

HIGH LANE U3A NEWSLETTER



www.highlaneu3a.org.uk

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March 2012

Chairman's Report at AGM

I hope you will agree that 2011 will go down as a good year in the history of High Lane U3A, and for 2 main reasons:

We celebrated suitably our 10th anniversary with a series of events throughout the year. I don't intend to go through them all as that's been done before and I'm sure most of you will have attended some or all of them. Suffice to say that, from my perspective they were all extremely enjoyable and, as a final memento of 2011 I hope you have all received your commemorative pen.

The second reason is the Open Day held in March and the consequences that flowed from that event chiefly in the form of new members. From a membership at the beginning of 2011 of 320 we had grown to just under 400 by the end of the year. We are delighted to have attracted so many new members and hope they, also, are delighted with what they have found in U3A.

We have 29 Interest Groups including 3 new starters in 2011 - Art, Ballet Appreciation, Engineering & Science and the Committee is very appreciative of the work that Brian Chadwick, Sheila Hall and Chris Gibson did to start these Groups. Indeed we are extremely grateful to all our Group Leaders for the enthusiasm and commitment they display in running their Groups.

However, 29 is low for a U3A of our size so your committee has set a rather ambitious target of 40 Groups to be running by the end of 2012. This number may well include splitting one or two of the larger Groups such as Churches & Pubs and Dining Out as well as forming new Groups for new subjects.

Other U3A's have a Group Co-ordinator to assist in the formation of new Groups as well as offering assistance to existing Group Leaders when requested, and we may well go down that route ourselves.

As you will shortly hear from Derek Hill our finances are in a healthy state and all Group Leaders have been contacted with the offer of additional funds for projects outside the normal self-financing basis on which our Groups operate.

The attendances at the Monthly meetings have been good throughout the year and once again we have had an excellent range of speakers and subjects. Also, I think the "Home Grown Affair" in August was a great idea and might well be repeated in the future. I firmly believe there is a store of untapped talent within our membership, sometimes it just needs a little coaxing out.

Away from the Monthly meetings, the bi-monthly newsletter and our own website provide the main vehicle for information distribution and my thanks go to Jean Drinkwater, Peter Kress and Richard Clark for maintaining quality and content.

Our next event is the Annual Lunch on February 29 at Disley Golf Club. If you haven't already got a ticket please make sure you buy one today for what I'm sure will be another successful and enjoyable occasion.

Finally, sincere thanks go to my fellow committee members for working so hard on your behalf during the year. We aim to provide knowledge and learning in an informal, social and enjoyable environment. If you don't think we're doing that, please let us know and we'll try and do something about it

Steve Reynolds

Group Co-ordinator



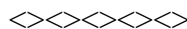
At The AGM it was suggested that we should have more interest groups. Pat Christopher has kindly consented to take on the role of Group Coordinator with a view to helping existing and new groups. There have already been some interesting ideas put forward including Photography and French with other suggestions such as Gardening (with an emphasis on our own gardens), Scrabble, Strolling (as opposed to strenuous walking) and more. It is intimidating to start a new group but well worthwhile as several of the group leaders can testify. There does not have to be just one group leader as two or even three people can run a group. If you have an idea for a group you could organise please feel free to discuss it with Pat.

HOLIDAYS AND VISITS



- MAY 3rd-10th **Montecatini in Tuscany.** Visits to Florence, Siena and San Gimignano
FULLY BOOKED
- JUNE 19th **National Slate Museum** Llanberis and Ffestiniog Railway from Blaenau
Ffestiniog to Porthmadog
£25 Deposit £5
- AUG.18th Cruise to **Iceland and Norway** on P&O Oriana
- SEPT.13th-17th **Cardiff.** Half Board at the Thistle Park Hotel. **£352.**
Single supplement **£70 (limited number)**
Includes visits to Cardiff Castle with a Welsh Banquet, St. Fagans and the
National History Museum
Deposit **£50 (NON REFUNDABLE)** at March meeting

Further information for any of the above from Margaret McDermott and Ruth Smith



Experience enables you to recognize a mistake every time you repeat it.

Ballet Appreciation Groups 1 & 2



The December and January meetings covered Christmas and New Year and as you would expect a touch of the occasion was added to the showings. To get us all into the Christmas spirit a glass of Bucks Fizz or Fresh Orange together with mince pies was enjoyed whilst watching the Christmas presentation.

Meetings 9th & 21st December

1. **The Nutcracker** - Performed by the Royal Ballet Co. and Presented by Deborah Bull.

One of the most popular ballets, with a story line to suit the festive season. The story of the ballet was based on the tale of the Nutcracker and the Mouse King originally by Hoffman and of course music by Tchaikovsky. The scene is set; *"The President and his wife are giving a Christmas party and with their guests are decorating the Christmas tree. The doors of the drawing room open and a group of children come in including Clara and Fritz, their son and daughter with a mysterious guest, which leads to a wonderful winter adventure for Clara and her Prince.....* Some how we never seem to tire of this lovely ballet.

2. **Three Short Ballets from the 2009 New Years Day Concert**

Every year the Vienna State Ballet Company present a concert of music and ballet danced to a selection of Strauss Waltzes. This is a selection from the 2009 performance.

Meetings 6th & 18th January

1. **Gala Performance in Red Square** - Performed by the Kirov Ballet

The stars of the Kirov Ballet perform a selection of Pas De Deux from various ballets including: Le Corsaire, Giselle, Anjuta, the Firebird and many more.

2. **Tribute to Jerome Robbins** - Performed by the Paris Opera Ballet

Two Ballets are performed "In the Night" and "The Concert", both featuring the music of Chopin.

Jerome Robbins who died in 1998 was an American theatre producer, director and choreographer known primarily for Broadway Theatre and Ballet/Dance, but occasionally directed films and also produced/directed for television. His work included everything from classical ballet to contemporary musical theatre. Among the numerous stage productions he worked on were; *On the Town, Peter Pan, High Button Shoes, The Pyjama Game, West Side Story, Seven Brides for Seven Brothers and many more.*

Sheila Hall

-ooOoo-

Unless you have never been tempted, don't pass judgment on someone who has yielded.

Discussion Group



On the 18th January the topic for discussion was Voluntary Euthanasia introduced by Irene Bentley. It had been discussed by the group on a previous occasion but it has recently been in the news again as a possible subject for debate in Parliament. One definition of euthanasia is "A deliberate intervention undertaken with the express intention of ending a life to relieve intractable suffering" (attributed to a House of Lords Select Committee). Another definition is "The painless killing of a patient suffering from an incurable and painful disease or in an irreversible coma"(Dictionary). In neither definition is the permission or the willing acquiescence of the patient mentioned. One member pointed out that doctors have the authority to withhold nourishment from certain patients, usually babies, with the intention of ending a life. There have recently been well publicised instances of the police being asked to make decisions on the advisability of bringing charges against persons who accompany patients to the clinic Dignitas in Switzerland where voluntary euthanasia is legal. It is also legal in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and at least three of the United States. We agreed that it is a legal, moral and ethical minefield for which we had no solutions but perhaps our Government, if and when necessary, could seek advice from the aforementioned. How do we safeguard citizens from those people who see legal euthanasia as a quick route to what they see as their rightful inheritance? Or those dutiful sons and daughters who see a way to get rid of a troublesome burden? And how about the cases of involuntary euthanasia? What protection is there against another insane Dr. Harold Shipman who was able to practice his own version of euthanasia? Are there any more members of the medical profession with similar views? It is a little known fact that the physician (Lord Dawson) attending King George V ended the King's life in 1936 with an injection of morphine and cocaine for humane reasons i.e. to end the King's long suffering. This was made public 50 years later. In the 1930s, Nazi doctors killed approximately 300,000 psychiatric patients, people suffering from genetic defects and patients with incurable illnesses, including five to eight thousand children, in what has been described as State Sponsored Euthanasia. *There was nothing voluntary about that!*

On the 22nd Feb Marlene Brookes introduced the subject of the effects of drugs i.e. non-prescription mainly but also including some prescription drugs, on society and the individual. Alcohol has been with us for a long time, nicotine for less and society has legitimized the use of both these common drugs. Although the dangers of tobacco have been known since the mid 1950s it is still on sale in the U.K. and throughout the world generally. The consequences of the abuse of alcohol are equally well known but the attitudes of Governments to the availability of both these drugs is that individuals must be able to exercise their rights to free choice. Tell the public the dangers involved and let them make their own choice. It has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that Distilleries, Breweries and Tobacco Companies are quoted on the Stock Exchange. On the subject of illegal drugs we discussed the likely results of de-criminalizing them and Marlene pointed to Portugal as an example of so doing. Apparently the results have so far been positive with decreases in the numbers of new drug addicts, lowered petty crime rates, decreases in the reported number of cases of H.I.V. and Aids (the result of an associated drive by the medical authorities).

This is not to say that the illegal importation of drugs into Portugal has either ceased or reduced but it does seem that the use of illegal substances in Portugal has decreased. We had a show of hands in the group to say who was in favour of drug decriminalisation in Britain: 75% were in favour. Is this the way to go?

Jim McDermott

History Group



The subject of the January meeting was General George Schovell. Schovell was born in London in 1774, to a family of quite modest means. His first occupation was as an engraver, but in 1794 he joined the army. As his army career progressed he became the Duke of Wellington's chief code breaker, for which he is renowned. Schovell decoded the Great Paris Cipher, which was the equivalent at that time, of the Enigma Code in WWII. To make the meeting even more interesting the group were given some codes to decipher.



Terry Browne presented a very interesting and informative topic entitled *The Theft of the Mona Lisa*. The painting was stolen from the Louvre in August 1911 by Vincenzo Peruggia, an Italian immigrant who had previously been employed at the Louvre. He kept it hidden for two years, first in Paris and then in Italy. Eventually Peruggia took it to an art dealer who reported it to the police. He was tried in Italy and defended himself on the grounds that he had wanted to repatriate the painting as it really belonged in Italy. He was given a short custodial sentence of approximately seven months and the painting was returned to the Louvre in 1913.

The next History Group meeting will be on Wednesday 28th March 2012 at 7.30pm and the topic will be partially relating to conspiracy theories.

Pam Curley

WALK REPORT – 25 JANUARY 2012 (All reports written by Walter Mason)



The first walk of 2012 attracted 21 walkers to enjoy Louanne and Peter's Lindow walk. This was flat and gentle on a mild and cloudy day, with just some sticky stretches from the previous day's rain. From the car park, we did a quick circuit of Lindow Common, passing by Black Lake, then headed along Newgate. A right turn took us past Lindow Moss, and then across a former landfill site, now attractively landscaped but still with a working methane burner to cope with generated gases. The well-cared for

war memorial at Morley Green was next, before the route took a succession of minor roads, including past Oak Farm and Moss Brow Farm, finally taking a coffee stop near Pownall Park. The next stretch was on made footpaths and bridges, along the River Bollin and tributary streamlets to Twinnies Bridge, and then a final length on The Carrs and by school playing fields back to our start point. It had been a pleasant walk, and a really easy start to the New Year. So we all thanked Peter and Louanne, before heading for home, for a picnic, for a carvery, or for whatever.

WALK REPORT TUESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2012

Perhaps the alternatives – table tennis, tennis, “colour me beautiful”, and half term demands for grandchildren minding – meant that only an elite group of walkers enjoyed John McCartney’s Valentine’s Day walk.

Thick ice still sealed most of the canal, but snow had departed from the fields, as we walked up the gentle gradients from Higher Poynton towards Four Winds, Lyme Park and then Plattwood Farm back to the canal. It was a misty, still day and, apart from one or two short stretches, it was quite firm underfoot on the familiar tracks and paths chosen for the 4 ½ mile route.

All in all it was a very pleasant walk, rounded off by a convivial carvery in the Dog and Partridge – even if, on the day, John didn’t have to part with too many Roses (chocolates)! Thanks John.

WALK REPORT – WEDNESDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2012

Gerry and Jan Chartres had prepared meticulously for their 4 ½ mile walk from Buxworth. But the weather forecasters had other ideas, and an abysmal forecast of heavy rain deterred several. In the event, most of this very pleasant walk, was dry, and the threatened rain only arrived when the Navigation Inn was in sight with an easy downhill stretch to go!

A group of eight followed the easy going of the former Peak Forest Bugsworth Tramway, with glimpses of sleeper bearings on the route, and black swans on the former mill ponds alongside. At Charley Lane we started climbing, and then went up several field paths, past Hallhill Farm (with panoramic views) and Lidgate Farm (with crowing cock), before contouring on a lovely green bridleway, and then a footpath below Eccles Pike.

With heavy rain approaching, signalled by thick mist on the westward horizon, we wisely took the lane down to Portobello and Crist, then over a highlevel footbridge, with the Buxworth bypass deep below, back to the Navigation where two others joined our party. A lovely day was rounded off with very satisfying meals, and we were very grateful to Gerry and Jan and their hard work.

NEXT WALKS: Both to be led by Walter Mason

- WEDNESDAY 28th MARCH – meet 9.30 at village hall with packed lunch, to travel to Dovestone Reservoir, Bank Lane, Greenfield for a fairly flat either 4 ½ or 6 mile walk* round two or three reservoirs with an impressive hilly backdrop. Most on paths or tracks, but parts of the route may be rather rough or muddy. (* not yet recd!).

- TUESDAY 10th APRIL – meet 9.30 at village hall, to travel to Dunham Massey, near Altrincham for a flat 4 ½ mile walk by canal, through villages, and in parkland. All the route should be dry and easy going, except for a few stiles. Various sorts of food are always available in the NT tea rooms, for all wanting to eat afterwards. A farm tea shop and an upmarket pub are also within reach. Bring NT cards for car parking, or if wanting to visit the house or garden afterwards.

Please let me have any material for next newsletter by the 30th April 2012 – Ed.

PERSONAL IMAGE COURSE



A member of Bramhall U3A who has trained as an image consultant for Colour Me Beautiful has been running a 6 week course for us. It has been extremely interesting, and enjoyed by the members (all ladies – funnily enough) who have been attending; look out for those of us who are looking more stylish! There has also been a lot of laughter, this really makes you look great.

The course consists of:-

Week 1 Colour analysis. Which colour suits you best

Week 2 Make up and skin care

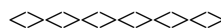
Week 3 Body shape. How to dress according to your shape. (Tricks to make you look slimmer!)

Week 4 Style personality. Looking at new season's fashions.

Week 5 Face shape, hairstyles and glasses. Where to shop online.

Week 6 Visit to M&S at Handforth Dean to choose an outfit (You don't have to buy it!)

It has been suggested that it would be a good idea to run the course again, possibly in October, if you are interested please give your name to Margaret McDermott.



Dieting Rules

- If you eat something and no-one sees you eat it, it has no calories.
- Foods eaten off plates or dishes about to be washed contain no calories as they are dissolved in the clearing up process.
- If you have a diet drink with a choc bar, the calories in the choc bar are cancelled out by the diet drink.
- When you eat with someone else, calories don't count if you don't eat more than they do.
- Foods eaten at films have no calories as they are part of the entertainment package e.g. caramel popcorn, chocolate dipped ice-cream, marshmallows, chippies.
- Broken biscuits have no calories as the process of breaking causes calories to leak out.

Stockport Summer School



The proposed programme for the Stockport Summer School, which will take place from the 9th to the 13th July this year, is set out below, there may be other interesting subjects added to this list later. Our secretary, June Gibbs, will be giving more information, including where to sign up, at the monthly meetings.

From Crime Scene to Court (some outdoor activity)

Wonders of the Universe (cosmology)

Dining Solo (cooking for one)

Pain and Pleasure (gym, reflexology, Swedish Massage)

You Can Do It DIY (suggestions from participants needed before the course starts)

-ooOoo-

Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody

Once upon a time, there were four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. Whenever there was an important job to be done, Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. When Somebody did the job well Everybody wanted the credit. Anybody could have done it, but sometimes Nobody did it. When Nobody did it, Everybody got angry because it was Somebody's job. Everybody thought that Somebody would do it, but it was not often that Anybody realised that Nobody would do it. So it ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

Please let me have any material for next newsletter by the 30th April 2012 – Ed.