

# HIGH LANE U3A NEWSLETTER

[www.highlaneu3a.org.uk](http://www.highlaneu3a.org.uk)

Editor  
Jean Drinkwater  
e mail: [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk)

HIGH LANE  
U3A



July 2008

---

*News below of a new group – the High Lane U3A just keeps growing!*

## Philately Group



We held the inaugural meeting of the Philately Group at my house on Tuesday 3rd June. Although 12 people had expressed an interest in joining the group, we could only get five together at this time, because of holidays and other commitments. Those that came brought with them some very interesting collections and we got thoroughly engrossed in looking at them and discussing individual preferences. The two hours we allocated ourselves went very quickly and everyone agreed that it was definitely worthwhile developing the group.

Whilst the group is still small and for the foreseeable future, most likely because we are into the holiday season, we will continue to meet at my house on the second Tuesday of every month, from 2.00 until 4.00. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 8th July.

If there is anyone interested in joining the Philately group, please contact Brian Farquhar.

Brian Farquhar

## Needlework Group



The Needlework group are having a break from creativity at the moment but plan to meet up for a meal on 15<sup>th</sup> July at Al Fresco's in Hazel Grove. Normal service will be resumed in September.

## Reading Group



There are about 14 members of this group now so we cannot take any more unless you enter on a waiting list. We read a great variety of books and have quite animated discussions about these. We have read recently *An Uncommon Reader* - Alan Bennet; *The Observations* - Jane Harris; *Mr. Pip* – Lloyd Jones and others. We are open to suggestions regarding the books we read.

Often we choose poems we either like or dislike and read them to each other and discuss them. We have, occasionally, read through plays too and are always open to suggestions. Our next meeting is on 9<sup>th</sup> July when we are having a party, as well as the discussion on our current book, *The Tenderness of Wolves* by Stef Penney. We usually meet on the second Wednesday morning of each month and after July the following meeting will be the second Wednesday in September.

Sue Dintinger – Group Leader

## Reports from Churches and Pubs Group



It was a beautiful day for our trip to the Bhurtpore Inn in Aston and then to St. Mary's in Nantwich. The Bhurtpore specializes in Indian curries which most of our group had and thoroughly enjoyed. After a leisurely lunch we headed to the parish church of St. Mary's, which is considered to be one of Britain's finest Medieval town churches dominating the centre of Nantwich. Built of Cheshire red sandstone it is a magnificent example of 14th Century architecture and several mason's marks are clearly visible on the inside walls.

On our arrival we were greeted by Ray who then introduced us to David and Harold, who were our very knowledgeable and witty guides. In the nave of the church are many stained glass windows. Situated in the North aisle is the newest stained glass called the "Creation" window, given in 1984 by Mrs Elizabeth Bourne in memory of her husband Albert, a local farmer. The farmer himself is shown twice, fishing in the stream and on the opposite side, emerging from the trees with his gun and dog. The lower section of the window shows the farmer's house with creatures of the Cheshire Plain. Above are shown some animals of the world, birds of the air and fishes of the sea, star and heavenly bodies including Halley's comet - all beneath the hand of the creator. The window was designed by Michael Farrar-Bell.

The wonderful carved pulpit was designed by Thomas Finch in 1601. The kneelers are the work of St. Mary's tapestry group and each pew has a different theme. The tapestry kneelers are very colourful and attract a lot of visitors from all over the world.

In the chancel is a richly canopied sedilla, with many wonderful wooden carvings and we could have spent a longer time looking at them.

The Jubilee curtain impressed us all. It was designed by Denise Bates and embroidered by the ladies of St. Mary's.

There was so much to see that the time flew by and before we knew it, it was time for us to leave. Our thanks go to Steve for all his hard work and for such an enjoyable day. We look forward to Chesterfield.

## Paul Kenneth

Chesterfield parish church's wonky spire became famously twisted and bent in sheer surprise when a bride turned out to be a virgin on her wedding day, so the old story goes. Another myth insists the devil became enraged at a clumsy shoeing job on his hooves and clobbered the spire with his tail.

More mundanely, it's probable that Bob the medieval builder skimped on the materials, which promptly warped and woofed, put a squiggle in the spire and made Chesterfield's fortune in the tourist industry.

Thirty five of us turned up to tour the Church of Our Lady and All Saints (mysteriously, 36 later sat down for lunch and no, the latecomer was not Old Nick) but not all made it up the squeezebelly spiral stairs to the base of the tower. Those who did were treated to fabulous views on every side because the church sits in a wide, shallow depression.

Interestingly, the lead-covered, oak framed spire also simply plonks its 200-ton weight on the stone tower, like a boiled egg in an egg-cup -- no bolts to hold it down, no superglue, no zip fasteners, just its own weight preventing it from blowing away.

An excellent lunch at the Old Pump at Barlow demonstrated the way successful British pubs are moving to the heights of the better sort of French village caff.

Cue for an old Bernard Manning joke.

British diner perusing menu in Parisian restaurant: 'Garcon, have you got frogs' legs'?

Waiter: 'Oui monsieur'.

Diner: 'Well hop off to the kitchen and get me pie and chips'!

How things have changed for the better.

The hugely enjoyable outing was plotted, planned and persecuted by Steve Reynolds' Worldwide Mega Productions for High Lane U3A.

## Tony Holt

Poem by Leo Marx submitted by Mary Leigh

The Life that I have is all that I have  
And the life that I have is yours  
The love that I have of the life that I have  
Is yours and yours and yours

A sleep I shall have, a rest I shall have  
Yet death will be but a pause  
For the peace of my years  
In the long green grass  
Will be yours and yours and yours.

## Visit to Munich 23<sup>rd</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> April 2008



A small group of U3A members travelled to Munich in April. Here are some accounts of the trip by 3 of the members of the group: Full report on website.

### From Pat Gorie:

A party of seven travelled to Munich on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and settled in at the very comfortable Hotel Ambiente conveniently situated near to the excellent transport facilities in the city. Marlene was an excellent guide as she knew Munich well, having spent a year at the university there and was able to tell us many details about places we visited.

We had six days there. Some of the Highspots were seeing the beautiful architecture of the city; visiting the English garden; the Hofbrauhaus with its 'oompah' band in Bavarian costume; meals at the homes of Marlene's friends, Franziska and Gerdi where we were given great hospitality; and then two splendid days out to Salzburg and Mittenwald, the latter a delightful alpine village surrounded by towering mountains. Only Marlene and Rona ascended the Karwendel by cable car, the rest of us indulging in retail therapy, eating cakes and drinking coffee! Altogether a very happy and interesting holiday!

### And now from our Zoo Correspondent, June Gibbs:

On a sunny Sunday morning three of us set off for the zoo, a very easy journey with the public transport in Munich.

The origin of zoos in Munich dates back as far as 1770 when the Elector Maximilian III set up an enclosure for exotic animals, strictly for the nobility in those days, of course.

There were several attempts at setting up a public zoo, but all failed until 1902 when Hermann von Manz was more successful. It cost at least half a million marks and the land was provided free of charge. On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1911 the zoo opened. The zoo was badly damaged after being bombed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War but it was able to reopen its doors in 1945.

We had a very enjoyable day watching the animals being fed. The giraffes were very amusing. A baby giraffe, only one month old and as tall as a tree was trying to get the food and being chased away by what I presume to be his father. Then the elephants gave us a display of acrobatics in their new enclosure which was only completed in December 2007, just in time for Christmas. The wide variety of animals at Hellabrun Zoo gives visitors a fascinating discovery tour of animals representing every continent.

The zoo has a successful international breeding and cross breeding programme of both wild and domestic animals.

As usual, there was not sufficient time, but having seen the giraffes, penguins, kangaroos, chimps, orang utans, big cats, the aquarium and the large play area for children, we certainly had a full day.

By the way, did you know that the gestation period for a giraffe is 450 days? Well, on that note, I'm glad that I am a mere human being!

### A Day in the Bavarian Alps by Rona White

After having spent a wonderfully varied, but somewhat lively week in Munich and its surrounding areas, I was looking forward to the rather more restful day that Marlene had planned, visiting the beautiful Alpine village of Mittenwald situated on the borders of Germany and Austria.

This was to be the last day of a very memorable week. Thanks to Marlene's extensive local knowledge and impeccable German, we were privileged to be able to communicate with the local people (Marlene talks to everybody), and to make our way round using public transport, thus avoiding costly coach tours which can sometimes be too structured.

Monday dawned and we headed for the railway station where we took a very restful couple of hours' train journey to Mittenwald. On the way we passed many 'Swiss chalet' type villages and magnificent scenery.

However, as we left the train on arrival in Mittenwald, we experienced the most breathtakingly beautiful view of an idyllic alpine village, nestling at the foot of a range of magnificent mountains.

Naturally, being a group of seven women, we first 'hit' the shops in the local high street, which, because it was out of holiday season, we had to ourselves. There were quaint little craft shops and some of us were able to grab a bargain in the little boutiques, However, I digress.

It is sad that in England we are generally unable to wander round our old churches in the way that one can in other countries. Southern Germany, being largely Catholic, means that there are so many examples of superb church architecture, Mittenwald being no exception.

We paused for a drink in the local specialist tea shop, where I had a Darjeeling leaf tea, served in a very elegant teapot incorporating a delicate porcelain tea strainer, which one immersed with German-like precision for exactly three minutes in the teapot. I was provided with a timer for this purpose. However, 'high tech' comes at a price - nearly 5 Euros for a cup of tea, but well worth the experience, and it tasted good after all that coffee one is obliged to drink after leaving the UK.

Next came the big question - Who was willing to accompany Marlene on the cable car up the Karwendel? Now, I might be described as more wimp than daredevil, but was surprised to find that I was the only 'taker' (must be something in the air). I consoled myself by saying that it can't be much

different from taking off in a plane. You are surrounded by the enclosed car, and despite being told that the engineers initially believed that to install a cable car up this mountain could not be done, and that it has only one main support, I still considered that it was well worth the risk for this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

It costs less to take the cable car after lunch when there are fewer skiers using the service. Coffee and cake is provided free of charge on reaching the mountain peak restaurant.

The ascent was surprisingly not unlike going up in a plane. We were surrounded by a sturdy carriage, far less scary than a chair lift. However, as we ascended more steeply, we could almost touch the sides of the mountain and my courage began to waiver. It was a long way up!

On reaching the summit, one can appreciate just how spectacular the views are and Marlene and I got busy with our cameras. It is said that you can just cross the border into Austria by simply taking a few steps, but I found that the banks of snow were a little disconcerting as you could not be sure how much solid ground was underneath. So we missed the opportunity of entering the Tirol.

I was surprised to find a number of crow-like birds (alpine choughs) on the peak, although I suppose the majority of birds would not suffer from a fear of heights.

### German Group

Some of us will have returned from a trip to Forchheim by the end of June, having experienced a full, interesting programme of excursions and events, visiting Ingolstadt, Nuremberg, Coburg and enjoying a welcome day of relaxation in a spa. The main group will resume classes in July when we will, no doubt, plan a meal out before our summer break.

### WALK REPORT



#### APRIL 2008

Ray and Rae took 23 of us to Swettenham for a very pleasant walk in the well kept Cheshire countryside. We left the Swettenham Arms (a former nunnery, reputedly with a secret tunnel through to the nearby church), and walked quiet lanes and the attractive bridle path across the fast flowing River Dane through to Brereton Heath Park Country Park.

This former heathland was extensively quarried for its high grade silica sand to be used locally in glass making and in the Midlands for iron foundry casting. The quarry has now become a lake surrounded by pleasant birchwoods and open glades, and as is nowadays common in country parks, with an occasional wood carving.

While the rest of the country was suffering heavy downpours, we were blessed with fine weather for walking, and for eating our packed lunches. The walk was not overlong, but one or two did get up sufficient thirst for a jar or two in the Swettenham Arms. Many thanks to Ray and Rae for their walk.

### **MAY 2008**

Eighteen of us (including a visitor from Liverpool ) enjoyed the walk led by Richard and Susan Clark. They took us to the pleasantly undulating meadows and woods between Mottram St Andrew, Hare Hill and the ridge of Alderley Edge. Late bluebells sprinkled the undergrowth, fishing ponds were all around, and there were lovely views of the distant Cheshire plain and the nearby hills of Lyme and Sponds.

In one field were cattle with calves, of a breed we couldn't identify, but they tolerated our passage. Other walking groups passed to and fro, one had some old University friends of our Chairman John, and there was even a group from Formby. Occasional rough ground and an awkward stile or two were the only blemishes on a very pleasant walk, and I believe, a very pleasant meal to follow at Osteria Mauros (formerly the Bull's Head). Many thanks to Richard and Susan.

### **NEXT WALKS**

**JUNE 25** Brian Allerton – meet 1000am High Lane, with packed lunch for a 6 miles fairly hilly walk, which starts on the Long Hill road out of Whaley Bridge, at a lay by on the right soon after leaving the traffic lights. Report in next newsletter

**JULY 30** Walter Mason – bring bus passes and packed lunch, and meet at 9.40am for a choice of 5 or 7 mile walks. We will start at Dove Holes, and return either from the Hanging Gate at Combs, or the Jodrell Arms at Whaley Bridge. One longish hill at the start, then a lot of downhill on good roads/paths, with just one stretch which is fairly rough, possibly muddy.

### **TRAVEL GROUP**



**The balance for the visit to Prague must be paid at the meeting on August 13th. If you are unable to attend please send to me a cheque payable to NEWMARKET AIR HOLIDAYS Ltd., by that date. (£275 sharing, £352 single room).**

**Margaret Mc Dermott.**

### **Discussion Group**

**Peter Harrington** introduced the subject of "The demise of good manners and courtesy in today's society". He has noticed that manners are now conspicuous by their absence and we discussed whether this was a trait of the modern generation or did it go deeper? Unfortunately it seems to be across the generations and perhaps it all started long ago and has been passed down. What started it is a matter of much speculation. T.V?

Changes in society? Greed is good? Parents? Peer groups? All the usual suspects? The motor car? Education? Certainly T.V. helped to kill table manners and courtesy on the roads is just a memory. We had to accept that if manners are not yet dead, they are certainly moribund.

The contentious subject of privacy was presented by **Sonia Ellis**.

The continuous and insidious invasion of one's privacy by all sorts of commercial interests, Local Government and National Government departments is deplorable.

Local Governments sell off the Voters Register to commercial interests and National Government sell off the Census records to all sorts of interested parties.

Banks want all sorts of details from customers otherwise they won't take your money off you! Tesco and other supermarkets compile "customer profiles" and the N.H.S.

combined with the Social Security have enormous amounts of data on the public. Is it secure?

Are we in danger of information overload? We have CCTV cameras on the streets, in bus shelters, on buses, on trains, in shops and stores and where else?

New passports are to include "biometrics" in the form of iris scans.

Some groups are pressing for I.D. Cards, some groups want a data base of everybody's fingerprints and yet other pressure groups (same groups?) want a data base of everybody's DNA.

If they are all successful some people will find it impossible to get insurance, some people will never get employment and others will be advised against having children. Also who would want to know that they have a DNA time bomb ticking inside them? It looks like the ultimate nightmare scenario. And all this may catch some criminals but it won't stop them.

**June Gibbs** introduced the contentious subject of legalised abortion, which has recently been discussed in Parliament. For the average lay person it is difficult to reach a conclusion as to the ethics of the subject. We enter into the realms of should a woman have the right to say what happens to the reproductive aspects of her body? Is it right to terminate the development of a foetus and if so at what stage of development and for what reason/s? The reasons for terminating can be many and quite complex and it is usually not a procedure that is either requested or authorised without a great deal of questioning both by the woman and the medical authorities. A very deep subject about which there are many diverse opinions.

**Jim McDermott**

THE DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER IS FRIDAY THE 29<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2008