

HIGH LANE U3A NEWSLETTER

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HIGH LANE
U3A



July 2009

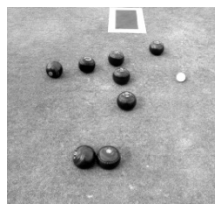
SPEAKERS CORNER



July's speaker needs no introduction: Ken Bentley will talk about his experiences of working in China

In August Richard De Peyer, Director of Macclesfield Museums will be explaining how the expertise of Macclesfield's early 20th century designers are today inspiring silk manufacture in Italy

Crown Green Bowling Group



Ken Bentley who set up and ran the Crown Green Bowling Group over the past 9 years has found it necessary to relinquish his duties for personal reasons. The group which has been very successful under Ken's stewardship is indebted to Ken for his efforts over the years. The members wish to express their sincere thanks to Ken for a job well done. Ken has kindly offered, subject to pre arrangement, to give bowling tuition, if required, by any group member.

I took over from Ken during May and I will be supported by other members of the group in ensuring the group continues to thrive.

The group meet each Thursday at 10.00 until 12.00 hours at Torkington Park, Hazel Grove, and bowl throughout the year (subject to weather). Bowls can be borrowed from the park and previous experience is not necessary. The cost is £1.00 per session. If anybody has any queries, please contact me.

Ray Barratt

DISCUSSION GROUP

On the 22nd April we discussed the subject of "Pets". A pet is defined as "a domesticated animal kept for pleasure and/or affection." This covers quite a lot, ranging from small birds to toyboys. Fortunately the commonest seem to be cats and dogs and budgerigars. Keeping a pet raises the question who benefits? Dogs and cats obviously but how about caged birds? Caged rabbits and gerbils etc? Supplying pets with food and vet care is a multi-million pounds business, so is what you get back worth it? Of course your animal never uses other peoples' gardens as a toilet and cats are good at keeping mice away, whilst dogs are great at scaring burglars. Also dogs are good at taking their owners for walks and chasing sticks and other objects. Cats are good at bringing back little birds and mice and offering them to the owner as a contribution to the larder. It was suggested that some owners begin to look like their pets but does this also apply to people who keep parrots? It was finally agreed that pets are really a 'Good Thing' and can confer a lot of intangible benefits to their owners, in spite of their shortcomings.

On the 20th May the subject for discussion was "Tips and tipping". Why do we do it, who does it and under what circumstances? It was agreed that in most instances it is a reward for services rendered such as good service in a restaurant or hotel, but unfortunately it is now used to supplement poor wages and the employer takes it into account when paying a wage. As do the Inland Revenue. But the tipping malaise seems to have extended into all sorts of other areas, such as taxis, hairdressers, bar tenders, porters etc. It originated as a reward for those people who got no wages, as is still the case in many of the menial jobs in America today. But most of those mentioned above receive at least the minimum wage, so tipping should be reserved for very good service. We all condemned the practice but that will not stop us doing it. "It is expected of us" seems to be the general attitude.

Jim Mc Dermott

Churches and Pubs



Visit to St Mary the Virgin, Clumber Park on Wednesday 3rd June

30 members visited the Chapel of St Mary in Clumber Park now owned by the National Trust. We were met by Danielle Brown, Chapel Steward and our guide for the visit. The chapel along with the stables are now the only original buildings left on the estate, formerly owned by the Dukes of Newcastle. Clumber House itself was demolished in 1938 and the estate acquired by NT in 1946.

The 7th Duke, a devout Anglo Catholic commissioned George Frederick Bodley the leading Church designer of Victorian times to design & build Clumber Chapel in 1886. It took 3 years and the 2 men eventually quarrelled over the cost which escalated to more than £40000 from an original estimate of £30000. Because of the quarrel the work was completed by others but Bodley continued to regard Clumber as his finest creation.

The style is English Gothic with the distinctive 180 ft spire modelled on Patrington Church in East Yorkshire. Inside, the chancel is almost as long as the nave but considerably grander, a church definitely built for a rich family and their estate workers. Both the east and west stained glass windows are outstanding, the work of C E Kempe a favoured artist of the Anglo Catholic movement.

The choir stalls, made of walnut and cedar, have superb carvings of sacred emblems, saints and texts. They are the work of the Rev. Ernest Geldhart, a very talented gentleman: he took holy orders and combined the work of a priest with that of an ecclesiastical craftsman. Very high in a tribune on the north side of the choir is the organ, a three manual instrument by Gray & Davison and recently restored.

The north transept contains the only object not originally designed for Clumber Chapel. The tomb of Georgina, wife of the 4th Duke who died after giving birth to twins, was moved here in 1965 following a break-in at its original site 5 miles away. In the baptistery the font is enclosed by a magnificent cedarwood cover carved with panels representing the seven sacraments.

All in all a most interesting visit and we will be able to compare Clumber with another Bodley Church – Hoar Cross when we visit in September.

Afterwards we had lunch in the NT restaurant and then a look around the estate which includes a walled kitchen garden complete with Palm House and Conservatory.

Steve Reynolds

GERMAN GROUP



Several members of High Lane and Cheadle Hulme U3A entertained guests from Forchheim in Franconia between 11th and 20th June. We had a full programme of events in the main week of their stay, including a trip to Liverpool, a guided tour of Manchester's Chinatown and a visit to Tatton Park. Particularly successful was a walk from Marple Library to Mellor Church, taking in Etherow Park on the way. Four of our guests joined us on the enjoyable canal boat trip with hotpot supper from Whaley Bridge. For most of the time the weather was kind to us but Manchester lived up to its rainy reputation but there was so much to see and do that it didn't matter. We were joined by other members of the German Group for a meal at the Ladybrook Hotel in Bramhall and at Tatton Park. Once again our guests enjoyed excellent hospitality and had many pleasant experiences. Thanks to all involved.



NEEDLEWORK GROUP

At the June general meeting we had a sale of embroidered cards. The date when we next meet will be announced at the July general meeting.

Heritage Group

Visit to Renishaw Hall – Friday 22nd May 2009



Travelling through the lanes of Derbyshire is always a pleasurable experience even when the sky is grey and the rain clouds are gathering. However on our arrival at Renishaw Hall we were greeted by a cheery guide and an invitation to sample the coffee and biscuits which were prepared for us in the Gallery Cafe.

At 11.15 (be prompt) we gathered at the front of the Hall. Renishaw Hall has been the home of the Sitwell family for nearly 400 years, and, in recent decades has become famous through the writings of Edith, Osbert and Sacheverel, the gifted children of the eccentric Sir George and Lady Ida Sitwell. The youngest of the trio Sachie, was the only one of his generation to marry and Renishaw passed to his elder son, Sir Reresby Sitwell and on his death (earlier this year) to his daughter, Alexandra (born 1958).

The published guide tells us that “the Ancient building straddles the crest of a hill, the drives wind up through parkland past gaunt old trees that stand sentinel around the front entrance. Grey and machicolated, this grim northern facade is of immense length and decidedly Gothic character, concealing the narrow width of the house and the beautiful Italianate gardens beyond. There are terraced lawns, clipped hedges and pyramids, statues and fountains on the southern aspect of this great house.”

On entering the Hall we found a much loved home!

Family portraits from earlier times to the present day adorned the walls of every room. As each generation took guardianship of the Hall exquisite furniture, carpets, collections of silver, porcelain and objects of great beauty adorned every surface. Books, old and new, lined the walls of the library; modern magazines, collections of cds; cushions recently embroidered by Lady Penelope Sitwell all gave the feeling that the family had only recently left the room. An assortment of hats were still hanging outside the kitchen door waiting to be collected.

The time we spend in the hall was little enough to appreciate all the treasures which the Sitwell family had collected over the years.

The visit to Renishaw Hall and gardens was a treat indeed and well worth repeating.

Shirley Harrison

TRAVEL GROUP

P & O Cruise on the Oceana (or 31 U3A members in a boat)

A desperate group of experienced sailors and novices set out from Southampton for the Mediterranean to be cosseted and entertained for 14 days.

Below are snapshot views from some of the travellers:-

All in all this was a great experience, seeing a little more of the wide world, learning to bond together and hoping to keep our cholesterol count down. Let's do it again sometime. FRED

After three days at sea Barcelona and Monte Carlo were a hive of activity; upmarket cosmopolitan ports of call. See how the rich and famous spend their holidays. Wonderful!
SUE

A holiday that ticked all the boxes. In addition to being transported to some interesting and exotic places we were entertained and fed to a high standard. SHEILA

It was amazing waking up in Monte Carlo to see all the superb boats in the Marina, the luxury apartments and the frantic preparations for the Grand Prix. PAT

Excellent standard of hygiene, cuisine, comfort, variety and good cheer from staff and fellow passengers. A very happy holiday. MOIRA

I have always wanted to see the Sistine Chapel in Rome and now I have. SONIA

So many things and happy times on our cruise. I'll never forget the friendships and laughter. A great holiday. LOTTIE

Calvi is a medieval town situated on the NW coast of Corsica, picturesque and perched on a hill, protected by a 13th century Citadel. It has a scenic backdrop of mountains, pine trees and wonderful beaches, an authentic old town with a lovely harbour. JUNE

The whole experience – great! BARBARA

Wonderful cruise – good food and company. Trips to Sorrento and Amalfi; invitation to Masonic Widows' Cocktail Party. MILDRED

I loved the half day outings to Barcelona, Sorrento and Gibraltar and strolling round Calvi. EDITH

What I appreciated most was the care the Head Waiter took over my diet; hearing him welcoming me with a loud 'Mrs. Griffiths' never failed to remind me of "Passage to India". JUNE

Two highlights of the cruise were:- standing inside the Pantheon in Rome whilst a torrential rain storm was in progress but no rain appeared to come through the opening in the domed roof, and having climbed Mount Vesuvius peering down into the deceptively benign crater at the top which showed little evidence of its awesome power with just the occasional puff of steam. JEAN & ROGER

Dawn breaking over Gibraltar and the Pillars of Hercules. The "Motion Discomfort Bags" deployed for both crossings of the Bay of Biscay. NOEL

My most memorable day was going up in the cable car to see the Barbary macaques at the top of the Rock with the whole of Gibraltar Bay spread out in the sunshine. Then back on board for the "Sail Away" with everyone singing "Land of Hope and Glory" and waving Union Flags. Very moving. GRACE

NEXT CRUISE



17 nights from 16th October 2010 on P & O Arcadia to the Adriatic. From Southampton to **Malaga, Zakinthos, Corfu, Dubrovnik, Venice, Malta and Cadiz.**

Inside Cabin from £1317
Outside Cabin from £1433
Balcony Cabin from £1802

£100 per person on board credit for those who have previously sailed with P & O

£50 for those who are new to P & O

If you are interested in this cruise please contact Margaret McDermott, June Gibbs or Sue Harlin.

WALKING GROUP REPORT - April 2009



A group of 16 joined the walk of Gerry and Jan Chartres at Errwood Reservoir Dam, on a perfect walking day with warm sunshine. The walk ascended by Jep Clough, then contoured along past Oldfield farm, up and down Mill Clough, skirted Oaken End farm, before heading down to the woods above the River Goyt to start our return. The bluebells were hardly showing colour, but there were wood anemones, sorrell, and celandines in abundance.

After a welcome lunch stop by the footbridge, we walked along by the river, up and across the Fernilee dam, then followed the woodland paths by Fernilee Reservoir, back to The Street car park. Many thanks to Gerry and Jan for their first walk as leaders, and for choosing firm dry paths for a forgetful bootless Walter!

WALK REPORT – MAY 2009



John McCartney led 21 of us on a very pleasant round from Great Hucklow. The weather forecast, for once, wasn't pessimistic, so we had a persistent drizzle for much of the way. But the tracks were firm, and the meadows green and comfortable under our feet, as we passed through Grindlow hamlet and Foolow village. Then we skirted Stanley House and Silly Dale, before returning to the welcoming warmth of the Queen Anne pub, with tasty and very well presented meals.

On the way we had passed an array of horse troughs, a succession of attractive farmhouses and dwellings, the ubiquitous sheep and lambs – but, in spite of the warning sign, and fortunately – no bull! The views were extensive, but inevitably misty, and we saw in the distance the attractive upper reaches of Cressbrook Dale near Litton, the venue for our next walk on June 17th (a week earlier than usual, because of the late June weekend). So, many thanks to John and Barbara for their planning of this walk in a new area for many – and finding such a good pub for afterwards.

WALK REPORT – JUNE 2009



Ruth and Dave Smith drew the short straw, as a bad weather report proved depressingly accurate. The usually dry dales greeted us with slippery limestone, and even with patches of mud, more akin to winter conditions. But the twelve of us did have summer warmth, and a mass of unusual vegetation and June flowers to admire, in the very attractive Tansley, Cressbrook, Ravensdale, Water-cum-Jolly and Millers dales.

Walter had a fruitless time searching for the now rare yellow mountain pansy, but others had more luck with the varied colours of the common spotted orchid, masses of common rock rose and biting stonecrop, and an occasional early purple orchid. There was a lingering scent of wild garlic (Ransoms), and seedheads of cowslips were in abundance.

We passed the pretty Ravensdale cottages, on our way to the converted mills of Cressbrook and Litton, and an improvised and sheltered lunch stop. Now upmarket apartments, Ellis Needham's Litton Mill once housed inhumanely treated children as its workforce, while the glorious Georgian facade of Joseph Arkwright's Cressbrook Mill used to contain much luckier and well cared for apprentices.

We left the overhung limestone climbing crags of Water cum Jolly Dale, where the River Wye was muddy and swollen almost over the riverside path, and climbed Litton Slack, past the New Houses and cemetery, and back to our cars.

Sheltered from the rain, the ladies of Litton were busy preparing their well dressing for the weekend opening, but for once our group seemed reluctant to linger and investigate, and anxious to return to hot showers. Such a shame for Ruth and Dave, who on any other day would have received far more thanks for this lovely and classic limestone walk. But was the weather the fault of the group leader who had set the date for this walk???

Walter Mason

NEXT WALKS

July 29 – Louanne Collins – Birchin Edge and monuments, near Baslow.

August 26 – Steve Reynolds – Windgather Rocks and Shining Tor.

DINING GROUP



On the 16th June 35 members, of the Dining Group (including some German guests of the U3A German group) enjoyed a meal on board the Judith Mary canal boat. We travelled along the Upper Peak Forest Canal departing from Whaley Bridge for two and a half hours on an extremely pleasant June evening. An occasional commentary was given about the countryside we passed by and a little bit of history of the area, including Teapot Row; this original name comes from the fact that all the dwellers used to empty their tea pots into the canal. Passing through Bugsworth Basin and Furness Vale, this was an extremely pleasant and relaxing way to spend a delightful summer evening. Having dined extremely well on home-made local Beef hot pot served with beetroot and red cabbage followed by apple pie and fresh cream, we felt replete and contented as we made our way home.

The next Dining Group outing will be on Thursday 13th August when the venue will be The Ram's Head at Disley. See Margaret Meekley or Jean Drinkwater to book.

HERITAGE GROUP

Updates

Wednesday 15th July – Llanberis - 'Electric Mountain'

Please note that our coach will leave High Lane Village Hall Car Park at 8.30 am. If you would like to be picked up in Hazel Grove at 8.15 am – at the Bus Stop Lay-By on the A6 (opposite the Rising Sun) – it is important that we have your name at the next meeting (July 8th) or earlier.

Wednesday 29th July – BBC Studios Tour

Will those members booked on this tour please let us have £5.00 each at the next meeting. Payment is now due. Please meet at the Studios on Oxford Road at 12.15 pm. The tour commences at 12.30 pm.

If you have your name down but are unable to come, please let us know as soon as possible as we have a waiting list.

September/October

We are arranging a visit to the Macclesfield Heritage Centre Museum, the Silk Museum and Paradise Mill (where we will have a guided tour). Details will be available very shortly. This visit will tie in with the talk we shall be having at the August Meeting entitled 'The Story of Silk in Macclesfield and Como'.

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Items for the next newsletter to be with the editor by Thursday 27th August