



Newsletter

September 2026



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FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the September 2026 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. This is another bumper issue. As well as reports from our groups and some catching up of reports from the July edition which we were unable to publish, we have reports of two recent travel group activities. We have day by day accounts of the Lake District holiday and the Fred Olsen cruise. Looks like members enjoyed their holidays! As ever, I would like to thank all the contributors for their interesting and informative contributions. The cover this month shows members who went on the very well supported late June holiday to the Lake District.

As I'm sure we've mentioned before! we rely on our group leaders and helpers for all that we do and always welcome offers of help with groups, events, the monthly meetings and of course the Committee. Please don't be afraid to offer to help!

We have some new members this month and look forward to meeting you at our meetings and interest groups. Please let us know if you have ideas for any interest groups you would like us to offer. We are always keen to offer new interest groups, and your contributions will be very welcome. There are a couple of ideas in the pipeline at the moment. You can read about one of these on page 3.

I always look forward to hearing from members so 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. Don't forget that photographs are always useful.

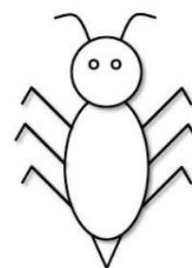
Regarding National u3a information, September has another varied and interesting range of [online talks](#). As well as these, the newsletter is accompanied by the latest National Office bitesize Friends newsletter. The full version is available [here](#).

The next issue of the newsletter will be October 2026 so please send your contributions to me by 28th September 2026 at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

BEETLE DRIVE

The rearranged Beetle drive will take place on the afternoon of Friday September 25th at 2pm in the village hall. Members who already have tickets will be contacted about the new date. For other members who would like to attend there will be tickets on sale at the September meeting.



MONTHLY MEETING

The speaker at the August monthly meeting was Andy McCullough and his talk was called From running away to running a marathon. Andy introduced himself as a retired high profile social care advisor, a widower and a keen gardener. He had a traumatic childhood. His father died when he was six, his mother abused him and he was taken into care. It was the terrible experience of this institution that made him determined to try to do something to improve the system and help those who were the victims.

When he was 16, he bought a tent and enrolled in a Youth Employment scheme where he gained a certificate for drystone walling. He got involved with anti-vivisection and the anti-liberation front but was not involved in any violence. However, the police hounded him and he left Cornwall and found himself in Liverpool. Here he worked in a day centre and found he was good at talking to people about their problems and he realised that talking therapy was useful to many disturbed or displaced people.

This eventually led to work with children who run away and are abused through prostitution. He was the founder of The English Coalition for runaway children. He worked with the government to try to change existing structures. He became Head of public affairs and policy for Railway Children, an organisation that works globally with children at risk. He has taken part in a number of enquiries as an expert including the Victoria Climbié Enquiry and most recently the terrible events in Southport. He ended his career working as a civilian advisor to try to improve corrupt behaviour and attitudes which existed in some police forces.



He was divorced from his first wife but together they have four children, and he now has a beloved granddaughter. Unfortunately, his second wife died and he found running and gardening as therapy. Today he is happily retired living by the mantra I do my best. He is writing a book and has got a publisher. He aims to give a free copy to every 16 year old in the care system.

His talk was very well received, and the overwhelming reaction was what a remarkable, caring and selfless life Andy had led, and we were humbled to share his memories.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 9th September when the talk is It's a wonderful life: innovations and inventions. The speaker is Brian Halliwell.

Kath Wareham

GROUP NEWS

NEW GROUP IDEA

Those who attended the recent monthly meeting will have heard David Sheldrake talk about his interest in philately. Our u3a currently does not have a Philately group but David suggested that there are likely to be many among our members who have collected stamps, postal history, postcards, memorabilia and may have forgotten the joy of the hobby that they once had with their stamps. Stamp collecting embraces almost every subject imaginable whether a person's interest is history, aviation, medicine, engineering, birds, ships, geography, railways, sport, science, or local history; there is always a philatelic connection. It is a hobby that encourages curiosity, learning, research, conversation; and an opportunity to make new friends. A collection can begin with inexpensive used stamps and may develop over time.

The aim is to help to revive the interest that people once had by introducing stamp collecting into our list of activities. Of course, it is only viable if there is sufficient interest. If you are interested and would like to discuss this further, please email me at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk and I will pass your details onto David.

BALLROOM DANCING

As we restart on September 11th after a summer break, we would love to welcome a new couple or two to our friendly group. Our skills vary enormously, so all can fit in, especially with a little help and guidance from our leaders or each other. Kate is leading the dancing this next month, while yours truly has his second cataract op.

Walter Mason

BACKGAMMON

The backgammon group continues to meet in the Bull's Head High Lane every other Wednesday from 2pm until 4 ish. We are a small group at the moment and would welcome any new members that would like to learn the game and play along with us. Unfortunately, the session due on the 9th September will be postponed due to pub closure for refurbishment, so the next meet up will be September 23rd, subject to the pub being finished.

Ken Jackson

CHURCHES AND PUBS

Holy Trinity Dinting Vale. Glossop

August Churches and Pubs took us to Glossop and to Holy Trinity church at Dinting Vale. We were greeted with tea, coffee and biscuits. The church is beautiful and very special community space next door to Dinting Church School. The church run a drop-in group called TnT (tea and toast and as much hot chocolate you can drink) on a Friday afternoon for secondary school pupils to come and have a chat, play games, eat toast have a good time. Apparently, it is very well attended.

The Church owes its origins to the Wood family through whose generosity the church was built. The foundation stone was laid in 1873. Consecration of the church was conducted by Bishop Selwyn, Bishop of Lichfield (of which Diocese Glossop was then part) on July 31st 1875 and regular services started the following day.

The Tower is 18ft square and has angled buttresses gradually tapering upwards and finished with pinnacles from the base of which springs the octagonal spire. The spire from top to bottom is 137 feet tall. The architecture of the church is late 13th century.

The interior of the church was originally cream coloured brick but in 1975 the north and south walls were painted. The font is made of Bath stone mounted on a red cork marble shaft and was carved by Bonehill of Manchester. There is a magnificent brass eagle which was subscribed for the church by the congregation.

We finished as we started with another cup of coffee. A big Thank you Kate and the church wardens for looking after us and also a big thank you to Jean and Rodger for organising the visit. We finished the morning by having an enjoyable lunch at the Norfolk Arms in Glossop.

Paul Kenneth

CHURCHES AND PUBS NOVEMBER. Christ Church, Burbage

The next Churches and Pubs is on Wednesday November 4th to Burbage, about two minutes drive from the Pavilion Gardens in Buxton.

The pub is close by, and we will have the menu for the u3a meeting in September. It will be three courses for £23. Please bring the money (cash only please) to the September/October monthly meeting.

Paul and Barbara

CURRENT AFFAIRS

A summary of some of the items we discussed at our August meeting.

1) Prince Harry opted out of Royal Duties and went to live in America a few years ago. Last week he and his wife and 2 children returned to live in UK. It is understood he will not carry out Royal Duties.

Q) Should UK taxpayers be expected to pay for his protection?

2) Serious flooding in borders of Tibet and China have caused many deaths and over 2000 people not yet accounted for. Living in the UK, we consider ourselves to be very fortunate we are not having to deal with such tragedies.

3) President Putin is not pleased UK is in full support for Ukraine in the war that Putin started. He has indicated it might be to UK disadvantage that we continue to supply money and weapons to Ukraine. UK border forces have discovered Russian ships in North Sea trying to tamper with UK underwater cables etc.

4) Retired Servicemen/women have received letters informing them they have been overpaid pension payments over a number of years in error. MOD has said the overpayments will have to be repaid. Retirees have said they had queried the increase in pensions because they had not been informed an increase was due and the MOD had failed to find the error and correct it at the time. Retirees have said they cannot afford to repay large sums at this late stage in their lives and bearing in mind living costs have increased dramatically and the money has been spent.

Q) Should they be forced to repay as the MOD had failed to check out the error even though they were informed of the extra payments being made?

5) Recent heatwaves in various parts of UK have caused massive wildfires and drought in certain areas. Firemen and military have had to work extremely hard in horrible conditions to dampen fires down.

Q) Should UK now start to set in motion plans to overcome some of the difficulties that are bound to occur. The whole Railway system will need to adapt rail lines to cope with the intense heat which can cause rail crashes. Should people be adapting to cycling and using public transport rather than using cars. Water Companies should build more reservoirs and also encourage the public to save not waste water; portable BBQs should be banned. Will we all be encouraged to have solar panels on our roofs or plug in panels in the garden?

6) Prisons are allowing some prisoners to leave prison earlier than their sentences due to prison overcrowding meaning not enough room for people committing future crimes.

Q) Should policeman Andrew Harpers killers be released early? Many more instances for release are being challenged. Building more Prisons should be a priority.

7) President Trump has now claimed that Lake Ontario on the border between Canada and America is to be called Lake America! It has always been called Lake Ontario.

Q) Why does he think he is allowed to make these decisions without discussion?

Irene Podolanski

CRIME FICTION READING

Our book for August was *Frozen People* by Elly Griffiths. Griffiths is a very popular author whose Ruth Galloway series we have read and enjoyed but this novel was the start of a new series with a fantasy aspect which created divided opinions.

Ali Dawson and her cold case team investigate crimes so old, they're frozen – or so their inside joke goes. Most people don't know that they travel back in time to complete their research. The latest assignment sees Ali venture back farther than they have dared before: to 1850s London in order to clear the name of Cain Templeton, the eccentric great-grandfather of MP Isaac Templeton. Rumour has it that Cain was part of a sinister group called The Collectors; to become a member, you had to kill a woman. Fearing for her safety in the middle of a freezing Victorian winter, Ali finds herself stuck in time, unable to make her way back to her life, her beloved colleagues, and her son, Finn, who suddenly finds himself in legal trouble in the present day. Could the two cases be connected?

The majority of our group, appreciate the author, but were not a fan of the fantasy and some felt their concern about whether the main character, Ali Dawson, would get back to the present day overshadowed the crime aspect.

A couple of us have reread this novel and found it better on the second reading. The author released the second book, in this series, this year and her third is due for release in spring 2027, so Elly Griffiths is clearly determined to continue this theme.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 26th August when we will be discussing *Past Lives* by Val McDermid, the seventh of eight books in the Karen Pirie series, many of which have been televised by ITV.

Sue Roworth

DID YOU KNOW?

Britain is the only country which doesn't have its name on postage stamps.

GARDENING

With the hot weather opening flowers before their time, August gardens are somewhat sparse this year.



Some exceptions include agapanthus which has excelled this year.

Tip for agapanthus – plant under pebbles or very close to paths.

Perennial Rudbeckia Goldsturm has grown well this year.



Tip – plant on the shady side where it will brighten the garden till well into Autumn.

This early helenium has been flowering since June but still looks good.

Tip – deadhead occasionally and flowers will keep coming.



Meanwhile our group still enjoyed their August meet, with just the September meeting to come, probably with sedums and Michaelmas daisies in flower.

Walter Mason

MEMOIRS

Memoirs August meeting

Barbara F had found a newspaper cutting about her grandfather, George Barker. He set up a refrigeration company based in Leeds in 1925 in a disused piggeries site. The company made bespoke refrigeration cabinets for companies including M & S. In 1928 a Mr Hope and Andrews became involved. Her grandfather emigrated to Canada to learn more about refrigeration but later returned to England and started another company.

Margaret J told us about 'Close' adventures. She lives in a Close and the residents used to go on day trips. In 1975 they went to various places including Matlock Baths Illuminations, Knowsley Safari Park and Blackpool Illuminations. In Blackpool they played games on the beach and they were given the choice of lights or chips. Of course, chips won and they never saw the lights. In 1977 they had a street party for the Queen's Jubilee and in 2001 they had a reunion party at Lyme Park.

Lynda's talk was called 'Anyone for tennis'. When she was at school she hated hockey, running and gym workouts but loved ball games especially tennis. She and her partner played in the school team and won cups for the school. She also played for her college team. When married she signed her daughter up for tennis at Woodside tennis club but her daughter didn't take to it but she was very good at swimming, particularly synchronised swimming.

Pat and her husband went to Sicily in 2000. She was in pain but went out on the balcony and Mt Etna was erupting which wasn't a good sign. They went for a meal and encountered a man in the restaurant wearing a suit and dripping with gold. Obviously, Mafia which wasn't a good sign. They then went to Palermo and stayed in a four-star hotel, but they didn't eat in the restaurant but were shown to an inferior room and the starter was tinned spaghetti hoops. Not a good sign. They got home on the Monday and she had an operation on the Friday.

Angela remembered her first job in a bank in Hanover Square, London where she worked as a telephonist. Her favourite singer was Adam Faith and when she heard he was in his car outside she left the switchboard and rushed out to see him. Her job also entailed having to post the post. Several times she posted her luncheon vouchers and once posted her purse with the letters. She was then transferred to a main branch.

Stewart read three of his poems. The first was called 'Temples and mere Mortals' and was about the younger generation giving advice to us oldies on food etc. The younger generation run marathons, but we call them Snickers. How did we survive? The second one was called 'Time goes by' and was about a fifty-year reunion. Would we recognise each other? There was much reminiscing and a few tears.

The third one was called 'The tribulations and trials of Christabelle Giles'. The poor girl had nits and zit spots, a snotty nose and red hair. Not a good combination.

Avril moved to Summerfield Road when she was a child. Her father had a bike with a dynamo light, and she remembered watching for him coming home from work. In 1950 he bought a car, a Jowett Javelin. In 1953 they went on holiday to Cornwall and she and her younger brother Alan were then left on their own in the b&b in Weymouth while her parents went off on their own touring. They found jobs at the local fairground and got paid for helping. The catchphrase was 'never has the sea been so blue'.

Marlene told us about her fridge history after she made an alarming discovery that her milk had gone off. She remembered that there was no fridge during her childhood and her mother had to scald the milk. In 1960 when she was a student in Munich there was no fridge but she bought tinned evaporated milk. In 1966 when in Norway she had her first fridge with a compartment for frozen food. It was enormous. When home she bought a chest freezer from Iceland in Stockport and spent hours blanching vegetables.

David's middle daughter Jill got an MBE in 2016. There were four invitations to go to the palace so David, his wife and Jill and her daughter went. They had to be at the palace at exactly 10.10am. The night before they stayed in London and booked an Uber for 9.30am. The Uber was 10 minutes late and they hadn't taken into account the traffic and roadworks. They had to walk the last 250yds but got there on time. They had elevated seats at the palace so had a good view of everything. Jill had bought a beautiful dress from Debenhams only to find that another woman was wearing the identical dress. She received her MBE from Prince Charles. David showed us the photographs and in my opinion Jill was wearing the nicer pair of shoes.

Quote for the month

Treat everyone with politeness and kindness, not because they are nice, but because you are. – Roy T. Bennett

Barbara Kenneth

DID YOU KNOW?

- Memories are not stored in the same place in the brain. Different aspects of a single memory are distributed across regions of the brain; visual cortex, auditory cortex and amygdala.
- The act of remembering changes the memory itself. The memory is reconstructed using new information, emotions, or perspectives at the time of recall which can become incorporated into the original memory.

PHOTOGRAPHY

This month's topic for the group was BOATS, and we had some great pictures as was shown in the voting, all very close.

Joint first with 6 points each were Calm Maldives from Barbara, and Marple canal from Anthony.



Joint second place with 5 points were Queen Mary 2 from Anthony, Tall ship from Mark, Dry dock Newquay from Barbara and Gondolas Venice from Ken.



Third place was Venice from Mark with 4 points.

This month's topic is STOCKPORT. Entries by September 18th. If anybody else is interested, please send me three photos and I will include them in the competition.

Ken Jackson

READING

At our last meeting we discussed TULIP FEVER by Deborah Moggach, set in Holland in the 17th century at the which tells the story of a wealthy merchant and his young wife who commission a young artist to paint their portrait. The inevitable happens when the artist and the young wife fall in love. This occurs at the height of "Tulip Fever" when a fortune could be made by the sale of a single tulip bulb. The artist stakes all his fortune on the purchase of a tulip bulb which will make enough money to enable the lovers to escape to a new life, but this is not to be. You will have to read the novel to find out what happens.

Most of us enjoyed the story despite the chain of events which lead to an unhappy ending. As in THE MINIATURIST which we read some time ago, we are given a vivid picture of prosperous life in the Netherlands when it was the leading nation in Europe with a vast empire.

Our next meeting is on Monday, 7th September when we will be discussing UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE by Thomas Hardy.

Marlene Brookes

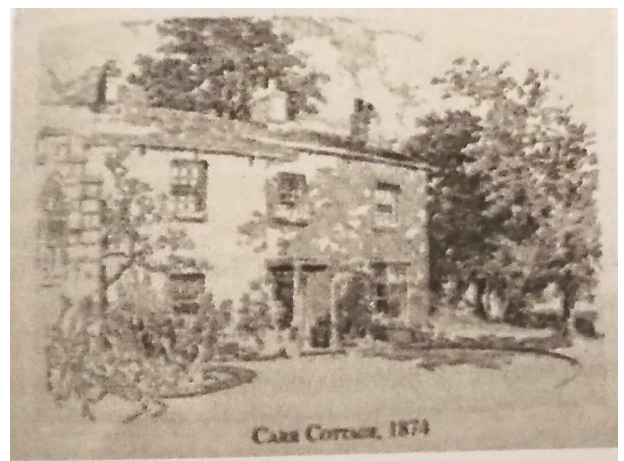
Remembering....

The August newsletter brought back some fond memories for Rosemary and I when we read the Reading groups report about the book "The Manchester Man". As Marlene mentioned the book takes you to Whaley Bridge :-

"Beside the mill, Mr Ashton owned the White Hart inn, close to the bridge, where Buxton coaches stopped and Carr Cottage a long low rough cast building....."

Carr Cottage is still there but is often missed. As you go past the White Hart in Whaley Bridge and carry on to the traffic lights at Horwich End near the lights is Dunbar business centre on the right and opposite on the left an entrance to The Carr hidden in the trees.

Following the death of Mary Grimshawe of the Errwood Hall estate, in about 1930 the land was purchased to build Fernilee and Errwood Reservoirs. On the land were not only the Hall but several farms including the Joule family who lived at Brownhill Farm.



The farms in the area were purchased to create a clean water area around the Reservoirs. The Joules then moved to a farm near Lyme Park where they installed a similar clean zone around the reservoir in the 1960s meaning Ralph, Phyllis and Sybil all moved to temporary accommodation which was next door to Rosemary's mum and dad. The Joules became Rosemary's godparents and moved to none other than "The Carr"

The house was beautiful inside with a small well in the back yard and Sybil and Phyllis were well known in the village for their open top Sunbeam Talbot tourer which was restored at Gray's garage (now Dunbar business centre). Our member Dave Heathcote occasionally worked at Gray's and remembers working on it.

In the middle of the drive to the Carr was a branch of the Cromford Railway and Phyllis in her car was actually hit by a train and shunted up the line.

They were great times; the Joules attended our wedding and eventually in later years moved, living near Rosemary's parents.

Thanks to Barry and Marlene for some great memories.

Rosemary and Les Birks (Treasurer)



QUIZZING

The quiz group is still in abeyance due to my accident, but we hope to be able to get together again in Autumn. I will confirm the date of the next meeting as soon as possible. New members will be very welcome to join our restart.

For the last few months, I've been getting my quiz fix via an IGO quiz group which meets once a month via Zoom on the second Tuesday afternoon. Quizzes are 40 questions on a specific topic which is announced ahead of the meeting. We mark our own answers and share scores online. The August quiz was US States and State capitals. We had questions on 40 different states. For each state, there was one mark for getting the correct State capital plus a mark for identifying a place or person related to the state.

Diane Saxon

IGO is [Interest Groups Online](http://www.interestgroups.org.uk). For just £12 per year, you can access a huge range of interest groups, currently well over 100.

SHORT WALKS

May walk

Today's walk was down the Hagg bank steps or the Lea, as known by the locals. Onto a lane past Athertons farm, with far reaching views to Kinder Scout. Then, onto the canal, where we watched the swing bridge in action and saw the ancient path that bought goods to be transported onto the canal.

Up a little way to Turf Lee and back onto the canal for the return journey, up a gentle slope to the farm with the Escape Room and onto Leafield Road/The Ridgeway estate. The walk was nearly 4 miles with beautiful views and we were lucky with the weather.

Dee Nichols



June walk



Eight folk assembled in Mellor Church Car Park on a beautiful summer morning (not too hot). Agnes kindly led this walk again, as the seven who walked this walk in October 2025 asked for a return to the area.

From Mellor church car park, the group set off through the graveyard to see that the church was open, so in we went, a beautiful old but 'lived in' church. A flight of steps took us from the church down through the vineyard (production of 'Mellor wine next year'). A right turn at a T-junction of pathways took



us over fields to Townscliffe Farm. From here up a local road through sunlit woods and up again to Mill Brow and the pub on Hollywood Road. Winding our way back to pass a very old Mellor Hall with Mullion Windows and studded doors. From here track and path took us back to Mellor Church Car park.

Thank you, Agnes, for leading an interesting walk.

July walk

The morning of our walk was not too hot, in fact a very pleasant temperature. Six folk met in Hague Bar Car Park to start the under 4 mile walk.

An easy walk along the River Goyt through Mousley Bottom crossing the river just before the Millenium bridge up a slope and steps to the cafe in the mill where the group had coffee in a delightful setting. Onward up the road to Knat Hole recreation ground, crossing over the field then making our way a little distant up onto the Hayfield Road in New Mills Newtown and onto the Peak Forest Canal. Onto the footpath with took us to Lower Greenshall Lane (a track) under the railway and onto Waterside Road by the river over Hague bridge and up to the car park.



August walk

Saturday 15th August came with an overcast sky – no sun – and cooler temperature, great for the group. Parking in Jacksons Brickworks car park eleven folk set off down to the Middlewood way and up onto Prince's Incline, crossing Middlewood Road and taking a path passing under a canopy of trees and Davenport Golf Club. At a T junction turning right onto a wide track seeing views of Manchester's Metropolis.

A narrow path on our right took us to a mowed meadow where we had a coffee stop. A Land rover came with a lady and four dogs; yes we were OK to sit. Onward up a slight gradient of the meadow through a kissing gate and then down to the farm in Norbury Hollow. A short walk on Middlewood road and a short climb over badly kept steps brought us onto another field with a slight gradient close to the radio towers turning left and down a track to German Lodge on Middlewood Road. Crossing the road through a kissing gate onto a path taking us back onto Prince's Incline, Middlewood Way and back to the car park.



Thank you, Kath and Majrid.

Ruth Smith

TRAVEL

Lake District Holiday June 2026

Following our morning pick-up from Alderdale Drive the coach and our driver Richard took us to Barton Grange Garden Centre at Garstang. Here we had time for lunch and browse the extensive well stocked wide range of products. Across the road a Marina tempted some of our group to wander around the array of boats and watch the ducks with their little ducklings bathing in the sunshine. We continued our journey to The Damson Dene Hotel where we would stay for the next four nights. The hotel was situated in the Lythe Valley just a few minutes from Bowness-on-Windermere, a tranquil countryside setting for our break.

Tuesday

After breakfast we made our way to Ullswater where we boarded the waiting boat at Pooley Bridge for our cruise. The scenery was wonderful, the dramatic views of the surrounding fells looked majestic even on a dull day. Our destination was Glenridding where our coach was waiting to take us on a scenic drive to The Lakeland Motor Museum at Backbarrow. On arriving some of us descended on the café whilst others went into the museum. I thought the museum was absolutely brilliant, taking us all down memory lane. All the old vehicles from cars, motorcycles, pedal cars and cycles were in pristine condition and most of us could remember the cars etc. on show. In a separate building, the Campbell Bluebird Exhibition was interesting, especially seeing the replica of Bluebird; this interested the men in particular.

Sue Harlin

Wednesday Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway

Today we set off in a different coach with Carl our driver. I think after two days with us Richard felt in need of a holiday and left us in Carl's hands. The trip today took us from our hotel to Haverthwaite Station, a delightfully reconstructed remnant of Mr Beechings cuts and owned and run by a family concern. The station is tastefully decorated with posters, signs and station odds and ends. It has a well-stocked shop and café.

The train steamed in a few minutes before the departure time and the engine posed for photographs. After boarding our carriage, the guards whistle blew dead on time. The train however took a few minutes to respond before we chuffed our way through a very dark tunnel and into the delightful Leven Valley. We all benefitted from a good breath of coal smoke!!



In no time the river widened out to become Windermere and we arrived at our destination, the aptly but not very imaginatively named, Lakeside Station, where the connecting boat was just steaming in. For us however, Carl's fluorescent orange coach was waiting to take us to Ulveston.

Tony Cummings

Several members of our group visited the Laurel and Hardy museum. The Museum was started by a fan, Bill Cubin, with a few scrapbooks of photos, which grew over time until it filled a small room in his cafe. In April 2009 it moved to the current site at the Roxy cinema when a statue of them both was unveiled in the town. Several members of our group had their photos taken with the duo. The museum is packed with memorabilia such with pictures, statues, mugs, records, anything and everything to do with 'The Boys', as they were known.



We also had free time in Ulverston to browse the shops and have a late lunch. Unfortunately, our tour operator had chosen Wednesday to visit, and it was half day closing! However, we found a few shops open and of course the cafes and pubs were serving food and drinks.

Thursday

Arriving in Kendal we had the option of visiting The Lakeland Pencil Museum, unfortunately their car park was closed making it too far to walk for most of us. Just one of our group, Janet, was determined to make it to the museum, it was a short visit as her time was limited and she didn't want to miss the coach, it would have been a long walk back to the hotel. Janet did enjoy the Pencil Museum and vowed to return to spend more time there.

Friday

On our last day we left the hotel at 10am and went to Oswaldtwistle Mill where we spent two hours, some people looking and some people buying, at a vast array of clothes, household goods and much more. After a drink and snack we went on a guided coach tour of the Colne Valley and surrounding moors with a guide from the Mill pointing out places of interest. After a brief stop back at the Mill we went to the Calf's Head Pub in Worston near Clitheroe where we had an excellent carvery meal followed by a large choice of delicious sweets. We had a quiet journey home arriving in High Lane about 7.30pm.

Margaret Jones



Ocean Cruise July

We travelled by coach from High Lane to Liverpool Cruise Terminal with an excellent driver who gave us lots of information about Fred Olsen having sailed with them many times. Bolette is a beautiful ship with many lounges and places to eat. Many of the staff are from the Philippines and Thailand, always smiling and helpful. On our first day at sea, we had an excellent view of Fingal's Cave.

One morning there was a lecture on the folklore of Scotland and Ireland. There are many different versions. The Irish giant Fionn mac Cumhaill built a bridge from the stones in the Giant's Causeway to Fingal's Cave on the island of Staffa which are both built from the same hexagonal basalt columns. The Scottish giant Bennandonner challenged Fionn to a fight, but when he saw how big he was he retreated back to Ireland. When Bennandonner came to Ireland Fionn's cunning wife dressed Fionn as a baby. When the Scottish giant saw how big the baby was, he thought the father must be enormous, so he made a hasty retreat to Staffa.

Entertainment was provided by the resident song and dance company, a comedian from Liverpool, the excellent Coppull and Standish Brass band and the final of the World Cup which some of our group watched. The highlight was an Irish group of singers and dancers who came on board while we were docked in Killybegs.

Belfast

For any Quizzers — If Cotonopolis is Manchester, which city is Linenopolis? It's Belfast, the first city on our cruise. It's full of contrasts, from the impressive architecture of the City Hall, the University, and the ultra-modern steel-clad Titanic Museum to the colourful, historical wall murals which seemed to appear at every street corner on the open top tour bus route. There were no fiddly earphones on this facility — just a humorous tour guide telling us Belfast's history over loudspeakers, but the highlight for me was the Titanic "Experience" where we were lifted and lowered in four-seater carriages, through a simulation of the Harland and Wolff shipyards. It was dark and noisy, a bit like the ghost train at a fairground, but far more impressive and very informative.

Dublin

The day in Dublin started with a rocky boat tender to Dun Laoghaire followed by an efficient DART train into the city. A large crowd was gathered round Molly Malone taking photographs. We met a group of Spanish students there, some wearing their country's football shirts; smiles all round as we congratulated them on their World Cup win.



Next stop was a visit to St Ann's Anglican Episcopalian church. The church is over 300 years old and since 1723 has had bread shelves for the poor. This was on the bequest of Lord Newtown. Bram Stoker, author of Dracula, was married there in 1818. Thomas Barnardo attended Sunday school as a boy; later in 1869 he opened a boys' home in Stepney which marked the beginning of his organisation known as the Barnardo's Homes.

Killybegs- The little cells

Killybegs gets its name from the Irish phrase Na Cealla Beaga, which translates to "the little cells". This name is a reference to the early Christian monastic settlements and stone cells that once stood in the area.

Group members who went into the town commented on a singer in the Town Square and those of us on the tour of the Donegal Wild Atlantic Way saw the fishing boats anchored and warehouses closed until November, due to the fishing quotas. This means that local fishermen have to find other work in the off season. However, the area appears to be benefitting from tourism and cruise ships like The Bolette.

Bog/peat is still taken, dried and used. We saw it drying in the fields as we passed through Kilcar where Donegal tweed is still woven (now on mechanical looms not handwoven). We passed through Carrick and over the Slieve League, cliffs which at 601 metres/1,792 feet are some of the highest in Europe. We were to see these from the Bolette as we sailed away during dinner. They are really spectacular and looked so beautiful in the evening sun. We also enjoyed an Irish coffee in 'The Rusty Mackerel, situated at the foot of Slieve League.



We were able to view Glencolmcille beach, officially known as Silver Strand (An Trá Bhán) which is a secluded, horseshoe-shaped cove in Malin Beg, famous for its crystal-clear waters and towering cliffs. It is accessed by descending 174 steep steps from a clifftop car park. One 88 year old from our group did go down to the beach to watch those swimming in the beautiful clear water! However like many of the group I just enjoyed the view in the warm sunshine from the cliff top.



On our way back to The Bolette we saw some of the old straw thatched roof cottages alongside many beautiful more recent houses, all looking pristine with manicured lawns and gardens. Some of these had robot mowers!

Truly a mixture of old and new Donegal.

Irene Taylor

Galway

We arrived at Arras Docks after leaving our ship on a tender. The heart of Galway City is Eyre Square. It is a vibrant city with shops, pubs and cafés blended among many historical sites. A castle built in 1690 became a bank in 1935. The City Museum was very interesting and informative on the history of this part of Ireland. On our return to the tender, we passed a building known as Red Earl. During its redevelopment a medieval hall was discovered, the oldest building in Galway. All the stones from the floor were left and exhibited for the public to see. The River Corrib and canals offer walks and attractions such as Galway Cathedral and the Spanish Arch.

Contributions from: Mavis Dean, Karen Ganly, Angela Knight, Sheila Small, Irene Taylor and Margaret McDermott.

Sheila was also inspired to pen a poem about the cruise.

A Seafaring Life

*The Bolette is our beautiful ship
Not too big or small
Our home for the cruise round Ireland
It suits us one and all
With seven decks, we're lost, we must hope
Yes, all are smiling, we will cope
The crew smiles too, ever helpful and caring
I think we are going to like seafaring
Meals are delicious
And very ambitious
Something for everyone's taste
Excursions ashore, enjoyed by all
Activities on ship, too many to call
Dolphins following, a thrilling sight
Sun on the waves, forever bright
Followed by a lovely moon
We will remember for ever
Returning home
Too soon!*

WALKING



On August 26th, 12 intrepid u3a walkers set off in rain for a 5-mile walk, with a severe weather warning of thunder/ heavy rain. Within no time the rain had stopped, and we enjoyed a dry and sunny day, as we traversed undulating countryside with historical points of interest and beautiful valleys.

The cottage of the Rainow Witches was interesting, as in 1656, the two female inhabitants were hanged at Chester (gallows hill) though pleading not guilty to the death of three people in the village by witchcraft and devilish acts. We walked on and then enjoyed lovely views whilst eating our lunch in a beautiful valley. Moving on White Nancy (a cone shaped stone folly or summerhouse) came into view, built by the Gaskell Family from Ingersley Hall, in 1817 to commemorate the battle of Waterloo in 1815. A very popular landmark overlooking Bollington. Within a short distance down into the valley, we passed Clough Mill built in 1792. After a fire in 1819 it was rebuilt to house the largest water wheel in the UK. Energised by the River Dean, it had varied uses during its time but was partially destroyed by fire in 1999 and is now earmarked for conversion into luxury apartments.



Walking along the valley we observed Savio House previously known as Ingersley Hall which was purchased in 1952 by the Salesian Brothers as a house of prayer. We then began the final stretch of our walk along Ingersley Vale, retracing the steps of the mill workers some 200 years ago as they walked to work, across beautiful countryside by the river, passing an eye-catching waterfall.

With far reaching views we ended our walk at Rainow in this lovely corner of Cheshire. Several of us then availed ourselves of a refreshing drink, after an interesting and invigorating day.

Monica Martin

National Office Learning Activities for September

Some events you might want to book.

- 4 Sept Wild, edible autumn seeds
- 15 Sept Introduction to Cryptic Crosswords
- 21 Sept Secrets of the human brain: sleep and dreams
- 22 Sept The Enchanted Archipelago – a journey through the Galapagos
- 24 Sept Promoting brain health: From evidence to action
- 27 Sept Live cookery demonstration – try something new. Autumn recipes
- 29 Sept Experimental brain research: from old suppositions to modern observations

All are free via Zoom. Click here for details and to book a place.

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

[Learning activities](#) continue to enable members to share their interests with others across u3a nationally. Activities cover a wide range of interests – challenges and projects to competitions.

Photography, art and writing competitions



Essay competition 2026
The most Incredible Journey
Judging is in progress. Keep an eye out here for further announcements.



The still got it photography project
Take part in a celebration of positive ageing through photography.



Short story competition winners 2025/26
Read the winning stories and final shortlist on the theme of 'Lost and Found'.

Connect with members



Missing Pieces
Explore a listed building in your area with your u3a group, uncover its stories through shared memories and research, and contribute your discoveries to the national heritage archives.



Virtual visits
Share your favourite places and discover new and interesting destinations.



Paint or draw
Monthly themed galleries – Submit your artwork!



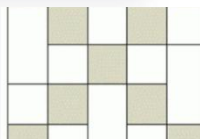
u3a Eye
Themed photography project – Submit entries for "Disruption"



u3a walkers' exchange
An initiative for u3a walking groups to exchange trips with others.



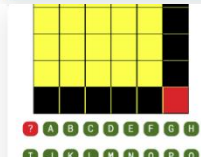
The u3a quiz library
Quiz leaders & enthusiasts—swap quiz rounds here!



Logic puzzles
Puzzles once a month followed by solutions the month after



Maths challenge
New quiz every Thursday followed by answers a week later



Aileen's game
Play Aileen's game, a word game created by East Suffolk u3a member Ian Clarke.