

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the September 2022 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. Thanks to all the contributors for their interesting and informative contributions.

Tickets are now on sale for the murder mystery evening on Friday, 21st October. Food will be served during the evening before the announcement of who committed the murder.

You probably know this but this month is the 40th anniversary of u3a. The week 17-23 September has been designated u3a week. Various activities will be happening across the UK – see Paul's note below about our Open day. There is more information in the National Office bitesize newsletter for August which you will have received along with this edition of the newsletter.

Most members now receive the newsletter by email or read it on the website. We know that not all members can do this so there will be a few printed copies available at the monthly meeting for members without web access or email.

This is your newsletter. Please feel free to share some of your news, your interests, items you have found that you think would be of interest to other members, places you have visited, books you have read, films you have seen; your stories, anecdotes, photographs, recipes, limericks, jokes; the list is endless. I've said this a few times now – we'd love to hear from some of our new members. Why not share your experiences with our members.

The next issue will be October 2022 so please send your contributions to me by 28 September at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

FROM THE CHAIR

Please don't forget to tell all your friends and neighbours that High Lane u3a is having an open day on Saturday September 3rd at the Village Hall from 10am to 12 noon. Come down and see what the u3a is about. Look around and have a tea/ coffee and cake with us.

Paul Kenneth

MONTHLY MEETINGS

The speaker for the August meeting was Rod Devereux whose talk was entitled "My Life in Special Branch"

Rod, who has been retired for several years was invited to apply to join Special Branch while in the police. The selection process was rigorous and intrusive, but he was eventually successful and worked in Counter Terrorism in Manchester. He kept a close eye on Irish, Libyan and Palestinian dissidents to name but a few.

It was a surprise to hear what nice blokes these potential terrorists were. Rod's job was to gain their trust and offer the odd inducement for information. In the case of one informant a season ticket to Old Trafford did the trick!! He also provided protection for the Royal Family members on their visits to the city.

Listening to Rod was like reading Le Carre but with a lot of laughs. When it came to anecdotes, he came into his own and had the audience well entertained. My favourite referred to a bomb disposal operation which went awry.

When he left the hall, he said "Do ask me again, I have a lot more stories to tell!"
We will do just that!

Sheila Harrop

FOR GROUP LEADERS

Some of the group pages need to be updated. Please will you have a look at your group page(s) and decide what amendments you need. Please send your changes to Les before the end of September.

FOR BRIDGE PLAYERS

One of the activities for u3a week is a u3a Bridge festival where we will play the same hands as members in other u3as across the country. We are hoping to take part in this and would welcome anyone who would like to join us. Please contact one of the bridge group leaders or the Editor.

GROUP NEWS

CHOIR

High Lane U3A choir needs you!

It's hard to believe that it's now nearly a year since we resumed singing face to face. It's been wonderful to be back together sharing our love of singing and we've even managed to perform a couple of concerts. The first was a Christmas concert for the Poynton Golden Memories group (to which Margaret and Tony Glynn belonged) and the second was for a High Lane Residents' Association Jubilee weekend event.



I'm delighted to say that both were so pleased with our performance that we've been invited back, so we'll be performing for the Poynton Golden Memories and the High Lane Residents' AGM in October. We've also been invited to sing at the U3A meeting in November.

We're currently busy preparing for all of these events but are also trying to recruit some new members into the choir. We're particularly looking for altos and basses but other voice parts are equally welcome. Previous experience of singing in a group or choir and/or the ability to read music are desirable but not essential.

Singing has been proven to be beneficial to peoples' mental and physical wellbeing and it's good fun, so what's not to like?!

We're a friendly and welcoming group so if you're interested, please come along to one of our rehearsals and give it a try. We meet every Friday morning between 10 am and noon in the village hall.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Julie Sutton

CHURCHES AND PUBS

St Luke's Church Goostrey

Wednesday 3rd August dawned bright and sunny, just perfect for a drive out into the beautiful Cheshire countryside to visit St Luke's Church. Liz and Ann provided us with some delightful refreshments on our arrival; did anyone manage to get the recipe for the delicious apple cake? Roger then gave us a wonderful talk on both the history of the church and the village itself.

Initially there were two chapels in Goostrey, monastic settlements inhabited by monks from St Werburgh. The first recorded vicar was Abel in 1250 and the church was a typical wooden building complete with wattle and daub. In 1350 the Abbot gave residents the right to bury their dead in the grounds which meant that this could happen immediately rather than wait until they could get across the river to a burial ground.....which could take some months if the river was in full flood.

Records of births, deaths and marriages are dated to 1560. The 'gentry' of the area paid tariffs to keep the church going and aisles were built along with box pews which were owned by the rich families and rented out to other residents. This gave them not only the right to sit in the pews but also to be buried under them! When work was done on the current church these graves were unearthed.

The beautiful windows were brought here from Belgium and are painted glass which is then fired. The font is from the original church and in the churchyard a yew tree believed to be at least 1000 years old.

Roger told us about a couple of 'infamous' vicars from bygone times, Zachary Cruft and William Dickson. Zachary had an interesting life which saw him expelled from the church for not turning up for services to being imprisoned in the Tower of London for whipping his servant. William Dickson didn't appear to enjoy his years as vicar (1848-1858). He had a stove installed because he complained of the cold and his records are full of sad stories. He also seemed to have had a running battle with locals who liked to 'party' and he lectured them on the evils of drink. I'm not sure what he would have made of our group adjourning to The Crown for our pub lunch! Our lunch in The Crown was most enjoyable. Aa big thank you to Paul and Barbara for arranging the visit.

Lynn Arnold



CRIME FICTION READING

The Beekeeper's Apprentice by Laurie R King

The third meeting of the Crime Reading Group took place on Friday 19 August with a good attendance of ten people. We had been reading *The Beekeeper's Apprentice* by Laurie R King. This book is the first of a long series featuring Sherlock Holmes and his new, much younger partner, Mary Russell.

The book opens with Mary meeting Holmes and, as he is impressed by her intelligence and embryonic deductive powers, he effectively takes her on as his apprentice. These early times take up the first section of the book which then moves on to a real case where Mary proves her worth.



As usual, there was a mixed response to the book – with a rough fifty/fifty split between those who liked it and those who did not. 'Far-fetched and silly' was one view. Many of us found the first section to be rather slow, but the pace picked up once the real case started.

We agreed that the book was well written and very reminiscent of Conan Doyle's style. We were also impressed by the fact that although the writer was American, she had been able to avoid many Americanisms!

All in all, it was a good read, but the general view was that we were unlikely to read the rest of the series.

Our book for September is *Burial of Ghosts* by Ann Cleeves, the author of the Vera and Shetland series of books.

Lesley McCall

Just discovered the new Comoran Strike novel is to be released on 30th August. Not content with the 944 pages of the last mega tome, JK has managed 1,024 pages for this one. The book is called *The Ink Black Heart* and weighs 1.25 kg. Perhaps not one for the Crime fiction reading group?

CURRENT AFFAIRS

24th August

Our very small group discussed a few subjects which had been featured in the news recently. The first question asked was Do Workers have a right to withdraw labour?

So many groups from different walks of life are on strike at the moment including the dockers at Felixstowe, refuse collectors in Edinburgh, barristers, railway workers, others such as doctors and NHS workers threatening action that one remark was made that we could possibly see a General Strike before long. Some of these strikes show how essential some low paid workers are, for instance, if refuse collectors are not working, chaos can quickly ensue. The general opinion seemed to be that people should be paid what they were worth and the ones at the top should not be given such high salaries and bonuses. So, yes, workers do have the right to withdraw their labour until they are treated fairly.

The NHS and whether it was coping came up next. It seems in some areas it is still coping well but elsewhere things are not so good with difficulty getting appointments with the doctor, not to mention having to hang on the phone for ages to even speak to a surgery. Hospitals are hit very hard being greatly understaffed and the point was made that we needed to be employing foreign workers as both doctors and nursing staff. I think we all agreed that it was so unnecessary to insist on a university degree for nurses. Germany's health care was cited as working very well. A proportion of tax is ring fenced for health care as apparently ours was intended to be but never reached the required amount. Numbers in medical school have been reduced which adds to the dearth of doctors.

Liz Truss's statement, from a few years ago, that British workers were lazy and need more graft was discussed. Some reasons for our workers not producing goods to the same extent as countries like China and Japan is that we have not modernised our factories as other countries have.

Should the Prime Minister of Finland be criticised for partying? We all thought the same. She has done very well, at only 36 years of age, to reach such a position and she certainly should be allowed a private life. No criticisms from us about her attending a party.

Finally: How many marks out of ten will Boris earn for his Premiership in the future. These were ours. 4/10. 2/10. 6/10. 1/10

Pat Gorie

DINING

The dining Group is up and running after the long closure for Covid. Last week we met at The Joshua Bradley ,it is a delightful place with a large light room overlooking the gardens.

It turned out to be one of our diners birthday and we could not resist the opportunity to sing Happy Birthday as he blew out his candles

Our next lunch will be our Christmas meal and we have decided to celebrate at The Hanging Gate in Chapel. It is worth going just for the Decorations, it is a spectacular display which takes three weeks to install and we will be entertained with a pianist playing Christmas music and carols.

Why not join us.

Dorothy Gerrard
Dorothy Neillands

TRAVEL

LINCOLN October 14th -16th
Half board at Holiday Inn Lincoln. BALANCE WAS DUE AT AUGUST MEETING. We must pay the invoice for this holiday in the next few days. If you have not paid the balance, contact Ruth.



SAMLESBURY HALL December 9th
Coach. tour of the Hall, 3 course Christmas lunch. £46
Only 3 places left
Final payment at September meeting.

Report and photos from the August Rhine cruise will be in the next newsletter.

Margaret McDermott

HANDBELLS, PHOENIX RINGERS

We are delighted to report that our team is still (miraculously!) intact despite all the Covid related setbacks. There are seven of us. We generally practice weekly, and have put together a varied programme of pieces, some written exclusively for handbells, some classical, and some traditional.

We are doing little concerts again now, and in June played at Marple Cricket Club. On July 30th we played in the chapel at the Chadkirk well-dressing event, which was lovely. It was well attended, and the weather was kind. The chapel itself is a very special little place, worth a visit. Due to cutbacks, S.M.B.C. is not supporting it as much as in past years. The "Friends of Chadkirk" are trying to involve as many people as possible to keep the place alive. At the present time they are only managing to open it to the public on the last Sunday of each month from 2.00 till 4.00pm. They are hoping to promote some informal musical entertainment at these openings, from any interested volunteer groups. We thoroughly enjoyed our day there in July and are really pleased that they have asked us to play again sometime during the Winter season. A few events will be advertised on their website, chadkirkchapel.org

If anyone wants any further information about our group, please give us a call.

Kate Hellar

READING

This month's book for discussion was *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga who was born in India and subsequently studied in New York and Oxford, the book was published in 2008. This book is described as 'darkly humorous' which it certainly is, it is very funny in a satirical way.

The main character, Balram, the son of a rickshaw puller, explains how he escaped a life of servitude to become a successful businessman. Adiga tells Balram's story through seven letters written to the Chinese Premier. Unfortunately, Balram discovers that the only way of escaping is through bribery, corruption and murder. Adiga wanted to capture the unspoken voice of people from the impoverished areas of rural India and also to show the social class divisions and religious discrimination, which he does. It is an easy and humorous read.

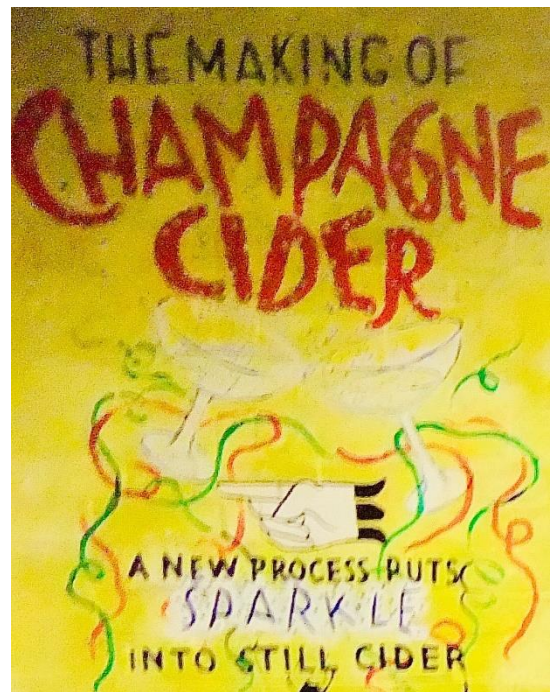
Pam Curley

PHOTOGRAPHY

This month's competition was Yellow. Winning photographs were:

1st. Rosa Chinatown – Walter 5 votes

Joint 2nd. Coat Hangers – Earl 4 votes and Champagne – Derek 4 votes



Thanks everybody and especially our new member Earl for his first entries.

The topic for next month is 'Numbers and Letters'. Why not come and join us?

Jeff Robinson

u3a AT SOUTHPORT FLOWER SHOW

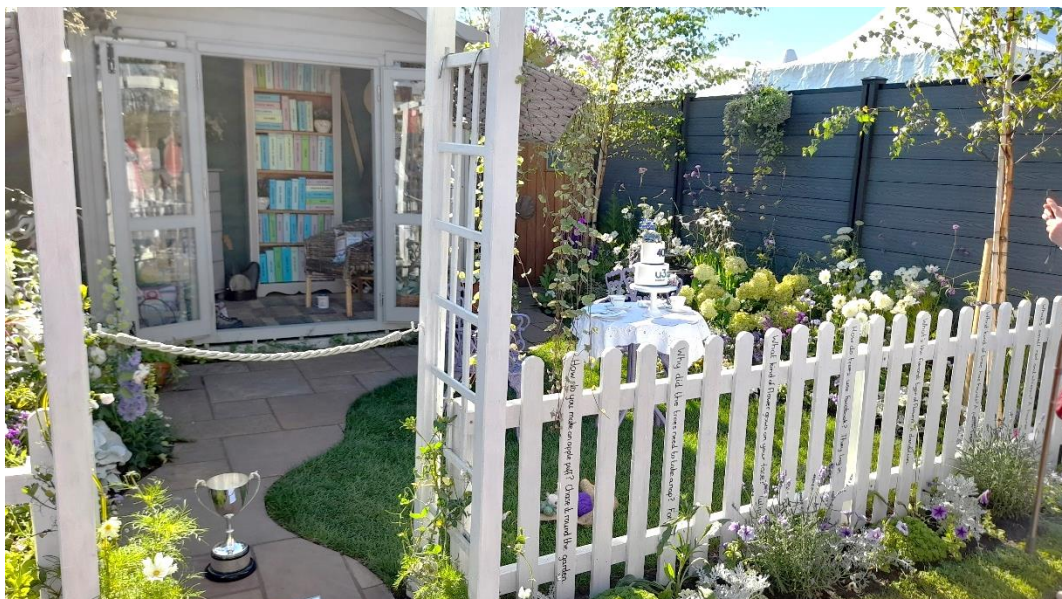
On Friday 19th August we visited Southport Flower Show where Southport U3A entered a garden display for its 40th Anniversary.

The garden formed a tranquil space for relaxation and reflection. Trees were added for shade and shelter.

The focal point was the Summer House where items from a camera, binoculars, to a well-stocked book shelf showcased U3A activities. The open door in the corner suggested new opportunities. A highly liveable garden where U3A members can truly learn, laugh and live.

Below are some photographs of the U3A entry which was exceptional, winning Large Gold Medal for "Charity/Community Garden - Celebrating 40 years of "Learn, Laugh and Live". It also won the Brian Aughton Memorial Trophy for Best use of Plants in a Display.

Linda Dale



AND FINALLY

Edinburgh Fringe festival winning jokes

10 jokes made the shortlist. This was the final order.

1. I tried to steal spaghetti from the shop, but the female guard saw me and I couldn't get pasta – Masai Graham (52%)

2. Did you know, if you get pregnant in the Amazon, it's next day delivery? – Mark Simmons (37%)

3. My attempts to combine nitrous oxide and Oxo cubes made me a laughing stock – Olaf Falafel (36%)

4. By my age, my parents had a house and a family, and to be fair to me, so do I, but it is the same house and the same family – Hannah Fairweather (35%)

5. I hate funerals. I'm not a mourning person – Will Mars (34%)

6. I spent the whole morning building a time machine, so that's four hours of my life that I'm definitely getting back – Olaf Falafel (33%)

7. I sent a food parcel to my first wife. FedEx – Richard Pulsford (29%)

8. I used to live hand to mouth. Do you know what changed my life? Cutlery – Tim Vine (28%)

9. Don't knock threesomes. Having a threesome is like hiring an intern to do all the jobs you hate – Sophie Duker (27%)

10. I can't even be bothered to be apathetic these days – Will Duggan (25%)

