



## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the December edition, the twenty first, of the monthly High Lane U3A newsletter. Unfortunately, we are seeing the reintroduction of restrictions as the World waits to see the severity and threat of the Omicron version and most importantly the efficacy of the existing vaccines. However, some groups are continuing to meet and some are still Zooming so it is not all bad news.

The highlight of this edition is a selection of photographs from the talented artists in Brian's very popular art class. We also have reports of group activities, and we end with the usual sprinkling of light-hearted items.

The newsletter is being sent out by email and will also be on the website. The next issue will be January 2022 so please send your contributions to me before the end of December via [newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk) This edition is accompanied by the November newsletter from the u3a National Office.

Diane Saxon

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## u3a new draft strategy – Your views

You may still wish to contribute to the draft strategy.

The aims of the strategy are

- Supporting an Engaged, Strong and Vibrant Movement
- Making u3a membership an attractive opportunity for all retired people
- Developing the u3a Voice
- Maximising the u3a Learning Mode



The survey is still available and doesn't take long to complete. Your responses will be anonymous and the findings of the consultation process will be reviewed by the end of the year with firm proposals being developed early next year. This short survey seeks your views on four initial aims which you can access at

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/about/vision#future>

Please note these are DRAFT aims and reflect early thinking. You may not agree with these aims. You may have ideas for additional or substitute aims. Or you may think these are exactly what is needed. Whatever your thoughts, we look forward to hearing them. We encourage you to focus your feedback on the sentiment of the aims, and not the specific wording.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

### November

Our speaker was Canon Michael Burgess, whose topic was "For Better for Worse". He regaled us with many facts including the most amazing wedding ceremonies, from one underwater to another a mountain top, most expensive wedding dress the briefest wedding, to name but a few. All recounted with his signature dry humour. Our members were well entertained.

Sheila Harrop

### December

The Christmas meeting this year is on 8 December. There will be an entertainer, a quiz, raffle and some light refreshments. Admission by ticket only. Tickets are now all sold for this meeting.



## PROGRAMME FOR 2022

In case you missed it, next year's programme is repeated here.

12 January	John Wallace	Over Paid and Over Here (GIs in the UK)
9 February	AGM	
9 March	Roger Browne	King s Tiger Rag (Roger plays piano with Manchester Jazz)
13 April	Sharon Evans	Children s Air Ambulance
11 May	Caroline Melliar-Smith	Family Secrets
8 June	Mike Storr	Masters of Mirth
13 July	Geoff Scargill	Last Laugh of the Railway King (Early comedians e. g. Stanley Holloway)
10 August	Rod Devereux	My Life in Special Branch
14 September	Jim Williams	Life and Times of Casanova
12 October	Allan Shalks	My very interesting life in Theatre, Television and Radio
10 November	Julie Sutton	Our u3a choir
7 December	Christmas Party	

Sheila Harrop

**The Covid advice from National Office has not yet been updated. We are expected to follow Government guidelines.** We expect all those who attend face to face meetings to be, at least, double vaccinated or to have had a recent negative Covid test. We ask you to follow all relevant public health advice, eg wearing of face masks in enclosed indoor spaces.

As has been the case for some time, any member who is feeling ill, displaying Covid symptoms, has received a positive test result in the past 10 days or has been instructed to isolate must not participate in u3a meetings, trips and events. Any member who subsequently tests positive (within 7 days of attending) is asked to advise their group convenor(s) or meeting organisers so that all other attendees may be informed.

There is detailed advice for members and group leaders at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/running-your-u3a-covid-and-beyond/england-activities-advice>

## National Office Events

### Astronomy – What's out there?

A virtual tour of the Solar System by Martin Whillock, u3a Subject Adviser for Astronomy

This was still available as I write but don't delay in Registering if you wish to attend.

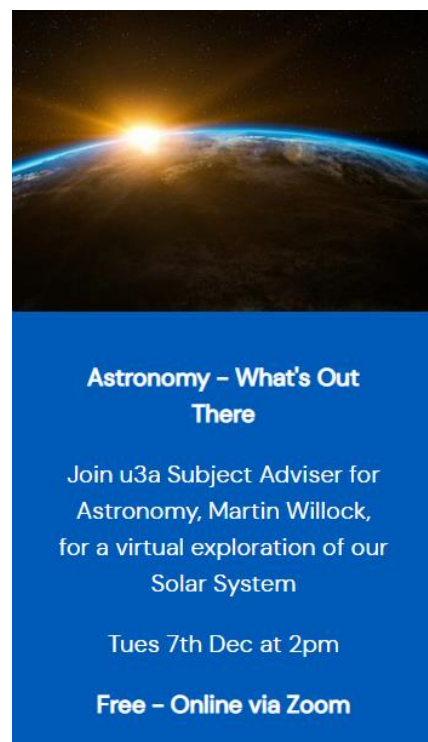
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/astronomy-whats-out-there-tickets-191766678297>

A PowerPoint tour of the Solar System, plus a little of what is beyond. Suitable for general audiences, with no prior knowledge needed.

The presentation will last about 40 minutes with time discussion at the end. Questions are encouraged, and no question is too simple! Martin Whillock FRAS is the u3a Astronomy Subject Adviser. He got hooked on Astronomy when living in a village in the 1950s with no street lights to spoil the view of the stars. His career included Engineering, Youth Work, Outdoor Education, Adult Education & Community Development. Martin has Dyscalculia so struggles with numbers. He was an expert Caver for many years.

There is a wide variety of other events. These can be found here.

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



## GROUP REPORTS

### ART

The group is very lively and Jolly and good fun. The posh biscuits are better than ever. In the new year we are having a visit by Ally Hargreaves for a couple of weeks to show us all how to paint portraits. Everybody is looking forward to this event with trepidation. The subject is Albert Einstein. She is very good, writes in a national art magazine and runs a local art school for senior persons.

I managed to ask Mavis to take some photos of some of our paintings and current work on our meeting day. A selection can be seen here. There are more that can appear in later editions. (Ed: Unfortunately, I don't have names of the artists. Perhaps artists might like to write a little about their painting for a future edition?)







Onward and Upward

Brian

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### November meeting

We discussed several topics proposed by group individuals.

The first question was Should MPs have other jobs? This proved to be difficult to decide and one comment was made that politicians are a crafty lot! But we all, with one reservation, came to the conclusion that the answer must be No.

A second related to the Liverpool bomb and the problem of failed asylum seekers being able to stay in the country for 7 years. We felt we didn't know enough about this case, and discussion continued about those who cross the Channel in small boats. We couldn't find a solution.

Third was a discussion about finance – rising wages, rising costs, State pensions, and ring-fencing extra taxes. We learnt about the history of Aldi – then Adidas – and a general consensus was that we could learn from other countries, but we don't! Food supplies are being affected, staffing too, but one member said We have lots of turkeys for Christmas, but we'll have to slaughter them ourselves!

Fourth – apparently the Government is selling off parts of the NHS to private companies. Why is nobody stopping this? Problems at Stepping Hill were mentioned and a heated discussion developed from this. Is there a too highly paid hierarchy?

Finally, the plan to introduce a London-style congestion charge of £10 a day in Greater Manchester was the topic. Apparently, this is due to start next May, but hasn't been confirmed, or explained completely. One member thought it's a good idea, others were more doubtful.

Our next meeting is Wednesday 15th December at 2pm. Come and join us for some light-hearted (mostly) discussion, with tea and cakes.

Mavis Dean

### October meeting

As usual the topics were many and varied. We started off with problems in the NHS, a shortage of staff and equipment despite all the billions that are spent. Bad management of money and resources was discussed. The pandemic has made us realise how dependent we are on the front line workers who are often poorly paid but who play a vital part in society and who should be remunerated adequately.

We felt that demonstrators demanding more insulation in new houses, sitting on motorways impeding traffic, including ambulances, were irresponsible but felt they had a valid point to make. How is it possible to be taken notice of in a way that doesn't inconvenience members of the public? This led to a discussion of poor building practices and poor insulation in many new houses, but we felt that the use of heating pumps would be too expensive. Perhaps a better solution would be an extensive programme of tree growing.

Are we, as a society, becoming more violent? Newspapers are filled with horror stories but actually there is probably less violence today than in the past. There has been an increase in domestic violence during the pandemic but, at least, that is now being treated more seriously. The pervasive influence of the internet which gives some people the opportunity of being really nasty (in words, if not in deeds) was something we all deplored.

Asylum seekers were discussed again, since so many have arrived from Afghanistan. We wondered why so many are sent to poor areas like Rochdale and not to the leafy suburbs of southern England. There is bound to be resentment if foreigners are given housing ahead of people who have been on the waiting list for years. Another important question is why aren't asylum seekers allowed to work? We are told there is a shortage of labour in many sectors of our economy but those poor people have to languish in detention centres often for years. Again, it was pointed out that there are far fewer asylum seekers in this country than in most European countries. We are number seven in the league tables of the numbers behind countries such as Germany, France, Spain, Italy and the Scandinavian countries.

Marlene Brookes

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### Some Christmas jokes – from the Web.

Why is Christmas just like your job?

What's the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the ordinary alphabet?

What did Adam say the day before Christmas?

What did the stamp say to the Christmas card?

What does Santa say when Mrs. Claus asks for the weather forecast?

Who is Santa's favourite singer?

What do you call an obnoxious reindeer?

What does the Queen call her Christmas Broadcast?

Why don't you ever see Santa in hospital?

You do all the work and the fat guy with the suit gets all the credit.

The Christmas alphabet has Noel.

"It's Christmas, Eve!"

Stick with me and we'll go places.

"Rain, dear."

Elf-is Presley

RUDEolph.

The One Show!

Because he has private elf care!



## GARDENING

A big contrast in gardens between the beginning and end of the month; from bright rose and yucca flowers, to the surprise snowfall which had goldfinch and the normally shy jay scrambling for sunflower hearts and peanuts. In fact, it was personally the heaviest November snowfall I can remember – surely not global cooling?! Meanwhile our group's activities are curtailed till a group meal in the New Year.

Walter Mason



Walter Mason



## BALLROOM DANCING

The group is getting steady attendances, and already starting to feel festive. Long forgotten steps and moves are coming back to us, as we look forward to the New Year.

Walter Mason



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## CINEMA

The group worked well through lockdown as I was able to highlight films which were being shown on TV. I am happy to continue doing this as I feel that many of us still prefer to catch up on films from the security of our own sofas.

However, both the Regent and Plaza cinemas have been open for a while and I have been recommending films which are being shown there. It is now much easier to book in advance at the Regent as they have gone on-line. The big advantage of going to the Plaza is that you can travel in daylight for the morning screening at 11am and enjoy a lunch in their splendid cafe and discuss the merits of the film; if you feel so inclined, of course.

If you would like to join the group, please contact me.

Sheila Harrop

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## TRAVEL

### Shibden hall and Lincoln

If you previously paid by cheque these have now been cancelled. Arrangements will be made for refund of cash payment. Contact Margaret McDermott.

### Proposed holidays for 2022:

Hampshire	June
River Cruise	August
Ireland	September
Lincoln	October

Margaret McDermott

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Congratulations to Diane with a full house this month.

- 1st. Medley of Keys 6 votes
- 2nd. Cross Keys 5 votes
- 3rd. Bubbly Keys 4 Votes



Some of the best photographs and ideas this year. Thanks everybody.

The subject for next month's project is **Circles**. Lots of round objects for the next edition.

Jeff Robinson

## QUIZ

Quiz group had its first (and only) face to face meeting of the year this month. Mavis was quizmaster and a small group of quizzers met to attempt the challenge.

A small sample of the questions

Which UK building has the largest clock face?

Who is on the new £50 note?

In which war was Mary Seacole nursing?

Which is the deepest of the Italian lakes?

Who wrote 'The Tiger who came to tea'?

Which company introduced tea bags?

In which Dickens' book will you find Lady Dedlock?

Which BBC presenter is taking part in this year's Strictly Come Dancing?

*Answers on page 12*

We welcomed Betty, a new member, to the group. More members would be useful to help us build our teams. We meet on the fourth Thursday of the month. Please contact me if you would like to join this group.

Diane Saxon





**WALKING****Wednesday 24th November Walk**

Fourteen of us met at the Longshaw Estate car park near Hathersage. We set off along the main footpath to cross the B6521 and pick up a well-marked path until we reached a footbridge. After crossing this bridge, we followed the stream which led on to Padley Gorge. Finding a very picturesque area with tree trunks and boulders to sit on, we stopped for a short coffee break before continuing down the Gorge, noting its ancient woodland and some unfinished millstones lying around.

Continuing along this path, we eventually emerged near Grindleford Station, just near the western portal of the railway tunnel. Just next to the station, we took a short steep uphill path, which, interestingly, was provided with electric lamp posts. On reaching the B5621, we crossed the road and entered Tedgeness Road. Obviously, the lighted footpath was for the benefit of these local residents accessing the station at night.





Taking a footpath to the left, we entered a climbing woodland path which eventually led to the top of Tumbling Hill. The views from this vantage point were fantastic and we were able to identify several local landmarks. We stopped here for some time while we ate our packed lunches.

We then descended to pick up the A 625 and join the easy path through the Longshaw Estate back to the car park.

Jeff Mortimer

And to finish: some puns and jokes.



André sent these some time ago and we did publish some in an earlier edition. Here are a few more. These are titled 'Puns for Educated Minds' and there are many sites on the web containing these and more.

- She was only a whisky-maker, but he loved her still.
- A rubber-band pistol was confiscated from an algebra class, because it was a weapon of math disruption.
- No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.
- A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
- Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
- Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
- Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
- A sign on the lawn at a drug rehab center said: 'Keep off the Grass.'
- The midget fortune-teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
- A backward poet writes inverse.
- If you jumped off the bridge in Paris , you'd be in Seine .
- A vulture carrying two dead raccoons boards an airplane. The stewardess looks at him and says, 'I'm sorry, sir, only one carrion allowed per passenger.'
- Don't join dangerous cults. – Practice safe sects!
- Two hydrogen atoms meet. One says, 'I've lost my electron.' The other says, 'Are you sure?' The first replies, 'Yes, I'm positive.'
- Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root-canal? His goal: transcend dental medication.
- There was the person who sent ten puns to friends, with the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did.



*Happy Christmas!*

