when we will be discussing *Lies of Silence* by Brian Moore.

Kath Wareham

We compiled a list of six books, suggested by members of the group, which we will read in the next 6 months. They are:

- LIES OF SILENCE by Brian Moore
- HAMNET by Maggie O'Farrell
- IN THE DARKNESS by Karen Fossum
- CONCLAVE by Robert Harries
- PERFUME by Patrick Suskind
- FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS by Ernest Hemingway

Anyone interested in joining the group, should contact me. (details on the group information sheet).

Marlene Brookes

I was interested to see *Perfume* on Marlene's list. I recently reread this book – the first time was many years ago – after watching Richard E Grant's literary journey through the South of France. He was of course in Grasse when he was discussing the book. I will leave a review of the book to the Reading group; suffice it to say that I found it interesting if more than a little strange. The programme is available on iPlayer.

I have just finished reading Celia Imrie's new book *Orphans of the Storm*. I really enjoyed this. Two families from Nice and New York become entwined through the Titanic disaster. The book is based on a true story and the author has clearly done an impressive amount of research.

Diane Saxon

## QUIZ

We are planning our first face to face meeting later this month. Having lost some members during lockdown, this group needs more members to continue. Please contact me if you are interested in joining us.



Here is a short extract from our September quiz for you to try.

1. What nut is in the centre of a Ferraro Rocher chocolate?
2. Which juice is mixed with lime and vodka in a Cosmopolitan?
3. Which legendary surrealist artist is famous for painting melting clocks?
4. The olecranon process refers to which part of the body?
5. Which planet has the most moons?
6. What colour is Mr Messy?
7. Which actor plays Ted Hastings in Line of Duty?
8. In which decade was the Highway code first published?
9. Where is the tallest bridge in the world?
10. And the longest bridge?

Diane Saxon

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## TRAVEL

I am told the recent trip to Ireland passed without any major mishaps and was 'the best ever'. The report will be in the next edition.

A girl who liked travelling light  
Was convinced this plan was alright  
She reached the hotel  
And thought all was well  
But her luggage was still on the flight.

Masks can be terribly trying  
They may make you feel like crying  
But in a wintry storm  
They will keep your face warm  
And they protect you when you are flying.

**WALKING**

**U3A Walk Report Walk Report 29th September 2021**

The weather forecast looked promising for the return of the walking group following Covid. 13 walkers joined Merlyn and Joyce for an easy 6 ½ mile ramble into Lyme Park.

The walk started from the Village Hall following a back route to Lyme via Woodside Tennis club, over and under the railway line and then following Bollinhurst Brook to Lyme Park. The paths despite the rain on previous days were fine but care was needed over the broken stile following railway crossing. We passed the stone renovated cottage and barn conversion alongside the brook before entering Lyme.



A welcome coffee stop was taken seated on a low stone wall under trees just before reaching Bollinhurst Reservoirs. We circled the reservoirs on field paths and woodland to the surprise of some local members who had not used them before and join the old road to East Gate Lodge. On route we stopped to watch local farmers loading sheep into a double stack trailer possibly off to fresh pasture.

We had a photo stop on the path down to Lyme Hall and had good views of the Highland cattle and calves on the hillside adjacent to the fence but the Red Deer must have been hiding.



Distant views towards Manchester looked threatening as waves of sunshine and storms approached. As we approached our lunch stop the rain and hail flurries caught us in open countryside but soon passed over.

Lunch was taken near the Hall on picnic tables and under trees sheltering in case of the occasional shower.

The showers had passed and the sun was out again for our return journey which took field paths towards Platt Wood Farm and then Macclesfield Canal to High Lane.

Group Leader, David, thanked Merlyn and Joyce for leading the walk and gave details of forthcoming walk dates.

Merlyn and Joyce Young

## SNIPPETS

- Is it true that cannibals don't eat clowns because they taste funny?
- What do you do when you see an endangered animal eating an endangered plant?
- If nothing sticks to Teflon, how do they make Teflon stick to pans?
- Why do clocks run clockwise?
- How does Aspirin find a headache?
- Why is there a light in a fridge, but not in a freezer?
- Why do the English drive on the left and most other countries on the right?
- Why do doctors have messy handwriting?

A round up of shortages- who knows what's next

- Petrol
- Cars
- Computer chips
- Turkeys
- Milk
- Lorry drivers
- Abattoir workers
- Hotel and restaurant staff
- T shirts
- Timber
- Hats

**Quiz answers**

- Hazelnut
- Cranberry
- Salvador Dali
- Elbow
- Saturn
- Pink
- Adrian Dunbar
- 1930s
- France
- China