

HIGH LANE U3A NEWSLETTER

www.highlaneu3a.org.uk

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HIGH LANE
U3A

September 2009



Speakers for forthcoming U3A Meetings

A reminder for those who receive the newsletter by email - our September talk is by Elizabeth Williams a much respected lecturer and the title of her talk is "Jane Austin, Charlotte Bronte and Love"

In October Marion Hankey's talk is entitled "The Natural process of Aging"

The subject for November is Alison Uttley (author of "Little Grey Rabbit" and 100 other books for children). She spent her childhood on an isolated farm near Cromford and was only the second girl to study for a physics degree at Manchester University. After marriage she lived in Knutsford and later Bowden. The talk traces her life and career and is illustrated through slides of the places and natural history associated with her life and writing

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Dancing Group Ballroom Lessons



Ballroom Dancing classes are held on Friday afternoons at High Lane Village Hall from 2.00 – 4.00 p.m.

The dates for the autumn are:-

11th September
25th September
9th October
23rd October
6th November
20th November
27th November

Cost:- £9.00 per person for the term - Contact:- Kath Taylor

NB: There is a waiting list for this class.

Family History Group



The Family History group meetings will restart on Thursday 17th September. Returning and new members will be welcome and we hope to cover topics of interest to everyone whether experienced or absolute beginner.

The meetings will be held 4.30-6.30pm on the first and third Thursdays of the month during term time in the computer room at Brookside Primary School.

We have the use of the school computers with internet access. We also have access to a fiche reader and the index for the 1881 census.

Our meetings are part general discussion and part computer based and we are happy to add in extra topics of general interest on request. We made some fascinating discoveries in the previous sessions (including a couple of shotgun weddings) and although it can be a slow process with a number of brick walls on the way, perseverance often paid dividends with a great sense of achievement at the end.

Autumn Programme

17 th Sept	Getting started	-	Basic web sites
1 st Oct	Civil registration of births, marriages and deaths		Internet access to the BMD information
15 th Oct	Census information from 1841 – 1911		
5 th Nov	A more detailed look at the freeBMD and familysearch websites and how to get the most from them.	-	More detailed look at the 1881 census index
19 th Nov	Information on birth, marriage and death certificates and how to order them by post or on line		
3 rd Dec	Keeping records and storing information		

In addition to these basic topics we hope to provide additional topics for those of you with more experience. E.g. genuki, war graves, trade and street directories and any topic of general interest on request.

The U3A requires us to cover our costs which include room hire. We do get this at a preferential rate but to ensure we meet our commitments we have decided on two scales of charges. Pre-booked and paid 6 sessions for £14, or £3.00 per session.

If you have any questions about the group please contact: Pat Christopher, Sue Harlin, or Jean Drinkwater

OPEN GARDENING CLUB

As the High Lane U3A group is part of the Pennine Link members are welcome to attend the Gardening group of Marple Bridge and Mellor. Below is the programme of events up to Christmas:-

9 th September	Outing to Styal
14 th October	Stockport Trees, speaker, Mr. J. McGarrie
11 th November	Winter Hanging Baskets, Kate Lomax
9 th December	Mary Hoult talking about 'Mellor Gardens'

Also ideas wanted from group on 'What to give a gardener for Christmas!'

HERITAGE GROUP

MACCLESFIELD HERITAGE CENTRE, PARADISE MILL AND SILK MUSEUM



WEDNESDAY 7th OCTOBER

MEET

10.55 am HERITAGE CENTRE (Roe Street) to view displays

Followed by free time for lunch etc. There are plenty of cafes, including one at the Heritage Centre.

1.35 pm PARADISE MILL (Park Lane) for a guided tour.

2.30 pm SILK MUSEUM (Park Lane)

COST: £7.75 per person

PLEASE NOTE

We will need to make our own way to Macclesfield. There are car parks in the town. A bus runs from Stockport to Macclesfield Bus Station stopping in Hazel Grove and Poynton. It is a 5/10 minute walk from the Bus Station to the Heritage Centre - the Railway Station is approx. 10/15 minutes walk.

Would you please let us know if you wish to be included on this visit.

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Matinee Group



Bolton Octagon Theatre

"Ghosts" by Henrik Ibsen

Saturday 14th November 2009 at 2pm

The cost of the seat is £8.50 or £14.40 for ticket and coach.

Last date for booking is 14th October 2009.

Lowry Theatre

" White Christmas " by Irvin Berlin

Wednesday 2nd December at 2pm

The cost of the seat is £27, coach £6.00

There is a waiting list as this is fully booked.

Royal Exchange Manchester

" Blythe Spirit " by Noel Coward

Saturday 2nd January 2010

No coach on this occasion. No further information regarding cost or time yet

Churches and Pubs

Visit to St. Oswalds Church, Lower Peover. - Wednesday 23rd July 2009.



Some two dozen members of the Group made their way to St. Oswald's, Lower Peover for 11am.

Fortunately we arrived during a sunny break in the weather and were able to get some nice pictures of the Church exterior before entering and meeting our guide Mrs. Ann Godfrey.

The church is dedicated to Oswald, king of Northumbria from 634AD, who was converted to Christianity as a young Prince and took an active part in evangelizing that Kingdom. He lost his life at the battle of Maserfield (probably Oswestry) on August 5th, 642. The following year his remains were recovered by his brother and taken to be enshrined at Lindesfarne. Oswald was considered a Saint and a Martyr and as a result relics accompanied English Missions to the Continent from 690 onward.

The founding of St. Oswald's, Lower Peover by Richard Grosvenor in 1269 was probably due to the steady increase in the number of tenants as the land was drained and forests cleared

When he had built his chapel of dark oak interior, half timbered on the outside, he applied for the services of a priest. It was arranged between Royal Authority (Henry III), the prior of Norton and the clergy of Great Budworth that a priest should visit Lower Peover on Sundays and Wednesdays, the chief Holy Days and Saint Oswald's day (Aug. 5th).

Mediaeval churches had little furniture apart from the altar. In St. Oswald's the first addition was a font, introduced in 1322 when baptisms were first permitted.

The only other notable, and necessary, piece of furniture in the Middle Ages was the chest in which books, vessels and robes were kept locked when not in use. St. Oswald's is famous for its 'bog-oak' chest, now in the South Chancel, one of a very few left of its kind.



Legend has it that at one time the prospective bride of a Cheshire farmer was required to be able to lift the heavy lid with one hand!

By the middle of the 15th century the estates had passed to Sir Robert Grosvenor of Hulme. In his will he left provision for the building to be enlarged. A proper side-aisle was added along the north side, the roof being adjusted in some way to allow for this. Some of the carved roof-timbers remaining today in the north aisle may go back to this date.

It was in 1582, just six years before the defeat of the Armada, that the registers (opening in 1570) record: "In this year the Tower was builded of stone" from Alderley. There had been two bells in the old tower, as recorded in an inventory made by royal order in 1548, under Edward VI. By 1625 the new tower contained four bells. Today there are six, and change-ringing is regularly practiced and performed.

The main changes were made at the time of John Holme. In 1852, under the direction of the well-known architect A Salvin, and the church was transformed into "the finest specimen of timber-built ecclesiastical edifices extant" (*Illustrated London News*. Jan 1st, 1853). The pattern of half-timbering visible previously on the north side, gave inspiration for what is now seen round the exterior as a whole.

A small organ had been in use for some years. It was later replaced by a larger one (Alexander Young, 1880) which was further adapted in the 1950's and in the 1980's.

The windows, as altered and replaced in 1852, were of clear glass, as had pertained since the Cromwellian period. In 1875 the main east window was glazed in memory of the Rev. John Holme, with a Resurrection scene and the four Evangelists. Other memorial windows followed in the succeeding decades, of good quality for their period.

The building was wired for electric light in 1939, but not lit by that means until 1945. It was rewired in 1967. Candlesticks and candelabra are used at Festival Evensongs and these remain in the chancel area. Both chandeliers are of the 19th Century: the one of wrought iron is English in make and design, while the brass one is copied from a 17th century Dutch pattern.



Finally we cannot finish without mentioning the Clock - On the belfry wall a diamond-shaped tablet reads - "To the glory of God, in commemoration of the sex-centenary of this church (1296-1896,) and of the Diamond Jubilee of her Majesty, Queen Victoria (1837-1897,) the clock with chimes was placed in the tower on Wake Sunday, 1897" This clock is a horizontal beam clock manufactured by Midland Steam Clock Works of Derby. It remains the only public clock in the parish.

The Church is still in rural surroundings at this well known beauty spot. Here is a centre of Christian worship and life for a parish of nearly 2,000 people. Long may it remain.

Following our guided tour of the Church, we thanked our excellent guide Mrs. Godfrey, then the party *ran* through pouring rain to the adjacent hostelry, 'The Bells of Peover' which was fortunately only a few yards away. This 'Pub' dates back to 1569, but its more recent claim to fame was as a privately run very high class Restaurant and Public House. Unfortunately, since the original proprietors left it has since been taken over by one after another of the well-known brewery chains culminating with the acquisition, by Robinson's of Stockport, only a few weeks ago.

Whilst the 'locals' point out that it is no longer the restaurant that it was when in private hands, we found the fare and service of a high standard. The menu provided a very good variety of foods that seemed to suit all palates and pockets. The cost for a generous main course and drink being about £12.50 per head. Certainly we heard no complaints and believe that there was a general move to sign up for our next soirée.

Eric & Sue Harlin

DINING GROUP



The next lunchtime outing of the Dining Group will be to The Peruga Restaurant on the 15th October at 12.30 for 1.00 p.m. Please see Margaret or Jean at the next meeting to checkout the menu and make a booking.

Walking Group head for North Yorkshire Coast



At the end of June and on a sunny weekend, the walking group went to the Raven Hall Hotel at Ravenscar, a superb location, fantastic views and wonderful food ... and that was before we had done any walking!

We met on Sunday morning at West Ayton and our “starter for 5 miles” was a walk through Forge Valley. This could have been the Malaysian jungle since plenty of rain and warm sunshine had encouraged the undergrowth to enthusiastically overtake the path. Quote from the leader “it wasn’t like this when we came in February” but we forged ahead to the lunch stop. Here our ingenuity was challenged with 27 walkers and one picnic table and bench – needless to say it was cosy for those sitting down. Now the return journey back along the riverbank was certainly an issue for the Health & Safety Executive. The duck boards built over the boggy ground were deadly – covered in slime, moss and decayed leaves but the nimble footed folk traversed them successfully but some interesting oohh...., gosh...., aghs.... accompanied the slipping and sliding until we reached the safety of a traditional field. Back to the car park and time to head to the hotel, check in, explore, go for a swim and order a well-earned drink before our very welcome evening meal.

On Monday we walked along the Cleveland Way to Robin Hood’s Bay famous for sea, sand, secret streets and smugglers. It was another lovely day and there were spectacular views across the bay. After a lunch/picnic stop we walked back along the beach (and yes... the tide was out). However since our hotel was 700 feet above sea level, so 700 feet had to be climbed on the return journey along the “ever steadily ascending coastal path” – this is popular but deceptive walking terminology for jolly steep. Never defeated the resourceful walkers produced different coping strategies i.e.

- a) the steady pace approach – ok for some
- b) race ahead then slow down and collapse – some like it this way?

Or c) the successful improvised tortoise approach, which is accompanied by a “Private Benjamin” style chant: “1, 2, 3, 4; a few more steps and then some more” (say it aloud and practise marching = it works!!)

Return to the hotel for another well earned drink (yes, walking makes you thirsty) followed by a delicious meal after which brain power was needed for a very challenging table quiz (at Christmas our leader acquired a large quiz book – beware). With our brains drained some still active members of the group took up the gauntlet for a table tennis competition, those less energetic played bridge or scrabble, whilst there was also the option of watching Andy Murray play his epic evening floodlit tennis match. The statistics for these options remain a closely guarded secret.

After a good rest we had a more modest walk on Tuesday morning which some of the group had trail blazed the previous day. Although there was a sea mist when the tide came in (early

in the morning and in the evening) there was lovely sunshine during the day. At lunchtime we officially finished the holiday, although some of us stayed another night and then came home on a scenic route with perhaps a castle, stately home or impressive garden to visit. The entire group, with mixed abilities, were able to find enjoyable walks whilst the hotel was wonderful and so it was an extremely successful weekend. There was good group bonding, plenty of laughs and smiles all round. Our grateful thanks to Steve and Ann for producing, yet again, another winner.

Judith Ridgway

Walk Report July 2009



On the day the British Met Office declared the barbecue summer dead and buried, 8 intrepid U3A walkers led by Louanne and Peter Collins decided to test that declaration with an “easy” 5 miler near the Buxton and Matlock Bath spa areas. 3 watery hours after our start from the Robin Hood pub above Baslow, we agreed completely with the meteorologists, after seeing a varied set of rain, from fine, through steady, to heavy – but all continuous, and very wetting! Those same meteorologists, by the way, had forecast the downpours to blanket the North West, and miss Derbyshire – but we can all make mistakes!

Through the raindrops, and unmolested by tourists or fair weather picnickers, we got close to the battleship – like rocks of Birchin Edge, and the monuments to the British heroes Nelson (a slender needlelike column), and Wellington (a sturdy cross on a layered gritstone outcrop).

Views were misty and tenuous, and the ground inevitably soggy and occasionally boggy, but our spirits held firm, even jovial, as we descended from the edge, proceeded along the old Chesterfield Road (now a track), picked our way through the woods down Jack Flat, and climbed up by Gardom Edge on our return to the Robin Hood.. Neolithic field systems abound in this area, so were our ancestors a hardy lot if they thrived on these damp fields in the days before supposed global warming?

A quick shedding of damp clothing, a quick drink at the Robin Hood, and we were recognisable and smart again, and ready for a – surely hot and sunny? – next walk at the end of August (26th), to be led by Steve Reynolds. But thanks to Louanne and Peter for showing us that walks can be interesting and enjoyable even on the wettest days.

Walter Mason

“Why do banks charge a fee on 'insufficient funds' when they know there is not enough money?”

Philosophy Group



The Philosophy Group will resume on Monday 14th September at 2.00 p.m., hosted by Shirley Harrison. Anyone who is interested can dip into any of the following sessions:-

1. Recap of the aims of philosophy and some previous topics
2. Ayn Rand – Objectivism and does man need values and why?
3. Karl Marx – The forgotten philosopher with the big impact.
4. Aristototele – He defined western thought.
5. Stanley Milgram – The perils of obedience.
6. Immanuel Kant –The most influential philosopher of modern times.
7. John Dewey – Pragmatism and how to find the truth.

Liam Canavan

TRAVEL GROUP



Cruise on P&O Arcadia to the Adriatic on October 16th 2010 for 17 nights.
We have one lady who would like to share a cabin. Anyone interested please contact Margaret McDermott.

MARPLE BRIDGE & MELLOR U3A have organised a 10 night holiday in Turkey from 5th to 15th May, 6 nights in Istanbul and 4 nights in Sile on the Black Sea Coast. The cost is £1055 sharing a twin room, with a single supplement of £340. Members of High Lane U3A may join this group. Contact Hazel Jones or Margaret McDermott.

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“Why do doctors leave the room while you change? They're going to see you naked anyway.”

"Why does someone believe you when you say there are four billion stars, but check when you say the paint is wet?"

DISCUSSION GROUP



On the 24th June the topic for discussion was Democracy, introduced by Irene Bently. What is democracy? Has any Government ever practiced democracy since the time of Democritus? Can any Government ever stay stable under Democracy? Proper Democracy means that every group, no matter how small, how irrelevant, how irrational, should and can have a say in how the country is run. Well, just look at Italy. To consider the non-democracies, look at North Korea. So it is obvious that a compromise has to be reached. Democracy in a limited form such as the one we have seems to work after a fashion but in a dissatisfactory way. We can get Governments representing less than half the population. There seems to be no solution which will meet everyone's requirements. We all agreed to differ and throw the question open to suggestions. Any offers?

On the 22nd July the subject for discussion was 'Benefits', introduced by Amy Summers. Benefits are aimed at needy people and are not to be confused with Grants which are awarded to Firms, organisations, Institutions and deserving individuals. Benefits seem to be available for a bewildering number of circumstances. Can you guess how many? Nor could the members of the group. There seems to be a Benefit to cover almost every circumstance but it isn't until one makes the necessary enquiry that one discovers the existence of it. At first sight it appears that some of them are there just for the asking but we were assured that each application for a Benefit is safeguarded so well that some genuine applicants are so frustrated that they give up in despair. This is not to say that a determined fraudster will not succeed in penetrating the Red Tape defences. The question was should we have such a large number of Benefits? Some of us were not aware that the retirement pension is classed as a Benefit so can it be true, as some newspapers say that we are living in a Benefit culture? Or is it really a safety net for the needy and unfortunate?

On the 26th August the discussion subject was 'Taxes', introduced by Margaret McDermott. How much do we pay in real terms, how much do we pay relative to other developed countries, how is it distributed, should more be allocated to, for instance, Defence and less to Education, or more to Pensions and less to Rail subsidies? Complex and complicated. However, we did learn that we are not the most heavily taxed nation in the E.U. As a percentage of G.D.P. Denmark pays 50% in taxes, France 46%, Germany 40.6%. U.K. 39%. Some examples of V.A.T. are Denmark & Sweden both 25%, Belgium 21%, France 19.6%, Germany 19%. The U.K. has the lowest V.A.T. rate in the E.U. Other E.U. nations obviously have differing commitments so comparisons for expenditure are not possible but it seems that Scandinavian countries spend more on Social benefits than other E.U. nations. In the U.K. the biggest expenditure is also on Social Security followed by Health and then Education etc. We agreed that as long as we are getting value for money then taxation can be endured. Local Taxation is another minefield entirely, to be discussed at a different meeting.

Jim McDermott.

GERMAN GROUP



We will next meet on 11th September after our summer break. As we missed out on a meal recently we shall organise one in the near future. Let's hope everyone has a lot to talk about (in German, of course!)

NEEDLEWORK GROUP



On 4th September a group of us will have attended The Stitch and Creative Crafts Show at Manchester Central where we hope to pick up some new ideas and bargains. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, 17th September. New members welcome.

How To Know When You Are Getting Old!

Everything hurts!
What doesn't hurt, doesn't work,
The gleam in your eye
Is the sun shining on your bi-focals,
You feel like the morning after,
But you haven't been anywhere,
Your children begin to look middle-aged.

You turn out the light for economy
instead of romance.
You are in a rocking chair,
but can't make it go.
Your knees buckle but your belt won't
Your back goes out more than you do.

You join a health club,
But you don't go.
A dripping tap causes an uncontrollable urge.
You have all the answers,
but nobody asks you the questions.
You look forward to a dull evening.
You need glasses to find your glasses.

Your house is too big,
Your medicine box is not big enough.
You sink your teeth into a steak,
and they stay there.
Your birthday cake collapses from the
Weight of all the candles.

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Items for the next newsletter to be with the editor by Thursday 29th October.

"Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?"